RESTITUTION AS ABORIGINAL WORLDVIEW FOR ELEMENTARY CLASSROOMS

by

Myla Leinweber

BEd., University of Victoria, 2010

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION IN MULTIDISCIPLINARY LEADERSHIP STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

September 2013

© Myla Leinweber, 2013
Abstract

The author of this study designed and implemented lessons integrating Restitution (Gossen, 1992) and a locally developed curriculum of Indigenous stories to employ an Aboriginal worldview to support students' positive identity and self-management. The professional inquiry method merged the practical and the critical traditions of action research to improve teaching practices in response to a specific problem and to improve life conditions for a marginalized group. The inquiry had two stages: (a) curriculum design and (b) reflective implementation of the curriculum in a grade one and two classroom. The new curriculum and the author's reflections may be helpful to teachers who wish to incorporate an Aboriginal worldview in their own classrooms but lack the knowledge, confidence, or resources to do so. The author illustrated teachers' journeys from an emphasis on controlling students to supporting their self-management and toward finding confidence as an ally for Aboriginal people.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract .................................................................................................................................... ii  
Table of Contents ..................................................................................................................... iii  
Glossary ................................................................................................................................... vii  
Restitution Glossary ................................................................................................................ xiii  
Acknowledgements .................................................................................................................. xvi  

## CHAPTER I: A NEED FOR INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE .............................................1  
    Research Questions ..................................................................................................... 3  
    Integrating Restitution and Learning Journeys .......................................................... 3  
    Purpose of the Study .................................................................................................... 5  
Inquiry Method ........................................................................................................... 6  
    Benefits and Limitations of Professional Inquiry ....................................................... 9  
    Parameters of the Study .............................................................................................. 10  
Ethics Processes and Consideration ............................................................... 11  
My Inquiry Spiral ........................................................................................................ 12  
    My Interest in Aboriginal Education ........................................................................... 13  
    My Interest in Restitution ......................................................................................... 16  
    My Beliefs .............................................................................................................. 18  
The Context of Aboriginal Education ........................................................................... 20  
Local History of the Sinixt People .............................................................................. 20  
The School District and School Context .................................................................... 22  
Chapter Summary ......................................................................................................... 24  

## CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW ............................................................................... 26  
    Context Related to Aboriginal Education .................................................................. 26  
        History .............................................................................................................. 27  
        Cultural Disconnect ......................................................................................... 29  
        Statistics .......................................................................................................... 32  
    Restitution as Restoration ........................................................................................... 33  
        The Basic Practice of Restitution ................................................................. 33  
        Restitution and Aboriginal Pedagogy ........................................................... 35  
        Restitution and Restorative Justice .............................................................. 41  
Aboriginal Worldview ...................................................................................................... 47  
Aboriginal Worldview in Kindergarten ........................................................................ 47  
Components of an Aboriginal Worldview .................................................................... 51  
    Spirituality ............................................................................................................. 51  
    Interconnectedness ............................................................................................... 52  
    Space and Place ...................................................................................................... 55  
    Healing and Teaching ............................................................................................. 57  
    Positive Self-Identity .............................................................................................. 59  
    Modeling and Experiential Learning .................................................................... 61  
    Storytelling ............................................................................................................ 63  
Becoming an Ally ........................................................................................................... 64  
Curriculum Design ......................................................................................................... 65
Chapter Summary .................................................................68

CHAPTER III: TWO-STAGE PROFESSIONAL INQUIRY ......................69
Stage One: Curriculum Design Process ..........................................70
Stage Two: Reflective Implementation Process .................................72
Rationale for Research Method .........................................................74
  Professional Inquiry as Empowerment ...........................................75
  Contributing to the Community .....................................................76
  My Voice as an Ally .................................................................77
  The Influence of Indigenous Research ...........................................78
  Action Research .........................................................................81
  Professional Inquiry Informed by Action Research ..........................82
Chapter Summary ...........................................................................84

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS .........................................................85
Events Leading to the Study .............................................................86
Curriculum Design ..........................................................................87
The Classroom and Students ............................................................88
Evidence of Teacher Learning ..........................................................89
  Confidence with Reflective Curriculum Design ..............................90
  Internalizing Restitution Language and Processes .........................92
  Shifting from Controlling to Supporting Social Learning ...............94
  Understanding an Aboriginal Worldview ......................................95
  Summary .....................................................................................98
Student Learning ............................................................................99
  Strategies to Meet Needs ............................................................100
  Summary .....................................................................................106
Suggestions for Improving the Curriculum ......................................107
Summary and Future Inquiry ...........................................................108

CHAPTER V: FINAL REFLECTIONS AND COMMITMENTS .............110
Facilitating Collaborative Inquiry .....................................................110
Emerging Themes: Doubt and Feelings ............................................112
Convictions and Commitments .........................................................114
Limitations and Contributions .........................................................115
Key Understandings .......................................................................117
Summary .........................................................................................117
Recommendation for Further Study ................................................118
Final Thoughts ...............................................................................119

References ......................................................................................120
Appendices

Appendix A: Letter of Support from School District

Appendix B: UNBC Research Ethics Board Approval

Appendix C: Learning Journey and Restitution Connections

Appendix D: The Restitution as Worldview Curriculum
List of Figures

Figure 1. Integrative design of the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum ..........71
Glossary

This glossary is provided to give the reader a sense of the meaning of specialized terms, as I, the author, have understood them and used them in this study. Where possible, the terms are referenced as well. The general glossary is followed by a section for Restitution terms as well as a list of the Learning Journeys (BC School District #20, 2003) animals and the personal strengths they represent.

Aboriginal – The term “Aboriginal” refers to all First Nations, Inuit, and Metis people and is embedded in the Canadian Constitution Act of 1982. This term includes status and non-status First Nations people and those who live on and off-reserve. The Canadian Constitution includes references to Aboriginal rights and in this Act; these rights apply to First Nation, Inuit, and Metis people. Although the British Columbia (BC) Ministry of Education programs generally refer to “Aboriginal students”, the BC government does not separately identify First Nations (status or non-status), Inuit, and Metis learners (Kavanagh, 2006, p.12).

Aboriginal Worldview – The four major categories of the Sacred Tree (Bopp, Bopp, Brown, & Lane, 1989) are: Wholeness, Growth, Protection, and Nourishment. The Elders who contributed to this synopsis of Aboriginal wisdom wanted to show a way to wellness through traditional worldview and teachings. Personal gifts are to be nurtured through inner reflection on symbols, stories, and meanings to develop one’s volition or will, the inner force that aligns behaviour with a positive vision. In a world where all things are connected, hurt means that wholeness is broken but wholeness can be restored through healing processes and traditional teachings.
Aboriginal worldview is also described by the First Nations Information Governance Centre as *Ways of Being, Ways of Thinking, Way of Seeing,* and *Way of Relating.* (Dumont, 2005) and includes belief systems, spirituality, relationship to the land, and family. This study focuses on relationships as a key feature of a traditional Aboriginal worldview and notes that respect is not understood as obedience to authority but it is expressed when others allow an individual to make the personal choices that, upon reflection, will develop his or her will. Ideally, those choices are made within a context of a close community where relationships are valued and mistakes will result in the desire to heal and restore wholeness.

**action research:** Participative action research has a community focus and practical action research is conducted by professionals (Creswell, 2008). Both methods focus on finding and testing solutions to practical problems in cycles of action and reflection and have the dual purpose of knowledge creation and empowerment (Greenwood & Levin, 1998). Practical action research can be described as systematic investigations conducted by teachers (or others in an educational setting) to gather information about, and subsequently improve, the ways their particular educational setting operates, their teaching, and their student learning (Mills, as cited in Creswell, 2008, p. 597).

Manfra (2009) warned that the dichotomy of practical and critical action research is a "tyrannical myth" that "has [falsely] divided teacher inquiry into two discrete categories" (p. 33). Manfra proposed that action research by teachers should explore middle ground, where practical and critical issues merge. The method for this study is described as professional inquiry (Brown & Cherkowski, 2011; Kaser & Halbert, 2009), because of the way that it merges these action research traditions.
ally: Andrea Avayzian (1995) defined an ally as
a member of a dominant group in our society who works to dismantle any form of oppression from which she or he receives the benefit. Allied behavior means taking personal responsibility for the changes we know are needed in our society, and so often ignore or leave to others to deal with. Allied behavior is intentional, overt, consistent activity that challenges prevailing patterns of oppression, makes privileges that are so often invisible visible, and participates with the empowerment of persons targeted by oppression (para. 3).

culturally responsive teaching: Gay (2000) defined culturally responsive teaching as instruction with awareness of students’ cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles to make learning more appropriate and effective.

circle: As with the restorative processes of mediation and conferencing, circles provide a space for encounter between the victim and the offender. However, circles also involve the community in the decision making process (Pranis, 2005). The circle process offers a structure and language with some similarities to Restitution. Both are restorative processes.

deep change: A process where an individual mindfully shifts from previous routine thought patterns. It involves embracing a new pattern opposed to staying with the old and familiar pattern (Mezirow, 1991). Deep change is a learner’s intentional alignment with new ways of thinking and acting.

dominant society: A conglomeration of different, often competing, cultures and subcultures. Dominant society or culture is one that is able through economic or political power, to
impose its values, language, and ways of behaving on a subordinate culture (Marshall, 1998).

**double loop learning:** Double-loop learning occurs when error is detected and corrected in ways that involve the modification of a person’s or an organization’s underlying norms, policies, and objectives (Smith, 2001). Double-loop learning involves questioning the role of the framing and learning systems that underlie actual goals and strategies. Argyris (1982) argued that double-loop learning is necessary if practitioners and organizations are to make informed decisions in rapidly changing and often uncertain contexts.

**First Nations:** Historically referred to as Indians and later as Native, the people who are not Metis or Inuit and trace their ancestry to the original inhabitants of Canada are now generally referred to as First Nations people. The term Indian is most often used when referring to the Indian Act or to specific federal government policies (Kavanagh, 2006, p.12).

**Indigenous:** In this study, the term Indigenous is used interchangeably with Aboriginal or First Nations, which apply to Native people in Canada. The Indigenous people of any nation are “ethnic minorities who have been marginalized as their historical territories became part of a state” (Coates, 2004, p. 12).

**integrative design process:** This term is used in this study to describe the design of a series of lessons, or curriculum, with reference to two or more curricular resources or strands of literature. I used an integrative process to design lessons that teach Restitution as a way of relating to self, to one another, and to the community, consistent with an Aboriginal Worldview, as expressed in the locally developed Learning Journeys (BC School District #20, 2003) program. My understanding of Aboriginal Worldview was drawn from
various writings, particularly those by Aboriginal authors or produced with the input of Aboriginal Elders (Sacred Tree, 1989) (Ross, 2006). Oral traditions were valued as an approach to teaching.

**learning:** This study was concerned with teacher learning and student learning. For both, learning refers to the development of understanding (Wiggins & McTighe, 2004) and the ability to apply knowledge and skills flexibly in new situations. Learning begins when individuals are receptive to new information, which I describe as connecting or attaching to new ideas, terminology, or skills. When learners have internalized new information, they not only use it proficiently and flexibly but it has become a lasting part of their identity. In this way, internalizing new information is similar to double loop learning (Argyris, as cited in Smith, 2001) and to transformative learning (Cranton, 1994; Cranton & King, 2003).

**Nuu-Chah-Nulth:** The Nuu-chah-nulth (/nuːˈtʃə:nulθ/; Nuu-chah-nulth: [nuːtʃaːnulθ]), also formerly referred to as the Nootka, Nutka, Aht, Nuuchahnulth, are one of the Indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast of Canada. The term 'Nuu-chah-nulth' is used to describe fifteen separate but related nations, such as the Nuchatlaht First Nation, whose traditional home is in the Pacific Northwest on the west coast of Vancouver Island (Hoover, 2002).

**professional inquiry:** This is an approach to professional learning that occurs when practitioners, specifically teachers or principals, identify and attempt to come to an understanding of the mysteries of their practice. The term professional inquiry assumes that knowledge construction is not limited to university researchers but that valuable knowledge can be generated by those working in schools and classrooms (Brown &
Cherkowski, 2011). Professional inquiry may take various forms but when it includes cycles of action and reflection, as in the second phase of this study, it draws on action research traditions but merges the critical and practical traditions (Manfra, 2009). This study demonstrates that professional inquiry may also focus on design, as in the first stage of the method, when materials were integrated and adapted for a local context and a specific purpose.

**Restitution:** In this study, Restitution refers to an approach to counseling children and youth, developed by Gossen (1998), after she observed First Nations Elders counsel incarcerated youth (Brown & Gossen, 2011). When practicing Restitution, a teacher helps students remember the shared beliefs that a class has established to guide their treatment of one another. Taking time to establish and reaffirm these beliefs helps to create the conditions in which a student who has caused harm to others or to the community can make amends for a mistake and return to the group with his or her positive view of self strengthened. Gossen (1998) described Restitution as a process of consensus that celebrates diversity and views conflict as a positive opportunity for learning (p.183).

**Restorative practices:** These are a range of exercises that share a broader preventative focus for a whole school community rather than focusing on incidents of harm or compliance with rules. These traditions show respect, concern, and commitment to both offender and victim and support the offender in accepting responsibility (Brown & Gossen, 2011).

**Sinixt:** The Sinixt are also known as the Arrow Lakes Band. The people of this First Nation are descended from Indigenous peoples who have lived for at least 10,000 years in what is known today as the West Kootenay region of British Columbia, Canada and the adjacent regions of Eastern Washington in the United States. The Sinixt are part of the Salishan
linguistic group and speak their own dialect of the Colville-Okanagan language (Sinixt Nation Society, n.d.).

**transformative learning:** The development of revised assumptions, premises, ways of interpreting experience, or perspectives on the world by means of critical self-reflection on new behaviours (Cranton, 1994). In this study, transformative learning occurred through reflection on teacher attitudes, on students' use of Restitution and Learning Journeys vocabulary, and on change in student behaviours.

**Western Worldview:** This term refers to views of a Western European philosophy and is often contrasted with an Aboriginal or Indigenous worldview. *Eurocentric* is a related term that indicates that a Western worldview is privileged.

**Restitution Glossary**

The following definitions contain my understanding of these terms and phrases, based on my study of Restitution (1998). These definitions reflect the way that Restitution language was applied in the classroom featured in this study.

**social contract:** The contract is established by coming to a consensus about the ways that people in a class want to be treated (Gossen, 2008). Common beliefs are identified so that children who make a mistake in terms of their treatment of others can be reminded that his or her behaviour does not correspond to the beliefs that everyone has agreed upon. For example, an adult might ask, *What do we believe about keeping our classroom safe for everyone?* And *Do you believe that?*

**my job/your job:** In this activity the students and the teachers clearly outline and record their expectations of one another and also identify what is *not* included in their jobs or roles.
When conducting this activity, it is also important to seek the belief behind the roles, asking students why we have these expectations of one another (Gossen, 2008). The activity may culminate in a poster that can be referred to when either students or teachers do not seem to be fulfilling their role as agreed.

**basic needs:** Gossen draws on Glasser's (1998) choice theory, formerly known as control theory, to identify human four basic human needs as *love* or *belonging*, *power* or *competency*, *fun*, and *freedom*. Once the students understand these needs and know that everyone tries to have their needs met, they can understand behaviour as an attempt to meet needs. Gossen (2008) then advised that we help students distinguish between behaviour that meets their needs in a way that is compatible with individual and community beliefs (up and clean) or in a way that is not (down and dirty). The healing conversation can then extend naturally to generating ideas for behaviour that meets personal needs in a prosocial way.

**down and dirty:** This phrase refers to fulfilling personal needs in an inappropriate way, for example calling out in class to get the teacher's attention and satisfy a need for belonging.

In contrast, the phrase **up and clean** refers to fulfilling needs in an appropriate way.

**up and clean:** This refers to fulfilling your needs in an appropriate way, for example reading a book independently to satisfy a need for power (competency) or freedom.

**make Restitution:** In order for students to fix their mistakes and turn them into learning opportunities, they need to make Restitution, for example, a child who knocked down a block tower might offer to help the other child rebuild the tower. Also part of making Restitution is making a plan for the future to prevent the mistake from continuing to happen (Gossen, 2008).
**person I want to be:** This phrase refers to a routine for helping students transition to being internally motivated by asking them to reflect on and define what kind of person they want to be. The phrase can also be a prompt for self-reflection when an adult or classmate asks someone if they are being the kind of person that they want to be in any given moment.

**quality world:** The vision of the person the student wants to be fits into the quality world the student wants for themselves and the people they care about (Gossen, 2008).
Acknowledgements

This thesis was a collaborative effort that involved many individuals in various capacities. Dr. Willow Brown worked with me tirelessly and helped me cultivate my moral purpose and organize my ideas so my passion could be shared in a meaningful way. This thesis would not have been possible without the dedication and mentorship of my thesis committee members: Dr. Verna McDonald, Ms. Rheanna Robinson, and Dr. Blanca Schorcht and I am also grateful for the contribution of my external examiner, Dr. Kristen Guest. Working with these knowledgeable individuals enhanced this project and helped to guide my journey.

I am grateful to be able to live and learn on traditional Sinixt territory, and for the support for this study provided by School District #20, acknowledging that their teachers have a voice to share. Thank you to all of my students past and present, and for all you teach me.

It is also an honor to acknowledge my first teachers, Gary, Kim, and Carlo. This journey began with your lessons of open-mindedness. Dad, thank you for the care that you have always dedicated to my education. Mom, thank you for listening with more than just your ears. Without the support of my husband, Nick, my thesis would not have arrived at this final stage. Thank you for the hours spent side-by-side in the library and your belief that I had something meaningful to share. Thank you to Vern, Loni, and Judi for all your encouragement and support. Finally, I would like to extend my most heartfelt gratitude to Ms. R.. – without your willingness and thoughtful reflection this project would have never happened. I aspire to be the kind of teacher you are and it was an honor to learn with you.
Chapter I: A Need for Indigenous Knowledge

Scholars have documented the failure of public education in Canada to serve the needs of First Nations youth. “British Columbia schools have not been successful in ensuring that Aboriginal students receive a quality education, one that allows these students to succeed in the larger economy while maintaining ties to their culture.” (Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement, BC Ministry of Education, n.d.). As Battiste (2002) has asserted, “educators who acknowledge the continuing problems of Aboriginal retention and recidivism in Eurocentric schools have been trying to determine why Eurocentric educational systems fail Aboriginal students” (p.16). Battiste also described how the system failure might be due, in part, to Eurocentric schooling ignoring Indigenous knowledge.

Possible solutions for the failure that targeted First Nations students and the generations to follow could be valuing and including Indigenous knowledge in schools (Battiste, 2002). “Indigenous knowledge is now seen as an educational remedy that will empower Aboriginal students if applications of their Indigenous knowledge, heritage, and languages are integrated into the Canadian educational system” (Battiste, 2002, p. 9). Although some educators have responded to this recommendation with more culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2010), others have lacked the knowledge, skills, or confidence to implement a culturally responsive solution. Many educators and their students may benefit from instructional resources that show how an Aboriginal Worldview can be incorporated into daily life in the classroom.

Leavitt (1995) argued that spiritual beliefs and legends of Aboriginal people should not be treated as artifacts in the classroom in attempts to increase cultural content. As an alternative to an isolated unit of study on First Nations peoples, Leavitt recommended, “classroom teachers…use the social, cognitive and linguistic aspects of Native culture” (p.127). However,
these suggestions for improving cultural content lack the detailed information and specific methods a classroom teacher, particularly a non-Aboriginal one, would need to incorporate Aboriginal culture or traditions into the daily operation of a classroom. In some cases, it may even be inappropriate for a non-Aboriginal person to be sharing cultural information (Kavanagh 2006).

Kirkness (1992) described the potential positive effects of teachers' willingness to incorporate Aboriginal Worldview in their classrooms and referred to the necessity of an education relevant to the philosophy of Aboriginal people. Kirkness paraphrased a First Nations parent description of an ideal education system: *one where the children learn to be proud of who they are and where they come from.* The parents that Kirkness worked with believed that students at school should be able to build on the early lessons learned at home that emphasize self-reliance, respect for personal freedom, generosity, and respect for nature and wisdom. He highlighted the importance of First Nations children having an opportunity to develop a value system in school that is compatible with their Aboriginal culture.

However, one reason that non-First Nations teachers may fail to include Aboriginal culture effectively in their teaching could be that recommendations for implementation are too general for them to follow without specific cultural knowledge. Teachers' responses to calls for increased attention to Aboriginal culture may be to have students complete stereotypical "craft projects," such as colouring pictures or building models of totem poles or teepees without reflection. Outdated information and limited time to seek or create new resources may also inhibit the integration of Aboriginal content. Some teachers may feel uncomfortable with the content or be discouraged by the risk of offending or being disrespectful to First Nations groups. As Kavanagh (2006) cautioned, teachers should "demonstrate their commitment to incorporating
the language and culture into their classrooms, but it is also very important to pursue this issue sensibly” (p.27). Fearing that they lack this sensitivity, non-Aboriginal teachers who respect Aboriginal culture but have little personal experience of it may become cautious and unwilling to try to bring Aboriginal perspectives into their classrooms.

Research Questions

A progression of compelling questions and a spiral of previous inquiry (Halbert, Kaser, & Koehn, 2011) led to my primary research question for this study:

*How can a Restitution curriculum that emphasizes an Aboriginal worldview be designed to help teachers feel better equipped to create culturally affirming classrooms for Aboriginal students?*

From the primary question, related questions emerged to focus my observations and guide my analysis:

1. *If the curriculum is successful, what specific aspects do teachers find beneficial for all students? For Aboriginal students? What evidence do they draw on to make that judgment?*

2. *What changes in the participating teachers' beliefs and practices are likely to be sustained, as a result of teaching this curriculum?*

3. *How can the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum be improved?*

Integrating Restitution and Learning Journeys

One structured and accessible approach to teaching Aboriginal students in a more inclusive, culturally responsive way is *Restitution* (Gossen, 1998). Restitution is a program of *restorative practices* (Brown & Gossen, 2011) designed by Diane Gossen (1998) to restructure school discipline toward student self-management that is based more on shared beliefs or values
than the obligation to follow rules. The program provides a framework for teachers to shift their emphasis from punishment to counseling students who do harm to others, and on restoring the identities, relationships, and sense of value to the community for offending students. Even before any harm has occurred or needs to be addressed, proactive development of shared beliefs among students builds the classroom community as a positive learning environment. Restitution training and materials for teachers provides the support teachers need to internalize the approach and apply it creatively to new problems or contexts.

Gossen (1998) developed Restitution as a specific approach to counseling children and youth after she observed First Nations Elders counseling incarcerated Aboriginal youth (Brown & Gossen, 2011). When practicing Restitution, a teacher helps students remember the shared beliefs that a class has established to guide their treatment of one another. Taking time to establish and reaffirm these beliefs helps to create the conditions in which a student who has caused harm to others or to the community can make amends for a mistake and return to the group with his or her positive view of self strengthened. Restitution appears compatible with an Aboriginal worldview because of its focus on maintaining and restoring relationships as well as its emphasis on counseling rather than punishing a student who has caused harm. The view of respect is also compatible with Aboriginal values of personal freedom: with Restitution, students are respected and supported in their ability to make choices based on their own internal values, as opposed to being disrespected by external control (Brown & Gossen, 2011).

However, when Restitution is presented in workshops for teachers, its compatibility with First Nations perspectives is not always clear. I believe that the language and strategies of Restitution would be embraced if more teachers understood how traditional Aboriginal thinking could empower students to manage themselves. Further, there is potential in this restorative
approach to answer Battiste's (2002) call for Indigenous knowledge and heritage and Leavitt's (1995) recommendations that integration of Aboriginal knowledge in classrooms focus on social processes rather than Aboriginal stories as literature only. With greater emphasis on the Aboriginal worldview underlying Restitution, introducing the concepts and applying them consistently to school relationships could address the calls made by Kirkness (1992). Here is the potential for a value system that helps all students, especially First Nations students, feel proud of who they are and regain that pride when they have made a mistake.

For me, this study has confirmed that highlighting the Aboriginal relevance of Restitution and integrating it with Aboriginal stories for teaching values (for example, Learning Journeys, BC School District #20, 2003) has potential to enrich social understandings and build community in a classroom. A specific curriculum or series of lessons to do this may be the resource needed to support teachers, particularly non-Aboriginal teachers, who are searching for authentic ways to honour Aboriginal knowledge in their classrooms. The story of the trial implementation of these lessons in one classroom may give teachers a clear picture of the challenges and benefits of such an approach and inspire them to adapt this curriculum for their own students. If the lessons described in this study are not relevant for another grade level or location, I envision that my story of their design and implementation may still be inspiring. Teachers may be inspired to continue their own search for authentic ways to bring the benefits of Aboriginal values to their approach to healthy individual and classroom community development. Perhaps they will also be inspired to act as classroom and community allies for Aboriginal children and their families.

**Purpose of the Study**

The overall purpose of this study is to design, implement, and refine a series of lessons or
Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview, to support teachers as they incorporate Aboriginal approaches to self-management in their classrooms. In this study, I initially designed six lessons of a Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview Curriculum (Appendix D) and then collaborated with my participant, Ms. R., to implement the curriculum reflectively in her grade one and two class. Through the reflection and afterward, we modified and adjusted the lessons for this group of students and their teacher. In the final stage of the study, I share the revised curriculum in a form that may be useful to other teachers. I also share the story of our delivery of the lessons and reflect on what we have learned through the inquiry process.

Inquiry Method

My method for the study was professional inquiry, informed by the cycles of action and reflection drawn from the traditions of action research methodology (Brown & Cherkowski, 2011). The study was conducted in three stages that can be described as the steps in a complete inquiry cycle: learning for practice, learning in practice, and learning from practice (Townsend & Adams, 2002). In the first stage, my focus was on learning for practice by conducting my literature review and designing the lessons or curriculum. The term integrative design process was coined for this study to describe my approach to designing lessons that integrated Restitution with the Learning Journeys (BC School District #20, 2003) program of Aboriginal animal stories used in our district’s Kindergarten classes. Further integration occurred as I considered, for my design, how the lessons would convey the principles of an Aboriginal worldview, as described by a collaboration of Elders from across North America in The Sacred Tree (Bopp, Bopp, Brown, & Lane, 1989) and other readings. In the second stage, I focused, with my teacher collaborator, on learning in practice by implementing the curriculum in her grade one and two classroom and reflecting on and revising the lessons in response to our observations of how
students responded. Finally, in the last stage I focused on learning from practice, with a final revision of the curriculum as well as an overall reflection on both the design process and the action and reflection cycles of implementation.

