



# Respectful and Responsible Representation of AI/ANNations in the Curriculum

## Competency

Educators analyze and use American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian (AI/AN) inclusive resources to support learning for all students.

## Key Method

Using an Indigenous lens, educators will analyze and assess teaching materials for truth telling, deconstruct curriculum, and rework as indigenized and decolonized lesson plans.

## Method Components

Educators must demonstrate an understanding of, appreciation for, and responsiveness to the complex, ongoing, and present-day histories of Indigenous peoples. Do this by using Indigenous primary sources, Native history taught as American history, acknowledging tribes as sovereign nations, examining implicit bias, distinguishing among tribal differences, balancing Indigenous struggles and Indigenous joy, and applying accurate present-day representations and implications.



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**Teaching For and About Native Americans**

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## Essential Understandings & Anti-Bias Concepts

Most common portrayals of Indigenous peoples are inaccurate and harmful. Educators must examine and take action to prevent their own biases as well as deconstruct biases embedded in curriculum and educational resources. Read [The Seven Essential Understandings](#) through the lens of Indigenous peoples in your area. Consider these and other essential understandings and anti-bias concepts described in the article:

- Cultural diversity exists among different tribes
- Personal diversity exists among individual tribal members
- Indigenous cultures and tribal histories are unique, extensive, complex, and valid
- Tribes were not given their homelands or reservations; the federal government negotiated with tribes for land on a nation-to-nation basis
- American Indians are not extinct; for the most part, interactions between the U.S. government and Indigenous people have not been benign or neutral
- How Native Americans understand the historical events they have experienced frequently differ from those of non-Native Americans and are worthy of study
- Tribes are sovereign nations and have not relinquished their inherent sovereignty; tribes continue to exercise their sovereignty today

## The Five Critical Orientations

Read [The Five Critical Orientations](#) and consider how traditional curricular studies have acknowledged and addressed these ideas (or not):

- PLACE: You are always on Indigenous lands
- PRESENCE and the PRESENT: Indigenous peoples are still here
- PERSPECTIVES: Indigenous perspectives can challenge Eurocentric curriculum
- POLITICS AND NATIONHOOD: “Indigenous Peoples are nations, not minorities” (Wilkins & Stark, 2010)
- POWER: Challenge power dynamics within curricula

## Combating Bias and Stereotypes

Indigenous studies need not be taught as a separate subject or disparate from the core curriculum. Native culture should be taught to all students as embedded within existing structures of education, not as a stand-alone or elective course.

Read [Evaluating American Indian Materials and Resources](#) and evaluate teaching materials from any subject area for bias and stereotypes such as these described in the article:



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- Omission
- Avoidance of controversial issues
- Selectivity
- Tokenism
- Ethnocentric bias
  - Primitivism
  - Paternalism
- Value judgment
- Blatant inaccuracies
- Biased language
- Stereotyping
- Objectification
- Dehumanization
- Generic Indian identity
- Historicizing

## Considerations

While encountering new ways of thinking about Indigenous peoples and culture, some discomfort may be necessary. Stay open and keep a growth mindset about your path as an educator teaches AIAN culture in schools. Review the [Dos and Don'ts of Native Allyship](#). While this is not a comprehensive list, it covers some common mistakes people frequently make.

Do not:

- Play cowboys and Indians
- Ask your students to dress up as native people
- Wear or make a headdress as an activity
- Confirm a student's tribal identity if you don't know
- Think that a DNA test grants you tribal citizenship
- Romanticize Native peoples
- Show your students Pocahontas
- Tokenize your Native American students
- Give spirit animal or native names to your students
- Expect a Native student to be knowledgeable about Native peoples or explain all things about Native peoples
- Create native "costumes" as part of a lesson plan
- Say we willingly gave our land away
- Spread the misconception that Native peoples receive "free" money/college tuition just for "being Native"
- Talk about frybread as traditional Native food
- Use or support Native American/R\*dsk\*n mascots



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# Supporting Rationale and Research

National Congress of American Indians (2019). *Becoming Visible: A Landscape Analysis of State Efforts to Provide Native American Education for All*. Washington, D.C. September 2019. [NCAI-Becoming\\_Visible\\_Report-Digital\\_FINAL\\_10\\_2019.pdf](#)

