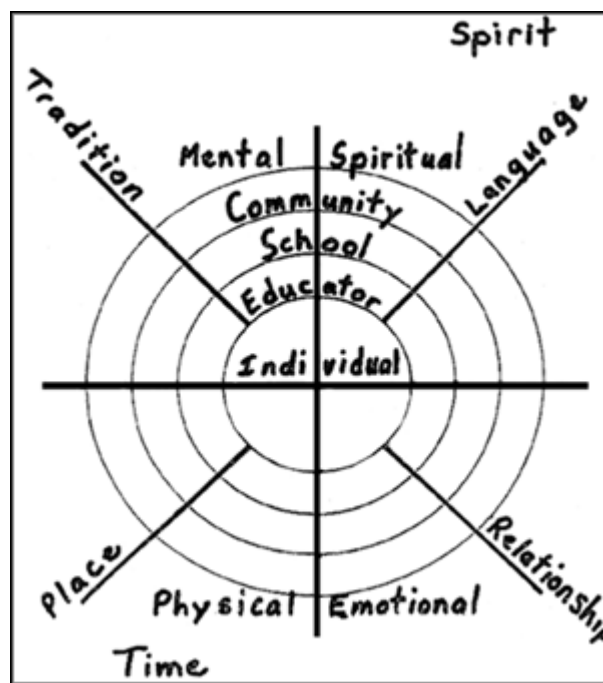


Culture-Based Curriculum: A Framework



Part One

A
WHOLE-SYSTEM
APPROACH
TO
DESIGNING
AND
DEVELOPING
ABORIGINAL
CULTURE-BASED
LITERACY
CURRICULUM
PROGRAM
LESSON PLANS

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Note:

Although the author has exhaustively researched all sources of information contained in this manual, he assumes no responsibility for errors, inaccuracies, omissions or any other inconsistency herein. Any slights against people or organizations are unintentional.

PREFACE

A Whole-System Approach To Designing and Developing Aboriginal Culture-Based Literacy Curriculum Program Lesson Plans provides guidelines for those responsible for the development of contemporary curriculum for instruction in the Native Literacy fields. The manual is written in two parts, each aimed at specific tasks in curriculum design and development, or at a particular method of instruction. Part One outlines the processes involved in the design of a First Nation's culture and community-based whole-system approach to education. Early sections in Part One concentrate on specific tasks such as writing a First Nation community's world view and cultural values, education philosophy and goals. Later sections focus on the tasks of identifying, selecting and developing alternative core learning categories and their content that are more appropriate to a culture-based education system. The final sections in Part One give some suggestions as to instructional processes and practices and evaluation methods that are appropriate to a culture-based system of education.

Part Two of the manual focuses specifically on Native Literacy Programs utilizing Native Literature to facilitate the learning of Native world views, values, local Heritage Languages and the English Language. Included in Part Two is a section on the basic steps involved in designing and developing culture and community-based literacy curriculum program lesson plans, and a section that suggests a Native literacy curriculum program lesson plan format, with explanations of the components, to aid in the development of culturally appropriate lessons and/or projects. Finally, there is a sample lesson that demonstrates the final lesson plan product.

The purpose of *A Whole-System Approach to Designing and Developing Aboriginal Culture-Based Literacy Curriculum Program Lesson Plans* is to clearly present what readers need to how and do to propose and design appropriate culture-based curriculum, curriculum programs, lesson plans, projects or redesign the curriculum, curriculum programs, lesson plans, or projects they already offer to further their effectiveness.

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Part One

A WHOLE-SYSTEM APPROACH TO DESIGNING AND DEVELOPING ABORIGINAL CULTURE-BASED LITERACY CURRICULUM PROGRAM LESSON PLANS

INTRODUCTION

The writer of this manual advocates that a whole systematic change and/or innovation in curriculum design and development in Canada be carried out and implemented in First Nation communities. Towards this end, the purpose of this manual is to assist Native literacy practitioners and their respective communities in the design and development of their own educational systems. A Native curriculum that reflects who they are as a unique people. "An Indian education sui generis. Indian education sui generis is Indian education as 'a thing of its own kind' (National Advisory Council on Indian Education 1983), a self-determined Indian education using models of education structured by Indian cultures."¹

As a starting point for educational change in Native communities, we will look at First Nation-based adult learning centres and their Native literacy programs. Although adult learning centres are usually considered an extension of the formal Western-based school system, Native adult learning centres can also be viewed and utilized as an educational model for First Nation communities. Native adult learning centres with their literacy programs are ideal sites for implementing a proposed systematic change in curriculum design from the usual Western-based curricula, structure, and learning methodologies.

As a model of nonformal education, Native Adult learning centres with their literacy program have many structural characteristics now that may further be enhanced, adapted, and integrated to meet the goals of our proposed Native education system.

¹ Eber Hampton, "Towards a Redefinition of Indian Education," in *First Nations Education in Canada: The Circle Unfolds*, ed., by Marie Battiste and Jean Barman, Vancouver: UBC Press, 1988.

The structural characteristics of First Nation-based adult learning centres and their model of nonformal education that I speak of are:

- they are learner-centred;
- learning is geared to action and the application of knowledge;
- much of the education content draws on community resources; and
- education teaching and learning practices generally incorporate experiential learning and projects.

However, problems remain. the teaching and learning of Native culture is still cast in the structure of Western-based curricula and teaching and learning methods.

Our goal in this manual is to design an education system for First Nation- based adult learning centres and their literacy programs that reflects the world view, values and patterns of social interaction of the community in which it is situated.

It is of a general consensus and the goal of this manual, that a modern system of education for Native people be:

- **Holistic**

In the development of a comprehensive educational plan, which describes generally what should be learned and how best that learning might be facilitated, the educational plan must take into account the whole person. The term holistic will refer to the, educational practice of teaching and learning of the whole person in all the dimensions of their lives- spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical.

- **Culture-Based**

In this manual, the term culture-based means that the education system is based on a First Nation community's framework of values, priorities and world view, so that the path of educational development chosen to meet a community's needs is theirs, not what outsiders might choose for them.

- **Community-Based**

The term community-based means, for the design and development of a whole-system of education, that the base or foundation of educational design and development must be rooted in the lives and processes of the community for whom it is being designed for. In order to own the educational system, the work of designing the educational system must be done from within the actual context that gives rise to the need for the system in the first place.

Finally, our modern system of education must include:

- Our heritage languages; and
- English language skills.

Ideally, our proposed system of education will function to allow learners to:

1. learn from within their own culture, and;
2. function from within their world view and cultural values.

Specifically, we will be designing a culture-based curriculum system that integrates English language skills development.

CURRICULUM DEFINED

Curriculum... is not a concept; it is a cultural construction. That is, it is not an abstract concept which has some existence outside and prior to human experience. Rather, it is a way of organizing a set of human educational practices. (Grundy 1987, 5)²

The implications of the above definition need to be made explicit.

1. A curriculum is intentions, or plans.
2. A curriculum is not activities but plans, or a blue print, for activities. The word *program* will be used to refer to learner activities that result from the implementation of a curriculum.
3. A curriculum contains many other kinds of intentions, such as what learnings learners are to develop, the means of evaluation to be used to assess learning, the criteria according to which learners will be admitted to the program, the materials and equipment to be used, and the qualities required of teachers.
4. A curriculum involves formal intentions, that is, intentions deliberately chosen to promote learning.
5. As an organized set of intentions, a curriculum articulates the relationships among its different elements (objectives, content, evaluation, etc.), integrating them into a unified and coherent whole. In a word, a curriculum is a system.
(David Pratt 1980, 4)³

² Rick Hesch, *Teacher Education and Aboriginal Opposition in Circle Unfolds*, p. 179.

³ David Pratt, *Curriculum: Design and Development*, Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1980.

In its broadest sense, the term curriculum as used in this manual includes all the educational offerings and learning experiences offered under the direction of a First Nation-based adult learning centre.

CURRICULUM DESIGN DEFINED

Curriculum design is a carefully structured process. It consists of identifying educational goals, obtaining learning centre and related community information, and making curriculum decisions as to what content will be included and how the curriculum will be structured.

Thus, this manual will outline the processes involved in designing the following four basic dimensions of any educational curriculum:

1. The goals or function of the proposed education system,
2. The curriculum content (subject matter),
3. The Instructional Process (which includes structure, method and context),
4. And Assessment

All four dimensions must be functionally integrated and consistent so as to form a whole.

The following sections will outline the processes involved in a whole-system approach to designing an Aboriginal culture-based education system.

Further, the important roles and responsibilities that communities, learning centres and educators have in the structure and practice of teaching and learning culture today will be outlined.

NOTE: The design, development, and articulation of the component parts of our proposed education system framework here, in Part One, is critical to the design, development and implementation of culture and community-based literacy curriculum program lesson plans andlor projects in Part Two.

PRELIMINARY CURRICULUM DESIGN PROCESSES

There are three important preliminary curriculum design processes that need to happen before the actual design of the education system (curriculum) can begin. They are:

1. An educational needs assessment should be carried out.
2. Organize and Develop a Community Curriculum Design Committee.
3. Develop and Support Ongoing Teams of Elders, Native teachers, and Others.

1. COMMUNITY SURVEY / NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The first principle for developing culture and community-based curriculum is that the curriculum be locally-based so that the local community "owns" the curriculum. The second principle is that the curriculum or educational system be based on the world view and values of a particular community. These two principles are based on the belief that the community knows what is best for its children, and further, that to learn from within the culture and to develop relevant curriculum goals, objectives and resource materials to meet the needs of its learners, communities are critical educational resources.

In practice, Native control of Native education means that local First Nation communities are responsible for their education system's approval, development, implementation, maintenance, evaluation, supervision, and to ensure that appropriate resources and support are provided. (Note: It is unwise to proceed with a whole- system approach to curriculum development until it is clear that minimal resources and support will be provided.)

The usual first step in designing a curriculum or educational system is to determine the educational needs and aims or purposes (goals or function) of the intended curriculum system. In Native control of Native education, this is the responsibility of each First Nation community.

Although a needs assessment is not required, it is desirable. Generally, a survey or needs assessment is done to determine what the significant educational needs are of the population under purview. Data gathered should include such information as:

- learners' education needs;
- learner characteristics;
- identified community characteristics;
- support or barriers to the proposal of "owning" an education system (learners and community's perceptions and beliefs about their involvement in the proposed education curriculum);
- scheduling issues (should intake be open and continuous?);
- what education goals should be pursued;
- what curriculum content should include; and so on.

(Note: This list is not exhaustive of the data that might or should be collected.)

Some uses for the education needs assessment document are:

- prioritizing needs, stating education goals;
- rationale for a course of action, and guidance as to the type or model of education system you might plan for;
- rationale for curriculum content (subject matter); and
- its information can be used in the preliminary section of a curriculum guide; and so on.

For example, the educational needs assessment of the Sto:Lo Sitel found:

1. High drop-out rate;
2. Academic failure;
3. Poor self-concept;
4. Lack of identity as an Indian person;
5. Learners' lack of knowledge about their culture;
6. Lack of teaching materials about Sto:Lo people;
7. Upper Sto:Lo culture documented inaccurately.
8. Further, there was concern that their heritage language had been almost forgotten, and that few of the stories and traditions were being passed on to the children.

As a result of the education needs assessment, the Sto:Lo people put their efforts towards developing an educational philosophy and objectives that they urged to be part of any educational system within their region. They also went on to develop relevant curriculum programs and materials that are now being used in regional schools for the benefit of their children and others.⁴

⁴ See *Sto: Lo Sitel Curriculum Development Guide* by Jo-Ann Archibald, 19977.

2. FORMING A COMMUNITY CURRICULUM DESIGN COMMITTEE

For detailed planning and design a Community Curriculum Design Committee should be set up prior to the beginning of the design work.

Method of Selections⁵

A Community Curriculum Design Committee attempting a whole-system approach to curriculum design, and development - that is, a holistic, culture and community-based curriculum - must consist of individuals with a wide variety of skills. Every attempt must be made to find individuals from the community. The Community Curriculum Design Committee should consist of representatives from the following groups or with expertise in the following areas: (Note: an individual may fulfill the requirements of several categories.)

1. Local people with a knowledge of life as it is lived in the community:
 - a. children;
 - b. youth
 - c. elders;
 - d. parents;
 - e. women;
 - f. learning centre board members;
 - g. health board members;
 - h. band council members;
 - i. alcohol program workers;
 - j. spiritual leaders;
 - k. elementary school staff for the local community.
2. Curriculum development and pedagogy
3. Data analysis and interpretation
4. Integrative thinking and writing (to pull the contributions of various committee members into a cohesive report).

⁵ See *Holistic Educational Evaluation* by Four Worlds Development Project, 1984, p. 53.

