

Culture as Strength: Integrating Culture within Urban, Native American Student Personalized Learning Plans

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Context

Saint Paul is a large, urban city, which is also the capital of Minnesota. While an independent city, Saint Paul shares metropolitan space with Minneapolis, hence the reference to the name of the Twin Cities. The original stewards of the land include the D/Lakota, Ojibwe (Anishinaabe) and Ho-Chunk (Winnebago). Currently, the Twin Cities is home to 72,000 people who identify as American Indian (AI) (Wilder Research, 2023).

The Twin Cities holds an oppressive history regarding the original stewards of the land. Through a series of calculated treaties for land cessions and broken agreements during the 1800's, the United States Government systematically relocated the Ojibwe to northern Minnesota and eventually removed the Dakota and Ho-Chunk people altogether from the state (Minnesota Historical Society, 2008). Some historical contexts include the Dakota Conflict, U.S.-Dakota War (Dakota 38), the Fort Snelling Concentration Camp, genocide, the Boarding School Era, the Winnebago Removal Act, and the Dakota Removal Act (Minnesota Historical Society, 2023).

During the 1950's, the United States Government pivoted from eradicating AI people to moving them "to cities, where they would disappear through assimilation into the white, American mainstream" (Nesterak, 2019, para. 8). This would be referred to as the Indian Relocation Act, or Public Law 959, and facilitated by Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Minneapolis became a favorable BIA relocation city due to its proximity to the multiple Tribal reservations located within the Midwest (Nesterak, 2019). AI families were enticed with free transportation, expense money, and free vocational training to move from Tribal reservation lands to the Twin Cities. Because of this Act, the Twin Cities became a new home for AI people from a variety of Tribal Nations, including Ojibwe, D/Lakota, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Oneida, Cree, Iroquois, Arikara, Cherokee, Ponca, Omaha, Blackfeet, and Tlingit (Davis, 2013).

In 1969, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was created to ensure Native students in the Twin Cities had access to equitable education (National Indian Education Association, 2023). In 1973, Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) started its own Indian Education Program (IEP) to provide cultural and targeted, support services to AI students and their families. Since 2013, I have been the school counselor assigned to the SPPS IEP.

My personal ethnicity is German American. I grew up in a suburb of the Twin Cities called Shakopee, which is named after Chief Sakpe, the former chief of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community. Additionally, I married into an Ojibwe family (White Earth). I have been a licensed school counselor since 1999. Together with my lived experience, formal education, and professional experience, I have restructured the SPPS IEP school counseling program to meet the unique cultural needs of urban, AI high school students attending SPPS. On any given year, I will serve between 150-300 students, with those numbers changing continuously throughout the school year due to housing insecurity. At the time of this paper, I serve 230 AI students or about 2% of the 10,259 high school students attending SPPS. Of my assigned AI students, 24% identify as Ojibwe, 8% D/Lakota, 2% Cherokee and 66% identify from another AI Tribe or declined to indicate their Tribal affiliation (Saint Paul Public Schools, 2023).

Rationale

In 2019, Minnesota passed Statute, section 120B.125, which now requires all students beginning no later than 9th grade to have a Personal Learning Plan (PLP). PLPs are defined “as a formalized process that involves high school students setting learning goals based on personal, academic and career interests with the close support of school personnel or other individuals that can include teachers, school counselors, and parents” (U.S. Department of Education Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development Policy and Program Studies Service, 2017, para. 3). PLPs have been linked with higher student motivation, sense of belonging and connectedness to school, both of which can support dropout prevention.

AI graduation rates needs to be acknowledged, which in Minnesota, which has been a contentious topic. National AI dropout rates are steadily improving from 15.4 in 2010 to 10.2 percent in 2020 (U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 2022). Currently, the national AI graduation rate is around 88%. However, Minnesota currently holds a 58% graduation rate for AI students (Minnesota Department of Education, 2023), and more specifically, SPPS reports AI student graduation rates at 62% compared to the overall SPPS graduation rate of 75% (Saint Paul Public Schools, 2023). While graduation rates for AI students within SPPS exceed Minnesota’s AI graduation rates, an achievement gap does exist for our AI students, as they are graduating at rates 13% lower than their peers (Saint Paul Public Schools, 2023).

One promising strategy to support AI graduation rates is promoting enculturation to build resiliency with AI youth (Stumblingbear-Riddle & John S C, 2012). Resiliency is referred to as “the capacity to overcome personal weaknesses and negative environmental conditions... the ability to succeed under adverse conditions” (Thornton, Collins, & Daugherty, 2006, p. 5). Enculturation is the inclusion of Native culture, traditional spirituality, and traditional activities, which will be discussed later in this guide. PLPs can be designed to include enculturation as a culturally responsive intervention to increase AI student graduation rates.

In Minnesota, public schools are overseen by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), which has required the implementation of PLPs. These learning plans must contain several key elements, including academic scheduling, career exploration, career and employment-related skills, community partnerships, college access, all forms of postsecondary training, and experiential learning opportunities (Minnesota Department of Education, 2019).

In addition to directing PLP implementation, MDE also supervises the Office of American Indian Education (OAIE), whose mission is “to supporting districts and schools to ensure that every American Indian student reaches their full potential within their school communities through meaningful, equitable, and targeted educational experiences that affirms and values their unique cultural identities” (Minnesota Department of Education, 2022, p. 1). Funding aid is provided to school districts to support AI students within six key goal areas.

Of the OAIE goal areas (Minnesota Department of Education, 2023), the following can directly align to PLPs:

- Support postsecondary preparation for pupils;
- Support the academic achievement of American Indian students;
- Make curriculum relevant to the needs, interests, and cultural heritage of American Indian pupils;
- Provide positive reinforcement of the self-image of American Indian pupils.

By combining the MDE PLP requirements and the OAIE goal areas, school districts are in an advantageous position to support AI students towards graduation through enculturation. Additionally, since school counselors were the primary school support in assisting students in developing their PLPs (U.S. Department of Education Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development Policy and Program Studies Service, 2017), this culturally responsive guide was developed specifically for school counselors to utilize with AI students in crafting their PLPs. When AI students are encouraged to integrate AI culture within their education, they build resiliency. Resiliency ultimately supports students along their high school journey and beyond. Therefore, this guide promotes the mindset that culture is strength for our AI students. As school counselors, we can encourage our AI students to integrate their culture within their personalized educational and life planning.

Topic Summary

PLPs are designed to guide students towards creating goals to reach academic and life ambitions. Common themes such as academic planning, career development, post-high school education/training planning, and employment skill acquisition are the primary focus of PLPs. These focus areas closely align to the Westernized worldview, or “a standard of ethics by which to live” (Preston & Claypool, 2021, para. 12). Key examples include individualism, goal orientated/status seeking, and ownership. Contrastingly, an Indigenous worldview encompasses interconnectedness; “All matter is connected via shared energy, which radiates within and throughout every human being. Indigenous worldviews see knowledge, experience, and life as unified and holistic” (Preston & Claypool, 2021, para. 13). Examples include interdependence, traditions, and purpose (see Table 1).

Table 1

Comparison of Cultural Values and Expectations

| Traditional Native American | Contemporary mainstream American |
|---|---|
| Harmony with nature | Power over nature |
| Cooperation | Competition |
| Group needs more important than individual needs | Personal goals considered important |
| Privacy and noninterference; try to control self, not others | Need to control and affect others |
| Self-discipline both in body and mind | Self-expression and self-disclosure |
| Participation after observation (only when certain of ability) | Trial and error learning, new skills practiced until they are mastered |
| Explanation according to nature | Scientific explanation for everything |
| Reliance on extended family | Reliance on experts |
| Emotional relationships valued | Concerned mostly with facts |
| Patience encouraged (allow others to go first) | Aggressive and competitive |
| Humility | Fame and recognition; winning |
| Win once, let others win also | Win first prize all of the time |
| Follow the old ways | Climb the ladder of success; importance of progress and change |
| Discipline distributed among many; no one person takes blame | Blame one person at cost to others |
| Physical punishment rare | Physical punishment accepted |
| Present-time focus | Future-time focus |
| Time is always with us, things happen in their own time | Clock-watching |
| Present goals considered important; future accepted as it comes | Plan for future and how to get ahead |
| Encourage sharing freely and keeping only enough to satisfy present needs | Private property; encourage acquisition of material comfort and saving for the future |
| Speak softly, at a slower rate | Speak louder and faster |
| Avoid singling out the listener | Address listener directly (by name) |
| Interject less | Interrupt frequently |
| Use less “encouraging signs” | Use verbal encouragement (uh-huh, head nodding) |
| Delayed response to auditory messages | Use immediate response |
| Nonverbal communication | Verbal skills highly prized |

Note: Reprinted from “Fostering Resilience Among Native American Youth Through Therapeutic Intervention” by Garrett et al., 2014, *J Youth Adolescence*, 43, 470–490. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-013-0020-8>. Copyright © 2013, Springer Science Business Media New York.

In order for AI youth to create an authentic PLP, culture must be included by integrating it into the experience. AI values/traditions shape AI youth to discover their role and purpose within their Tribe or community. For example, among the Menominee, Winnebago, D/Lakota, Crow, and Cheyenne is a rite of passage for young men called a vision quest. Through a series of preparation, fasting, and prayer, teenage boys spend four days to discover their purpose in life;

His fasting will allow his mental capacities to be more attentive to the natural world around him, to be directed towards and singularly focused on his relationship with the universe and the role he is to play in it. He will marshal all his abilities, skills, fears, experiences, goals, and hopes to further the quest. Whether it be in a dream state or in full consciousness, something, some one thing or series of events, will reveal to this young Native American man a strikingly real element of the future he must follow. He will have sought after and received some vision of his role, his life's work. (Heinrich, 1990, pp. 130-131)

The emphasis for AI student PLP work is the word “personalized”, thus, the importance of culture. However, as previously outlined, many urban, AI youth are disconnected from traditional, cultural ways and knowledge. Without access to enculturation, many urban, AI youth may feel a sense of confusion and frustration in connecting to academic and future planning. Therefore, it is imperative for schools to ensure AI youth have access to quality cultural experiences, knowledge, resources, and teachings to support the creation of their PLP.

In order for this guide be implemented with fidelity, school counselors of urban, AI students would benefit from understanding the key concepts of culture and enculturation. Webster defines culture as “the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group” (Merriam-Webster, 2023). The Smithsonian refers to AI culture as:

a result of human socialization. People acquire knowledge and values by interacting with other people through common language, place, and community... American Indians have shaped and been shaped by their culture and environment. Elders in each generation teach the next generation their values, traditions, and beliefs through their own Tribal languages, social practices, arts, music, ceremonies, and customs. (Smithsonian, 2023, para. 2)

Examples of AI culture includes “Family life, cultural and religious practices, value systems, language, and dress” (Duran, 2002, p. 1).

Enculturation, on the other hand, is more complex. “Enculturation is proposed as a means of reconnecting to ancestral norms and values and of coping with the generational trauma emerging from a history of loss” (Napoli, 2003, p. 2). As previous addressed, many urban, AI youth and communities have been disconnected from their traditional ways through broken treaties, relocation, assimilation, and genocide; moreover, this disconnection has had severe results, including domestic violence, physical and sexual assault, poverty, chemical use and addiction, suicide, mood disorders, heart disease, and posttraumatic stress disorder (Brown-Rice, 2013).

