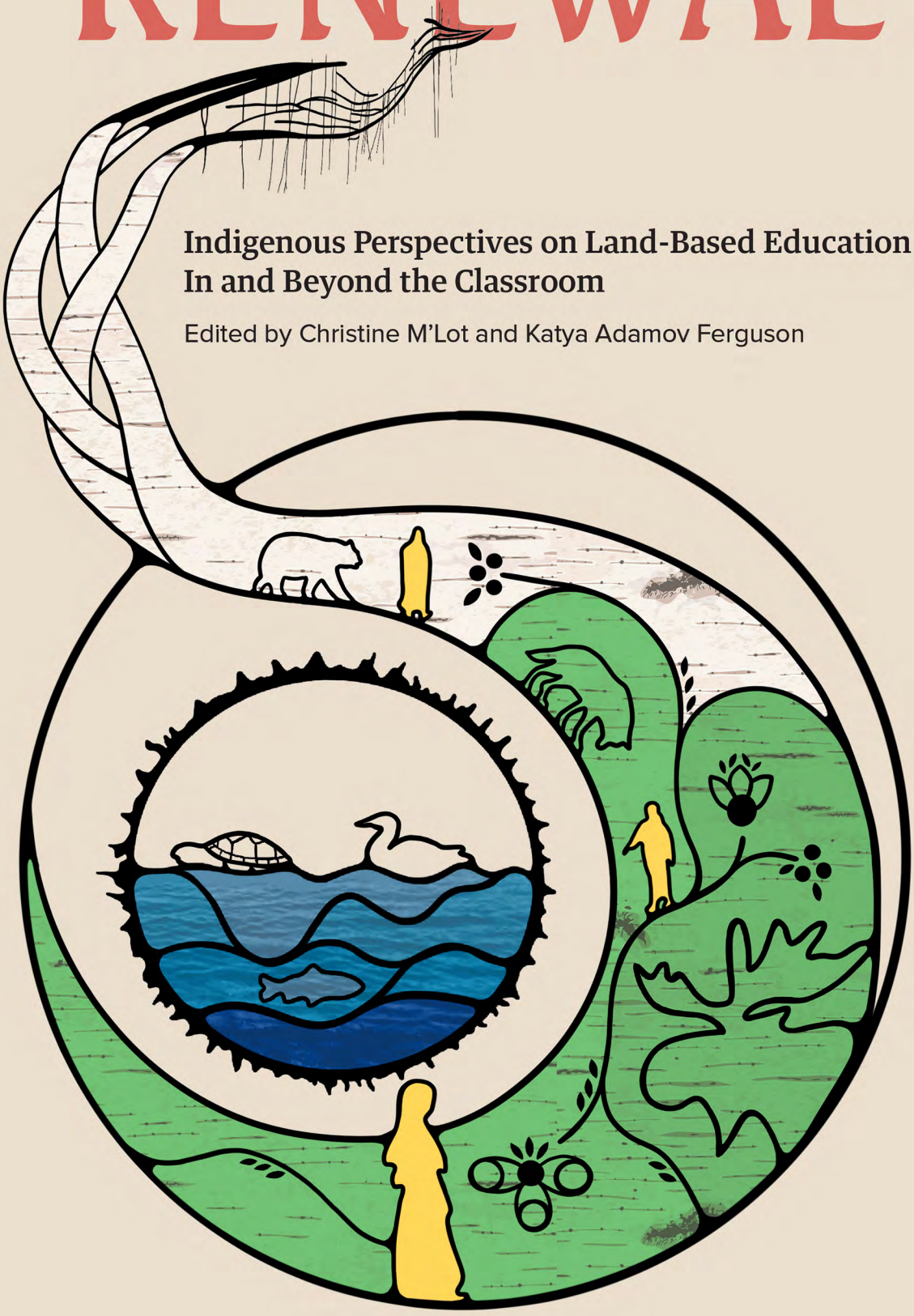
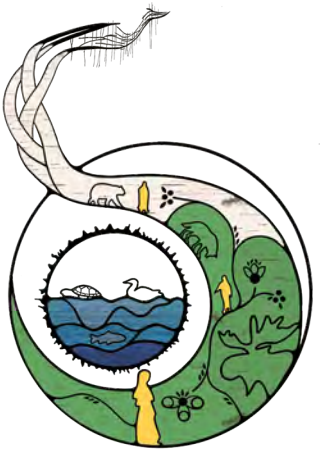
RENEWAL

Indigenous Perspectives on Land-Based Education In and Beyond the Classroom

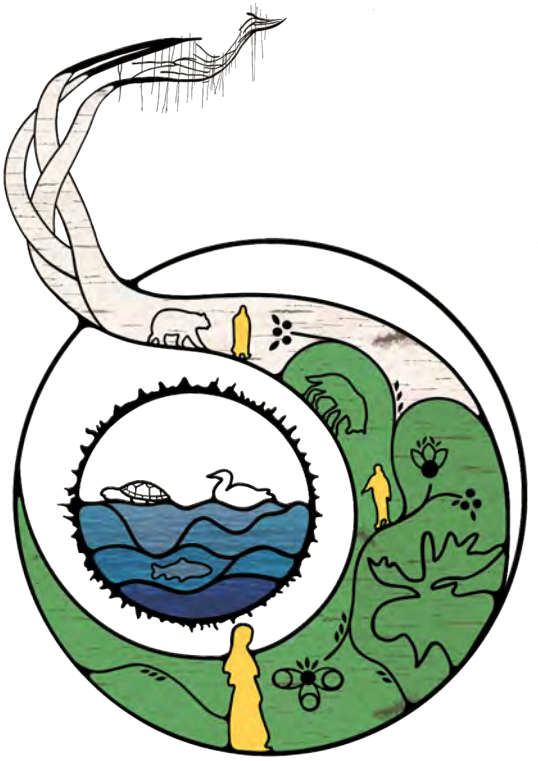
Edited by Christine M'Lot and Katya Adamov Ferguson





RENEWAL

Indigenous Perspectives on Land-Based Education
In and Beyond the Classroom



Edited by Christine M'Lot and Katya Adamov Ferguson

Portage & Main Press

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I would like to dedicate this volume to
those who've generously shared their wisdom, knowledge,
and experiences, and whose words fill these pages.
—CM

To my dad, who during his time on this Earth
taught me to respect the profound interactions
and relationships between living beings.
—KAF

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Thank you to our editor, Caley Clements. We appreciated your keen eye for detail and your perspective of the bigger picture throughout the process of editing this land-centred collection. Your supportive suggestions have been important underpinnings in the building of this footbridge. We are grateful to Catherine Gerbasi and the amazing team at Portage & Main Press for this learning opportunity and for helping to make so many diverse topics accessible for learners of all ages.

Thanks to David A. Robertson, who, in the early phases of planning this book, suggested that to move forward in the face of the climate crisis, this text needed to focus on building better stewards of land who revere and respect land and water. He reminded us that kids often seem to "get it," but as adults, we need to learn how to "treat the land differently and draw strength from land and water."

Thank you to all the contributors who shared their unique perspectives of education on Indigenous lands. We know your words, images, songs, and poems will help transform practices in schools and far beyond. The opportunity to connect with many of you for conversations about your work and your commitment to education that prioritizes land helped to inform the Educator Connections sections. We are grateful to you for sharing your time, creativity, and wisdom, making this iteration of the Footbridge series possible.

Christine: I'd also like to acknowledge my 100-year-old kookum, Vina Swain, as some of my earliest memories as a child include the taste of the traditional medicines she put under my tongue when I was sick; my mother, Donna M'Lot, who ensured some of my first words were in our traditional language; David and Sherryl Blacksmith, who have welcomed me into ceremony; the late Elder Stella Blackbird, who shared teachings and wisdom at Medicine Eagle Camp; and Shirli Ewanchuk, who has invited me into her home for ceremony. Miigwetch for being generous with your teachings.