Personal Qualities Of Curriculum Teams

- An effective group is relaxed and informal,
- Every member engages in discussion on an equal basis,
- Members are socially and psychologically secure,
- They trust one another,
- Members show clear value commitments,
- Every idea is given a hearing,
- Disagreement occurs without discord,
- Communication is multidirectional, and
- Members take pains to make the group process work. (McGregor, 1960)

Decisions are generally made by consensus rather than by chairman's decision, majority rule, or unanimous vote. Consensus has been lucidly described by Schmuck:

Group consensus is a decision-making method in which all participants contribute their thoughts and feelings and all share in the final decision. No decision becomes final which is not understood by nearly all members. But consensus does *not* mean that everyone agrees. Consensus means that (1) everyone can paraphrase the issue to show that [s/he] understands it; (2) everyone has a chance to describe [s/he's] feelings about the issues; and (3) those who continue to disagree will nevertheless say publicly that they are willing to give the decision an experimental try for a prescribed time. In other words, consensus means that a sufficient number of participants are in favor of a decision to carry it out, while others understand the decision and will not obstruct its occurrence (Schmuck, 1972, p. 43).

Remember, it is crucial that the members of the group be compatible. The group as a whole should have breadth and diversity to match the curriculum problem, individual members should also have a broad rather than narrow outlook. The primary return is in the form of development of learner potential.⁶

3. DEVELOP AND SUPPORT ONGOING TEAMS OF ELDERS, NATIVE TEACHERS, AND OTHERS

Finally, it is important to organize and develop teams of elders, Native Instructors, and others for they will play a critical role in giving guidance, advice, and support to the design and implementation of your proposed education system. It is of special importance that community elders be organized and supported for they will play a major role in the teaching and learning of cultural concepts and skills.

Organizing community elders can be facilitated in two ways:

⁶ See *Curriculum: Design and Development* by David Pratt, 1980, pp. 122-127.

1. The Community Curriculum Design Committee can themselves identify elders and others in the community who they believe have the capabilities to share their knowledge with others at the learning centre and to help in the teaching of cultural concepts and skills. Or,
2. Organize community elders and have them identify what cultural knowledge and skills, and personal qualities they believe are needed to help facilitate learning with others at the learning centre.

Recognizing who is an elder is best left to each First Nation community as each community may have different ways of recognizing who are their elders.

CURRICULUM DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

It is assumed here, that unmet educational needs have been identified (generally through a survey or education needs assessment); the Community Curriculum Design Committee has been set up; and community elders and others have been organized and are being supported and made aware as to their roles in the design process.

CURRICULUM DESIGN DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

For detailed planning and design of a whole-system of education, the Community Curriculum Design Committee must enter into the process of visioning, discussion, reflection, valuing and reaching consensus on the tasks listed below. **These inter-linked processes constitute the decision-making process which should be used throughout the whole of the curriculum design process.** The primary outcome of such a lengthy process is the articulation of a vision of an education system that can be put out for the people of the community to interact with. Feedback and participation of the community through community meetings is critical to "owning" the vision of the education system. The educational plan that the Committee envisions and articulates should reflect the goals, needs, desires and plans of the community as a whole. Through the decision-making process described above, the tasks and responsibilities of the Community Curriculum Design Committee are as follows, they must determine and articulate:

1. Community's World View
2. Community's Statement of Values
3. Community's Education Philosophy
4. Education Objectives
5. Core Curriculum Learning Categories and Curriculum Content
6. Native Instructional Processes
7. Evaluation

With such goal-driven tasks for our Community Curriculum Design Committee in mind, we will now turn to the processes involved in generating the outcomes listed above.

Section 1

NATIVE WORLD VIEWS

First, Community Curriculum Design Committees, to create a local indigenous curriculum framework, must understand world views and their relationship to successful education. If one of the purposes of education is to meet human needs, then the learning of one's world view and cultural values is essential to meeting some of their human needs.

In effect, a people's world view and its supportive elements and processes, is conducive to personality formations and the perpetuation of the culture. For example, sweats, fasts, vision quests, oral traditions such as storytelling, songs, dances, ceremonies, and so on, are elements of the culture and at the same time, processes that are conducive to personality formation and the perpetuation of the culture. Furthermore, these elements are seen as values, or qualities for life. It is thought that the teaching and learning of these elements aid the person in developing harmony and balance within themselves, with others, with the natural world, and the spirit world. In essence, it may be said that a people's world view and cultural values are important to their well-being. Knowing one's world view and cultural values is conducive to the development of one's self-concept and one's self-image. Further, a society's world view gives meaning and a sense of purpose to one's life.

A world view, for our purposes, consists of the principles, including values, traditions, and, customs, society acquires to make sense of the world around them. Once a world view has been formed, the people are then able to identify themselves as a unique people. (Oskar Kawagley, 1995.)

In an analysis of the beliefs and practices of indigenous people from around the world, Knudtson and Suzuki (1992) identified the following characteristics as distinguishing their worldviews:

Indigenous Worldviews

- Spirituality is imbedded in all elements of the cosmos.
- Humans have responsibility for maintaining harmonious relationship with the natural world.
- Need for reciprocity between human and natural worlds - resources are viewed as gifts.
- Nature is honored routinely through daily spiritual practice.
- Wisdom and ethics are derived from direct experience with the natural world.
- Universe is made up of dynamic, ever-changing natural forces.
- Universe is viewed as a holistic, integrative system with unifying life force.
- Time is circular with natural cycles that sustain all life.
- Nature will always possess unfathomable mysteries.
- Human thought, feelings and words are inextricably bound to all other aspects of the universe.
- Human role is to participate in the orderly designs of nature.
- Respect for elders is based on their compassion and reconciliation of outer-and-inner-directed knowledge.
- Sense of empathy and kinship with other forms of life.
- View nature as a continuous two-way, transactional dialogue.

(Adapted from Knudtson and Suzuki, 1992, p. 13-15)

At the core of Native Peoples spiritual belief systems was the principle that all creation was spirit. For example: land had spirit, rivers had spirit, seas had spirit. winds (weather) had spirit, the Great Mysterious was spirit, man was spirit, and so on.

On the following pages you will find worksheets to help with articulating your First Nation's world view. Although some persons may say, why do this for we know already who we are, it is a good exercise in affirmation of self and the community as a whole.

WORKSHEET

Part One

WORLD VIEW: Principles, Traditions, and Customs

Part one is designed to aid you in articulating your First Nation community's world view. As our definition of world view states, a world view is composed of a people's principles, traditions, customs, and values. In Part , One, Committee tasks are:

(Adjust spacing to suit, use as many pages as required, and remember to keep all forms of discourse)

1. Principle

Random House defines the term principle as "an accepted or professed rule of action or conduct. Thus, the term principle refers to rules of life - from the rule of personal conduct to the rule of operation in natural phenomena. For example: he lived a principled life: he always left tobacco when he picked medicine; And, time is circular and ever unfolding.

Describe or list your First Nation and/or community's body of principles.

WORLD VIEW: Principles, Traditions, and Customs

2. Tradition

The term tradition will mean an intellectual body of knowledge, doctrines,. customs, practices, etc. that is based on past experiences of what to do to survive and to live a life in harmony and balance with self, other people, the natural world, and the spiritual world and is transmitted from generation to generation. For example: every morning he offered tobacco and gave thanks to Father Sun for rising yet,: once again.

Describe the Traditions still existent in your community or traditions that your community would want to be revitalized:

3. Custom

The term custom will refer to the community's usual (or repetitive) mode of behavior, or habitual and specific way of acting. For example; to offer tobacco as a gift to an Elder for their help.

Describe the Customs still existent in your community or customs your community would want to be revitalized:

Part Two WORLD VIEW: Values

Random House defines value as "the quality of anything that renders it desirable or useful." Milbrath (1989) has written that some idea or some practice becomes a value when a feeling has been attached to it. Further, value can refer to "qualities for life," that help to make a life. In essence then, an idea, belief, practice, or thing can be infused with value - be something we value. For instance, education can be viewed as a "quality for life" because we have infused education with value. Thus, your task is to identify the constellation of life values that help an individual and a people make a life, today.

It is of utmost importance that each proposed value goes through the same process. It is also important that your First Nation community reach consensus on a Statement of Values for these values support and will be taught across the community's education curriculum. These values also have implications for the selection of educators, and the teaching and learning processes.

On the next page is a Worksheet on values that can be copied and used for discussion of each proposed value. Remember; keep all forms of discourse on each of your proposed values.

NOTE: Having completed your deliberations on your community's values, you should make a Statement of Values that demonstrates in some way your uniqueness as a people. On page 19 is a sample of a people's statement of values. And, on page 20 is a worksheet to write your community's statement of values.

WORKSHEET

World View: Values (Reached By a Process of Valuing, Reflection and Consensus)

The process of valuing entails that the community discuss, reflect and reach consensus on important human values, and "qualities for life" they feel learners should consider in their lives. Each proposed value must be deemed important enough to pursue within the culture, the community and in the learning centre. To facilitate this process of valuing, each community must determine what encompasses a value - human values and/or "qualities for life" - for them.

One method of determining a value for a particular community may mean the standards of evaluation and the rules of conduct that a person or the society has adopted to guide its behavior and attitudes. A value may be assessed on its strengths, use, and desirability to be of the culture.

A second method for determining what is a value is to give a description of the value you are proposing in cultural context of your society. That is, what constellation of values does your community advocate to make a life? For yourself? For the community as a whole? You need to describe the value in a known (total) situation, in a cultural context that makes the value's meaning clear.

Your task is to identify the constellations of values, or qualities for life, that help to make a life for the individual and community.

Outline your community's criteria or standards that encompasses a value for them, and then go on to discuss the merits of the value for inclusion in your culture: (Adjust spacing to suit. Use as many pages as necessary.)

(VALUE)

Community's Criteria or standards of what encompasses a value for them:
Put here.

A value encompasses the importance of:

Ideas

Beliefs

Things

Practices

And may be assessed on their worth in terms of their:

Strengths

Use

Thus, is the value of such worth, esteem, and desirability to be of the culture?

Discussion:

Merits of Value

Inclusion. Why? Or Why not?

STATEMENT OF VALUES
(A Sample)

ST. MARY'S SCHOOLS:
YUPIIT-YUUTAIT

Every Yup'ik Is Responsible To All Other Yup'iks For
Survival Of Our Cultural Spirit, And The Values
And Traditions Through Which It Survives. Through
Our Extended Family, We Retain, Teach, and Live
Our Yup'ik Way.

With a Guidance and Support From Elders

We Must Teach Our Children Yup'ik Values:

Love For Children
Respect For Others
Sharing
Humility
Hard Work
Spirituality
Cooperation
Family Roles
Knowledge Of Family Tree
Knowledge Of Language
Hunter Success
Domestic: Skills
Avoid Conflict
Humor
Respect For Tribe
Respect For Land
Respect For Nature

By The Design Of Our Creator

We Were Created Yup'ik In Space And Time;
Proud, For Generations To Come,
Of The Values Given To Us By Our Creator.

(1974)

COMMUNITY'S STATEMENT OF VALUES
(Worksheet)

Describe in paragraph form and/or place your
Community's values list here.

Cover when duplicating.

Section 2

DETERMINING GOALS, OR FUNCTION OF A PROPOSED NATIVE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Within the proposed decision-making process model outlined previously, the task of the Committee in this section is to determine the goals, or purposes they believe their education system should be accomplishing in the long term. In turn, specifying the educational goals will help determine what type, or model of education system they should be working towards designing and developing. The Committee must then devise the means by which such goals might be achieved.

There are a number of terms used to describe an educational system's purpose: aim, ambition, end, goal, intent, objective, target, and so on. In this section of the manual two main terms are employed: goal and objective.

Goal

The term *goal* will be used as an umbrella term, including both general and specific purposes.

Objective

The term *objective* is defined as a statement of a specific change to be brought about in a learner.

PURPOSE IN THE CURRICULUM

Process Design Questions a Committee might ask of themselves when deliberating on what purposes and/or goals they believe their education system and curriculum should be accomplishing in the long term are:

1. What human needs should the proposed education system and curriculum be attempting to meet for the full development of personality?

For example, the Committee should consider, at a minimum, the following basic human needs (Note: these are not exhaustive of human needs):

Need for self-actualization entails both the realization of potential and absorption or engagement in activities that the individual finds directly fulfilling. The concept is not limited only to the development of particular skills or talents, but encompasses the whole area of evolving an identity: male or female, mental and physical, spatial and temporal. It means knowing who you are and liking what you know.

Need for meaning entails the growth of self-consciousness and is accompanied by a drive that is essentially philosophical: the need to find meaning in one's existence. Questions generally posed are: Who am I? What is the meaning of life? What is the good life? In other words, it is a search for personal meaning.

Social needs entail the need for developing the capacity for mutually enriching relationships'. One needs, social skills and confidence and compassion for others.

Aesthetic needs entail the experience of beauty in one's life. To be able to appreciate works of art, or to express one's self through a work of art, literary work, or performing arts.

Survival needs entails the survival of self and survival of the people. For the survival of self, the individual needs knowledge and skills conducive to survival of self such as how to swim, drive, first aid, physical fitness, good nutrition habits, information on tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.⁷

Other Process Design Questions are:

- What should your system of education be doing to prepare your people for the future?
- What cultural knowledge and skills do learners need to know and be able to do and be committed to?
- From Western-based culture, what other knowledge and skills do your people and learners need to know? Be able to do? Be committed to?
- What cultural values and/or beliefs do your learners need to know and pass down?