In the tradition of action research, a practice-focused professional inquiry was the most suitable method for addressing an authentic problem or need and for attempting to improve social conditions. The need was for teachers to have support to incorporate Aboriginal Worldview in their classrooms and the ultimate outcome that I envisioned would be that Aboriginal children would have a more positive school experience. The method for this study meets two key requirements for action research, in that it both produces knowledge and seeks to improve social conditions through empowerment (Greenwood & Levin, 1998). However, the method for this study is more specifically identified as professional inquiry because the knowledge is created by educators, for educators, as a result of professional moral purpose regarding the quality of learning and of life opportunities for every student. Although the study involved collaboration among teachers, it does not qualify as participative action research because students did not participate in the study beyond their usual engagement in lessons. In professional inquiry, students may become empowered indirectly, when their teachers' learning leads to more equitable learning opportunities for them. Teachers are empowered in that they are taking on a role of creating knowledge for themselves rather than merely implementing solutions designed by others (Brown & Cherkowski, 2011).

Several authors (for example, Holly, Arhar, & Kasten, 2005; Sagor, 2000) have written about action research for teachers, which Creswell (2005) identifies as practical action research. This study could be identified as practical action research, conducted by a professional to solve a problem in practice as well as in the community – the BC educational context for Aboriginal
students. Practical action research is distinct from participative action research common in other fields because it has less of a community development orientation and is conducted by professionals themselves. However, use of the term professional inquiry makes a stronger claim that teachers and principals have the right or even the obligation to inquire or to ask questions of practice and to contribute knowledge to others in their profession. In professional inquiry, it is the educators as researchers who are empowered by the process, rather than community members participating with a university researcher (Brown & Cherkowski, 2011). This claim is empowering for educators because traditionally, the function of creating knowledge for others has been limited to university researchers. Other benefits of the term professional inquiry include acknowledgement that: a) educators other than teachers may participate, b) the investigation is not limited to a focus on one’s own practice, and c) the study may include but is not limited to cycles of action and reflection.

This study added a dimension to the forms of professional inquiry described by Brown and Cherkowski (2011) because, in the first stage of the study, the focus was on design. Thus, design-based inquiry to develop a curriculum, instructional strategy, or teaching resource can be added to action-based and data or information-based inquiry as appropriate forms for teacher exploration. Although the second and third stages of this study were action-based, the first stage was design-based, in that a new product or strategy, a series of lessons, was synthesized or created. In the typology of practical action research data collection techniques described by Mills (as cited in Creswell, 1995), the process of design is noticeably absent from experiencing, enquiring, and examining.

The combination of design and action-based inquiry used in this study to improve social conditions in the classroom and beyond addresses the concerns of Indigenous scholars, who note
a "focus on negative aspects of life, identified by outside researchers" (Wilson, 2008, p. 16).

From the dominant culture's perspective, researchers often identify problems and call for further study (Wilson, 2008). Progress is stalled when Indigenous "problems" are studied rather than worked on with a focus on finding solutions. In this study, I have contributed a response to a call by Indigenous researchers for alternate curriculum for Aboriginal learners. I have drawn on my experience and belief system as well as the published literature to understand and honour an Aboriginal worldview in the curriculum that I have developed. Finally, I have tested the curriculum in a classroom with a teaching partner, to ensure that the lessons are classroom-ready and that they have potential to build teachers' confidence for incorporating an Aboriginal worldview in their classrooms.

Benefits and limitations of professional inquiry. As a qualitative study, the benefits of professional inquiry are that it is a richly detailed examination that is sensitive to context. It is worth noting that this type of study cannot be prescriptive for other teachers or schools, although the new understandings gained here may be useful for teachers who have experienced similar problems or needs and the curriculum that was designed may be adopted, preferably with an inquiry mindset (Kaser & Halbert, 2009). In such cases, I hope that the way I have described my participation in cycles of action and reflection inspires others to use this study as a starting point for their own inquiry.

In this study, I have documented the benefits and difficulties of designing, implementing, and refining an integrated curriculum, as perceived by me as I collaborated with one other teacher in her grade one and two classroom. I had hoped to lead a collaborative inquiry with a group of teacher participants to bring multiple perspectives to the learning. However, the small size of the school district and the requirement that teacher collaborators be willing to implement
the curriculum in their classrooms were factors that may have limited the number of volunteers. I chose to continue the study with just one volunteer participant and our close partnership provided an opportunity for focused, intense, and meaningful reflection. Throughout our cycles of inquiry, my partner and I reflected together on our changing attitudes and levels of confidence. In the overall reflection that concludes the study, I considered whether the curriculum development and implementation process led to new or deeper convictions that would likely lead to sustainable changes in teaching practice (Fullan, 2007; Brown & Cherkowski, 2011). In this way, the study is an act of self-leadership, designed to generate personal professional learning. However, it is also an act of leading others whose thinking and teaching practice may be influenced as we share our process of modeling a spiral of inquiry related to Indigenous student success as the main focus.

**Parameters of the study.** This study was conducted in one elementary classroom with grade one and two students who had worked with me the year before, in Kindergarten, on the Learning Journeys (BC School District #20, 2003) curriculum. I developed the draft *Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview* curriculum for this study based on the principles of Restitution (1998) and the stories from Learning Journeys. Ms. R. began implementation of the newly integrated curriculum in the fall of 2012 and lessons were taught weekly, for twelve weeks, during the period designated for the Health and Career curriculum (BC Ministry of Education, 2006). After each lesson a poster was displayed to remind students of the content from Learning Journeys – the animal that had been introduced and the strength symbolized by each animal. The teacher continued to use the language of Restitution (Gossen, 1996) and Learning Journeys programs throughout the week and asked the children to remember the animal strengths, as needed. I was contracted to work in Ms. R.’s class twice a week for 40-minute periods and I also volunteered
on occasion. This time in the classroom allowed me to use the language of the *Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview* curriculum with the students to reinforce the ideas. The focus of the study was on data related to teacher perceptions that were developed and revealed in our reflective conversations. The knowledge we created may be limited by our self-awareness and experience as well as the topics we introduced for discussion. Not all of the casual conversations that took place over the school day could be recorded, although I captured insights from less formal conversations in my journal.

**Ethics processes and considerations.** In accordance with the ethical requirements of the university, support for this study was obtained from the school district superintendent (see Appendix A). The university Research Ethics Board (REB) reviewed the proposal for the study (see Appendix B). The participant Information Letter and Consent Form letter made it clear to my inquiry partner that her participation in the study was voluntary and that she could withdraw at any time. She was also assured of anonymity and that data pertaining to our work together would be stored safely, would be destroyed after a period of time, and would not be used for any purpose other than what was described in the Information Letter.

However, ethical considerations for this study went beyond the requirements of school district approval and review by a university ethics board. Although these approvals were requested and granted, additional standards for ethical behaviour came from the principles of Indigenous research methodology. As a non-Indigenous teacher, I realize that I am in a unique position in Aboriginal education. My goal is to be seen as an ally (Avayzian, 1995) for Aboriginal people in their struggle for empowerment. However, it has been made clear through personal experiences and the literature (Wilson, 2008) that my role must be tentative and peripheral. In order to gain credibility and be seen as trustworthy, I must include Aboriginal
authors as the authorities on the topics of Indigenous knowledge, methodology, and worldview. Although this study does not make me an authority on incorporating an Aboriginal worldview in the classroom, it does allow me to contribute my voice and my experiences to a conversation on the topic. In the tradition of a talking circle, I offer the limited state of my knowledge at this time to the community of educators who seek to provide equitable access to opportunity for each student.

My inquiry spiral. In qualitative research, it is important to identify one's own background and biases, or personal location, because the researcher is considered the research instrument; biases or values cannot be eliminated but they should be acknowledged. In professional inquiry, which can be categorized as a form of qualitative research, the investigation of a question is often situated within a spiral of inquiry (Halbert, Kaser, & Koehn, 2011) that should be acknowledged so readers can follow the development of the researcher's understanding, convictions, and commitments (Brown & Cherkowski, 2011) and evaluate their trustworthiness and their relevance for other situations.

However, in both professional inquiry and in Indigenous research methods, the researchers’ subjectivity or personal history and perspective are not as much a difficulty to overcome as a unique feature to enrich the study. Sustainable change, the purpose of professional inquiry, occurs when the change has meaning (Fullan, 2007) for the educators involved. Therefore, it follows that a change in practice that corresponds to personal moral purpose and values will be more likely to last.

In Indigenous research, meaning is also important and related to concepts of identity within a social setting. Wilson (2008) explained the relational quality of our existence: “I think that is a real foundational thing, to say who I am. Who I am is where I’m from, and my
relationships” (p.80). Emphasis on relational perspectives is essential to an Aboriginal worldview and important for non-Aboriginal researchers who respect this worldview by attending to Indigenous research methodology. Wilson also (2008) cautioned that readers must be able to comprehend the writer’s beliefs. Therefore, in order to situate this research, it is important for me to articulate my beliefs about Aboriginal education, the role that non-Aboriginal teachers can play, and the meaning that the work I have embarked on in this study has for me.

To heed the cautions of qualitative research methodology as well as to enrich the trustworthiness of my personal voice in relaying the story of this study, the following sections outline how Restitution came to have meaning for me as a way to address urgent issues in Aboriginal education. These sections describe my thinking prior to this study and note other questions that I have investigated as well as some of the literature that I believe is relevant. Perhaps this background information about my spiral of inquiry will make the study more meaningful for readers as it resonates with or calls into question their own beliefs.

**My Interest in Aboriginal Education**

In my undergraduate program at the University of Victoria I enrolled in an Aboriginal Education course. I was ready to learn practical and useful ways to serve the needs of Aboriginal students and was excited that this was a required course. Because I grew up in the small community of Tofino with a high population of Nuu-chah-nulth people, I knew that the needs of Aboriginal students were great. Even as a young child I saw how the school system failed to create the conditions for many of my First Nations classmates to succeed in school and graduate. At the time I did not understand the multiple factors that created the circumstances but I could see the injustice in the system.
I was surprised to find that many of my classmates at the University of Victoria did not appear to have the same enthusiasm about the Aboriginal Education course. Some did not believe the course would be relevant and others made comments that revealed their prejudice against Aboriginal people. Several students expressed the sentiment that the course had not equipped them to help Aboriginal students and had left them feeling inadequately prepared. After taking the course, a few colleagues, including myself, believed that without an understanding of protocol or a complete appreciation of each of the hundreds of different groups of First Nations people, it might be wiser not to do anything rather than to do something wrong or disrespectful.

As I considered these issues, a myriad of critical and complex questions surrounding Aboriginal education occurred to me. What is Aboriginal education? Who should teach Aboriginal education? Is there a space for non-Aboriginal teachers in Aboriginal education? Should curriculum related to specific Aboriginal cultures be taught? How should pan-indigenousness be avoided? Is teaching an Aboriginal-focused curriculum beneficial for students from all backgrounds? These are difficult questions with important implications. However, the current needs of Aboriginal students ignited my sense of moral purpose as an educator and inspired me to work toward equity and equality for all students (Kaser & Halbert, 2009) by focusing on my own role and on making a unique contribution.

My earlier fear of making mistakes and contributing naively to the problem had led me to an inquiry that I completed as my undergraduate studies culminating project, in which I asked, Is there a space for non-Indigenous teachers in Indigenous education? My inquiry involved interviewing people in the University of Victoria who were either Aboriginal or worked closely with Aboriginal people in education, and analyzing those interviews in light of readings. People agreed that, of necessity, there could be a role for non-Aboriginal educators but that Aboriginal
educators would always be preferred. What I realized is, however, is that non-Aboriginal people could be seen as allies.

In order to be an ally, the consistent message was that non-Indigenous teachers would have to assume the principles of Aboriginal Worldview. What also became clear was that no one was able to articulate precisely what a teacher could do to assume a worldview that was not his or her lived experience. I struggled with how to present the information generated by my inquiry because of my educational background in a program that expected precise and specific knowledge. To clarify my understanding, I decided to present the findings of my inquiry to my colleagues by telling a story I had written.

The story was about a little girl who tried to teach a bird to fly. She went on a journey to ask various people how to teach the bird. The answers she received were often unspecific or steeped in metaphor. Sometimes the advice did not seem relevant to the question of how to teach the bird. At the end of the story, the girl came to understand that there was no formula, no exact rules, and no specific solution. However, she could become an ally for the bird. She realized that she had been trying to teach the bird something it already knew and instead she should have been encouraging the bird to use the knowledge within.

This inquiry left me with more questions so I decided, in September of 2010, to pursue a Masters degree. In 2011, while on leave from my Masters, I participated in a British Columbia Teachers Federation (BCTF) inquiry group working on differentiating instruction for Aboriginal students. I took this opportunity to continue my spiral of inquiry but instead of asking whether there was space for me in Aboriginal education, I began with the intention to develop myself as an ally for Aboriginal students, using the two programs featured in this study – Restitution and Learning Journeys. I looked for compatibility with Aboriginal Worldview by incorporating
Restitution as my primary discipline practice, noting the children's responses in my journal. I taught about animals and their symbolic strengths from the Learning Journeys program. This cycle in my spiral of inquiry allowed me to become familiar with both programs and I began to see the possibilities for integrating and extending their content, so that the animal stories, like the Restitution lessons, could be applied throughout the day as life lessons about regulating one's own behaviour.

This study is the current stage in my spiral of inquiry. All of my preceding inquiries led to my comfort level offering to facilitate inquiry for and with others. The classroom teaching that occurred during my BCTF inquiry also enabled me to describe, for Ms. R., my own experiences with implementing Restitution and Learning Journeys the year before and to offer some advice. As this study drew to a close, plans are underway to continue the spiral of inquiry with Ms. R. in a Network of Inquiry and Innovation (NOII) (Kaser & Halbert, 2012) project over the 2013-2014 school year. We plan to continue this investigation within a teachers' network that is structured to develop and share knowledge and transform teaching and learning in British Columbia. The NOII mantra, "Every learner crossing the stage with dignity, purpose and options" (Halbert & Kaser, 2012, homepage) will address our moral purpose as we strive to create a more welcoming environment for all students but particularly for Aboriginal learners.

My Interest in Restitution

In order to learn to incorporate an Aboriginal perspective in the classroom, a perspective that was not part of my own lived experience as a non-Aboriginal teacher, I knew I would have to find a framework, program, or resource to help me. I also wondered if there were existing programs that correlated with traditional Aboriginal teachings. Although I had been introduced to Restitution (Gossen, 1998) in 2007, it was not until I learned more about traditional teachings
of Aboriginal peoples across Canada through readings and research that I saw the strength of the relationship between Restitution and an Aboriginal worldview. By the time I designed this study, I was compelled to investigate how Restitution could be a means to incorporate an authentic Aboriginal Worldview into the social dynamics of an elementary school classroom.

My introduction to Restitution went back to my teacher education, when I held the position of Education Students’ Association Workshop Coordinator. My role was to arrange for workshops that fulfilled a need that was not being met by the teacher education program. Pre-service teachers continually requested a classroom management or discipline procedure that could be implemented kindergarten to grade twelve. A presenter approached me offering a workshop that dealt with these concerns. The presenter advertised the session as a behaviour workshop and presented ideas on Restitution. The ideas appealed to me but it was difficult to know where to begin applying them. It seemed that at that time, my understanding was not deep enough to know where to start putting the ideas into practice.

After graduation, I had the opportunity to work in various schools in BC School District #57 in Prince George, and a few of these schools practiced Restitution. My observations there led me to read Diane Gossen’s (1996, 2006) books on Restitution. In 2010, I had the opportunity to attend a Restitution workshop presented by Diane Gossen herself. This workshop solidified for me the ideas that I had read in the books and I began to envision practicing Restitution in my own classroom.

In 2011, I purchased the Elementary Restitution kit (Chelsom Consultants, n.d.) that had been mentioned at the workshop. The kit included a series of DVD’s that further explained and detailed the process of Restitution as well as possible scenarios with students and ways to approach them. The kit also provided sample activities, lessons, and workbooks. Unfortunately
for me, many of these lessons were directed at students older than Kindergarten and grades one and two. However, the lessons did provide information on potential ways to differentiate the information for younger students and how to translate the concepts into child-friendly language.

As I sought to learn more about Restitution in my first few years of teaching, it became clear to me that many of its concepts and procedures are compatible with the traditional Aboriginal teachings that I became familiar with growing up in a Nuu-Chah-Nulth community. Therefore, I came to believe that Restitution may be an effective way for teachers to bring Aboriginal worldview to their classrooms, not just in isolated pockets of content but woven throughout the day in a way that people relate to each other. As Battiste (2002) explained, “what is required in First Nations education is research that moves beyond rule-based learning and considers life-long learning” (p.16). I was curious about exploring the potential of Restitution to contribute to lifelong learning about how people can manage their own emotions and behaviours and learn to live in a way that is consistent with their personal values and those of their community.

My Beliefs

As a result of my experiences with Aboriginal culture, issues in Aboriginal education, and Restitution, I have come to believe that as a non-Indigenous person, I do have a place in Aboriginal education. I see my role as an ally and facilitator whose confidence is supported by ongoing inquiry and collaboration with First Nations people. Although I am not an Aboriginal person, I believe that aspects of my personal worldview, beliefs, and values are compatible with an Aboriginal worldview, at least to the extent that I am open to understanding and valuing an Aboriginal perspective on pedagogy, not just for Aboriginal students but for all students.

In traditional Aboriginal child rearing practices the whole child was addressed and
mistakes were learning opportunities. For example, Chief Luther Standing Bear, of the Teton Sioux (Nerburn, 1999) explained that there were no apologies in the Lakota language. When someone caused inconvenience or harm, the word “mistake” was spoken and that was enough to show that what happened was unintentional. In a traditional Aboriginal setting, the interconnectedness of everyone and everything was acknowledged, the natural world was respected, and stories were the mode of teaching (Archibald, 1995; Bopp, Bopp, Brown, & Lane, 1989; Kavanagh, 2006). These are a few of the aspects that I consider essential to my practice as a teacher. However, a great challenge in my teaching career, perhaps familiar to Aboriginal teachers, is that I must function successfully within the confines of a Eurocentric education system without compromising my beliefs. In the public school system, teachers are expected to omit spirituality from their teaching, refrain from taking nature walks without consent forms, and address the social and emotional needs of more than twenty students without usurping their parents’ role in teaching values.

Wilson (2008) has shown that the credibility of the ancient knowledge valued by Indigenous people is in doubt when viewed through the dominant society's perspective and understanding. Considering Wilson’s (2008) recommendation that the nature of our research has impact on the rest of our lives, it has been important for me to internalize Aboriginal knowledge. Because of my personal experiences in the classroom and the world, I have embraced the tenets of an Aboriginal worldview. I am continually seeking to expand that understanding and enact it in the curriculum and management of my classroom. As a result of previous inquiries, I have acquired the conviction that an Aboriginal worldview is valuable knowledge that is useful and effective in the classroom. This personal relationship to Aboriginal worldview has meant that my research has carried over into my daily life, as Wilson argued it should. Although I am not
Aboriginal, I can align my study with some of the principles of Indigenous Research.

The Context of Aboriginal Education

The issue of educational institutions ignoring Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy is grounded in a history of colonialism and the effects of residential schools (Battiste, 2002). There were two forms of genocide committed by the colonizers, both the intentional and the unintentional. The colonial education system has failed to educate Aboriginal children adequately (Haig-Brown, 1988). With the education system in dire need of action, agencies have been working over the past thirty years studying and describing the issues in Aboriginal Education. Teachers who are in a position to serve the needs of Aboriginal students in British Columbia need clear practical solutions that can be implemented in the classroom. Additionally, Battiste (2002) outlined how institutions responsible for teacher education have made the mistake of treating Indigenous knowledge as cross-cultural education. As a result teachers are not always well prepared to engage Aboriginal students specifically.

Local History of the Sinixt People

School District 20 is situated in the Slocan Valley in the West Kootenays. British Columbia has numerous reservations and diverse First Nations. With the rapid growth of First Nations populations in BC, it is unusual to find an area without a significant Aboriginal population. However, School District #20 does not have an Aboriginal reserve within its boundaries and only 12% of the student population are Aboriginal (School District No.20, 2011-2012). Many of the Aboriginal families are from other regions in BC and in Canada.

The local Aboriginal people, the Sinixt, have a long history in the area where school district #20 is located. Archeologists have uncovered communities of Pit Houses in the Slocan Valley, which were traditional subterranean dwellings that allowed for geothermal heat to
minimize the need for fires. Because these people lived in the river valleys with a plentiful food supply, they were able to develop advanced technologies and a thriving culture (Woffenden, 2008). With the European occupation came the infamous treaties and confusion surrounding ownership of the land. As in most areas entered by the colonizers, there was little understanding of the Indigenous peoples of the area and many mistaken assumptions were made.

After living in the Arrow Lakes and Slocan valley for more than five thousand years, the Sinixt peoples were declared extinct in 1956 by the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs (Woffenden, 2008). This extinct status was a result of a complex history of displacement, proximity to the United States, and treaty agreements. Although the Canadian government views the Sinixt as extinct, there can be little debate about the occupation of the area in the past. There are archeological records showing the inhabitation of the Sinixt peoples from around 3500 to 5000 years ago (Woffenden, 2008).

The displacement of Sinixt resulted from their traditional movement in the area. They did not acknowledge the British and American claims over them and attempted to live their lives as though the border did not exist. The discovery of gold in the area interrupted the main salmon fishery of the Sinixt and contributed to instability (Woffenden, 2008). Without a reserve established in Canada and with continued conflict with the colonizers, the Sinixt were drawn to their southern territories even more and were frequently identified as American. Degraded by disease and industries that had stripped away the wilderness and wildlife they had depended upon, the Sinixt of the Slocan Valley became a severely decimated population.

Even in present day there is debate and confusion regarding to whom the territory belongs. The Shuswap, for example, claim the Arrow Lakes as part of their traditional territory (Woffenden, 2008). The confusion was perpetuated by government agents who were mistaken
about who the Lakes people were. Many were considered Colville (USA) Indians and therefore were granted no territory or rights in Canada. As the Sinixt people were displaced to the south, their cultural traditions and language were dying with the aging adult populations.

To emphasize an important point through repetition, a key understanding about the context of Aboriginal life in this area is that the Sinixt Lakes Indians were declared extinct in 1956, although there were still Sinixt people living in the area. This is the complicated history and the reality that the Aboriginal people of the area face today. This context is vital in understanding the school districts’ approach to Aboriginal education.

The School District and School Context

In 2008, School District # 20 gathered a committee, *The Aboriginal Committee on Education* (ACE), which included representation from the school district and representatives of the Aboriginal communities (Kootenay-Columbia School District # 20, 2008). The ACE created the *Kootenay-Columbia Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement*. The purposes of the agreement, outlined by the Provincial Government, were to improve Aboriginal students’ achievement; enhance all students’ understanding of Aboriginal culture, history and language; improve cross-cultural education; and enhance Aboriginal parents’ sense of belonging within the schools (Kootenay-Columbia School District No. 20, 2008). In the Aboriginal Enhancement document there are yearly updates on the achievement of the goals. The June, 2012, update explained the expansion, of the Aboriginal Support Worker team, a team that is divided among the schools in the district to support students and their families of Aboriginal ancestry. Also, the update included a directive that the Learning Journeys series is to be taught in all Kindergarten classrooms. (This update indicated that not all classes had previously received the program.)

The first goal outlined by the ACE was to have Aboriginal students perform at acceptable
standards. The district described how they would track the performance through Foundational Skills Assessment test results, exams, and graduation rates. The second goal was to "improve Aboriginal students' knowledge of Aboriginal languages" (Kootenay-Columbia School District No. 20, 2008, p.10). The third and final goal was to improve all students' knowledge of culture and history of Aboriginal peoples. In order to accomplish this goal, when it was initially proposed, the ACE decided that a there would be an Aboriginal Culture and History booklet for Primary students. In the 2010 update the ACE decided to track the students' Aboriginal cultural experiences.

The well-intentioned ACE document offered general ways to accomplish the goal of improved achievement for Aboriginal students but lacked a direct or explicit approach. In the Aboriginal Enhancement agreement the committee outlined how to accomplish the goal by involving staff, parents, guardians, grandparents and community members and approaching academic success in a holistic manner with sensitivity to the physical, social, spiritual and emotional needs of Aboriginal Learners. The document called for community members to teach language and create language books (Kootenay-Columbia School District # 20, 2008, p.8).

In the school where this study was conducted, there was a dedicated Aboriginal support worker, who facilitated a lunch club three days a week with the Aboriginal girls in the school. The support worker also provided in-class academic assistance and support. However, after working in this school for two years, I had not observed the involvement of Aboriginal community members, the creation of language books, or specific strategies to support Aboriginal success in a holistic manner.

The elementary school had 215 students enrolled in kindergarten through grade seven. The school population was socio-economically diverse, with many of the students coming from
varied family structures and lower income families. The school had seen an increase in the amount of transient students and many students are bussed to school. Approximately 9% of the students were identified as special needs students and were on Individual Education Plans. Twelve percent were of Aboriginal descent. The district and school did not ask Aboriginal students for their specific Nation and so this information was not available. The Aboriginal Education support worker was at the school three days a week and was the only teacher identified as having Aboriginal ancestry.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this study was to design, implement, and refine a curriculum or series of lessons to help teachers increase their knowledge of Aboriginal teachings and their confidence sharing them as part of a more culturally affirming classroom. I began this chapter by presenting a rationale for including Indigenous knowledge as part of a school curriculum that would better serve Aboriginal students, with recommendations from Battiste (2002), Leavitt (1995) and Kirkness (1992). I suggested that non-Aboriginal teachers may feel unprepared to follow this advice and would find it helpful to see an example of such a curriculum as well as learn about the challenges and benefits of its implementation in an actual classroom. I planned to contribute to teachers’ confidence to incorporate Aboriginal knowledge in their classrooms by designing a curriculum that emphasizes Restitution (Gossen, 1998, 2004, 2006) as compatible with an Aboriginal worldview. To enrich these lessons with the storytelling approach of Indigenous pedagogy and to honour local First Nations knowledge, I integrated Restitution lessons with the Learning Journeys (BC School District #20, 2003) lessons provided for all Kindergarten classrooms in my school district.

I clarified the purpose of the research and the questions that focused my data collection
and analysis. I provided a brief rationale for the professional inquiry method that I used to address the research. I noted the benefits and limitations of this method as well as the parameters of the study and the ethical considerations, including the importance of drawing on the work of Aboriginal researchers and authors.

