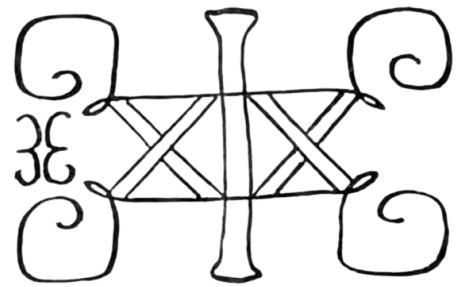


Circle Discussion Resources



Perhaps one of the most important skills we can help our students with is learning how to have hard discussions and discussions that help us learn, heal, and work together to solve problems. This is the objective of this Circle Discussion unit. It is not meant to promote debate as many times students feel a discussion is meant for this purpose. There are times when disagreements in discussions happen, and we respectfully try to find common ground and learn from a different opinion, but the purpose of this unit is so much more than that.

Below you will find an outline of a way to approach a circle discussion around Wabanaki people. It is meant to be a resource that you can use to adapt to your classroom. The only ask is that you work to create a space for discussion that respects and honors the Wabanaki people. It may be tempting to see only the sides of the Wabanaki people that have been traumatic, but please know that each Wabanaki Nation is filled with rich culture and a history with our Mother Earth that deserves to be celebrated. You may even have Wabanaki students in your classroom and/or family, friends, and allies of these beautiful Nations. Enjoy these resources with the hope it helps your students create meaningful discussions.

Frontloading Discussion

[Why Wabanaki Studies?](#): This resource is a guideline for how you could help make sure all your students have a basic understanding of who the Wabanaki people are before beginning some deeper discussions. It has basic questions that will give you a base to start from. This resource will give a deeper understanding of Wabanaki people and their Nations.

[How To Have Crucial Conversations?](#) This resource was created by an educator whose work is grounded in working with vulnerable communities. She works to educate schools and communities regarding trauma awareness.

Resources for Discussion Guidelines: You could have students read and take notes with these discussion sources, then work in small groups to discuss how the sources can help create guidelines for our circle discussions, and then bring the discussion to larger groups and make a class list of discussion guidelines that you will agree to follow during the discussions. See Links Below:


[First Nations Pedagogy Online\(Talking Circles\)](#)

[Wabanaki Reach](#)

wholeheartinc.org

** Please note that the use of a talking stick can be problematic as it is often used by the Wabanaki people in their culture and there may be varying opinions as to the best way to do this. If you want something that will help people listen and symbolize who is speaking, try using another object instead like a rock, spoon, or cloth object or any other object that is not a talking stick, especially if that stick uses colors or symbols that could represent Native cultures. Below are some links to videos that you can watch as a class that might help students to better understand why this could be offensive. It suggested you use this as part of your guidelines discussion.

Resources for Learning More about Cultural Appropriation:

 [Cultural Appropriation.pdf](#)

Discussion Topics and Discussion Prep: The following resources include discussion topics, guiding questions, and source links. It is recommended students take notes(see note taking resource below) and prep for discussion topics. It is also recommended that students bring materials to discussions.

[What? So What? Now What? Note-taking Guide](#)

Topic Handouts:

[Land Claim Act and the Wabanaki People](#)

[Relationship With Mother Earth](#)

[Sipayik Water Crisis](#)

[Two-Spirit](#)

[Forced Historical Assimilation Among The Wabanaki People and ICWA](#)

Assessment:

[Discussion Rubric:](#) This document was created using a combination of discussion resources, rubrics, and classroom experiences.

Best wishes in your journey with these resources and the rich and healing discussions they hope to promote in your classroom!