Honoring Oral Traditions and Using Appropriate Resources to Support the Language & Literacy Development of the Aboriginal Child
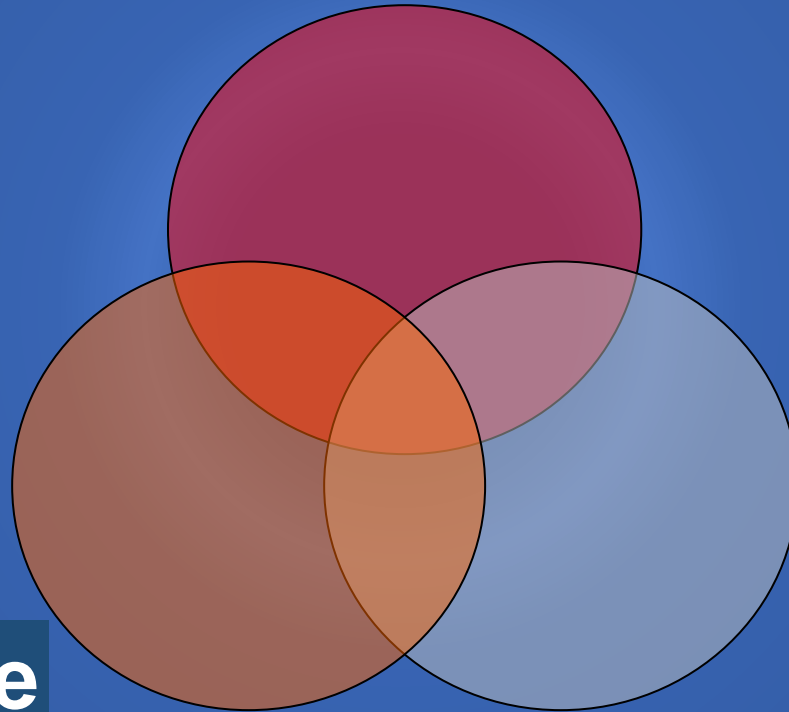
BCSLPA Burnaby BC

