Grounding Elementary Social Studies Teacher Education in Indigenous Knowledge

Sharla Mskokii Peltier and Janice Huber

Abstract

This article tracks a multiyear relationship between an Indigenous and a non-Indigenous preservice teacher educator working together on *Odenang* Inquiry pedagogy. The importance of truth-telling and relationship-building in a reconciliation context is discussed, followed by a discussion of Anishinaabe *Wiijiindowin* and story pedagogy as Indigenous relational self-study. We present some examples of *Odenang* Inquiry in social studies preservice teacher education that reflect three interconnected and layered processes. We conclude the article with some reflections on ways that the interconnections among these processes have contributed to the development of our *Odenang* Inquiry approach.

Coming Toward *Odenang* (Heart Place) Inquiry in Elementary Social Studies Teacher Education

The research reported in this article has an important positionality component and builds on a previous project involving the application of Indigenous knowledge. We are an Anishinaabe kwe from the Chippewas of Rama First Nation (Mnjikaning) and a member of the Loon Clan whose ancestors have been in a reciprocal relationship with Lands/Place[1] that through colonization have become known as Ontario, Canada (Sharla), and a person of mixed Scandinavian and European ancestry who was raised on lands known within colonial accounts as Crooked Creek, Alberta, Canada (Janice). We are a former speech-language specialist with years of experience alongside Indigenous and non-Indigenous children in First Nation and public schools (Sharla) and a former elementary teacher who came alongside children and families in rural, international, and urban schools, and has been a faculty member in various teacher education programs in diverse places in Canada (Janice). We are both mothers.[2] Our relationship began in 2017 when Sharla accepted a position in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. Our coming to implement *Odenang* (heart place) Inquiry in an elementary social studies course was nurtured through our participation in a four-year project led by Anishinaabe Elder Stanley Peltier and Sharla.[3] Since then, our reflections together of our project experiences have deepened our relationship of coming alongside each other as instructors of preservice teachers.

As two of the 21 student, staff, and faculty co-researchers, we participated in a monthly Teaching Lodge guided by Elder Peltier and Sharla's teachings. Early in the project, Elder Peltier began to teach *Odenang* as he invited us to remove our shoes and walk barefoot on the grass. There was much laughter and sharing about how many of us had not let our bare feet touch the earth for a long time. As we stood in a large circle beside the trees near the Teaching Lodge, Elder Peltier taught us about their medicines, and reminded us of our need to walk in this whole-body way so we remember *Aki* (all of creation at the level

of the earth or Land) and our connection with the Lands/Places where we were raised and/or currently live. In the Teaching Lodge later that evening, he shared more of his knowledge of *Odenang*:

> O doing with your heart
>
> d actualization
>
> ode heart
>
> nan territorial area of where you live; usually closer to where your Nation lives; we walk where our ancestors are
>
> (Peltier et al., 2022, pp. 5–6)

In a subsequent Teaching Lodge, Elder Peltier encouraged us to remember the web of life, which includes the remains of our ancestors who nourish Lands/Place and us, and the feelings and knowledge we reconnect with when we walk on the Lands/Places of our ancestors.

One purpose of this earlier research project was to support the design of new courses or to redesign existing courses with attention to culturally respectful engagement with Indigenous foundational knowledge. The re-visioning of our teaching of the social studies methods course has been an ongoing process fueled by our desire to engage students and ourselves in *Odenang* Inquiry. This Indigenous pedagogy can nurture the individual and collective growth of critical thinking in response to colonial, taken-for-granted beliefs, values, discourses, and practices in social studies and citizenship education. By engaging in *Odenang* Inquiry, we want to support student teachers to understand children as situated beings, as knowledge holders and makers, and that children's families, communities, and Lands/Places are key in relational learning and in Indigenous Knowledges. Through use of this approach to inquiry in the course, we envisioned a process of growth in the ability of our students to value Indigenous Knowledge. We invited Elders, family, and community members to lead culture- and Land-based learning and stories, which nurture habits of slowing down, and we visited with Lands, Waters, and Beings, including local Indigenous significant sites.

This article further elaborates on *Odenang* Inquiry by discussing its importance for truth-telling and relationship-building in a reconciliation context before moving to a discussion of Anishinaabe *Wiijiindowin* and story pedagogy as Indigenous relational self-study. We go on to present some examples of *Odenang* Inquiry in social studies preservice teacher education in a way that involves three interconnected and layered processes. We conclude the article with some reflections on ways that the interconnections among these processes have contributed to the development of our *Odenang* Inquiry approach.

Odenang Inquiry for Truth-Telling and Relationship-Building as Reconciliation

As an Indigenous scholar and a non-Indigenous scholar, and as mothers, we have each long been involved in the field of education. Our experiencing *Odenang* Inquiry in the project grew our desires to ensure we maintained attention to truth-telling and relationship-building as key constituents of reconciliation. As noted by Frank Deer (2019),

> the general aim of reconciliation that has emerged from the activities of the TRC [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] is the development of a new relationship amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. Such a new relationship must acknowledge harms of the past and their impact into present. (p. 1)

Crucial are Indigenous peoples' understandings of Lands/Places, education, and the Treaties. As affirmed in a seminal report by the National Indian Brotherhood (1972),

> In Indian tradition each adult is personally responsible for each child, to see that [each child] learns all [the child] needs to know in order to live a good life. [We] want our children to learn that happiness and satisfaction come from . . . pride in one's self, understanding one's fellowmen, and, living in harmony with nature. (p. 1)

Centering a child's growth in pride "encourages us to recognize and use our talents, as well as to master the skills needed to make a living" (National Indian Brotherhood, 1972, p. 1). Centering a child's growth in understanding other human beings, "enable[s] us to meet other Canadians on an equal footing, respecting cultural differences while pooling resources for the common good" (p. 1). Centering a child's growth in living in harmony with Lands/Places and more-than-human-beings ensures "preservation of the balance between man and his environment which is necessary for the future of our planet, as well as for fostering the climate in which Indian Wisdom has always flourished" (pp. 1–2). These goals are realized for each child when education "provide[s] the setting in which our children can develop the fundamental attitudes and values which have an honoured place in Indian tradition and culture" (p. 2). These include "self-reliance, respect for personal freedom, generosity, respect for nature, and wisdom" (p. 2).

As Mary Young (2005) highlights, given the ways Indigenous people have always understood education, their perspectives during Treaty-making were such that they "wanted an education but did not want to be 'Christianized,' 'civilized,' or 'assimilated'" (p. 33). Even so, the colonial government intentionally and forcibly "separated children from their parents, sending them to residential schools [meant] not to educate . . . but to break their link to their culture and identity" (TRC, 2015a, p. 2). "Insulating" the children "from the influences of their own people" took place by "[subjecting the children] to a program designed to lead them to forget who they were and to adopt the ways and values of their teachers" (Young, 2005, p. 33). Slowly, more Canadians are learning these truths. Many preservice teacher educators see the importance of their own and present and future teachers' inquiries as part of truth-telling that can interrupt the colonial legacy of Indigenous education (Battiste, 2013; Cardinal & Fenichel, 2017; Chambers, 2006; Deer, 2022a; Dion, 2009; Donald, 2016; Peltier, 2017; Steinhauer, 2023; Tupper, 2014; Weenie, 2008).

Troubling Multiculturalism and Colonial Understandings of "Citizenship"

Our work as preservice teacher educators in the Social Studies course responds to calls for education to stop assimilating Indigenous peoples and to honor an Indigenous perspective of citizenship in Canada, where Indigenous Peoples are "Citizens Plus." Over time we have learned that many non-Indigenous people, including non-Indigenous teachers and teacher educators, do not yet know of Harold Cardinal's leadership on behalf of the Indian Association of Alberta. Harold's work elevated an Indigenous perspective of citizenship in Canada as outlined in the 1970 *Citizens Plus/The Red Paper* (Indian Chiefs of Alberta, 2011), grounding historical Treaty relationships with First Nations as self-determining and in control of all aspects of their lives as Indigenous peoples first, and Canadians second.

In her book about multicultural education, Rhatna Gosh (2002) discusses Indigenous peoples' assertion that they are "citizens plus" with their rights superseding all subsequent rights granted to other groups. Rhatna states that "any real and long-term change will require education [policies and curricula] to be more reflective of and responsive to Aboriginal interests" (Gosh, 2002, p. 32). However, as recently shown by Sara Karn, Kristina Llewellyn, and Penny Clark (2024), this reflectiveness and responsiveness is still not happening as "history curriculum across the provinces [continue to] generally ignore Indigenous ways of knowing and being" (p. 1101). As a result, we have seen how Indigenous peoples' understanding of themselves as "Citizens Plus" continues to be denied. This includes denial of experiences and values that give rise to broader understandings of education and membership in society that are grounded in the value of centering Land/Place relationships and responsibilities.

Indigenous education is not ideally situated within a multiculturalism agenda. As noted by Angela Ward and Rita Bouvier (2001), while "multicultural approaches to curriculum recognize cultural differences" (p. 7), in the absence of a lens of social justice, multicultural narratives continue to assimilate Indigenous peoples. Verna St. Denis (2011) shows that when multicultural narratives of being/becoming a good citizen are centered in social studies education, "Aboriginal peoples' claims to land and sovereignty in Canada" are silenced (pp. 306–307). Verna describes the differing concerns of Aboriginal peoples and racialized immigrants with the concept of multiculturalism:

> Racialized immigrants of color are concerned that multiculturalism does not address racism and anti-immigration sentiments but may even provoke them . . . . Aboriginal peoples are concerned with Indigenous sovereignty and asserting rights based on their original and continuing occupation of the land . . . . In other words, Aboriginal groups suggest that multiculturalism is a form of colonialism and works to distract from the recognition and redress of Indigenous rights. Racism also impacts upon Aboriginal groups, and multiculturalism can justify public expressions of anti-Aboriginal sentiments. (St. Denis, p. 308)

As Verna makes clear, in the absence of attention to Indigenous people's enduring occupation and relationship with these Lands, it is only when Indigenous people's sovereignty is recognized and realized that Canada will be actually moving toward respecting Indigenous peoples as Citizens Plus.