As further background for the study, corresponding to advice for qualitative research, professional inquiry, and Indigenous research, I described the long-term interests in Aboriginal education and Restitution that led me to believe I had a meaningful contribution to make by designing this curriculum and sharing it publicly. Finally, I provided information on the local Aboriginal context where this study was conducted, including the historical marginalization and oppression of the local First Nation, the Sinixt. This context gives the study relevance and meaning by showing how a culturally inclusive curriculum is of crucial importance to local First Nations students, who have seen their culture not only devalued but also declared extinct.

However, as is illustrated by this study and classroom implementation of Restitution elsewhere, (Gossen & Anderson, 1995) a belief or values-based system to support student self-management has potential benefits for all students.
Chapter II: Literature Review

For professional inquiry, the literature review inspires trust that the author has investigated current understandings of the topic before beginning an informed course of action. In this literature review I considered the current issues surrounding Aboriginal education, I proposed Restitution (Gossen, 1998) as a potential means to address some of these issues, and highlighted the similarities between Restitution practices and traditional Aboriginal pedagogy.

To delve more deeply into the nature of Restitution and compatibility with Aboriginal worldview, I situated it as a restorative practice, related to restorative justice. Next I defined general concepts that characterize an Aboriginal worldview and explore briefly what it may mean to be an ally of Aboriginal people. To conclude the chapter, I note some advice for curriculum design that I found helpful. Together, these strands of literature informed my design of the *Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview* curriculum as well as its implementation and refinement. Themes found in this literature also guided my analysis of the learning that occurred as a result of reflective implementation with my teaching and research partner, Ms. R.

Context Related to Aboriginal Education

Although there has been a recent focus on First Nations people in Canadian curricula, some scholars argue that the delivery may not encourage students to engage with the issues in a meaningful way (Egbo, 2009). A first step toward developing curriculum that will support meaningful student engagement may be for teachers to understand the urgency of this need for Aboriginal students. In the following section, I present the literature that contributed to my own sense of urgent moral purpose, in terms of the history and cultural misunderstandings that impact contemporary Aboriginal learners and the statistics that highlight inequities.
**History.** Kirkness (1992) described the traditional education of First Nations before the arrival of Europeans to North America. The focus was on relationship to the community and land. There were no designated teachers but each adult was responsible for some teaching, based on the skills he or she had developed and his or her role in the community. The complex explanations of the current education system were unnecessary because education was a natural part of life (Haig-Brown, 1988) and children and young people were included in the work of the community. The education was holistic. Traditionally, children were in many senses fully participating members of the household. The goal of learning was for young people to develop their gifts in order to contribute to the community and to gain independence and self-reliance for survival in the natural world.

Following the arrival of Europeans, government schools or residential schools and day schools were introduced. The primary educational goal of these institutions was assimilation of Aboriginal children and through the isolation from their families, to cause a separation from their traditional language and culture. A result of residential schools, described by survivors, was a loss of self worth. Some Aboriginal parents who sent their children to Residential school realized that their own culture was different from dominant society and hoped that education would improve their children’s opportunities (Haig-Brown, 1988). The assumption that it was the Aboriginal people’s responsibility to “catch up” to their colonizers was unquestioned at the time and although this idea is viewed today as bigoted and unenlightened, some people may continue to think that way. Over time, the Residential schools were abandoned and their policy of assimilation was recognized as destructive and renounced. However, the new policy of integration amounted to a continued policy of assimilation, merely with the boarding school component removed (Kirkness, 1992).
“The legacy of residential schools has weighed heavily on the lives and well-being of First Nations, Inuit, and Metis individuals and communities for generations” (Castellano, Archibald, & DeGagne, 2008, p.xiii). Historically, the public education system and Aboriginal students in Canada have yet to have a successful relationship. Hampton (1995) claimed that Aboriginal students have not had sufficient contact with educators who are attuned to their culture. In fact, Aboriginal culture was seen as archaic and undesireable and as the dominant culture continued the systematic degredation of Aboriginal traditions, the First Nations cultures began to die (Haig-Brown, 1988).

Beginning what would become a long history of shame, some residential school students were indoctrinated to believe that the ways of their cultures were pagan. One student recalls that when she returned home, she would look at her parents and feel ashamed of them (Haig-Brown, 1988). This embarrassment was ingrained so deeply, in residential schools and in the ways that Aboriginal people have been treated elsewhere, that many of their children and grandchildren have internalized the shame and still suffer from a lack of positive identity.

In 1971 a policy paper presented to the House of Commons showed the deplorable situation of First Nations people in the education system. From this report came the recommendation for Indian Control of Indian Education, to make education relevant to First Nations people. In order to create a relevant system, in addition to the control of education by Aboriginals, there would need to be parental involvement, curriculum development, and proper teacher training (The Brotherhood, 1972).

The irrelevance of the current education system to Indigenous peoples is, according to McGovern (2000), due to the conflicting ideology between classroom and culture. The curricula taught in schools may be seen by Indigenous people as having little real life application. The
point that knowledge must be produced within a local context was reiterated by McGovern
(2000). Nicholas (as cited in Robinson, 2007) described how the education system still
perpetuates oppression and remains irrelevant: “Although not as obvious as once was, (as in the
case of mission schools and Residential schools), due to state policy Aboriginal children still
endure a system of education where institutional racism and class oppression persist” (p. 29).
Robinson additionally argued that contemporary policies are still based on underlying goals of
assimilation and integration.

Overall, none of the educational systems since European settlement have been effective.
The problems that existed in Aboriginal education in 1960 are still, in part, problems faced
today. These include an absence of a consistent philosophy of education with clearly articulated
goals and objectives with respect to Aboriginal worldview, failure to provide a meaningful
program based on First Nations realities, a lack of qualified teaching staff, inadequate facilities,
and the absence of parental and community involvement in the education of their own children
(Kirkness, 1992). Robinson (2007) quoted Miller’s assertion that traditional Aboriginal
education, “aims, first, to explain to the individual members of a community who they are, who
their people are, and how they relate to other peoples and to their physical work” (p. 29). This
emphasis on identity and relationships contrasts significantly with the public education system
and its emphasis on acquiring content.

Cultural disconnect. The lack of success experienced by Aboriginal students in the
public school system can be attributed to unacknowledged or misunderstood differences between
the cultures of teachers and students. One disconnect between a traditional western European
view and traditional Aboriginal ways relates to the concept of respect. Although the European
view of respect implies obedience and compliance with authority, the Aboriginal view of respect
emphasizes accepting that other individuals have the right to make their own choices (Brown & Gossen, 2011). Wilson (2008) described respect as "regulating how we treat Mother Earth, the plants, the animals, and our brothers and sisters of all races. Respect means you listen intently to others' ideas, that you do not insist that your idea prevails" (p.58). This fundamental distinction between the two belief systems highlights the need to develop supportive curricula for teachers whose students could benefit from a culturally responsive learning environment.

The challenges facing Aboriginal students in British Columbia and across Canada suggest that education systems must be improved to address inequities in achievement between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. At the school level, issues facing teachers include lack of knowledge, incorrect knowledge, fear of incorrect use or implementation, or an unwillingness to recognize and address the unique needs of Aboriginal students. These deficiencies can be based on the misconception that these students should be treated the same as everyone else. Compounding these uncertainties, teachers have few concrete resources to remedy the situation. Battiste asserted "literature on the topic of Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy does exist, although it is limited in scope and depth, particularly in the Canadian context" (2002, p. 2). Pattnaik (2005) explained that when teachers do make an effort to incorporate Indigenous education in their classrooms, their efforts have been described as additive or superficial. Focusing on science education and Aboriginal worldview, Aikenhead (2011), found that participants in his study had difficulty seeing the relevance of incorporating Aboriginal worldview into the science curriculum.

According to Stairs (1996), the role of educators has not progressed as much as the curriculum. A culture-based approach to Aboriginal education sees teachers as having direct access to the children and from this position they can either offer conflict or reconciliation
between Aboriginal and mainstream cultural learning models. It seems that conflict between cultures is the common default, because teachers cannot help but bring their culturally patterned ways of communicating into their teaching. *Cultural reconciliation* requires that teachers first have an understanding and appreciation for the Aboriginal culture and have worked toward integrating this worldview meaningfully throughout the curriculum.

Stairs (1996) described how educators who are members of First Nations must be the brokers between the conflicting goals of *education for economic advancement* and the cultural maintenance of Aboriginal communities. A picture of mainstream and Aboriginal cultures working together might have Elders and professional teachers finding new educational roles where language, content, and the teaching process recognize culturally relevant ways. One of the many challenges, though, is how to teach the curriculum of the dominant society while maintaining the value and significance of the Aboriginal culture. Shawn Atleo, the recently re-elected National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, described the need for Aboriginal people, and especially students, to walk in two worlds. With one foot in the education of the dominant society and one foot in their traditional ways of knowing, Atleo claimed that individuals could manage success in both areas. However, without guidance to integrate the two cultures, I am concerned those students' lives will be disjointed and that they may feel that they have to choose one culture or the other.

McGovern (2000) articulated the value of Indigenous knowledge and the importance of its integration into formal education. Critical evaluation should contribute to restructuring of education systems to *include* Indigenous knowledge, rather than merely emphasizing the worth of Indigenous knowledge. It is important that Indigenous worldview is integrative and not just an additive to the belief system. The current education systems should promote an understanding of
knowledge and practices that allow stakeholders, including teachers and parents, to discuss alternatives in a way that is respectful, ethical, compassionate, and useful.

Statistics. Aboriginal students, as defined by Barbara Kavanagh (2006), include all First Nations, Inuit, and Metis people. The age profile of Aboriginal Identity population from the 2001 Census shows that the Aboriginal population has larger percentages aged 0-34, with significantly larger gaps compared with the rest of the population in the age range of 0-14. This statistic describes the rapid growth of Canada's Aboriginal population and the increasing number of Aboriginal children who will be or are entering the public school system. These numbers signify that, "improving educational outcomes is critical right now, and cannot wait for many years" (Mendelson, 2006, p.5). According to Kavanagh (2006), graduation rates for Aboriginal students in the BC public education system have been recently calculated as less than 50%, a figure that compels educators to reflect on their role in ensuring the success of Aboriginal students.

According to Canadian Census information, 55% of the Aboriginal population in 1996 and 48% of the population in 2001 had "less than high school education" listed as their highest level of schooling. From 2001 the census reported that 4% of the Aboriginal population obtained a university degree compared to 17% of the non-Aboriginal population. As outlined by Mendelson (2006), "the data on the university sector is more discouraging" (p. 10). Mendelsen proposed that if there was a focus was on improving high school graduation rates, the gap of university graduates would be reduced. In order to improve high school completion rates, the public education system would have to be more relevant to Aboriginal students, so that the knowledge and skills of their ancestors were both available and valued (Battiste, 2002).
Restitution as restoration. Gossen's (1998) program of Restitution has the potential to begin to address many of the issues outlined by critics of Western European education for Aboriginal students. Gossen established the program based on the theories and practices of Dr. William Glasser and her own insights, as a non-Aboriginal counselor, drawn from her observation of Elders working with First Nations youth (Brown & Gossen, 2011). Discerning a pattern in the way that Elders worked with youth, Gossen formalized the sequence into steps that teachers can follow to achieve a similar effect – restoring the young person's positive sense of self as a member of the community. Through a carefully structured program, Gossen (1996, 1998, 2004, 2006) has explained these steps clearly for Restitution in schools. Because its principles mirror the values found in a traditional Aboriginal worldview, Restitution may provide a culturally relevant and sensitive way to integrate Indigenous worldview and move toward addressing the issues evident in the public education system.

The basic practice of Restitution. Gossen (1998) described the reflective journey and conscious restructuring of thinking and interactions necessary to apply the principles of Restitution. With Restitution, teachers can shift from using coercion or extrinsic rewards to control student behaviour to helping students learn more appropriate behaviors that align with personal and community values. Gossen wrote about the importance of reflecting on current discipline practices to facilitate a move away from ineffective and harmful punitive measures toward practices that strengthen the child. Through a step-by-step counseling process, Restitution offers the opportunity for students to first stabilize their identity and validate their behavior as a legitimate attempt to meet their own needs, seek the shared belief that supports a more appropriate way to behave to meet those needs, and finally, create a plan to make amends and behave differently in the future (Gossen, 1996).
Restitution is fundamentally about restoring wronged relationships. Through an invitation for the offender to look inside him or herself and find the basic need behind the behaviour, shame and guilt can be released. This process creates the conditions to set right the mistake. Restitution is about strengthening and restoring the offender to the group (Gossen, 2011). According to Gossen, when teachers assume traditional positions of control, which she identified as punisher, guilter, buddy, and monitor, students are more likely to be extrinsically motivated. However, teachers who assume the role Gossen described as manager encourage the development of intrinsic motivation, which is more enduring.

The goals of Restitution include making amends to the victim but it is not necessary to have the victim accept the offer or forgive the offender. There must be effort from the offender and the offender must have attachment to the group in order to facilitate successful Restitution. The Restitution should be tied to a higher value and there should not be any resentment, criticism, guilt, or anger expressed by the teacher in the facilitative role as planner or helper (Gossen, 2008). It is a crucial component of this process to restore the offending student’s dignity and positive sense of self as a valued member of the community. This is a novel approach compared to traditional classrooms where students are removed from reflection on their behaviour or any role in deciding consequences. To involve students in their own Restitution, they are offered choice. Their self-worth is maintained when students feel they are participating in the decisions that affect them. The necessity of their involvement stems from the idea of the whole-child, where all behaviour is understood as purposeful. By reflecting on and then recognizing the cause of the behavior, offending students are able to keep their dignity intact and are consequently motivated to make an effort to fix and learn from their mistakes.

Gossen (1996) described Restitution as “providing the teacher with a process to redirect
the individual” (p. vii). It is a system that teaches students to look at their own behavior, determine what needs motivate them, and make and follow through with plans to improve their behavior. In Restitution, personal needs are acknowledged and given importance: solutions will come through finding a better way to meet needs. This process is intended to teach the child how to meet his or her needs without harming others, to restore the student’s positive view of self, and to ease reintegration into the classroom community as a valued member.

**Restitution and Aboriginal pedagogy.** Based on his communication with traditional Aboriginal Elders in several northern Canadian communities, a non-Aboriginal judge, Rupert Ross, (1996) explored the connection between Aboriginal justice and child rearing. He described traditional Aboriginal parenting as teaching children responsibility to the group, developing their personal attributes and skills, and allowing almost complete independence, within a close-knit community, to make their own choices. Restitution is rooted in these child-rearing practices because the goal is to bring offenders back to shared beliefs and values without compromising their personal beliefs. Questions such as, *What do you believe?* and *What kind of person do you want to be?* help to guide the child back to the group belief system and consider other options, consistent with both shared and personal values. This process also allows children to develop their own unique attributes as they make choices. The focus is not on blame or forgiveness because forgiveness involves the idea that offenders realize they should not have done what they did. (This is a perception that is ubiquitous in European culture, so that children are quick to chime “sorry” when they make a mistake, although little learning has occurred.) Traditional Aboriginal teachings were not oriented to finding fault, so there was no reason to forgive. The corresponding principle in Restitution is that the focus shifts from the offense to the plan to make it right.
In a case study, Brown and Gossen (2011) described the impact of implementing Restitution in an inner city school, referred to as Tansi Community School, with a prevalence of Aboriginal students. Previous discipline programs had divided the school and community. However, once restorative justice principles were applied with the use of Restitution, relationships among students and teachers and between the school and the parent community improved. The authors described the transition that took place, when, in 1999 there was a, “shift toward Restitution, learning community development, and affirmation of Aboriginal culture” (Brown & Gossen, 2011, p. 3). Restitution was seen by the Aboriginal community as a culturally appropriate option because, “fundamentally, Restitution involves regular reflection on personal behaviour, and helps students learn to profit from their mistakes to become better able to conduct themselves in harmony with their needs and inner sense of morality” (Charles, 2007, p. 187).

Brown and Gossen described how the Aboriginal cultural perspective values the independence that develops within a caring and connected community. They explained that Restitution principles, such as independence and internal motivation, correspond to Aboriginal teachings that have merit for human development but may not be predominant in Canadian education systems or mainstream society.

In Tansi, as Restitution was introduced, teachers gained awareness of their beliefs, values, and assumptions. The participants in the study found connections to their own culture and belief systems that brought personal meaning and moral purpose to their practice of Restitution, which included, for First Nations teachers, compatibility with their traditional Aboriginal worldview. A key point was that the Aboriginal teachers understood respect differently, not as courtesy and obedience, but rather as granting other people the right to choose their beliefs and behaviours for themselves, even if those choices involve making mistakes. Teachers’ interactions
with students and the language they used reflected their intention to guide children to learn how to reconsider mistakes instead of acting as authority figures with absolute power to control students. Teachers believed that with Restitution, students developed confidence in the rightness of their own decisions and their ability to learn a better way when mistakes have been made.

Amendt and Bousquet (2006) conducted a later study in the same school, which they identified as Princess Alexandra Community School in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, to investigate whether teachers learning more culturally appropriate ways would help students achieve more academic success. They described the lack of academic success for their Aboriginal students as the driving force for change and identified the implementation of Restitution as one of their first steps. The authors confirmed that when the school adopted the ideas of Restitution and self-discipline, there was a more peaceful learning environment and better relationships between students and teachers, leading the way to improved student achievement. At the end of the study the authors identified overall improvement in achievement, although they acknowledged difficulty in specifying which of the several innovations they had adopted as culturally affirming practice had had the greatest impact.

The Amendt and Bousquet (2006) study confirmed that adoption of Restitution occurred as a result of the First Nations parent community rejecting the idea for a system based on rewards and punishment that they believed was not culturally appropriate. Restitution encouraged independence instead of conformity and developed shared beliefs within the school and expressed agreements about how to treat each other. When administrators, teachers, and community members were first introduced to Restitution in a workshop they attended together at the home of Diane Gossen, an Elder commented, “these are our teachings that were lost due to residential schools” (Amendt & Bousquet, 2006, p. 19).
Gossen (1998) described the role of coercion in the functioning of many schools. Teachers not only use coercion with students in order to get compliance but principals also use it with teachers and teachers use it with each other. Coercion occurs when people feel that they have no choice but to comply. Restitution, on the other hand, gives people choices and opportunities to make decisions that they believe are right for them. These choices are coherent with the principle of non-interference, a commonly noted aspect of an Aboriginal worldview, based on the belief that it is disrespectful to evaluate others (Gossen, 1998; Ross, 1996; Bopp et al., 1989).

Archibald (1995) discussed traditional educational practices that exemplified an Aboriginal worldview. “First Nations people traditionally adopted a holistic approach to education...certain learning specialties in these areas were emphasized, including independence, self-reliance, observation, discovery, empirical practicality, and respect for nature” (p.289). Traditionally, parents and grandparents modeled teachings and would hold themselves to a high standard; this was one of the ways that children learned (Haig-Brown, 1988, p.72).

Fixico (2003) described Aboriginal “seeing” that may be understood as worldview. Some of the explanations of “seeing” that Fixico offered are the ability to visualize a connection between two beings, responsibility to care for the relationships of all things, understanding the totality of one’s universe, listening, and being comfortable with silence. Fixico (2003) emphasized the importance of relationships: “for what all of us see, we must relate carefully to how it is related to other things, or how it is related to us” (p.6), and also noted the importance of the relationship with self. I believe these concepts can be applied to the need for students to look internally and see what motivated their behavior, connecting their behavior to a need, as well as for them to be aware of how their behaviour affects others as well as their own sense of self.
Fixico (2003) also emphasized the importance of reflection more explicitly: “Indian thinking is inquiry into relationships and community” (Fixico, 2003, p.7). I see Restitution as compatible with these ideas: A child’s understanding of positive self within a community of relationships supports the individual to make choices that sustain this image and these relationships.

The principles of Restitution, according to Gossen (1996, 2004) were rooted in Aboriginal practices. Some of the similarities between Restitution and Aboriginal worldview that Gossen (1996) described were the encouragement of independence rather than conformity, social cohesion developed through shared beliefs, and the idea that discipline based on punishment does not strengthen people but shames and weakens them. Another similarity is that it is disrespectful to evaluate others – an alternative is to give information about how you feel about their behaviour or how it affects you. Ross (1996) noted other points where Restitution and traditional Aboriginal teachings appear to align are (a) the emphasis on refraining from blame and (b) the need to look at the whole person, not just the offence. In Restitution, as in traditional Aboriginal child rearing, wrongdoing is an opportunity for teaching or healing.

Another component of traditional Aboriginal educational practices at work is the effectiveness of an approach based upon active participation; student initiated exploration, and planned student-instructor collaboration (Leavitt, 1995). These ideas are similar to the active participation and decision making that students engage in when solving a problem through Restitution. Traditionally, Aboriginal students were not given direction, instruction, or teaching without an explanation to respond to the question “Why?” (Haig-Brown, 1988). Restitution encourages students to seek the belief behind the rule and understand the why of their own behaviour. When teachers use such Restitution language as, “I am here to help if you need me”, the message is really an offer to collaborate. The students are shown that they have the power to
make their own decisions but if they cannot decide what to do, the teacher is there to provide support.

To summarize the relationship between Restitution and traditional Aboriginal pedagogy, Restitution contributes to the development of independence, inner morality, and decision-making capacity with responsibilities to social groups. Social cohesion is developed through shared beliefs and active reflection that strengthen the individual, rather than through a system of rewards and punishments that weaken both individuals and communities. Teachers who have embraced Restitution have developed respect for students in the Aboriginal sense of the word, granting children the right to choose their beliefs and behaviours and learn from reflecting on their mistakes, emphasizing the self-reliance, observation, and discovery mentioned by Archibald (1995). Restitution processes correspond to Fixico's (2003) description of Indian thinking, which is “inquiry into relationships and community” (p. 7). With Restitution, as with traditional Aboriginal child rearing, wrongdoing is an opportunity for teaching and healing that requires the active participation of the child and the support of caring adults. Major differences between traditional Aboriginal teaching and teaching in classrooms are that the children are not involved in community tasks with their parents and they are in an artificial environment rather than on the land, where community survival depends on group cohesion. Although these differences are important, there seems to be enough philosophical similarity to justify the use of Restitution in schools as a strong step toward Stairs' (1996) conception of cultural reconciliation and McGovern's (2000) advice to include Indigenous knowledge in school life rather than merely emphasizing its worth.

Restitution and Restorative Justice

Restitution can be described as a restorative practice, related to restorative justice, which
also has roots in Aboriginal or Indigenous traditions. It is worthwhile exploring this relationship in order to grasp the principles of Restitution more deeply and to show that Gossen’s (1996) understandings have been affirmed in other approaches. The similarities between Restitution and restorative justice are illustrated by Zehr’s (2002) explanation of restorative justice as an empowering process that focuses on the accountability of the offender and not on punishment. I understand both restorative justice and Restitution as involving transformation for everyone involved, toward the goal of understanding and deterring repeated offences. Within Restitution and restorative justice, violations are seen as opportunities to fix mistakes or renew obligations. In both cases the offender must take responsibility, which requires that the offender understand the harm done. The fixing of the mistake or righting of the wrong can allow a reintegration into the community. Through both processes values are explored collaboratively and there is encouragement to tell stories and express feelings in order to work toward an outcome.

In her book describing circle processes for peacemaking, Pranis (2005) presented the underlying philosophy of restorative practices: we are all in need of help and helping brings healing to ourselves. Restitution enacts a similar idea; the offender is aided in fixing mistakes, which can help others to internalize the values of the group and contribute to a stronger community. In the circle process described by Pranis, there is a circle keeper who does not try to move the group toward an outcome; storytelling is an important part of the process that engages people on emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and physical levels. Pranis noted the connection of these levels to the four directions of the medicine wheel, which may be seen as similar to the needs described in Restitution (Gossen, personal communication, 2010). The discussion of shared values is the foundation of restorative practices, which is a general term for circle processes as well as Restitution. Pranis explained that individuals wish to be connected to other
people in a positive way, which corresponds to the importance of relating to the collective that is part of an Aboriginal worldview. In Restitution, the desire for connection to others creates the conditions that encourage offenders to fix their mistakes because they want to be welcomed back to the group. Pranis noted that each person participating in a circle process develops responsibility not only for his or her individual behaviour but also for the group as a whole.

In *Security with Care* (2011), Elliot illustrated how restorative justice creates an environment where learning can occur through reflection on experience. She identified ten core values of restorative justice circles that can be used to guide actions toward greater good: *respect, honesty, trust, humility, sharing, inclusivity, empathy, courage, forgiveness and love*. The author discussed the meaning of each of these values, the teaching of values in education, and the importance of daily examples so that students experience the values in a variety of ways.

Elliot went on to explore different ideas of justice, starting with most people's first experience with justice as a comparative judgment: *What does another person have compared to me?* Another idea of Elliot's is that some people begin their understanding of justice by viewing justice as people getting what they deserve. In the realm of education for citizenship, the idea of justice is an individual virtue, whereas in the criminal justice system it is seen as a virtue of social institutions. The idea of justice plays a role in Restitution as individual needs take precedence over the comparison of needs (Gossen, 1998). This idea is echoed in an Aboriginal worldview in that forgiveness is not as significant as learning from the mistake.

For Elliot (2011), an ethic of care is a determiner of moral reasoning and correlates with “the value orientations of security and harmony” (p.116). She explained that education cannot be separated from personal experience because morality is dependent on experience. Thus, the four components of education for a caring ethic are: *modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation*. 
The virtues of care incorporate a relational perspective. In addition to these virtues of care, restorative justice requires interdependence, consideration of the needs of the individual and the group, and engagement. The focus of restorative justice and Restitution is on needs rather than rights and must be a way of life rather than a practice.

In addition to the values of care, Elliot added virtues: acquaintance, mindfulness, moral imagining, solidarity, tolerance and self-care, to apply to both character and citizenship education. She proposed that these values and virtues to be taught rather than enforced so that the experience of maintaining a secure place in the community becomes a powerful deterrent. The restorative justice process is designed to help individuals build and experience capacity for community, creating a situation where mistakes are a chance for engagement and not exclusion. The process of dialogue, Elliot explained, is how values become important. In the approach to restorative justice that Elliot described, the process is guided by the ten values and must begin with the student's willingness to listen and participate. The dialogue and listening in the restorative justice process leads to a collective understanding or agreement.