American Indian youth may be in a particularly difficult position with regard to the development of ethnic or cultural identity. Forced assimilation via policies such as mandatory boarding school attendance and forced relocation may have resulted in the

loss of many protective elements of traditional culture in some families. (Jones & Galliher, 2007, as cited in Sahota, 2019, p. 2)

Through a circle of support, including community, families, schools, neighborhoods, youth programs, Tribal partnerships, and other allies, a nurturing and safe environment can be created for urban, AI youth to engage in enculturation and begin to learn/restore cultural, protective elements. “Schools are key environments to facilitate enculturation by helping Native youth achieve a balance between education advancement and cultural preservation” (Ambler, 2000; Callahan & McIntire, 1994, as cited in (Napoli, 2003, p. 2). Examples of enculturation can include cultural storytelling, academic language classes, community feasts, powwows, regalia making workshops, drum teaching circles, language tables, and Coming of Age ceremonies.

A brief examination of literature contends that culture and enculturation are protective factors in the lives of urban, AI youth and supports their overall resiliency. Iwasaki, Byrd, & Onda (2011) offered that participation in cultural activities, like pottery, dance, and drum classes; resource/media centers; and herbal remedies/traditional medicines classes, played a significant role in ensuring positive mental health in urban, AI youth. Cultural traditions, sacred site visits, Elder visits, cultural values, cultural activities (Sun Dances, smudging, or powwows), and spirituality were also identified as protective factors for AI youth in relation to positive health (Griese, 2016). Additionally, Henson, Sabo, & Trujillo (2017) asserted that enculturation, including traditional activities, identification with American Indian culture, and involvement with traditional spirituality as protective factors. In the same paper, LaFromboise et al. (2006) “found enculturation to be the most influential protective factor in fostering resilience in AIAN adolescents” (p.7). Finally, Garret et al. (2014) supports the following enculturation interventions within the therapeutic environment for displaced AI persons, or those not connected to a specific Tribe:

- Community program participation
- Physical health awareness
- Native American historical context examination
- Positive cultural identity promotion
- Social connection/reconnection
- Elder inclusion

In addition to accessing published research, the guide’s author conducted an informal sampling of local stakeholders for insights to enculturation experiences needed for urban, AI youth. AI youth workers, Indian Education staff, parents/guardians’, and student voices were captured on this topic. The following aspects were highlighted as protective, cultural elements:

- Naming ceremonies
- Medicines/bag understanding
- Singing (Drum or Rattle) traditional songs
- Introducing oneself in Native language
- Advocacy
- Ricing and Sugar Bush
- Traditional dancing/regalia making
- Ribbon shirt/skirt making

- Coming of Age ceremonies
- Leadership/kinship opportunities
- Native art and crafts
- Language revitalization
- Genealogy and enrollment
- Cultural field trips
- Networking opportunities
- Cooking and foods
- Food sustainability

Both the literature review and informal sampling provided insight to possible enculturation experiences and activities for urban, AI youth to explore. These activities were then assessed for commonalities, and the following four enculturation categories were established: Self-Awareness; Art, Literature, & History; Leadership & Community; Art, Literature, & History; and Native Cultural Ways of Knowing. These categories were then used as the foundation pieces for this guide's model, which will be explained later within this paper.

While traditional PLPs are structured to emphasize Westernized concepts of academic success and future planning, AI communities adhere to the importance of the present (Garrett, 2014). Life itself is not a goal but rather a journey. One's life journey travels in a circle, as do all things.

You have noticed that everything an Indian does is done in a circle, and that is because the Power of the World always works in circles, and everything tries to be round. In the old days when we were a strong and happy people, all our power came to us from the sacred hoop of the nation, and so long as the hoop was unbroken, the people flourished. The flowering tree was the living center of the hoop, and the circle of the four quarters nourished it. The east gave peace and light, the south gave warmth, the west gave rain, and the north with its cold and mighty wind gave strength and endurance. This knowledge came to us from the outer world with our religion. Everything the Power of the World does is done in a circle. The sky is round, and I have heard that the earth is round like a ball, and so are the stars. The wind, in its greatest power, whirls. Birds make their nests in circles, for theirs is the same religion as ours. The sun comes forth and goes down in a circle. The moon does the same, and both are round. Even the seasons form a great circle in their changing, and always come back again to where they were. The life of a man is a circle from childhood to childhood, and so it is in everything where power moves. Our tepees were round like the nests of birds, and these were always set in a circle, the nation's hoop, a nest of many nests, where the Great Spirit meant for us to hatch our children. (Black Elk Speaks via Western University, 2023, para. 2)

This life model is best illustrated through the AI concept of the Medicine Wheel (Figure 1).

Figure 1



Figure 1. The standard Medicine Wheel identified with Aboriginal spirituality. Reprinted from “The Medicine Wheel Revisited: Reflections on Indigenization in Counseling and Education” by L. Robertson, 2021, SAGE Open, 11(2) (<https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211015202>). CC BY 4.0.

In many Indigenous cultures, the Medicine Wheel metaphor contains all of the traditional teachings and can therefore be used as a guide on any journey, including the educational process. While there is some variation in its teachings and representations, the underlying web of meaning to Medicine Wheels remains the same: the importance of appreciating and respecting the ongoing interconnectedness and interrelatedness of all things. (Bell, 2016, para. 3)

AI youth’s life journey will follow the Medicine Wheel’s teaching of interconnectedness and balance. This includes strengthening one’s spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental directions capabilities (Bell, 2016). Since many AI communities align to the teachings of the Medicine Wheel, albeit the teachings may vary among Tribes and Nations, school counselors would benefit from becoming knowledgeable of the concept and teachings of the Medicine Wheel through the context of the AI communities represented at their school.

The foundation for this guide utilizes the Ojibwe Medicine Wheel as a structural model (Figure 2). The model can easily be adapted to visionally appeal to students who identify as other than Ojibwe.

Figure 2

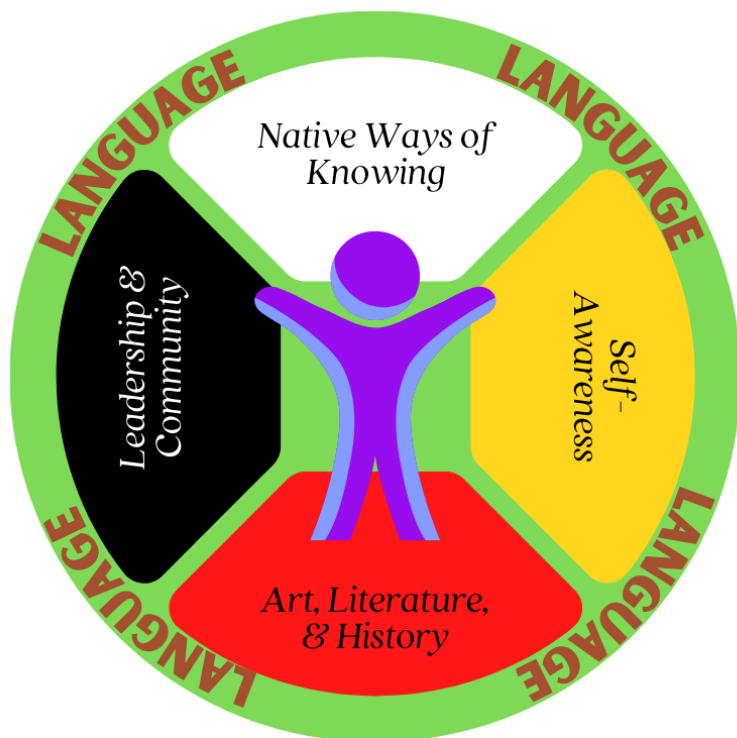


Figure 2. The Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model. Own Work.

The Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model incorporates the various aspects of the traditional Ojibwe Medicine Wheel, including the colors and directions: “For Ojibwe people, the colours are yellow (east), red (south), black (west), white (north), Father Sky (blue), Mother Earth (green) and the self (Centre, purple)” (Manitowabi, 2023, para. 1). Embedded within the model are the enculturation concepts outlined previously: Self-Awareness; Leadership & Community; Art, Literature, & History; and Native Cultural Ways of Knowing. The following provides the Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel model components in more detail:

Center – Student (purple): “the centre represents the fire within and our responsibility for maintaining that fire” (Manitowabi, 2023, para. 3). Within the model, the student is the center. The student is responsible for their cultural “fire” by discovering, learning, understanding, and practicing aspects of their AI culture at their own pace. The cumulation of information and learning the student experiences will be documented within their PLP.

East Direction – Self-Awareness (yellow): “The east is where we come from...we begin our human life as we journey from the spirit world into this physical world” (Pitawanakwat, 2006, para. 15). Students begin this cultural journey through self-awareness with culture as the focal point. In this direction, the students are establishing a connection to their Tribe or Nation and also understanding how to care for themselves utilizing the teachings of the Medicine Wheel.

Key concepts to consider within this model's direction include genealogy, Tribal enrollment, letter of descendency, self-care, identification of strengths, affirmations, life skills, purpose discovery (which may also include financial planning, post-high school planning, scholarship matching), and summer AI youth programs.

South Direction - Art, Literature, & Language (red):

Here in the southern direction of the Medicine Wheel, everything is thriving. The trees have come awake, producing their leaves. Life itself is awake and dancing, because the summer stage is here, a time of continued nurturance for all of Creation, when everything is new and growing fast (Pitawanakwat, 2006, para. 28).

In this section, students will be nurtured culturally through the introduction to cultural art forms, Native authored literature, and Indigenous history.

Key concepts to consider within this model's direction include regalia making, ribbon skirt/shirt making, traditional dances, drum/singing and traditional songs, book club, beading, painting, treaties and sovereignty, and dream catchers.

West Direction - Leadership & Community (black): “The buffalo is sacred to the native people because of everything buffalo has given us to help us to survive. The lessons that buffalo teaches us are about sharing with others and being generous” (Indigenous Education Department, n.d., p. 13). Within this direction, students will exercise the themes of responsibility and reciprocity through cultural leadership opportunities and community participation.

Key concepts to consider within this model's direction include powwows, round dances, feasts, youth leadership conferences, cultural youth groups, and kinship programs.

North Direction – Native Ways of Knowing (white): “This is a place of wisdom” (Pitawanakwat, 2006, para. 58). This direction will provide students the opportunity to learn from Elders, cultural knowledge keepers, and culture bearers. Through teachings and experiences, students will be exposed to Native Ways of Knowing.

Indigenous ways of knowing (IWOK) is an epistemology that recognizes the interconnectedness of all things... IWOK are the collective epistemologies and ontologies of Indigenous people from specific locales that have worked to promote harmony and balance in all directions of their environments: the North, South, East, West, above, below and all around...IWOK essentially equates to the raising of consciousness from a level of cognitive behavior to one that encompasses actions upon the world to sustain it. (Grayshield, 2010, p. 2)

Within the report *Incorporating Indigenous Ways of Knowing within Curriculum and Programming* Prepared (Cote & Ready, 2021), the authors cite several themes to consider when building curriculum utilizing IWOK. For this guide, four themes, with definitions provided by Cote & Ready, will be used:

- **Intergenerational** –the centering of knowledges across generations, with Elders and Knowledge Keepers and Knowledge Holders and Cultural Helpers having the role of sharing their teachings, knowledges, experiences with the generations that come later.