The Committee might also discuss the following questions:

- How did things used to be?
- How did things get to be the way they are now?
- What is the current situation or condition?

⁷ See *Curriculum: Design and Development* by David Pratt, 1980, pp. 54-62.

The Committee might also want to:

- Compare traditional indigenous education and contemporary Western education: and the values of each.
- And, determine what steps are needed to enter into a new way of being, a new consciousness, a new system of education that reflects who they are today.

In today's modern world, the Committee might ask of themselves, What would be the main purposes of designing, developing and implementing an Aboriginal culture-based education system and curriculum? What would it accomplish? Other questions the Committee has to ask of itself are:

1. What would this Aboriginal education system be conceived of as being?
2. How would it function?
3. What content would be appropriate?
4. And, how might it be organized most effectively?

Further, the Committee should ask of their community elders what are their cultural beliefs about the kinds of content that should be learned in and out of learning centre, what contexts are appropriate for that content, and who should lead the different learning activities?

Coupled with the community's education needs assessment (if one was completed), the first outcomes of such a lengthy discussion and decision- making process should be the articulation of:

1. Community's Education Philosophy
- the articulation of the Community's philosophy as to what they believe learners should be learning, the purpose, goals, or function of the proposed education system, and
2. Community's Education Objectives
-the articulation of the educational objectives of learner change in the long term.
3. Type or Model of Education System
-a decision as to the type or model of education system the community should be working towards designing and developing.

Types of Education Systems

Depending on the educational needs of your learners and community, there are, in general, three models or approaches to designing an education system.

1. There are the culture-specific education systems, which can exist side by side, with clear separations from Western-based education systems.
2. There are culture-specific education systems that exist separately, but with opportunities for integration around common themes, skills, or topics with Western-based education systems.
3. There are culture-specific education systems that can support the understanding and blending of common elements and values of Western-based education systems.

In this manual, we have already decided to pursue the design of a culture-specific education system that exists separately, but with opportunities for integration around common themes, skills, or topics with Western-based education systems.

On the next few pages you will find samples of a community's education philosophy and educational objectives that are based on a culture-specific education system that integrates learning English language skills. Further, there are worksheets and forms with explanations as to the content you should include on each. These are for you to practice writing your community's education philosophy and education outcomes.

Remember: It is important to keep all forms of discourse as a record of the curriculum design process.

COMMUNITY'S EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

NOTE: Although throughout Committee and community discussions, the terms purposes, goals, intents and so on may have been used to discuss what the community believes its proposed education system should be accomplishing, these purposes, goals, intents, etc. should be articulated as belief statements when articulating the community's education philosophy.

A community's education philosophy is based on what they believe an education system should be doing. The education philosophy represents the beliefs and purposes of what the community believes their proposed education system should be accomplishing.

The education philosophy is a statement of beliefs, which is general in nature. It speaks to learner needs, content, and what learners need to know and be able to do. It speaks to learner well being in society. It speaks of citizenship.

The education philosophy may be thought of as a series of purposes and beliefs, which the community has formulated to be the foundation for what is to be taught. It need not be lengthy; yet, it serves to set the stage for stating the curriculum system's educational objectives. On the following pages you will find an example of an education philosophy and a worksheet so as to write your community's beliefs about what education should be accomplishing in the long term.

EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

(An Example)

The purpose for developing this curriculum system is for the benefit of all our people, young and old alike. The curriculum focuses on the enhancement and enrichment of our local heritage language and culture. It also promotes integration of Provincial English Language Standards and other Western- based subject areas with our cultural perspective. We believe that all learners should learn about our history, knowledge, traditions, values and beliefs. This will strengthen their education today and in the future.

Curriculum content will create an educational link between the past and the present. It will help reinforce the identity of our individual learners and community at large, now and in the future. It is also believed that the curriculum system will create a new path, or new consciousness for our community to follow.

The most fundamental goal of the curriculum is unity. Unity for the benefit of our children, families, and community.

COMMUNITY'S EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

(Worksheet)

Describe here in paragraph form, or list, in terms of believe statements, what your community believes its proposed education system should be accomplishing in the long term. Speak to all areas of instruction that your community believes learners should be learning. Include statements concerning learner needs, content (subject matter), and what learners need to know and be able to do after the formal learning process has ended.

Cover when Duplicating

COMMUNITY'S EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

In this section of the manual, the term objective will refer to proposed learner change the education system and curriculum aims to achieve in the long term.

Education objectives are statements of expected learner change based upon the education philosophy, which has been established. Like the philosophy, there are many levels of objectives starting with the broad national education objectives and moving down to the objectives of a specific program or lesson plan.

Here you will list the broad learning objectives for the entire curriculum system itself. This list should not be overtly long because each broad learning objective will cover a rather large area of instruction. State all objectives in terms of expected learner behavior. Think about how a learner will gain in knowledge, skill, and attitude throughout the education process.

In writing the objectives of your education system, keep in mind the various instructional areas (subject matter) that are intended to be covered and what learners should know, be able to do, and be committed to after participating in educational programs, having learning experiences, and after the formal learning process has ended.

The objectives you list here are important for when you state the objectives of your specific curriculum program(s) and accompanying lesson plans and/or projects.

On the next page you will find an example of a list of broad learning objectives for a culture-specific education system that integrates learning English language skills.

A Community's Educational Objectives for a Culture-Specific
Education System that Integrates Western-based Subject Areas
(Specifically English language)
(An Example)

1. Learners should be well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community.
2. Learners should know and understand the cultural values of their community andlor First Nation.
3. Learners should be able to build on the knowledge and skills of the local cultural community as a foundation from which to achieve personal and academic success throughout life.
4. Learners should be able to, actively participate in various cultural environments.
5. Learners should be able to engage effectively in learning activities that are based on traditional ways of knowing and learning.
6. Learners should be able to demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.
7. Learners should be able to communicate in two or more languages, one of which is English.
8. Learners should be able to operate technology-based tools.
9. Learners should be able to recognize beauty and meaning through the arts in the learners life.
10. Learners should be able to acquire a core knowledge related to well being.⁸

⁸ Adapted from the booklet *Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools*, published by the Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998.

COMMUNITY'S EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

(Worksheet)

List here the community's educational objectives. The educational objectives are broad statements of learner change and cover all intended instructional areas (subject matter) of the proposed education system. State all objectives in terms of expected learner behavior. Think about how a learner will gain in knowledge, skill, and attitude throughout the education process.

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Section 3

CORE LEARNING CATEGORIES AND CURRICULUM CONTENT (Subject Matter)

Although we are designing a culture-specific curriculum, this does not mean going back to traditional times, but building on our past human cultural values and world views. In other words, for Native people today, an understanding of past cultural practices such as hide-tanning and shelter construction, may be important for the learner to gain a sense of identity and linkage with the past. However; studying these material aspects of our Native cultures is not enough and can result in trivialization. Cultural content (subject matter) must also focus on the more intangible aspects of our Native cultures such as our Native philosophies, values-systems, and beliefs. Most current curricula often neglect to balance the presentation of our cultural material or learning experiences with factual, spiritual and conceptual knowledge.

For our purposes, because we are designing a culture-specific curriculum that integrates Western-based subject areas such as English language, curriculum content is defined by:

- What cultural knowledge and skills learners should know, be able to do, and be committed to.
- Content includes what you choose to teach and the values that are contained within that content.
- And current Western Based Provincial Content Standards in English Language Skills.

Begin with asking yourself what it is you want to teach (instructional content), since the structure and method you develop (in the next section) should be built upon and consistent with what it is you are trying to teach.

Culture as content

If cultural knowledge and skills are to become the end (outcome) and the content is to serve as a means to that end, then the content itself should be organized around processes for acquiring cultural knowledge and skills. In a culture-based curriculum, therefore, cultural elements should be reflected in the content, so that what is taught is consistent with the goal toward which the teaching is directed. One way by which this may be accomplished is to replace the traditional list of academic subjects with a list of appropriate general cultural learning areas and devise an educational system aimed at developing an understanding of these cultural learning areas.

With such goals in mind, we will now turn to the development of a curriculum framework specific to your First Nation community's worldview and cultural values.

Content decisions include:

- What cultural beliefs, values, customs, knowledge and skills should be taught?
- What current course offerings can be maintained or modified to address your guidelines? If any.
- How is Western-based content to be integrated?
- How will local Native Heritage Languages be taught?

IDENTIFYING AND DEVELOPING CORE CURRICULUM LEARNING CATEGORIES

Having worked out and articulated the philosophy, goals, world view, and values of your proposed education system, the next question is What curriculum organizers or learning categories would best be suited to organize and structure the material?

The goal of this section is to aid literacy practitioners in identifying, selecting, and developing core curriculum learning categories so as to provide a framework from within which to derive curriculum and to assist their First Nation communities to design compatible indigenous learning' systems that allow. for and support their world view and values.

At present, the approach to curriculum design in most First Nation based Native Adult Learning Centres and Elementary Schools is generally still the Western-based subject-oriented curriculum. That is, the curriculum is drawn from Western-based categories of knowledge, such as the academic subject categories of Math, Science and English. These current categories are used to analyze and organize reality from an academic perspective. However, if we are designing a curriculum to teach our culture(s), and to reflect our reality, then what is needed are alternative categories of reality that can be used to analyze and organize reality from our cultural perspective.

The broad learning categories that a First Nation community selects should reflect the cultural reality of the people and from within which you can derive and establish curriculum content and organize learning activities.

The identifying and selection processes must begin with the still existent knowledge, traditions, customs, language, values and beliefs (still practiced) within your Native First Nation community. Simply put, your curriculum system and curriculum content is derived from the place in which you live. Your core learning categories should reflect your First Nation Community's traditional Native ways of knowing which is generally centred within the place you live. Thus, you will be devising an education system aimed at developing an understanding of content of the learning categories you select.

The task for each First Nation community and/or Native Literacy Practitioner (who may be working in isolation) is to identify those major learning categories or sources of Native ways of knowing that they consider to still contribute to their culture and their present way of life; and/or to identify new sources of knowledge, or new learning categories that reflects their current contemporary way of life.

Two important considerations are: the ideal curriculum allows learners to function within their world view and to appreciate the world views of others, and secondly, to support a people's world view requires a model which teaches and shares knowledge from within a culture rather than teaches about a culture.

Remember, curriculum organizers, or learning categories are broad areas of study around which the curriculum, curriculum content and instruction are organized.

Identifying Curriculum Learning Categories. Where To Begin?

In terms of starting from scratch, the ideal educational setting for teaching and learning should be embedded in the place where one lives. Thus, a starting point in the process of selecting and developing learning categories should start with the community, and the people.

Process Questions

1. The Committee should ask of itself, what dimensions of our traditional world view still contribute to our knowledge, to our self-identity as a First Nation? As a people? As an individual of that specific First Nation?
2. From what elements of their known reality of the universe did our forefathers traditionally draw energy from, learn from, be influenced by, interact with and communicate with?

For example, in times past, traditional sources of knowledge, or sources of Native ways of knowing included both the spiritual and material means of acquiring knowledge. Means to gain knowledge of the spiritual realm included: Dreams, Visions, and Ceremonies. Means to gain knowledge in the physical realm included: Studying nature, Seeking the advice of others wiser. Also, spiritual means can be used to gain knowledge about the spiritual realm. For example, while dreaming, insight may be revealed about death, afterlife, and so on.

Further, Committee members might ask of themselves:

What is the cultural picture of my community in its modern form?

What contributes to the culture patterns of our lives?

What core thoughts and beliefs still remain within my community?

How would you know if a learning category reflects your community's contemporary cultural reality? By observation. Look around your community. What do people do? Practice? What are the core thoughts and beliefs that make families, individuals and the community at large do what they do? What core thoughts and beliefs does your community organize its way of life around? What constants are present in the community?

Next, the Community Curriculum Design Committee (of Native Literacy Practitioner if working alone) should review examples of Native organizers for curriculum and content. Then, develop, modify, or choose curriculum categories for their local indigenous framework. **However, remember that the learning categories you select must be in relation to each other and reflect the wholeness of the reality that is your community's perception.**

NOTE:

Due to copyright laws, the curriculum models cannot be presented here. You can **find** the curriculum frameworks in the following curriculum guides, which are listed on the homepage of the Alaska Native Knowledge Network: <http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/>

1. A.Oscar Kawagley. (1995). *A Yupiaq World View: A Pathway To Ecology And Spirit*. Perospect Heights; Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc.
2. Baffin Division Board of Education. (1989). *Piniaqtavut Integrated Program*. Iqaluit. N.W.T.: Teaching and Learning Centre.
3. Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture, and Employment. (1993). *Dene Kede: Education, a Dene Perspective: K-6 Teacher Resource Manual*. Yellowknife: Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture, and Employment.
4. Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture, and Employment. (1994). *Inuuqatigiit: The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective: K-12*. Inuvik: Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

Keep in mind when reviewing the above models of indigenous knowledge and curriculum systems that they reflect the values of their respective cultures, including the strong connections of respect for elders, the natural world, the spiritual world, family ties, and the importance of the language in communicating and understanding these values.

You should also be aware that all the models provide for more than a series of seasonal subsistence activities and traditional activities or skills. By articulating an organizing structure, the framework can provide a sequence for structuring instruction around a model that invokes deep cultural values.

