

Title: Introduction to the Medicine Wheel

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Marissa: I am a recent Werklund Graduate with an Undergraduate in Kinesiology majoring in Pedagogy. I have a passion for movement education as well as international teaching and learning experiences. I have taught Physical Education and Health in Antigua West Indies, as well as taught and observed education in Japan. I believe that a classroom is a diverse group of individuals with different experiences, abilities, skills and backgrounds and addressing the needs of every student is my goal in education.

Laura: I am a 2020 Werklund School of Education graduate with an Undergraduate and Graduate degree in Geoscience. I am passionate about providing students with hands-on, memorable learning experiences where they understand why they are learning what they are being taught. I believe in incorporating student voice every step of the way and strive to support the learning needs as well as the personal needs of every student in my classroom.

<p>Resources used and possible concerns</p>	<p>Resource:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Picture Book: <i>The Medicine Wheel: Stories of the Hoop Dancer</i> written by Teddy Anderson, illustrated by Jessika von Innerebner <p>Possible concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Neither contributor is Indigenous by blood, however, Teddy Anderson and his family have been adopted into the Tagish/Carcross First Nations
<p>Author/creator and/or literature background</p>	<p>Teddy Anderson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Professional hoop dancer of the First Nation's style who has performed in 20 countries across the world ● Teddy is not First Nation's by blood however Teddy has deep family connections with First Nations peoples and is a proven ally in the Red Deer community where many people consider him to be family. ● Teddy and his family have been adopted into the Tagish/Carcross First Nations. ● Teddy belongs to the Deishitaan clan and given the name Yéif S'aaghí (Crow Bones). <p>Jessika von Innerebner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Self-taught artist who landed her first illustration job at age 17.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jess is the illustrator of several picture books and chapter books, but <i>It's Not All Rainbows</i> is her author-illustrator debut. ● Canadian resident
<p>UPE course connections (not exhaustive)</p>	<p>EDUC 450: Diversity in Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using this picture book is an easy way for pre-service teachers to incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing into their teaching in a thoughtful way. This lesson provides an example of how to introduce the medicine wheel to students and begins to explain how to use it continuously throughout the year. This is applicable to the diversity course as this course talks a lot about incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing but lacks specific examples for pre-service teachers. <p>EDUC 460 and 535: Specialization I & II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This lesson could be adapted to suit any specialization as it is an introductory lesson and discusses ways by which the medicine wheel can be used in different subjects throughout the school year.
<p>K-12 connection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Target age range: Grades 1-5. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This lesson is an introduction to the Medicine Wheel and therefore can be adapted for use from Grade 1 to grade 5. ● Social Studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Grade 1</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1.1 My World: Home, School, and Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1.1.1 value self and others as unique individuals in relation to their world ● 1.1.2 value the groups and communities to which they belong ● 1.1.3 examine how they belong and are connected to their world ● 1.1.5 distinguish geographic features in their own community from other communities ● Grade 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2.2 A Community in the Past <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2.2.1 appreciate how stories of the past connect individuals and communities to the present

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2.2.4 appreciate how connections to a community contribute to one's identity ● <u>Grade 3:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3.1 Communities in the World <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3.1.1 appreciate similarities and differences among people and communities ● 3.2 Global Citizenship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3.2.1 appreciate elements of global citizenship ● 3.2.2 ● explore the concept of global citizenship ● <u>Grade 4:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4.2 The Stories, Histories and Peoples of Alberta <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4.2.1 appreciate how an understanding of Alberta's history, peoples and stories contributes to their own sense of belonging and identity ● 4.3.3 examine, critically, Alberta's changing cultural and social dynamics ● <u>Grade 5:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5.2 Histories and Stories of Ways of Life in Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5.2.1 appreciate the complexity of identity in the Canadian context ● 5.2.2 examine, critically, the ways of life of Aboriginal peoples in Canada
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Picture Book, <i>The Medicine Wheel: Stories of the Hoop Dancer</i> ● Talking circle object (ex: a rock) ● Land acknowledgement, tailored to the audience ● Medicine Wheel poster board (Appendix A) ● Medicine Wheel cards (Appendix B)
Rationale	<p>Big Idea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students will participate in a talking circle and will learn the significance of the medicine wheel, the