Katya: I am grateful to continue to learn from Indigenous leaders who have expertise and profound knowledge in this area. I want to acknowledge that the land-based work of Indigenous communities has never stopped. So much work has been done to preserve the land and this knowledge, and visionary educational teams are actively undertaking renewal efforts here in Winnipeg. I hope this important sustainability work continues to receive the substantial funding and prioritization it deserves.

Introduction

CHRISTINE M'LOT (she/her/hers) is an Anishinaabe educator and curriculum developer from Winnipeg, Manitoba. She currently teaches high school at the University of Winnipeg Collegiate and is the associate publisher at Portage & Main Press. To learn more about her past and current education projects, visit www.christinemlot.com.

KATYA ADAMOV FERGUSON (she/her/hers) is a settler educator and artist of Ukrainian and Russian ancestry from Winnipeg, Manitoba. Katya is also an arts-based researcher engaging with creative and critical methods to support place-based inquiries and deeper understandings of land-based issues. She is committed to creating partnerships and supporting Indigenous resurgence.

Land-based education is education *on* the land, *about* the land, and *from* the land. It is not simply "taking the classroom outside," although that may be one aspect of it. Land-based education relies on the *land as the teacher* and encompasses education pertaining to the sky, waters, land, and all of Earth's inhabitants. Land-based education reflects Indigenous philosophies and methods of education that are connected to specific places and rooted in history, language, and culture, as Indigenous nations have lived on the land, learned from the land, changed the land, adapted to the land, and acted as stewards of the land since time immemorial. Land-based education is interdisciplinary, fusing the sciences, social studies, mathematics, physical and health education, geography, global issues, and more. It is experiential and inclusive of all learners.

There are many reasons why you may have decided to learn more about land-based education. Perhaps your current teaching context feels hollow, as though it is more about school and schooling than life and living. Maybe you have seen how a hidden curriculum leaves students with a limited perspective of the history of the land where they live or positions land only as a resource to be extracted. Perhaps your most memorable and authentic learning experiences were on land and water, amongst animals and the natural world, and you want to share this with students. You may have seen first-hand how learning *on*, *about*, and *from* the land supports healing and well-being. Perhaps you are awakening to the fact that embracing Indigenous knowledge is essential to combatting the climate crisis and moving toward a more sustainable way of living. Or maybe you are here because the education department in your region has added Indigenous knowledges to the curriculum and you want to learn to integrate this into your teaching in a good way. Regardless of the reason you've chosen this book, *Renewal* will give you plenty to think about and offer concrete ways to bring this knowledge into your learning space.

The term *renewal* can be defined as the process of re-establishing or replenishing relationships, which may include connections between humans and non-human or more-than-human elements.[1] It acknowledges a response to the interruption of colonial schooling that aimed to distance peoples from land and from teachings and languages connected to land and community. To us, renewal is also about renewing our practices and priorities in relation to land-based education, while acknowledging that the field of land education is not new. The word *renewal* acknowledges the strengths of the past while expressing great hope for the future; both perspectives are needed to achieve a wholistic balance within and beyond the classroom.[2] We hope that reading these pages will help you establish, re-establish, or replenish your connection to land-based education.

---

1 Various terms are used to describe natural elements that are not human, including non-human, more than human, and beyond human. They remind us that humans are not the most important living entities on Earth and reveal interspecies connections among those dwelling on this planet. They can also remind us of spiritual aspects of the natural world.

2 We prefer *wholistic* to *holistic*, which indicates "'whole' as in…complete, balanced, and circular," as described in Kathy Absolon, "Indigenous Wholistic Theory: A Knowledge Set for Practice," *First Peoples Child & Family Review* 5, no. 2 (2010): 75.

The overarching goal of *Renewal* is to support educators in integrating Indigenous land-based pedagogies in both the classroom and outdoor settings. As we, an experienced Indigenous educator and non-Indigenous educator, are not experts in land-based education, we walk alongside you in this learning. The contributors whose works are featured in this book are Indigenous leaders—thinkers, artists, creatives, and activists—who guide us through many ways of knowing, being, and doing in relation to the land. They model how to live as relatives to the land, through a variety of actions: walking, painting, singing, researching, photographing, travelling, writing, performing, protesting, planning, healing, listening, reimagining. They invite us to ask what this can mean for us in the places where we live and learn. Though their work is grounded in the present, it acts as a bridge to many past generations who remained connected to the land, resisting the destructive colonial practices that actively sought to destroy these connections. In this collaborative project, we treat each piece as a "living text" that acts as a springboard for engaging with Indigenous voices and pedagogies. At the core of this text, we seek to foster a profound awareness and appreciation of our intrinsic connection to the land, emphasizing its vital role in shaping culture, identity, and well-being.

What Is Indigenous Education? What Is Land-Based Education?

Land-based education is a fundamental aspect of Indigenous education. Indigenous education is a multifaceted concept rooted in the rich histories, teachings, and traditions of Indigenous nations. The term *Indigenous* refers to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities and peoples in Canada collectively. It is important to recognize that there are similarities and differences among and between Indigenous groups. At its core, Indigenous education acknowledges the unique stories and deep wisdom possessed by every Indigenous nation, recognizing that each has its own sacred teachings passed down through generations. The contributors to *Renewal* reflect a variety of Indigenous nations, teachings, and perspectives, grounding the text in specific communities and lands.

For non-Indigenous educators, engaging with Indigenous education may bring up feelings of discomfort or anxiety about "getting it wrong." But by working patiently and with a good heart, you can learn alongside your students, acting as a facilitator of knowledge rather than an expert. As you engage with the texts and classroom materials in *Renewal*, be mindful to avoid mimicking Indigenous cultural practices, ceremonies, and artwork. If you are wondering about the appropriateness of any activity, we encourage you to consult Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and members of local Indigenous communities whenever possible. We have tried to provide helpful learning extensions but acknowledge that opinions on what may or may not be suitable in certain settings differ. Asking questions is part of the learning, and we hope you will seek out and continue learning from Indigenous leaders in land-based practices.

Indigenous educational approaches are wholistic and inclusive, welcoming all individuals and making space for them. Indigenous intelligences encompass a wide range of abilities, including the capacity to learn from observations, absorb teachings and oral history through storytelling, express oneself orally, and have intuitive insights.[3] Additionally, Indigenous education emphasizes getting involved in one's community. Many of the supporting materials in the Classroom Connections sections throughout *Renewal* are centred on these principles, encouraging readers to learn through observation, listening, and discussion and to take action in response.

A fundamental aspect of Indigenous education is its deep connections to the land. It encompasses content and processes that are land-based, emphasizing an intimate relationship with the land—being of the land, being on the land, and understanding the land. Traditionally, living harmoniously with the land required cross-disciplinary expertise in geology, geography, biology, physics, mathematics, and engineering, and this still rings true today. The contributors to this book have a wide range of experience and use different modes of expression to share their understandings, demonstrating how land-based learning takes many forms.

---

3 Red Rising, "Red Rising Education Resource Video," YouTube, 13:34, www.youtube.com/watch?v=G4bcSaumWfo&t=198s, at 40 seconds.

Indigenous ways of knowing, being, doing, and becoming are the pillars of land-based education, emphasizing a symbiotic relationship with the environment. Central to this is the understanding that land is not merely a physical locale or property to acquire, but a living entity woven into the foundation of Indigenous worldviews encompassing the land, water, sky, and animals. Throughout this book, we use the term *land* broadly, and with utmost respect for its complex meanings. When we talk about land, we mean land and water. Human beings are and always will be connected in our physical form to both. In his essay on page 194, Nehinuw scholar Réal Carrière helps us think about the meaning of *land*: "The 'land' of 'land-based' is more than a place. The land is spiritual. The land is physical."