Frank Deer (2011) further describes how "citizenship is a problematic issue for all citizens in Canada because of its awkward association with the concept of identity" (p. 10). He highlights that for Indigenous people in Canada, "Canadian citizenship serves as a mechanism for control over crucial elements of

personal and collective self-concept," in part due to the lack of recognition of "the diversity of Canada's Aboriginal population," as well as "their struggle for recognition" (Deer, 2011, p. 11). While Indigenous peoples in Canada experience "this mechanism . . . at work in numerous social forums, including Canada's public schools," Frank asserts that because "social studies curricula across Western Canada address skills and outcomes that can be associated with specific citizenship values," citizenship has become "treated as an academic subject" (Deer, pp. 10–11). He argues that Aboriginal students are ill-served as a result:

> Aboriginal students are frequently exposed to subject matter that does little to facilitate the development of an identity that is informed by the traditional cultural mores of their peoples (Saunders & Hill, 2007). The Eurocentric educational programming that is delivered to many Aboriginal students in Canada may provide skills necessary for developing active citizens, but such programming is carried out with an omission of appropriate content that is relevant to the students in question and provides opportunities to challenge Canada's cultural status-quo in a way that solidifies Aboriginal identity (Critchly et al., 2007). Through language, community relationships, and traditional knowledge, Aboriginal students may be provided the opportunity to develop an identity of their own (Neganegijig & Breunig, 2007)—one that is informed by the experiences and legacies of their ancestors and communities. (Deer, 2011, p. 10)

Over time, as we have guided students in *Odenang* Inquiry, our recognition has deepened about how the spiritual ethos of Indigenous peoples emerged as significant in the TRC Calls to Action (TRC, 2015b) and education for reconciliation. As Frank notes, "in order to understand many aspects of the Indigenous experience, understanding the spiritual dimensions of those experiences and their associated ceremonies are necessary" (Deer 2022b, n. p.).

As we show in this paper, our re-visioning of coming alongside students in the Elementary Social Studies course led us to include exploration of spirituality and experience of ceremony through story circles, Elder and Land visits, and reflective arts practice, all of which shaped an unfolding process of "coming to know" deeply (Peltier, 2016, 2021). This process opens liminal space that alongside our ongoing nurturing of *Odenang* Inquiry draws attentiveness and further inquiry into values, such as interconnectedness and relationships. Exploration of these values opens potential for understanding citizenship and identity in ways that move far beyond the human-centric and economic focus that dominates in government-mandated social studies outcomes. As noted by Blair Stonechild (2020), "Indigenous peoples regard their sacred duty as one of respect for and living in harmony . . . with the rest of Creation. The action of placing humanity and its interests above all else was a critical mistake. It resulted in unresolved ideological conflict that has critical implications" for the destiny and interconnected rights of all beings (p. 241). As becomes visible through the upcoming sections that show our relational self-study, from the outset of our teaching of the Elementary Social Studies course we have invited student teachers to explore Indigenous conceptions of citizenship related to Treaty Education and Indigenous sovereignty and identity.

Anishinaabe *Wiijiindowin* and Story Pedagogy as Indigenous Relational Self-study

As the Teaching Lodge project was being conceptualized, Elder Peltier and Sharla shared their knowledge of how the Anishinaabe way of living *Wiijiindowin* (hearts joining together) opens an unfolding multidimensional process activated within a person as they attend to where they originate from, the values of working together, respecting personal experience, and appreciating the relationship between mind and heart. This process, which involves moving toward deeper awareness and understanding, is a powerful Indigenous pedagogy (Peltier et al., 2022).

By the time the project ended, our pedagogical research relationship had grown into a strong friendship, which had deepened through our experiences and interconnected storying within the multidimensional "*Anishinaabe* way of coming to know (theory and praxis)" of the project. Creating "space for Indigenous Circle storywork pedagogy . . . illustrates ways of knowing the interrelationships and interconnections with *Aki* and each other" (emphasis in original, Peltier, 2016, p. 120). As we continued to collaborate in teaching courses and in supporting the doctoral research of numerous graduate students, our trust in and vulnerability with one another continued to grow through our ongoing centering of *Wiijiindowin* and story pedagogy in our day-to-day lived relationship. As a result, it felt natural to continue drawing on, and to share and make meaning of our experiences through story as we inquired into our coming alongside students encouraging their *Odenang* inquiry in the Elementary Social Studies course.

This Anishinaabe self-study process has supported and continues to support our ongoing individual and relational re-searching. Kathy Absolon (2022) describes "re-searching" as a "process of how we come to know—a process of acquiring knowledge" through our continuous "searching for ways of knowing that wholistically include the spirit, heart, mind and body" (pp. xvi–xvii). This inquiry process has supported our ongoing designing of the three interconnected processes in the Elementary Social Studies course, which we invite students to engage in as the course unfolds, as well as our ongoing storying and restorying of our praxis with one another as we have come alongside successive groups of students.[4] Central is our dwelling in the midst of story with students, and our restorying, which Greg Sarris (1993) illustrates as a process that unfolds as we allow stories to work on us. As he describes, it is through our storying and restorying that we continue to (un/re)learn and grow as we talk back and forth with our stories, inwardly and with one another.

Odenang Inquiry: Interconnected Processes in Social Studies Teacher Education

Figure 1 shows that as the course unfolds, we invite students to engage in three interconnected and layered processes that support them to grow their knowledge of engaging in *Odenang* Inquiry when teaching elementary social studies. These three processes come into play in student inquiries into their "philosophy of citizenship education in social studies"; individual, small-group, and whole-class "reflective thinking with course texts" processes; and small-group collaborations to co-create an inquiry plan. In the upcoming sections we briefly describe each process and draw on students' work to show their engagements.[5]

Fig. 1: Nurturing *Odenang* Inquiry by growing knowledge through three learning processes

Philosophy of Citizenship Education in Social Studies

When we envisioned students' philosophical inquiry into citizenship education within the interconnected processes of the course, we searched for ways to support their growth in understanding how their inquiry into their experiences and lives—their identities—would bring forward "a knowledge of yourself [that enables] you to imagine who you will be as a teacher of social studies" (Philosophy of Citizenship Education in Social Studies assignment description, Fall 2019). Below we highlight work that was created by students in Sharla's Winter 2023 and Winter 2024 courses as they inquired into the nature of the philosophies of citizenship education they were carrying or living by, while they imagined coming alongside children and youth in social studies education. Both orally as each course began, and in the assignment description, Sharla illustrated to students how this process would invite them to draw on reflections from their personal experiences in social studies classrooms and their experiences outside of school, which they bring with them to teaching social studies with attention to citizenship and identity. Students engaged in reflection and a creative response in the form of a five-panel art belt. The work below illustrates the course readings, classroom activities, and discussions about citizenship orientations and resonance with Indigenous ways of being, teaching/learning traditions, and the kind of social studies teacher each student envisioned becoming.

The Art Belt assignment in Sharla's Winter 2023 and Winter 2024 classes illustrates teaching philosophy and vision for future classroom goals and learning environment. The Art Belt consists of five "philosophy panels," each with its own theme and prompt. Panel 1 ("Who I am and where I am from") has the following prompt: "What is my identity? I am considering complexities of power, privilege, identity, and difference and my social, historical, cultural-linguistic, political, and ethical contexts."

Panel 2 ("What honoring the rights of the child looks like and feels like in my social studies classroom today") has the following prompt: "Further to reflections on my lived experiences in Social Studies

classrooms as a child/youth, I am aware of resonance/dissonance. As a Social Studies teacher today, I can honor the rights of the child."

Panel 3 ("My personal experience stories and skills that I bring to the social studies outcomes of citizenship and identity") has the following prompt: "Further to reflections on my lived relationship with Land-Place and my awareness of Indigenous relational ways of being, I appreciate my experiences and skills outside of school that connect with Social Studies outcomes of Citizenship and Identity. A list of favorite personal and local experience and knowledge resources comes to mind and I see how these connect to the inquiry plan for Grade __ that I am developing with peers in my inquiry plan group."

Panel 4 ("My valued instructional resources for fostering respectful relationships and honoring intercultural understanding in my social studies classroom") has the following prompt: "I vision building a community of inquiry in my Social Studies classroom by drawing on valued instructional resources that support the learning experiences of all children and reflect diversity, equity and inclusion, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples' histories, cultures, languages, contributions, perspectives, experiences and contemporary contexts."

Panel 5 ("What resonates with me about equitable and ethically relational performance tasks and assessments") has the following prompt: "Children are learners and teachers. They are valued and engaged listeners, thinkers, and classroom community members with relationships inside and outside our school context. Children play many roles."

The examples shown in Figures 2a to 2e show all of the panels in Andrew's Art Belt from Sharla's 2023 class, which together illustrate his philosophy of teaching citizenship in social studies through his creative response to a series of prompts.