Key concepts to consider within this model's direction ceremonies, sugar bush, Check & Connect mentors, treaties, Land Back, ice fishing/spearing, cooking with traditional food, intergenerational classes/experiences, and farming.

- **Place-Based** - the work you are doing is connected to the land you are on and the knowledge is situated within the relationship to the location, experience, and groups of peoples of the land and this relationship needs to be acknowledged.

Key concepts to consider within this model's direction cultural museum visits, Tribal community visits, ceremonies, and Indigenous calendars.

- **Narrative** – the knowledge held by Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Knowledge Holders, and Cultural Helpers is knowledge that has been known and shared for generations, passed on through storytelling.

Key concepts to consider within this model's direction winter storytelling, podcasting and digital storytelling, adopt an Elder, and sacred ceremonies.

- **Experiential** – there are many ways of learning about the world and it is valued that learning is immersive and in connection to land and place.

Key concepts to consider within this model's direction Bdote tour, sustainable gardening, medicine and plant identification and gathering protocols, and Indigenous Entrepreneurs programming, sacred site visits.

Earth – Language (green): “All creation on Mother Earth was put here for a purpose and we are all deeply connected” (Tribal Trade Company, 2021. 3:43). The earth connects all life. Language is the element that connects all of the aspects within this model and will be represented throughout each direction.

Indigenous languages are not only methods of communication, but also extensive and complex systems of knowledge that have developed over millennia. They are central to the identity of indigenous peoples, the preservation of their cultures, worldviews and visions and an expression of self-determination (United Nations Department of Public Information, 2019, para. 3)

Key concepts to consider within this model's direction language table participation, academic Indigenous language class, summer language programs, and access to AI college courses while in high school.

Sky – Purpose (blue): “Father Sky in the upper realm” (Pitawanakwat, 2006, para. 4). For this guide, the sky will represent the student’s goals, aspirations, and purpose. This area will be intentionally left open for students to continue to envision their futures.

Student Engagement

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is the primary source of professional and ethical standards for school counselors. According to ASCA, school counselors have the ethical obligation to provide AI students with culturally responsive services. Consider the following ASCA ethical practices impacting this curriculum guide (American School Counselor Association, 2023):

- Support all students and their development by actively working to eliminate systemic barriers or bias impeding student development.
- Provide culturally responsive counseling to students in a brief context and support students and families/guardians in obtaining outside services if students need long-term clinical/mental health counseling. image ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors.
- Acknowledge the vital role and rights of parents/guardians, families and Tribal communities.
- Respect students' and families' values, beliefs and cultural background, as well as students' sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, and exercise great care to avoid imposing personal biases, beliefs or values rooted in one's religion, culture or ethnicity.
- Advocate for equitable, anti-oppressive and anti-bias policies and procedures, systems and practices, and provide effective, evidence-based and culturally sustaining interventions to address student needs.
- Involve diverse networks of support, including but not limited to educational teams, community and Tribal agencies and partners, wraparound services and vocational rehabilitation services as needed to best serve students.
- Provide students with a culturally responsive school counseling program that promotes academic, career and social/emotional development and equitable opportunity and achievement outcomes for all students.
- Recognize that establishing credibility, rapport and an effective working alliance with some students and stakeholders may be facilitated by developing relationships that extend beyond the school day and building (e.g., attending community events, advocating for community improvement for and with students and stakeholders, joining community enhancement organizations).
- Offer culturally sustaining small-group counseling services based on individual student, school and community needs; student data; a referral process; and/or other relevant data.
- Facilitate culturally sustaining groups from the framework of evidence-based or research-based practices.

In this context, school counselors have an obligation to learn about and to exercise culturally responsive counseling. Rutledge (2019) refers to culturally responsive counseling as when “school counselors identify, recognize and utilize the cultural strengths of students to increase positive outcomes” (para. 2). Given this understanding, this guide supports this statement by

embedding specific, culturally responsive content, learning objectives, and strategies. Students will:

- Utilize the traditional Medicine Wheel as a foundation to support and guide their personal growth.
- Recognize general concepts associated with AI culture, including traditions, language, beliefs, and history.
- Create cultural learning goals, related to the ASCA domains (personal/social, academic, and career/college planning), that allow the student to personalize and explore their cultural identity exploration.
- Develop connections and networks within the AI community and with AI stakeholders to support their personal, cultural growth.
- Establish a continued plan and resource base in the community for meeting their future inquiries related to culture and cultural knowledge.

The following are helpful suggestions for school counselors beginning this culturally responsive counseling journey:

- Understand that all Tribes and Nations are unique and independent of one another. Each has their unique language, culture, and traditions; therefore, school counselors will need to consult with their Indian Education program (IEP), local cultural knowledge keepers, AI agencies, and community Elders on adapting this curriculum to meet the cultural needs of the AI students on their caseload. This is especially important for school counselors who may be new to culturally responsive counseling work with AI communities.
- Collaborate with local IEPs. IEP staff will be able to support the identification of local resources, as well as guiding school counselors with cultural protocols when approaching AI supports for knowledge and information. This may include approaching local Tribes and Nation communities. Additionally, IEPs may be available to support with curriculum building. Approach AI knowledge keepers with good intentions (a good heart) and be open to what is shared with you.
- Develop a needs assessment to gather insights from stakeholders to cultural concepts deemed important when providing counseling services to AI youth within the school system. Review Appendix A for examples of cultural concepts that were gathered for this guide utilizing local stakeholders' input.
- Identify local and national AI agencies and resources. Visit or connect with the agencies and organizations to establish a collaborative relationship and to identify programs and opportunities supporting AI youth. Utilize national organizations for resources and networking (Appendix B).
- Expect to not have all of the answers. Much of this work is committing to learn about AI ways and to identify resources. Be patient with your own knowledge gathering. Use this opportunity to learn not only from this guide, but also from the students and their communities. Reciprocity is key in this venture.

Learning about Tribal communities and ways will be evolving. School counselors would benefit from creating an informational storage system that works for their needs to easily access the

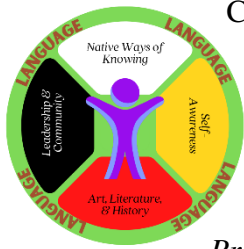
research, information, and resources as necessary. Continued education regarding AI concepts, social issues, and practices is imperative to this work, as is establishing positive relationships with students, families, and cultural stakeholders. This can be done through attending cultural events, like powwows and language tables, participating on AI advisory boards, and attending cultural conferences and workshops.

Additional notes regarding the facilitation of the lessons within this guide:

- Offer students a light snack. Food is an important element within Tribal communities: “Sharing food is a way of welcoming visitors, similar to offering a handshake. Food is usually offered at community meetings and other gatherings as a way to build relationships” (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2009, page 5). When meeting with AI students, school counselors would benefit from having a small snack available.
- Consider co-facilitating the lessons with an IEP staff or other cultural support resource. These key people are resources who can guide the school counselor to accurately share cultural concepts and/or add relevancy and insights to the conversation.
- Refer to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (2009) [American Indian and Alaska Native Culture Card: A Guide to Build Cultural Awareness](#) to enhance cultural competency.
- Adhere to proper group counseling protocol. The lessons are built on the assumption that the school counselor has identified AI students, informed student(s) of the purpose of meetings, and has appropriate consent from the parent/guardian for the students to participate.

Curriculum

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Culture as Strength Lesson Plan 1:

Overview of the Medicine Wheel

This lesson plan is part of the Culture as Strength: Integrating Culture within Urban, Native American Student Personal Learning Plans curriculum developed by Kerrie A. Troseth as part of the 2023 Northern Arizona University’s Indian Country School Counselors Institute Professional Development Program cohort.

| General Information | |
|---|---|
| Grade Level: | 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th grade |
| Setting: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual Counseling Session <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group Counseling Session |
| <p>Overview of the lesson:</p> <p><i>This lesson will introduce Native American student(s) to the image and attributes of the Medicine Wheel (aka Sacred Hoop), which is the foundation of the curriculum. As a result, students will recognize and personalize the concepts of interconnectedness, balance, and knowledge, which will eventually be embedded into their personalized learning plans.</i></p> | |

| Targets & Outcomes |
|--|
| <p>ASCA Student Standards Targeted:</p> |
| <p>Mindsets & Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>M 1. Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being</i> ● <i>B-LS 4. Self-motivation and self- direction for learning</i> ● <i>B-SMS 1. Responsibility for self and actions</i> ● <i>B-SS 3. Positive relationships with adults to support success</i> ● <i>B-SS 10. Cultural awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness</i> |
| <p>Social and Emotional Learning Competencies Targeted:</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Self-Awareness <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Management <input type="checkbox"/> Social Relationship/Awareness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relationship Skills/Management <input type="checkbox"/> Responsible Decision-Making |

Student Learning Objectives:

Student(s) will:

- Identify the Medicine Wheel symbol and elements contained within it.
- Examine prior knowledge regarding the Medicine Wheel.
- Identify new knowledge regarding the Medicine Wheel.
- Produce a list of questions or wonderings to support continued learning regarding the Medicine Wheel.
- Generate a list of resources to expand their knowledge on the Medicine Wheel.

Materials:

- *Optional: food or snack*
- *Optional: smudge kit*
- *Optional: small incentive*
- Blank paper
- Black Elk Speaks excerpt
- Internet connection to access
 - [What is the medicine wheel? \(Medicine wheel teachings 101\)](#) (Tribal Trade Company, 2021) **OR**
 - [Medicine Wheel TEACHINGS \(NATIVE Medicine Wheel System EXPLAINED!\)](#) (Tribal Trade Company, 2020)
- Computer or internet access device
- Projector and screen to show online videos
- Color copy of *The Medicine Wheel* (Tribal Trade Company, 2020)
- Color copies of *Culture as Strength Lesson 1 Medicine Wheel Worksheets 1 and 2* for each student
- Writing utensils
- File or folder for each student

Lesson Delivery:

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| <i>Pre-Delivery Preparation:</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Familiarize yourself with the concept of the Medicine Wheel. Utilize your local cultural and knowledge keepers to learn more. Supplemental information is available within the <i>Additional Resources</i> section of this lesson plan.● <i>Optional:</i> obtain a cultural, smudge kit from a reputable and culturally appropriate source. Connect with local resources for support and protocol. |
| <i>Introduction:</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Optional: permit student(s) to smudge, if appropriate</i>● <i>Optional: offer student(s) food or snack.</i>● <i>Welcome student(s) into the space and allow for introductions or ice breaker, if in a group setting.</i> |