By reframing land-based education in this way, educators can tap into a wide breadth of knowledge and wisdom beyond the four walls of the school. The land is a dynamic classroom where lessons can unfold organically through observation, reflection, conversation, and participation. By centring Indigenous perspectives, educators can create inclusive learning environments that honour diverse ways of knowing and being, fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment among students. Through this reframing, educational opportunities expand to encompass not only academic growth but also personal and cultural enrichment, nurturing students' wholistic development and fostering a deeper understanding of their place within the broader web of existence. The contributors featured in *Renewal* help us think about what land-based education was, what it is for now, and how it may continue to change in the future.[4]

4 We acknowledge that discourses around land-based education are changing and shifting, and we have noticed that at times it is being referred to as *land education*. Reverence and respect for the land can also be emphasized by capitalizing this term (i.e., Land).

Why Is Land-Based Education Important for All Learners?

There is no substitute for the profound experience of learning and being on the land. Directly engaging students with the land and her stories and lessons has a transformative effect that transcends conventional classroom education. Schools today are integrating land-based pedagogies in various ways, from outdoor education initiatives to place-based inquiries, to Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge, to designing their own relevant local curricula. Each method carries its own distinct worldview and objectives, shaped by cultural, regional, and community-specific needs and nuances. *Renewal* encourages educators not to be constrained or limited by their location, as land-based learning can take place anywhere, including in urban areas.

Renowned Métis visual artist Christi Belcourt powerfully states that

> the only education that our children need is from the land. Educators and academics, you can do more than you realize. You must have the courage to disrupt the system for the sake of our children and our grandchildren. You must have the courage to join with each other to turn the system on its head. You must rebuild so schools cease being institutions, and return to their natural state of bringing children to the land.[5]

We believe Belcourt's assertions can apply to all students. While connecting to land and water is natural, land-based education can be seen as revolutionary in that it goes against current norms. Connecting to land and water will prompt educators to reflect on new learning priorities alongside the consequences of the colonial past and present. Embedding Indigenous land-based knowledge within current education systems is an important step toward reconciliation.

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5 Christi Belcourt, "Chapter 7: The Revolution Has Begun," in *Toward What Justice? Describing Diverse Dreams of Justice in Education*, ed. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang (Taylor & Francis, 2018), 120.

Land-based education focuses energy on seeing the places where we live through a new lens and developing renewed relationships with land that demonstrate a commitment to action. Throughout *Renewal*, you will notice the contributors' physical, emotional, and spiritual connections to land, water, animals, and air. They nudge us to become aware of and unlearn the anthropocentric notion that humans are more important than other animals and living things.

In addition, because land-based learning is wholistic and engages multiple aspects of ourselves, it can support student and educator well-being. An emerging consideration is the intersection of land-based education and provisions for neurodiversity and various learning needs among students, highlighting the inclusivity and adaptability of these Indigenous pedagogies. On a practical level, in our own teaching experiences we have witnessed how connecting to the land can support students in ways that a traditional classroom setting cannot. Students who have challenges communicating, regulating, and participating in the regular classroom setting become leaders when learning shifts to an outdoor environment. Connecting to nature in small and intentional ways may shift perspectives about how children learn and who is able to achieve success. Reconnecting to land and water can help us all relate and regulate.

Why *Renewal*?

Land-based education is a way of learning and taking action that can advance truth and reconciliation. It does so by grounding learning in relation to historic removals from land and relationships between land and language. It is important for educators to address historic injustices and build meaningful connections to specific nations and territories that are centred around understanding and respect. In his essay on page 184, Kanien'kehá:ka scholar Dan Henhawk calls for a renewal of attention to Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing; he notes, "It's not that Indigenous knowledges are lost, but rather that human beings have stopped listening."

Renewal's contributors guide us in understanding issues surrounding land, including how land dispossession has been used to control and dishonour Indigenous Peoples. Their reflections expose the consequences of ongoing injustices, environmental racism, and consumerism. As Valérie Courtois (Innu), a leader in Indigenous-led conservation and stewardship, states, "One of the worst impacts of colonialism was to remove Indigenous Peoples from our landscapes—the places where we find our strength, our identity, and our place in this world. Taking us away from our lands—through residential school and other forced removals—has been profoundly traumatic. But the reverse is also true: reconnecting with the land heals us."[6] The contributors balance the difficult historical truths and contemporary challenges with empowering and healing aspects of connection and reconnection to land. Their personal perspectives establish paths forward.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) states: "Reconciliation must support Aboriginal peoples as they heal from the destructive legacies of colonization that have wreaked such havoc in their lives. But it must do even more. Reconciliation must inspire Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples to transform Canadian society so that our children and grandchildren can live together in dignity, peace, and prosperity on these lands we now share."[7]

The TRC emphasized this in Call to Action 45, which addresses land and water rights.[8] In part, it calls upon the government of Canada to:

i. Repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*.

ii. Adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.

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6 Valérie Courtois, "Reconciliation Happens on the Land," Indigenous Leadership Initiative, September 29, 2021, www.ilinationhood.ca/blog/reconciliationontheland.

7 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Canada's Residential Schools: Reconciliation, The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, Volume 6 (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015), 4.

8 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action* (2015), ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf.

This Call to Action underscores the need for a deeper understanding of and respect for Indigenous knowledge and traditions. The concept of *terra nullius* (or nobody's land) incorrectly viewed the land as empty and uninhabited. This led to land grabs that prioritized the settler quest for property over Indigenous ways of knowing and being that were *already here* and were intrinsically connected to the land. By incorporating Indigenous knowledge systems, languages, and traditions into land-based education, educators can empower students to challenge dominant narratives and advocate for Indigenous rights and sovereignty.

The idea of an international standard on Indigenous Peoples' rights grew from several grassroots Indigenous movements in North America, as well as the Civil Rights Movement in the United States.[9] The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007. It outlines the rights of Indigenous Peoples around the world, including those related to cultural preservation, the land, and self-determination.

Today, as we stand on the precipice of a looming climate catastrophe, it is paramount that we fundamentally shift our perspectives and behaviours toward the land, water, and environmental sustainability. This necessitates acknowledging settler colonialism and its pervasive impact. By confronting historical and ongoing injustices, we can work toward a more ecologically conscious future.

The contemporary Land Back movement highlights the urgent need to restore traditional lands and rights to Indigenous communities. This movement emphasizes the fundamental connection between Indigenous Peoples and ancestral territories, advocating for the return of land that has been unjustly taken through colonization, dispossession, and government policies. The Land Back movement in Canada is not attributed to a single individual or group but represents a collective effort by Indigenous Peoples and communities. The idea of Land Back is integral to *Renewal,* providing students and educators with opportunities to think about their understandings

9 Sheryl Lightfoot, "The Road to Reconciliation Starts With the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," The Conversation, September 12, 2019, theconversation.com/the-road-to-reconciliation-starts-with-the-un-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples-122305.

of settler colonialism, and to consider what actions can be taken to support Indigenous sovereignty and stewardship over ancestral lands.[10]

Treaty relationships, which have significant historical and legal importance, play a crucial role in these discussions. Beyond their importance as legal agreements, treaties also embody promises and commitments made between Indigenous nations and colonial authorities. They often include provisions for land rights, resource sharing, and the protection of Indigenous sovereignty. Recognizing and respecting these treaty relationships is an essential step toward achieving reconciliation and justice in the ongoing dialogue about land and water. Throughout *Renewal*, we encourage you to learn more about relationships to land as outlined in treaties and to critically consider the extent to which these documented partnerships and rights have been upheld and honoured.

Land and language are intricately connected and are a steady stream flowing through this book that gives insight into worldviews of Indigenous communities. A crucial element of land-based education is acknowledging Indigenous place names, which offer insights into the historical, cultural, and spiritual significance of a region. New understandings of land and water or other land-based terms can surface through learning Indigenous words.