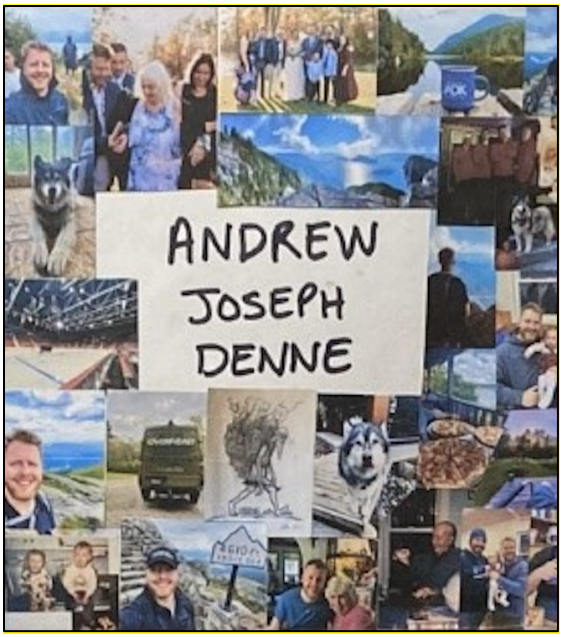


Fig. 2a: Panel 1, "Who I am and where I am from" (Andrew)

Fig. 2b: Panel 2, "What honoring the rights of the child looks like and feels like in my social studies classroom today" (Andrew)

Fig. 2c: Panel 3, "My personal experience stories and skills that I bring to the social studies outcomes of citizenship and identity" (Andrew)

Fig. 2d: Panel 4, "My valued instructional resources for fostering respectful relationships and honoring intercultural understanding in my social studies classroom" (Andrew)

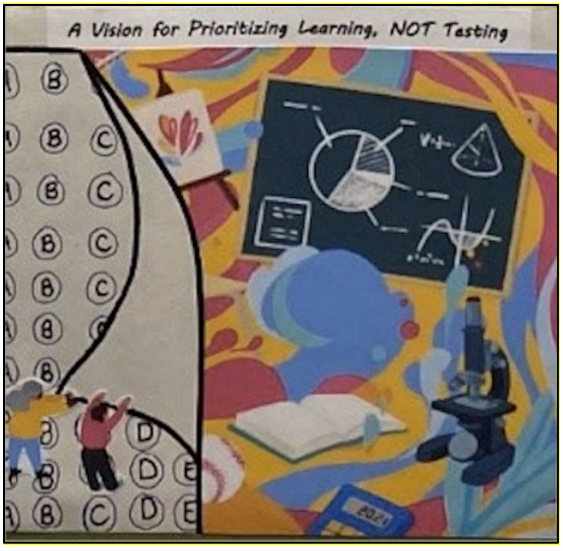


Fig. 2e: Panel 5, "What resonates with me about equitable and ethically relational performance tasks and assessments" (Andrew)

The Art Belt assignment was continued in Sharla's Winter 2024 course. The examples below shown in Figures 3 to 7 provide an idea of the student diversity. As these and the above art belt panels reflect, the prompts function as provocations for preservice teachers to reflexively examine experiences that inform their own educational perspectives, while their learning and evaluation experiences demonstrate a pedagogical approach to a philosophical understanding of teaching and learning.

Fig. 3: Panel 1, "Who I am and where I am from" (Kassidy)

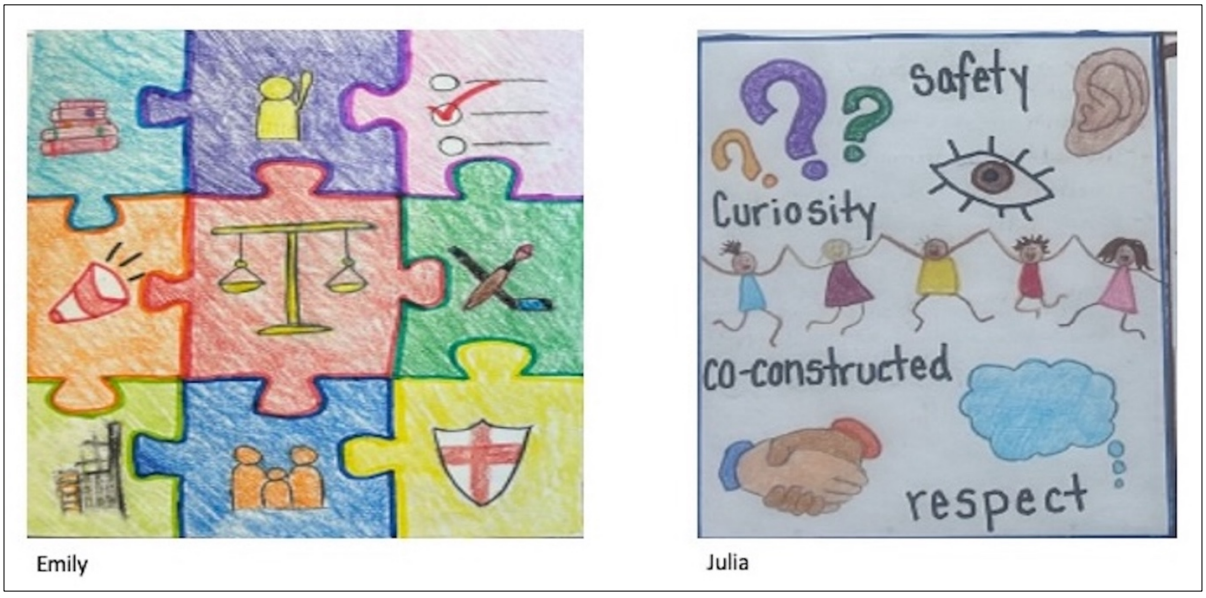


Fig. 4: Panel 2, "What honoring the rights of the child looks like and feels like in my social studies classroom today" (Emily and Julia)

Fig. 5: Panel 3, "My personal experience stories and skills that I bring to the social studies outcomes of citizenship and identity" (Jessica and Emily W)

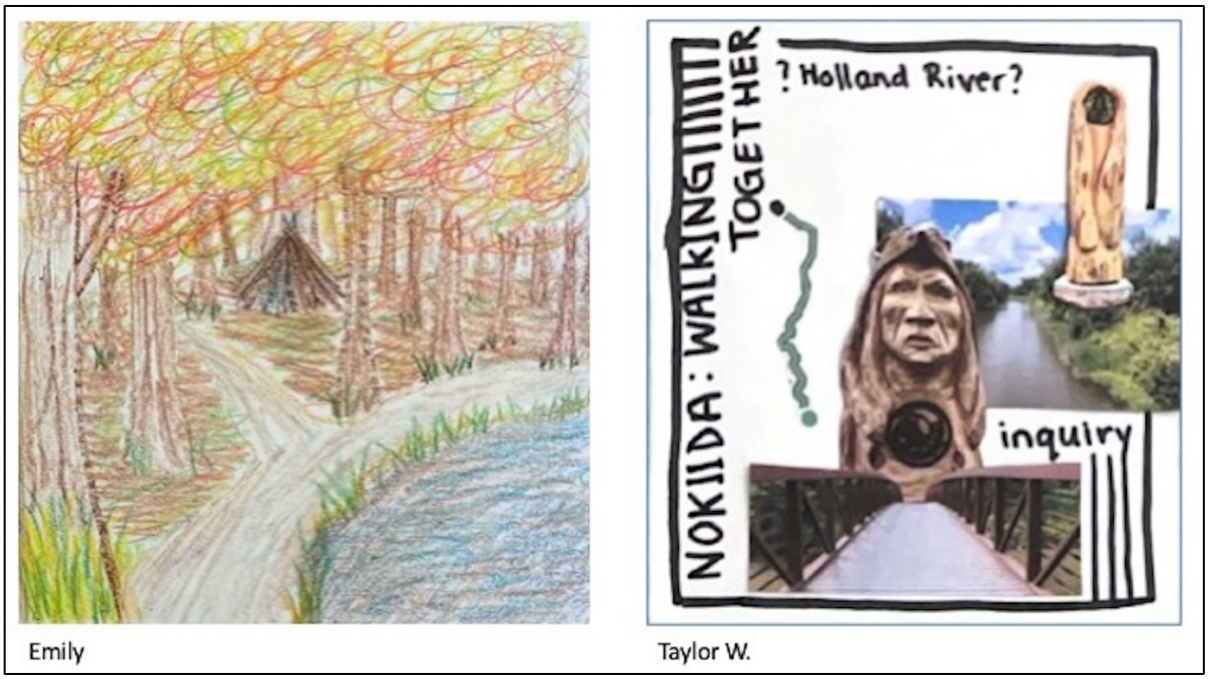


Fig. 6: Panel 4, "My valued instructional resources for fostering respectful relationships and honoring intercultural understanding in my social studies classroom" (Emily and Taylor)