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| | <p>Read the following to the student(s) or edit as necessary:</p> <p>“As you may already know, our state requires every student to create a personalized learning plan. As a school counselor, I can be a resource to support students with creating and implementing their plans.</p> <p>Through our time together, we are going to consider cultural pieces that you may want to add to your own plan. Additionally, I can offer you guidance and find resources to support you to reach your personal goals. If appropriate, you can share information with me to help me increase my own learning about Native culture.</p> <p>Today, I would like to begin this conversation with you.”</p> |
| <p>Frontload Activity:</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide each student with a blank piece of paper and a writing utensil. 2. Instruct the they have two minutes to write down as many things that they can think of that are circular or is a circle. Examples, can include the sun, eyes, basketballs, etc.). 3. After two minutes, ask the students to stop writing. 4. Allow each student to name one item that is circular. If no one else had the item on their list, award that student a point. If other students have that item on their list, ask all the students to cross out the word on their list. 5. Continue to have the students name the items on their lists and award points until each student has exhausted their own lists. 6. Ask students to count up their point. 7. Provide the student with the most points a small incentive. |
| <p>Teach Content:</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Connect the Frontload activity to Black Elk Speaks perspective on circles by reading the provided excerpt, for example, “I wanted you to start thinking a bit more about circles, because it ties into today’s lesson. Has anyone heard of Black Elk? He was a Lakota who shared his vision and wisdom to both the Lakota people and to the people of the world. Listen to what Black Elk has to say about circles...”. Read the excerpt to the student(s). 2. Indicate that the sacred hoop that Black Elk has referring to is also known as the Medicine Wheel. 3. Provide each student a copy of the <i>Culture as Strength Lesson 1 Medicine Wheel Worksheets 1 and 2</i>. The worksheets are based on the K-W-L strategy; however, it has been modified to complement this lesson and integrate the cultural concepts. 4. Indicate that today we will be discussing the concept of the Medicine Wheel. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ask students to located the “K” section of the worksheet 1 called “What do I know?” and write down anything that they already know about the Medicine Wheel. Provide student(s) a minute or two for writing. Indicate to the students that it is fine if they do not write anything down. b. Show the color copy of <i>The Medicine Wheel</i> to the student(s). Indicate the we are going to watch a short video explaining more about this concept. Instruct students to use the worksheet 2 to |

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| | <p>take down notes from the video. Note: students can use the blank worksheet in whatever way they would like to take notes. One student may list a season or medicine for each section. Another student may write one fact about the Medicine Wheel within each section. There is no correct or incorrect way to take the notes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Play the selected video from the <i>Material</i> list to the student(s). d. After watching the video ask the student(s) to write down a few thoughts on what they learned under section “L” of worksheet 1. After a few moments, encourage student(s) to share some examples of what they wrote. e. Refer to section “Q” of worksheet 1. Ask the student(s) what questions do they still have about the Medicine Wheel. This may include what does the D/Lakota Medicine Wheel version look like; how are attributes assigned on the wheel; does it matter what colors are used; etc. Encourage student(s) to share their thoughts and write down those questions on the worksheet. f. Refer to section “D” of worksheet 1. Explain that life is a journey, which means that we are continuously learning throughout our lifetime. We learn through school, family, community, experiences, and resources. Ask the student(s) how they can get their questions about the Medicine Wheel answered. Encourage student(s) to brainstorm resources and share. Request that the student(s) write down their thoughts and ideas. Examples could include the internet, read a book, speak with a grandparent or Elder, visit with local resources, etc. <i>Note that some students may not be able to identify any resources, and this is fine.</i> |
| <p>Summarize/ Close:</p> | <p>Ask student(s) to take a moment and reflect on today’s activity silently. After a few moments, ask the student(s) the following reflection questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is one way that the Medicine Wheel can support us on our life’s journey? 2. How was Native American culture valued (or emphasized, included) in today’s activity?* <p>Thank the student(s) for participating today and schedule the next session.</p> <p><i>Collect student(s) worksheets for next session. Place in folder or file.</i></p> |
| <p>Post Delivery:</p> | <p>*Consider having the student(s) write down cultural concepts of discussion on a poster board or white board or the facilitator can do this. Keep a running list of the Native cultural concepts explored in today’s session. The list will be used at a later time with the student(s).</p> |

Additional Resources

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Medicine Wheel</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Medicine Wheel Teaching with Elder Elsey (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7juFo9nKmmM)● Basics of the Medicine Wheel presented at November 2020 Albuquerque Public Schools TLF Summit (Basics of the Medicine Wheel - YouTube)● Medicine Wheel Teaching Kaaren Dannenmann from Trout Lake, Ontario (Medicine Wheel Teaching - YouTube)● Lakota Medicine Wheel Curriculum with Carmen Eagle Pipe (Taopi Wicagloglaca Win) (Lakota Medicine Wheel Curriculum - YouTube)● What is an Indigenous Medicine Wheel (Bob Joseph, Indigenous Corporate Training, Inc.) (https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/what-is-an-indigenous-medicine-wheel) |
| <i>Smudging Resources</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Smudging for Beginners - LEARN TO SMUDGE in 5 minutes (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnpPd3MqGk0)● How to smudge: Burning sage with knowledge keeper Debra Courchene (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fIMumk2cnA)● One Take What is Smudging? (Short version) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-AyMOyGBhw)● Smudging: Attract the Good and Refuse the Negative (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=669fVeUZUdY) |

Notes for future delivery or research:

Black Elk Speaks Excerpt:

You have noticed that everything an Indian does is done in a circle, and that is because the Power of the World always works in circles, and everything tries to be round. In the old days when we were a strong and happy people, all our power came to us from the sacred hoop of the nation, and so long as the hoop was unbroken, the people flourished. The flowering tree was the living center of the hoop, and the circle of the four quarters nourished it. The east gave peace and light, the south gave warmth, the west gave rain, and the north with its cold and mighty wind gave strength and endurance. This knowledge came to us from the outer world with our religion. Everything the Power of the World does is done in a circle. The sky is round, and I have heard that the earth is round like a ball, and so are the stars. The wind, in its greatest power, whirls. Birds make their nests in circles, for theirs is the same religion as ours. The sun comes forth and goes down in a circle. The moon does the same, and both are round. Even the seasons form a great circle in their changing, and always come back again to where they were. The life of a man is a circle from childhood to childhood, and so it is in everything where power moves. Our tepees were round like the nests of birds, and these were always set in a circle, the nation's hoop, a nest of many nests, where the Great Spirit meant for us to hatch our children. (Black Elk Speaks via Western University, 2023, para. 2).



The Medicine Wheel



Medicine Wheel example (Tribal Trade Company, 2020)

The diagram is a square divided into four quadrants by a central green circle. The quadrants are: top-left (white background) with a purple circle containing 'D' and the text 'How can I discover more?'; top-right (yellow background) with the text 'What do I know?' and a purple circle containing 'K'; bottom-left (dark blue background) with a purple circle containing 'Q' and the text 'What questions do I have?'; and bottom-right (red background) with the text 'What have I learned?' and a purple circle containing 'L'. The central green circle contains the text 'Medicine Wheel'.

D *How can I discover more?*

What do I know? **K**

Q *What questions do I have?*

What have I learned? **L**

Medicine Wheel

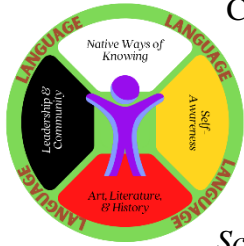
This worksheet is a companion piece of the Culture as Strength: Integrating Culture within Urban, Native American Student Personal Learning Plans curriculum developed by Kerrie A. Troseth as part of the 2023 Northern Arizona University's Indian Country School Counselors Institute Professional Development Program cohort.

Culture as Strength Lesson 1: Medicine Wheel Worksheet 2

The diagram is a square divided into four quadrants by a vertical and a horizontal line. In the center is a green circle containing the text "Medicine Wheel". The quadrants are: top-left (white background), top-right (yellow background), bottom-left (dark blue background), and bottom-right (red background). Each quadrant contains a large, light gray rounded rectangle for notes.

Medicine Wheel

This worksheet is a companion piece of the Culture as Strength: Integrating Culture within Urban, Native American Student Personal Learning Plans curriculum developed by Kerrie A. Troseth as part of the 2023 Northern Arizona University's Indian Country School Counselors Institute Professional Development Program cohort.



Culture as Strength Lesson Plan 2:

**Overview of the Culture as Strength PLP
Medicine Wheel Model**

This lesson plan is part of the Culture as Strength: Integrating Culture within Urban, Native American Student Personal Learning Plans curriculum developed by Kerrie A. Troseth as part of the 2023 Northern Arizona University’s Indian Country School Counselors Institute Professional Development Program cohort.

| General Information | |
|---|---|
| Grade Level: | 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th grade |
| Setting: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual Counseling Session <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group Counseling Session |
| Overview of the lesson: <i>This lesson will introduce Native American student(s) to the Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model and its components. Students will begin to analyze the components as future cultural learning considerations.</i> | |

| Targets & Outcomes | |
|---|--|
| ASCA Student Standards Targeted: | |
| Mindsets & Behaviors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>M 1. Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being</i> ● <i>M 3. Positive attitude toward work and learning</i> ● <i>B-LS 4. Self-motivation and self- direction for learning</i> ● <i>B-SMS 1. Responsibility for self and actions</i> ● <i>B-SS 3. Positive relationships with adults to support success</i> ● <i>B-SS 10. Cultural awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness</i> | |
| Social and Emotional Learning Competencies Targeted: | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Self-Awareness <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Management <input type="checkbox"/> Social Relationship/Awareness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relationship Skills/Management <input type="checkbox"/> Responsible Decision-Making | |

Student Learning Objectives:

Student(s) will:

- Identify the Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model and the elements contained within it.
- Classify cultural concept examples within the Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model directions.
- Produce a list of cultural concepts interests for future consideration.

Materials:

- *Optional: food or snack*
- *Optional: smudge kit*
- Student folder(s) from last session
- Color copies of ***Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model*** for each student
- Script for Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model, or refer back to the Topic Summary of this guide for more insight.
- Flashcards
- Writing utensils
- Poster board of cultural concepts from previous sessions

Lesson Delivery:

Pre-Delivery Preparation:

- Print out flashcards and laminate.
- Research any cultural concepts listed on the flashcards that are unfamiliar to the facilitator. This will support any questions that may arise during the activity. However, it is fine to let the student(s) know that you are just learning about the concept as well.

Introduction:

- *Optional: permit student(s) to smudge, if appropriate.*
- *Optional: offer student(s) food or snack.*
- *Welcome student(s) into the space.*

Read the following to the student(s) or edit as necessary:

“In our last session, we learned more about the Medicine Wheel. What is one aspect that you remember about our time together?” Offer the student(s) their folders, if they would like a reference. Review the Medicine Wheel with the students.

“We are going to be using the Medicine Wheel as a model for our next few sessions. This model will assist us with adding cultural goals to our Personalize Learning Plans, aka PLPs. Today, we are going to talk more about the Culture as

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| | Strength model and begin to brainstorm ideas that you may want to consider for your PLP.” |
| Teach Content: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hand out a copy of the <i>Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model</i> to the student(s). Indicate that this is the model that we will be using to determine the aspects that the student(s) will be adding into their PLP. 2. Review the Model with the students(s) by reading the Script for Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model. 3. Ask student(s) if they have any questions at this point. |
| Practice Content: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Indicate to the student(s) that we will be reviewing the <i>Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model</i> further. Indicate that you will be showing them a cultural concept, and they can guess to which direction of the model the concept fits. 2. Review flashcards. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Show the student(s) one <i>flashcard</i> and ask them to guess which of the four directions the concept fits into. They can choose ANY direction as many of the concepts will fit into multiple categories. b. Encourage discussion or further insights from the student(s) about the concept. Some students may want to share a personal story or insight, which should be encouraged. c. Consider having the student(s) point to which direction on their <i>Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model</i> that the cultural concept fits. This may support students who are more introverted. 3. Suggest that as they go through the flashcards that the student(s) write down any cultural concept on their <i>Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model</i> handout that they would like to learn more about in the future. 4. Proceed through all of the <i>flashcards</i> with the student(s). 5. Offer students the opportunity to share other cultural examples that came to their minds while doing the activity. |
| Summarize/ Close: | <p>Ask student(s) to take a moment and reflect on today’s activity silently. After a few moments, ask the student(s) the following reflection questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is something that you identified today that you would like to take on your life’s journey? 2. How was Native American culture valued (or emphasized, included) in today’s activity? <p>Thank the student(s) for participating today and schedule the next session.</p> <p><i>Collect student(s) handouts for next session.</i></p> |

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| <i>Post Delivery:</i> | *Consider having the student(s) write down cultural concepts of discussion on a poster board or white board or the facilitator can do this. Keep a running list of the Native cultural concepts explored in today's session. The list will be used at a later time with the student(s). |
|------------------------------|---|

Notes for future delivery or research:

Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model



Script for Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model

You have the option to create a PLP that reflects your personal, cultural learning goals. Our time together will focus on learning goals related to exploring and expanding your knowledge of Native culture. You will determine what aspects are important to you and how you would like to expand your own knowledge. I can be a resource person for you to discover more or to link you to other resources. This is your time to explore.

