

**SHARED
Learnings**

Men and women have specific roles in traditional and contemporary Aboriginal cultures.

There are many Aboriginal role models in various careers.

There are many career opportunities in contemporary Aboriginal communities.

Many Aboriginal people have experienced discrimination.

Aboriginal peoples have been portrayed in various ways in the media.

Since 1996, National Aboriginal Day has been held on June 21, the summer solstice and the longest day of the year.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**Planning Processes**

Invite the school or district counsellor or other appropriate person to visit the classroom and introduce and discuss the subject of racism and its impacts on individuals and groups. The discussion should also explore the significance of human rights and laws and legislation that are designed to protect freedom and liberty and enhance the well-being of individuals, groups, and societies.

Introduce and talk about the Medicine Wheel and its symbolism of balancing all components of life, focusing on its significance to Aboriginal peoples and their beliefs.

Career Development

After students have researched BC Aboriginal life and societies during the 18th Century, brainstorm with students a list of characteristics, responsibilities and tasks that would have been a normal part of day-to-day Aboriginal life two hundred years ago. Ask students to sort their list based on the following three categories:

- those responsibilities and tasks for which Aboriginal men would typically have been responsible (e.g., hunting, protecting villages and building shelters)
- those responsibilities and tasks for which Aboriginal women would typically have been responsible (e.g., food gathering, food preservation, preparing hides, making clothes)
- those responsibilities and tasks that Aboriginal men and women might share (e.g., teaching children, fishing, technology/tool making).

This exercise could be conducted in small student groups or in pairs, then shared with the class as a whole.

Ask students to work in small groups to research life in the local community/village during both traditional and contemporary times and encourage students to prepare and perform a role-play depicting a contemporary Aboriginal woman and a traditional Aboriginal woman. Students should consider asking the characters the following questions during the role play:

- What is your role in the community?
- How does what you do affect others?
- How did you learn the skills you have?

Ask students to identify and list similarities and differences between men's and women's roles in traditional and contemporary Aboriginal cultures. Encourage awareness of relationships between men and women and the significance of their individual roles to family structure, work in the home, work outside the home, and socio-political and economic power. Ask students to examine the external and internal causes (e.g., *The Indian Act*, modern technology, residential schools) of the change of roles and relationships as Aboriginal cultures moved through history to contemporary times. Students can create role plays based on their research.

Ask students to prepare a brief biographical sketch of a prominent Aboriginal individual. Encourage students to look for living, local persons and ask students to pay particular attention to how this person's personal and/or professional behaviours reflect a concern for family and status in the community.

Ask the school career counsellor, work experience coordinator or the Aboriginal community employment counsellor to visit the classroom to talk about career development opportunities in the local community.

Explore the Aboriginal Youth Network (Appendix F) for ideas on Aboriginal career development opportunities. Ask each student to choose one career to research in depth as preparation for a class presentation. As part of their presentation, encourage the student to find and invite someone in that career to speak to the class.

Personal Development

Invite a member of the local Aboriginal community to visit the classroom to talk about how one's "place" or position in family and community is significant to her or his personal identity.

Ask students to work in small groups to research life in the local community/village during both traditional and contemporary times and encourage students to prepare and perform a role-play depicting a contemporary Aboriginal woman and a traditional Aboriginal woman. Students should consider asking the characters the following questions during the role-play:

- What is your role in the community?
- How does what you do affect others?
- How did you learn the skills you have?

Have students list and explain similarities and differences between men and women's roles in traditional and contemporary Aboriginal cultures. Encourage awareness of the relationship of men and women's roles to family structure, work in the home, work outside the home, and political power. Have students examine the external and internal causes (e.g., *The Indian Act*, modern technology, residential schools) for the change of roles and relationships from historical to contemporary times. Students can create role-plays based on their research.

Consult with the local Aboriginal community to explore inviting Aboriginal role models to visit the classroom on a regular basis and/or help students contact the National Native Role Model program for further information

(Appendix G). Have students ask visitors questions and/or correspond with role models to learn how they got started and why they are successful.

For this ongoing project, place students in small working groups and ask the groups to identify Aboriginal stereotypes/labels that negatively impact Aboriginal people and their cultures. Introduce and talk about how such terms as "noble savage" and "vanishing race" influence contemporary thinking about Aboriginal people and their communities and cultures. Conduct a larger class discussion about how and why certain views of Aboriginal people have been created and perpetuated. Then ask the groups to research the origin and perpetuation of stereotypes and labels that impact Aboriginal people in the media and in historical documents (e.g., television and cinema, anthropological accounts, history texts) and relate this information to possible reasons for labelling and stereotyping and the link to racism. Ask student groups to present their findings to the rest of the class.