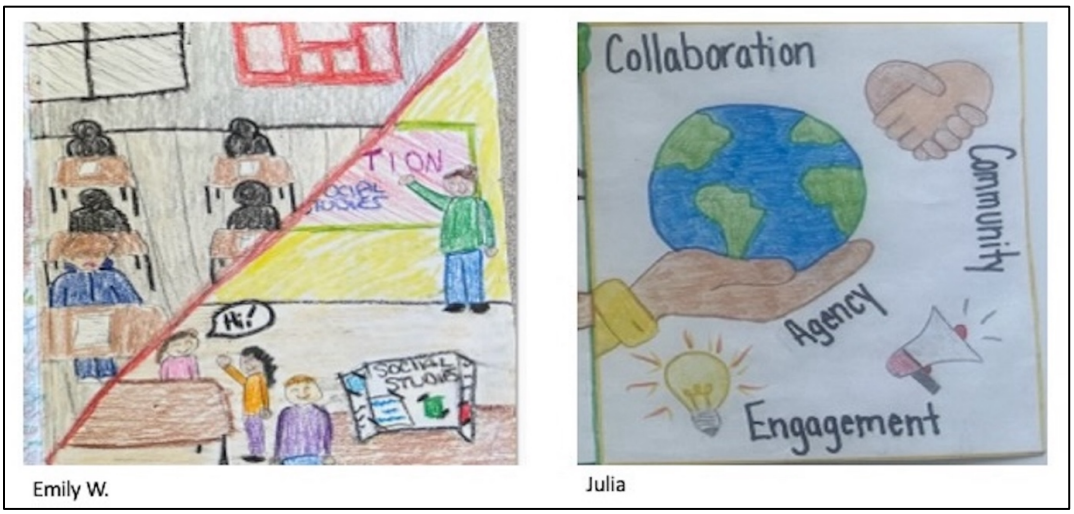


Fig. 7: Panel 5, "What resonates with me about equitable and ethically relational performance tasks and assessments" (Emily W. and Julia)

At the end of each course, students gathered to show their five-panel creative/artistic work and shared meaningful connections in a class story circle, with a circular cloth and candle in the center, to express their "philosophy of citizenship education in teaching social studies." At the beginning of each course, Sharla explained the circle protocol, which ensures a safe place of belonging. *Mishomis*/Grandfather Rock[6] was introduced to the circle and students were asked to introduce themselves by saying their name and then responding to the provocation to share an oral story about their philosophy of teaching social studies with attention to citizenship and identity. Due to limited classroom wall space, students placed their art belts around the center of the story circle in a beautiful sunburst formation, as shown in Figure 8 below.

Fig. 8: Story circle to orally express "philosophy of citizenship education in teaching social studies"

Each student was invited to show one or two panels on their art belt that were particularly relevant to their story. *Mishomis* was passed clockwise around the circle from person to person and represented our relational way of being a respectful, attentive community and signaled who currently had the floor to share. A gallery walk after the story circle enabled students to closely examine specific art panels that resonated strongly with them, and a discussion board provided a space to share about those connections with the art belt storyteller. As students experienced story circles, collaborative group work, self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and engagement in class discussions, they called forward memories of teaching and learning from across their lives, building educational perspectives through storying.

Engagement in art transports students to an in-between space where judgment-free and critical consideration of memories brings deep knowing. As is visible in their creative representations, their awareness was deepened by recalling experiences and assumptions that were previously hidden.

Reflective Thinking with Course Texts

Figure 9 shows the beginning of the "reflective thinking with course texts" process, which requires students to make individual and collective commitments to their learning. During the first class, students form groups of three or four students. Here, they visit to learn a bit about each other, and identify what each needs to ensure their group inquiry space and process is unintimidating (safe to be vulnerable, equitable, educative, and inclusive). Plans are also created for knowing how to navigate in the midst of tensions, which can arise when there is diversity in ways of knowing, being, doing, and relating.

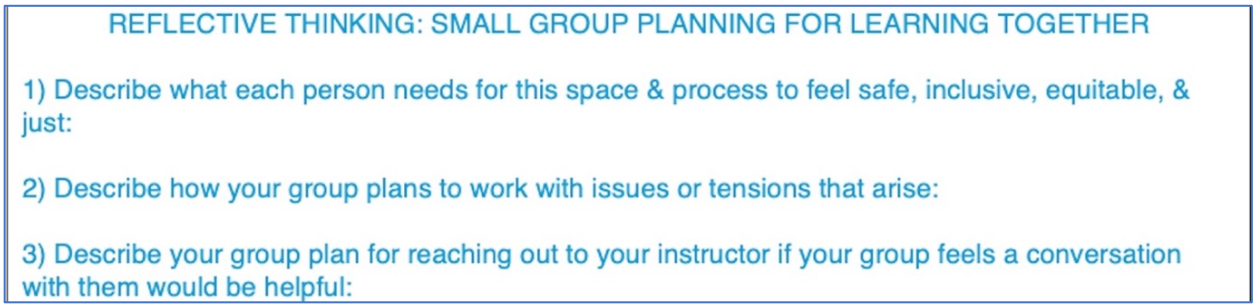


Fig. 9: Small-group planning steps for reflective thinking with course texts

This learning process supports students to explore a wide range of course texts, including textbook chapters, numerous additional readings and multiple videos and/or websites, as well as a large selection of diverse forms of classroom resources, such as (graphic) novels and picture books, the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* (Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989), the *Coming Home to Indigenous Place Names in Canada* map (Canadian American Centre, 2019), the *Nibi (Water) Song* (Mother Earth Water Walk, n.d.). Each week, three to five course texts are organized around themes, such as those depicted in Figure 10.

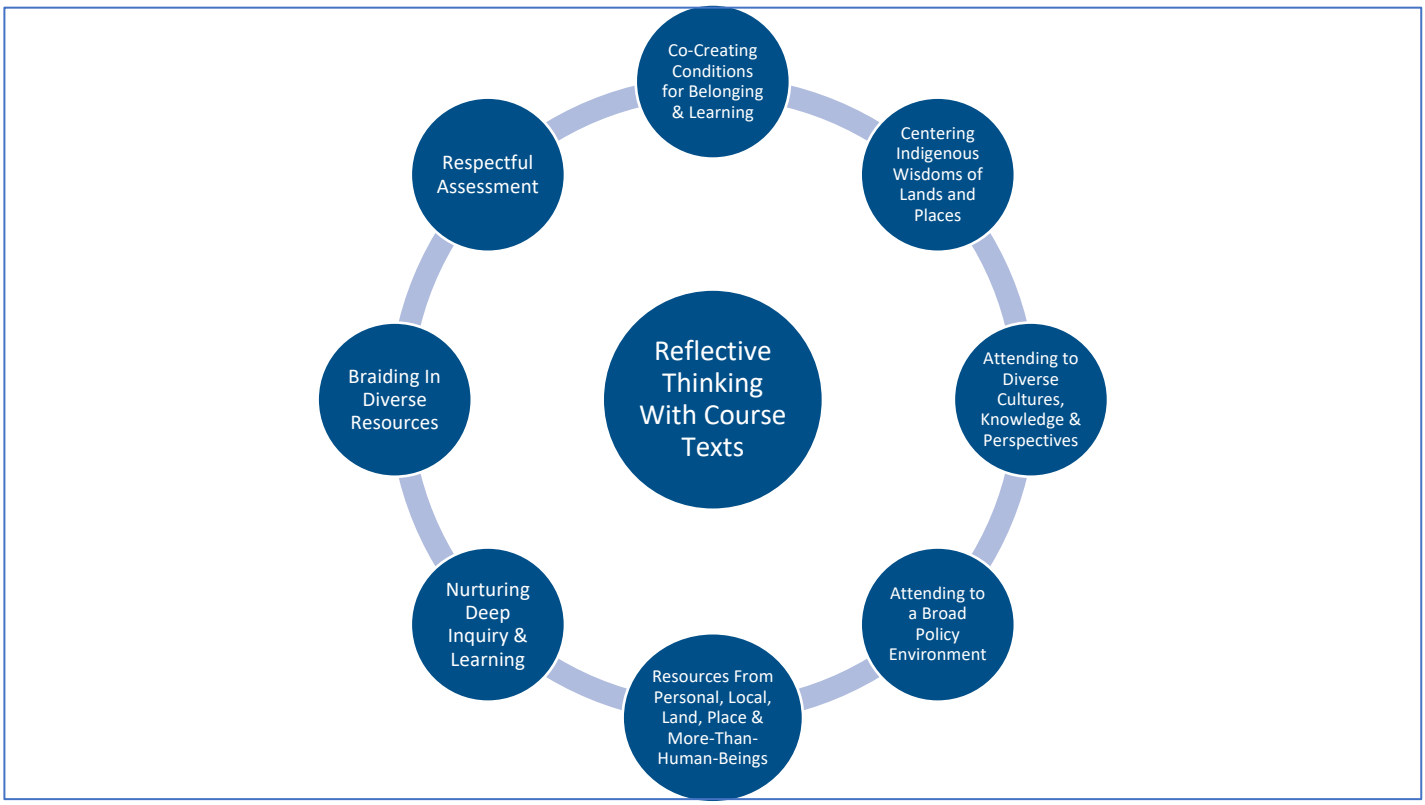


Fig. 10: Course themes that nurture students' creative, critical, and reflective thinking

Figure 11 shows the creative, critical, and reflective thinking of Carmen (a student whom Janice was alongside in Fall 2022) as she inquired into two readings connected with the theme of "Co-creating Conditions for Belonging and Learning." Carmen engaged in critical thinking in relation to two readings: first, a chapter from a textbook focused on strategies for centering children's diverse identities in social studies learning (James, 2021) and second, an article written by Métis Cree teacher and scholar Cindy Swanson (2013) who reflects on her growing understanding of children and families as holders and makers of knowledge. Carmen explored her knowledge of the importance of nurturing her and children's journeys from their heads to their hearts. As she centered her inquiry around this lifelong journey, her knowledge of barriers that many children experience in school came forward, as well as ways she imagines diminishing them; for example, in her interactions with them, centering values and priorities that deepen learning and knowledge, such as relationships, respect, validation, connection, stories, listening, curiosity, belonging, and experience.

