



A Resource by
Natural
Curiosity

From Acknowledgement to Action

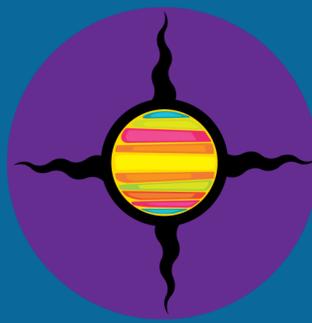
1-Pager for Educators

Connecting to the Land through Natural Curiosity

In Support of
Take Me Outside



Branch 1 Inquiry & Engagement



Lighting the fire of your inquiry

A land acknowledgement is more than a script to be recited. Bringing those words to life takes time and a commitment to ongoing learning. This journey includes building respectful relationships with local Indigenous partners, and also cultivating a meaningful relationship with the natural world. An environmental inquiry approach challenges educators to learn alongside students as “more experienced learners”, engaging their questions, interests, and ideas in a diverse learning community with the Land participating as co-teacher. From an Indigenous perspective, learning through inquiry means bringing the heart to the forefront of the learning process. Heart-based learning honours the spirit of each individual, and what they uniquely bring to the learning community.

When thinking about forming a deeper connection to the land with students through Natural Curiosity, ask:

- What is your personal, heartfelt relationship to the land beneath your feet?
- What do you know about the land already, and what more do you want to know?
- What are the stories of this place? What are the original names of the nations, animals, plants, and other beings that belong to this place? What is your story in relation to this place?

"When a student's heart and spirit are engaged, learning naturally blossoms. When the same happens for the educator, practice is transformed."
– from 'Lighting the Fire', Natural Curiosity 2nd Edition

Branch 2 Experiential Learning



Sending out the roots of your learning

To meaningfully acknowledge the land, we must first have a relationship with it. Experiential learning – hands-on, minds-on, and hearts-on immersion in the real world – is an integral part of Natural Curiosity. Visiting the same piece of land, through the seasons, and building a deep sense of place can trigger a spiral of experience, reflection, informed action, and new inquiries. An Indigenous lens on Natural Curiosity encourages educators and students to not only learn outside, but *from the land*; using all our senses and gifts to make fundamental connections with as many aspects of the natural world, *as part of it*.

When thinking about making experiential outdoor learning a more regular part of acknowledging the land with students, get outside and ask:

- Using all the senses, look up, down, and up close – what do you notice, smell, and hear?
- How do you feel in this place?
- How well do you know this place? What plants and animals belong to this place? What nations and laws govern this place? How can you grow your understanding of this place?
- Who shares this place with you? Who was here before, and who will come?
- How well does this place know you? What land knows you best?

"An Indigenous approach challenges us to ask, how do we deepen our relationship with the place we are in? How do we send out roots?"
– from 'Sending Out Roots', Natural Curiosity 2nd Edition

Branch 3 Integrated Learning



Making connections and learning whole

Making connections and integrating multiple perspectives is a natural part of a growing inquiry. Connecting to the natural world creates possibilities for authentic and rich learning experiences that reflect the complexities of real life. An Indigenous lens on integrated learning challenges us to consider how *everything is already connected*, and to create meaningful learning experiences that have positive ripple effects seven generations into the future, while respectfully connecting to seven generations in the past.

When thinking of creating wholistic learning experiences that draw on diverse connections and perspectives through Natural Curiosity, ask:

- Where in our community can we locate possible provocations that could lead to integrated learning – community partners, experts, and more-than-human teachers?
- How can you integrate family, culture, stories, and other parts of who you are, to make the learning experience more whole?
- What skills, knowledge, and experiences are needed to move the learning forward? What or whose perspectives and voices are missing?
- What lights your fire, and have you shared that with students? How does sharing your joy and passion with one another impact the learning experience?

"There is no end to integrating school subjects, once we allow the integrity of all knowledge to flow like water through any aspect of our immediate place."
– from 'The Flow of Knowledge', Natural Curiosity 2nd Edition

Branch 4 Moving Towards Sustainability



Building reciprocity with the land

Action is a natural part of all that happens on the Land, including the cycle of learning! When we spend significant time outdoors and have the opportunity to know, love, and learn from the natural world, we are more compelled to express gratitude and care towards the Land. An Indigenous lens on Natural Curiosity challenges us to move beyond one-off acts of stewardship and shift towards sustainability, while learning to nurture reciprocal relationships with everything around us, including each other.

When thinking about applying your learning and giving back to the natural world with students through Natural Curiosity, ask:

- How can you acknowledge the land differently through the lens of reciprocity?
- How can you be a part of sustaining the connections that you are seeing in the natural world? What is your responsibility for your new learning?
- What does your new understanding compel you to do? How can you learn more?
- How can you help other people understand the importance of what you have learned?
- How will you share this learning with at least one person in your life?

"Everything changes if we shift from asking how we foster stewardship in children to asking how we help children relate to their world, love their world, and value reciprocity with all our relations."
– from 'Breathing with The World', Natural Curiosity 2nd Edition



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Worksheet for Students

Connecting to the Land through Natural Curiosity

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Take Me Outside



Branch 1

Inquiry &
Engagement



Lighting the fire of your inquiry

Write, draw, or jot down your responses to the following questions:

- What do you know about the Land?
- What more do you want to know?
- What do you expect when you go outside?

Branch 2

Experiential
Learning



Sending out the roots of your learning

Write, draw, or jot down your responses to the following questions:

- Using all the senses – what do you notice? How do you feel in this place?
- How well do you know this place? What plants and animals belong to this place?
- Who shares this place with me?
- Who was here before, and who will come?

Branch 3

Integrated
Learning



Making connections and learning whole

Write, draw, or jot down your responses to the following questions:

- What skills did you use outdoors?
- What subjects does this remind you of?

Branch 4

Moving Towards
Sustainability



Building reciprocity with the land

Write, draw, or jot down your responses to the following questions:

- How can I maintain and grow my relationship with the natural world?
- What is one new learning from today and what does it compel me to do?
- How do I learn more about the land I am on, and all who shares this land with me?
- How will I share this learning with at least one person in my life?