Remember, the learning categories that you select must be developed in relation to each other and reflects your First Nation community's contemporary cultural reality. Further, the culture-based curriculum categories selected will vary by First Nation community, and region, and they should arise out of a local consultation process.

Examples of curriculum organizers, or sources of Native ways of knowing are:

- Land
- Others Wiser
- Language
- Traditions
- Sky
- Water
- Spirit
- Community
- Other People
- Fire
- Time
- Sea
- Traditional Technology

The above are only some of the curriculum organizers that may be selected and developed. However, the learning categories you select and develop should reflect your community's Native ways of knowing and provide gateways into developing insights and understandings into your community's Native world view, spirituality, philosophy, rules of life, ethics, morals, attitudes, values and beliefs.

Characteristics of Culture-Based Curriculum Learning Categories

In the process of identifying, selecting and then developing learning categories, keep in mind the following characteristics of what culture-based learning categories should reflect:

1. Curriculum learning categories must be grounded in and reflect the local First Nation's Native knowledge systems.
2. Curriculum learning categories should reflect the values of the culture and the community.
3. Curriculum learning categories should reflect the reality of the learners and the community.
4. Curriculum learning categories should relate to the functions of carrying out everyday life.
5. Curriculum learning categories should reflect how learners develop in a particular way.
6. Curriculum learning categories should reflect the processes by which learners classify experience.
7. Curriculum learning categories should provide a structure for organizing and disciplining thought and thus simplify and promote understanding.
8. Curriculum learning categories should reflect the goals and function of the proposed education system and curriculum content.
9. Curriculum learning categories must be able to accommodate Western based subject matter electives such as English, Math and Science.
10. Curriculum learning categories, in relation to each other, should be able to provide a (structural) framework within which facilitators are enabled to teach or share cultural knowledge and skills, and within which the literacy practitioner and other facilitators and learners can interact in appropriate cultural patterns of interaction.
11. Curriculum learning categories should reflect how curriculum content is derived and delivered.

WORKSHEET

Identifying and Developing Core Curriculum Learning Categories and Curriculum Content

The purpose of this exercise is to aid you in identifying, selecting, modifying or developing alternative curriculum organizers so as to provide an educational framework that is compatible and supports your community's or First Nation's world view and cultural values. Remember, curriculum categories should arise out of a local consultation process and a community process of reflection, valuing, and reaching consensus.

First, list in the boxes provided below the curriculum learning categories you are proposing to be the foundation framework of your education system and from within which you are going to derive curriculum content. Note: the number of learning categories you select is dependent on the perceived reality of your community, what they believe the education system should be doing, and what learners should be learning.

In terms of today, what curriculum learning categories would represent your culture's contemporary reality?

Curriculum Learning Category #1

Curriculum Learning Category #2

Curriculum Learning Category #3

Curriculum Learning Category #4

Curriculum Learning Category #5

Curriculum Learning Category #6

Worksheet

DEVELOPING CORE LEARNING CATEGORY CURRICULUM CONTENT

Next, having (tentatively) selected your core curriculum learning categories, brainstorm and extrapolate on the meanings and contents, and list any ideas that come to mind of how each learning category you have selected can contribute to your proposed education system. Duplicate this worksheet for each learning category proposed, list all ideas and save all forms of discourse as you will need these lists and their content for use in Part Two.

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR ACCESSING AND EXTRAPOLATING LEARNING CATEGORY CONTENT

In the context of:

What cultural knowledge and skills should learners know and be able to do, write under the following questions:

(Adjust space to suit and use as many pages as necessary.)

1. What values and/or beliefs are associated with each learning category?
2. What cultural knowledge and skills, that learners should know and be able to do, is associated with each learning category?
3. What culturally based resources and materials are identified with each learning category?
4. What learning activities are associated with each learning category?
5. What types of teaching and learning methods are associated with each learning category?
6. What types of evaluation methods are associated with each learning category?
7. What Western-based subjects areas are associated with each learning category?
8. What past and contemporary cultural issues are associated with each learning category?

Learning Category: LAND
(An Example)

1. What values and/or beliefs are associated with LAND?
 - respect land
 - respect nature
 - respect the spiritual forces of nature
 - believe we should have respect for the ecology/environment
 - have humility
 - respect earth as our mother, gave birth to and nurtured us, subsistence
 - believe earth has spirit

2. What cultural knowledge and skills, that learners should know and be able to do, is associated with LAND?
 - our language and forms of language come from land and nature (native language changes with the seasons, with new plant and wildlife, seasonal ceremonies, and seasonal activities)
 - know the Creator put us here, in this place
 - recognize that our peoples' "place" is the centre of our world view, values, our reality and spirituality.
 - recognize that land and nature provide the natural resources for our survival - know territorial and land rights
 - land, in conjunction with other dimensions of our reality, is one of the sources of all forms of our discourse
 - Native art depicts many forms of nature, or natural phenomena
 - many Native rituals are connected with earth
 - know that observation of land and nature is the basis of some forms of Native knowledge (e.g. observation over generations of time is generational knowledge that is passed down)

3. What culturally based resources and materials are identified with LAND?
 - local flora (food, medicines)
 - local wildlife (food, clothing, shelter)
 - water, lakes, rivers, streams and marches
 - other people
 - community as a specific place with its own landscape of houses, institutions, businesses, boundaries, social issues, roads, and so on.
 - Native technologies (raw materials for making tools, shelters, travel)

3. What Western-based subjects areas are associated with LAND?

- Science
- Technology
- Geography
- Math
- Health
- Language
- Art

4. What learning activities are associated with LAND?

- Seasonal community preparation activities (Fishing, hunting, trapping, planting, gathering and harvesting)
- Traditional games played
- Native Traditional Technology or survival technology: Shelter construction, traditional preserving methods, utensil construction, carving
- Learn in real-life context of situation
- Learning Native Science
- Learning Native Geography
- Learning Native Biology

5. What types of teaching and learning methods are identified with LAND?

Listening, Observing, Guided Practice, Self-Practice, learning cultural knowledge and skills in real-life context (e.g. Seasonal Land Experiences)
Learner utilizes the five senses for learning.

6. What types of evaluation methods are associated with LAND?

- Direct observation
- observation over time; generational knowledge of a specific place.
- Life: survival on the land
- Quality and usefulness of Technological products produced from land resources
- Observed and demoustrated personal understanding of the spiritual forces of land and nature

7. What Western-based subjects areas are associated with LAND?

- Science
- Technology
- Geography
- Math
- Health
- Languag
- Art

8. What past and contemporary cultural issues are associated with LAND? -land pollution such as quarry pits, garbage dumps
- over fishing by commercial and private interests
 - oil disasters (overland oil pipes and/or shoreline disasters)
 - clear-cutting, logging and land erosion
 - archaeological and grave disturbances
 - animal migration patterns, drop in newborns
 - mercury pollution (pulp and paper mills.)

(Note that the above examples included under each access question are not exhaustive of the elements that may pertain to each learning category.)

Note:

It is important that these core-learning categories (dimensions of reality) are identified for they will form the foundation of your education system and any curriculum program, project, lesson plan, or cultural activity developed thereafter. In other words, your education system and your entire curriculum will be derived from these learning categories.

Section 4

NATIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS

We have decided that our Native culture(s) is to be our education system's primary subject matter (curriculum content). We have also identified our core curriculum learning categories and some of the content that can be derived from each learning category. Keeping in mind our education system's goals, such as "learners should be culturally knowledgeable," the question is, what instructional processes and practices are most appropriate for the teaching and learning of our cultural knowledge, skills, and values?

Instructional processes include the structure and methods by which information is conveyed, the context of the learning experience, and the beliefs about how knowledge is generated, conveyed, and received. Together, the structure, methods, context, and processes make up the instructional process. All four dimensions must be functionally integrated to form a whole.

Note: Changing the subject matter (content) without a concomitant change in the structure, method, context and processes through which that content is conveyed does not necessarily help you towards your educational goals if the educational experiences remain within the structural framework of the dominant culture. Therefore, the structure and method we develop in this section should be built upon and consistent with what it is we are trying to teach. The following process questions will aid you in identifying what structural and teaching processes and practices might be employed so as to be consistent with teaching our cultural knowledge, skills and values.

Process Questions

1. What are the key features of instruction and learning within your culture? How should these guide instruction?
For instance, elements of traditional education were:
 - Emphasis was on being able to do something;
 - Acquiring knowledge was through observation-practicing-applying and vice-versa;
 - Assessment was by active demonstration of knowledge learned.

NATIVE THEORY OF CULTURAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

How best can we teach our learners our cultural knowledge, skills and values? The following outlines two underlying processes or practices that should be considered in the teaching and learning of our Native cultures.

Traditional Native heritage education systems provide us with two processes that support learning of our worldviews and values. Both are represented by traditional Native symbols:

- The Sacred Circle Concept - a framework for nurturing the self- actualization of the whole person and;
- The Spiral Theory of Learning - a method for the teaching and learning of the whole person in context, over their lifetime.

Used in conjunction with each other, these underlying instructional processes and practices are in keeping with our traditional ways of teaching and learning. Both ought to be considered as the instructional processes and practices at an adult learning centre. The following outlines how these two processes function and are implemented within a Native system of education.

The Sacred Circle Concept

For Aboriginal peoples, learning must be associated with spiritual, physical, and emotional growth, as well as academic growth. The Sacred Circle concept can be used as a framework for the education of the whole person in all his or her dimensions and in all his or her stages of life. Holistic education means that educators must address the four interrelated dimensions of human potential and personality: the physical, emotional, spiritual and mental.

To implement some of the following elements of the Sacred Circle concept, Literacy practitioners have to be aware of diverse faith communities within their own community and the accepted social practices in regards to these matters.

Robert Regnier states the following reasons for the Joe Duquette High, School adopting the Sacred Circle concept of the school: "The school adopted a comprehensive and substantive approach to healing education. The Sacred Circle offered a healing approach to education based on a holistic spiritual perspective on learners and their place in the world. The school's spiritual perspective is sustained by daily sweet grass ceremonies, feasts on special occasions, special ceremonies, and sweat lodges. Teachers conduct talking/healing circles to build communities of trust so that learners can speak about their feelings and lives. They also teach survival skills in which the Sacred Circle helps learners think critically about personal health and development. As well, they use storytelling circles and collective improvisation through which learners dramatize their learning. Drumming and dancing circles introduce learners to aesthetic dimensions of culture that unify psyches and social relations through celebration. Support circles for learners generate peer backing in dealing with abuse..."⁹

Further, in his *The Sacred Circle: A Process of Healing*, Robert Regnier¹⁰ states that the process pedagogy as healing is interpreted as having three phases; of belonging, understanding, and critical reflection. These three phases recur in cycles that make up the whole.

The Sacred Circle as Belonging

A sweet grass ceremony, consisting of all person's who wish to attend should be done each morning. This ritual affirms that everyone belongs and is welcomed by the others into the circle of life. Further, the sweet grass ceremony is the visible manifestation of a school committed to education as a process of healing through the Sacred Circle.

Sacred Circle as Understanding

The purpose of talking circles is to create a safe environment for people to share their point of view with others. This process helps people gain a sense of trust in each other. They come to believe that what they say will be listened to and accepted without criticism. (Four Worlds Project, 1990) Healing circles should be conducted every morning. In this process, learners can come to see and build their interdependence with others who are attending the school. Interdependence is viewed as the basis of a community of healing. This community is built on the notion that through speaking the learners can share their hurting with others who will empathize with them. In this empathy, learners receive the affirmation of others, which builds self- image and confidence. The community takes up the personal reality of the student as curriculum.

⁹ Ibid., p. 135.

¹⁰ Robert Regnier, *The Sacred Circle: A Process Pedagogy of Healing in Interchange*, Vol. 2512, 1994, pp. 129-144.

Sacred Circle as Critical Learning

Elements of the process of critical learning are: Every morning a sweet grass ceremony reinforces learners' sense of belonging. The next part of the process is for learners to visualize and make judgments about themselves so they can become self-determining. To move to critical reflection and action, there are two processes that can be derived from the Sacred Circle as Medicine Wheel. (Here I will only discuss one of the processes.)

In the first process, learners are taught to think critically about their own healing within a conceptual framework taken from the Sacred Circle.... It offers a relevant, practical way for learners to visualize their health by providing a framework for critical reflection. The Sacred Circle drawn into four quadrants, differentiates physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual dimensions of personal development,. Through this model, the learners are Encouraged to view themselves as whole persons who can become self-determining. This self-determination requires envisioning ideals in each area and examining the connections within each area. A discussion of high physical ideals provides a framework for addressing physical abuses such as smoking, alcoholism, and drug abuse. Analyses of physical abuses are directly connected to emotional, spiritual, and intellectual matters. The wheel facilitates practical reflection that relates to the immediate life Circumstances of learners and offers a framework for learners to visualize possibilities for themselves. Through the circle, learners can visualize themselves as whole persons, see the connections between different aspects of their lives, and determine how to balance their development.¹¹

Spiral Learning¹²

The spiral is also a traditional Native symbol representing human possibility. It can be used as a method for teaching and learning of the whole person, over their lifetime.