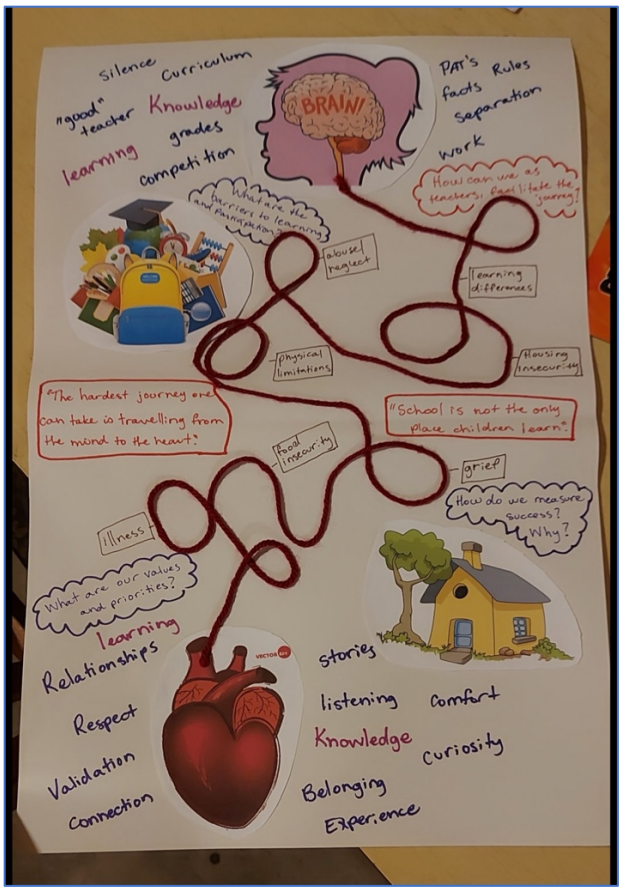


Fig. 11: Carmen's reflective art creative representation

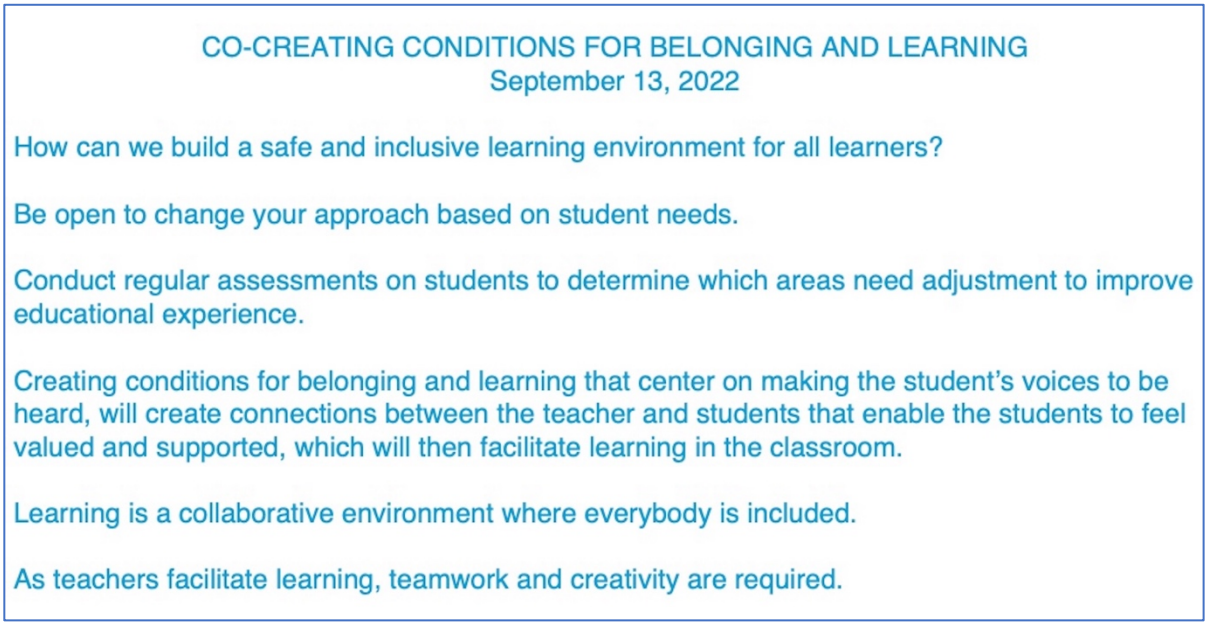
As students weekly reflect on one or two course texts, they experience the need to think with the differing perspectives that come forward in relation with each course theme, and across the term. Each student creates and uploads on a Google Doc shared with the members of their small group, either a creative representation or a journal entry that documents their learning. With respect to written reflections, two examples of journal entries written by students in Sharla's 2023 class are shown in Figure 12.

"A question this article has made me think of is: How can we encourage students to stay curious while still achieving the curriculum expectations?" (Maija M., Part of Journal Entry for Reflective Thinking, Winter 2023)

"My question about using children's books to examine examples of social inequity is, how can we ensure that we are choosing books that deal with such heavy issues and are still suitable for every child in the classroom? It is important to consider this because we do not know a child's entire background or history, or how they will react to such stories. Although we may have the best intentions in mind, I believe it is crucial that we read and interpret the story from different perspectives before choosing to use it as a resource. I would like to find out more about choosing appropriate yet meaningful resources to examine social justice issues. Overall, this reading has helped me to inform my future teaching by providing me with strategies to make all students feel included and create a positive learning environment" (Denize V., Part of Journal Entry for Reflective Thinking, Winter 2023)

Fig. 12: Some examples of journal entries

Both as Carmen shared her creative representation with her small-group peers and as Maija and Denize shared their journal entries with their small group peers, their goal was to teach their peers what they had learned from each of the resources they had read or interacted with. After each person in the small group teaches their peers, they then collaborate to create and post on a whole class Google Doc either a pedagogical insight or question or praxis statement. For example, as Carmen and her small-group peers thought with all of their creative representations in relation with the theme of "Co-creating Conditions for Belonging and Learning," they and each small group synthesized their learning by posting the following pedagogical question and numerous pedagogical insights onto a whole-group Google Doc (see Figure 13 for a sample), which then served as a bridge into a whole-class conversation circle where students continued to grow as they expressed their knowledge and understandings.


CO-CREATING CONDITIONS FOR BELONGING AND LEARNING
September 13, 2022

How can we build a safe and inclusive learning environment for all learners?

Be open to change your approach based on student needs.

Conduct regular assessments on students to determine which areas need adjustment to improve educational experience.

Creating conditions for belonging and learning that center on making the student's voices to be heard, will create connections between the teacher and students that enable the students to feel valued and supported, which will then facilitate learning in the classroom.

Learning is a collaborative environment where everybody is included.

As teachers facilitate learning, teamwork and creativity are required.

Fig. 13: Selected class posts for weekly theme, "Co-creating Conditions for Belonging and Learning"

In some offerings of the course, instead of posting pedagogical questions or insights, students were invited to post praxis statements that show their group synthesis as they draw on all group members' creative, critical, and reflective thinking to highlight the similar and differing insights in their small groups, in relation with challenging colonial discourses, voicing respectful questioning, contemplating beliefs, values, and/or socio-cultural experiences, and re-thinking and co-constructing new understandings. Figure 14 shows how Stacie, Caitlin, and Selin, three students who were alongside Sharla in the Winter 2023 term, reflected at the close of the course on the significance of their small-group creation of praxis statements in their learning and growth.

"I believe that these praxis statements will carry me into my home-schooling journey with my children. I appreciate this fresh perspective on social studies as it was very different [and boring] when I took it in elementary school. I learned a lot and continued to improve throughout the weeks" (Stacie M., Self-assessment, Winter, 2023)

"I strived to make connections between the weekly topics and practical use within the social studies classroom, drawing on specific examples for implementation" (Caitlin S., Self-assessment, Winter, 2023)

"When first writing the praxis statement it was challenging to me to contribute to the statement because it was the first time working with my group members and I did not know how to share my ideas. I shared my summary and what my reading was about but when it came time to write the statement, it was challenging for me to start as we all have our different writing styles. As the weeks went on it was easier for me to write my summary, talk about the article, and contribute to the group. We came up with the idea to have a document and to all contribute to it with a summary and to help write the statements" (Selin B., Self-assessment, Winter, 2023)

Fig. 14: Student reflections about learning how to collaboratively create praxis statements

Another aspect of this relational learning process is that twice during the term we invite students to talk in their small groups about how this process is shaping their individual and collective learning and growth. During the first of these check-ins, we ask the students to also set group goals for the remaining weeks of the process. Figure 15 shows the mid-October 2022 check-in for Carmen and members of her group.