Restorative justice has been described by Howard Zehr as "a set of principles, a philosophy, an alternative set of guiding questions" (p.5, 2002). Restorative or transformative justice has often been used in contexts of criminal law. Authors such as Gilligan (2000) detailed extreme generational or individual atrocities, creating situations that require extensive restoration or reparation of the relationships. Although this work is crucial, it does not address the school context for restorative justice. Gossen's (1998) Restitution deals directly with the school and classroom context through restorative practices. And unlike circle approaches, Restitution does not deal only with major offenses but with the building of a classroom community and the resolution of small, daily interpersonal problems within it.
Restorative justice and a range of restorative practices that include Restitution are guided by a human rights concern for maintaining the respect and dignity of an offending individual while focusing on compassion over retribution. An important part of conflict transformation is how one reflects on an experience rather than what happened in the situation. Morrison (2007) has asserted that restorative practices guide a process where the collective is not asking What are we going to do?, but rather, honoring the traditional Aboriginal perspective and asking How are we going to do it? The direction that restorative justice leads is away from a system of social control and toward one of social engagement (Morrison, 2007). The restorative justice approach maintains the group’s focus on values and not on rules, is concerned with the behaviour rather than the person, and puts the behaviour in context with stories to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach to consequences.

One of the goals or outcomes of restorative justice and restorative practices is to have individuals value their place in the group so that they are internally motivated to behave with the group in mind (Morrison, 2007). The key words or ideas are respect, responsibility, reparation, and restoration. Respect is achieved in restorative justice by having willing participants who utilize circle processes, which requires that guidelines and values be established at the outset. The offender taking responsibility for his or her part in events is vital – the transgression must be acknowledged for any of the restorative work to be successful. Reparation can emerge through the stories of the affected parties and the offender’s understanding of the effect of the wrongdoing. The reparation also comes from the victim’s needs being addressed while the needs of the offender are not disregarded. Restoration can happen through a circle process and focuses on the release of shame by giving the offender the opportunity to repair the relationships and have his or her place in the community restored.
When restorative principles (Zehr, 2002) are applied, crime is a violation of people and relationships. These violations create obligations and at the core of those obligations are putting right the wrongs. The central focus should be on the victim’s needs and offender’s responsibility for repairing harm. The victim and the offender must work together to negotiate how to put things right. Zehr writes how part of the healing for the victim can come simply from the offender moving toward making things right and that this effort can be the catalyst for reparation. Part of this healing may come from exploring values together. Through this articulation of values, it can become easier for both the victim and offender to view the whole person and see the behavior, rather than the individual, at the center of the process. Thus, it is the behaviour and not the individual that is rejected.

There are differences between restorative justice and Restitution. To begin with, the semantics of restorative justice assume a justice system. Zehr (2002) referred to wrongdoings as “crimes” where, “crime is a violation of people and of interpersonal relationships” (p.19). Diane Gossen described the wrongdoing as a “mistake” that provides an opportunity to stabilize the young person with reassurances that it is okay to make a mistake (2008, p.40). A difference that is explicitly stated in literature related to restorative justice is the idea that there should be a direct consultation between the victim and the offender to, “negotiate together how to put things right” (Zehr, 2002, p. 26). Encounters between offending students and those who have been harmed are not required in Restitution because it is not “victim centered” (Brown & Gossen, 2011, p.6). Restitution’s priority is on the offender and in restorative justice; the victim’s needs are more of a priority. However, concern for the one who has been harmed is implied in the process of Restitution because the goal is to have the offender understand how shared values, relationships, and the harmed person’s needs have been disregarded.
Restorative justice encourages the inclusion of community members and all affected parties and Restitution is a smaller circle with a focus more specifically on the offender and the teacher as a counselor. “Restitution does not specifically involve the affected community in a circle process” (Brown & Gossen, 2011, p. 6). It is possible that this structure could be integrated with Restitution. The parallels of restorative justice and Restitution do exist, beginning with their practices being embedded in Aboriginal ways. Restorative justice is rooted in traditional Aboriginal ways of knowing. Pranis (2007) described how, “Peacemaking Circles draw directly from the tradition of the Talking Circle, common among indigenous people of North America” (2005, p.7). Additionally with circle processes, the priority is storytelling, which connects to the oral traditions of Indigenous peoples. A prominent example of restorative justice is the family group conference, which is an adaptation of traditional Indigenous ways from New Zealand (Zehr, 2002). Restitution is rooted in observations of Canadian Aboriginal practices such as the whole child approach, a focus on needs, nurturing intrinsic motivation, and empowering individuals to fix their own mistakes without shame (Gossen, 2008).

In both processes there is a focus on the recognition of the wrongdoing and an effort to make it right. The offender takes responsibility instead of blaming the victim. Taking responsibility for their actions does not imply that there must be punishment: both systems acknowledge the negative byproducts of punishment and seek to find an alternative that is right for the offender. The primary goals of both are personal transformation and deep internalization that prevents reoffending, which can be described as healing. In the Aboriginal sense of the word, healing is about learning how to repair relationships to restore both the individual and the community to health.

Because the focus of Restitution is on the offender, the cornerstone concept is identifying
the need behind the behavior because there is always a reason that human beings behave the way they do (Gossen, 2008). Zehr (2002) proposed a similar idea: “wrongdoing is often a symptom that something is out of balance in the web” (p.20). Both emphasize respect for the whole person and move the focus of concern to the behavior. Reintegration, or the value of belonging to the group, has poignant importance to both restorative justice and Restitution. Circle processes seek to help the offender see themselves as important and valued by the group and Gossen’s Restitution (1998) seeks to establish and create shared values and beliefs proactively, which strengthens relationships and encourages a sense of belonging. Both of these lead to the opportunity for the offender to value their relationship to the group and have the desire to fix the harm to be reintegrated.

Gossen and Brown (2011) specifically outlined similarities between Restitution and restorative justice. “Restitution can be described as restorative justice for schools because it focuses on the reparation of harms more than on compliance with rules, shows respect, concern and commitment to both offender and victim, and supports offenders in accepting responsibility. Restitution and restorative justice share an emphasis on collaboration and reintegration as being more important than coercion and isolation” (p. 6). The authors admitted that Restitution might not be defined as fully restorative, in the sense that circle processes are, but declared that the fundamental philosophies of the two approaches are similar.

Aboriginal Worldview

Indigenous knowledge is a complex knowledge system that has been transmitted through oral language, modeling, and practice (Battiste, 2002). Because Indigenous knowledge has specific relevance in each local context, generalizations can be offensive and inappropriate. However, in The Sacred Tree (Bopp et al., 1989), a collaboration of Aboriginal Elders from
various locations in North America resulted in the definition of some concepts that were thought
to be universal. The purpose of presenting these concepts in story and symbol form was to show
a way to wellness for Aboriginal people through a return to their traditional worldview and
teachings – to enrich the present and plan for the future with the wisdom of the past. This work
was important to me as the main theoretical framework through which I sought to understand
other writing on Aboriginal worldview.

Key principles of an Aboriginal worldview as presented in The Sacred Tree (Bopp et al.,
1989) are wholeness or the interconnectedness of all things, the gifts or good things in life that
are the fruit of good teachings or wisdom, the unique potential of each human being, and the
importance of each person’s volition or will, which is the primary force in developing an
individual’s potential. The authors described the importance of developing a vision of how one
wishes to be and to use one’s will to act in ways that bring that vision to reality. Human beings
grow as a result of inner reflection and the medicine wheel is presented as a mirror through
which people can view themselves and their actions to maintain or regain balance, including
balance between the inner and outer worlds of thoughts and actions. Icons from the natural
world, particularly animals, are described as symbolic teachers because in stories of animal
behaviour, each person can find unique meaning to apply to his or her own life. Personal
reflection on a symbol or story is the key to envisioning oneself as being or doing something
more and then working toward that vision to realize potential. The centrality of human will in
conception of Aboriginal worldview emphasizes the importance of having great respect for our
inner spiritual growth as human beings. This is the kind of respect that does not coerce or judge
but guides by example and by sharing stories that the younger person may interpret and apply for
her or himself. This kind of caring respects another individual’s right to learn through reflection
and does not interfere with that process of development with attempts to control through coercion.

**Aboriginal worldview in kindergarten.** In BC School District 20, Kootenay-Columbia, a locally developed curriculum, *Learning Journeys*, is mandatory for all Kindergarten classes. It was developed to support the province’s *Safe School* initiatives as well as to enhance Aboriginal cultural awareness. The *Learning Journeys* curriculum consists of six lessons that are focused on animal stories based on traditional Aboriginal teachings. Although this curriculum presents Aboriginal beliefs to children and honours the storytelling approach to character development, the emphasis is on the stories themselves rather than on practicing the beliefs in daily interactions. Integrating the locally developed curriculum with Restitution may provide teachers with both content and processes that bring universal and local principles of an Aboriginal worldview into the classroom.

Archibald (1996) identified the need for culturally relevant curriculum, due to First Nations students’ historical hurdles and current problems with developing strong self-identity and insufficient knowledge of cultural differences among their teachers. Archibald described how programs have previously worked on a problem-based model, not a proactive one. The solution or recommendation she offered was to implement preventative measures by developing First Nations students’ pride in their cultural heritage and increasing mainstream awareness of cultural differences. In a case study, Archibald (1996) described how the major concepts and skills might be taught through cultural context and examples. Some of the guiding principles stated that education must encompass the traditional Aboriginal patterns of teaching and learning. These patterns include: *independence, self-reliance, observation, discovery, practical experience,* and *respect for nature.* In Archibald’s study, these patterns or values were
implemented with an integrative inquiry process that resembled the holistic approach to traditional Sto:lo education, the local BC First Nation that was part of the context of the study.

An important difference between Aboriginal worldview and Western worldview is in the definition of respect. "(T)he Nuu-chah-nulth word *isaak* (respect) necessitates a consciousness that all creation has a common origin, and for this reason [it] is extended to all life forms" (Atleo, 2004). *Shared Learning: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10* (BC Ministry of Education, 2006) is one resource that acknowledged the need for classroom materials to help teachers acquire knowledge of BC Aboriginal peoples to share with their class. The curriculum emphasizes the importance of helping Aboriginal students experience a sense of place and belonging in the public school system. In the Shared Learning curriculum, similar to the underlying beliefs in both Restitution (Gossen, 1998) and Learning Journeys (BC School District #20, 2003), there is "a sense of individual responsibility to family, community and nation. [It is] important to continually pursue spiritual, physical, and intellectual balance. [There is] a respect for the relatedness of all things in the natural world" (p.6). Worldview is summarized in the interconnectedness of everything within a larger whole. It is this holistic perspective that authors of the prescribed curriculum hope to see shared with children.

The Shared Learnings (BC Ministry of Education, 2006) document outlined principles to be integrated throughout the provincial curricula. Those related to Restitution are: a) recognition that Aboriginal influence continues to impact the world, and b) appreciation of Aboriginal social, economic, and political systems as a source of strength, and c) the knowledge that Aboriginal languages and communication reflect a distinctive worldview. These principles are expressed inherently in the language of Restitution as well as in the language of the Learning Journeys (BC School District #20, 2003) program that teaches children to call on various animal strengths to
support their development. The relationship of Aboriginal worldview and Restitution is apparent
and my integrative design of the Learning Journeys with Restitution to create a new set of
lessons pays heed to a caution expressed in the Shared Learnings document. Due to the range of
Aboriginal groups and their significant differences, it is of the utmost importance that the
information presented to students is “accurate, authentic, and grounded in the perspective of
Aboriginal peoples” (p. 8). Learning Journeys is a locally developed curriculum created by
Aboriginal people and my understanding of Restitution is grounded in careful consideration of
Aboriginal worldview through *The Sacred Tree* (Bopp, et al., 1989) and other readings,
relationships, and experiences.

**Components of an Aboriginal worldview.** The Sacred Tree (Bopp et al, 1989)
provided an initial theoretical framework for understanding Aboriginal worldview that can be
confirmed, expanded, and deepened by reading other literature. Particularly important are the
writings by contemporary Aboriginal scholars. In the following sections, I synthesize my
understanding of the components of an Aboriginal worldview under the headings of *spirituality*,
*interconnectedness, space and place, healing and teaching, positive self-identity, modeling and
experiential learning*, and *storytelling*. These components of an Aboriginal worldview guide
understandings of human purpose and development within a supportive society.

*Spirituality.* Spirituality plays a significant role in Aboriginal worldview. This is a
contentious issue in the public school system because spirituality is equated with religion and
seen as something to be addressed at home and in the church and is inappropriate for school, due
to the separation of church and state. Storytelling enables the purpose, meaning, and relationship
aspects of a universal spirituality different from any specific religion to be addressed in an
acceptable way in schools. If these are what students need to glean from the story, they are
accessible. For example, Atleo (2004) described how, in the Raven story, “the waters are a metaphor that indicate not only the degree of difficulty in communication and travel, but also the substantive connection between the two realms” (p. 11). The layers of metaphor and the reference to spirituality in this story may be evident to a listener who has had prior experiences with spirituality. Others may grasp the concepts intuitively.

Ermine (1995) described how the Aboriginal perspective accepts mystery, without the need, as in the Western European worldview, to seek out explanation or answers in order to show dominance. He believes that Aboriginal Epistemology is grounded in the self, the spirit, the unknown” (Ermine, 1995, p.108). Further he explained that experience is also knowledge and that sometimes experience entails introspection. The Western world is entrenched in a worldview that fragments the self, which is in direct opposition to a holistic Aboriginal worldview. “In reality, spirituality is not separate but is an integral, infused part of the whole in the Indigenous worldview” (Wilson, 2008, p.89). Spirituality is individual and personal, but not necessarily seen as organized religion, which is the social manifestation of spirituality. Rather, spirituality can be defined as “one’s internal sense of connection to the universe” (Wilson, 2008, p.91). Based on Wilson’s definition of spirituality and the personalized and individual nature of it, storytelling at school allows for spirituality to be addressed at school in ways responsive to any child or principled family.

**Interconnectedness.** Robinson (2007) proposed that a more holistic curriculum containing Aboriginal worldview would allow First Nations youth to synthesize material more effectively and increase their comprehension of diverse subject matter. A response to the Aboriginal achievement gap, as proposed by Robinson, is to revitalize Aboriginal epistemology and incorporate this philosophy of education for balance and harmony in all areas. The
worldview includes the conceptual framework of seeing everything as interdependent components of the universe. The goal of including Aboriginal philosophy in a mainstream education is to eliminate racism and oppression and promote the success of all children (Robinson, 2007). The holistic view is not limited to education; Wilson (2008) also wrote about his holistic view of the world and the importance of a more holistic approach to various areas of human endeavor.

Confirming that a fundamental principle of Aboriginal traditional teachings is interconnectedness, Ross (2006) described how Cree Elders knew that it was important to teach children that nothing you do is without consequence to others. For example, there is great care and attention in the Maori approach to justice, which has been shown to have similarities to BC First Nations (Ross, 2006), to treat the offender as a person and not shame them, but rather focus on finding an alternative to the shameful act. A caution against shaming offenders, and instead strengthening them and restoring their positive identity and connection to the community, is echoed in Gossen’s explanation of Restitution (Brown & Gossen, 2011).

In the Western education system, compartmentalized thinking is evident in the way that students are separated by ages and achievement levels. Ermine (1995) described how “Aboriginal education has the responsibility to uphold a world-view based on recognizing and affirming wholeness” (p.110). One of the fundamental insights of an Aboriginal worldview is that all existence is connected. Ermine described that in the Aboriginal mind, this interconnectedness gives meaning to existence. When trying to understand self, it is in relation to existence. Through creating community, people are empowered to access the accumulated knowledge of the culture. An Aboriginal way of knowing looks at self as part of a whole. This perspective is in stark contrast with a Western worldview that emphasizes independence, the
belief that you must be everything yourself and if you cannot be, you are not fully capable or successful.

In *The Sacred Tree* (Bopp et al., 1989), the first principle is *wholeness*, which relates to an assumption of interdependence. This is the idea that all things are interrelated and connected. “It is therefore possible to understand something only if we can understand how it is connected to everything else” (Bopp, et al., p.26). Atleo (2004) also asserted that “interdependence is considered one of the strengths of a Nuu-chah-nulth community” (p.12). Relational values, including generosity and contributions to the common good are highly regarded. In contrast to a European or Western worldview, Aboriginal education is concerned with the well-being of the group rather than individual self-sufficiency. Stairs (1996) stated “knowledge is a shared resource acquired cooperatively” (p.142).

Interdependence is also a principle theme in the Learning Journeys (BC School District #20, 2003) stories about Wolf, Coyote, and Salmon. This interdependence and close relationship of nature and man is a widely held perspective among Aboriginals and has been described as a worldview (Atleo, 2004, p.16). However, although these themes are widely held, understandings of how they operate in one’s own life are left to be discovered and interpreted by individuals through story. Atleo (2004) explained that *Heshook-ish tsawalk* is the theoretical proposition that everything is one. What is also clear from Atleo’s description of *Tsawalk* is that stories are the foundation of knowledge and are guides to understanding. This affirms the validity of using the stories of Learning Journeys to bring an Aboriginal worldview into the classroom and supports encouraging students to personalize the meaning of the symbols that appeal to them.

There are significant differences between Aboriginal worldview and Western worldview. Without acknowledging that these differences exist, well-intentioned allies may enact prejudice
by omission. In Western thought there is a tendency to compartmentalize experience and deduce that some parts have no relationship to others (Atleo, 2004). The Aboriginal worldview is based on the assumption that every part has relationships to other parts. This comparison can be viewed as holistic versus fragmented thought.

Contrary to Western worldview, which assumes humans have one type of spirit, in Aboriginal worldview every life form has spirit (Atleo, 2004). Various Indigenous perspectives hold that humans, animals, and spirits are in an equitable or balanced relationship. Wilson (2008) explained, “all forms of living things are to be respected as being related and interconnected” (p.60).

Another facet of interconnectedness is that wholeness or community should be fostered. “Wholeness is not an ideology like socialism or communism but the very essence of life” (Atleo, 2004, p. 20). Just as the Aboriginal definition of respect is unlike the European definition, so is the notion of wholeness. These variations should be given significant attention, because the language of an Aboriginal worldview is integral to understanding and integrating the ideas. Without a patient search for understanding, it will be difficult if not impossible for non-Aboriginal teachers to adopt and sustain practices that express Aboriginal worldview and create a more affirming learning atmosphere for First Nations children.

**Space and place.** McGovern (2000) described some common experiences of Indigenous people, including being subjected to colonization and having a strong relationship to the land. McGovern emphasized the importance of the local context in which the knowledge is gained. In the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview lessons, the local context is considered and valued because the Learning Journeys program was developed locally by Aboriginal educators.

Ermine (1995) described how Western ideology is a determinant of mainstream
epistemology, or view of knowledge and how it is created. Western knowledge involves a great deal of categorization and is validated by science. A significant assumption of the Western worldview is that knowledge is used for dominance of the natural world. Further, the Western view postulates that knowledge is truth and that we should keep everything separate from ourselves – objective rather than subjective truth is valued. This Western emphasis on objectivity clashes with an Aboriginal worldview that puts a premium on subjective experience. Ermine believed that to seek understanding of the reality of existence and harmony with the environment, it would be necessary to acknowledge and employ the alternate knowledge paradigm that he termed *Aboriginal epistemology*.

Lewis (as cited in Wilson, 2008) explained:

> The land is paramount for all Indigenous societies. Their relationship to that land, their experience on that land shapes everything that is around them... land is another word for place, environment, your reality, the space you’re in. (p.88)

The relationship to the environment in Indigenous worldview is as important as the relationships of human beings to one another.

Community connections and parent and family relationships hold great importance for the success of First Nations schools. Kavanagh (2006) argued, “parents and families have a fundamental right to a strong and meaningful voice in the learning of their children” (p.29). However, some First Nations parents have not had positive schooling experiences or may not feel that they have the skills or ability to help their children at home. Additionally, some parents may not want to be seen as interfering with the teacher’s practices. This can lead to a deficit in the relationship between the school and community.

Ideally, in Aboriginal culture the relationships between families and their community are strong and healthy bonds that generate psychological strength. With accountability to the
relationships there is an increased sense of common interests (Wilson, 2008): “Family is seen as of utmost importance for many Indigenous people. Family is what holds us in relationships as individuals and bridges us as individuals into our communities and nations” (Wilson, 2008, p. 86). The strong relationships and connections are not solely for the nuclear family but stretch in concentric circles to various layers of community.

**Healing and teaching.** Ross (2006) offered an example of the differing worldviews of Aboriginals and Europeans: “In the non-Indian community, committing a crime seems to mean that the individual is a bad person and therefore must be punished. The Indian communities view a wrongdoing as a misbehaviour which requires teaching or an illness which requires healing” (p.1). Ross explained that traditional ways of knowing preferred teaching and healing over punishment. From his own observations and interviews with Elders he described the emphasis on these traditional teachings still in place in some First Nations communities. He also described how a circle configuration for dialogue was used when traditional Aboriginal teachings played a part in legal proceedings, with the hope of reducing the adversial nature of the process.

The ideas presented by Ross (2006) have an underlying theme that he described as recurrent in all the Aboriginal communities he visited: “We are all assembled to help make life better for the next generation” (p. 5). Stemming from that theme were related ideas such as the belief that traditional teachings will allow offenders to move forward out of their hurt and anger in a way that punishment will not. Such beliefs are deep-rooted and have enduring relevance for developing individual gifts and the freedom to make personal choices, within the context of an interconnected community.

Ross (2006) also evaluated Navajo teachings, which express a focus on guidance for resolving conflict. The belief was that the parties talk about their problems and with the guidance
of the *naat’aanii* or Elders, plan decisions with guidance rather than having decisions made for them. Also, according to Navajo law, the parties would also be guided back to thoughts and behaviours that reflect the values and the agreements of the traditional beliefs about proper relationships. This peacemaking process was about restoring harmony. The sacred justice was a way to deal with problems that allowed for relationships to mend and solutions to be found. This method was about focusing on the solution and on what should be done in the future.

Ross (2006) outlined ideas that pertain to both traditional Aboriginal teachings and restorative justice, including returning to harmony, removing punitive consequences, providing guidance instead of direct instruction, and helping individuals develop a strong awareness of their values and belief systems as the internal compass for returning to harmonious relationships. Ross provided evidence of the relevance and potential benefit of implementing these practices in classrooms, particularly with Aboriginal students.

Also promoting the ideas of healing and teaching, the resource manual for the Learning Journey curriculum described how the authors have created a program “...to teach Kindergarten children the difference between normal childhood conflict and bullying behaviors” (p.4). This teaching is done through Aboriginal animal stories and drawings, with social and anti-bullying lessons taught through comparing the animals’ traditional characteristics with human problem solving skills. The authors stated that “introducing simple stories related to bullying will help enlighten children at an early age to simple problem solving skills” (p.4). The focus in this program is on teaching students appropriate social interactions from an Aboriginal perspective.

Just as Restitution is based on traditional Aboriginal teachings, restorative justice circles emerged from First Nations or Indigenous traditions. Storytelling is an important part of restorative justice as it is a way for the members participating in the process to find and explore
meaning and healing, and is also central to Aboriginal cultures as a way to teach. Talking circles are common among Aboriginal and Indigenous peoples (Pranis, 2005). A common belief is that everything is connected so that there is interdependence where everyone has a role and each person is valued. Just as an Aboriginal worldview assumes that people will be viewed holistically, circle processes create a space where all aspects of human experience are recognized and welcome. Aboriginal cultures use legends to cultivate understanding; circle processes encourage sharing stories of struggle, pain, joy, despair and triumph to reaffirm a sense of connectedness and obligation to each other. The beliefs guiding circle process are similar to those in traditional Aboriginal culture.

Positive self-identity. Kavanagh (2006) described similarities among First Nations in BC but noted that there are variations in each local area that cannot be overlooked. She described the benefits of working in a First Nations school and the potential challenges. Some First Nations have established clear goals regarding education in their efforts to determine how they can best serve the needs of their children and prepare them for success. However, definitions of success may differ, depending on worldview. Kavanagh described success as “children being self-confident, understanding their own culture and traditional values, and having a positive self identity” (2006, p.20).

Education should be perceived holistically, to include intellectual, spiritual, physical, and emotional development. A residential school survivor described how her Grandmother taught her the traditional ways. The Grandmother’s approach to teaching was that you try and do it on your own (Haig-Brown, 1988). Another survivor described spending time with her grandmother and that even as a child she was left to complete complex jobs but the Grandmother was always available if she was needed. If the child made a mistake the Grandmother was supportive but not
punitive (Haig-Brown, 1988). Aboriginal child-rearing was traditionally done in a gentle and supportive way and discipline was mild but fair and effective, which allowed the child to develop a positive self-identity.

Participation in developing one's own potential is described in The Sacred Tree (Bopp, et. al., 1984) as part of the realization of self. A person must decide to take the journey, which is also an expectation of Restitution. It takes reflection and active participation to act in accordance with our beliefs and not simply respond to our emotions. Focusing on the conscious acts that will have to take place for behaviour to change for the future is the work of the individual. Learning can not take place without a sense of purpose and self-worth (Haig-Brown, 1988).

In the Learning Journeys curriculum, the authors described how positive self-identity can be addressed through the social conscience of the teachings. They identified seven sacred laws that are the values that guide those teachings: love, respect, courage, honesty, wisdom, humility, and truth. The authors envisioned that these Sacred Laws would help to promote a student’s positive self-identity and when delivered in a way that honoured oral traditions, would have a lasting impact on First Nations children.

However, in my view, what was missing in this program was a connection to demonstrating the seven sacred laws in classroom interactions. My intention in designing the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview lessons was to address this deficit. My goal was for the integrated lessons to help both the teacher and students to develop the beliefs or value system to support student self-reflection on behaviour. This study is focused on first designing this integrated curriculum and then exploring the extent to which my teaching and research partner believed it was manageable for herself and beneficial for students. I also share my own insights and development that emerged as a result of interpreting this data.
Modelling and experiential learning. Stairs (1996) described various principles of traditional teachings, including the predominant method of acquiring knowledge through observation and imitation. Adults would progressively leave the final stages of an important task to be completed by children as the children gained mastery. Concepts were developed by repeating tasks in various circumstances with various tools. There were few explicit rules explained verbally to children but adults would recount what they had experienced and tell stories from which the child would have to discover implicit principles or teachings. Learning occurred when the child made meaning of the stories and found truths that applied to his or her situation. Children also approached adults and Elders when they wanted information.

Stairs (1996) provided an example of this approach applied to a school learning activity. A group of children worked on a booklet and each contributed his or her skills and strengths. There was no clear leader but that lack of leadership did not hinder the productivity. The group project was not assessed on individual contributions but rather as a group effort. Stairs described a kind of teaching that honours the cognitive culture of an Aboriginal worldview. “Knowledge is conveyed holistically and thematically” (Stairs, 1996, p.144); children do not learn one thing at a time – rather information should be presented by relating themes to real life experiences and feelings.