Let's begin by looking at the Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model. Remember that the Medicine Wheel supports us to learn about interconnectedness, balance, and knowledge.

This model also supports these concepts. **What are the four directions on this model?**

(Answer: self-awareness; art, literature, & history; leadership & community; and Native ways of knowing). These four directions are knowledge areas that will guide you towards learning more about Native culture. The directions are connected, or interconnected, through language, which you will also have an opportunity to explore. Language is the foundation of every culture.


The image in the middle, in purple, is you. You are the center of this model, because it is all about you and what you would like to learn. You will draw upon all of the directions to grow your cultural identity. Lastly, within the model, you are outlined in blue. Blue represents the future you as you transform with the knowledge you have gained. This knowledge will support you through high school and beyond

**Learn about
Tribal
Enrollment
requirements**

**Understand Life's
Purpose**

**Introduce
myself in my
Native
language**

**Practice Self
Care**



Learn to say
colors and
numbers in
my Native
language



Identify my
strengths




Practice Self
Care



Find Native
affirmations



Learn to
bead



Attend a summer
program for
Native youth



Make a
regalia



Make a ribbon
skirt and shirt



Read the
book *The
Fire Keeper's
Daughter*



Learn traditional
songs



Learn about
Treaty
Rights



Learn the dream
catcher story and
make one



Attend a
Powwow



Learn how to
Fancy or Fancy
Shawl dance



Participate in
a Round
Dance



Tutor a Native
elementary
student



Join the
local Native
youth
community
group



Be a
representative at
a Native Youth
conference



Create a Native
student group
at school



Cook a
traditional dish
or recipe




**Visit a cultural
museum**



**Learn about
ceremonies**

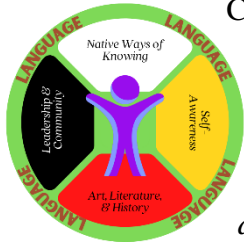


**Speak with an
Elder**



**Identify
Indigenous plants
and medicines**

**Use traditional
medicines**



Culture as Strength Lesson Plan 3:

Creating Your Own Journey

This lesson plan is part of the Culture as Strength: Integrating Culture within Urban, Native American Student Personal Learning Plans curriculum developed by Kerrie A. Troseth as part of the 2023 Northern Arizona

University’s Indian Country School Counselors Institute Professional Development Program cohort.

| General Information | |
|---|---|
| Grade Level: | 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th grade |
| Setting: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual Counseling Session <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group Counseling Session |
| Overview of the lesson: <i>This lesson will provide Native American students the opportunity to explore each Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model component in more detail. As a result, the students will have the opportunity to identify one or more cultural learning goal to explore in the future.</i> | |

| Targets & Outcomes |
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| ASCA Student Standards Targeted: |
| Mindsets & Behaviors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>M 2. Sense of acceptance, respect, support and inclusion for self and others in the school environment</i> ● <i>M 3. Positive attitude toward work and learning</i> ● <i>B-LS 2. Creative approach to learning, tasks and problem solving</i> ● <i>B-LS 4. Self-motivation and self-direction for learning</i> ● <i>B-SMS 1. Responsibility for self and actions</i> ● <i>B-SMS 3. Independent work</i> ● <i>B-SS 3. Positive relationships with adults to support success</i> ● <i>B-SS 10. Cultural awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness</i> |
| Social and Emotional Learning Competencies Targeted: |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Self-Awareness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Self-Management <input type="checkbox"/> Social Relationship/Awareness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relationship Skills/Management |

Responsible Decision-Making

Student Learning Objectives:

Student(s) will:

- Define each component within Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model.
- Identify cultural examples within each component within Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model.
- Identify one cultural component to consider as a goal.

Materials:

- *Optional: food or snack*
- *Optional: smudge kit*
- Student folder(s) from last session
- Color copy of ***Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model***
- Color copy of the ***Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model’s Directions’ Definitions and Examples***
- Copies of Everything You Wanted to Know About Indians But Were Afraid to Ask (Young Readers Edition) (Treuer, 2021) (Check with the Indian Education program for available funding or with a local library/media center for copies)
- Writing utensils
- Poster board of cultural concepts from previous sessions

Lesson Delivery:

Pre-Delivery Preparation:

- Obtain a copy of Everything You Wanted to Know About Indians But Were Afraid to Ask (Young Readers Edition) from a local library or bookstore. Peruse the book and explore topics of interest to you.
- Obtain a copy of Everything You Wanted to Know About Indians But Were Afraid to Ask (Young Readers Edition) for the student(s).

Introduction:

- *Optional: permit student(s) to smudge, if appropriate*
- *Optional: offer student(s) food or snack.*
- *Welcome student(s) into the space.*

Read the following to the student(s) or edit as necessary:

“Let’s begin our session by reviewing what we have learned in our last two sessions together (provide student(s) with their files/folders for context). What

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| | <p>are some main points that you remember?” Allow time for student(s) to recap with aspects that they remember and story sharing.</p> <p>“The Medicine Wheel supports us to gain knowledge, to balance our lives, and to understand the interconnectedness of the world. The <i>Culture as Strength Medicine Wheel Model</i> (show) supports us to gain cultural knowledge, balance our learning, and understand how cultural pieces interconnect. Today, our time will be spent on reviewing the <i>Culture as Strength Medicine Wheel Model</i> in further detail and then beginning to create our own learning journey.”</p> |
| <p><i>Teach Content:</i></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refer to <i>Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model</i> within the student(s) folder. 2. Highlight each direction by using the <i>Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model’s Directions’ Definitions and Examples handouts</i>. Encourage student(s) to discuss the aspects of the handouts and to write down any area(s) of interest on to their <i>Culture as Strength Lesson 1 Medicine Wheel Worksheet 2</i> found inside their folder. |
| <p><i>Practice Content:</i></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide student(s) with a copy of Everything You Wanted to Know About Indians But Were Afraid to Ask (Young Readers Edition) (Treuer, 2021). Indicate that book was written for Native and non-Native youth to learn more about Native American history, culture, and general insights. 2. Invite the student(s) to peruse the book’s Table of Contents and find a topic that is of interest. Encourage them to review the information within the book and share aloud. For practice, ask the student(s) to identify which <i>Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model</i> components that the concept would be classified. All answers are correct. 3. Allow the student(s) to take the book with them to read on their own (and return if borrowed or keep if donated). |
| <p><i>Summarize/ Close:</i></p> | <p>Read the following:</p> <p>“We have spent some time reviewing some aspects of Native culture. You have considered some cultural aspects that you would like to explore further. Also, you have a book to support you to explore even more concepts.</p> <p><i>(Group counseling) For our next meeting, I will meet with you individually. We will spend some time creating a plan for you to start your cultural learning journey.</i></p> <p>Before you leave today, let’s set up a time to meet to start your plan.”</p> <p>After setting up the appointments, close the session.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is one cultural concept that you are interested in learning about more? |

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| | <p>2. How was Native American culture valued (or emphasized, included) in today's activity?</p> <p>Thank the student(s) for participating today.</p> <p><i>Collect student(s) handouts for next session.</i></p> |
| <p><i>Post Delivery:</i></p> | <p>*Consider having the student(s) write down cultural concepts of discussion on a poster board or white board or the facilitator can do this. Keep a running list of the Native cultural concepts explored in today's session. The list will be used at a later time with the student(s).</p> |

Notes for future delivery or research:

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness: The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts. This includes capacities to recognize one's strengths and limitations with a well-grounded sense of confidence and purpose.

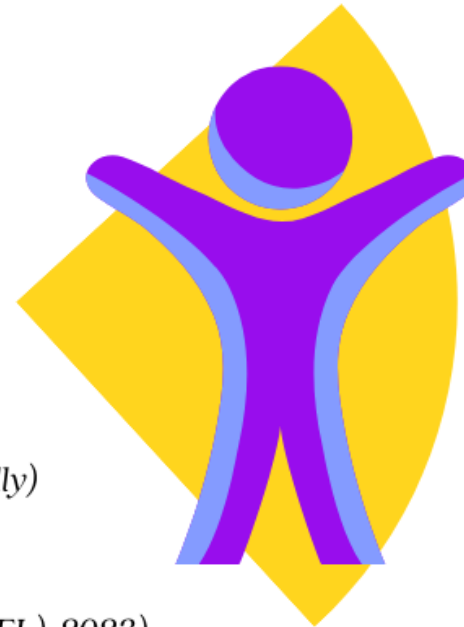
(Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), 2023)



Self-Awareness

Cultural Examples

- *Self Care*
- *Tribal Lineage & Clan Systems*
- *Cultural Affirmations*
- *Recognition of One's Strengths*
- *Life Skills*
- *Career Planning/Purpose Identification*
- *Post-High School Planning*
- *Walking in Balance (Spiritually, Emotionally, Physically, Mentally)*



(Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), 2023)

Art, Literature, & History

Definition of Humanities

humanities, those branches of knowledge that concern themselves with human beings and their culture ... appreciation of human values and of the unique ability of the human spirit to express itself.

Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. (2023)



Art, Literature, & History

Cultural Examples

- *Beading*
- *Painting*
- *Regalia Making*
- *Dancing at Powwows*
- *Reading a Native Authored Book*
- *Learning about Treaty Rights*
- *Visiting Cultural Museums*
- *Visiting Cultural Sites*
- *Learning Traditional Songs & Drum/Rattle*
- *Studying the Dakota War of 1862*



This handout is a companion piece of the Culture as Strength: Integrating Culture within Urban, Native American Student Personal Learning Plans curriculum developed by Kerrie A. Troseth as part of the 2023 Northern Arizona University's Indian Country School Counselors Institute Professional Development Program cohort.

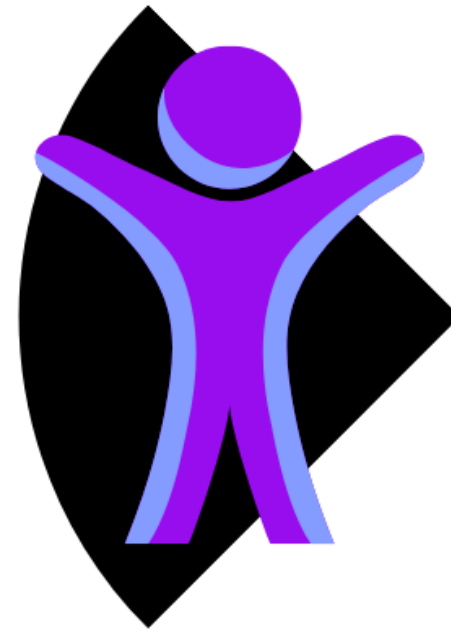
Leadership & Community

Reciprocity

Ojibwe people had a strong belief in the principle of reciprocity that applied to different kinds of beings. When they hunted, fished, or gathered plants, Ojibwe people reciprocated with the natural world by giving something back. For smaller items, people often left a gift of tobacco. In other cases, such as the killing of a bear, they held an elaborate ceremony of thanks and gave presents.

