



Unlearning Colonialism In Education

In reference to the article *A Curriculum for Education Differently: Unlearning colonialism and renewing kinship relations*, by Dr. Dwayne Donald (Education Canada, September 2022)

Learning Objectives

- 1** Participants will begin to understand the pervasive influence of colonialism and how that “gets in the way” of Indigenous-Canadian relations.
- 2** Participants will consider how they could begin to “unlearn colonialism” in education and honour other ways to know and be.

Preparation

Participants should read the [article](#) in advance and bring a copy to the session.

The [discussion video](#) between Dr. Donald and education professionals can be used as a springboard into staff discussions.

The [podcast interview](#) is also very helpful background (all available on www.edcan.ca).

REVIEW: 5 minutes**AIM: TO INTRODUCE THE SESSION'S THEME BY REVIEWING KEY POINTS FROM THE ARTICLE**

- 1** Colonial ideologies and structures that disregard and devalue Indigenous (and other cultures') ways of knowing and being pervade our society in ways that can be difficult to recognize. Before Reconciliation (the establishment of healthy and balanced Indigenous-Canadian relations) is possible, a broad social, cultural, and educational reckoning process must be undertaken that focuses on unlearning colonialism.
- 2** Colonial worldview and its cultural assumptions deeply inform the structure and character of the "common-sense" conventions of education.
- 3** The "Western code" teaches us to divide the world and deny relationship, for example by placing human needs before all other forms of life, and by placing the mental aspect of a human being above emotional, spiritual, and physical aspects. In contrast, Indigenous wisdom teachings see human beings as enmeshed in networks of human and more-than-human relationships that enable life and living.
- 4** Nêhiyaw (Cree) teachings about the numbered treaties reveal the possibility of a "treaty relationship" that goes far beyond most Canadians' view of treaties as business deals. Dr. Donald suggests that this understanding of the treaty as a commitment to a kinship relationship can be an inspiration as we do the work of unlearning colonialism.

WATCH AND DISCUSS THE VIDEO 30 minutes +**AIM: TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE AUTHOR'S IDEAS THROUGH HIS CONVERSATION WITH SCHOOL EDUCATORS, AND TO SHARE THOUGHTS AND QUESTIONS**

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