Land and water also connect to contemporary issues that require urgent attention. Bodies of Indigenous women are buried in landfills. Unmarked graves of Indigenous children are found on the grounds of Indian residential schools and in burial grounds hidden beneath the pavement of our cities. Ongoing and unchecked poisoning of water sources continues on reserves. These haunting connections to the past are surfacing in public discussions with increasing frequency. Understanding these issues and connecting to land are part of acknowledging responsibility and taking important restorative steps as educators.

Sara Florence Davidson (Haida) reminds us that "in the past, the emphasis has been placed upon including Indigenous content (information *about* Indigenous Peoples) without necessarily considering who created the materials, thus the inclusion of Indigenous *content* was prioritized over the

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10 For each text featured in this book, see the Connecting to Land Back section for specific links to the Land Back movement.

representation of Indigenous *perspectives*" (original emphasis).[11] In *Renewal*, we maintain a commitment to a diverse representation of Indigenous perspectives and a variety of ways of knowing, being, and doing to engage with physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual elements that connect us to land and water. While the editing team represents a collaborative effort between Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers, the contributions themselves are representative of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives.

The contributors prompt us to think about land, exploring topics such as ancestral homelands and waterways, stolen lands and the long-lasting damage of colonialism, and ways of acting to ensure a healthy planet for future generations. Kanien'kehá:ka scholar Dan Henhawk prompts us to think deeply about how we can renew our relationship with land: "What would happen if we approached the world, and our own activities, with an understanding of our obligations as human beings to live in respectful relations with each other and with all our relations on the land, in the water, and throughout the cosmos?" (page 185).

The variety of nations represented here nudges us beyond our personal orientations and the lands and waters we may know best. The contributors' perspectives and voices encourage readers to think about common ground among diverging viewpoints and experiences. For settler educators, the contributors provide advice for how to become active participants in land-based education and be mindful about appropriation. While our roles and responsibilities may vary and we may take action in different ways and contexts, the voices heard here make us think about how we can look to the land as teacher. In response to the contributors' gifts, we offer practical and concrete ways to facilitate discussions around land-based topics, advice on land-based activities, and suggestions for how students can engage with these topics through inquiry learning. Both the texts and supporting materials provide guidance in renewing our relationships with land and ensuring this is done in a respectful way.

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11 Sara Florence Davidson, "Evaluating Indigenous Education Resources for Classroom Use," *Teacher* [BC Teachers' Federation Magazine] 32, no. 5 (May/June 2020): 22, www.bctf.ca/docs/default-source/publications/publications-teacher-magazine/teacher-may-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=66291b19_0.

we extend readers an invitation to actively engage with *Renewal*'s content. We hope that this book serves as a platform for innovative thinking, and we encourage you to draw inspiration from the diverse texts and prompts to craft lesson plans that resonate with your unique perspective and teaching style. In doing so, you will not only deepen your understanding of Indigenous land-based education, but also cultivate the skills and insights necessary for imparting this knowledge to future generations.

Land-Based Education: How to Begin?

RECOMMENDED APPROACHES

- *Prioritize safety lessons.* Safety lessons should happen before any outdoor activities and as new situations and conditions arise. For example, if students will be going outside in the winter, they should first learn how to stay warm and recognize the signs of hypothermia.

- *Build and maintain Indigenous community partnerships.* This is an essential step in the full experience of land-based education. This may take time and patience; however, remember that this is *part* of the learning, not an obstacle to it. Find ways that you can give back to and support local Indigenous communities.

- *Involve Elders and Knowledge Keepers.* The involvement of Elders and Knowledge Keepers is an essential aspect of land-based education. Elders and Knowledge Keepers hold traditional knowledge and teachings and should be treated with the utmost respect. We encourage you to connect with your school, division, or board's Elder-in-residence, Indigenous Education Lead, or consultant, or to reach out to your local Friendship Centre or other local Indigenous organization to request an introduction to an Elder or Knowledge Keeper.

  It is important to note that some Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers are more comfortable talking about their areas of expertise, rather than adhering to a specific topic and presentation structure. Ensure that Elders and Knowledge Keepers have all the information they

need to make their visit a success; for example, that they know where to go on the day of the visit and where the washroom is located.

Elders and Knowledge Keepers should be generously compensated for their time and, when possible, in keeping with local protocols. It is important to inquire about the appropriate protocols and proper compensation when requesting an Elder's or Knowledge Keeper's services, and to have payment or other forms of compensation ready at the conclusion of their visit.

We encourage educators to stay in touch with their guests. Consider having students write thank-you letters after you have debriefed the visit together. Educators who want to make meaningful connections with Indigenous communities may also consider attending local Indigenous events to demonstrate their support and commitment to lifelong learning.

- *Prioritize Indigenous languages.* We can learn a lot about Indigenous ways of knowing, being, doing, and becoming from the Indigenous words for various natural elements.
- *Honour Indigenous protocols.* For example, Indigenous communities often have specific cultural protocols that are followed when planting, harvesting, hunting, and feasting. If you are doing any of these activities, it is best to ask and follow the lead of Indigenous community partners. This is especially true if you will be engaging in ceremony, which should be conducted only by an Indigenous Elder or Knowledge Keeper. It is important to remember that if a teaching is shared with you, it does not mean you have permission to share it with others.
- *Invite local Indigenous youth to be helpers and participants.* Ensure that you create a safe space for community members and offer various roles so that individuals can contribute meaningfully.

GETTING STARTED CHECKLIST

1. Determine your goals:
   - Why do you want to include land-based education in your curriculum?
   - How might the experience connect with curricular outcomes and understandings?

- Do you want this to be a one-time event or ongoing?
- What do you want students to learn from the experience?
- What skills, knowledge, and experiences are relevant?
- Where will the learning take place? Will it be close to or far from the school?
- When will the learning take place?
- Do your student learning goals align with the proposed time and place? For example, medicine picking with the support of a Knowledge Keeper may only be possible in certain places and at a specific time of year; in this case, the season in which the medicine is available and plentiful enough to be harvested is an important consideration.

2. Determine who will be involved:
   - Which community experts would be valuable co-facilitators? For example, there might be a traditional fisher, hunter, astrologer, hide tanner, language speaker, or other relevant Knowledge Keeper from one of the First Nations in your area who you might want to reach out to.[12]
   - What is the cultural protocol for asking community experts for assistance? If you don't know, it is appropriate to ask the individual or organization which protocols should be followed. For example, for many First Nations and Métis Knowledge Keepers in Manitoba, passing tobacco is an accepted protocol when asking for help, guidance, teachings, or collaboration in addition to monetary compensation for time, travel, and expertise.
   - Are there any students/youth that could act as helpers?
   - Are there any community organizations you can partner with? For example, to connect with a local First Nation, you can call the band office, school, or cultural centre.

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12 See Herman J. Michell, *Land-Based Education: Embracing the Rhythms of the Earth From an Indigenous Perspective* (JCharlton Publishing, 2018), 32–33.

- How can you form reciprocal relationships with the individuals or community partners you've reached out to? For example, in addition to providing an honorarium, you might offer to assist community members with their projects (e.g., working in their garden during harvest time).
- How will you bridge connections with students' families? Think about how parents and guardians could be involved in the learning, provide support from behind the scenes, or actively participate by sharing their knowledge.

3. Determine what the experience will entail:
   - What will students be learning and doing? Consider why this learning is important.
   - How will Indigenous knowledges and worldviews be incorporated throughout?
   - How will Indigenous languages be incorporated throughout?

4. Determine what resources you already have and what you will need:
   - What outdoor learning spaces are available nearby?
   - What resources do you already have access to? (e.g., equipment, supplies, safety items)
   - What items do you need and how will you get them?

5. Determine logistical details:
   - Will you provide the Knowledge Keeper or Elder an honorarium payment utilizing proper protocol prior to the experience, or on the day of?
   - How will your students get to the site?
   - How will your community partners or individuals get to the site?
   - How much time will be spent outdoors?
   - Is there an indoor space nearby?
   - Are there indoor or outdoor washroom facilities available?

