

Guiding the Conversation

Using *Aboriginal Perspectives and the Curriculum* by Dwayne Donald

The document *Aboriginal Perspectives and the Curriculum (Social Studies) – Discussion Papers* was created with the specific intention of encouraging conversation amongst education professionals regarding Aboriginal perspectives in the Alberta Social Studies curriculum. These activities are suggestions for curriculum specialists to facilitate rich conversations, recognizing that each person will bring their own context, experiences, and perspectives to the conversation.

Why are Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum?

- Read segment independently
- Write these words and phrases on large sheets of paper:
 - National narrative
 - Ethical space
 - Contested terrain of the past
- Invite participants to circulate and write their thoughts about these terms on the paper.
- Discuss similarities and differences of the group's responses
- In a full group discussion, ask participants to reflect on why creating a common understanding of these terms is a necessary step in integrating Aboriginal perspectives in the Social Studies curriculum.

Why is it necessary for all teachers and students in Alberta to be required to work with Aboriginal perspectives?

- Read segment independently.
- Invite participants to mark their segment with the following symbols:
 - 3 “!” for points they found interesting
 - 2 “?” for points they found challenging
 - 1 “★” for a point they believe is the essence of this segment
- Ask participants to discuss the marks with their elbow partners and then with their table group.
- As a full group, discuss how they believe Dwayne Donald's assertion of curriculum as a “...complex dialogue...” (p 3) can be furthered in our district(s).

What are the hopes, wishes, goals of Aboriginal people and their communities?

- Read the segment independently.
- Ask participants to make groups of three. Each person will take on one of three roles (these could be written on note cards or a PowerPoint slide):
 - Summarizer – provides a summary of this segment of the article, emphasizing key points with specific examples
 - Discussion Leader – prepares three probing questions for the group to discuss
 - Connector – explore connections or links between this segment and the other segments of the article. Provide specific examples to support these connections
- Invite participants to share their information in their group and discuss observations.

What notions of curriculum are most helpful in understanding the large curriculum shift occurring in Alberta?

- Read the segment independently.
- Ask each participant to select a meaningful quote from this segment and write it on a large post-it note.
- Participants place their post-it notes on a central sheet of large paper or board; once all have placed their notes, ask each participant to select another note that intrigues them.
- Ask each participant to create a one minute explanation of the quote, including how the ideas could potentially impact curriculum implementation.
- Instruct participants to pair up and share their one minute explanations.
- Rotate partners, until each participant has shared their one minute explanation four or five times.