

Sharing Circle 2 (4-12)

Lesson Plan (60 minutes)

Materials Needed:

- Raven Talking Stick

If possible, have students sit around in a circle.

Introduction:

1. Introduce Yourself

- Introduce yourself (name, title, where you are from, who you are as an Indigenous Person)
- Acknowledge the territory. “We acknowledge that we reside on the traditional ancestral shared territory of the Sumas and Matsqui First Nations, Sumas and Matsqui First Nations have lived in the Fraser Valley for 10,000 years.
- Ask who are Indigenous people? (Answer: 3 groups, First Nations Métis and Inuit People)

1. Introduce the Presentation:

- Today, we will learn about and participate in a traditional sharing circle.
- Students will respond to grade appropriate topics.

****Before hand – talk to the teacher or (TA – if it is a smaller group) about any kids who have specific behaviours / anxiety about speaking aloud. Explain to the teacher that you welcome them into the circle with their class and you would like them to continue their management strategies.***

The Purpose of the Sharing Circle

- The circle shape is used because there is no head, not like a traditional “western meeting” with a chair in charge/ head of the circle.
- Shapes are important to Indigenous people. A circle is important in Indigenous Culture because it doesn't have an end or a starting point.
- The circle represents sun, moon, seasons, life cycle, conical shape homes
- Spirituality.
- Clockwise (the way the earth turns, the way the clock hands turn)
- Sometimes called a healing circle.
- Learning about the similarities and differences of each other that we may not have known.
- Gives the members of the circle a sense of belonging.
- Traditionally the circle is used to come up with a decision about a problem.
- The sharing circle allows everyone the opportunity to speak.
- Is really the democratic model for decision making and problem solving.
- Contemporary uses of a sharing circle – counselling, educational groups
- Sharing circles are now used for many different reasons.

Expected Behaviours While in the Sharing Circle

- One person talking at a time – they have the talking stick
- If a student wants to reply or has an opinion to what was said he / she will have to wait until the talking stick comes to them again.
- No across the circle talking.
- You may hear something that someone else says that you may disagree with. In this circle you respond respectfully. “I respectfully disagree.”
- When you are finished talking respectfully pass the stick to the next person.

The Stick Represents

- The talking stick is a raven = “authority” in Northwest Coast
- Who has the floor and who has the right to speak.
- If you don't have the talking stick the expectation is that you use your ears (2 eyes, 2 ears, 1 mouth – look and listen twice as much as you speak).
- Listen with your heart as well
- When struggling to speak to the circle – look at the stick
- Speak to the topic we are talking about
- When you feel you are done saying what you want to say pass the stick on to the next person.

If I, the facilitator, need the floor for a purpose, I will get the stick – to talk, to clarify, to stop and interruption, or use a teachable moment.

Once the circle starts:

- The presenter is the Facilitator.
- The presenter has to keep parameters around how we use a talking circle.
- This sharing circle is NOT counselling. We want to keep emotions in a box and want to control what happens, your classroom management will help. Feel free to call the teacher in to manage as well.

Rules:

- Don't want to interrupt a person talking
- Don't want to leave others with “open wounds”
- Having a variety of topics to talk about is important.
- Facilitator goes first to set the example or if the teacher is sitting beside you, let the teacher go first and you are the facilitator.
- Explain that you expect everybody to participate and say something.
- If a student is nervous, get them to look at the stick when they talk.
- Facilitator can acknowledge what a student said with a comment or they just let the thought absorb in.