- What will you eat?
- How will food be stored safely?
- Are there students with medical concerns? Will they have access to their medication?
- Who can assist you if there is an emergency?
- Will you have to send permission forms home?
- Will you ask for parent/community volunteers?

6. Determine what safety education is needed:[13]
   - What are the safety concerns associated with the experience? What precautions do students need to learn about before engaging in the experience?
   - Who will teach the safety lessons? Consider discussing some specific scenarios in advance.
   - How will you know students are ready for the experience?

7. Determine how students will document their experiences and learning:
   - Will students take notes or pictures during the experience?
   - Will students have time to reflect on their experience during the day? After?
   - How can students share or synthesize what they've learned?
   - Will students showcase their learning to the class, school, or larger community?

8. Determine how you will invite reflection on the experience:
   - How will you reflect on how the experience went?
   - How will the community partners, members, and volunteers' reflections on the day be listened to?

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13 See Michell, *Land-Based Education*, 32–33.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Bell, Nicole, Kim Wheatley, and Bob Johnson. *The Ways of Knowing Guide: Earth's Teachings*. Toronto Zoo, 2012. www.torontozoo.com/pdfs/tic/ways-of-knowing.pdf.

Canadian Commission for UNESCO. "Land as Teacher: Understanding Indigenous Land-Based Education." June 21, 2021. en.ccunesco.ca/idealab/indigenous-land-based-education.

Cherpako, Danielle R. *Indigenous-Led, Land-Based Programming: Facilitating Connection to the Land and Within the Community*. Social Connectedness Fellowship Program, Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness, 2019. www.socialconnectedness.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Indigenous-Led-Land-Based-Programming.pdf.

Indigenous Education: The National Centre for Collaboration. "Stories—Land-Based Learning." Accessed August 26, 2024. www.nccie.ca/nccie-stories/stories-land-based-learning/.

Learning the Land. "Welcome to Learning the Land." Accessed August 26, 2024. learningtheland.ca.

Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre. *Land-Based Education Support Document for Educators*. Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre, 2023. mfnerc.org/product/land-based-education-support-document-for-educators/.

Michell, Herman J. *Land-Based Education: Embracing the Rhythms of the Earth From an Indigenous Perspective*. JCharlton Publishing, 2018.

Tkaronto CIRCLE Lab. Land Education Dreambook. Accessed May 21, 2025. landeducationdreambook.com.

Personal Connections

Christine: I recently decided to apply for (and successfully obtained) my treaty status. Given recent events where people have falsely claimed to be Indigenous, I thought it was important to have proof of my identity. Previously, I never cared if the government recognized me as an "Indian," as I felt confident in my identity as an Indigenous person. Even though I was born and raised in the city, some of my earliest memories include going to the annual Swan Lake powwow and visiting my kookum, Vina Swain, who lived in the town of Swan Lake. I had the privilege of hearing our traditional language, Anishinaabemowin, spoken in familial settings and attending ceremony to receive my spirit name as a teenager. When the idea of a land and water textbook came up, I was excited and somewhat nervous because it prompted me to think about my own connection to, and even disconnection from, land and water. I thought being raised in an urban centre had stifled my connection, but through Dr. Tasha Beeds's contribution (page 100), I came to realize that "it doesn't matter where you are…every time you pray, you activate; every time you sing, you activate; every time you give offerings or tobacco, you activate; every time you lift Pipes and Water, lift pen to write and fingers to type, sweat and fast, or dance, you activate." This revelation that connection to land and water can happen even in the concrete jungle of the city is just one way that my thoughts about my own connection to land and water have evolved throughout the journey of editing this book. I'm excited for you to read the contributions and reflect on your own connection to land and water.

Katya: When I think about my connections to land and water, I think about past, present, and future all at once. When I think about land, I think of foraging for mushrooms and blueberries in Manitoba and around the lakes in Ontario with my beloved grandparents. When I think about water, I am reminded of my dad and his knowledge of fish and the boreal forest. I wish I could discuss this book project with him, as he would undoubtedly have had connections and insights to share. In a way, discussions of land and water help me sustain this spiritual relationship with

my dad, who is no longer on this Earth. I am connected to places where my grandparents are from: villages near Chernivtsi, Berdyansk, Kharkiv, and other places in Ukraine, Russia, and Eastern Europe. I maintain connections to these places through dancing, singing, sacred arts practices, and spiritual traditions, and through sharing these and working to preserve them for my family. Then I'm reminded of how land is the source of ongoing violence in my own ancestral homelands. These perspectives of land continue to shift. Anti-racist settler scholar Sheelah McLean reminds me to stay grounded in the reality that my own family are uninvited guests, colonizers, settlers who benefitted from the systems designed to oppress Indigenous Peoples.[14] We craved ownership of land and were unaware of the impacts of our arrival. Now I try to undo and unlearn "myths of meritocracy" in my work as a teacher.[15]

Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing have fundamentally changed my paths as a mother and teacher. I value my time learning within schools such as Niji Mahkwa School, which prioritizes Indigenous cultural practices and ceremony. In my artistic practice, I have drawn upon Earth-based art to help me speak from the heart as a way of communicating tensions between Indigenous and settler perspectives, and actively bringing attention to issues that are consistently marginalized. There is a Haida teaching, shared by Sandra Styres, that continues to remind me of the importance of land and water, sitting within my being as a mother: "We do not inherit the land from our ancestors—we borrow it from our children."[16]

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14 Sheelah McLean, "'We Built a Life From Nothing': White Settler Colonialism and the Myth of Meritocracy," *Our Schools/Our Selves*, Fall/Winter 2018, policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2017/12/McLean.pdf.

15 McLean, "'We Built a Life From Nothing.'"

16 Sandra Styres, "Literacies of Land: Decolonizing Narratives, Storying & Literature," in *Indigenous and Decolonizing Studies in Education: Mapping the Long View*, ed. Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Eve Tuck, and K. Wayne Yang (Routledge, 2019), 24–37.

How This Book Is Organized

THIS BOOK is organized into four parts: Knowing, Being, Doing, and Becoming. These part titles are drawn from an approach to learning that is common among many Indigenous Peoples. The four interconnected aspects overlap throughout the book, but are most strongly represented in each respective part.

Part One: Knowing highlights Indigenous ways of knowing, which encompass the diverse epistemologies or knowledge systems developed by Indigenous Peoples over millennia. This knowledge is rooted in extensive observations and experiences, and is recorded in oral traditions such as stories, songs, and place names. It is intergenerational, passed down from Elders to youth, and is deeply tied to the land, culture, and spiritual practices.

Part Two: Being focuses on Indigenous ways of being, which refer to the ontological or philosophical perspectives that guide how Indigenous Peoples understand and interact with the world and view their place in it. This includes understandings of nature, human existence, kinship, and sustainability.

Part Three: Doing connects to Indigenous ways of doing, which involve the practical application of Indigenous knowledge in daily life and cultural practices. This includes life-sustaining activities such as hunting, fishing, and harvesting. Indigenous ways of doing also include spiritual and cultural practices such as ceremonies, storytelling, and artistic expressions.

Part Four: Becoming explores Indigenous ways of becoming, which focus on the process of growth and lifelong personal and communal development. This process highlights the importance of lifelong learning, adaptation, and the transmission of knowledge through generations. It involves cultivating a sense of identity and highlights the importance of individual and community well-being.

The Footbridge Framework

The Footbridge Framework first introduced in *Resurgence* serves as a guide for both educators and students, facilitating a meaningful connection with Indigenous perspectives and texts. Within this framework, the Educator and Classroom Connections sections that accompany each text offer valuable steps that can be taken to begin to bridge the gap between classrooms and Indigenous worldviews. The Connecting to Land-Based Learning and Connecting to Land Back sections (which are new to *Renewal*) provide ideas that encourage students to actively engage with their natural surroundings and critically reflect on topics related to land removals, colonial land claims, and the restoration of relationships with land.