As a method of teaching and learning for the acquisition of cultural knowledge and, skills, the spiral theory of learning is consistent with and embodies the experiential method of traditional Native ways of teaching and learning. Characteristics of Spiral Learning are:

- Being observant while learning
- Making an individual decision as to when to try to do something on their own
- Taking responsibility for what to learn and when.

¹¹ Ibid., 1994: 140.

¹² See *Dene Kede Curriculum: Teacher's Resource Manual*, 1993, pp. 18-22.

Stages of Learning and Evaluation

There are three stages which are repeated over and over throughout the process of spiral learning, and the acquisition of cultural knowledge and skills development: the input stage, the reflective stage and the output stage.

Input Stage

In this stage, learners participate in key cultural experiences and are exposed to many cultural learning experiences. Included here are planned classroom-based lesson plan activities, which prepare learners for key cultural experiences.

Reflection Stage

This is the stage where learners become culturally self-aware. They become culturally self-aware by reflecting on their cultural experiences. Methods used here are sharing circles, conferencing and journals.

Output Stage

The output stage consists of learner experiences in sharing. The output stage is when the community benefits from the learning's of the learner. Output experiences can be in the form of.

- progress reports made to the people of the community
- learners can display or demonstrate their work in the learning centre or other places within the community
- the output experience can be doing things or sharing of things which actually benefit the community in concrete ways. Some examples are community newsletters written by learners; elders' stories made into dramatizations, feasts or radio programs produced by the learners, or a personal cultural demonstration of a cultural skill such as retelling some traditional stories to an elementary class.

The output stage is like the final test or summative evaluation. All records of individual learners should be kept to indicate progress. However, in the final analysis, the community evaluates the success of the learner.

Other elements of spiral learning are: learning is life long; learning takes place in real-life contexts; and with each learning opportunity presented, the learner develops more knowledge and experience. Further, because the experiences of learning cultural knowledge and skills are done in real-life contexts, worldview and values are also learned. Worldview and cultural values are learned within the context of the participation of community elders and other community members.

Other social practices learning centres should strive to incorporate are:

1. the on-going participation of Elders in all aspects of the learning centre's process of learning;
2. providing opportunities for learners to learn in and/or about their heritage language;
3. having facilities that are compatible with the community environment in which they are situated;
4. fostering extensive on-going participation, communication, and interaction between itself and people within the community.

Furthermore, because learning centres need to operate within a community context, literacy practitioners and other educators should invite other Native agencies such as Native Mental Health Workers, Native Social Workers, Native Drug and Alcohol Workers, and Native Counselors to the centre as they could help within their own spheres of operations.

Project Approach

Similar to spiral learning is the project approach to teaching and learning. The project approach to teaching and learning can also bring about the conditions necessary to acquire cultural knowledge and skills.

The term project, as used here, refers to a planned task or problem undertaken by one or more persons for the purpose of achieving some goal. A project can take almost any form: it can be a lesson plan, a unit, or a year-long effort; it can take place inside or outside the learning centre; it can involve one student, or the whole learning centre; and it can be incorporated in nearly any subject or learning activity. The learners therefore have a great deal of flexibility in defining the nature of their participation and pursuing their own avenues of interest.

This manual advocates that the project approach along with spiral learning be utilized to carry out a substantial part of the educational responsibilities vested in the learning centre. The literacy practitioner will have to ensure that the projects themselves are deliberately and carefully planned with particular learning tasks in mind, blending the academic functions of the learning centre with the cultural patterns of the community. Further, projects should be designed to incorporate valuable learning experiences with a useful social function.

Subject Integration

Spiral learning and a project-centred approach do not preclude the necessity for more formalized forms of learning activities at various stages: Academic learning such as learning English language skills is a supportive activity for both spiral learning and the project approach. Both approaches require that literacy practitioners carefully plan their learning activities.

For example:

- How would you integrate learning English language skills within your culture and community-based curriculum?
- What language strategies should be used to teach or maintain your local heritage language?

It is suggested that the curriculum content component of Western-based subject areas such as language arts, social studies, mathematics, the physical sciences and from the knowledge and skills component of the traditional curriculum. Learners should still be expected to meet provincial academic content standards which other Learners are required to fulfill. It is the process by which those standards are reached that a culture-based curriculum proposes. Western-based academic learning should occur within the context of culture based learning activities/experiences.

Possible teaching strategies could be:

- Do a comparison between Aboriginal thought and Western thought across all disciplines,
- Utilize Native literature to teach English language concepts and skills,
- Learn English language concepts and skills within the context of learning cultural knowledge and skills,
- Build the majority of your curriculum around projects,
- Keep journals,
- One-on-one tutoring in English as the need arises,
- Maintain formal tests in English,
- Match English Language Content Standards with your Cultural Content Standards.

Some Suggestions on Organizing Time¹³

To implement the above suggested approaches to teaching and learning, the structure of the learning centre must be flexible. This can be done by way of scheduling.

Independent of the frequency and number of classroom hours a group has, scheduling will allow the group to make the best use of everybody's time. In designing a schedule, it is important to keep a balance between whole group, small group and individual activities that emphasize oral, reading and writing skills. Ideally, every time the group meets, learners will have an opportunity to talk, read, and write as well as work with the whole group, in small groups and individually.

Scheduling Mornings:

After the morning sweet grass ceremony and/or circle discussion, learners can work on local heritage language skills and/or English language skills, but in either case, work on themes utilizing your body of local Native Literature.

Afternoons:

Learners spend two and a half hours working on planning and detailing of a project, or the carrying out of project plans, or working on their own.

Other scheduling considerations:

Keep in mind and utilize community events and seasonal activities as learning opportunities.

¹³ Ibid., p. 122.

Practitioners/Educators

After the community has articulated its education philosophy, goals, and objectives, and the adult learning centre has adopted their model of education and instructional processes and practices, it is the literacy practitioner(s)/educator(s) that unify and make real the curriculum's goals. The concepts of learning from within the culture, and learners functioning within their world view and cultural values is manifested here by practitioners/educators through their personal traditional styles of teaching and learning, and developing and implementing culture-specific curriculum programs, lessons, and activities.

The culture-based approach to Native education recognizes teachers as the immediate agents of contact... (Ariene Stairs, 1995:146). And, in many ways, the teacher is the primary curriculum (Four Worlds Development Project, 1989:54).¹⁴ The selection of educators for Native learners must be stringent. "Teachers must be willing to learn at least the rudiments of the Native language and culture in order to do an effective job of teaching, for 'belief systems are the framework upon which cultures and societies function,' and the language is the carrier (Locust, 1988:328). Non-Native teachers may be opposed to this idea, but it is desideratum if a new consciousness is to be developed. It is a requirement consistent with Native peoples' holistic teaching and learning." (Oscar Kawagley, 1995:113)

It is generally believed by First Nation communities that practitioners and educators who reflect their worldview and cultural values best do teaching. Furthermore, practitioners and educators who are culturally oriented - who have a strong spiritual center and know Aboriginal ways of knowing - may have a better opportunity to attend to the cultural well-being of learners by acting as role models, speaking the language, and relating to them on a personal level. The following is a model of teaching and of attending to the cultural well being of learners.

Instructional Process: Practice of Teaching

The model of "teacher as healer" views teaching as a healing process. "If we consider healing as a 'transition toward meaning, balance, connectedness and wholeness' (Katz, 1982), we can see how teaching and learning can be healing acts. The "teacher as healer" is one who, infused with spiritual understanding, seeks to make things whole. Within the formal school setting, the "teacher as healer" is one who, informed by spiritual understanding, seeks to respect, and foster interconnections -- between herself/ [himself] her/ [his] learners, and the subject matter; between the school, the community and the universe at large -- while respecting each part of these interconnected webs.

¹⁴ Four Worlds Development Project, *Recreating Native Education*, University of Lethbridge, Alberta, 1989:54

The 'teacher as healer' is a description of actual practice. Teaching has the task of making things whole. Teaching as healing recreates the spiritual and ethical dimension of teaching.... By understanding healing as a process which draws meaning deeply from within daily life, and thereby spiritually transforming it, we can see how ordinary teachers can give and receive in a most special manner. Further, subject matter placed within a spiritual and value context could become meaningful and valuable for learners." (Richard Katz and Verna St. Denis 1991: 24)¹⁵

General Principles of How "Teacher as Healer" Functions¹⁶

- Teaching is by example, connected and inspired by the actual life of the practitioner/educator.
- Learners are given space, time and help to develop in their own way.
- The practitioner/educator lives the life they wish to teach.
- Practitioner/educator creates room for questions to emerge.
- The "teacher as healer" shares knowledge, passing it on to others, rather than holding on to knowledge, or using it to control others.
- "Teacher as healer" stresses her [or his] own vulnerability, rather than having to be in control.
- Respect characterizes all phases of the work of the "teacher as healer," respect for knowledge, for the learner, for the community, for oneself and one's profession and responsibility.
- The "teacher as healer" is one who cares and loves. This means that teaching (or knowledge sharing) comes from the heart.

Furthermore, culturally oriented educators possess the possibility of raising a new consciousness amongst their learners by applying spiritual lessons in their practice of teaching. That is, the spiritual dimension comes from the heart (one who has balance in one's life, cares for the community, and respects spiritual relationships) - healing comes from the attitude and person doing the instruction. Teaching healing takes no time from the schedule; it is a quality of instruction, which is woven into and throughout the schedule. (Katz, 1991)

¹⁵ Richard Katz and Verna St. Denis, Teacher as Healer, *Journal of Indigenous Studies*, Volume 2, 1991:23-26.

¹⁶ Ibid.

From an instructional process point of view, the practitioner or other instructor facilitates learning holistically. As outlined previously in teaching practices, the instructor is mindful of learner needs in their spiritual, mental, physical and emotional lives. Native cultural values of respect, sharing and caring are most important in the instructional process.

Questions literacy practitioners and other facilitators should consider asking of themselves are:

- Are you culturally oriented?
- Are you experientially oriented in your teaching and learning strategies?
- Do you have as your goal the betterment of yourself, the learners, the community?
- Do you have active participation within everyday community affairs and community cultural events?
- Are you willing to learn the local heritage language?

Section 5 Evaluation

NOTE:

The following curriculum program evaluation outline is for our proposed new, culture and community-based Native Literacy Curriculum Program which in turn is reflective of an evaluation of our proposed new culture- based education system and its intended goals, objectives. subject matter and instructional processes.

Two forms of curriculum. program evaluation are formative and summative. Formative evaluation is concerned with meeting program objectives in the short term. That is, evaluation is conducted for the purpose of diagnosis and correction; monitoring during implementation of a curriculum program. Summative evaluation is evaluation made subsequent to instruction to judge achievement of objectives. It is concerned with meeting long-term outcomes. The evaluation outline presented below concerns some aspects of summative program evaluation.

Although there are many aspects of a curriculum program that can be assessed, two main features of program evaluation that should be assessed are; effectiveness and acceptability.

Curriculum Program Effectiveness

In assessing curriculum program effectiveness, the key questions are: Did learners achieve the objectives? And, What effects did the curriculum program have?

In assessing the achievement of program objectives, you have to determine what criteria to use as a measure of your Native literacy curriculum program objectives?

The main objectives of your literacy curriculum program have to do with the acquisition of:

1. Cultural knowledge, skills, values and dispositions
2. Local heritage language skills
3. English language skills

Grades can be used to reflect achievement of objectives of the English language skills development portion of your literacy program. Information can be gathered from standardized test results for English language skills. Analysis of Journals, writing assignments, and so on.

Cultural Knowledge, Skills, Values and Disposition Objectives

Criterion of achievement of cultural knowledge and skills objectives can be:

1. Learners attain the skill level of their parents or of an adopted role model as a standard of comparison.
2. Learners have the ability to share cultural knowledge and skills by showing others.
3. Learners do a personal demonstration of cultural knowledge and skills acquisition (for example, setting up a fish camp).
4. An elder asks a learner to share their skills, showing others.
5. Learners are seen to actively express cultural values in their everyday life.

You should also be mindful of unexpected effects, or outcomes of the program.

Information sources can be:

Interviews with learners, community members, administrators, instructors.

Program Acceptability

In assessing curriculum program acceptability, the key questions are: Is the literacy curriculum program acceptable to learners, instructors, administrators and the community? Did learners enjoy or appreciate the program?

Information Sources:

- Learner program evaluation questionnaires
- Interviews with learners
- Dropout rate
- Attendance data
- In-program observations
- Subsequent program enrolment rates
- Subsequent academic choices of learners
- Public attendance at open house days
- Public requests for program information
- Community evaluation: is the community happy with the results it sees?

Other aspects that should be evaluated in regards to a program are:

- Instructors
- Facilities
- Resource materials
- Scheduling
- Learners, and any other aspects deemed relevant.

It must be remembered that at present, there is no formally recognized method for assessing achievement of cultural objectives. This is an area of culture-based, education that needs further research.