Archibald (1996) explained that in traditional Aboriginal education, expectations and the roles of each person in the community were clearly defined and structured. She noted that the way of life “reflected values of sharing, cooperation, and respect for the environment, oneself and others” (p. 292). Discipline was a result of strict training that was imperative for social and physical survival. When children were disobedient they were shunned, ignored, or spoken to privately by an adult.
Bopp et al. (1989) presented four dimensions or capacities of true learning and human development. First, human development must include the capacity to respond to realities that exist in a non-material way. Second, there is the capacity to accept those realities as part of a reflection and third, to express these realities using symbols. The fourth capacity is to use symbolic expression to guide future action. In order to achieve and maintain balance, all four capacities should be present and applied in sequence.

The last principle described in *The Sacred Tree* (Bopp, et al., 1989) is that anyone who makes a commitment and acts on it for the purpose of self-development will be aided. Through social processes in which young people become self-disciplining and independent, they will find success (Bopp et. al, 1984). I interpret this principle to mean, in the modern classroom, that adults should model the desired attitudes and behaviours for students and then guide their practice, with a transfer of responsibility so that students may move toward self-development under their own volition.

A theme that continuously arises in Aboriginal worldview is the importance of experience over knowledge. The Western idea that knowledge is power and its acquisition leads to dominance is unique to Western thinking. The Western worldview places importance predominantly on empirical and physical experience. In contrast, Aboriginal worldview acknowledges the validity of spiritual reality (Atleo, 2004). From the perspective of an Aboriginal worldview, the prevailing assumptions of Western worldview are incomplete because there is little recognition that “the universe is unified, interconnected, and interrelated” which are the assumptions about the physical and spiritual realms found in Nuu-chah-nulth origin stories” (Atleo, 2004, p. xix).

**Storytelling.** Stories are a traditional Aboriginal way to convey information. “Stories go
in circles...it helps if you listen in circles because there are stories inside and between stories and finding your way through them is as easy and as hard as finding your way home” (Wilson, as cited in Tafoya, 1995, p.12). The stories offer unique layers to the listener because the meaning is subjective and based on experience, not knowledge.

Wilson (2008) explained the importance of stories for personal meaning making:

Stories and metaphors are often used in Indigenous societies as a teaching tool. Stories allow listeners to draw their own conclusions and to gain life lessons from a more personal perspective. By getting away from abstractions and rules, stories allow us to see others’ life experiences through our own eyes. This information may then be internalized in a way that is difficult for abstract discussions to achieve. (p. 17)

Wilson demonstrated, through story, the confusion that is a result of cross-cultural misunderstandings. In his story, Coyote, an animal familiar with Aboriginal ways of knowing, learns from the dominant society about Aboriginal education. This story provides cautions that I have addressed in Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview through the use of the Learning Journeys (2003) stories that were developed locally.

Using stories to teach, explain, inquire, and understand the metaphysical and physical world around them was common traditional Aboriginal practice (Atleo, 2004). The stories were typically told in family settings, connected to ancestral storytellers who had heard the original stories, and each story was about home (Atleo, 2004). Each family would have a version of the stories that retained the characters and the principal truths. Questions could be answered through the origin stories that enabled the Nuu-chah-nulth to manage their lives.

Although a story-based approach is not the primary method of teaching in the school system, the value of this delivery cannot be underrated. An important strength of the Learning Journeys (2003) program is the method of delivery through stories, which have enduring characters and principal truths about how to behave. There may be variations in the delivery and
the emphasis of these stories but the characters and lessons are retained.

The importance and significance of storytelling is held with such high esteem in Aboriginal communities that it is fundamental to the way of life. The Learning Journeys (2003) and Restitution (1998) frameworks are mutually reinforcing, in that Restitution can make the lessons in the stories more explicit and provide classroom routines for reflecting on the wisdom in the stories and applying it to situations that children are experiencing. For example, the story about Bear and Eagle sharing spaces is about not pushing each other and respecting each individual’s own space. The addition of Restitution offers the perspective that we are going to make mistakes as we learn how to respect others. Mistakes are part of the process of learning but the opportunity to fix the mistake will help us learn how to respect each other well and be part of a stronger group.

**Becoming an Ally**

Andrea Avayzian (1995) defined an ally as

a member of a dominant group in our society who works to dismantle any form of oppression from which she or he receives the benefit. Allied behavior means taking personal responsibility for the changes we know are needed in our society, and so often ignore or leave to others to deal with. Allied behavior is intentional, overt, consistent activity that challenges prevailing patterns of oppression, makes privileges that are so often invisible visible, and facilitates the empowerment of persons targeted by oppression (para. 3, p.1).

As a young student, I was a member of a privileged dominant group, although my parents were not comfortable with the Eurocentric worldview curriculum. As a teacher, my allied behaviour occurs as I answer the call from Aboriginal scholars to help bring about needed changes in the education of Aboriginal children. My design of the *Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview Curriculum* is meant to interrupt patterns of oppression by supporting teachers as they work toward creating more culturally affirming classrooms. Although I designed the curriculum to
support teachers, the ultimate goal is to empower their Aboriginal students, who can be expected to gain a more positive self-image when they find that their heritage is valued at school.

Avayzian’s (1995) definition of ally answers a question that has troubled me for some time – What is my role as a non-Aboriginal teacher who cares about the success of Aboriginal students? An ally describes who I hope that I am becoming as a result of my efforts to revise a Eurocentric school curriculum to better reflect the wisdom of Aboriginal people. Overall, my intent was to create a more culturally affirming learning environment for Aboriginal students, although I expected that this approach would have benefits for other students as well. My design of the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum is my attempt, as a teacher leader, to bring my professional actions and leadership in line with the deeply held conviction that school classrooms can benefit from Aboriginal wisdom. Taking action as an ally for an oppressed group is, as Avayzian (1995) explained, a way for members of the dominant group to begin to address the overwhelming effects of systemic oppression. It is better to take thoughtful action as an aspiring ally, consulting with Aboriginal people whenever possible, than to remain immobilized and allow injustices to continue unquestioned.

Curriculum Design

Cunningham and Billingsley (2000) defined the curriculum development process as “curriculum making”, as opposed to the curriculum design, the term they used to describe the end result, the product of curriculum development. However, in other current work such as Understanding by Design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) and in the learning-oriented design concept described by Kaser and Halbert (2011), design is the term used to describe the process of planning learning opportunities for both students and colleagues.

My preference for design over development reflects the creativity involved when teachers
choose outcomes, activities, and resources to create curricula for their own classrooms and to share with other teachers. Further, the term describes the effect of implementation and reflection on the redesign of curricula, once teachers observe their students' responses. However, in my approach to this process, I acknowledge the guidelines and criteria for curriculum development emphasized by Cunningham and Billingsley (2000).

Billingsley and Cunningham (2000) noted that the Tyler approach to lesson planning listed seven steps: diagnosis of needs, formulation of objectives, specification of content, organization of content, selection of learning experiences, organization of learning activities and evaluation, and selecting the means of evaluation. These researchers also noted that Taba (as cited in Billingsley and Cunningham, 2000) modified these steps to emphasize the need for teachers to be the primary curriculum developers. Taba's advice affirmed for me the appropriateness of designing the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum through collaboration with another teacher.

According to Cunningham and Billingsley (2000) and confirmed by Wiggins and McTighe (2005), when developing educational objectives for the curriculum, the developer(s) or designer(s) should first consider what students are expected to be able to do and understand rather than the activities or materials that the instructor will use. Additional criteria described by Cunningham and Billingsley and considered as outcomes for the curriculum were that students would develop openness to new experiences and tolerance for diversity, learn to address their own needs, broaden their interests, and identify what is significantly important to them, and receive constructive feedback in the process. Overall, the curriculum was designed to foster the total development of students in cognitive, affective, psychomotor, social, and spiritual domains. The curriculum I designed can be described as humanistic, because it "emphasizes the
development of fully-functioning students, through focus on subjective feeling, perceiving, becoming, valuing, growing” and “encourages the tapping of personal resources of self-understanding, self-concept and personal responsibility” (Billingsley & Cunningham, 2000, p. 59).

Subject matter can also be organized as the center of a curriculum and focused on as a process (Billingsley & Cunningham, 2000). This design feature allows the students to move to increasingly sophisticated models of process that can be varied to meet differing goals.

The educational experiences that I included in the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum were chosen based on criteria recommended by Billingsley and Cunningham (2000). For example, I expected the knowledge and skills students honed by participating in and applying the lessons and their application to transfer to other in-school and out-of-school experiences. In the spirit of learning-oriented design (Kaser & Halbert, 2011), transferable learning was a goal for the teachers who were involved in curriculum design as well.

Billingsly and Cunningham (2000) recommended that educational experiences be organized to reinforce each other. The Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum was designed to encourage application across subject areas and across grade levels, to solidify the concepts and provide a process for student self-monitoring. Students’ individual needs were to be addressed with the variety of stories, attributes, and metaphors that were presented, from which each child could choose to make the meaning needed for his or her situation. This potential for personalized learning, based on each student responding to the animal story or metaphor that was most appealing, was compatible with the Indigenous pedagogy expressed by Elders in The Sacred Tree (Bopp et al., 1989).

I designed the curriculum for this study with the belief that Aboriginal worldview offers
something for all students. It emphasizes self-regulation, a concept recently brought to attention in education by Stuart Shanker (2013). Dr. Dan Seigel (2011), a well-respected child psychologist, echoed Shanker’s emphasis on addressing the whole child to develop self-regulation. Affirmations in current literature of Aboriginal worldview as beneficial for child rearing or teaching are significant. Meyers (2003) reiterated this conviction, “All ideas come from ancient systems and they have helped me learn to think” (p 56).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have reviewed the literature that provided my rationale for bringing an Aboriginal worldview into classrooms in a way that is not additive or superficial (Pattnaik, 2005). I have also reviewed the literature that informed my understanding of Restitution and restorative justice as coherent with an Aboriginal worldview, particularly as expressed in The Sacred Tree (Bopp, et. al., 1989) and the Learning Journeys curriculum mandated by the Kootenay-Columbia school district. I have defined my role as a teacher leader as an ally for Aboriginal learners. The literature presented here is not exhaustive but should inspire confidence in my ability to integrate Restitution and Aboriginal worldview in an appropriate curriculum design.
Chapter III: Two-Staged Professional Inquiry

The method used in this study was professional inquiry (Brown & Cherkowski, 2011; Kaser & Halbert, 2009) conducted in two stages. The first stage was inquiry-based curriculum design to address the problem described in my overall research question: How can a Restitution curriculum that emphasizes an Aboriginal worldview be designed to help teachers feel better equipped to create culturally affirming classrooms for Aboriginal students? I used what I call an integrative design process to develop six lessons that introduced Restitution and emphasized its compatibility with aspects of an Aboriginal Worldview. I developed the lessons to integrate Restitution with the language and concepts found in the locally developed curriculum, Learning Journeys, with attention to the principles of an Aboriginal worldview expressed in The Sacred Tree (Bopp et al., 1989). These lessons made up the first written draft of the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum or program that I hoped would increase teachers’ confidence for including an Aboriginal worldview as an integral part of classroom life.

The method for the second stage of the study, which shifted emphasis toward reflective implementation but also included collaborative revision or redesign of the curriculum, was professional inquiry informed by action research (Brown & Cherkowski, 2011). This part of the inquiry process included cycles of classroom-based action and collaborative reflection during the period in which the lessons were taught and after all lessons had been delivered. In this stage Ms. R. delivered the lessons and she and I considered their impact and application to social or behaviour problems throughout the school day. In our conversations, both formal and informal, we looked for information specific to my three research questions, noting the apparent benefits for students, the teacher learning that had occurred, and ways that the curriculum could be improved.
In this chapter, I describe my research procedure for both the design stage and the implementation stage. In the design stage, I called on the advice of Cunningham and Billingsly (2000) for design guidelines. The chapter closes with a rationale for the research method that I have chosen.

**Stage One: Curriculum Design Process**

When I began this study I was familiar with Restitution routines and strategies as well as with the animal stories of the Learning Journeys program. I also knew many of the students who would receive the new curriculum because I had taught them in their Kindergarten year when the Learning Journeys stories were first introduced. I thought the stories had merit for introducing an Aboriginal worldview as content, in a superficial way, but I did not see a mechanism for helping students apply the lessons of the program to social problems throughout the day. Perhaps this application would have occurred naturally with stories told by Elders in a traditional Aboriginal community.

I developed the purpose of the study with reference to recommendations by Aboriginal scholars – I wanted to develop a curriculum that would support teacher confidence for weaving Aboriginal worldview into their classrooms in more than a superficial way. With reference to the principles described in *The Sacred Tree* (Bopp et al., 1995), I matched key lessons from Restitution with the six stories from Learning Journeys. Figure 1 shows my initial design of the *Restitution as Worldview* curriculum, specifically how I combined the six story lessons from *Learning Journeys* with Restitution mini-lessons or strategies, with attention to the principles of Aboriginal worldview as described in *The Sacred Tree* (Bopp et al., 1989). Examining this anthology of wisdom endorsed by Elders confirmed and enriched my personal understanding of Aboriginal worldview and gave me confidence that the curriculum I had designed was
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Journeys</th>
<th>Restitution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Book One: Working Together          | • Developing Beliefs, Social Contract  
• My Job, Your Job  
• Person I Want to Be          |
| - Salmon                               |                                                                             |
| 2. Book Two: Sharing Spaces            | • Bottom Lines  
• Basic Needs          |
| - Bear, Eagle                          |                                                                             |
• Solidify and extend Beliefs and Basic Needs          |
| - Coyote, Wolf                         |                                                                             |
| 4. Book Four: Accepting Differences    | • Quality World  
• Review Person I Want to Be to re-evaluate the initial vision of self          |
| - Hummingbird, Porcupine               |                                                                             |
| 5. Book Five: Playing and Working      | • Behavior Car  
• Continue Beliefs, Social Contract, and Person I Want to Be          |
| Together                               |                                                                             |
| - Beaver                               |                                                                             |
| 6. Book Six: Care and Respect          | • Review all Restitution concepts or focus on Quality World and use of the Restitution Triangle for problem solving |
| - Mother Earth                         |                                                                             |

*Figure 1. Integrative design of the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum*
As I designed the newly combined lessons, I considered the curriculum development advice provided by Cunningham and Billingsley (2000) and Wiggins and McTighe (2000) regarding beginning with specific outcomes and then choosing activities and assessments. I also considered how to organize the activities so that they would reinforce one another and support new thinking, language use, and behaviours that children could apply to problems beyond the lessons. The design stage ended when I presented the draft curriculum to Ms. R. before teaching and she selected activities that she believed would provide opportunities for students to develop thinking skills and a greater understanding of their own existence as individuals and members of the group. However, design continued in the revision of the curriculum that occurred in the classroom, as Ms. R. made decisions about what to repeat, emphasize, or omit, and during and after implementation, as Ms. R. and I reflected on how the curriculum could be revised for sharing with other teachers.

**Stage Two: Reflective Implementation Process**

Between lessons and after the lessons were delivered by Ms. R. during the first half of the school year, Ms. R. and I had four formal meetings to describe and make sense of our observations of children’s responses to the language and activities. We also had short informal meetings that I made note of in my journal. In this implementation stage, there were two main sources of data: a) the transcripts from formal collaborative meetings, and b) reflective journals kept by Ms. R. and by me. The journal entries were recorded soon after classroom events and provided insights to discuss at the collaborative meetings as well as quotes to strengthen the trustworthiness of my written account of the study.

I extended an invitation to participate in this inquiry to early year (grades 1 – 3) teachers in BC School District #20, Kootenay-Columbia. My rationale for focusing on the early years was
that this school district has mandated the locally developed *Learning Journey* curriculum in all kindergarten classes. This meant that some of the language and concepts of Aboriginal knowledge would likely be familiar to students and teachers.

I had hoped for a group of participants, who would implement the program in their schools and meet to reflect together on the outcomes. However, only one teacher, Ms. R., expressed interest in participating in the study. The lack of response may have occurred because the school district had several change initiatives operating at the time and teachers were feeling overloaded. Restitution may have been unfamiliar to teachers the area or potential participants may not have seen a need for incorporating an Aboriginal worldview into their classroom curricula. In any case, I decided to proceed with the study with one willing participant.

In this study, a twelve-week period of curriculum implementation was interspersed with formal and informal collaborative meetings between the participant and me. We had one formal meeting before the implementation of the program, to review the lesson drafts that I developed and to make changes that Ms. R. thought would make the lessons more effective for her students. Two additional meetings were held during implementation to discuss the benefits and problems of implementation as well as outcomes for both students and the teacher. We had a fourth and final meeting after all six lessons had been taught. Our four formal meetings were scheduled for one to two hours, as recommended by Brown and Cherkowski (2011). I was also available at other times for less formal consultation, including questions and clarifications.

Curriculum implementation began early in the school year and our final meeting was held on January 9th, 2013. A focus of the discussions in our collaborative meetings was the participant’s perceptions of the value of the curriculum for herself and her students and of her developing knowledge, comfort, and willingness to bring an Aboriginal worldview to her
classroom. I encouraged Ms. R. to refer to her journal entries as she described the evolution of her understanding of Aboriginal worldview and of Restitution and how they could be woven into the routines and social fabric of her classroom. Artifacts such as video, audio recording, and work samples also informed the reflective conversations that were recorded as data.

In my own Inquiry Journal, I recorded actual events as well as my response to those events. During formal meetings, Ms. R. and I drew on our journal entries and other artifacts to describe and interpret student responses to the lessons and their application throughout the school day. My discussions with Ms. R. focused on what she had taught since the last meeting and the student responses, benefits, or problems that she had noted. In our later meetings, we discussed how the *Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview* program might be improved and we identified changes in our own knowledge or attitudes about creating culturally affirming classrooms. Some of the discussion that occurred in our meetings caused us to revise the draft curriculum to its current form, as presented in Appendix D.

**Rationale for Research Method**

Although professional inquiry can be a valuable tool for a teacher’s personal learning, an inquiry becomes leadership when it is collaborative and the lead researcher is a participant, which was my role in this study. Professional inquiry was an appropriate method for this study because it provided the participating teachers, Ms. R., and myself, an opportunity to expand our understanding of how to bring an Aboriginal worldview to the classroom with the support of a colleague. Although most other research methods are conducted outside of classrooms to produce suggestions about what to do, professional inquiry is uniquely suited to help teachers learn about how to bring about desired changes in their own classrooms. Teachers’ personal and professional learning becomes research when it is conducted systematically in response to a
literature review and classroom needs and the new understandings are shared with members of
the professional community, as in this study.

I believe that teachers who choose and combine learning outcomes, activities, and
assessment tools purposefully to achieve specific goals can perform inquiry-based curriculum
design. This work becomes research when it is documented thoughtfully and data and reflection
are shared with other educators to contribute to a common pool of knowledge. This creative
process is an extension of lesson and unit planning but it is more oriented to addressing gaps in
the existing curriculum through innovative solutions (W. Brown, personal communication, May
15, 2013). The inquiry begins when the teacher identifies a problem or learning opportunity and
continues as he or she seeks information on potential solutions, programs, or approaches and
adapts them for the classroom. The inquiry is ongoing as the designer considers whether each
component of the new curriculum will bring about intended outcomes and how they should be
organized for maximum benefit. In this design process, as in any lesson planning, matching
instructional methods to students’ developmental levels and other needs is as important as
choosing the curriculum content.

Professional inquiry as empowerment. Wilson (2008) asserted that researchers “can
use methods and forms of expression that we judge to be valid for ourselves” (p. 14). Although
this message was meant for Indigenous researchers, the concept of validity based on experience
is also significant for teachers. Teachers’ professional experience, enlightened with relevant
literature and systematic, self-critical reflection and collaboration, brought a similar kind of
experiential validity to this inquiry. I applied Wilson’s encouraging words to give me confidence
in my own ability to interpret student and teacher responses and generate knowledge that could
be useful beyond our classroom. In this way, professional inquiry became empowering by
broadening the limits of who could be trusted to produce knowledge and what methods could be viewed as credible. This empowering aspect of professional inquiry draws on the traditions of Indigenous research as well as those of critical action research (Manfra, 2009).

**Contributing to the community.** Meyers (2003) emphasized the importance of making a contribution to the community in Indigenous research. “Research for us is not simply about asking ‘burning questions’ we wish to resolve, but rather, we are answering a call to be of use” (Meyers, 2003, p.54). This sentiment resonates with the issues of Indigenous education that funnel inward, beginning with global issues, then provincial and local issues, and finally focusing on individual student needs. This study meets Meyer’s call for usefulness because it addresses a lack of resources for implementing an Aboriginal Worldview in classrooms: a basic resource, the *Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview* curriculum, was produced and has been shared with other teachers in this document and elsewhere. In this study I also modeled, for other teachers, integrative design and reflective implementation of a new approach. I hope this modeling will encourage teacher leaders to embrace inquiry as a strategy for professional learning that is valuable beyond their own classrooms.

The focus on Restitution in this study was motivated by the idea that from a mistake, healing and teaching emerge. This notion, common to Restitution (1998) and Aboriginal worldview, encouraged me not to simply name and study a problem but to search for direction and possible solutions. An inquiry that drew on action research traditions offered the solution-focused approach that was compatible with both Restitution and the healing orientation of an Aboriginal worldview. Even if the potential solution had not been successful, trying to understand the lack of expected success could result in learning.

To summarize, the professional inquiry method allowed Ms. R. and I to generate
knowledge that was drawn from our experience, was compatible with the literature, and could be useful to other professionals for its focus on the often neglected how question. Using this method, this study went beyond advocacy for a particular pedagogic approach to explore and share the complexities of implementation. Our focus on reflective implementation in a particular context provided a model of inquiry for other teachers to use when designing or adopting curricula for their own contexts. This modeling would not have been provided if another research method had been used. Further, this study became an act of leadership as I facilitated inquiry and collaboration to make the traditionally private practice of teaching more public. My collaboration with Ms. R., reported publicly, worked against the common culture of isolation in teaching and contributed to a growing culture of inquiry (Kaser & Halbert, 2011).

My voice as an ally. Meyers (2003) observed that in research there is an inextricable voice that is behind the data and conclusions. This statement acknowledges the subjectivity or personal meaning that is evident in Indigenous research and in some other forms of qualitative research, including action research and professional inquiry. The influence of Indigenous research methods on the design of my study provided an opportunity for me to position myself in the research. Bias was not eliminated but addressed by including the words of my participant and comparing our insights thoughtfully with the literature.

In spite of my upbringing in close proximity to Nuu-chal-nulth communities and people, being non-Indigenous inevitably placed me on the outside of Aboriginal culture and experience. My role as a teacher ignites my moral purpose but I know that I will be an outsider in Aboriginal communities, regardless of my familiarity with the people and their historic problems and no matter how strong my desire to rectify injustices. Hopefully, Aboriginal people—students, parents, educators, and scholars—can see me as their ally. Presenting a public account of my
goals, beliefs, actions, and reflections in this study opens them to be critiqued by Aboriginal people, which is appropriate because the designation of ally is theirs to give.

The influence of Indigenous research. Indigenous methodology, knowledge, and pedagogy face the challenge of being measured against the dominant society's parameters when evaluations are made. Unfortunately there can be the assumption that if the Aboriginal population were given the same economic and environmental conditions, they would be able to "rise" to the level of the dominant society (Wilson, 2008). My study has acknowledged an achievement gap between the Aboriginal learners and the rest of the population. However the discrepancy and disconnect is inherent the system, not in individual learners. An assumption behind this study is that if all learners understood Aboriginal worldview, there would be an opportunity for an increase of self-esteem and pride in culture for Aboriginal students and greater respect for diversity by other students. Therefore, this study fulfills Wilson's (2008) criteria to use an "Indigenous research paradigm (to) lead to a better understanding of and provision for, the needs of Indigenous peoples" (p. 20).

Atkinson (as cited in Wilson, 2008) used a set of criteria to guide her Indigenous research, which I also considered for the method and procedure of this study. First, Aboriginal peoples themselves must approve of the research and the research methods (p.59). School and school district personnel, including the Aboriginal education worker, the Aboriginal Cultural Integration teacher, and the Aboriginal Cultural Coordinator had all been involved in the design of the Learning Journeys program and were also invited to participate in this study. Although they declined to participate for various reasons, including workload, they approved of the study as I described it to them.

I recognize also the importance of Aboriginal Elders guiding initiatives related to
Aboriginal worldview, and ideally this consultation would have been part of this study. However, I was new to the area and relatively new to teaching. I did not have support to work with Elders and there was no formalized process in my school district to guide me. Unfortunately, I did not have the contacts or confidence to approach local Elders. Additionally, with the official "extinct" status of the Sinixt people and the lack of a unified Aboriginal community in my area, I did not know where to make contact with local Elders. I hoped that the input of Elders into the Learning Journey's program and using *The Sacred Tree* (Bopp et al., 1989) as a key resource would help to legitimize my work. The participation of one or more Elders would be an important next step as I continue to develop and share the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum.

Another of Atkinson's (as cited in Wilson, 2008) criteria for quality Indigenous research is that the researcher appreciates the knowledge of the community and the diverse and unique contribution of each individual (p. 59). Thinking of the classroom as a community consisting of teacher(s) and students, the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum uses story and metaphor to allow for students' personal interpretation and application. In keeping with Aboriginal traditions of respect and non-interference, the curriculum was designed to provide strategies to help students and the teachers act in harmony with their own beliefs. In my approach to sharing the curriculum, my view is not imposed as the right one but offered to teachers to consider its merit for themselves. Overall, the purpose of the study rests on an appreciation for Aboriginal traditional knowledge, as confirmed by Elders from across the continent in *The Sacred Tree* (Bopp et al., 1989) and for local knowledge as expressed in Learning Journeys. Regrettably, there was no Aboriginal educator, parent, or Elder available to participate in my study. However, in a subsequent round of inquiry to develop the Restitution as
Aboriginal Worldview curriculum further for other settings and possibly grade levels as well, this limitation may be addressed.

Atkinson (as cited in Wilson, 2008) advised that studies should include ways of relating and acting within a community with an understanding of the principles of *reciprocity* and *responsibility* (p.59). Reciprocity is present in this study in that the end result, the draft curriculum, is offered as a contribution to the Aboriginal and educational communities. As a researcher, I feel gratitude for the wisdom that has been shared with me and I want to give back to the community responsibly rather than take information for my study without offering reciprocal gifts. Although I am a newcomer to the territory of the Sinixt people where I conducted my study, I believe that I have a respectful and appreciative relationship with the Nuu-chal-nulth people who lived where I grew up and to Aboriginal people across the continent whose worldview is expressed in *The Sacred Tree* (Bopp et al., 1989). My sense of responsibility means that I am vigilant to ensure that my research activities bring no harm to Aboriginal people. It appears that reciprocity and responsibility are also among the criteria for a non-Aboriginal person who aspires to be considered an ally of Aboriginal people.