	<p>land acknowledgement and the importance of the land in Indigenous culture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The lesson begins by having students gather in a circle and a reading and discussion of the land acknowledgement and its significance. The students will understand the purpose of the talking circle and the “rules” that come along with this teaching protocol. ● Next, the read-aloud will give students some background knowledge and the book will be discussed. ● Finally, students will use the medicine wheel board & cards to fill in the medicine wheel with the different components of the wheel. <p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This lesson is foundational in later connecting the medicine wheel teachings to other topics in the curriculum. For example: using “mental, physical, spiritual and emotional” aspects of the medicine wheel in order to investigate topics in science. Students will understand the meaning of the medicine wheel and the different ways that it will be used throughout the year. They will understand how the parts of the wheel are interconnected. ● By using a read-aloud alongside a memorable activity, students are able to connect back to the medicine wheel in later classroom lessons/activities. For example: Considering a science topic from a mental, physical, spiritual and emotional perspective.
<p>Lesson/activities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather students in a circle 2. Land acknowledgement (modify and personalize the acknowledgement in order to suit the school community and age range of your students). An example is provided below. Ask students if they have heard the land acknowledgement before. Explain the importance/significance and why we do it at school assemblies/gatherings. 3. Explain the concept of a talking circle. Ensure that the students understand that the only person who should be talking is the person who holds the talking circle object. It is important for students to understand that we are coming together in a

respectful circle because we are all connected. The purpose is to create a safe environment where everyone is equal and everyone belongs. The circle represents completeness and everyone's contribution is equally important. The talking circle object is passed around the circle and students are welcome to say, "I pass" if they do not wish to contribute.

- For this lesson, a simple example topic may be: "How do you feel today?" but the topic should be tailored to your specific group of students.

2. Read-aloud: read *The Medicine Wheel: Stories of the Hoop Dancer* aloud to the students.
3. Discuss the story and transition into talking about the medicine wheel.
4. Show students an example (photos provided below) of a real medicine wheel, such as the Nose Hill Siksikaitstapi medicine wheel in NW Calgary.
5. Medicine Wheel Board: the teacher will explain the medicine wheel, including the significance of the number 4, the symbolism of a circle and the different possible components (seasons, directions, colors, animals, etc).
6. Hand out the medicine wheel cards randomly to each student (28 example cards are provided but these need to be tailored to the age range as well as number of your students). Explain to students that each concept on the cards fits onto the medicine wheel and the color of their card matches a quadrant of the wheel. Have them arrange themselves such that they are positioned nearest to their color on the wheel and that students with the same color of cards are sitting together.
7. Facilitate a group discussion by having students read out the word (can be differentiated to be pictures, depending on the age range of students) and put it on the correct quadrant of the board. For older students, have them suggest a reason for their word being a component of the medicine wheel.
8. Finish the lesson by asking students how they feel to be in a circle instead of their usual seating arrangement and ask if they have any ideas as to

	other times where a talking circle could be used in your classroom.

Supporting Sources (APA):

Alberta Education. (2015). *Social Studies Kindergarten to Grade 12: Program of Studies*. Retrieved from

<https://education.alberta.ca/media/159594/program-of-studies-k-3.pdf>

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<https://www.edcan.ca/articles/teaching-by-the-medicine-wheel/Official>

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Penguin Random House Canada. (n.d.). Jessika von Innerebner. Retrieved from

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.ca/authors/2133581/jessika-von-innerebner>

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<https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/what-is-an-indigenous-medicine-wheel>

Appendix A

Medicine Wheel Board:

Recreate the Medicine Wheel onto a large size poster board, such that students can interact with the representation.



“Medicine wheels (sometimes called hoops) come in more than one form, and their significance and use is culture-specific. There is, however, one fundamental similarity besides the shape - medicine wheels represent the alignment and continuous interaction of the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual realities. The circle shape represents the interconnectivity of all aspects of one’s being, including the connection with the natural world. Medicine wheels are frequently believed to be the circle of awareness of the individual self; the circle of knowledge that provides the power we each have over our own lives.” (Joseph, 2020)

Appendix B

The medicine wheel may be composed of many different components and holds many different meanings and significance to Indigenous culture. For example, the four quadrants may represent the four seasons, elements, sacred animals, cardinal directions, sacred plants and medicines, different stages of life and different significant colors. There are many other different components that have been interwoven into medicine wheel teachings, these are just a few chosen examples. By having students understand the many meanings that the medicine wheel holds, they are able to connect to this way of teaching and learning. (Bell, 2014)

Medicine Wheel Cards:

Use as many cards as you have students in your class. You can alter these cards to use images/symbols instead of words for younger students or keep the words for older students. Color-code the cards to suit the appropriate quadrant of the medicine wheel.

Suggestions for different medicine wheel components:

Black	Red
Yellow	White
Spring	Summer
Fall	Winter
Spiritual	Emotional
Intellectual	Physical
Fire	Air
Water	Earth
Eagle	Bear
Wolf	Buffalo
Tobacco	Sweet Grass
Sage	Cedar
East	South
West	North
Birth	Youth
Adult	Death