This is the end of Part One. Part Two is designed to aid you in the actual design and development of culture and community-based curriculum program lesson plans and/or projects. By providing you with ideas on how to inventory, develop, and utilize community-based resources, and providing a culture-based curriculum program lesson plan format with explanations of its elements, it is hoped that your learners will be the beneficiaries of your determination and hard work to provide them with culturally relevant learning resource materials.

Part Two

DESIGNING
AND
DEVELOPING
CULTURE
AND
COMMUNITY-BASED
NATIVE
LITERACY
CURRICULUM
PROGRAM
LESSON PLANS
AND/OR
PROJECTS

Part Two
DESIGNING AND DEVELOPING CULTURE AND COMMUNITY-
BASED NATIVE LITERACY CURRICULUM PROGRAM LESSON
PLANS AND/OR PROJECTS

1. INTRODUCTION

In Part One you identified: the type of education system you are modeling your proposed system of education after your education philosophy, goals and objectives; your curriculum framework's core learning categories; your subject matter (content); your instructional processes (which included structure, method and context) and; your cultural evaluation methods. The purpose of the sections in Part One was to aid you in developing a culture-based curriculum framework that could give support and greater direction to your Native Literacy Curriculum Program and adult learning centre instructional processes and practices.

We, as Native people, needed an articulated educational framework that could support and do justice to our Native cultures and curriculum resource materials. As an example, there are no Western-Based curriculum learning categories that can adequately support the teaching and learning of our body of Native literature. As Penny Petrone (1990)¹⁷ has written, "Native literature expression communicated the respective histories and rules of belief and behavior of the specific tribe, and perpetuated their specific world view that gave the cosmos its origins, order, and meaning. It encompassed the teller, the listener, the tribe, and the land and the universe. By transmitting specific cultural knowledge with its specific meanings and messages, it helped strengthen tribal identity and provided for its continuity. Here it is to the context or text of the oral expression that is of importance.

Context is important to understand Native stories. Native oral literature must be approached from the religious, social, and literary traditions that influenced them. For example; consideration has to be given to the fact that each linguistic Native group has acquired, over a long history, its own particular way of expressing itself, and this diversity has complex origins in climatic and geographical differences, cultural environment, group configuration, and individual disposition. Further, one has to consider the cultural matrix informed by the attitudes, beliefs, and customs of the tribe of which the original is an organic part. [their body of oral literature developed out of time, place, and the lived experiences of individuals and the people as a collective]

¹⁷ See the sections: Introduction, pp. 1-8 and Oral Literatures, pp. 9-34 in *Native Literature in Canada* by Penny Petrone, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Each linguistic group has its own particular set [of oral narratives] that accords with its own regional ecologies [sic], its own values, customs, and tastes, embodying its own religious and philosophical beliefs. Thus, in order to appreciate the significance of, these narratives in the lives of the Native people, it is important to read the stories not as isolated literary narratives, but as part of the sociocultural and historical contexts of the culture groups in which they developed.... If they are removed from their cultural settings, it is very easy to get a false idea about aboriginal narratives. Present-day versions of the literature written for children simply recount stories about culture heroes, the animal kingdom, and natural phenomena that are unrelated to the social, economic, and religious life of the tribes. Presented in this way, native oral traditions do not provide valid guides to native reality of the time that formulated their understanding of the world."

Thus, this writer believes that the development of our culture-based curriculum framework in Part One, if implemented appropriately, will give greater support and direction to our respective Native literacy programs and to the teaching and, learning, of our material and non-material cultures.

The focus here in Part Two is on designing and developing culture and community-based Native Literacy curriculum program lesson plans for a Native Literacy curriculum program. Here, you will utilize and implement all that you learned and developed in Part One. For example; your literacy curriculum program's objectives will be based on and developed in relation to your curriculum system's objectives. Further, your Native literacy curriculum program content and instructional processes will be derived from your education system's core learning categories.

In this manual, the term Native literacy is taken literally to mean the processes involved in becoming literate in two languages. In our case, one language will be the local heritage language of a specific First Nation community, and the other, the English language.

The term Native Literature, as used in this manual, will refer to all forms of Native expression; from the oral tradition to the present.¹⁸ Further, in conventional Western-based terminology, this manual views Native Literature as a discipline - "a structured area of knowledge characterized by a distinct configuration of subject matter, concepts and methodologies of inquiry" (Funk & Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary) - and as such deserves its own program of study.

It is the belief of this writer that one of the goals of a Native Literacy Curriculum Program should be to raise and enhance learners' knowledge and respect for the intelligence of their forefathers, their culture, and their spiritual and aesthetic values. Native literature, then, must be presented from within a cultural matrix that supports the correct way of teaching and learning the cultural knowledge embedded in Native literature expressions.

Second, if successful education means influencing personality formation while meeting human needs, then Native peoples' separate, but distinct bodies of Native literature meet these criteria for embedded within Native literatures is a people's world view, life principles, traditions, customs and values. As stated in Part One, the teaching of a people's world view is in effect, the shaping and influencing of personality formation. Thus, the teaching of our respective Native literatures is one of our people's traditional methods, or gateways, to our peoples' well-being.

In effect, the teaching of our respective Native literatures contributes to the well-being of the individual and the community to which they are an organic part by providing them with a strong sense of identity, place and meaning in life.

If we view education as aiding our people towards greater well-being, while doing justice to our cultures, then adult Native Literacy Programs are justified in utilizing Native literature as the program's primary curriculum content.

¹⁸ See *Native Literature in Canada* by Penny Petrone, 1990.

2. NATIVE LITERACY CURRICULUM PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

NATIVE LITERACY CURRICULUM PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

As mentioned in Part One, there are many types of philosophies. In Part One we wrote the philosophy for the whole of the education system itself. The educational philosophy there encompassed all the educational areas that we were envisioning developing. Here, we are writing the specific philosophy of our Native Literacy Curriculum Program.

As a rule of thumb, any educational curriculum program needs its own statement of beliefs, or philosophy about what it should be accomplishing, what content it believes is appropriate, what learners should know, and be able to do upon completion of the program, and what methods will be used to teach and deliver the program. In our case, we should also mention our beliefs about why and how we will be using a local body of Native Literature to teach English language skills.

As with a community's education philosophy, a specific curriculum program's philosophy is also based on what they believe their program should be accomplishing in the long term. A specific curriculum program's philosophy is also a statement of beliefs which is general in nature. It speaks to learner needs, content, and what learners need to know and be able to do once the program has been successfully completed.

Here, too, your literacy curriculum program philosophy may be thought of as a series of purposes and beliefs which are to be the foundation for what is to be taught. As with your education system's philosophy, it serves to set the stage for the objectives.

NATIVE LITERACY CURRICULUM PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

In Part One you stated your culture-based education system's objectives. Now, you need to state the specific objectives of your proposed literacy curriculum program.

Your literacy curriculum program objectives should be developed in relation to, and reflect the overall objectives of your education system.

As with your education objectives, your literacy curriculum program objectives are statements of expected learner change you expect your literacy program to bring about. State all objectives in terms of expected learner behavior. Think about how a learner will gain in knowledge, skill, and attitude throughout the literacy program. Keep in mind the various subject matter that is intended to be covered in the literacy program.

On the next few pages you will find examples of a Native Literacy Curriculum Program Philosophy and, an example of a Native Literacy Curriculum Program Objectives. These examples are based on a culture-based education system that integrates learning English language skills. There are also worksheets with explanations as to the content you should include on each. These are for you to practice writing your Literacy Curriculum Program Philosophy and Literacy Curriculum Program Objectives. It is important that you complete these exercises and refer to them when writing your lesson plans for they will help to keep you focused on your community's cultural perspective.

Remember: The literacy curriculum program's philosophy and outcomes should be derived from a community consultation process. It is also important to keep all forms of discourse as a record of the literacy curriculum program design process.

NATIVE LITERACY CURRICULUM PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY (An Example)

The purpose for developing this Native Literacy Program is for the benefit of all our people, young and old alike. The Literacy curriculum program focuses on the enhancement and enrichment of our local heritage language and culture. It also promotes integration of Provincial English Language Standards and other Western-based subject areas with our cultural perspective. We believe that all learners should learn about our history, knowledge, traditions, values and beliefs. This will strengthen their education today and in the future.

The Native Literacy Curriculum Program content will create an educational link between the past and the present. By utilizing our own local body of Native literature, it will help reinforce the identity of our individual learners and community at large, now and in the future. It is also conceived that the Literacy curriculum program will create a new path, or new consciousness, for our community to follow.

NATIVE LITERACY CURRICULUM PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY
(Worksheet)

Describe here what your community believes a Native Literacy Curriculum Program should be accomplishing, what content is appropriate, what teaching and learning methods are appropriate, and why and how learning English language skills will be integrated.

Cover when duplicating.

NATIVE LITERACY CURRICULUM PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

(An Example)

- Learners will be knowledgeable in two languages, one of which is the local heritage language and the other, the English language. (This is also one of your culture-based education system's outcomes.)
- Learners will be more appreciative of and value more their own people's body of literature, from the oral tradition to the contemporary.
- Learners will gain greater knowledge and understanding of their people's values and beliefs.
- Learners will gain a greater sense of self, of their place in the local community, and within the dominant society and the world at large.

NATIVE LITERACY CURRICULUM PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

(Worksheet)

List here your literacy curriculum program objectives. The objectives are broad statements of learner change and cover all intended instructional matter of the literacy program. State all objectives in terms of learner behavior. Think about how a learner will gain in knowledge, skill, and attitude throughout the literacy program.

Cover when duplicating

3. INVENTORYING, DEVELOPING AND UTILIZING LOCAL RESOURCES

Local community input is needed for an effective culture-based literacy curriculum program. Constant considerations when developing curriculum content are:

1. the type of information learners require depends to some extent on local use patterns;
2. the types of activities which would promote positive self-esteem is also influenced by the cultural background of the learners and by local values and customs;
3. as well, local conditions might influence which resources are available;
4. local conditions will also be a major factor -in determining appropriate spiritual and cultural values to be taught in the curricula;
5. the degree to which community resource personnel are required to be involved in the implementation of the curriculum may be feasible in some communities but not in others; finally,
6. consider the way in which material is presented.

Thus, it is suggested that you, the Native literacy practitioner start from scratch to develop your own literacy curriculum program materials. In this way, you can develop resources that fit learners' needs and the particular situation in which your literacy curriculum program is run.

By developing your own literacy curriculum program materials, you can take advantage of the educational opportunities offered within your community, resources in the local environment and the skills and knowledge of community members and local experts.

In getting started, remember, the most important resource you have is yourself. You have to be able to draw from all the resources in your community. Look around you. Inventory your local resources.

3a. NATIVE LITERATURE

Our primary focus in designing and developing our Native Literacy Curriculum Program is on utilizing our Native Literature as the primary content (subject matter) to learn English language skills.

Therefore, we have to identify what is Native Literature. Native Literature is inclusive of our oral literature to our contemporary written literature. It encompasses the oral narratives of traditional stories, speeches, songs, and public ceremony to letters, journals, autobiographies, journalism, short stories, novels, poetry, and drama, to name but a few native literary forms.

Thus, you might begin with developing lesson plans and/or projects based on your own community's body of local traditional stories. Search for all types of traditional stories of your Nation, people and community.

Search for other materials related to your First Nation and community. There may already be:

- accurate books,
- films,
- print materials in either English or your heritage language,
- audio tapes and video tapes of elders in either language,
- film strips,
- photographs with text in either language,
- audio tapes and video tapes of elders, or others engaged in doing or showing a cultural activity.

3b. MATERIAL RESOURCES

You can and should include topics that relate to community issues, politics, and economic issues such as type of reserve government, laws, membership code and so on, as these have immediate relevance to the lives of the learners.

Search for written history(ies) of your community, look for historical and contemporary maps, locate cultural artifacts, search for indigenous traditional and modern stories that are written down (myths and legends), photographs, slides, transparencies, songs, and so on.

3c. OTHER RESOURCES

There may already be materials developed, from a Western-based perspective, for literacy skills such as print materials, hands on activities, and workbooks from the Ministry, but these would have to be matched with specific themes, appropriate key experiences and lesson plan development.

As learners progress from learning basic English language skills such as listening, reading, writing, and spelling, to more complex forms of English language skills development, you should include contemporary Native literary forms such as autobiographies, biographies, books, novels, short stories, poems, songs, magazine, newspaper and journal articles.

For example, some Native Novels are:

- *Blood Red Ochre*, by Kevin Major (New York: Laurel-Leaf Books, 1989)
- *Where the Rivers Meet* by Dan Sawyer (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Pemmican Publication Inc., 1988)
- *Log Jam* by Monica Hughes (Toronto, Ontario: Harper and Collins, 1987)
- *Clearcut Danger* by Lesley Choyce (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Fomac Publishing Company Limited, 1992)
- *My Name is Louis* by Janet Craig James (Waterloo, Ontario: Penumbra Press, 1988)
- *Winners* by Mary-Ellen Lang Collura (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1984)
- *The Ghost Dance Caper* by Monica Hughes (Toronto, Ontario: Methuen, 1978)
- *Bearstone* by Wil Hobbs (New York: Avon Books, 1989)

Other Contemporary Native Writers are:

Drew Hayden Taylor, Thomas King, Basil Johnston, Ruby Slipperjack, Barry Milliken, Alexander Wolfe, John McLeod, Armond Garnet (is a poet), Duke Redbird, Penny Petrone, Thomsom Highway, and many others.