Atkinson (as cited in Wilson, 2008) wrote that it is important for research participants to feel safe and be safe (p.59). I honored confidentiality and other requirements of the university Research Ethics Board (REB). As a classroom observer, I took care to not be intrusive and to cause no disruption to Ms. R.’s work with her students. Our discussions occurred after the lessons were over.

Aboriginal wisdom helped me with my data collection process, as I found myself observing in the classroom and attending to Ms. R.’s comments in meetings with the “deep listening” and “hearing with more than the ears” that I have heard Aboriginal storytellers
describe. A reflective, non-judgmental consideration of what I had seen and heard was employed in the process. This self-critical behaviour aligns with what Atkinson recommended as important guidelines for conducting Indigenous research.

I considered all of these criteria throughout my reflection process. Through reading, journaling, conversation throughout the study, and the revision of the curriculum, I was constantly aware of preserving right relationships. The relationships to ideas, to individuals, and to groups of people that this study brought to me were all important areas for reflection. To my knowledge, the study has been designed and conducted respectfully and without doing harm.

**Action research.** Action research in education has been described as “systematic procedures done by teachers to gather information about, and subsequently improve, the ways their particular educational setting operates, their teaching, and their student learning” (Creswell, 2008, p. 597). The focus of *practical* action research is to improve teaching practices in response to a specific problem (Manfra, 2009). In contrast, *critical* action research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, Kincheloe, 1995), focuses on social change to improve life conditions for marginalized groups: Teachers are encouraged to “investigate the social, cultural, and political contexts of schooling in the pursuit of more democratic schools and society” (Manfra, 2009, p. 32).

However, Manfra (2009) warned that the dichotomy of practical and critical action research is a “tyrannical myth” that “has [falsely] divided teacher inquiry into two discrete categories” (p. 33). She declared that because both practical and critical concerns are woven through teachers’ lives, both should be open to their professional inquiry, formalized as action research. Manfra proposed that action research by teachers should explore middle ground, where practical and critical issues merge.
Examples of this middle ground work may be found in the action research or inquiry networks that connect teachers through their common concern for improved teaching (practical action research) for equity (critical action research) or success for all students. Such networks have included the Madison Metropolitan School District initiative that resulted in an anthology of action research reports published under the title, *Creating Equitable Classrooms Through Action Research* (Caro-Bruce, Flessner, Klehr, & Zeichner, 2007). A Canadian example is the Network of Inquiry and Innovation (NOII) in British Columbia, which is built on the mantra, “Every learner crossing the stage with dignity, purpose, and options” (NOII, n.d). On this middle ground, action research can empower individuals to study their actions so that future actions will be more effective (Schmuck, 2006).

**Professional inquiry informed by action research.** In the first stage of my study, my integrative curriculum design process consisted of a careful review of the Restitution and Aboriginal Worldview literature, followed by construction of lesson materials that reflected the principles found in that literature. In the second stage, my research method was collaborative professional inquiry, informed by cycles of action and reflection. This method was pertinent because, as Brown and Cherowski (2011) stated, “inquiry is most effective when it is *purposeful*, or emerging from real community need” (p.65). I am a teacher who recognizes the need to include Aboriginal perspectives in classrooms, making the inquiry approach purposeful in both a practical and a critical sense. This approach encouraged input from the participating teacher and facilitated her subjective meaning making as well as her acquisition of knowledge. Fullan (2007) argued that personal meaning making by those who must implement change is essential to achieving changes that are sustainable.

Further, as Brown (2011) described, the benefits of a teacher inquiry approach can
transfer to student success and more specifically, "improved attitude toward the subject" (p. 65) for both student and teacher. Having positive attitudes toward Aboriginal worldview is an important element in ensuring success of the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum, which makes this particular research approach well suited for this study. The action component enabled the teacher to participate in cycles of action and reflection, which helped her to move toward double loop learning (Smith, 2001) and a more transformative learning experience (Cranston, 2003).

The professional inquiry platform described by Brown and Cherkowski (2011) includes a four-stage cycle of action and reflection. These four steps include wholeness, awareness, meaning, and commitment. These steps enrich the typical action research cycle of plan, do, reflect, and revise to facilitate a greater orientation to collaboration among colleagues and the development of convictions, or strong beliefs that will support changes in practice. This platform or approach to professional inquiry situated my teacher participant and myself as collaborative learners and was informed by three prominent school improvement themes: (a) creative tension; (b) single and double loop learning; and (c) the need for new beliefs to sustain new practices (Brown & Cherkowski, 2011, p. 63).

The concept of double loop learning played a vital role in my study because teacher development and institutional change was the primary purpose. As evidence of teacher development, I examined the data for conversation that revealed a substantial change in thinking, to indicate that double loop learning (Brown and Cherkowski, 2011) or transformative learning (Cranston, 2003) had occurred and would be likely to sustain changes in practice (Fullan, 2007). Wilson (2008) pointed out that an essential aspect of Indigenous research is inherent relationship building between the researcher and the subjects (Wilson, 2008). Action research,
when it is both practical and critical, includes relational accountability through the processes of collaboration and joint reflection. The outcome of the collaboration in this study “is to gain a closeness or familiarity with a group, [Ms. R.. and the students], through taking part in their day-to-day activities over a long period of time” (Wilson, 2008, p. 40).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have described my research process for the two stages of the study: (a) the curriculum design stage, and (b) the reflective implementation stage. I explained how action research and Indigenous research methods have informed my approach to design-based and action-based professional inquiry, which I see as empowering teachers to generate valuable knowledge. I have provided a rationale for adopting this method, drawing on emerging traditions of Indigenous research and on a new conception of the mid-ground between practical and critical action research.
Chapter IV: Data Analysis

In this chapter I review the events that led to this study that occurred in one grade one and two classroom in BC School District #20. Next I note the process of curriculum design that unfolded differently than I had expected when I began working with Ms. R. The main body of this chapter contains data that leads to the new understandings that I developed in response to each of my three research questions, which I developed before the study to use as predetermined categories for analysis. However, I have changed the order of the questions, to construct a more accessible account of the inquiry for readers: I begin with data that illustrated that teacher learning occurred, then move to a discussion of the success of the curriculum for student learning, and finally note suggestions for an improved curriculum.

To preview the overall findings of the study, I present evidence that the curriculum was successful in terms of student responses and teacher learning, although there were some surprises in both areas and there are some remaining questions. It was interesting to note that Ms. R. found that the Restitution strategies made her feel calmer when dealing with disruptive student behaviours and that she shifted from trying to eliminate social issues among the children to accepting them as inevitable learning opportunities. Ms. R. and I did not expect how strongly the children would internalize the animal stories from Learning Journeys and call on them for self-management outside of the lessons. I interpret teacher learning and student learning as evidence of the success of the program for achieving the intended outcomes of the BC Health and Careers curriculum; many students surpassed the required ability to “understand” or “describe” social and emotional management strategies and actually demonstrated their use in real situations.

However, a question that remains is whether students needed to understand that the information and skills they were developing had their roots in an Aboriginal worldview. In this study, we did
not make that connection explicitly for students and even in our final reflection on the data we were not sure whether it was important to do so.

**Events Leading to the Study**

In the planning stage of the study, I was a *Teacher on Call* (TOC) in School District 20 and working in many elementary classrooms across the district. Working in a variety of schools provided opportunities for casual conversations with primary teachers about their current understanding of Restitution and of how and why an Aboriginal worldview might be brought into primary classrooms. My TOC assignments were also occasions for me to build relationships with primary teachers in this school district. This interaction laid the groundwork for my study and for sharing the new understandings that developed through inquiry once the study was completed.

In November, 2011, I began a contract on Thursday afternoons and Fridays in a kindergarten classroom, which was extended to full time in January, 2012. During the time that I held this position, I used Restitution strategies to teach and support student self-management and I taught the Learning Journeys curriculum to the Kindergarten students. I began to see how the two programs might blend together well to be a vivid expression of Aboriginal worldview in the classroom. I also participated in an inquiry group facilitated by School District 20, Kootenay Columbia Teacher’s Union (KCTU) and the British Columbia Teacher’s Federation (BCTF), entitled *Differentiating Learning for Aboriginal Students*. During this time, I was working across the hall from the grade one/two teacher, Ms. R., who would later offer to participate in the study.

When I looked for participants for the study, Ms. R. was the only teacher who responded to my invitation to participate. I can only speculate on the reasons for the low interest. A possible hindrance may have been the pressure that teachers feel when school and district administrators
ask them to implement a variety of new programs. It is also possible that teachers did not see this study as relevant to their work because the Aboriginal student population in the district is composed of various nations and the local Sinixt peoples have been declared extinct. The *Aboriginal Cultural Integration Teacher* suggested that the title of Restitution might have caused challenges in recruitment because of its association with the justice system. Whatever the reasons, I secured only one participant. However, because of this participant’s eagerness, I believed that the two of us could conduct a successful study.

**Curriculum Design**

When I designed the *Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview* curriculum, I reviewed literature on Restitution, Learning Journeys, universal Aboriginal worldview, and local Sinixt history. All of these readings affirmed my belief that the principles of Restitution were coherent with traditional Aboriginal child-rearing practices and an Aboriginal worldview that was locally relevant. Using the knowledge I had gained through the review of this literature and my understanding of curriculum design based on the advice of Cunningham and Billingsley (2000) and Wiggins and McTighe (2004), I selected and combined lessons from the Restitution Kit and Learning Journeys and adapted the Restitution lessons for young students.

Initially I created what I considered to be a skeletal outline of the lessons as a starting point for discussions with participants about how they would like to see the curriculum developed further. When the decision had been made to proceed with the study with one participant, I emailed Ms. R. my outline, which consisted of the concepts and strategies of Restitution as they related to each of the Learning Journeys stories. However, when we had our first formal meeting, before Ms. R. began implementing the curriculum in her classroom, she seemed more interested in obtaining clarification of the lessons as presented.
Ms. R. did make some planning suggestions, for example:

_I think it would be beneficial to have pictures of animals with simple and clear language underneath to display in the room, for example, “Take a Bear Breath”, or “Do What You Can”_ (RJ, Dec., 2012).

Ms. R. also selected, from the activities I had suggested, those that she believed would help to develop positive personal identities, self-reflective skills, and a social environment conducive to learning. However, it was clear that Ms. R. was more comfortable following the suggested lessons and making modifications as she was teaching them. We discussed these modifications in subsequent formal meetings, paying close attention to these decision points (Brown & Cherkowski, 2011) as an indication of teacher learning. Although curriculum revision did not occur as I expected, prior to teaching and as a result of collaborative dialogue with me, valuable adaptations were made to show that Ms. R. felt a degree of ownership of the lessons and confidence in her judgment about how they could be most effective for her students.

**The Classroom and Students**

For the 2012-2013 school year in which the study occurred, I was hired 0.25 to team-teach with four teachers of grades one to three for literacy or Language Arts instruction. One of the classrooms I was assigned at the end of September was Ms. R.'s class, for two periods a week. This placement provided the unique opportunity for me to observe students' responses to the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum, to use the language of Restitution and Learning Journeys with the students, and to hear them using that language among themselves.

The grade one/two classroom where Ms. R. and I taught is located in BC School District 20, Kootenay-Columbia. The school is a designated inner city school and many of the students live with the circumstances of poverty. Three students in the class were designated as having extreme/moderate behaviors. Four students had been in Ms. R.'s class the previous year. The
number of students with Aboriginal heritage was five. It is valuable to note that the specific
nation, clan, or ancestry for these five students was not available, which is not uncommon in this
school.

Evidence of Teacher Learning

This study was concerned primarily with teacher learning, which depended to a degree on
the teacher’s reflections related to student learning. For both, learning refers to the development
of understanding (Wiggins & McTighe, 2004) and the ability to apply knowledge and skills
flexibly in new situations. Learning begins when individuals are receptive to new information,
which Ms. R. and I described in our conversations and journals as connecting to or attaching to
new ideas, terminology, or skills. When learners have internalized new information, they not
only use it proficiently and flexibly but it becomes a lasting part of their identity. In this way,
internalizing new information is similar to individual double loop learning (Argyris, as cited in
Smith, 2001) and to transformative learning (Cranton, 1994; Cranton & King, 2003).

In this study, I assumed that teacher learning occurred when there was evidence of
change in a teacher’s practices or beliefs. Evidence consisted of observation of new teaching
practices, including use of language and strategies or routines, and of the teacher’s descriptions
of the changes that she believed had occurred. Change in practice can be thought of as single
loop learning and corresponding changes in beliefs, which are required to make the changes in
practices last over time (Fullan, 2007), are identified as double loop learning (Argyris, as cited in
Smith, 2011). Double loop learning, as described in the organizational literature, is a deeper and
more sustainable change, similar to transformative learning (Cranton, 1994; Cranton & King,
2003), which is the terminology used for deep and sustained learning in the adult learning
literature.
In this study, I envisioned a curriculum and collaborative implementation that would facilitate double loop learning or transformative change for the teacher participant. I hoped that changes in her practice and beliefs would be more lasting than this single delivery of the curriculum to a specific group of students. However, I was reluctant to use the term "transformation" to describe her learning because, as it is commonly used, such phrasing could imply that Ms. R. was not already a competent teacher with beliefs and practices appropriate for her students, and that was not the case. However, as an academic term, transformational learning does not imply a transition from incompetence to competence but a transition to a different way of thinking and behaving that the person herself believes is more appropriate. In this sense, Ms. R.'s learning can be described as transformational without criticizing her previous beliefs and skills.

There were several indications that Ms. R. gained confidence as she implemented the curriculum and also that she experienced shifts in her practices and beliefs that were compatible with an Aboriginal worldview. I have documented evidence of her learning in four areas: 1) increasing confidence with reflective curriculum design, 2) internalizing Restitution language and processes, 3) shifting from attempting to control student behaviour to facilitating social learning, and 4) developing understanding of an Aboriginal worldview.

Confidence with reflective curriculum design. In our second formal meeting, I noticed that Ms. R. deferred to me as the “expert”. This was not an unreasonable role for me because my preparation for the study included extensive reading and attending workshops on Restitution. However, it was not the collaborative role that I had intended. When it became clear that Ms. R. was worried about whether the curriculum was appropriate for her students’ developmental level, I had an opportunity to explain my intention that we would collaborate on developing the
curriculum from the outline I had provided. With that explanation Ms. R. remained hesitant and still looked to me with questions about how to proceed and what to teach.

However, these initial uncertainties faded later in the study after classroom implementation was well underway and Ms. R. saw that students were able to grasp the concepts. Ms. R. implemented the Needs portion of the curriculum and adapted it so that she was satisfied that it was developmentally appropriate. After teaching, she told me, enthusiastically, “They just get this now. They can tell you all of the Needs just like that!” (Informal Communication, Dec. 18th, 2012). This line of thinking led me to ask her, later in the study, about the goal she had set in September, 2012, to have uneventful days. I asked if she still had the same goal. Ms. R. responded, “I guess my goal would be to get them to take more ownership of the Restitution language; yeah, I’ll change it to that” (Collaborative Meeting, Jan. 9th, 2013). This seemingly casual comment marked a significant transformation, Ms. R.’s shift from believing that it was her responsibility to control students, which was stressful for her, to the more relaxed role of helping children learn from their social problems.

When I inquired whether Ms. R. would be comfortable sharing the material at a professional development day or with other teachers, she was hesitant. “I would, but I am not ready to do that yet, I still have to make it my own and probably spend another year or two and see how things work” (CM, Jan. 9th, 2013). Although Ms. R. showed apprehension about assuming a leadership role with this curriculum, it was clear she had every intention of continuing to use and develop the program and will eventually share it with confidence.

It was worth noting that when Ms. R. discussed her participation in the study with another teacher, that teacher approached me and asked if I could implement the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview program during the 80 minutes a week that I was in her classroom. I
interpreted it as a sign of teacher learning that Ms. R. had come to believe in the curriculum enough to share news of it so positively with another teacher. Finally, a strong indicator of Ms. R.'s belief change, or commitment to an ongoing reflective approach to the new curriculum, is that she applied to participate in a BC Network of Inquiry and Innovation (NOII) inquiry project regarding Aboriginal worldview and Restitution for the 2013 – 2014 school year. In this network of inquiring teachers, Ms. R. will continue with classroom experimentation to build on what we have learned so far. At the end of the inquiry she will share her learning with other teachers in a public venue at the local and possibly the provincial level.

**Internalizing Restitution language and processes.** Ms. R. began internalizing the language and processes of Restitution early in the study, perhaps because the behaviour management needs in her class were so great, or possibly because Restitution thinking was already familiar to her. She said, "I love the Restitution; I think I always taught that way but now it's clear cut and it's nice to have a script to go through. I makes me calmer" (Collaborative Meeting, Sept. 21st). By the end of the study, Ms. R. articulated her intention to continue to use Restitution language.

As I worked with Ms. R., I noticed that it had become common for her to use Restitution phrases throughout the day with her students, for example, “It's okay to make a mistake but what are you going to do to fix it?” Ms. R. also referred children to the stories for help with solving problems at times other than when they were presented in lessons.

I tried to touch on the idea of a quality world. I said: “Would you like to live in a world with the animals we have met and learned about?” The students said 'yes' and when I asked why, they explained because they are all trying to be nice to each other. I then stated, that is a good quality world, we can learn from the animals and create the same thing in our classroom (RJ, Dec., 2012).

Her method of closely linking the concepts from Learning Journeys and Restitution provided
even deeper connections than I had outlined in the draft curriculum.

I think Restitution and the animal’s stories fit so nicely together. I have been teaching it in an intertwining fashion. When a student has a problem, and I go through the language (that is, what was the problem, how can we fix the mistake, and so on.) I might at the same time say: “You could have taken a bear breath, or shared like Wolf” (RJ, Dec. 2012).

In the last collaborative meeting, when I asked about what had changed in her teaching, Ms. R. summarized her developing proficiency with the language of Restitution and her commitment to it:

...basically the main premise of Restitution. So what was the problem? What can you do to fix it? What will you do in the future? How can you fix it? How can you make it better, I use that every single day, probably fifteen times a day, every time there is an issue. Maybe the wording is different every time and maybe a different approach to it every time, but that main premise of you made a mistake and you need to pay for it, and you need to fix it (CM, Jan. 9, 2013).

It was clear that Ms. R. had internalized the Restitution language and integrated it daily into her teaching practice, although more work with the concepts may deepen her understanding further. I interpreted her developing proficiency with the language as first order change but the commitment she expressed indicated that a second order, transformative change was occurring as well.

However, Ms. R. did comment that the ideas in Restitution were not unfamiliar to her.

I would 100% do the Restitution again, that will be my new philosophy. It always was my philosophy, but now it’s just clearer to me now and I have a few more options with it now. I will always use the restitution, I like it and it just made things a little more clear-cut or, solidified it for me (CM, Jan.9, 2013).

This response showed a different pattern than what is often expected in teacher learning. It is a common assumption that reflection on changes in practice may bring about the changes in beliefs necessary to sustain those practices (Fullan, 2007). Alternately, Ms. R. seemed to have the beliefs to support Restitution but those beliefs remained dormant until she acquired new
practices to enact them. Until she had internalized Restitution practice, it seemed that Ms. R. had not been teaching in accordance with her most deeply held beliefs about how children should be treated and how they should be taught to interact with each other.

**Shifting from controlling to supporting social learning.** Ms. R. noted early in the study that the curriculum was helping her to feel more equipped to deal with behaviors, which she re-emphasized in our collaborative meeting in January.

I feel calmer when something happens and I know how to handle it every single time now, whereas before I might have thought, what do I do...[send the child to the] office? Deal with it myself? Is it crossing a line? Now I go through the Restitution first. It’s my first go to. Then there are still some big problems, and if it’s escalating beyond what I can handle with the other 21 kids then you know, that still happens. But I feel calmer.

During our final conversation, a transition from trying to control students to helping them learn self-management was evident:

> You are making me think about this a lot too. Before I felt like good classroom management meant there were no issues and I feel like this [curriculum] sort of allows for mistakes to happen, that’s part of the learning process. People get upset, make mistakes, people hit people and that’s okay that that happens, but the more important part is what do we do to fix it? That’s why I feel more confident because before I felt like I have to keep everything under wraps and none of this can go on. But it can and does go on and we can’t pretend that it doesn’t and you hope that it gets less and less as they have more strategies, but it can happen, but now we have a way to address it.

Although the benefits for using Restitution to increase students’ self-management are commonly referred to at Restitution workshops, this effect of the teacher feeling calmer and therefore more competent was an unanticipated result.

**Understanding an Aboriginal worldview.** As we were discussing the components of Aboriginal worldview that were evident in the curriculum, I could see a transition happening. At first Ms. R. did not see the importance in reading all of the stories of Learning Journeys:

> The animals I really do like, because the kids really like them. But I probably wouldn’t do all of them, just do the ones: bear, because the bear breath is so important to calm
down, I would probably do the salmon, do the coyote and the wolf, it’s important for sharing and their age. I do like the hummingbird, I would probably do them, but not as extensively (CM, Jan. 9, 2013).

Then later, I was explaining how pertinent storytelling was in Aboriginal culture.

Storytelling in Aboriginal culture is so important because you take what you need from the story at different times in your life. But like because you said, one child attaches to the hummingbird and relates and connects (CM, Jan. 9, 2013).

This explanation was not an effort to persuade but in fact was confirming the participant’s sentiment that some of the stories had extensive value for the students. She then modified her previous statement.

Even as we are talking, I said I wouldn’t have done all the animals, but maybe I should re-think that because maybe a child would need an animal that doesn’t connect with me, but it might be what they need to hear. If you throw them all out there then they can use what they need (CM, Jan. 9, 2013).

Through this statement, she demonstrated a belief change about the value of the stories, to a way of thinking more consistent with the way stories are interpreted subjectively for personal growth in Aboriginal culture, as described in The Sacred Tree (Bopp et al., 1989). This example could also be interpreted as illustrating a move away from control because Ms. R. was moving toward accepting students’ choices as to which material was most personally relevant. This orientation to student choice and meaning making may not yet be common in classrooms but there is a growing body of literature on the need for student engagement that supports such a shift (for example, Dunleavy & Milton, 2010).

When discussing the components of Aboriginal worldview in the curriculum, Ms. R. explained: “I didn’t use the term First Nations, I just talked about the animals, they are part of the Aboriginal curriculum, but I didn’t explicitly say that (to the students)” (Collaborative Meeting, Jan. 9th, 2013). It was only at this point I realized we had not discussed describing the lesson content to the students as Aboriginal and I felt unsure about whether it was necessary to
do so explicitly. I explained to Ms. R. that when the Aboriginal Cultural Coordinator teaches the Learning Journeys lessons in kindergarten, "she does specifically say 'this is an Aboriginal drawing' or 'we' used this feather so only one person talked at a time" (Collaborative Meeting, Jan. 9th, 2013). Ms. R.'s response was interesting:

I would be willing to add it in but I don't think it's necessary. I think the kids can make that connection, when the time comes. For example, if they saw the button blanket in the math book and it has a salmon on it, I think they'll say 'that's like the salmon from our stories'. I did put the Aboriginal drawings of the animals in the mini-books they did (CM, Jan. 9th, 2013).

Initially, this statement indicated to me that Ms. R. did not value the Aboriginal component of the curriculum, as I had hoped she would, and that she had not fully integrated an Aboriginal worldview in her teaching. However, further in our conversation, I realized that the Aboriginal Cultural Coordinator in kindergarten had initially introduced all of the students to Learning Journeys, so perhaps Ms. R.'s assumption that the children already understood where the stories came from was accurate.

This conversation led me to ask, "I believe that you are implementing Aboriginal worldview more comfortably, do you agree?" (Collaborative Meeting, Jan. 9th, 2013). She agreed and then described a previous teaching experience:

Absolutely! And if I were to do this up North, they live a lot of the traditional ways of life, eat traditional foods etc. I could bring this into the classroom, and not explicitly state it, because it is just a way of life. So maybe it is more important to say it's Aboriginal here because the kids don't have that reference (CM, Jan. 9th, 2013).

Once again, as a result of reflective dialogue, Ms. R.'s perspective seemed to shift. I was still unclear as to whether identifying the curriculum teachings as Aboriginal was necessary. I contributed the following to the conversation:

It's an interesting thing what we explicitly say to kids. You knowing it, maybe you feel a level a comfort that you didn't need to explain it to them. Maybe its just language to them at this point, to say that 'this is Aboriginal' or: These are good positive ideas and my
teacher supports it. I know because there is a picture up, and then they go to grade ten and they are introduced to the history of Aboriginal people, they are going to, 'oh, Ms. R. had a positive view of this, I feel good about this.' And maybe we break that cycle of racism, because teachers are positively identifying with Aboriginal culture (Collaborative Meeting, Jan.9th, 2013).

Although our conversation explored the possible positive long-term effects of the curriculum, we still continued to wonder how much explanation should be offered to the students. Ms. R. talked about her increased comfort with the material, without direct reference to Aboriginal culture:

It's not the scary unknown. I am just going to talk about the animals and I am not worried about saying the politically correct thing, I don't know the wording. I think you're right if I have a positive view and the animals were so positive and helped us, I think that will go with them (CM, Jan.9th, 2013).

This was an interesting effect; Ms. R. may have been more comfortable precisely because there were no direct references to Aboriginal or First Nations culture in the scripted language of Restitution. She did not have to be as worried about being politically and culturally correct when following a script.

Another topic related to understanding an Aboriginal worldview was our discussion of spirituality in the curriculum. Ms. R. explained her view:

I didn't do the last book because I thought it might bring up a lot of spirituality questions that I wasn't ready to answer. I don't just feel uncomfortable with the Aboriginal worldview of that, but also the Christian worldview of that, because a lot of time kids will say when we brainstorm words for our word wall at Christmas, they'll say God or Church and I'm never sure if I should add them or not? (Collaborative Meeting, Jan.9th, 2013).

I responded by explaining my rationale for using the animal stories to access the topic of spirituality.

That's part of the stories too, children might say to themselves, Mom taught me God created all animals and that's why they are good, because they are creatures of God. And the child who believes in Mother Earth, might say, oh they are good because they are protecting Mother Earth, because that's what my family taught me. That's what I like about the story piece so much. Spirituality in the classroom, but it's not explicit. It's the
secret spirituality. Because it is a big part of peoples lives, and we eliminate it from school (CM, Jan.9th, 2013).

