MA’AT CULTURAL CURRICULUM CONSULTANTS

Culturally responsive teaching agreements

Community authority and student dignity

Invite a locally relevant Indigenous educator or organization to review names, public resources, and learning goals. Offer payment for review or classroom expertise. Ask what may be shared, translated, recorded, photographed, or distributed. A public webpage does not automatically authorize copying a story, image, song, or design into a commercial product. [S2 S12]

Do not make Indigenous students representatives of a whole people. Participation in family history is optional. Offer a public community source as an equal alternative. Respect home languages and allow oral, visual, written, and bilingual responses. Identity is not determined by skin tone, hair texture, surname, blood percentage, or a classroom authenticity test.

Instructional practices

Open each unit with an inquiry tied to a real place and a named people. Invite students to connect food, water, family teaching, and local geography with their own lives without claiming that all traditions are the same. Use maps, artifacts, photographs, author identified testimony, and short texts together. Explain what each source can and cannot answer.

Teach religion and spirituality academically. Discuss public information about relationships among people, ancestors, places, and spiritual beings. Do not recreate ceremonies, assign sacred roles, make ceremonial replicas, or use pan Indigenous costumes. Public art can be analyzed without treating every design as available for imitation.

Colonization and trauma

Use age appropriate language about land seizure, coercion, illness, and resistance. Do not simulate enslavement, conquest, punishment, or forced conversion. Never require students to argue that an Indigenous people deserved conquest. Older students can examine the evidence for policies and acts of violence while evaluating the choices and rights of those affected.

Correcting classroom stereotypes

Replace the peaceful Arawak versus savage Carib contrast with inquiries into specific encounters, alliances, conflicts, and sources. Treat accusations of cannibalism as claims to be contextualized and corroborated, not as a people’s defining trait. Include multiple forms of resistance and evidence of continuing Indigenous communities. [S10 S11]

Knowledge and attribution

Label teacher summaries as summaries. Identify an oral account’s speaker, place, recording context, and permission. Distinguish origin teachings, archaeological interpretations, colonial observations, and contemporary testimony. Students may identify tension among sources without humiliating a family’s knowledge or presenting an unsupported claim as settled history.

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