This created a culture of generosity among the Ojibwe. For example, rather than store up food for personal use, Ojibwe families would give it to others. Gift-giving created bonds between families and helped turn strangers or enemies into kin or allies.

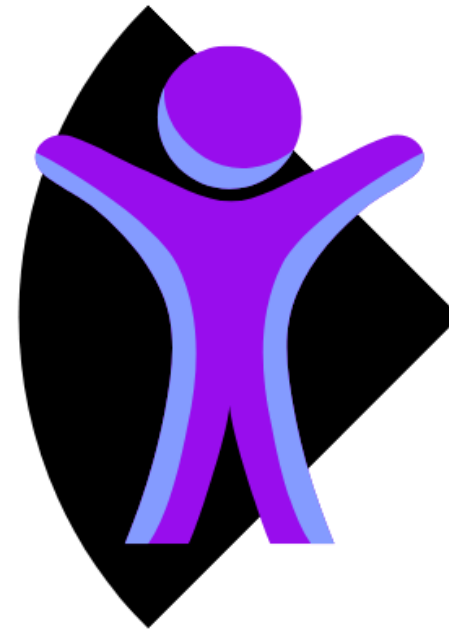
Minnesota Historical Society (2023)



Leadership & Community

Cultural Examples

- *Community Service*
- *Attending a Powwow*
- *Volunteering at a Feast*
- *Sitting at a Drum*
- *Teaching or Tutoring Younger Ones*
- *Attending Native Leadership Groups or Conferences*
- *Starting a Native Group at School*
- *Attending a Native Summer Youth Program or Camp*



Native Ways of Knowing

Indigenous Ways of Knowing

The intent of the phrase "Indigenous Ways of Knowing" is to help educate people about the vast variety of knowledge that exists across diverse Indigenous communities. It also signals that, as Indigenous Peoples, we don't just learn from human interaction and relationships. All elements of creation can teach us, from the plant and animal nations, to the "objects" that many people consider to be inanimate.

Queen's University (2023)



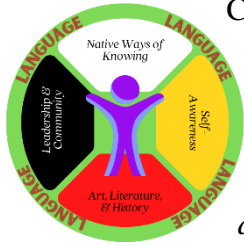
Native Ways of Knowing

Cultural Examples

- *Visiting Elders*
- *Ceremonies*
- *Sugar Bush*
- *Ricing*
- *Traditional Medicines & Uses*
- *Dakota Spirit Walk*
- *Moons & Calendar*
- *Three Sisters Gardening*
- *Storytelling*



This handout is a companion piece of the Culture as Strength: Integrating Culture within Urban, Native American Student Personal Learning Plans curriculum developed by Kerrie A. Troseth as part of the 2023 Northern Arizona University's Indian Country School Counselors Institute Professional Development Program cohort.



Culture as Strength Lesson Plan 4:

Setting a New Goal

This lesson plan is part of the Culture as Strength: Integrating Culture within Urban, Native American Student Personal Learning Plans curriculum developed by Kerrie A. Troseth as part of the 2023 Northern Arizona

University’s Indian Country School Counselors Institute Professional Development Program cohort.

| General Information | |
|---|--|
| Grade Level: | 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th grade |
| Setting: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual Counseling Session <input type="checkbox"/> Group Counseling Session |
| Overview of the lesson: <i>This lesson will guide Native American students to create their first cultural goal utilizing the Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model. Additionally, students will learn through modeling how to identify and gather resources to access cultural knowledge.</i> | |

| Targets & Outcomes |
|---|
| ASCA Student Standards Targeted: |
| Mindsets & Behaviors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>M 2. Sense of acceptance, respect, support and inclusion for self and others in the school environment</i> ● <i>M 3. Positive attitude toward work and learning</i> ● <i>B-LS 2. Creative approach to learning, tasks and problem solving</i> ● <i>B-LS 4. Self-motivation and self- direction for learning</i> ● <i>B-LS 7. Long- and short-term academic, career and social/emotional goals</i> ● <i>B-SMS 1. Responsibility for self and actions</i> ● <i>B-SMS 3. Independent work</i> ● <i>B-SMS 5. Perseverance to achieve long and short-term goals</i> ● <i>B-SS 3. Positive relationships with adults to support success</i> ● <i>B-SS 10. Cultural awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness</i> |

Social and Emotional Learning Competencies Targeted:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Relationship/Awareness
- Relationship Skills/Management
- Responsible Decision-Making

Student Learning Objectives:

Student(s) will:

- Identify at least one cultural aspect of interest to explore further within Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model.
- Create a cultural goal, including steps, resources needed, and timeline based on that aspect of interest.
- Connect to local, cultural resources for personal growth.

Materials:

- *Optional: food or snack*
- *Optional: smudge kit*
- Student folder from last session
- ***Culture as Strength Goal Setting Worksheet***
- ***Culture as Strength Goal Setting Example***
- Writing utensils
- Poster board of cultural concepts from previous sessions

Lesson Delivery:

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>Pre-Delivery Preparation:</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Refer to Appendix A of this guide for examples of cultural concepts and their categorization for students to view. Consider creating one reflective of the Native community in your area. Continue to build and share with students. |
| <i>Introduction:</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Optional: permit student to smudge, if appropriate.</i>● <i>Optional: offer student food or snack.</i>● <i>Welcome student into the space.</i> <p>Read the following to the student(s) or edit as necessary:</p> <p>“Last time we met, we talked about the <i>Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model</i> components and identified some examples of each. Also, you</p> |

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| | <p>were given the book <i>Everything You Wanted to Know About Indians But Were Afraid to Ask</i> (Young Readers Edition) to review.</p> <p>Today, I would like to guide you in creating a plan to reach one, cultural goal of interest. It can be anything that you want to explore further. Together, we will create a path for your unique, learning journey.”</p> |
| <p>Teach Content:</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage the student to share aspects of their handout and/or from the book that piqued their interest. Use clarifying questions to have the student explain the importance of these aspects to them and/or their family/community. 2. Thank the student for sharing these thoughts and insights. 3. Introduce to the student the <i>Culture as Strength Goal Setting Worksheet</i>. Indicate the we will be using this worksheet to process through the cultural aspect that they would like to explore. Ask the student to name one cultural aspect that they would like to explore. 4. Show the student the <i>Culture as Strength Goal Setting Example</i> handout. Remind the student that learning is a continuous process just like the Medicine Wheel teaches us. Walk the student through the example and emphasize that their learning will involve steps. For example, one cannot become fluent in another language instantly. One will need to take smaller steps to get to fluency. Use the handout example to show the student how the goal is broken down into a first step. If appropriate, complete a second step together for this example. 5. Refer back to the <i>Culture as Strength Goal Setting Worksheet</i>. Guide the student to complete the top section of the worksheet. Brainstorm with the student the different steps that may be needed to complete their goal. Continue discussion until the first step is identified. Write the step on the yellow section. Additionally, support the student to brainstorm resources needed and timeline completion. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Note: This step will support the student in creating a plan, which is a useful life skill. The process should be done together to model to the student how to identify obstacles, resources, and processes. Encourage the student to reach for solutions; however, support as needed, especially if the student is unsure of cultural resources available to them.</i> b. Support the student with identifying and connecting to outside of school resources. If needed, access the Indian Education program staff or local Native agencies for more direction or insights. |
| <p>Summarize/ Close:</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask the student to recap their first step. 2. Encourage student to express their thoughts about exploring this goal. |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>3. Set up a time with the student to revisit this step. Assist the student to determine when they would like to revisit their progress.</p> <p>Thank the student(s) for participating today.</p> <p><i>Collect student(s) handouts for next session or offer the handouts to the student to keep. If the latter, be sure to photocopy for file.</i></p> |
| <p><i>Additional Sessions</i></p> | <p>Continue to meet with the student as necessary in order to complete, edit, or change their cultural learning goal(s). <u>Support the student in documenting their journey of cultural learning within the specific PLP platform for your school.</u> For example, the student can create a short video clip of themselves reciting the Dakota alphabet, provide pictures of a beading project, link to a podcast that they created with an Elder, etc.</p> <p>When the student is ready, support them to complete a goal for each of the other three components/directions. Repeat steps 1-5. Continue to support the student(s) to create, revise, and update goals as needed. Be sure to check in periodically with the student(s) to solidify relationship of support.</p> |

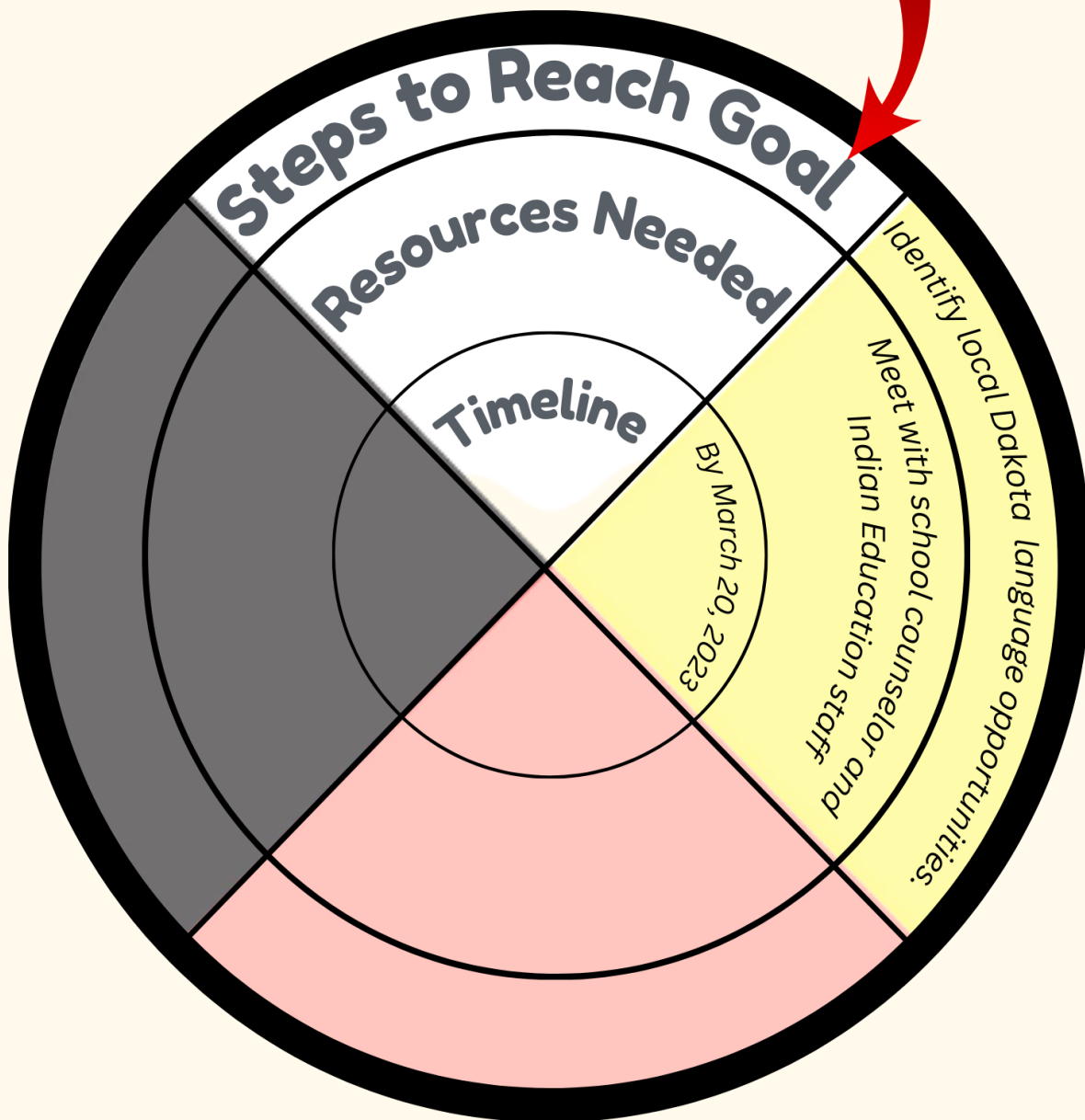
Notes for future delivery or research

Culture as Strength Goal Setting Example

Name: Susie Grant

Direction: Self-Awareness

Goal: I want to learn to introduce myself in Dakota.