*“WHY Does Native American Education for All K-12 Students Matter? Most Americans do not have accurate information about the historical and contemporary lives of Native peoples in their state. A recent study found that people look to their K-12 education experience to provide them with good information about Native peoples, but they did not receive accurate information or no information at all when they attended school. This lack of awareness and knowledge of contemporary Native Americans leads to misguided school policies/practices, impaired relationships, racism, and discrimination. All students benefit from learning accurate information about Native Americans, including their history and special political status.”* (Becoming Visible, page 45)

*“According to the RNT research, teaching students accurate Native history is not enough to break through the invisibility and stereotypes that feed and perpetuate bias and racism; it is also imperative to teach about contemporary Native issues and the accomplishments of Native peoples today.”* (Becoming Visible, page 9)

## *“CURRENT TEACHING ABOUT NATIVE AMERICANS*

*Three obstacles to providing better instruction about American Indians and Alaska Natives are (1) lack of training provided by teacher-training programs, (2) ongoing racist portrayals of Native Americans in the larger society, and (3) difficulties in locating sources of trustworthy materials.”*

<https://www.ericdigests.org/1997-2/antibias.htm>

Sarah B. Shear, Ryan T. Knowles, Gregory J. Soden & Antonio J. Castro (2015)  
*Manifesting Destiny: Re/presentations of Indigenous Peoples in K–12 U.S. History Standards*

## Resources

### Essential Readings

[Critical Orientations to Support Indigenous Studies](#)



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[Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians](#)

[Evaluating American Indian Materials and Resources for the Classroom](#)

[Dos & Don'ts of Allyship](#)

## Lesson Plans & Resources

[American Indian Perspectives on Thanksgiving](#)

[Indigenous Authored Children's Book List](#)

[Indian Education Classroom Resources](#)

[Indigenous Peoples Lesson Plans and Resources](#)

[Integrate American Indian Studies Resources - Wisconsin First Nations](#)

[Map Showing Encroachment](#)

[Native Knowledge 360° - Interactive Teaching Resources](#)

[Native-Land.ca](#)

[Oklahoma History from a Native American Perspective](#)

[Oyate's Additional Criteria](#)

[PBS: We Shall Remain](#)

[School Library Resources](#)

[Tips for Choosing Culturally Appropriate Native Books and Resources | Colorín Colorado](#)

[When Rivers Were Trails by indian land tenure](#)

## Additional Anti-Bias Resources

[Narrative Power + Impact - Illuminative: "We have Medicine For Each Other"](#)  
Podcast



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# Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn the micro-credential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1 and 3 and be proficient in all components in Part 2.

## Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

(250-500 words)

Please use the suggested word count as a guide to answering the following contextual questions. The responses will help our assessor understand your context for working on this micro-credential.

Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to reviewers.

1. Why did you choose to study this micro-credential?
2. How does your current teaching practice address:
  - a. How your Indigenous students perceive feeling represented, seen, and heard in your classroom?
  - b. How non-Indigenous students understand and respect for Indigenous culture, history, and resilience today?
3. What do you hope to take away from completing this micro-credential?

**Passing:** Response provides reasonable and accurate information that justifies the reason for choosing this micro-credential to address the specific needs of both the teacher and the student. A learning goal that clearly states what teachers hope to gain from earning this micro-credential.

## Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following three artifacts as evidence of your learning. *\*Please do not include any information that will make you or your students identifiable to your reviewers.*

### Artifact 1: Analyze Lessons

Curate five lessons that you have used in the past or wish to use in the future. Analyze each lesson using the Resource Evaluation Checklist For Educators on page 21-22 of [Evaluating American Indian Materials and Resources](#).

1. Print a separate copy of the Resource Evaluation Checklist for each lesson.
2. Use the checklist tool to analyze each lesson.



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3. Combine a copy of each lesson and the evaluation into one document and upload it.