RESOURCES

- *Dakelh Keyoh*
- *The First Westcoast Nations in British Columbia*
- *Growth of the First Métis Nation*
- *Honoring the Wisdom*
- *Inherit the Earth*
- *Just Talking About Ourselves - Vol.1*
- *Just Talking About Ourselves - Vol. 3*
- *Keepers of the Fire*
- *Khot-La Cha*
- *O'Siem*
- *Qatuwas*
- *The Sayings of Our People*
- *Something Left To Do*
- *Through Indian Eyes*
- *Visions*

See Appendix H for detailed descriptions of these recommended resources, and for a list of locally developed resources that have been created through partnerships between school districts and Aboriginal communities.

**SHARED
Learnings**

Sharing, giving, balance, and respect are highly valued in traditional Aboriginal cultures and exemplified in contemporary Aboriginal cultures.

The roles of men and women in many Aboriginal communities have changed over time.

There are many Aboriginal role models in various careers.

Many Aboriginal peoples lives and experiences have been affected by prejudice, stereotyping, and racism.

Did you know?
Status Indians in Canada were not allowed off reserves between 1882 and 1935 unless they showed a pass.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**Career Development**

Ask students to research the roles of women and men in traditional Aboriginal society. Ask them to choose several prominent Aboriginal individuals in various walks of life, focussing on individuals who may be working outside traditional gender roles. Ask students to write a brief essay comparing the ways in which the individual's work is both consistent with tradition and also departure from tradition (e.g., in most traditional Aboriginal societies, women had an important role in decision making, although they were seldom designated as Chiefs). In a follow-up class discussion, relate changes in roles with general societal changes brought about by evolving technology and developing social attitudes (e.g., increased specialization of work, improved communication systems, automation leading to decreased need for unskilled labour). For instance, Status Indians in Canada were not allowed off reserves between 1882 and 1935 unless they had an official government document called a "pass."

Ask students to conduct a study of a prominent Aboriginal man or woman, creating a comparison chart of the traditional and non-traditional aspects of their lives.

Personal Development

Invite a member of the Aboriginal community to visit and speak to the class about ways in which their community maintains a connection to traditional values. Ask students to explore activities such as powwows (traditions from the Plains and Eastern Canada), tribal journeys (Coastal BC), potlatches (Southern BC Coast), and feasts (Northern BC Coast).

Ask students to conduct research in the library, on the Internet, and through personal interviews with Aboriginal people to explore how some individuals are applying traditional values to their contemporary lives. Invite an Aboriginal community member to speak on this topic.

Ask students to create posters using symbols and pictures to portray an important traditional or contemporary Aboriginal person, including information about gender, family, beliefs, ancestry, and culture. Identify the posters by number and display them around the classroom. Ask students to select one poster and write a paragraph about their impressions of the person depicted.

Gather a variety of historical and contemporary materials (e.g., videos, magazine articles, ethnographic accounts, or fictional stories) that include portrayals, both positive and negative, of Aboriginal people. Group students and have each group analyze two or three resources, looking for examples of stereotypes that are developed and reinforced by downplaying information (i.e., omission, diversion, confusion) and intensifying information (i.e., repetition, association, composition). Relate the use of these techniques to the ways in which inaccurate or biased information is created.

RESOURCES

- *Dakelh Keyoh: The Southern Carrier in Earlier Times*
- *Growth of the First Métis Nation*
- *Honoring the Wisdom*
- *Inherit the Earth*
- *Just Talking About Ourselves - Vol. 1*
- *Just Talking About Ourselves - Vol. 3*
- *Keepers of the Fire*
- *Khot-La Cha*
- *O'Siem*
- *Qatuwas*
- *Roast Moose and Rosaries*
- *The Sayings of Our People*
- *Something Left To Do*
- *Suwilaay'msga Na ganiiyathm: Teachings of Our Grandfathers*
- *Through Indian Eyes*
- *Visions*

See Appendix H for detailed descriptions of these recommended resources and for a list of locally developed resources that have been created through partnerships between school districts and Aboriginal communities.

DO YOU KNOW
One in five Aboriginal
peoples in BC lives in the
Greater Vancouver area.