I explained my hope that the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum addressed spirituality without overtly bringing it into the classroom, which could invite parental complaints. I felt confident that the broad concepts of spirituality, such as morality and values, could be presented through story, so that the children could make personal connections to develop their own meaning.

Summary. There was ample evidence that Ms. R. learned to adjust her language and interactions with students in response to Restitution. Her increasing commitment to these practices may have had as much to do with her own increased calmness as with the responses of the students. It is interesting to note that her shift to seeing student problems as inevitable opportunities for social learning helped her to approach teaching as traditional Elders may do, with a calm demeanor and an orientation to the growth of the child through counseling rather than through control or punishment. Thus, even while her concern about choosing the right words to talk about Aboriginal values remained, Ms. R. appeared to be modeling interactions that were more consistent with an Aboriginal worldview and traditional Aboriginal pedagogy.

The connection between Ms. R.’s practices and beliefs is particularly interesting when analyzed as single or double loop learning or as incremental or transformative learning. She did not see her previous orientation to control as harmonizing with her personal values and so she embraced the new practices because they released her from a position of control that was uncomfortable for her. Therefore, her learning could be interpreted as single loop because she was merely adopting practices that were in line with her existing beliefs. However, the overall effect was as powerful as double loop or transformative learning: with greater integrity between her actions and her beliefs, I believe that Ms. R. was likely to sustain the change as a permanent
part of her professional practice and identity. It may be that specific scripts and strategies and ample opportunities to practice them allowed Ms. R. to enact beliefs that would otherwise have been dormant. Eventually, without practical strategies, Ms. R.’s belief that teachers should not control children but instead teach them to control themselves may have been discarded as idealistic.

The growth in Ms. R.’s orientation to reflective curriculum design may have been more like conventional double loop learning. As a result of this study, her first experience with collaborative inquiry, she plans to continue with a related NOII investigation. I interpret her plans to build on the work we have done as a new orientation to inquiry for professional learning.

Student Learning

The main focus of this study was on the teacher learning that occurred as a result of implementing the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum, to build confidence for creating more culturally affirming classrooms. However, teachers learn to adjust their thinking not just as a result of using new curriculum materials but also by reflecting on the student learning that occurs when these materials are used. Therefore, in this study, evidence of student learning was the feedback that confirmed Ms. R. and I should continue to support student self-management with materials that emphasized an Aboriginal worldview.

Students learned to identify their own needs and developed self-managing language and strategies to meet their needs appropriately, which is referred to in the Restitution language as the up and clean way rather than the down and dirty way. Evidence of this learning was drawn from classroom observations recorded in my journal as well as from Ms. R.’s comments describing student responses. Further evidence was found in students’ writing.

**Strategies to meet needs.** In our September meeting, Ms. R. was unsure about teaching
children about their needs. She anticipated “blank stares” and feared it would be “over their heads.” However, in the January meeting she explained how the students had responded to this material:

But they have attached to the needs and I do say to them, “I know you need to... but this is the up and clean way and this is the down and dirty way” and they totally understand and get that. The basic needs I loved. At first I wasn’t sure how to go about it, because it seemed above them, and then I sort of made it work for me. They get it and I put up the symbol pictures of what they are and I can point to those at any moment and they can tell you what they are, stand for. And even...the power I thought was going to be obscure, but they get it. “I feel powerful when I read, I feel powerful when I learn.” and so I really like the needs, and I refer to them all the time, they come up in lots of situations (Collaborative Meeting, Jan. 9th, 2013).

My own classroom observations and interactions confirmed Ms. R.’s perception that the new curriculum was helping students learn to identify their own needs, to meet those needs in pro-social ways, and to manage their emotions when their needs were not met. After the students had received lessons including Salmon, Bear and Eagle, as well as the Social Contract and the Needs, I was working in the classroom. Student C was making distracting and unnecessary noise while Ms. R. was teaching a writing lesson. I stood next to him and asked quietly, “What did Bear teach us?” Student C took a deep breath. Then when the students were working I went over and asked, “Were you needing to feel belonging, because your hand was up, but you weren’t being called on?” Student C nodded. Then I asked him, “Was making noise an up and clean way to get what you needed, or down and dirty?” and the boy replied, “down and dirty.” When I asked, “is it okay to make a mistake?”, he replied eagerly, “Yep!”. With a further probe, “But what do you need to do now?”, he told me he would apologize to Ms. R., and I said I would help him by letting him know when was a good time to do that (Classroom Observation, Oct. 2012).

What this interaction indicated to me was that Student C had a strong understanding of using a deep breath to cope with a need not being fulfilled. After our interaction, any guilt was
removed and he was happy to have the opportunity to “fix it” or to repair harm to others that occurred because he was trying to meet his need without thinking about the needs of others. This demonstrated for me that the student had internalized the integrated language and concepts of Restitution and Learning Journeys in a way that gave him strategies for self-management, available for use with a bit of prompting. A short, restorative interaction with a teacher instead of the more typical power struggle allowed this student to rejoin the group, strengthened because of what Ms. R. had taught him.

Because of my time in the school during 2011-2012, I was familiar with the students’ behaviour and personalities. Student A had struggled in the previous year with self-regulation and his coping strategies were limited. During my time working in Ms. R.’s classroom, Student A was often making inappropriate noises, calling out, interrupting and moving around the class in ways that distracted his classmates and disrupted their learning as well as his. However, during my time in the classroom, when this behaviour occurred, I asked him, “What need is not being met?” He responded, “I just want to have fun!” I responded, “And should I tell you that you shouldn’t have fun?”. “No”, he replied. “Are you meeting the need in an up and clean or down and dirty way by going over and distracting your friends?” “Down and dirty,” he admitted. “What’s something you can do to get yourself ready to be here?” I asked. “Take a bear breath!” He said excitedly. I saw this as another example of how the students had begun to integrate and internalize Restitution and Learning Journeys concepts and use the language for problem solving.

Further evidence appeared in student writing. On Remembrance Day, Ms. R. began her lesson with a group brainstorm to generate ideas, followed by a time for students to write. She displayed the word peace and asked for students to tell her about how they could practice peace
using the sentence stem, "I will...". When Ms. R. first described this lesson to me, I doubted the
students would be able to say much about such an abstract concept. However, without
prompting, one student noted that peace was taking a bear breath when you were upset. Another
student identified peace as using salmon strength (which is synonymous with working together
and identifies each person as special and important).

Students were then instructed to complete their writing assignment: Write your plan for
making our world a peaceful place. One student wrote:

I Will UOOS My SAImoN StrEnGtH AND I Will By Safe Not fighting AND I Will Cer
For Soldiers Hoo DIDY. (I will use my salmon strength and I will be safe not fighting
and I will care for soldiers who died.)

Another response was:

I Will DO hands off Policy and being quiet and be taking bear breaths and being safe and
using my heart is good and I Will nevre shot a gun.

As the result of another lesson, one student described using her animal strength as a
coping strategy:

A Bear Breth
by: Student E
Wen you Are Sad or Mad or Scard you Tack a Bear BreTh.
Then you FeLe Beter.
I Fele BeTer Now.
I Fele Sad agen I will Tack a Bear BreTh HHa WW.
I am Happy agen BuT I aM Tierde Two.
I am Happy.
They ENd.

One of the benefits of using the traditional Aboriginal practice of storytelling is that each
listener can take from the story what is applicable to his or her situation. I noticed the students
were not using Eagle, which has benefits for self-discipline and self-regulation, and may be
useful for some students. I wondered if the students did not use it because Ms. R. did not refer to it frequently. She had similar questions:

> They don't mention eagle, frog, beaver, but maybe that's because I didn't attach to those as much or understand them as much. Maybe I understood the salmon and coyote better and more applicable to what we do here everyday, so maybe I didn't push it? (CM, Jan.9th, 2013).

For another writing assignment, which she compiled into a mini book for students to read, Ms. R. photocopied Aboriginal drawings of the Learning Journeys animals on one page and left the facing page blank for students to write about what each animal taught them. (At this point, they had only been introduced to the animal stories up to Hummingbird). All the students demonstrated awareness of the obvious lessons contained in the animal stories and some had extended the meaning for themselves.

> [Hummingbird] Shar my friendship with _____ (student name)
> the bear HelPd me calm down.
> eagle have the courage to Help.
> [Hummingbird] I aM small Bat I Kan DO Wt athr PiPl Kan DO
> Wen I was crien I tuc a bear breth
> [Porcupine] iT ownLy Maters if your gud inside
> [Eagle]When I am Sumwear and Sumwan wants to go tere I Move Over
> [Coyote] To FIcs your MSTAK

One thing I noticed was that although Ms. R. and I relied on the language of Restitution, the students used the animal strengths more. I discussed this in my journal, with reference to a specific incident:

There was a TOC in the classroom and Student C was acting up. I had a string of students coming up to me to complain he'd hurt them in some way. I took him aside and asked, "Why did you do that, what need were you trying to get?" He wanted them to play with him (Belonging). "Is it okay to make a mistake?" He answered yes. "What do we do if we make a mistake?" He told me, that he has to fix it. "How are you going to fix it?" He went in, went around and apologized. This wasn't full Restitution, as we didn't make a plan, but this thirty second intervention dealt with this child that in the past simply will not respond when you ask him what had happened. In trying to combine both the Restitution and the Aboriginal worldview, I have noticed something interesting: The teachers find the Restitution language the saving grace (I have a script, so I have something to follow and a way to remain calm),
where the children use the animal strengths.

Ms. R. made a similar observation:

They don’t use the Restitution language that much...But they do use the animal language a lot, they talk about the animals and they always make connections to other stories, so if we are reading a story they’ll say that was like the coyote or just like salmon (Collaborative Meeting, Jan. 9th, 2013).

When Ms. R. described how she did not document each example of the students’ attachment to the curriculum, she explained that it was because those connections happened all the time. She explained how both she and the students were attaching to the Needs.

I was surprised how much I liked them and how much the kids understood and I went back to them quite a few times, and we left it and went back with quality world and they totally understood what I was getting at (CM, Jan. 9th, 2013).

One of the changes she observed was even though she had been using the principles of Restitution as part of her practice, she now had specific language and as a result, the students were more competent in their process.

I am always pretty directed when I ask what was the problem, and what are you going to do to fix it. They don’t use the language that much, but they do now have an answer and it’s usually a reasonable one. It is usually to say sorry, but if you push them a little bit they can come up with something that means a little bit more, or is more difficult for them to do then just a flippant sorry (CM, Jan. 9th, 2013).

The animal story lessons were perceived as beneficial for all children, regardless of their origins or background. Ms. R. explained:

I don’t think they (Aboriginal students) did attach to it more than the other students but it’s just good for everyone. I wouldn’t say it’s better for them. Because of the Aboriginal population being the way it is in our area, I don’t know if their experiences are any different than any other child in the area (CM, Jan. 9th, 2013).

Ms. R.’s rationale about the Aboriginal students’ relationship to their culture may have been accurate, given the loss of language and traditions that comes when a people are declared extinct or when a family moves far away from traditional Aboriginal lands. However, culture persists in
language patterns, ways of relating to one another, and in what is considered right and good, and these cultural differences may not be recognizable to outsiders. So it may be that the new curriculum was culturally affirming for the five students with Aboriginal heritage in Ms. R.’s classroom. However, in this study, we did not see a difference in children’s responses and there was no data collection tool built into the study to reveal a difference if it had been there. Whether students experience this curriculum as culturally affirming is a topic for further investigation, perhaps in other settings where more Aboriginal children are familiar with traditional Aboriginal ways.

Ms. R. and I were confident, given our observations of students’ responses, that the combination of animal stories and self-discipline strategies in the new curriculum was valid and useful for all students.

There is always growth, but it’s hard when you are in the middle of it to say there is growth. But Student D has come a long way and I think this curriculum has been a major part of her growth, I absolutely do believe it. There are other kids that are going to have issues, and that’s the way they are, but I have a much better way of de-escalating the situation, putting it on them. You need to take a bear breath, you need fix your problems, and the responsibility is back on them. I do think it’ll come, but it might be slow, because there is just more work to do with some kids.

For each of them a different animal met a need in them, or they like that animal better. Because I know Student D really likes wolf so she talks about wolf, and the salmon it seems across the board they all just really understand that. We need to use that one all the time, because at this age/developmental level it’s really important because it’s all about me. The salmon always comes out and is always applicable. I know Student E would always talk about the Bear, I think it’s an animal that they liked, or did something that they understood. Student G talked about hummingbird a lot, and that’s kind of her personality, she’s small and quiet but she can do things (Collaborative Meeting, Jan.9th, 2013).

When I had taught the Learning Journeys stories to students D, E, and G in Kindergarten, they had not indicated that they had a preferred association with a particular animal. It seemed that revisiting the stories and their applications in a second year, particularly in conjunction with Restitution self-discipline strategies, contributed to a deeper internalization process. However it
was not possible to tell if it was the repetition of the stories or their application to personal behaviour, made possible by the addition of Restitution, which contributed most to this effect.

**Summary.** If learning is the ability to use knowledge in new situations, the students who used the Learning Journeys stories and images for self-management demonstrated that they had learned something important that would be likely to last. They learned to understand their own needs and they were beginning to choose more appropriate ways to meet them, with less prompting. This learning was supported by the use of new language to talk about and plans to fix their mistakes. This new language consisted of: (a) the expressions of “making it right” (Gossen, 1996) that went beyond the typical and superficial “I’m sorry”, and (b) ways to talk to themselves that drew on the examples and images of the animals from the Learning Journeys stories, for example “Take a Bear Breath”. In this study, there was no evidence for us to determine whether the students learned to view Aboriginal images, beliefs, and values more positively or whether the social atmosphere helped Aboriginal students to experience cultural affirmation.

However, from this study, I can say with confidence that the school life of children of any heritage, particularly when they moved from teacher control toward self-management, appeared to be enriched by teaching approaches that had their roots in an Aboriginal worldview. Particular components of Aboriginal worldview relevant to student learning included choosing animals as personal symbols to aid in self-understanding, interpreting stories as containing lessons applicable to one’s own life, and learning self-regulation as a result of counseling and reflection after inevitable social mistakes. All of these components are described in the teachings of Elders in *The Sacred Tree* (Bopp et al., 1989).
Suggestions for Improving the Curriculum

As she was working with the curriculum, Ms. R. described herself as constantly adjusting and modifying. She did not record all of the changes that she made in her journal. However, Ms. R. made some important suggestions for revision of the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum in our final formal meeting. She recommended eliminating the Restitution Behaviour Care and About Your Brain lessons, because the Learning Journeys stories were already rich with metaphors that resonated with the children. She suggested developing some templates for guiding and recording Restitution triangle processes. One template could be used for an adult to record the outcome of a problem-solving conversation, so that teacher and student could refer back to the plans that were made. Another template could help the children walk themselves through the Restitution steps (what happened? what are you going to do to fix it? what’s your plan for the future?) by writing or drawing answers to prompts. Finally, Ms. R. suggested having students brainstorm different ways to fix mistakes and create a jar of suggestions that could include actions such as getting a book for a friend at reading time, inviting someone to play a game at recess, or drawing a picture as a gift for someone. By the end of the study, all of these new strategies were used by the children in Ms. R.’s classroom and she perceived them as more meaningful than the typical “sorry” she used to hear from children who had harmed someone.

In addition to Ms. R.’s suggestions for the curriculum, the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum, I believe using the Understanding by Design (UbD) framework (Wiggins & McTighe, 2004) could be used to strengthen the curriculum further. In this planning format, teachers begin with the outcomes they intend to help students achieve by the end of the unit and then add activities and assessments that are closely related to the outcomes, often stated as big ideas. This approach to planning helps educators understand clearly the purpose of the activities
in the unit of study. Although outcomes or goals and assessments are included in the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum, a unit plan overview following the format of Understanding by Design may provide other educators with a clearer picture of suggested goals and activities from which to choose. From this understanding teachers may be able to better make the adaptations and modifications necessary for their local context and to inquire for themselves into the effectiveness of the redesigned curriculum for their students.

I believe that the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview program could also be strengthened by becoming an interdisciplinary unit of study, to include outcomes for the BC Health and Careers curriculum, as in this study, as well as Social Studies, Fine Arts, and Language Arts outcomes. Potential to meet a broader range of social and emotional as well as academic goals may make the program more appealing to teachers and subject integration could further emphasize self-management strategies and allow students more time to internalize them.

Summary and future inquiry. Recorded conversations, journal entries, student work samples, and classroom observations led me to believe that Ms. R. fully embraced the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum. Her transformative learning occurred not just as a result of adopting new practices but also as a result of our reflection on their impact for her and for her students. Although Ms. R.’s original intent was to acquire strategies for managing student behaviour, her “new philosophy” (Collaborative Meeting, Jan. 9th, 2013) became one of calmly helping students to manage themselves. This transformative shift was evident when she changed her main goal from having problem-free days to having students take greater ownership of ways to learn from inevitable problems.

In conclusion, I believe that Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum enabled this teacher to feel better equipped to teach in harmony with components of an Aboriginal
worldview. Most importantly, she learned to allow students to make sense of their world and find their own way in it with less external control. In the process, Ms. R. created a more affirming classroom for all students, which may have been culturally affirming for Aboriginal students as well, although that remains to be investigated in a subsequent study. Ms. R.'s transformative learning, brought about by the integrated curriculum and by the process of collaborative inquiry, was evident in her continued commitment to new practices even after the study was completed, for the remainder of the school year. However, Ms. R.'s learning, like mine, is not complete. She remains interested in further inquiry to explore the opportunities that may come when components of an Aboriginal worldview become a part of classroom life.
Chapter V: Final Reflections and Commitments

Personal meaning for those who implement educational improvements is a key feature of the sustainability of the changes that are made (Fullan, 2007). Therefore, in professional inquiry, as described by Brown and Cherkowski (2011), a complete cycle of action and reflection ends with the convictions and commitments of the inquiry participants. The beliefs that were generated or strengthened in the study, as well as corresponding action plans, are declared in order to build a community of support for continued application or exploration of the learning that was generated in the inquiry. At the end of one learning cycle, a new cycle in the spiral of inquiry begins (Kaser, Halbert, & Koehn, 2011).

Ms. R.'s developing convictions and commitments were evident in the data. However, I also participated in the study by working in her classroom with the students and I shared her experiences through the inquiry. In this chapter, I will present my final reflections on the study, including some thoughts about the process of facilitating inquiry, which was new to me. I will then share reflections about the coding process and mention themes of emotion and doubt that emerged, within and beyond the predetermined categories of the research questions. I will articulate the convictions and commitments that emerged for me in this study and I will review the limitations of the study. Suggestions for further research will be followed by a review of key understandings related to my overall research question. The chapter concludes with a final note about the significance of the study.

Facilitating Collaborative Inquiry

With my research questions answered, I also want to reflect on the process, which documents my development as a teacher who is prepared to lead collaborative inquiry on this and other topics. As the adult learning literature predicts, the teacher learning in this study,
particularly the changes in beliefs, appeared to be a result of reflective dialogue (Cranton, 1994). Although I was guided by the professional inquiry platform described by Brown and Cherkowski (2011), the process of leading collaborative inquiry still posed some challenges. I discuss these challenges as they related to themes of purpose, power, and the scope of collaboration.

First, Ms. R. and I had different purposes for participating in the study. Ms. R. admitted that she was mainly looking for strategies to deal with difficult student behaviour. She was not opposed to bringing an Aboriginal worldview into the classroom, having taught in northern regions with larger and more prominent Aboriginal populations, but this was not her main concern at this school. I was most interested in Restitution because of its compatibility with an Aboriginal worldview. At times, this difference in purpose may have inhibited our ability to work as a team. However, we seemed to have enough common interest to move together toward a common goal, even with the difference in emphasis. For me, it was clear that Restitution was an approach to behaviour management that was consistent with traditional Aboriginal pedagogy, and so ultimately our goals were similar. In the end, Ms. R. adopted a way of being in the classroom that came from the practice of Restitution but resembled the calm, non-controlling ways of Aboriginal Elders that inspired Gossen to develop Restitution (Brown & Gossen, 2012).

There was also a perceived power difference that affected our collaboration during the inquiry, although we had had a collegial relationship before the study. In the planning stages, when Ms. R. saw me as the teacher and herself as the student, she was overly concerned with delivering the curriculum just as I had intended. For example, she said, “If there are things you want me to say and do exactly, I can” (Collaborative Meeting, Sept. 21st). The collaboration that I had envisioned developed later, as the curriculum came to life in the classroom, possibly because Ms. R.’s concerns about meeting my needs were overtaken by concern for her students.
This problem may have occurred because there was only one participant or because she was unfamiliar with the process of inquiry. It may also have occurred because Ms. R. was not involved, from the beginning, in the design process. In any case, the transition to a more fully collaborative relationship enriched the study and enabled us both to learn from each other.

When I had implemented the draft version of the *Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview* in my kindergarten class the previous year, I lacked the opportunity to collaborate. It was affirming and rewarding, in this study, to work alongside another professional. I wrote about this in my researcher’s journal:

I spoke with Ms. R. today for the first official collaboration. It was good to know that she’s on board and I feel like I don’t have to explain the concepts too much, because it fits with her style. It’s great to have a participant who already is at stage of understanding Restitution, I don’t have to convince her of it’s worth. (RJ, Aug. 30, 2012)

The development of collaboration in the study raises a question about the scope of the collaboration process – whether study participants might have been more productively involved in the original curriculum design as well as in the implementation. Perhaps if Ms. R. had been involved in the design of the curriculum from the beginning, rather than starting with my draft, the power imbalance may not have occurred. However, such involvement may also have made the study unmanageable for her, in terms of the time commitment required. For future inquiries, it will be important to consider carefully the stage at which the collaboration should begin.

**Emerging Themes: Doubt and Feelings**

Although I developed research questions as predetermined categories for analysis (Efron & Ravid, 2013), I also coded chunks of text for themes that might emerge within and across the research questions (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). The aim of this process was to identify patterns (Crabtree & DiCicco-Bloom, 2006) and then “construct (with care) explanations that [could] account for the processes in plausible ways” (Huberman & Miles, 1998 as cited in Crabtree &
Miller, 1999). Following a process of creating codes, coding the text, sorting and then re-reading groups of similar segments, revealed ample evidence that both teacher and students had internalized skills and concepts from the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum. Although there will be more to learn as students mature and as teachers continue related investigation with other groups of children, enough learning occurred to justify viewing the curriculum as successful in this context and offering it as the basis for professional inquiry in other settings.

Most of the data that I grouped into codes were easily contained within the main topics of teacher learning and student learning. For example, a theme that I labeled Doubts was addressed in the teacher learning section, particularly in the description of Ms. R.'s developing confidence. Doubts, such as those regarding whether the curriculum would be age-appropriate, were resolved as Ms. R. observed favourable results in the classroom. Other doubts appeared as questions that Ms. R. raised in our collaborative conversations but these were often resolved in the same conversation. However, a significant doubt raised by Ms. R. was similar to the doubt that led me to initiate this study: the feeling that we, as teachers, were inadequately equipped to bring Aboriginal worldview into the classroom. During the September meeting, Ms. R. confessed:

I'm always careful of my language because it's a sensitive subject, like do I say Native American, and sometimes the word Indian comes up and I don't know how to address it, so I steer away for that reason. (Collaborative Meeting, Sept. 21)

Although Ms. R. never became completely comfortable with labels used to acknowledge Aboriginal culture directly, the integrated Learning Journeys and Restitution curriculum allowed her to develop way of relating to her students that was more affirming and less Eurocentric.

Choosing the language one uses as an ally of Aboriginal people is still a challenge but perhaps a
sincere attempt to learn ways of being that are consistent with components of an Aboriginal worldview are much more important.

A second important theme that emerged was *Feelings.* Much of Ms. R.'s conversation described her own feelings or what she thought the students were feeling. When powerful feelings were expressed in conversation or in writing, I noted this segment as important data. However, there seemed no logical place to include or address this theme specifically in the answers to the three research questions that I identified. Perhaps the most important point to be made related to this theme is that, for both teachers and students, understanding cannot be detached from feelings; the cognitive and emotional are integrated in us in a holistic way that is expressed clearly in an Aboriginal worldview, with its emphasis on symbolism and meaning-making as ways of acquiring wisdom (Bopp et al., 1985).

Teachers draw on their feelings as well as their intellect when they make decisions about what will occur in the classroom and where they will go next with their learning. Self-regulating strategies such as those that occur in Restitution help children learn to manage their feelings without harm to others but not to deny that the feelings exist. This is a topic of interest for further study.

**Convictions and Commitments**

My conviction that historical injustices can and should be corrected, and the moral purpose that flows from that belief, ensure that my efforts to bring components of Aboriginal worldview into school classrooms will continue. Although the integrated curriculum designed and implemented in this study can be seen as successful, it was a small step that will be followed by many more throughout my career in education. I make this commitment to better serve the needs of Aboriginal students, who have been severely underserved in Canadian education, but
also to align classroom practice with current trends in the educational literature, such as the need to develop student self-regulation (Shanker, 2013). My own transformative learning during this study brought an understanding of Restitution as a set of strategies for student self-regulation, a topic that I hope to explore further. However, a more immediate goal is to continue to advocate for the integration of Learning Journeys and Restitution in other classrooms, perhaps with a greater emphasis on the strategies as a gift to all of society from Aboriginal people.

In the classrooms and schools where I will do my life’s work, I will take whatever steps I can to ensure that all students, and particularly Aboriginal students, are confident that their values and beliefs are reflected in the school system. I believe this kind of cultural affirmation begins with teachers’ attitudes and beliefs, so I will work for change by working with teachers as well as students. However, I hope that I can be seen as an ally to Aboriginal people and an advocate for an education that affirms their contribution to society. I hold dear the conviction that the Elders have important wisdom about how people should interact peacefully, without controlling, but with concern for how actions will affect the well being of others. I am committed to helping more teachers learn to feel comfortable bringing Aboriginal culture into their classrooms in authentic ways that extend from crafts, stories, and outdoor activities to deeper norms of social interaction. I believe that these efforts will affect the educational and life experiences of Aboriginal people and all students positively. However, with my commitment to ongoing inquiry and a learning mindset (Kaser & Halbert, 2009), I will continue to look for evidence that these anticipated results actually occur.

Limitations and Contributions

It is important to note the limitations of the research method, so that readers do not misinterpret the extent to which the results of a study can be applied in other settings. This is a
qualitative study and so there is no basis for prescriptive recommendations. New understandings and insights can be offered to other educators who have common concerns but it is up to readers to make decisions as to where similarities occur and similar strategies might be applied effectively. Because the method for this study has been professional inquiry, it seems appropriate to recommend the knowledge that has been developed here as a basis for further inquiry but not as a roadmap to follow without question. From an Aboriginal worldview perspective, it is respectful to share wisdom with others but not to impose it.