EDUCATOR CONNECTIONS

1 Preparing to Set Out

- **Part Overviews:** Think about the part's ideas and themes in relation to Indigenous ways of knowing, being, doing, and becoming.
- **Contributor Biographies** and **Contributor Narratives and Expressions:** Focus on the contributor, their relationship to place, and their work.
- **Personal Connections** and **Educator Inquiry and Actions:** Reflect on your personal and professional engagement with Indigenous voices and content.

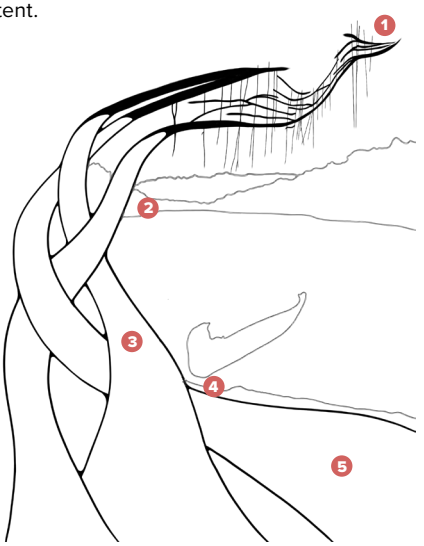
CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

2 Leaving Shore

- **Connected Concepts:** Decide on your learning focus. Share the text and its themes with students.

3 Crossing the Bridge

- **Connecting to Self:** Encourage students to engage in personal reflection.
- **Connecting to Community:** Initiate balanced conversations and deepen understanding through learning circles.
- **Connecting to Land-Based Learning:** Explore activities and experiences that encourage land-based connections.
- **Connecting to Land Back:** Connect contributors' texts to the Land Back movement or reclamation efforts.



4 Reaching the Shore

- **Connections to Other Indigenous Resources:** Suggest resources to prepare, extend, and enhance learning about Connected Concepts for students in any grade.

5 Beginning a New Journey

- Encourage students to read the same text through a new lens or read a different text to initiate another journey.

Part Overviews

Each of the book's four parts opens with an overview that prepares you for the journey across the footbridge that connects Indigenous worldviews and the classroom. We continue to think about the importance of readying ourselves for reading and draw upon Jo-ann Archibald Q'um Q'um Xiiem's (Stó:lo and St'át'imc) idea of preparing one's mind, body, and spirit before diving into each section.[1] The part overviews introduce key topics and provide insights into how the contributors embody Indigenous knowing, being, doing, and becoming. We highlight the key connected ideas that surface across the texts featured in each part, noting how the contributors have learned *on* the land, *about* the land, and *from* the land. We introduce the people from whom you will learn and where they are from. While they may come from different places, have individual viewpoints, and use diverse methods of sharing their knowledge, we note the strong ties that connect their work and common actions they have taken. Here, we begin to show the many forms that land-based learning and practice can take, and explore the emotional and spiritual engagements that might encourage readers to become more connected to land. We offer the overviews as a reminder to listen, read, and view with care, considering how you can become ready to learn on and from the land using the texts that follow.

Contributor Biographies

Each contributor's biography is placed before their text to situate the reader in relationship to them. These help us understand where the contributor is coming from and provide insight into where their connections to land are based. We encourage you to include these biographies when sharing the contributors' texts with your class to emphasize that their work and perspectives are integrally connected to place, local knowledge, personal experiences (such as birth and relocation), and where their ancestors are

1 Jo-ann Archibald Q'um Q'um Xiiem, "On Becoming Story-Ready," Indigenous Storywork, no date, indigenousstorywork.com/1-for-educators/.

from. Indigenous nations are diverse in their history, language, traditions, and customs, and so are the experiences of Indigenous community members. Read each biography with your class and locate the contributor's ancestral place on a map. They are inviting you into their life and story.

Contributor Narratives and Expressions

Renewal includes essays, photographs, poems, and artworks. Each contributor has used the medium of their choice to communicate their knowledges, perspectives, and experiences related to land and water. The many forms of expression used here have the potential to evoke emotions and provoke new possibilities for you to reimagine your professional practices. The table on pages 34–36 lists each contributor, their nation, and their text.

To engage with visual texts with your whole class, we highly encourage you to use a document camera or project them for all to see. Encourage students to record and share their questions as they view these pieces.

Educator Connections

The Educator Connections section presents our thoughts on each text and encourages you to engage in reflection before sharing the text and its topics with your students.[2] As the topics addressed are sometimes challenging, we encourage you to work through this section to ensure you feel comfortable before approaching these topics with students. The inquiry questions provided here can be used for self-reflection or in discussions with your colleagues in a professional learning community.

2 Although we use the terms *educator* and *teacher* here and throughout the book, the Educator Connections section provides opportunities and entry points for any adult learner.

PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

After each text, we explore our own personal connections to it in a conversational narrative that describes how the text relates to our lives, our understandings, and our teaching practice. This is an important first step in learning about Indigenous topics, as it requires us to position ourselves in relation to our learning. We ask ourselves the following big questions: How does this relate to me? Who am I in relation to this topic? We hope our responses serve as examples or starting points, and we encourage you to ask yourself these important questions too. Think of our sharing as the beginning of a conversation. We want to provide our reactions in order to become part of the conversation alongside you. They represent both Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives beside one another, which supports the bridging needed for deeper understanding. Our own reflections are an invitation to you to share a raw response—how do you feel immediately after engaging with the text? Consider sharing your responses with your students or colleagues.

EDUCATOR INQUIRY AND ACTIONS

Here, we invite you to engage with each text on a personal and professional level. The texts included in the book are quite short, but are loaded with meaning that can encourage rich, in-depth conversations. We provide guiding questions for inspiration and make suggestions for collaborative inquiry with colleagues—for example, as an action for a professional learning community.

As Rita Bouvier states, "calling oneself *teacher* assumes a relationship with the learner(s) and thus carries immense responsibility for not only the content or knowledge passed on, but also *in practice*."[3] This section guides you in taking on this responsibility, beginning with reflecting on your own educational experiences and ongoing learning and then encouraging you to think and take action. It encourages you to ask the following questions of yourself: How am I bringing Indigenous perspectives and voices into my curriculum? What learning do I need to do to support my work with

3 Rita Bouvier, "Poetry as a Cultural Expression," in *Resurgence*, ed. Christine M'Lot and Katya Adamov Ferguson (Portage & Main Press, 2022), 44.

students? Your answers to these questions can be used to guide your actions as you introduce Indigenous voices in your classroom. In schools where we have taught, these questions have also been used to guide action plans for professional learning communities.

Classroom Connections

The Classroom Connections section provides guidance on how to bring the texts to life through questions, prompts, experiences, and resource suggestions. This section follows the trajectory of a unit plan, offering support as you encourage your students to move from initially engaging with the text toward a deeper understanding of the topic.

As an educator, you will interpret these texts in unique ways based on who you are, where you come from, what you think and believe, and how you are situated within the power dynamics and problems being exposed. It is important to anticipate that your students will also have diverse reactions to the texts and interpret them in different ways. We encourage you to openly discuss with students what it feels, sounds, and looks like to respect a story, and how to create a safe space in your classroom for responding to and sharing personal stories. This will help students feel comfortable when participating in the Connecting to Community approach offered in each Classroom Connections section.

Before engaging with each text, it is also essential to identify for students the contributor's nation or homeland, rather than using the general term *Indigenous*. This specificity will allow you to ensure that your content and approach are respectful and accurate.

