

## **Sharing Learning Through Talking Circles Lesson Plan**

by Jessica Wesaquate and Andrea Rogers

### **Topic:**

Talking Circles

### **Subject Area:**

Social Studies

### **Grade Level:**

Four to Eight

### **Objectives:**

Students will be able to learn the significance of rocks to the First Nations people by listening to an elder share traditional knowledge.

Students will be able to share their learning with others in a talking circle.

Students will be able to follow the rules of a talking circle.

### **Pre-requisite Knowledge:**

Ability to follow rules

### **Recommended Video:**

Tipi raising videos

### **Materials:**

Rock or stick, tobacco (for elder)

Bringing Traditional Knowledge into your classroom: Invite an elder into your classroom to share with the students the significance of rocks to the First Nations culture. Remember to follow proper protocol. You can contact the community resource person at your school, or through the school board. You may also be able to get in contact with a band office close to your location.

### **Introduction:**

Have students talk about what they learned from the elder. Discuss that traditionally children would learn from their elders and they would teach them the ways of life and what their traditions were. We still learn from our elders today.

At this time it is important to stress the rules of a talking circle. Relate the rules to the law, we simply don't break them. Two options are to make an overhead of the rules, and/or write them on poster board and place them somewhere in the classroom. These rules can be used in other area, such as conflict management.

The following are the rules. You can have students read them out loud, or you can present them yourself and have them explain what each rule might "look like." I.e. 'I won't go out on the playground and tell my friends about what happened in our circle.'

- Always pass the rock in a clockwise direction.
- The rock must do a complete circle.
- The things that are said in the circle are kept in the circle.
- You must be respectful of everything that is said in the circle.
- A person can choose to pass the stick without speaking at all.
- If needed, pass the stick around the circle again.
- Only one person at a time speaks, everyone else listens.
- Once the stick has been passed in a complete circle it is completed.

After students are comfortable with the rules, have them get into a circle on the floor, or outside. Explain that the purpose of the talking circle is to share what students learned about the tipi. As the

rock goes around, students will say 1-2 things they learned about the tipi from the elder, or in class teachings. Send the rock along again for students to share 1-2 things they liked from learning about the tipis. Use your discretion to what else you may want them to talk about in the circle.

**Assessment:**

You can ask students to do a self-evaluation of their behavior in the talking circle. You can have them write an exit note to recall the rules of the talking circle.

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