3d. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

To properly design and implement some aspects of your literacy curriculum program, you will need knowledge of, and the help of the following:

Local First Nation Community Boundaries and/or Territories

You should be self aware and be able to identify the territorial landscape of your First Nation community which includes rivers, lakes, streams, forests, swamps, plants, animals, fish, birds, mountains, sacred places, the community's local institutions, roads, houses, social issues, politics, businesses, and be able to identify the people themselves and determine how they can be of benefit to your literacy program.

Land Experiences

All aspects of culture cannot be taught in the classroom. Of late, Native learners of all ages have been isolated from real cultural experiences. Not to include land experiences is not effective cultural teaching. Land experiences teach many subtle but uniquely important perspectives of your community's culture. Your education system and any curriculum program and associated lesson plans should be concerned with developing your community's basic perspectives in learners.

Any land experience will not do. Attention must be given to your community's cultural perspectives while on the land. The community resource people who are involved in the land experience should model your community's cultural perspectives and behaviors that are desired for the learners. The land experience must be of a quality of which the community elders can approve and have a comfortable feeling about.

Types of land experiences

Throughout the year, there will be individuals, or families within your community who are involved in special projects or events which relate to the land. Examples could be fishing, hunting, etc., and with the permission of the individuals, learners can be taken to watch, or if appropriate, be actively involved in the activity.

Or,

With the help of the community, week-long trips for hunting, trapping, or a fish camp could be arranged by the learning centre in all seasons to challenge learners. The community resource persons who are involved to help teach the learners on the land should be very capable and have your community's cultural perspective toward land experiences.

The amount of time spent on the land for these cultural experiences will vary from community to community depending upon the amount of community support there is for such activity.

3e. UTILIZING LOCAL RESOURCE PERSONS

Within your First Nation community, as the Literacy Practitioner (and ideally with the help of the Community Curriculum Design Committee), you should start the process of identifying elders and other local resource persons who could help you with your literacy program. The benefit of recruiting, and supporting such local resource persons is that they embody and express community values.

These resource persons have cultural skills and knowledge about local subsistence and survival skills, craft skills, local ecosystems, local history, and traditional stories and dance. Further, resource persons such as storytellers, weavers, local artists, carvers, hunters, trappers, and fishermen can help teach the local community's heritage language; teach about local land claim issues, treaty rights and membership codes; teach how Native technologies of the past came about and were put to use in creating and developing tools such as canoes, fish nets, shelter construction, and so on.

Assisting Local Resource Persons To Develop Lesson Plans and/or Projects

Elders will play a crucial role in the development and delivery of your community's education system and specific curriculum programs. Elders should be accessed for advice in planning or other problem areas, and to help in teaching cultural concepts and skills. As the literacy practitioner, you should assist elders and other local resource persons with developing their own programs, projects, or lesson plans. You can ask the resource person to describe what they will do, etc., and what they want to stress, and write these down. Then, read back to them what you heard so as to ensure that you have understood each other. Then, you can develop this into a project or lesson plan. Check with them for approval of final draft of project or lesson plan.

Be Open To Learning Yourself

If it is the situation that you, the literacy practitioner, do not have the practical knowledge and skills for a particular cultural task or key cultural experience, then have a sit down with the resource person to discuss and design the projects, lessons and activities together. In this way there is sharing of information and experience in both directions.

Utilizing Other Resource Persons

As the Literacy practitioner of the adult learning centre, you should consult and be in contact with on-reserve elementary school teachers and other possible resource persons in your community such as Native Counselors, Native Drug and Alcohol Workers, and so on, as they could assist with learning within their own respective spheres of knowledge.

As a rule of thumb, remember, within the extended family concept and approach to teaching and learning, any and all persons have the potential to contribute to your adult literacy curriculum program.

3f. EQUIPMENT

As is probably the situation, your adult literacy program is low on funding. Having worked hard and established good relations within the community, you might consider and inventory who or what other local institution has the following equipment:

Cameras, video cameras, tape recorders, computers, televisions, VCR's, overhead projectors, even boats and motors, tents, and vehicles, and so on.

It may be that these pieces of equipment can be borrowed from some other local institution or person within the community.

Computers

Today, most if not all adult learning centres have computers or access to computers. Computers have become closely identified with the process approach to writing instruction. Some ideas for the use of computers are: through e-mail learners can converse with other learners across the country: they could launch a project based on themes of geography, people and community, seasonal activities, and so on.

Remember, computers are a "tool" that can be used to preserve the local culture; for self expression; to let others know who you are; and used for other communication purposes.

Television

There are many excellent contemporary films, videos, and movies by Native people that can also be used for literacy lessons.

3g. ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS

Within the context of preserving the local culture, learners could plan the following video or photographic projects:

- Community Service Commercials (Don't Drink and Drive)
- Video Histories
- Video Exchange with Other Adult Learning Centres
 1. Produce videos focusing on the seasons and subsistence activities that occur within the community during the year.
 2. Or, produce images of the community and people., Take a photographic journey of the community, and people, during the year.

The above projects should be done within the context of learning the local heritage language and English language skills. Learners plan video projects by developing storyboards in both the local heritage language and English language. (Resource: *Stories in Motion: Developing Video Resources*, Owen Sound: Ningwakwe Clearing House, 1996.)

Other Project Ideas

1. Learners can produce a language text book in both mother tongue and English for elementary students.
2. Learners collect old photographs from friends and relatives, make frames or prints of photos, with written descriptions and display in learning centre and around the community.
3. Learners collect videotape and/or photograph cultural artifacts for display and/or for use in the literacy program.
4. Learners can publish books on local traditions.. Each book focuses on a single theme.
5. Learners produce a community profile for distribution.
6. Learners write and produce the community newsletter.

Remember, all, projects can, be designed to teach learners about the history, customs, crafts and values of their people while teaching academic skills and knowledge such as English.

4. WRITING LESSON PLAN OUTCOMES, OBJECTIVES AND PLANNING ACTIVITIES

In this section of the manual, the following terms will be used:

OUTCOME

The term outcome will refer to what a curriculum program lesson plan or project aims to accomplish following successful completion of the lesson or project.

OBJECTIVE

The term objective will refer to the expected learner change the curriculum program lesson plan, or project will achieve during the lesson or project to attain its stated outcome(s).

David Pratt (1980, p181) identifies five types of learning objectives: knowledge, skill, disposition, physical, and experience. What you need to do when writing your lesson plan is to write a clear statement of the state or capability to be developed in the learner in relation to the outcome statement. Think of objectives as attributes or elements of the outcome(s) and simply state what you think the learner should be able to do after the lesson has been taught.

The verbs in objective statements should refer to states. Verbs generally used to write knowledge objectives are: *know, understand, be, apprehend, appreciate, and recognize*. It is good practice to reserve the term *be able to* for writing skills objectives. Verbs used to write disposition objectives are: *develop*. Verbs used to write experience objectives are: *enjoy, participate*.

ACTIVITIES

Activities are the specific exercises, applications, community services, demonstrations, etc. that take place within the lesson plan or project in order for it to meet its objectives. The more activities contribute to specific outcome-driven objectives, the more likely it is the lesson or project will reach its stated outcome(s). So, lesson plan activities support lesson plan objectives, and lesson plan objectives support lesson plan outcomes, and in turn, lesson plan outcomes support a specific program's outcomes.

BASIC STEPS IN LESSON PLAN DEVELOPMENT

USING YOUR CORE LEARNING CATEGORIES

1. Gather Background Information

- a. Select your topic.
- b. Think about your topic from your community's cultural perspective.
- c. Develop a list of questions for your topic.
- d. Research the topic.
- e. Identify the needed resources for your project or topic.
- f. Decide learner level that you are writing the lesson plan for.
- g. Identify subject area your topic is mostly aligned with.
- h. Decide how each of your core learning categories contributes to the learning of your posed topic or subject?

2. Topics/Subjects and Core Learning Categories

Think of your topic, or subject as whole, a totality in cultural context. A guiding principle for designing and developing a lesson plan is:

Native world view does not allow separation of its parts, as each part must be understood in relation to the whole.

Therefore, refer back to all your core learning categories and the content lists you made for each and determine how they might be able to contribute to the design of your lesson plan.

Use the above principle in conjunction-with the learning category access questions you answered earlier (reprinted below), but remember to narrow your focus when answering the access questions this time to your specific topic or theme.

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR ACCESSING AND EXTRAPOLATING LEARNING CATEGORY CONTENT

In the context of.

What cultural knowledge and skills should learners know and be able to do, write under the following questions:

(Adjust space to suit and use as many pages as necessary.)

1. What values and/or beliefs are associated with each learning category?
 2. What cultural knowledge and skills, that learners should know and be able to do, is associated with each learning category?
 3. What culturally-based resources and materials are identified with each learning category?
 4. What learning activities are associated with each learning category?
 5. What types of teaching and learning methods are associated with each learning category?
 6. What types of evaluation methods are associated with each learning category?
 7. What Western-based subjects areas are associated with each learning category?
 8. What past and contemporary cultural issues are associated with each learning category?
3. Depending on your topic/subject and outcome statement, determine what specific cultural knowledge, skills, and behavior learners will be, or should be exposed to concerning the topic/subject so as to learn about it.
 4. Next, express the elements of the topic you have selected in terms of related specific objectives, activities and assessment.
For example:

a. **Objectives**

Write objectives for each of your core learning categories. That is, write an objective statement stating what, 'specific,' change is intended to be brought about in a learner, or what learning you expect learners to learn in relation to each of your core learning categories as a result of instruction.

b. **Activities/Application**

Next, design and expose learners to activities that would reinforce the knowledge, skills or behaviors to be learned during the lesson. Remember, activities reinforce learning objectives. The more activities contribute to specific outcome-driven objectives, the more likely it is the lesson will reach its stated outcome(s).

c. **Assessment**

Next, in relation to your core learning categories, write a method of assessment that will determine if learning has occurred.

Example:

Topic: Local Traditional Stories

Outcome: Learners will hear, learn and be able to retell some local traditional stories.

Cultural Learning Objective(s)

Learning Category #1 LAND

Learners will:

- appreciate that many local traditional stories are based on land experiences of individuals, and/or the people as a collective.

Learner Activity - Learning Category #1 LAND

Learners will:

- be able to identify local landmarks mentioned in some of the local traditional stories told by the elder(s).

Assessment - Learning Category #1 LAND

Learners will:

- identify local landmarks mentioned in some of the local traditional stories on a map.

Remember, you should write an objective, plan an activity and assessment method for each of your core learning categories when you write your lesson plan.

Following, you will find a form that you can use for each of your core learning categories when you are designing and developing a lesson plan.

Form

Topic/Subject _____

Lesson Plan Implications for the Curriculum Learning Category

#1 _____

Outcome(s)

In relation to your topic/subject, state what you expect learners will know, be able to do, and/or what behavior(s) will be changed, or influenced as a result of instruction?

Cultural Learning Objectives

What cultural knowledge, skills and behavior(s) will learners be exposed to in relation to the topic, or subject matter?

For example:

What cultural values or beliefs are associated with the topic and that learners will be exposed to during the lesson?

As when you identified the core values or beliefs that sustain your culture and world view, so too here you are going to identify the cultural values and beliefs that are associated with the topic, or subject matter of your proposed lesson plan or project.

Learner Activities

1. In relation to your topic/subject, what cultural learning activities are associated with _____?
2. In relation to your topic/subject, what traditional teaching and learning methods are associated with _____?
3. In relation to your topic/subject, what learning resources are associated with _____?
4. In relation to your topic/subject, what capabilities do learners need to, know and be able to do _____?
5. In relation to your topic/subject, what types of traditional evaluation methods are associated with _____?

*Adjust spaces to suit your needs. Use as many pages as you need. Remember to keep on file all forms of discourse as they pertain to each learning category.

NOTE: You need to go through the above process for all your core learning categories, to, design and develop your lesson plan. That is, your lesson plan should be developed in relation to all your core learning categories. Or, at a minimum, you must consider all your core learning categories, for that is what develops your lesson plan's cultural and community perspective. However, you do not need to have an answer for each question.

You should now be in a position to develop a whole lesson plan. Some other elements, you should include in your lesson plan are: learner level; English language objective(s), activity(ies) and assessment method(s).

The next section outlines one possible literacy curriculum program lesson plan format that reflects the goals of a culture-specific education system that integrates English language concepts and skills development.

FORMAT
AND
FORMS
FOR
DEVELOPING
NATIVE
LITERACY
CURRICULUM
PROGRAM
LESSON PLANS
AND PROJECTS

Format and Forms For Developing Native Culture-Based Literacy Curriculum Program Lesson Plans and Projects

The following are important components in the development of culture- based Native literacy curriculum program lesson plans and projects.