BEGINNING, BRIDGING, AND BEYOND

We understand that your students will engage with the topics explored in this book at varying levels, depending on their comfort level and prior knowledge and experiences. For this reason, we have indicated whether the prompts and questions provided in the Classroom Connections are at a *Beginning, Bridging*, or *Beyond* phase. We have opted not to align this content with specific grade levels, which do not necessarily indicate experience with or knowledge of Indigenous topics. The Beginning, Bridging, and Beyond phases are described as follows:

- The **Beginning** phase encourages students who are starting out on their journey and have limited experience with or prior knowledge of the topic. This phase is indicated by a crescent-moon icon.
- The **Bridging** phase is for students with some experience with or prior knowledge of the topic. This phase is indicated by a half-moon icon.
- The **Beyond** phase is for students who have extensive experience with or prior knowledge of the topic and are ready for more critical and challenging discussions. This phase is indicated by a full-moon icon.

The phases of the moon support the topic of land-based education, connecting to Mother Earth and the cyclical relationship between land, water, and sky.

CONNECTED CONCEPTS

This section lists three or four underlying topics that are present in the text. Each text provides many possible interconnections and directions for inquiry, but we have chosen to focus on specific big ideas, or Connected Concepts, for each text. For example, while the broad theme of sustainability is addressed in more than one text, we have highlighted multiple ways of taking up that topic. As you step onto the footbridge with students while they begin their learning journey, share the text and topics you want to focus on with them.

Some of the texts deal with subjects and use language that may not be appropriate for younger students. For these learners, you can focus on exploring the Connected Concepts rather than engaging directly with the text. The broader themes and Connected Concepts are accessible and important to students of all ages. See the table on pages 34–36 for the suggested learner level (which takes into consideration both content and reading level) and Connected Concepts for each text. Be sure to review each text before you introduce it to your students.

The Connected Concepts can also be addressed as stand-alone topics to complement other resources you are using. Seek out existing provincial or territorial curricula to supplement and expand on specific topics. This will ensure that Indigenous voices and expressions are central, rather than an add-on. This approach can create more meaningful engagement with Indigenous perspectives and knowledges.

CONNECTING TO SELF: PROMPTS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

In this section, we offer questions that encourage students to reflect on the text on both personal and academic levels. Here, students begin taking steps across the footbridge toward greater understanding of Indigenous perspectives. For this work to be relevant, it is important that students consider their own identities. How students demonstrate their learning in this area is up to you; you may invite them to answer questions via written reflection, video reflection, or another mode of assessment. Depending on the topic, you might ask students to discuss these questions with a partner—a less intimidating option than presenting their views in a whole-class discussion. Note that the questions in the Connecting to Self section are provided at the Beginning, Bridging, and Beyond phases.

One way to encourage self-reflection is to pick a prompt for students to consider when beginning to explore the topic, then to come back to it after some further learning to see if, and how, their thinking has changed over time. Using the frame of *learning* and *unlearning* can aid students in seeing these changes.[4] Mi'kmaw scholar Marie Battiste calls for us to make a commitment to *unlearning*, which involves gaining awareness of what has unconsciously become the norm in order to "learn new ways of knowing, valuing others, accepting diversity, and making equity and inclusion foundations for all learners."[5]

CONNECTING TO COMMUNITY: PROMPTS FOR LEARNING CIRCLES

Once students have engaged in a process of personal reflection and introspection, the next step on the footbridge is to engage in conversation with community. This opens our eyes to the various ways in which people experience text. By connecting to community, students will learn about the diverse opinions, experiences, and worldviews of those around them.

One way to facilitate these conversations is through a learning circle, also called a talking circle or sharing circle. Talking circles are traditional processes used by many First Nations to ensure everyone has a voice in decision making, whereas learning circles are a reflective classroom activity that encourages respectful communication, active listening, and unity.

While sitting in a circle, everyone (including the adults in the classroom) is equal. In a learning circle, a specific topic of discussion is chosen, and speakers are encouraged to speak from the heart on this topic. Only the person holding a designated item, such as a talking stick, may speak, while everyone else listens. Speakers talk until they are finished, being respectful of time. Once the speaker has finished, they pass the stick to the person beside them and that person speaks. Not speaking in a learning circle is acceptable; the person simply says "pass" and passes the item on to the next person. The process is complete when everyone has had a chance to speak.

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4 Marie Battiste, "Nourishing the Learning Spirit: Living Our Way to New Thinking," *Education Canada* 50, no. 1 (2010): 14–18, www.edcan.ca/wp-content/uploads/EdCan-2010-v50-n1-Battiste.pdf.

5 Marie Battiste, *Decolonizing Education: Nourishing the Learning Spirit* (Purich Publishing, 2013), 166.

If you want to use learning circles or a similar process with your students, we encourage you to invite a local Elder or Knowledge Keeper into your classroom to share related nation-specific teachings before doing so. Before trying a learning circle in your classroom, you may want to work through the process with colleagues to increase your comfort level and familiarity.

In the Connecting to Community section, we have provided prompts at the Beginning, Bridging, and Beyond phases that can be used in a learning circle. Choose the prompts that are appropriate for your place of learning. If you are still getting to know your students, start with the Beginning phase prompts; although these may seem simple, you might be surprised at what surfaces in response! You can keep coming back to these prompts and make them part of your routine inside or outside of the classroom.

CONNECTING ONLINE

Post reflections from your own learning or share how you take up these ideas in your educational setting using the hashtags #FootbridgeRenewalBook and #FootbridgeRenewal.

CONNECTING TO LAND-BASED LEARNING

The next step in the learning process is Connecting to Land-Based Learning. This section provides guidance on how to extend learning beyond the classroom, as connecting to land needs to be done in physical, material, and active ways. The suggestions featured here provide possibilities for centring learning *from* the land, *on* the land. The environment where learning takes place is not a neutral background, and classrooms have a certain educational charge. Moving outside with the intention of meaningfully integrating connections to land in student learning is a form of activism that challenges the norms of traditional schooling.

CONNECTING TO LAND BACK

In this section, we delve into the concept of Land Back, a profound and active notion encompassing the return of ancestral lands, reparations, and vital reconnection to the land. Our discussion ties directly to the Land Back movement, offering insights into how each text aligns with critical themes surrounding land dispossession and the enduring impacts of settler colonialism.[6] By surfacing these connections, we ground our conversation in pressing issues related to land. We emphasize the active efforts of Indigenous communities in defending their lands and revitalizing their rights and responsibilities in relation to the land, echoing the words of Tuck and Yang, who remind us that "decolonization is not a metaphor."[7] This section serves as a reminder of the ongoing need for decolonial thinking and actions in the course of our educational journey. Rather than viewing it merely as the transfer of ownership from one property owner to another, we see Land Back as an opportunity to question Western notions of property and how they separated people from their ancestral territories and simultaneously from traditional knowledge systems and relationships. Land Back also prompts us to consider the long-lasting, and in some cases irreversible, damage that has been done to the land and the urgent need to restore relationships to the land. The idea of Land Back is a way of *talking back* to colonialism and *taking back* both land and power. It highlights both historical mistakes and contemporary activism.

Land Back is both straightforward, in terms of the physical restoration of land, and complex, as part of unravelling complicated systems of colonialism and restoring spiritual connections to Mother Earth. These are ideas we are still learning about, and each contributor to this book supports this learning and unlearning. In this section, we identify key disconnections or tensions created by settler colonialism. We focus on treaties, land claims, Land Back resistance efforts, and the historical relationships specific to contributors' ancestral homelands.

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6 See page 11 for more information on the Land Back movement.

7 Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 40.

For settler educators, this section supports becoming more knowledgeable and thinking critically about the reparations needed or already taken in relation to specific territories. It also gives an opportunity to connect to the Land Back movement by providing context related to where the contributor comes from or exploring the disconnections from land that surface through their work. Some contributions connect directly to examples of decolonial activism or identify ways for students and teachers to repair relationships.

CONNECTIONS TO OTHER INDIGENOUS RESOURCES

Finally, at the end of each chapter, we have included a list of resources (that may include books, films, articles, podcasts, and online materials) for further investigation and study. As students take their final steps across the footbridge and reach the shore, they may wish to extend their learning by engaging with these suggested works. The texts we have included may address similar topics, or may have been created by the contributor or an author or artist from the same nation as the contributor. The suggested resources have been created by Indigenous writers, artists, directors, scholars, and thinkers.