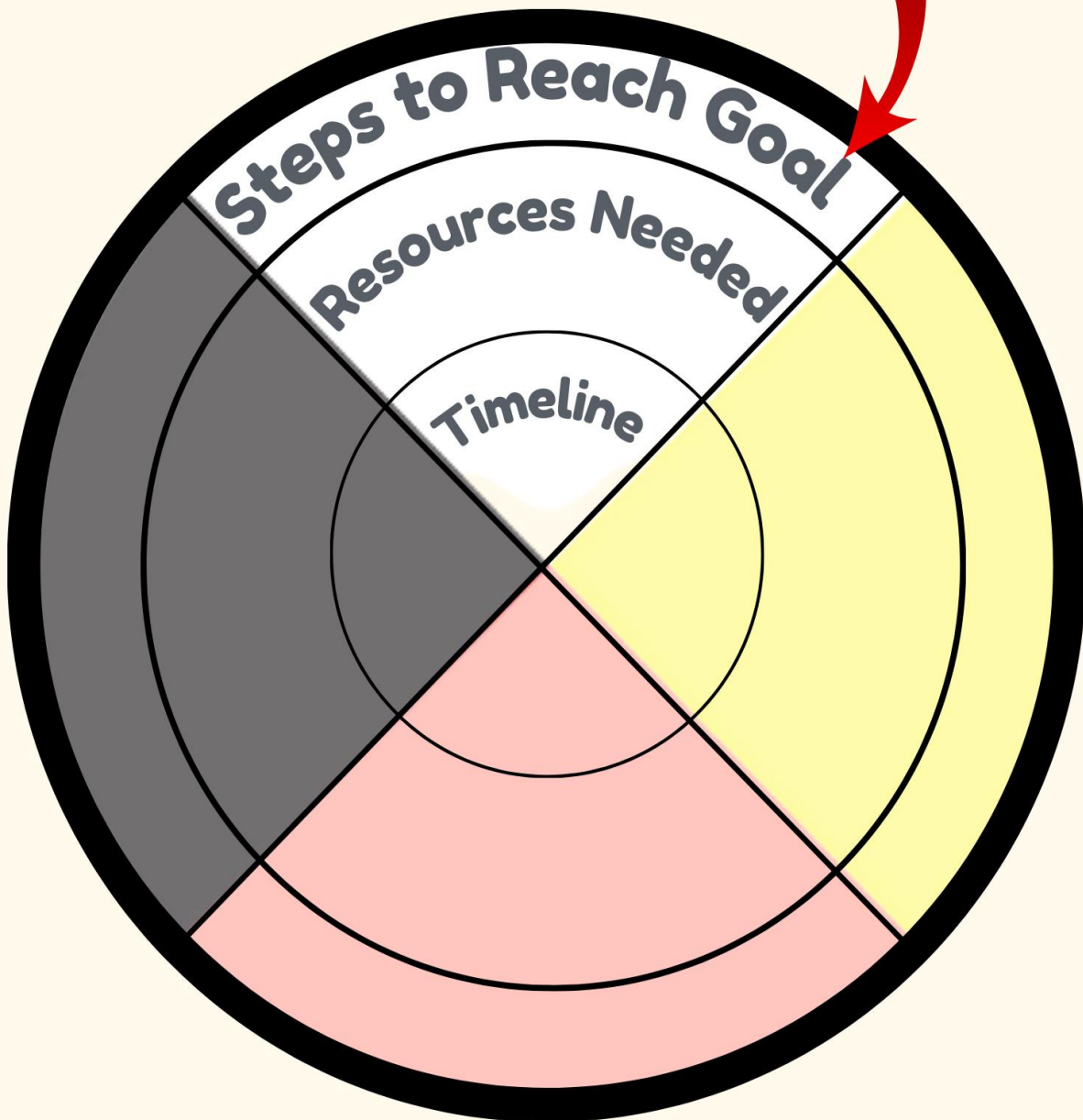
This worksheet is a companion piece of the Culture as Strength: Integrating Culture within Urban, Native American Student Personal Learning Plans curriculum developed by Kerrie A. Troseth as part of the 2023 Northern Arizona University's Indian Country School Counselors Institute Professional Development Program cohort.

Culture as Strength Goal Setting Worksheet

Name: _____

Direction: _____

Goal: _____



This worksheet is a companion piece of the Culture as Strength: Integrating Culture within Urban, Native American Student Personal Learning Plans curriculum developed by Kerrie A. Troseth as part of the 2023 Northern Arizona University's Indian Country School Counselors Institute Professional Development Program cohort.

Student Assessment

The assessment model for this guide was based upon the research and recommendations found within the journal article, *Analyzing Assessment Practices for Indigenous Students* (Preston & Claypool, 2021). The Culture as Strength assessment honors the Indigenous worldview, as described in Table 2, and minimizes the Westernized worldview.

Table 2

Comparison of Westernized and Indigenous Worldview on Educational Assessment

| Westernized Worldview of Educational Assessment | Indigenous Worldview of Educational Assessment |
|---|---|
| Popular types of Westernized assessment include written quizzes, tests, and exams, which primarily promote academic development via rational, linear, and accountable activities. | Education is about gaining life skills; it is about communicative interactions, social relationships, self-discovery, and self-growth. |
| Emphasize Westernize intellectual knowledge: for example, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blanks, written short answer, written long answer, PowerPoint presentations, essays, group work, demonstrations, and oral presentations. | Equally emphasize on physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual growth and development. |
| Instructors assess set curriculum to age-appropriate student groupings at set times of the day and grade at set points of the year. | Assessment for Indigenous students is predominantly an intellectual, quantitative, process-oriented, teacher- and state-dominated powered system. |
| Spirituality cannot be proven. | Spiritual valued and spiritual assessment is required. |
| Assessment is objective; in contrast, all assessment is value-laden, culturally contrived, and biased. | Indigenous students need to be taught and encouraged to use and rely on messages emanating from body, heart, and soul. |

Note: Adapted from “Analyzing Assessment Practices for Indigenous Students” J.P. Preston and T.R. Claypool, 2021, *Secondary Assessment, Testing and Applied Measurement*, 6. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2021.67997>. © 2021, Preston and Claypool. CC BY 4.0.

Best assessment practices for Indigenous populations, according to Preston & Claypool, were summarized:

Riley and Johansen (2019) noted effective assessment practices for Indigenous students are group-oriented and simulate real-life experiences. Such assessment could be a holistic or project-based assignment, as experienced through outdoor education or culture camps (Preston, 2017). Such projects manipulate assessment to be something that is relevant and functional (Johnson, 2013). Also, educators need to incorporate story-focused narratives (Iseke, 2013), personal journals, and portfolios (Kanu, 2007) into their assessment practices (2021, p. 7)

Based on the authors' recommendations, the Culture as Strength assessment tools were constructed. The following elements were considered in the development of the two tools: utilize the Medicine Wheel's teachings of harmony among the spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental directions; honor self-expression; be self-evaluative; and encourage self-motivation and growth.

The first tool to support the assessment of this project is the use of portfolios. SPPS utilizes Xello, a college and career readiness software platform. Xello provides users with a customizable, online portfolio to support students to create individual PLP goals and demonstrate mastery of those goals. Students can upload their Culture as Strength goal worksheets and then provide their selected evidence of growth and learning. Students choose the type of evidence of learning to include in Xello, including but not limited to social media posts, video uploads, audio uploads, pictures, and written expression (poems, papers, notes, compositions, etc.). For example, if a student would like to learn how to culturally introduce themselves in Ojibwe, they can upload a picture of themselves attending a community Ojibwe language table, upload a video of themselves verbally practicing their introduction with an Elder, or provide a writing sample of the introduction. This process encourages the students to take ownership in their learning through self-expressive and to evaluate their personal progress according to their own standards of growth.

The second assessment tool used by this project is a pre/post-assessment. The assessment was carefully crafted to collect the student's perspective of their spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental growth through their selective goal acquisition. This supports the students to be mindful of the importance of balance and harmony. Additionally, the pre/post-assessments permit the students to self-evaluate their progress and adjust their goals, if needed. This practice invites students to be self-directed and encourages a positive learning environment, as opposed to a restrictive and impersonal approach. The Culture as Strength assessments are provided: pre-assessment (Appendix C) and post-assessment (Appendix D).