1. Title/Theme (of lesson plan/project)
2. Outcome/Purpose (of lesson plan/project)
3. Subject Area(s)
 - a. Native Cultural Subject Area(s)
 - b. Western Academic Subject Integration Area(s)
4. Literacy Grade Level
5. Learning Objectives
 - a. Specific Culture-Based Learning Objectives
 - b. Western Academic Subject Integration Learning Objectives
6. Cultural Concept(s)
7. Cultural Lesson (Four-Step Method)
 1. Practitioner/Facilitator Background Notes
 2. Preparation of Learner
 3. Learner Activities/Application (includes Local Heritage Language and English Language skills development activities)
 4. Evaluation Activities
 - a. Culture-based evaluation activities
 - b. Western Academic-based evaluation activities
8. Resources
9. Developed by _____

Lesson Plan/Project Development: Format and Forms

1. **Title/Theme (of Lesson Plan/Project)**

In deciding about the title of your unit of study, it will help to keep the following in mind:

- make your title short and to the point
- the title should suggest aspects of what your unit of study will include the title should arouse interest and attention

2. **Outcome/Purpose (of Lesson Plan/Project)**

(If specifically planning a project, the project goals/outcomes should be stated in terms of a problem to be, investigated.)

3. **Literacy Grade Level**

Who is your target group? What group or level will you focus on? This is necessary so you can plan your unit of study appropriately.

4. **Subject Area(s)**

Keep in mind to what area of study your lesson will be mostly aligned. Will your focus be mainly on Native cultural subject areas and/or Western-based academic subject areas? For example:

Native Cultural Subject Area(s):

Native Literature; Subsistence Skills; Heritage Language; Native Art; Native Society; Native Government; Native Spirituality; Native History; Native Geography; Native Traditional Technologies.

Western Academic Subject Integration Area(s):

Math; Science; English; Social Sciences

It is best to place your area of study in a particular discipline as it will enable you to focus on your subject(s).

Learning Objectives

a. Specific Culture-Based Learning Objectives

Culture-based learning objectives should be stated for each cultural learning category and should state the intended learning outcome of that learning category as it pertains to the lesson plan goal. For example:

Learning Category #1: _____

Learners will:

(state learning objective for this category)

Learning Category #2: _____

Learners will:

(state learning objective for this category)

Learning Category #3: _____

Learners will:

(state learning objective for this category)

Learning Category #4: _____

Learners will:

(state learning objective for this category)

b. Western Academic Subject Integration Learning Objectives

Learners will:

(state learning objective for this subject)

Depending on learner literacy skill level, write objective here. Remember, you should match up Provincial English Language Content Standards with Cultural Content Standards.

5. Cultural Concept(s)

The cultural concept should be presented in a brief statement, which will give learners the main idea of what is to be presented in the lesson. One or two complete sentences would be sufficient to do this.

- The cultural concept is the basic unit of thought which will be explored and examined.
- The concept should be appropriate to the developmental level of the learner(s).

6. Cultural Lesson (Four-Step Method)

1. Practitioner/Facilitator Background Notes

As the Literacy Practitioner doing culture and community-based research for your specific topic/theme area, you should have made notes and gathered available resource materials. Put here the information that you (or for others who may follow you) need to know about the topic, so as to be able to share/present it for the learners.

2. Learner Preparation

Prepare learners by introducing them to the topic/theme. This can be done by engaging learners in a general discussion of their knowledge of the topic/theme, or sharing with them (informally, or by mini lecture) some of the information you have collected.

3. Presentation

The information that is presented to the learners should:

- stimulate the interest of the participants
- be appropriate for the learners involved

Utilize one or more methods of conveying the information such as:

- handouts
- interviews
- lecture (guest speaker; resource person)
- film, videos, slides, etc.
- music
- art
- displays

Attempt to present the concept being studied in a very thorough manner, always keeping the objective(s) and goals in mind.

4. Learner Activities/Application

Culture-Based Activities

Culture and community-based learning activities should also be developed in relation to, and reflect your core learning categories. Learner activities should support your learning objectives.

Western Academic Subject Integration Activities

All Western subject integration activities will be done within the context of culture-specific learning areas. Depending on learner skill level, place here learner activities that are instructive of Western Academic Subjects.

The following are activities in which learners could participate as an application for the lesson. This will serve to reinforce the concept presented.

- Discussion
- Sharing
- Writing
- Drawing
- Debate
- Field trips
- Key Cultural Land experiences
- Report
- Further research
- Interviewing

Working on a committee or group on a major project which could include: writing a play; producing a large mural; arranging a meeting or assembly in the community.

It is important that the activities focus on getting the learners involved in the lesson and concept. This helps the learners internalize the information and ideas.

As an example, the learners could:

1. relate the information in the cultural lesson to something in their own lives or experience
2. do something creative relating to what they have learned.

7. Evaluation Activities

Some type of evaluation activity will enable you, the literacy practitioner, to know the extent to which learners have understood and can apply the cultural concept and cultural lesson. An evaluation activity can take many forms and can be both formal and informal. Evaluation activities will provide you with the information you need in order to effectively assess progress. You can learn a lot by careful observation, by watching the learners work on their assignments, by listening to group discussions, and by reviewing learners' work. Remember also to:

- a. Use appropriate evaluation methods from your culture for evaluating cultural knowledge and skills acquisition and development.
- b. Use appropriate evaluation methods for Western academic knowledge and skills acquisition and development.

8. Resources

The purpose of a resources section is to provide information. Utilize a wide variety of resources to help you develop your lesson plans. Your list of resources will help you and others locate the materials, individuals, and organization related to the lesson. Update your resources list as other potentially helpful resources come to your attention.

Potential resources could include the following:

- a. Libraries
- b. Historical and Cultural Societies
- c. university Library Collections
- d. Craft Centres
- e. Band Offices
- f. Elders
- g. Local Resource People
- h. Local Historian
- i. Records
- j. Books
- k. Films, film strips
- l. Native magazines, newsletters, etc.

9. Developed by _____

As the developer of the lesson, you should include some information about yourself.. -your name, band affiliation, position, place of work, address and telephone number.

Lesson Plan/Project Development: Format and Forms

Title/Theme (of lesson/project):

Outcome/Purpose (of lesson/project):

Literacy Grade Level:

Subject Areas

- a. Native Cultural Subject Area(s):
- b. Western Academic Subject Integration Area(s):

Learning Objectives:

- a. Specific Culture-based Learning Objectives

Learning Category #1:

Learning Category #2:

Learning Category #3:

Learning Category #4:

- b. Western Academic Subject Integration Learning Objectives:

Lesson Plan/Project Development: Format and Forms (continued)

Cultural Concept(s):

Cultural Lesson

Practitioner/Facilitator Subject Background Notes:

Preparation of Learner:

Learner Activities/Application:

Be sure to include Heritage, Language Skills Development:

And

Subject Integration:

English Language Skills Development: (and/or other Western academic subject)

Lesson Plan/Project Development: Format and Forms

(continued)

Evaluation Activities:

- a. Culture-based Evaluation Activities:

- b. Western academic-based Evaluation Activities:

Resources:

Developed by: _____

SAMPLE LESSON

As an example, I will use the previous example, but expand on it to include four core learning categories: Land, Self, Other People, and Spirit. The lesson plan will also include heritage language and English language skills development activities and evaluation methods.

Lesson Plan
(Designed specifically as an in-class lesson)

Title: Traditional Stories

Outcome: To hear and learn some local traditional stories

Literacy Grade Level

Adult, Level One

Subject Areas

Native Literature/ Native Language Arts

English Language

Learning Objectives:

Learners will:

1. **Land (Objective)**
-recognize that many traditional stories describe local land features
2. **Self (Objective)**
-recognize their people's cultural values as expressed in local community stories
3. **Other People (Objective)**
-develop an appreciation and respect for community elders' knowledge and wisdom
4. **Spirit (Objective)**
-recognize the spiritual connection in most traditional stories

Heritage Language Objective(s)

-learn some words in the local heritage language

English Language (Objective(s))

-learn some words in the English language

Cultural Concept(s)

Story telling is a primary method that Native people use to pass on cultural knowledge and values.

Practitioner/Facilitator Background Notes**Purpose of Stories**

Native elders refer to their stories as "teachings" since they are used in order to pass on important aspects of the culture such as local history, traditions and values.

Types of Traditional Stories

1. Historical Stories tell about actual events.
2. Sacred Stories recount the creation of the earth and its people.
3. Migration Stories recount epic journeys.
4. Prophecies are stories that predict the future.
5. Stories that explain what is happening in nature.
6. Everyday stories about human experiences (problem-solving stories).

Timing of Stories

Generally, stories were only told during the winter as the people were too busy in the spring, summer and fall preparing for winter. However, depending on the time of season, activity and purpose, stories were also told while preparing for, during, and after fishing, hunting, trapping, planting, gathering and harvesting activities. Stories were also told during social gatherings; and whenever there was a purpose in everyday life (e.g. to help solve a problem, to explain beginning menstruation, ways of child-rearing).

Learner Activities/Application**Cultural Activities**

Learners will:

1. Research traditional stories of the local First Nation community.
2. Invite community elder(s) to retell some of their traditional stories.
3. Identify local landmarks that are maybe mentioned in some of the stories.

4. Identify their community's traditional Native values in the stories
 1. In a group discussion you might ask the following questions:
 2. What do the stories the elders told reveal about local Native values, attitudes and beliefs?
 3. What cultural knowledge and skills are revealed in the elders' stories? (And, the list can go on to other relevant questions for discussion.)
5. Retell a traditional story to their group.
6. Learn some local community heritage language words.
(Heritage Language Vocabulary List -- develop a list)
7. Subject Integration Activities
 - Learn some English Language words
(English Language Vocabulary List - develop a list)

Cultural Evaluation Method(s)

-Able to retell major events in one of the stories told by the elder(s) in either the local Heritage language or in English.

Resources:

Community Elder(s), indigenous books containing traditional stories, handouts of some local traditional stories.

FINAL COMMENTS

A whole-system approach to curriculum design and development is an arduous journey for any community and/or literacy practitioner to go through and complete. However, the benefits of such a journey are for the community as a whole. In the following, I have adapted and presented only the highlights of *Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools*¹⁹ as they might apply to First Nation based Adult Learning Centres and their Literacy Programs. The following Standards outline how important it is for First Nation communities, Literacy Practitioners/Instructors, and Learners to work together to make a culture-specific education system and literacy curriculum program at their local learning centre work.

Cultural Standards for Curriculum

1. A culturally-responsive curriculum reinforces the integrity of the cultural knowledge that learners bring with them.
2. A culturally-responsive curriculum recognizes cultural knowledge as part of a living and constantly adapting system that is grounded in the past, but continues to grow through the present and into the future.
3. A culturally-responsive curriculum uses the local language and cultural knowledge as a foundation for the rest of the curriculum.
4. A culturally-responsive curriculum fosters a complementary relationship across knowledge derived from diverse knowledge systems.
5. A culturally-responsive learning institution fosters the on-going participation of Elders in all aspects of the learning process.

Cultural Standards for Communities

In support of a community's stated educational goals, there must be congruency between the wishes of the community and what it actually practises day-to-day. A culturally-supportive community:

1. Incorporates the practice of local cultural traditions in its everyday affairs;
2. Nurtures the use of the local heritage language;
3. Takes an active role in the education of all its members;
4. Nurtures family responsibility, sense of belonging and cultural identity;
5. Assists teachers in learning and utilizing local cultural traditions and practices; and
6. Contributes to all aspects of curriculum design and implementation in the local learning centre.

¹⁹ See *Alaska Standards for Culturally-Responsive Learning centres*, Assembly of Alaska Native Educators, Anchorage, Alaska, 1998.

Cultural Standards for Adult Learning Centres

1. A culturally-responsive adult learning centre fosters the on-going participation of Elders in all aspects of the learning process.
2. A culturally-responsive adult learning centre provides multiple avenues for learners to access the learning that is offered, as well as multiple forms of assessment for learners to demonstrate what they have learned.
3. A culturally-responsive adult learning centre provides opportunities for learners to learn in and/or about their heritage language.
4. A culturally-responsive adult learning centre has a high level of involvement of professional staff who are of the same cultural background as the learners with whom they are working.
5. A culturally-responsive adult learning centre consists of facilities that are compatible with the community environment in which they are situated.
6. A culturally-responsive adult learning centre fosters extensive on-going participation, communication and interaction between the learning centre and community personnel.

Cultural Standards for Practitioners/Educators²⁰

Culturally-responsive practitioner/educators:

1. Incorporate local ways of knowing and teaching in their work;
2. Use the local environment and community resources on a regular basis to link what they are teaching to the everyday lives of the learners.
3. Participate in community events and activities in an appropriate and supportive way;
4. Educators work closely with parents to achieve a high level of complementary educational expectations between home and learning centre; and
5. Recognize the full education potential of each student and provide the challenges necessary for them to achieve that potential.

²⁰ Alaska Standards for Culturally-Responsive Learning centres, Anchorage, Alaska: Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998: 9-12.

Learners

It is expected that learners be responsible for their own learning which means:

- show enthusiasm;
- being receptive to others opinions;
- showing respect in communication with others;
- actively attending and listening and focusing on learning;
- asking questions;
- being responsible for project(s) completion;
- sharing with and helping others;
- doing their best at all times;
- acting responsible;
- having respect for themselves by living a healthy life-style.

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