Beyond the limitations of the overall method, it is important to note the limitations of the specific study as it was actually conducted. Three limitations for this study relate to inconsistent documentation, the small number of participants, and my limited participation. Although Ms. R. and I intended to document all of our informal interactions in our journals, this did not always occur. We worked together in the same school but often in different classrooms and our interactions often occurred literally as we passed each other in the hall. We tried to remedy the lack of documentation for informal meetings by returning to important topics in our formal, recorded meetings. However, it was inevitable that insights from some interactions were lost. Having only one participant and a researcher who was not implementing the curriculum in her own classroom at the time may also have limited the quality and depth of our conversations. Ideally, professional inquiry groups are larger, in order to bring greater diversity of ideas to be considered. I believe that I would have felt more actively involved if I had been able to implement the curriculum in another classroom at the same time as Ms. R. was working in her classroom. However, these were unavoidable limitations and although we did what we could to alleviate them, they are important considerations for the design of future studies.
Key Understandings

All three of my research questions contributed to an answer for my overall question but that question is also answered with a more global reflection on both the design and the implementation phases of the study. I began this study by asking, How can a Restitution curriculum that emphasizes an Aboriginal worldview be designed to help teachers feel better equipped to create culturally affirming classrooms for Aboriginal students? The answer that emerged in the design process and was confirmed in implementation was that Restitution could be reintegrated with Aboriginal stories and images for a more powerful effect. An unexpected understanding that developed was that the Restitution curriculum could be modeled, in a culturally appropriate way, in calm interactions with children that sought to guide rather than control. Inquiry can be seen as a compatible, non-controlling learning strategy for teachers: the curriculum is offered to other teachers not as a prescription but as a starting point for their own meaning making. So, this study revealed many ways that a Restitution curriculum that emphasizes an Aboriginal worldview could be designed and implemented effectively. The part of the question that was not addressed in this study was whether Aboriginal students actually experienced this integrated curriculum as culturally affirming. That part of the question remains unanswered as a focus for further study.

Summary

Meyers posed a compelling question: “How can we best educate our unique and diverse children via mass colonial education?” With the development and reflective implementation of the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum, I offer a suggestion for addressing this question in a meaningful, manageable way. The goal of the curriculum is to bring about a fundamental change in the beliefs of students and teachers, which creates the opportunity for a
shift from the “traditional” as Meyers (2003) called it, toward an integrated system that may be less colonial, with more potential to address the unique cultural needs of Aboriginal students.

The Indigenous research paradigm revolves around the way [Aboriginal people] view the world around us and throughout our whole lives (Wilson, 2008, p.14). In this study, which was informed by Indigenous research methods, my goal was for Ms. R. and myself was to move through the reflective process and reach a deeper level of understanding and confidence with expressing Aboriginal culture in our classrooms. The struggle, of course, has been, to understand how a non-Aboriginal teacher can internalize an Aboriginal worldview deeply enough to share it authentically with students. I found that the language of Restitution provided scripts or interaction patterns that we did not have opportunity to internalize through our own conversations with Aboriginal Elders. I confirmed the authenticity of these scripts with Aboriginal worldview in The Sacred Tree (Bopp et al.,1985) and other literature. However, additional efforts to acquire cultural learning should be confirmed or corrected with the work of Aboriginal scholars and oral teachings from Aboriginal Elders whenever possible.

Recommendations for Further Study

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, I offer the following suggestions for consideration in other contexts. Because there was only one teacher interested in participating in the study, I am motivated to explore what prevents teachers from engaging actively in developing creative solutions to the problems of alienation that Aboriginal students often face at school. I suspect that there may be a combination of reasons, including misunderstanding of the term Restitution, and a lack of familiarity with inquiry, in addition to the paralyzing belief that little can be done. However, the social unrest expressed in Aboriginal populations makes it clear this is not a fleeting topic but one cultural affirmation for Aboriginal students requires extended
Another area to be explored is implementation of the curriculum in areas of British Columbia and possibly the Yukon, which follows BC curriculum, with a higher Aboriginal population. Because the Aboriginal people of the area where this study took place have been declared extinct, the voice of First Nations people in the area is not strong. I would like to see the impact of the Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview curriculum for Aboriginal students, perhaps in an Aboriginal choice school or in a remote or northern community. Such a study could involve a critical mass of teachers and include the perceptions of principals as well as data on whether the new approach reduced office visits or school suspensions and improved student engagement and achievement over time.

Final Thoughts

The ultimate goal of this study was to provide a practical alternative to inaction for teachers who are hesitant, unwilling, or uncomfortable expressing components of an Aboriginal Worldview in their classroom curricula. This study contributed to the improvement of Ms. R.'s classroom practices and to my own understanding of how an integrated curriculum of the Learning Journeys and Restitution could be presented effectively to students. I believe the process of taking an inquiry stance and the cycles of action and reflection benefitted the growth of the participant and as a result, had more impact on the students' growth. While conducting this study I was able to share my passion for this topic and ignite another teacher's interest in this subject area. Her curiosity and dedication fueled mine and I will continue to seek opportunities to collaborate and inquire in the area of bringing Aboriginal worldview into the classroom.
References


RESTITUTION AS ABORIGINAL WORLDVIEW

Light.


Appendix C

**Learning Journey and Restitution Connections**

This document shows the planning process that I used for my initial design of the *Restitution as Worldview* curriculum, by combining the six story lessons from *Learning Journeys* with Restitution mini-lessons or strategies, with attention to the principles of Aboriginal worldview as described in *The Sacred Tree* (Bopp et al., 1989).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Journeys</th>
<th>Restitution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Book One: Working Together</td>
<td>• Developing Beliefs, Social Contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Salmon</td>
<td>• My Job, Your Job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Person I Want to Be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Book Two: Sharing Spaces</td>
<td>• Bottom Lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Bear, Eagle</td>
<td>• Basic Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Coyote, Wolf</td>
<td>• Solidify and extend Beliefs and Basic Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Book Four: Accepting Differences</td>
<td>• Quality World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Hummingbird, Porcupine</td>
<td>• Review Person I Want to Be to re-evaluate the initial vision of self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Book Five: Playing and Working Together</td>
<td>• Behavior Car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Beaver</td>
<td>• Continue Beliefs, Social Contract, and Person I Want to Be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Book Six: Care and Respect</td>
<td>• Review all Restitution concepts or focus on Quality World and use of the Restitution Triangle for problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mother Earth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I intended for the curriculum to follow the *Learning Journey* series. *Book One: Working Together*, was to be linked with Restitution (Gossen, 1998) lessons that develop *Shared Beliefs* and *Social Contracts* using the suggested strategies: a) *My Job, Your Job* and *The Person I Want to Be*. *Book Two: Sharing Spaces*, was to provide the opportunity to teach *Bottom Lines* and *Basic Needs* from Restitution. *Book Three: New Friendships* was to provide an opportunity to solidify the concepts of *Basic Needs* and *Beliefs* and extend them in relation to the story of coyote and wolf. *Book Four: Accepting Differences* was planned to connect to the Restitution lessons *Quality World* and the *Person I Want to Be*. As the latter will have already been introduced it will be an opportunity to re-evaluate the initial vision of self and reflect if the class has been working toward this goal. *Book Five: Playing and Working Together* was expected to be the place to introduce the lesson on the *Behavior Car*, in addition to continue to work with *Beliefs*, *Social Contract*, and the *Person I Want to Be*. *Book Six: Care and Respect* would be a cumulative lesson encompassing all of the ideas of Restitution (Gossen, 1998) but the focus could be on *Quality World* and the use of the *Restitution Triangle* when dealing with incidents. I expected that the lessons could be compartmentalized for ease of delivery but that the teachers would also be encouraged to bring the language of Learning Journeys series and Restitution (Gossen, 1998) into the daily vernacular of the classroom for discussion and social problem solving.

In the *Learning Journey* series Book 1, *Working Together*, the key lesson that is taught through the story of salmon is that people are all independent but we have to work together and trust our wisdom and inner knowledge. Despite challenges, we have to return to who we are. The Restitution lessons that connect to this concept outline and identify the roles and responsibilities of the students and the teacher and what their jobs do and do not entail. The other Restitution
piece that is connected to this key lesson is helping the students to identify the kind of person they want to be. This entails reflection that enables the students to create an image of themselves that they want to return to. In an Aboriginal worldview, as described in *The Sacred Tree*, values are the way that human beings pattern and use their energy. There must be a struggle in order to acquire new gifts but all people must be able to listen to their inner voice to develop new qualities. The only failure as seen by the Elders is to not try to be the person that you were meant to be. The Sacred Laws, as described in the Learning Journeys series, related to these lessons as described above are courage, wisdom, and respect. Aspects of Aboriginal worldview, as described in the literature, are having a positive self-identity and the interconnectedness of everything.

In Book 2, the key lesson taught through the story of bear and eagle emphasizes how important it to tell one another when we are feeling uncomfortable and to use our wisdom to say so. Also, it's okay to make a mistake but it must be seen as an opportunity to learn and the offender must try to fix it. This relates to the Restitution lessons, *My Job, Your Job* where the students and teacher define what their roles and responsibilities are and are not in the classroom. The other applicable lesson is teaching the students about their basic needs. These two lessons help the students to relate their conflicts to what bear and eagle experienced and realize that if they understand their needs and their jobs, they can have their needs fulfilled in an appropriate way. One Aboriginal worldview applicable to this book and Restitution lessons is that each person can reach his or her full potential. *The Sacred Tree* described how a person must decide to take this journey and in other words must understand how to reflect, learn from, and make sense of situations in order to reach that full potential. Additionally, the Elders talk about how there must be active participation in reaching one's own potential and conscious thought process.
Courage, humility, respect, and honesty are the sacred laws that relate to this area. The views of the importance of healing and teaching, or healing through teaching as well as connections to the community correspond also with book two and the compatible lessons.

In Book 3, the story of coyote and wolf offers an alternative to violent and destructive behaviors to express feelings or gain attention. This connects again to the Restitution lesson on Basic Needs, which at this point could be extended to include the language of, “up and clean” and “down and dirty” to refer to the different ways that a person gets their need fulfilled. In The Sacred Tree, the Elders wrote that values and identity are important to the individual and when those things are threatened there is going to be a reaction. The specific aspects of Aboriginal worldview that relate to these areas are wholeness, understanding that everything is interconnected, and the value of subjective experience that leads to the conclusion that people do not behave without reason. Also, the Elders describe how each person must find a balance between the physical and spiritual, or the reality of what is happening and the emotions that are guiding an individual. People must also participate in the unfolding of their own potential. The Sacred Laws that are connected to this Learning Journeys book and lesson are love, respect, and honesty. The aspects of worldview that are linked with these lessons are focused on the interconnectedness of all beings, the importance of healing through teaching and the degree of community connection, or the quality of members’ relationships with one another.

In Book 4, accepting differences, hummingbird and porcupine are used to teach understanding and acceptance of people with differences. The porcupine additionally teaches that regardless of how you look, everyone deserves to be treated with respect. Related lessons from the Restitution kit are Quality World and the Person You Want to Be. The Quality World piece guides individuals to be aware of what makes up their ideal or desired world and in turn what
might be important to others in their quality worlds. *The Sacred Tree* describes many teachings that are related to these lessons and book four: wholeness, change takes struggle, four dimensions of true learning, potential unfolds only with active participation, a person must decide to take the journey, the journey of self-development will be aided, and the only source of failure is an unwillingness to try. The related Sacred Laws are love, respect and truth. In the literature’s description of Aboriginal worldviews the associated views would include healing through teaching, positive self-identity and interconnectedness.

In Book 5, *Playing and Working Together*, beaver and frog show the importance of focusing on what you can do and not what you cannot. This story also teaches believing in yourself and in the goodness of others. Beaver shows that even though the work may be difficult, everyone can make a useful contribution. Restitution lessons related to this book are *Beliefs*, *Social Contract*, *Person You Want to Be*, and the *Behavior Car*. The other lessons have previously been addressed, but through the *Behavior Car*, students will understand the four components of total behavior: action, thinking, feeling, and body. This will assist them in moving toward self-evaluation. The related aspects of Aboriginal worldview as discussed in *The Sacred Tree* are: the only source of failure is failure to try, active participation for change, a person must decide to take the journey, there must be struggle to acquire a new gift, human beings are spiritual as well as physical, and everything is interrelated. The Sacred Laws kindred to these ideas are humility, courage, and wisdom. The aspects of Aboriginal worldview from other literature could be described as the importance of modeling to teach, experiential learning, positive self-identity, and one’s relationship to the environment.

In Book 6, *Care and Respect*, Mother Earth teaches that we must care for and respect everything she gives us. The related Restitution lessons are *Quality World* and the *Restitution*
Triangle. The triangle provides a road map for teachers to guide a child through Restitution conferences with students, first stabilizing the identity, then validating the misbehavior and seeking the belief tied to the behavior. The related aspects of Aboriginal worldview as described in *The Sacred Tree*, encompass each previously mentioned. The primary Sacred Laws are respect and love. Other literature relates aspects of worldview as interconnectedness, relationship to the environment, and community connections.
Appendix D

Restitution as Aboriginal Worldview Curriculum

This curriculum was designed to be taught with an inquiry mindset: the lessons are suggestions but not prescriptions. Please adapt and deliver the material to fit your class needs and context. Your ongoing inquiry will be to consider how these lessons benefit your students or how they can be redesigned to create a more culturally affirming classroom. I hope that teachers and students will refer to these animal stories and the Restitution lessons throughout the day, as you solve problems and build relationships with one another.

Lessons for Grade One/Two Class:

The script below is the common and consistent language to be used for conflicts, discipline issues, difficult behaviours, and whole class issues. The answers and understanding of the animals and ability to follow the script will increase with the lessons. Once the students are familiar with the process they can start to use it independently with teacher support.

Learning Journeys:

“Remember your __________________________ strength.”

“What did __________________________ teach us? What would they do in this situation?”

Restitution:

- Tell me what happened, (if they just repeat the “facts” have the child attach emotions to it, i.e.: how did you feel when Jonny pushed you?)
- What does the school believe (or believe about____________)? Why do we have that belief? Do you think that is an important belief?
- Why did you do the behavior? Should I tell you that it’s not important to __________________________ (protect yourself, have friends, have fun etc.)?
- Is it okay to make a mistake? Could you have done something worse?
- Do you want to fix your mistake? What’s the plan for the future? (Must be a concrete plan beyond, “I’ll be better.” The teacher can offer suggestions at first but offer three or four REAL choices and let them pick the one that fits best with them)
- What does it say about you if you are the kind of person who fixes mistakes?

Student Restitution Sheet

1. Write or draw what happened and how you felt about it
2. Why did you do __________________________?
3. How are you going to fix your mistake?
4. What’s your plan for the future so this doesn’t happen again?
Lesson One: Working Together and Creating the Boundaries/Beliefs of the Classroom
(May be taught over the course of several days).

**Health and Career PLOs**
- A1: Identify reasons for setting goals
- B1: describe their personal skills and interests
- C1: identify practices that contribute to health, including healthy eating, regular physical activity, and emotional health practices,
- C4: demonstrate an understanding of appropriate and inappropriate ways to express feelings.
- C5: differentiate between positive and negative behaviours in friendships
- C6: describe strategies for dealing with common interpersonal conflicts

**Materials**
- Learning Journeys Book One: Working Together
- Restitution Lesson: Beliefs and Social Contract
- Restitution Lesson: My Job, Your Job
- Talking piece or talking stick
- Salmon Poster with student generated sentence underneath
- (Optional) Salmon colouring sheet
- Large Paper
- Finger Paint
- Markers or felts

**Procedures**
1. Read Book 1: *Working Together*
   Using a talking piece (everyone has a chance to contribute or the choice to pass) and ask: *What did the salmon teach us?*
   *Salmon: key lesson is that we are all independent, but we have to work together and trust our wisdom and inner knowledge. We are all special and all important, so we match our behaviour to the benefits of the group.*
2. After each story is read, the poster with an Aboriginal depiction and drawing are hung for the students to see. Underneath put one sentence or word from the ideas of the children. For example: We are all important, we work together
3. Use the ideas of the children and the prompt that we are all in charge of our own brains and behavior but that our behaviour affects the group. Lead into Beliefs and Social Contracts.
4. *Optional* Have students do Aboriginal animal colouring sheet if you choose.
### Restitution Lesson: Beliefs and Social Contracts

1. **Most discipline policies start with rules, but it’s ideal to have the students focus on beliefs first. Use the words of the children as closely as possible to retain their meaning.**
   - What does your family believe about how to treat each other? What do you believe is important to do and say? What do you believe about how you treat each other? *(may use a web to connect ideas)*
   - What does our ideal or perfect classroom look like? *(Using a T or Y chart, put into categories: looks/sounds like, does not look/sound like. Or, looks like, sounds like, feels like)*
   - What would make everyone feel safe and relaxed in our classroom?
   - *(From these brainstorms pick 5-6 agreements: For example, we agree to be safe) Then you can see if anyone has new ideas/situations and see if they fall into your 5-6.*
   - Go to different settings around the school/classroom and role-play what the beliefs would look like in those areas/situations.

2. **If the students are stuck on rules (don’t hit) try and shift to the positive (hands to self) and then ask the students, Why do we have that rule? seek the belief behind the rule. Then ask “Why is this belief important?” Once there is this understanding the language can be, What’s the belief? instead of What’s the rule? From here have the students put their handprint and name on the contract and have it prominently displayed.**

3. **To bring the lesson back to the story, talk about each person having his or her own beliefs and now coming together to have shared beliefs for the group.**

### Restitution Lesson: My Job/Your Job

1. **To have the concrete “rules” or picture of what the jobs of the individuals are. This will lead to the question, What’s your job?**

2. **Start by telling the children that just as the salmon each had a job and some might have different roles, children’s jobs are to come to school and the teacher’s job is to be with the children.**

3. **What is your job at school? (try and be the person I want to be, listen and try my best, be kind, come to school, ask questions, follow the rules, help make up the rules, solve problems, clean up after myself, report serious situations)**

4. **What is my job at school? (help you, listen to you and respect you, teach you how to do things, answer your questions, find out what you have learned, find out what we need to practice, have fun activities, be your friend, help keep everyone safe, help you solve problems you cannot solve yourself.)**

5. **What is not my job? (clean up after you, solve problems you can solve yourself, babysit, referee, read your mind, listen to tattling)**

6. **Your is not your job? (tattle, disrupt the learning of others, argue or negotiate, interfere in someone else’s business, do someone else’s work)**
Assessment

- **Observation:** Are students using the new language or understanding the language when directed by teacher?
- **Observation:** When student’s need reminders, are they able to identify the belief behind the rule?
- **Retelling:** Students respond to questions such as, *What did Salmon teach us?*

Lesson Two: Understanding Needs and Using Strategies
(May be taught over the course of several days).

**Health and Career PLOs**

- **A1:** Identify reasons for setting goals
- **B1:** describe their personal skills and interests
- **C1:** identify practices that contribute to health, including healthy eating, regular physical activity, and emotional health practices,
- **C4:** demonstrate an understanding of appropriate and inappropriate ways to express feelings.
- **C5:** differentiate between positive and negative behaviours in friendships
- **C6:** describe strategies for dealing with common interpersonal conflicts

**Materials**

- Learning Journeys Book 2: *Sharing Spaces*
- Learning Journeys Book 3: *New Friendships*
- Restitution Lesson: Basic Needs
- Talking piece or stick
- Chart with needs listed or various colours of paper
- Stickers or Post-it notes
- Needs booklet

**Procedures**

1. *Read Book Two: Sharing Spaces*
2. You could use a talking piece (everyone has a chance to contribute or the choice to pass) and ask: *What did bear and eagle teach us?* Key Lesson: we need to tell others when we are feeling uncomfortable and use our wisdom to say so. Also, it’s okay to make a mistake but we must learn from our mistake and try to fix it. Taking a bear breath helps us to calm down to be able to fix our mistakes.

1. Restitution Lesson: Basic Needs
2. The ideas of the children from Book Two will lead to talking about how we all have different needs and have a right to try and fulfill them in an “up and clean way”.
3. **Basic Needs**: What are the things we need? (Either colour code as you go, or divide into needs chart beforehand, may place a sticker on each chart as students identify different needs) *Survival, Power, Belonging, Fun, Freedom*. Examples may fit into multiple needs.

4. **Brainstorm different things that help us feel these needs.** For example:
   - **Power**: badges, stickers, knowing you did a good job, certificates, learning to read/write or something new, identifying things that you are good at. See Power Needs activity in Restitution Kit.
   - **Belonging**: family hugs/kisses, playing with friends, having a role in the classroom
   - **Freedom**: Deciding who you play with, deciding what center you will do, what clothes you put on, what you are going to do if someone gets mad at you, what you write in your journals, what books to read at library, and so on.
   - **Fun**: video games, playing at the park, colouring, doing art, school, running, reading, movies, playing with friends, having your needs met.
   - **Survival**: food, proper clothing, water, and so on.

5. There are two ways to fulfill your needs, in an up and clean way, or a down and dirty way. Ask which the following are? You can also have them identify the need that was trying or was met.
   - **Wanting to have fun, so you throw a paper airplane to your friend when the teacher is writing on the board.** (D&D, fun)
   - **At snack time, telling a joke to your friend.** (U&C, belonging and fun)
   - **Making up a new game for recess and teaching it to everyone** (U&C power, fun and belonging)
   - **Slamming a book on a desk because you want the teacher to help you with your work.** (D&D, belonging, power)

6. Students can work through a booklet that has activities for each need. For example, identifying scenarios with needs and also depicting how they personally have different needs fulfilled.

---

1. **Read Book 3: New Friendships**
   Coyote and wolf: key lesson is how not to use violent and destructive behaviors to express feelings or gain attention. **What did coyote and wolf teach us?**

2. **Basic needs can be revisited.** Have the students identify what basic needs the wolf and coyote are trying to fulfill and how they did it in a down and dirty way, and how they could do it in an up and clean way.
Assessments:

- Observation: When students are asked to identify their needs, can they recall them or locate them on posters in the room?
- Observation: Are they able to identify Up and Clean and Down and Dirty, both in their own behaviours and those of characters in books?
- Retelling: What did Coyote and Wolf teach us?
- Basic Needs Booklet: based on criteria set (suggestion only)
  - identify and write or represent one new idea per page
  - makes connections to own experiences
  - uses pre-writing skills (such as brainstorm, or posters) to complete booklet

Lesson Three: Cultivating Empathy

Health and Career PLOs

- A1: Identify reasons for setting goals
- B1: describe their personal skills and interests
- C1: identify practices that contribute to health, including healthy eating, regular physical activity, and emotional health practices,
- C4: demonstrate an understanding of appropriate and inappropriate ways to express feelings.
- C5: differentiate between positive and negative behaviours in friendships
- C6: describe strategies for dealing with common interpersonal conflicts

Materials

- Learning Journeys Book 4: Accepting Differences
- Restitution Lesson: Person I Want to Be
- Talking piece or stick
- Paper, crayons, pencils
- Blank book (8½ by 11 folded in half and stapled)

1. Book Four: Accepting Differences

You could use a talking piece (everyone has a chance to contribute, or the choice to pass) and ask: **What did hummingbird and porcupine teach us?**

*Key Lesson: understanding and accepting differences. The porcupine additionally teaches that he may have a prickly exterior, but he deserves to have his needs met just like everyone else. Hummingbird teaches us that even though you may be small, there is always something you can do.*
2. **Person I want to be:**
   For each student to have a clear picture of the kind of person they want to be, discuss how the students want to represent themselves. This vision of himself or herself helps to have the student reflect on their choices and see if they are aligned with the kind of person they want to be.

   - What would an ideal best friend?
   - What would an ideal student, brother/sister etc be like/sound like/act like?
   - Role play different scenarios, and have the students pick which behaviour matches how they want to represent themselves.
   - Leads naturally from the Needs lessons
   - Give each child a paper to draw themselves and three qualities that help them know they are being the person they want to be.

3. **Culminating possible activity:** Create a book with the prompt: What did________ teach us? The children can be provided with the Aboriginal depiction of the animal to go with the writing prompt. They will have the posters and phrase available but also have the opportunity to demonstrate how they have integrated and interpreted the animal strengths.

| Assessments          | • Observation: Person I want to be activity, are the students using the language?
|                      | • Assessment of Learning: Are they able to identify three qualities that ensures they are being the kind of person they want to be? For example: kind, considerate, respectful, funny etc.
|                      | • Assessment of Learning: For the culminating activity, have the students been able to identify each animal strength and express or represent how to use it?

**Lesson Four:**

**Health and Career PLOs**

- A1: Identify reasons for setting goals
- B1: describe their personal skills and interests
- C1: identify practices that contribute to health, including healthy eating, regular physical activity, and emotional health practices,
- C4: demonstrate an understanding of appropriate and inappropriate ways to express feelings.
- C5: differentiate between positive and negative behaviours in friendships
- C6: describe strategies for dealing with common interpersonal conflicts
Materials

- Restitution Lesson: Quality World
- Learning Journeys Book Five: Playing and Working Together
- Materials for collaging: magazine, scissors, glue
- Small pieces of paper
- Container for making Restitution ideas

Procedures

1. Quality World:
   Using the characters of the learning journey’s stories, brainstorm what they have in their world to make a quality world. Then relate it to the students, what do they have in their world that makes their world safe, happy, fun, and so on.

   Related to the Person they want to be, may continue working on the person they want to be paper and add a collage around it of things that represent their quality world. Again, this will be based on satisfying the needs.

1. Book Five: Playing and Working Together
2. Key Lesson: you must focus on what you can do (not what you cannot) and believe in yourself and the goodness of others. Beaver additionally reminds us to work hard even when something is difficult.
3. As the lessons are being taught the restitution script should be used for all major disputes and conflicts. Initially the students may have difficulty identifying their needs, mistakes and coming up with solutions to fix, and plans for the future.

1. The final activity is to brainstorm effective ways to fix mistakes beyond the sometimes forced “sorry.” This collection can be put in a jar where the children still have a choice, but more ideas about what they could do to fix minor mistakes. For example: inviting the offended to play with them at recess, choosing a story for them at quiet reading that they know they’d like, picking them for an activity.

Assessment

- Observation: Restitution language is being used both prompted and both unprompted
- Assessment as Learning: See Self-Restitution sheets and documentation of teacher-led Restitution to assess whether students are understanding needs, Restitution and animal strengths
- Self-Assessment: How they felt about Restitution process after it was completed.