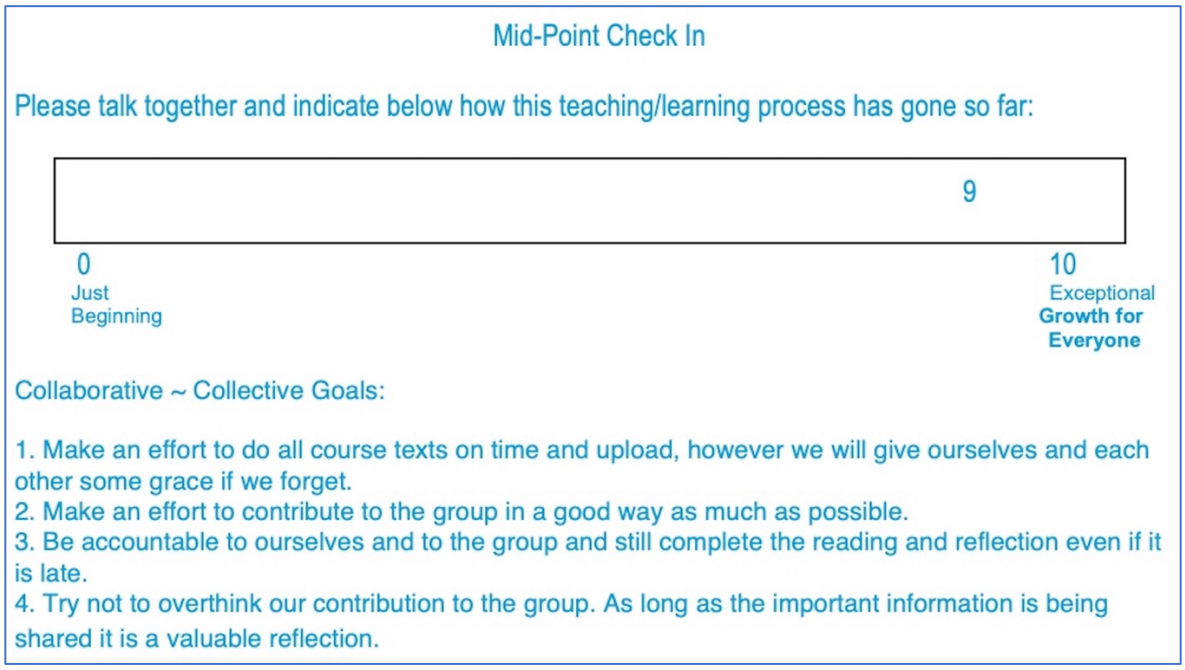


Fig. 15: Mid-term small-group check-in

Throughout this process, students collaboratively engaged within a small group of peers to create and clearly explain/teach and then co-create intriguing pedagogical and curriculum insights that invite their connections to praxis (a new awareness or learning applicable to teaching social studies) and their personal receptivity and responsiveness to new and diverse perspectives. Both the individual thinking, i.e., the creative representations or journal entries, and the collective thinking, i.e., the questions or pedagogical insights or praxis statements, are meant to show, and grow, each student's analysis and thinking with the author's or speaker's knowledge of the topic.

Partway through the course students often express gratitude for the peers whom they are learning alongside in their small group. As the group work begins, many students initially experience conflict due to their previous schooling experiences emphasizing individual thinking, representing their knowledge in written work, and competing with one another for academic standing. However, as students come to know each other, staying with the reflective thinking process supports them to experience a respectful community where each individual's contributions are welcomed, acknowledged, and become part of the overall learning and completion of course tasks. This collaborative process is not easy: it requires a desire to stretch and grow one's knowledge, as well as one's identity. Over multiple offerings of the course, we have noted how this growth serves as a springboard for how students come to see themselves and who they can be as they come alongside children in the future. One aspect that often emerges about who they want to be alongside children is their awareness that they can live out a similar relational process of deep thinking and synthesis with children. Over time, the student teachers grow in understanding that when children's capacities to synthesize are also nurtured, they too will see connections across concepts in a course, and across numerous courses or subjects, as well as much more broadly as they draw on their own identities, contexts, and relationships outside of school to create new layers of meaning. The students often express excitement as they recognize how this kind of synthesis grows agentic citizens who carry understandings of citizenship that attends to "all our relations," and who are further guided by questions such as, "How am I fulfilling my role in this relationship? What are my obligations in this relationship?" (Wilson, 2001, p. 171).

Inquiry Planning

In the later part of the term, when our classes shift toward making significant amount of in-class time for pairs and small groups to collaborate on their inquiry planning, the students have already carefully considered much: for example, who they are—their identities and where they are from and ways these aspects influence who they are becoming as teachers; connections between their *Odenang* and their identities; the kinds of learning environments and relationships they want to create with and among children (or if they are parents, that they also wish for their children); cultural protocols for inviting in, growing and/or sustaining relationships with, and learning from Elders, Knowledge and Language Keepers, and family and community members; ways of valuing and drawing on the diverse lives and identities of children to nurture interdisciplinary, intergenerational, and intercultural inquiry; and ways that the stories told today, yesterday, long ago, and into the future by local lands, places, beings, and

family and community members deepen inquiry into the government-mandated Kindergarten/Grade 1 to Grade 6 social studies outcomes.

As we transition into more fulsome inquiry planning, students often express that they do not yet feel they "know enough" to create a comprehensive inquiry plan. As a result, our work alongside them shifts from facilitating their philosophical inquiry and creative, critical, and reflective thinking and synthesis toward supporting them to apply what and how they have come to know through these two processes. As we make these shifts into the liminality, complexity, and messiness of this emergent forward, backward, inward, and outward thinking, which this kind of planning for inquiry with children entails, the weekly whole-class conversation circle makes space for sharing hopes, excitements, and possibilities, as well as fears and uncertainties. Figure 16 shares the visual representation created by Alanna and Claitinna, two students whom Janice was alongside in Fall 2022, to show the unfolding process through which they planned to support young children to inquire into where, how, and with whom they belong:

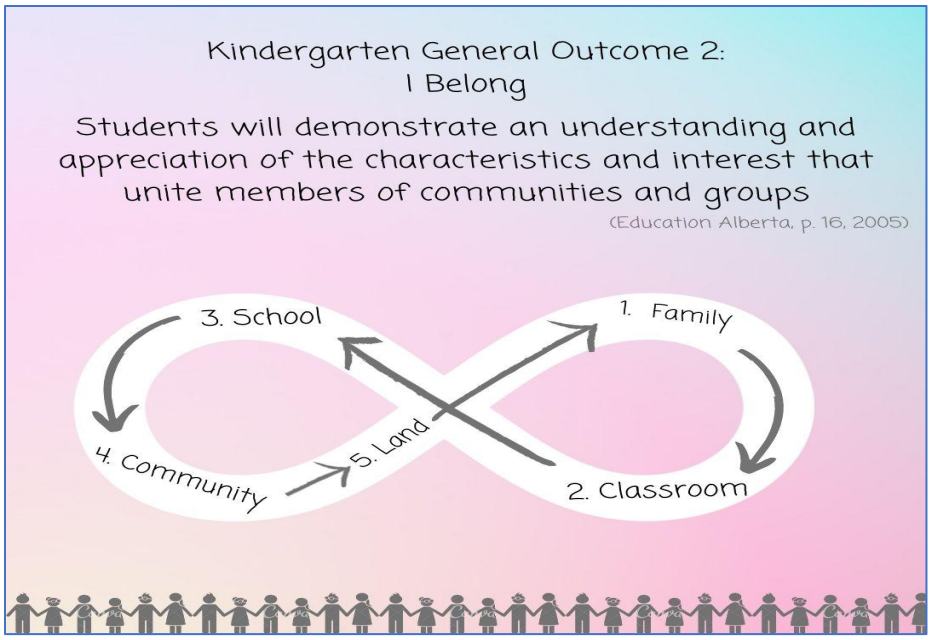


Fig. 16: Inquiry plan visual for the theme "Nurturing children's inquiry into their belonging"

Alanna and Claitinna are both deeply connected with a Métis settlement on lands that through colonization became known as northern Alberta. This Métis settlement is Alanna's ancestral home, and Claitinna, who is Blackfoot, has had strong connections with the settlement for many years. They are both mothers and each are strongly connected with the Lands/Places/beings, languages, values, knowledges, stories, and ways of their ancestors and present community. What Janice remembers about their numerous conversations as they began to plan in this emergent and non-linear way for the children's inquiry, is the significant hesitancy they initially expressed about starting with their embodied knowledge of belonging. As they and Janice made space in their conversations where they shared and thought with their hopes for and their experiences alongside their own children, Claitinna and Alanna slowly shifted away from the fear and intimidation they initially felt as a result of language, such as "students will,"

which at that time was dominant in the Alberta Social Studies Program of Studies (Alberta Education, 2005). Making this inner shift was crucial as they gradually re-valued what they had long before begun to come to know through their earliest and continuing experiences alongside their families and in the community, including with local lands, places, and beings.

As Claitinna and Alanna lived out this spiraling process of planning for inquiring into belonging with young children, some of their first work required that they share and think with one another about how each of their individual philosophies of teaching social studies and citizenship education were shaping how they were imagining inquiring into belonging with children in a Kindergarten classroom. They described this as follows:

> Our philosophy is rooted in Indigenous ways of seeing, relating, thinking and doing. We honour the guiding values instilled in us through the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program and progressively work towards decolonizing education as we know it to provide equitable and inclusive learning opportunities for inquiring young minds. (Alanna and Claitinna inquiry plan, Fall 2022)

This consequential personal inquiry, which began through their "philosophy of citizenship education in social studies" and their "reflective thinking with course texts" processes, slowly grew their awakeness to and understandings around the significance of *Odenang* in their identities. It also grew their knowledge of the place that *Odenang* Inquiry could have in the inquiries undertaken by children in relation with social studies values and attitudes, knowledge and understandings, and skills and processes. As they stayed with this circular and spiraling process over a number of weeks, they gradually saw that there could be at least five phases of meaningfully interconnected inquiry alongside the children (see Figure 17).