If you think a specific text in this book is too challenging for your students, but you would like to teach one of the Connected Concepts, start with one of the age-appropriate resources provided in the Connections to Other Indigenous Resources section. The age and grade ranges provided for each children's and young adult book are based on the publisher's recommendations.

Overview of Narratives and Cultural Expressions

The following table provides an overview of each text, specifying the contributor's name and nation, and the title and type of text. Suggested Learner Level refers to the content and reading level of the text itself; as noted, the Connected Concepts identified for each text can be addressed with students of all ages with various levels of knowledge and experience.

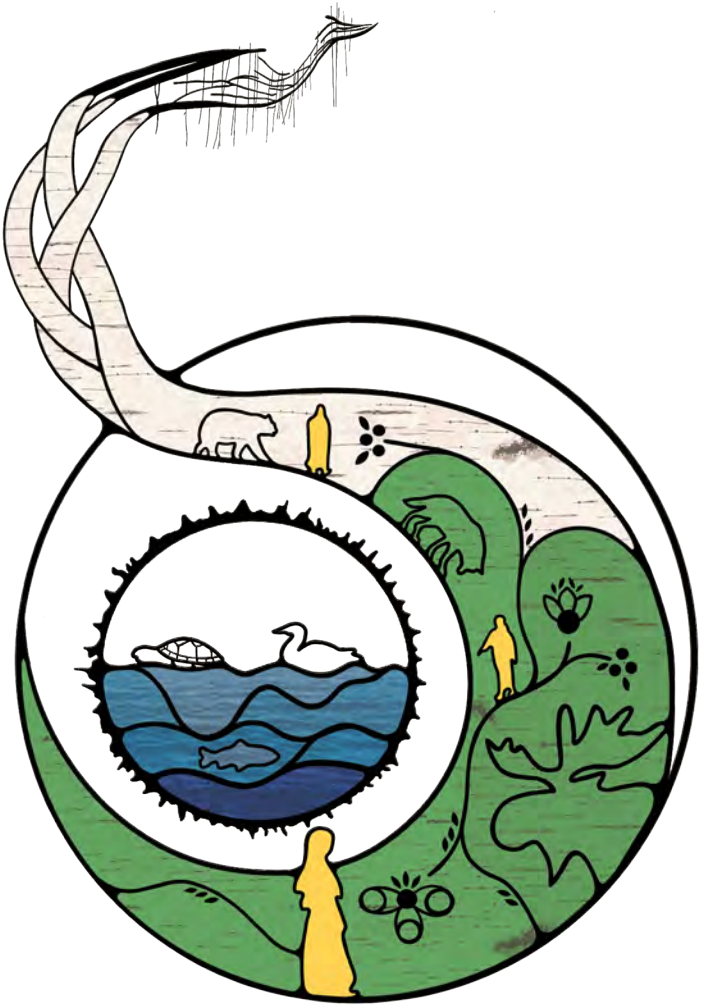
CONTRIBUTOR	CONTRIBUTOR NATION	TITLE OF TEXT	TYPE OF TEXT	SUGGESTED LEARNER LEVEL	CONNECTED CONCEPTS
PART ONE: KNOWING					
Dr. Brian Rice	Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk)	*Land-Based Education: A Means to Healthy Learning and Living*	Essay	Grades 9–12 and beyond	• Active lifestyle • Identity • Self-esteem
Nicki Ferland	Red River Métis	*Reclaiming Relationships With Land in the City*	Essay	Grades 9–12 and beyond	• Rural-urban binary • Place names • Belonging and property/ownership
Peatr Thomas	Ininew/ Anishinaabe	*Miskwaadesi Maada Ookii Gikendamowin/ Turtle Sharing Knowledge (From the Sturgeon)*	Artwork and personal essay	Grades 5–12 and beyond	• Pictographs • Oral and visual transmission of culture • Land and water dwellers
Tyna Legault Taylor	Omushkego Cree	*Homelands and Waterways*	Essay	Grades 9–12 and beyond	• Water justice/water and food sovereignty • Environmental racism • Survivance
PART TWO: BEING					
Shannon Webb-Campbell	Mi'kmaq	*"Ecology of Being"*	Poem	Grades 9–12 and beyond	• Selfhood • Interconnectedness • Medicine
Dr. Tasha Beeds	nêhiyaw, Scottish-Métis, and Bajan	*"We Are the Bundle": Activating Indigenous Ancestral Powers*	Essay	Grades 9–12 and beyond	• Ancestry • Kinship • Spiritual bundles

CONTRIBUTOR	CONTRIBUTOR NATION	TITLE OF TEXT	TYPE OF TEXT	SUGGESTED LEARNER LEVEL	CONNECTED CONCEPTS
Sonny Assu	Ligwiłda'xw of the Kwakwa̱ka̱'wakw Nations	Land Back *and* Dance as Though the Ancestors Are Watching	Artwork and artist's statement	Grades K–12 and beyond	• Consumerism • Advertising • Critical literacy • Indigenous aesthetics
Class from Jonah Amitnaaq Secondary School (Baker Lake, NU)	Inuit	*Qamani'tuaq (ᖁᒪᓂᑐᐊᖅ) Perspectives*	Photo essay	Grades K–12 and beyond	• Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) • Hunting and fishing sustainably • Perspective • Digital photography
PART THREE: DOING					
shalan joudry	L'nu (Mi'kmaq)	*"Raising Forests"*	Poem	Grades 5–12 and beyond	• Intergenerational trauma • Environmental protection/stewardship • Environmental degradation
Tricia Logan	Métis	*Michif Language Revitalization: Our Lessons On-line and On-land*	Essay	Grades 7–12 and beyond	• Language revitalization • Connecting online • Homeland
Dakota Bear	Cree	*"Freedom"*	Lyrics	Grades 5–12 and beyond	• Idle No More • Sovereignty • Activism • Self-determination
Shirli Ewanchuk	Ojibway	*Manitou Akiing/ Spirit Is in the Land*	Essay	Grades 9–12 and beyond	• Clothing and textiles • Food and nutrition • Family studies • Geography

CONTRIBUTOR	CONTRIBUTOR NATION	TITLE OF TEXT	TYPE OF TEXT	SUGGESTED LEARNER LEVEL	CONNECTED CONCEPTS
PART FOUR: BECOMING					
Dan Henhawk	Kanien'kehá:ka	*Start First With a Good Mind*	Essay	Grades 9–12 and beyond	• Reimagining leisure • Indigenous ways of doing/being • Learning/ unlearning • Sustainability
Réal Carrière	Nehinuw (Swampy Cree) and Métis	*Mah! (Listen!)*	Essay	Grades 9–12 and beyond	• Identity • Ancestral homelands • Worldview
Hetxw'ms Gyetxw (Brett D. Huson)	Gitxsan	*The Art of Learning and Storytelling: "A Gitxsan Ode to Water"*	Artwork and poem	Grades 5–12 and beyond	• Sacredness • Storytelling • Matrilineal society • Water as lifeblood
Reanna McKay (Merasty)	Nîhithaw	*Land Connection for Resurgence and Renewal*	Artwork and artist's statement	Grades K–12 and beyond	• Resurgence • Renewal • Intertwining knowledges • Journeying

PART ONE

KNOWING



THE FOOTBRIDGE SERIES

THIS FOOTBRIDGE is built through collaboration. The idea for the Footbridge series came from the inspiring and creative writer Garry Thomas Morse. He envisioned the first volume, *Resurgence*, and supported connections to many of the contributors in that book. In 2019, Garry shared that his initial inspiration for the series was the Hagwilget footbridge located on a First Nations reserve community of the Wet'suwet'en people near Hazelton, British Columbia. This powerful image from the late 1800s shows a carefully engineered footbridge that continues to guide us in our work.



(Image A-06048 courtesy of the BC Archives.)