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Appendix A

Example of Cultural Concepts for Students to Explore

| <i>Cultural Concepts for Students to Explore</i> | <i>Culture as Strength PLP Medicine Wheel Model Directions</i> | | | |
|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | <i>Self- Awareness</i> | <i>Art, Literature, & History</i> | <i>Leadership & Community</i> | <i>Native Ways of Knowing</i> |
| Calendar/Moons: seasons, traditional names, stories associated with calendar. | | | | X |
| Cultural Arts and Crafts: dreamcatchers, beading, painting, sewing, quilting, birch bark basket/weaving. | | X | | X |
| Ceremonies: Naming ceremony, sweat lodge ceremony, full moon ceremony, many others directly linked to Tribal affiliation. | X | | X | X |
| Traditional Medicines: identification of; uses of; traditional names. | | | | X |
| Sugarbush: collecting sap and making maple syrup | | | X | X |
| Storytelling: passing down information, cultural morals, and values through stories; Grandfather Teachings, virtues, customs. | | X | | X |
| Language: alphabet, pronunciation, introductions, language tables, and more | X | X | X | X |
| Food: food sovereignty, reintroducing traditional foods to diet, growing traditional foods, cooking with traditional foods, feasts, Three Sisters gardening. | | | X | X |
| Clan Systems: organizational structure of Tribes or Nations. | X | X | X | X |
| Songs: traditional songs used in ceremonies, events, and gathering. | | X | X | X |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| Games: lacrosse, moccasin game, bowl game, snow snakes. | | X | X | |
| Dance: traditional and contemporary Pow wow dances (Jingle, Fancy, Traditional, Hoop, etc.). | X | X | X | X |
| Ricing: harvesting wild rice from canoe. | | X | X | X |
| Canoe: canoe making, using a canoe, history of/styles. | | X | X | X |
| Creation Story: origins. | | X | | X |
| Minnesota Native History: Dakota War of 1862, Indian Relocation Act, Treaties. museum and cultural center visits, Tribal visit. | | X | | |
| Drum: hand drum, “Big Drum”, making a drum, beats associated with traditional songs, teaching of, caring for. | | X | X | X |
| Clothing Types and Making: moccasins, regalia, ribbon skirts/shirts. | | X | X | X |
| Media: Native authored non-fiction, Native authored fiction, documented Tribal history, Indigenous movies, podcasting, gaming, music artists. | | X | | X |
| Boarding Schools: history of, effects of/historical trauma. | X | X | | |
| Walking in Balance: balancing one’s spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental health, self-care, affirmations, culturally responsive therapy. | X | | | X |
| Tribal Connection: genealogy, lineage, enrollment requirements, Tribal benefits. | X | | X | |
| Reciprocity: giving back to the land or community; volunteering, mentoring, Elder visits, Native student group participation, leadership opportunities, Native summer camps or programs. | X | | X | |
| Life Purpose: career planning, post-high school planning, financial aid/scholarship, life skills development, college visits to school that support Native students. | X | | | |
| Sacred Places: visits to local, cultural sites: Bdote, Dakota Spirit Walk, Dakota Sacred Hoop Walk. | | X | | X |
| Hunting & Gathering: foraging, ice fishing, archery, atlatl, tanning. | | X | X | X |

Appendix B

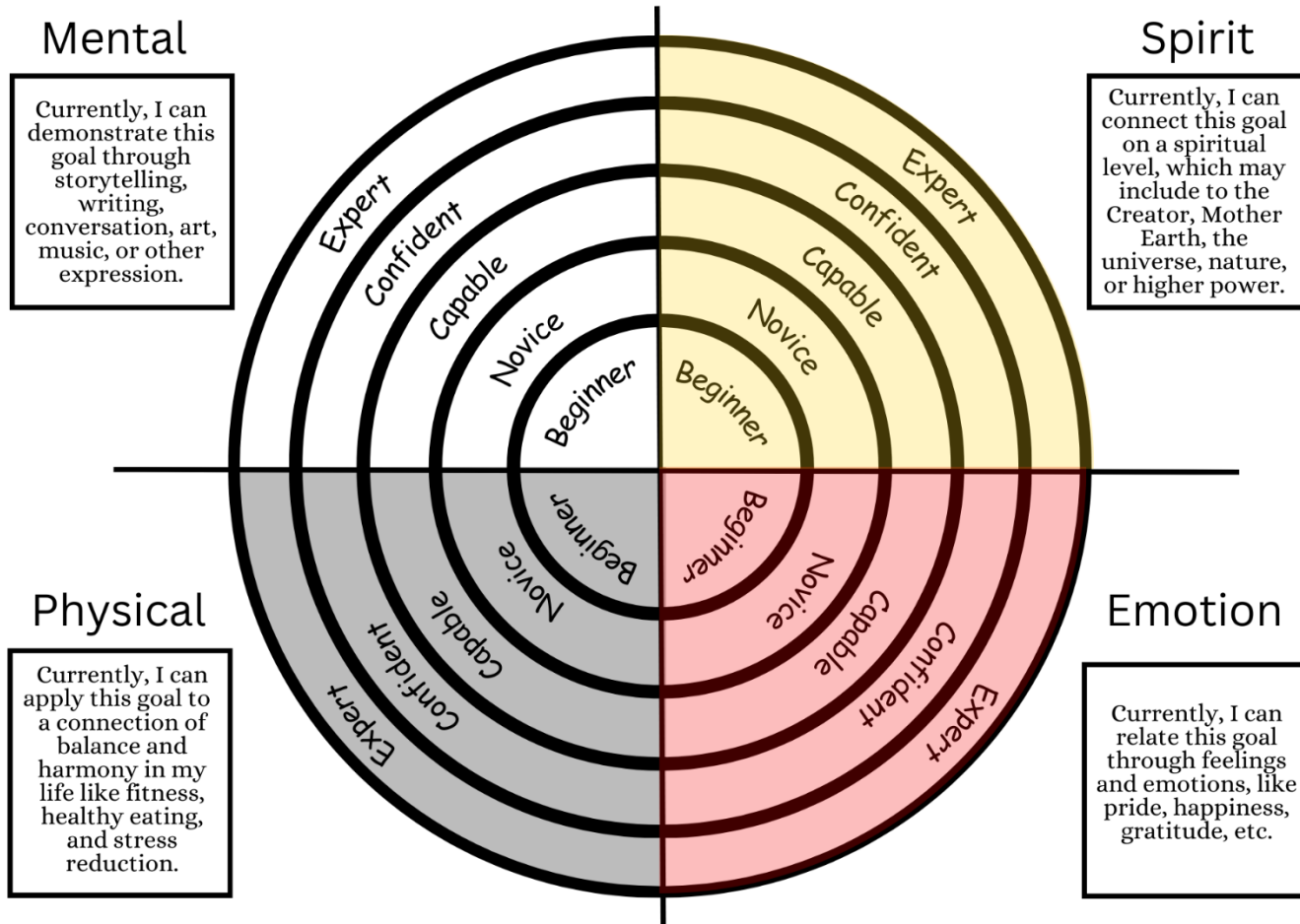
National Native American Organizations and Resources Examples

- [American Indian College Fund \(AICF\)](#) invests in Native students and Tribal college education to transform lives and communities.
- [American Indian Science and Engineering Society \(AISES\)](#) is a national nonprofit organization focused on substantially increasing the representation of Indigenous peoples of North America and the Pacific Islands in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) studies and careers.
- The [Center for Native American Youth](#), as an education and advocacy organization, is to improve the health, safety, and overall well-being of Native American Youth.
- College Board's [Native American Student Advocacy Institute \(NASAI\)](#) conference has assembled a dedicated community of educators and Tribal education leaders to address the educational challenges facing Native students. NASAI seeks to galvanize and build national networks to enhance the academic performance of Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander students and to close the educational opportunity gap.
- [National Indian Education Association \(NIEA\)](#) advances comprehensive, culture-based educational opportunities for American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians.
- [Running Strong](#) is building up the next generation of Native American leaders and strengthening Native communities in a holistic way – meeting critical needs, preserving culture, and supporting dreams.
- [United National Indian Tribal Youth's \(UNITY\)](#) mission is to foster the spiritual, mental, physical, and social development of American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native youth, and to help build a strong, unified, and self-reliant Native America through greater youth involvement.
- [WeRNative](#) is a comprehensive health resource for Native youth, by Native youth, providing content and stories about the topics that matter most to them. We strive to promote holistic health and positive growth in our local communities and nation at large.

Appendix C

Culture as Strength Pre-Assessment

Culture as Strength Pre-Assessment

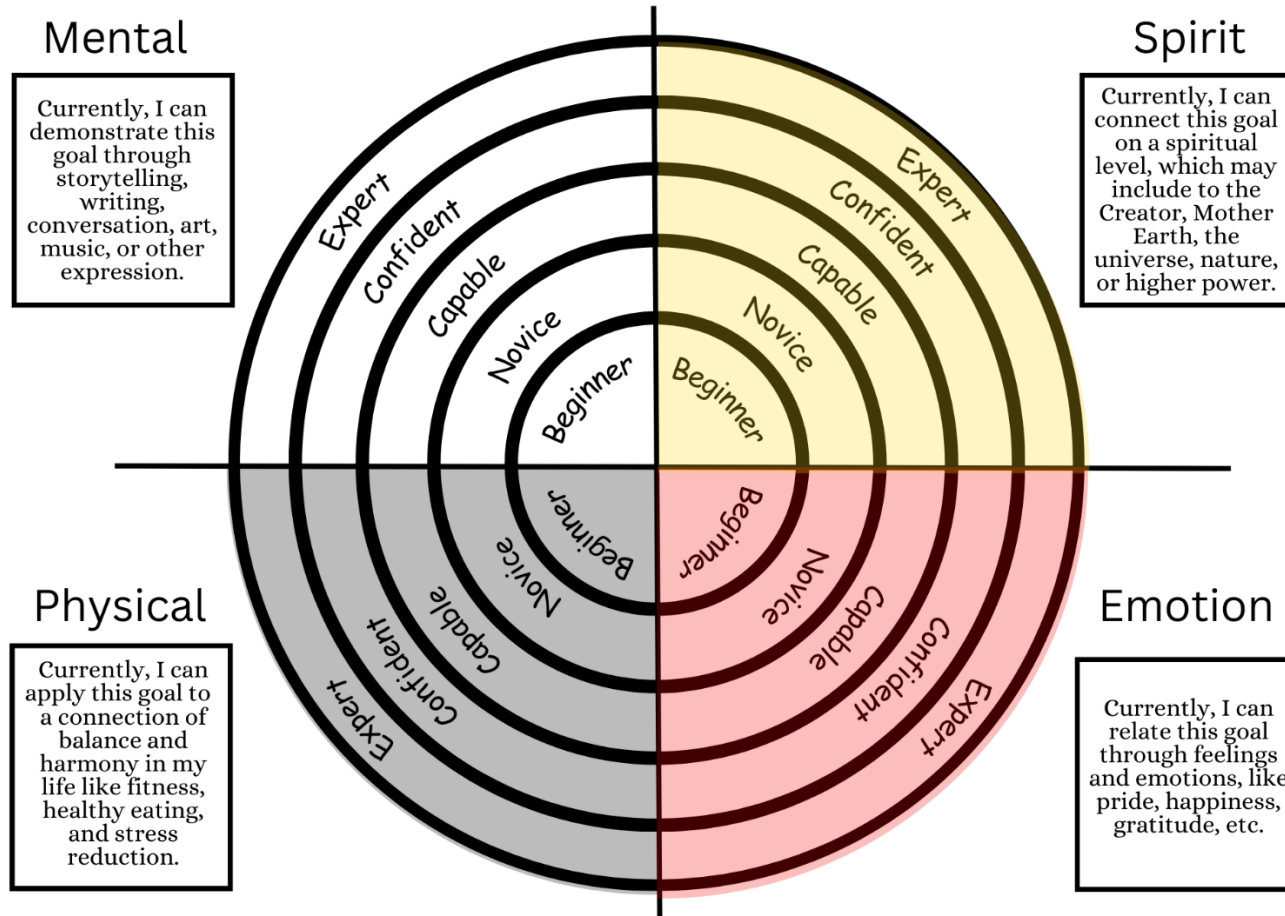


This assessment is a companion piece of the Culture as Strength: Integrating Culture within Urban, Native American Student Personal Learning Plans curriculum developed by Kerrie A. Troseth as part of the 2023 Northern Arizona University's Indian Country School Counselors Institute Professional Development Program cohort.

Appendix D

Culture as Strength Post-Assessment

Culture as Strength Post-Assessment



This assessment is a companion piece of the Culture as Strength: Integrating Culture within Urban, Native American Student Personal Learning Plans curriculum developed by Kerrie A. Troseth as part of the 2023 Northern Arizona University's Indian Country School Counselors Institute Professional Development Program cohort.