I BELONG		
Initial Phase	family	Centering their local Métis/Cree understandings of *wâhkôhtowin* (kinship & family) as the children explore the multiplicity of human & more-than-human families
Second Phase	classroom	Centering their local Métis/Cree understandings of *mâmahwohkamâtowin* (working cooperatively) and *mîyo wîcehtôwin* (getting along together) as the children explore how they fit within our classroom & discover interconnectedness with peers while learning to value and appreciate differences
Third Phase	school	Centering their local Métis/Cree understandings of *manâtisiwin ekwa* (respect) and *manâhcihitowin* (respect for others) as the children explore, acknowledge, and appreciate the contributions of those who add to our knowledge bundles and support our learning journeys
Fourth Phase	community	Centering their local Métis/Cree understandings of *kiskanowapâhkewin* (a keen sense of observation) as the children explore and observe ways community members foster a climate of cooperation and participate toward a collective whole
Final Phase	lands	Centering their local Métis/Cree understandings of *kisewâtisiwin* (compassion, loving and kindness) as the children explore and acknowledge our connection and responsibility to Land. Learners begin to accept their roles and responsibilities alongside Lands

Fig. 17: Phases of I BELONG inquiry with children

Another aspect that deeply grounded their inquiry planning was how story is woven within and across. This begins with stories in published picture books as a way to support the children's initial inquiries in phase one as they explore their own and one another's unique families, and animal families. Storying and thinking with their own and one another's stories begin in phase two and continues across the remaining three phases, which also draw in the stories of the children's families and diverse community members. Significant here is each child's growing sense of being a member of a learning community where it is safe to share their personal experience, knowledge, and ways of knowing and being, as well as their responsibilities to themselves and everyone else to learn from one another's stories. At the close of their inquiry planning, Alanna and Claitinna shared the following reflections about how this process, which as we earlier noted is significantly connected with the two earlier learning processes, supported their growth:

> The inquiry planning helped us connect to Indigenous teachings and practices, but it required us to first be grounded in what we already knew and understood. As mothers, we have knowledge and experiences that we can apply to teachings in the classroom. We know how our children learn best. In applying our previous knowledge and understanding and incorporating what we have learned through being mothers and our ATEP [Aboriginal Teacher Education] courses, we were able to foster a holistic approach. . . . Teaching from an Indigenous perspective [requires] the innate ability to connect the learning experiences to our land, our experiences and our people. . . . We created hands-on learning opportunities so that students can accurately conceptualize the sense of "belonging" in context. (Alanna and Claitinna, Personal Growth Reflection as part of their inquiry plan, Fall 2022)

Interconnections Among the Three Processes and Their Contributions to *Odenang* Inquiry

Figure 18 shows ways the three interconnected learning processes created a ground for and nurtured engagement in *Odenang* Inquiry. As becomes visible in Alanna and Claitinna's inquiry planning, as students experience *Odenang* Inquiry in the course, they gradually grow in feeling prepared to come alongside children, and their families and communities, to also engage in *Odenang* Inquiry. These inquiries, alongside the government-mandated social studies outcomes, open rich potential for nurturing truth-telling and relationship as reconciliation. This movement happens as students start to inquire into their "philosophy of citizenship education in social studies," which activates their attentiveness to their *Odenang* and supports them to draw on or rekindle ways of knowing and being, and relationships, that shape(d) their identities. The individual, small-group, and whole-class thinking that grounds the "reflective thinking with course texts" process shapes many opportunities for students to experience, as well as to contribute to, an inquiry community.

As students simultaneously engage in their philosophical inquiry and in the reflective thinking process, which requires that they attend to their identities and their visioning alongside the course objectives and the government-mandated outcomes for elementary social studies, they are gradually developing knowledge and ways of knowing and being that support their inquiry planning to be grounded in *Odenang* Inquiry. Central as they engage in all three processes is their gradual learning to trust that they, children, youth, families, communities, and more-than-human-beings all have knowledge to contribute, as well as diverse ways of knowing and being. Centering children's stories and identities situates children, and their families and communities (which includes Lands/Places), as holders and makers of knowledge and of ways of knowing and being that live deeply in their embodied knowledge. This praxis extends far beyond life in classrooms and schools to include everyday and ancestral, intergenerational, and interrelational knowledge and ways. These extensions are significant because they respect and draw on the wholeness of a life. In this way, as *Nehiyaw* scholar Patsy Steinhauer (2022) reminds us, they widen the ways of knowing and being in school: "For understanding to happen I needed to comprehend holistically. I not only had to learn something intellectually; I had to learn it emotionally as well" (p. 8).

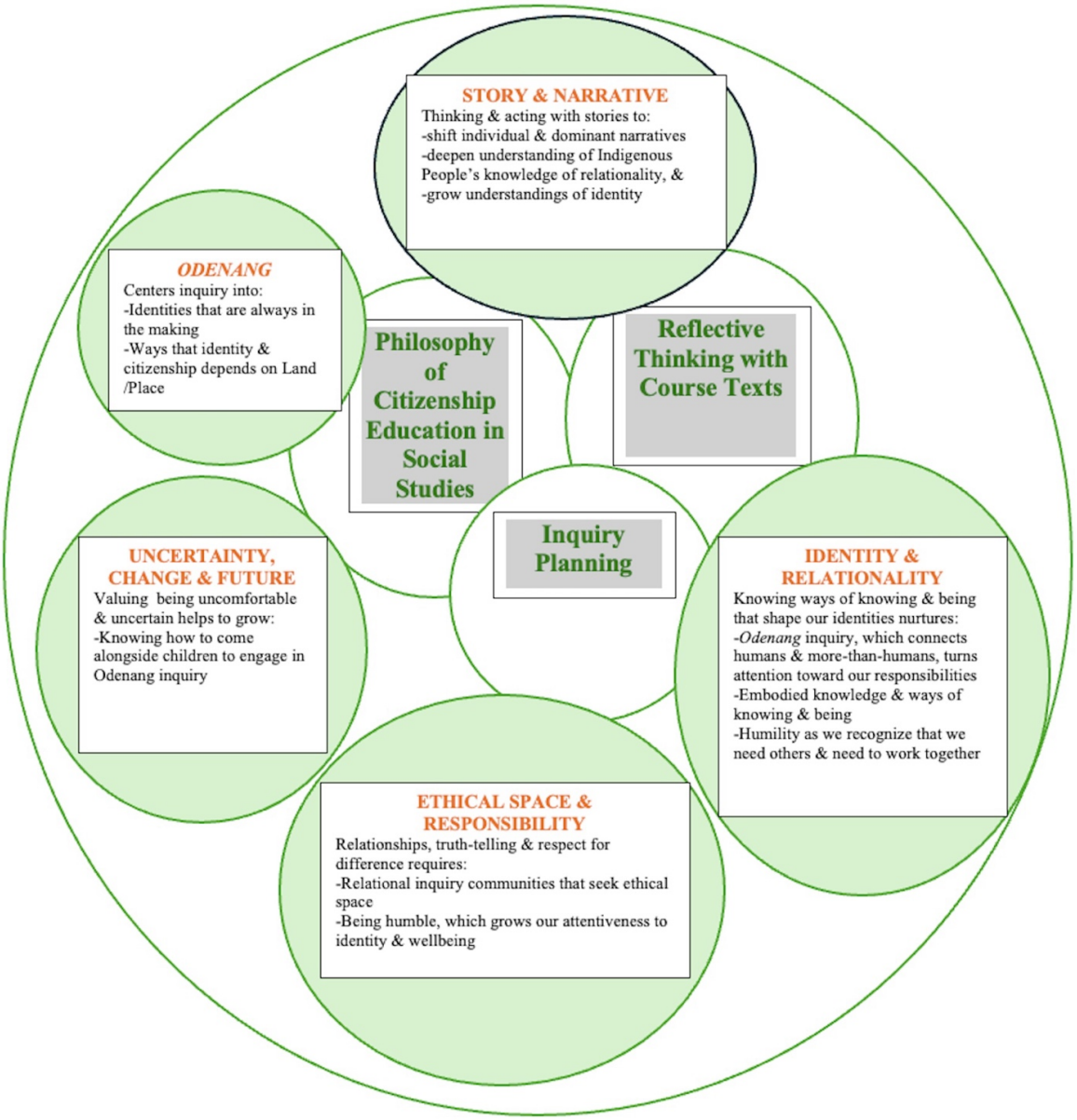


Fig. 18: Interconnections among the three processes and their contributions to *Odenang* Inquiry

Further, as she draws on her *Nehiyaw* understanding of citizenship, Patsy Steinhauer (2022) explains:

> Nahawahkohtohk can be understood as the idea of citizenship—the informed conscious act of living in harmonious coexistence and kinship. I emphasize understanding wahkohtowin as a foundation relational value—that is, our connection and kinship to all living things. Our understanding of these terms will deepen as we live out their truths. By continuing to acknowledge the interconnection and symbiosis that is the fabric of the living world, we will begin to recognize our place within the sophisticated system of wahkohtowin and mirror the kinship ways of living together. (p. 8)

While students often express feeling uncomfortable and uncertain as they simultaneously live out the philosophical inquiry process alongside the reflective thinking process, by the time we begin to move into the inquiry planning process, they often express gratitude for how these layered relational learning processes have not only grown their knowledge, skills, and understandings, but as importantly, their identities. They express feeling more awake to how working in a group brings awareness to what each person brings from their experience, group processing, and inner reflections. They also express greater wakefulness about how, across these experiences, they understand that we are seeking to support them to experience the emergence of an ethical space that is continuously shaped through their growing relationships and truth telling, and their differences. These qualities are foundational for our individual and collective understandings of, and growth in, a relational learning community that respects the interconnectedness among all of us as human beings; and among us and the many more-than-human beings with whom we are also in relation, and who are also wise teachers in our lives. Such knowledge also expands understandings of citizenship, as well as human beings' responsibilities to the many beings whose lives and ways significantly widen the narrow colonial ways that citizenship is understood in social studies programs of study.