### **Artifact 2: Rework 1 current Lesson**

Take one of the lessons that you analyzed and rework it to be more AIAN inclusive. Choose one(1) essential understanding from the article [The Seven Essential Understandings](#) to focus on in your reworked lesson. Also incorporate at least two (2) of [The Five Critical Orientations](#) concepts in your teaching.

Your lesson plan should include:

- Accurate historical and present-day representations of Indigenous peoples
- AIAN contributions to the content area of study
- Indigenous perspectives as primary sources
- Tribes/villages represented as sovereign nations
- Indigenous peoples who are not represented as one homogenous group, but rather specific tribal cultures that are unique to each community
- A balance of Indigenous joy and pain represented
- Honor of the intrinsic value of Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing
- Nurturance of cultural and personal pride in AIAN students
- A student assignment/exit ticket that can be used as evidence in Artifact 3.

Combine the before-and-after versions of the lesson into one document and upload it.

### **Artifact 3: Student Artifacts**

Teach the lesson from Artifact 2. Then, annotate and upload three student assignments. Your annotations should include and note three instances of student understanding of any of the following concepts per student:

- One or more of the Seven Essential Understandings
  - Cultural diversity exists among different tribes
  - Personal diversity exists among individual tribal members
  - Indigenous cultures and tribal histories are unique, extensive, complex, and valid
  - Tribes were not given their homelands or reservations; the federal government negotiated with tribes for land on a nation-to-nation basis
  - American Indians are not extinct; for the most part, interactions between the U.S. government and Indigenous people have not been benign or neutral
  - American Indians' experiences of historical events frequently differ from those of non-Indians and are worthy of study
  - Tribes are sovereign nations and have not relinquished their inherent sovereignty; tribes continue to exercise their sovereignty today
- One or more of the Five Critical Orientations



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- PLACE: You are always on Indigenous lands
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- PERSPECTIVES: Indigenous perspectives can challenge Eurocentric curriculum
- POLITICS AND NATIONHOOD: “Indigenous Peoples are nations, not minorities” (Wilkins & Stark, 2010)
- POWER: Challenge power dynamics within curricula
- Tribally-specific details about AI/AN peoples
- AI/AN resilience
- Indigenous contributions to the content area of study
- Honor of the intrinsic value of Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing

Part 2. Rubric

	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Developing</b>
<b>Artifact 1: Analyze 5 Lessons</b>	Artifact includes a copy of all five lessons and one (1) completed evaluation sheet for each lesson (five total)	Artifacts include a copy of three) to four lessons and one completed evaluation sheet for each lesson, OR evaluation sheets for all five lessons are incomplete	Artifacts include a copy of LESS than three and one completed evaluation sheet for each lesson, OR evaluation sheets for all five lessons are missing
<b>Artifact 2: Rework 1 Lesson</b>	Then, annotate and upload three student assignments. Your annotations should include and note three instances of how each student understands any of the these concepts and incorporates at least two of the Five Critical Orientations	The revised lesson includes one essential understanding and incorporates one of the Five Critical Orientations	Revised lesson excludes one of the following: oneessential understanding of at least one of the Five Critical Orientations



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<b>Artifact 3: Annotated Student Artifacts</b>	Describe what elements are needed for a proficient score	Describe what elements are needed for a basic score	Describe what elements are needed for a developing score
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### Part 3 Reflection

(500- 1,500 words)  
Use the word count as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this micro-credential. For tips on writing a good reflection, review the following resource:

[How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?](#)

*Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.*

Questions:

1. What uncomfortable feelings surfaced as you encountered new ways to think about AI/AN peoples; how will you manage those going forward? How might you continue to stretch and grow, challenge yourself, and keep advocating?
2. How might this experience impact your Indigenous and non-Indigenous students?
3. Reflect on the steps you will commit to taking to create responsible representations and truth-telling about Indigenous peoples. How will you create a more Indigenous and decolonized classroom and culture in your teaching practice?

**Passing:** Reflection provides evidence that this activity has had a positive impact on both educator practice and student success. Specific examples are cited from personal or work-related experiences to support claims. Also included are specific actionable steps that demonstrate how new learning will be integrated into future practices.

NEA acknowledges the [National Indian Education Association](#) for its review and endorsement of this micro-credential.

