

## **Cultural Protocols**

When teaching or engaging with First Peoples content in British Columbia, it's essential to follow **cultural protocols**—these are the guidelines that show respect for Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing. These protocols vary from Nation to Nation, but here are some general principles that are widely respected across BC

### **1. Acknowledge the Land**

Always begin by acknowledging the traditional territory of the First Nation(s) where you live, work, or are teaching. This honors their role as stewards of the land.

#### **Example:**

*"We respectfully acknowledge that we are on the unceded traditional territory of the Secwépemc Nation."*

### **2. Ask Permission**

Seek permission before using any stories, songs, art, or teachings. Not all content is meant to be shared publicly or outside of the community.

- Some knowledge is **sacred or ceremonial**, and only certain individuals have the right to share it.
- Contact the Nation, Elder, or Knowledge Keeper if in doubt.

### **3. Give Credit**

Always attribute teachings, stories, or artwork to the appropriate Nation, community, or individual.

- Avoid using "Pan-Indigenous" materials that blur cultural distinctions.
- Example: Instead of saying "an Indigenous story," say "a St'át'imc story shared by Elder Mary Thomas."

### **4. Build Relationships**

Take time to **develop relationships** with local communities. This fosters mutual respect and trust, and ensures teachings are authentic and accurate.

- Attend cultural events (if public), reach out to Indigenous Education Departments, and listen actively.

### **5. Compensate Elders and Knowledge Keepers**

Elders should be compensated for their time, knowledge, and presence—this can be in the form of honoraria, gifts, or meals, depending on the situation.

- Consult your school district's Indigenous Education Department for guidance on appropriate compensation.

## **6. Be Mindful of Cultural Sensitivity**

Some topics—like residential schools, ceremonies, or traditional medicines—require **careful, respectful** approaches.

- Prepare students emotionally and contextually.
- Include First Peoples' voices and perspectives directly through videos, guest speakers, or verified resources.

## **7. Respect Oral Traditions**

Understand that oral history is a **valid and respected source of knowledge**. It may not align with Western academic frameworks, but it is just as meaningful.

## **8. Be Humble and Open to Correction**

Mistakes may happen—what matters is that you listen, learn, and correct course respectfully.