Humility builds for both students and us as these three processes unfold and enfold. Knowledge of diverse human and more-than-human interrelationships and perspectives grows our humility as we, as teachers, acknowledge our need to work together so that the belonging and well-being of all can grow and guide us. As we live in ways holding up these values, we inwardly awaken to our responsibilities and accountabilities in the present, and in the future, to the young ones whom the new teachers will come alongside, to all of the beings still coming. These responsibilities to children open endless potential for co-creating with them opportunities through which they too will experience *Odenang* Inquiry and synthesis, through similar processes in which their diverse and healthy identity-making, and understandings and enactments of citizenship that center difference, kinship, and well-being, can flourish.

Acknowledgements

We are deeply grateful to all of the students who gave us permission to draw on their work in this paper. Many also read the next-to-final draft of the paper. We are also grateful to Dr. Trudy Cardinal and charis auger, friends and colleagues, who carefully read and gave us important response to our paper.

Notes

1. As taught by Anishinaabe Elder Stanley Peltier and Sharla, in their Anishinaabe worldview, Lands/Place includes Mother Earth (lands, air, winds, waters, and all more-than-human beings), as well as the physical places that have shaped Indigenous people's languages, ethical protocols, values, knowledges, relationships, and pedagogies since time immemorial.

2. Being alongside our children as they have navigated schooling contexts has provided important education to each of us. Our friendship has often included sharing and thinking with stories of our experiences as mothers.

3. This project, *Growing Faculty, Staff, and Student Foundational Knowledge of Indigenous Philosophies, Epistemologies, Ontologies, and Pedagogies*, was funded by Alberta Education.

4. When our inquiry began we were both teaching in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. Since 2022, Sharla has been a faculty member in teacher education at the Orillia Campus of Lakehead University.

5. All student work is shared with their permission; these students gave us permission to draw on their work in this paper.

6. Similar to what she did for her doctoral research, Sharla taught the preservice teachers to refer to Grandfather Rock as *Mishomis* (Grandfather), who was central to the story circle process, as holding him focused attention on respect and ensured an orderly flow within the circle. *Mishomis* was also a reminder to listen respectfully, remember, and share openly from the heart, in response to one another's sharings and personal life connections. In addition, the fire is central to the community. We are invited to take away what we can use for our personal and professional learning journey and we can leave behind any words and ideas shared that do not resonate positively with us. We give these to the fire, which has the power to transform negativity into positive energy for the universe.

References

Absolon, K. (2022). *Kaandossiwin: How we come to know Indigenous re-search methodologies*. Fernwood Publishing.

Alberta Education. (2005). *Social studies, kindergarten to grade 12* (Program of Studies). Government of Alberta.

Battiste, M. (2013). *Decolonizing education: Nourishing the learning spirit*. UBC Press.

Canadian American Centre. (2017). *Coming home to Indigenous place names in Canada*. University of Maine.

Cardinal, T., & Fenichel, S. (2017). Indigenous education, relational pedagogy, and autobiographical narrative inquiry: A reflective journey of teaching teachers. In V. Ross, E. Chan, & D. Keyes (Eds.), *Crossroads of the classroom: Narrative intersections of teacher knowledge and subject matter* (Advances in Research on Teaching, Volume 28), (pp. 243–273). Emerald Publishing Limited.

Chambers, C. (2006). "The land is the best teacher I ever had:" Places as pedagogy for precarious times. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing, 22*(3), 27–37.

Convention on the Rights of the Child. (1989). *United Nations Treaty Series*, *1577*, 3.

Critchly, K. A., Timmons, V., Walton, F., Bryanton, J., McCarthy, M. J., & Taylor, J. (2007). Mi'kmaq children's perceptions of education. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 30*(2), 217–230.

Deer, F. (2011). Aboriginal identity: A perspective on hegemony and the implications for Canadian citizenship. *In Education*, 17(3), 2–16. https://doi.org/10.37119/ojs2011.v17i3.69

Deer, F. (2019). Ancestral languages are essential to Indigenous identities in Canada. *The Conversation*, 1–6. https://theconversation.com/ancestral-languages-are-essential-to-indigenous-identities-in-canada-117655

Deer, F. (2022a). Discovering truth in the post-TRC era: Morality and spirituality discourses in the reconciliatory journeys of schools. In S. D. Styres & A. Kempf (Eds.), *Troubling truth and reconciliation in Canadian education* (pp. 3–14). University of Alberta.

Deer, F. (2022b, December 4). Indigenous spiritual teaching in schools can foster reconciliation and inclusion. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/indigenous-spiritual-teaching-in-schools-can-foster-reconciliation-and-inclusion-194324

Dion, S. (2009). *Braiding histories: Learning from Aboriginal peoples' experiences and perspectives*. UBC Press.

Donald, D. (2016). From what does ethical relationality flow? An Indian Act in three artifacts. In J. Seidel & D. W. Jardine (Eds.), *The ecological heart of teaching: Radical tales of refuge and renewal for classrooms and communities* (pp. 10–16). Peter Lang.

Ghosh, R. (2002). *Redefining multicultural education* (2nd ed.). Nelson Thomson Learning.

Indian Chiefs of Alberta. (2011). Citizens Plus. *Aboriginal Policy Studies, 1*(2), 188–281. (Original work published 1970.) Accessed June 17, 2021, from https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/aps/index.php/aps/article/view/11690/8926

James, U. (2021). Including all students. In R. Case & P. Clark (Eds.*), Learning to inquire in social studies: An anthology for elementary teachers* (pp. 172–180). Vancouver: The Critical Thinking Consortium.

Karn, S., Llewellyn, K.R., & Clark, P. (2024). Decolonizing history curricula across Canada: Recommendations for (re)design. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 1090–1121.

Mother Earth Water Walk. (n.d.). *Nibi Song*. https://www.motherearthwaterwalk.com/?attachment_id=2244

National Indian Brotherhood/Assembly of First Nations. (1972). *Indian control of Indian education*. Ottawa: Assembly of First Nations.

Neganegijig, T., & Breunig, M. (2007). Native language education: An inquiry into what is and what could be. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 30*(2), 305–321. https://doi.org/10.14288/cjne.v30i2.196417

Peltier, S. (2016). *Demonstrating Anishinaabe storywork circle pedagogy: Creating conceptual space for ecological relational knowledge in the classroom* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Laurentian University.

Peltier, S. (2017). An Anishinaabe perspective on children's language learning to inform "Seeing the Aboriginal child." *Language and Literacy, 19*(2), 4–19. https://doi.org/10.20360/G2N95C

Peltier, S., Cardinal, T., Khan, S., Menna, L., Huber, J., Peltier, S., with Auger, C., Barnes, K., Chamberlain, L., Courtland, D., Edgar, T., Howse, R., Steinhauer, N., Thomas, C., & Wimmer, R. (2022). *Growing faculty, staff, and student foundational knowledge of Indigenous philosophies, epistemologies, ontologies, and pedagogies*. (Unpublished Report submitted to Alberta Education March 31, 2022).

Sarris, G. (1993). *Keeping slug woman alive: A holistic approach to American Indian texts*. University of California Press.

Saunders, S. R., & Hill, S. (2007). Native education and in-classroom coalition-building: Factors and models in delivering an equitous authentic education. *Canadian Journal of Education, 30*(2), 1015–1045. https://www.jstor.org/stable/20466677

St. Denis, V. (2011). Silencing Aboriginal curricular content and perspectives through multiculturalism: "There are other children here." *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies, 33*(4), 306–317. https://doi.org/10.1080/10714413.2011.597638

Steinhauer, P. (2022). Nahawahkohtohk: Revisioning and situating citizenship in early education. *Early Childhood Education, 48*(1), 3–10.

Steinhauer, P. (2023). Okiskinwahamâkew: Reflecting on teaching, learning and assessment. *Frontiers in Education, Jan. 2023*, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.719107

Stonechild, B. (2020). *Loss of Indigenous Eden and the fall of spirituality*. University of Regina Press.

Swanson, C. (2013). Learning to attend to children's familial curriculum-making worlds. *LEARNing Landscapes, 7*(1), 301–317. https://doi.org/10.36510/learnland.v7i1.644

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). (2015a). *Final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume one: Summary: Honouring the truth, reconciling for the future*. Lorimer.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). (2015b). Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action. Lorimer. Retrieved from: http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

Tupper, J. (2014). The possibilities for reconciliation through difficult dialogues: Treaty education as peacebuilding. *Curriculum Inquiry, 44*(4), 469–488. https://doi.org/10.1111/curi.12060

Ward, A., & Bouvier, R. (2001). Introduction. In A. Ward, & R. Bouvier (Eds.), *Resting lightly on Mother Earth: The Aboriginal experience in urban educational settings* (pp. 5–19). Detselig Enterprises Ltd.

Weenie, A. (2008). Curricular theorizing from the periphery. *Curriculum Inquiry, 38*(5), 545–557. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-873X.2008.00435.x

Wilson, S. (2001). What is an Indigenous research methodology? *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 25*(2), 175–179. https://ojs.library.ubc.ca/index.php/CJNE/article/view/196968

Young, M. (2005). Is the legacy of residential schools relevant today? *M.A.S.S Journal* (Manitoba Association of School Superintendents), *Fall 2005*, 33, 36–38.

Sharla Peltier is privileged to walk alongside Janice exploring ways to bring ourselves and our students to deeply know relational ways of being, elevating *Odenang* in the classroom. Sharla is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University, Orillia, Ontario, who cherishes a supportive network in the challenging field of Indigenizing education.

Janice Huber is deeply grateful to have been able to continue to learn *Odenang* Inquiry alongside Sharla and numerous groups of students in the Elementary Social Studies course. She is a professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta who is privileged to have also been a faculty member at St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia and at the University of Regina, Saskatchewan.