Dr. Sharla Peltier

U of A Faculty of Education, Elementary/ATEP

October 21, 2017
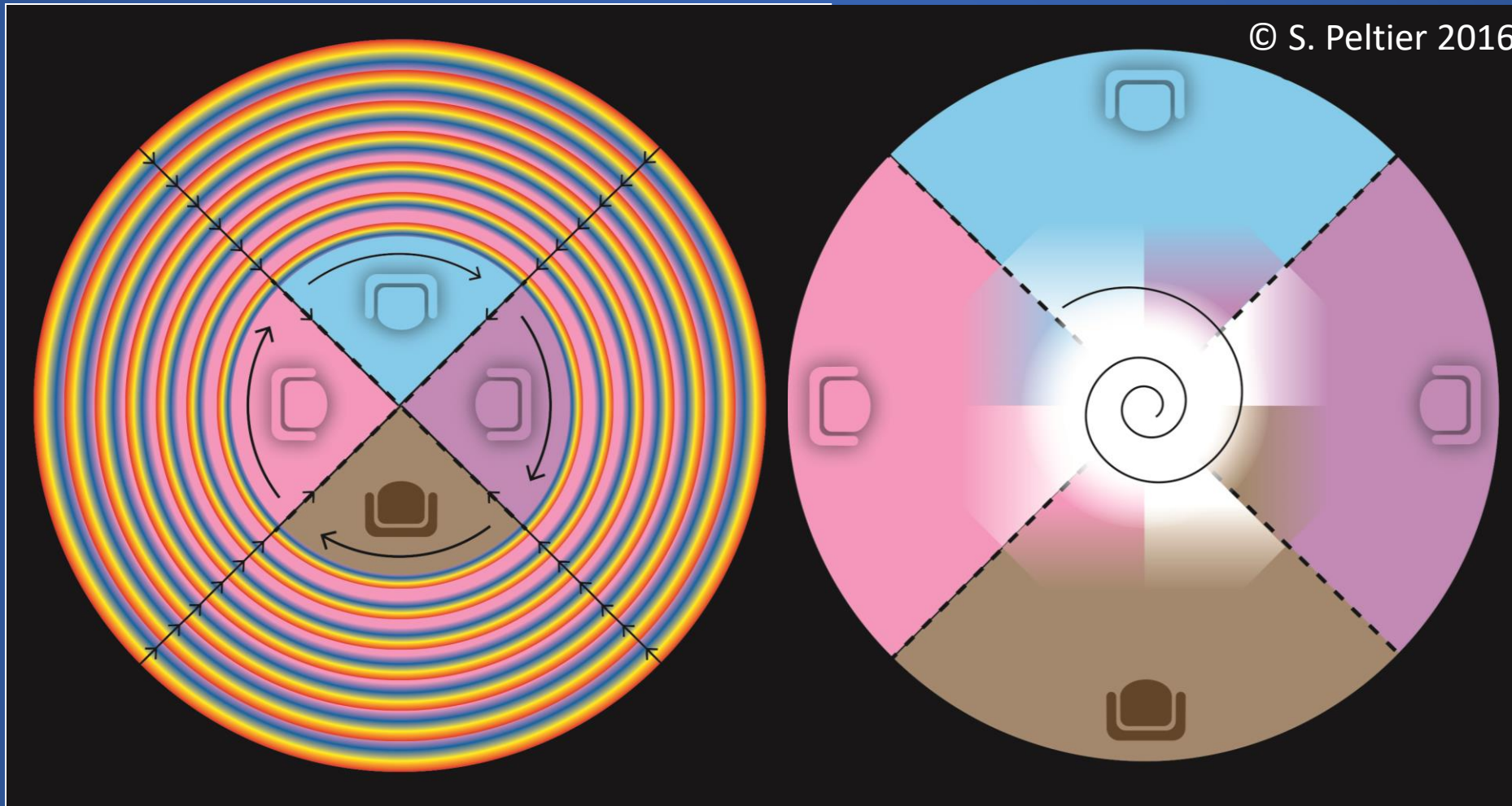
Dr. S. Peltier

2

The Oral Tradition

- **Important for passing information from generation to generation**

- **Philosophy and ideas**

- **Indigenous   Language (Anishinaabemowin)**

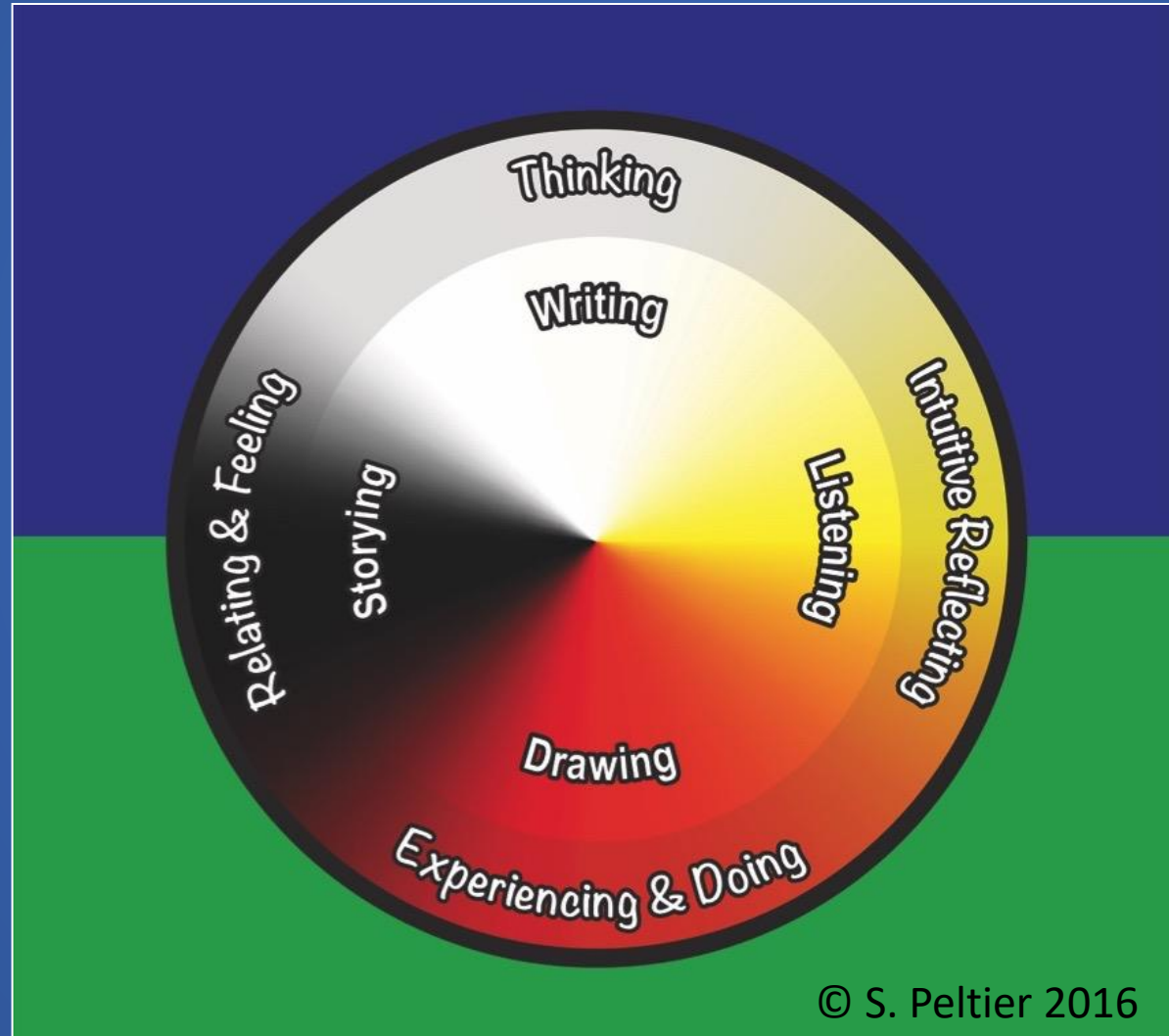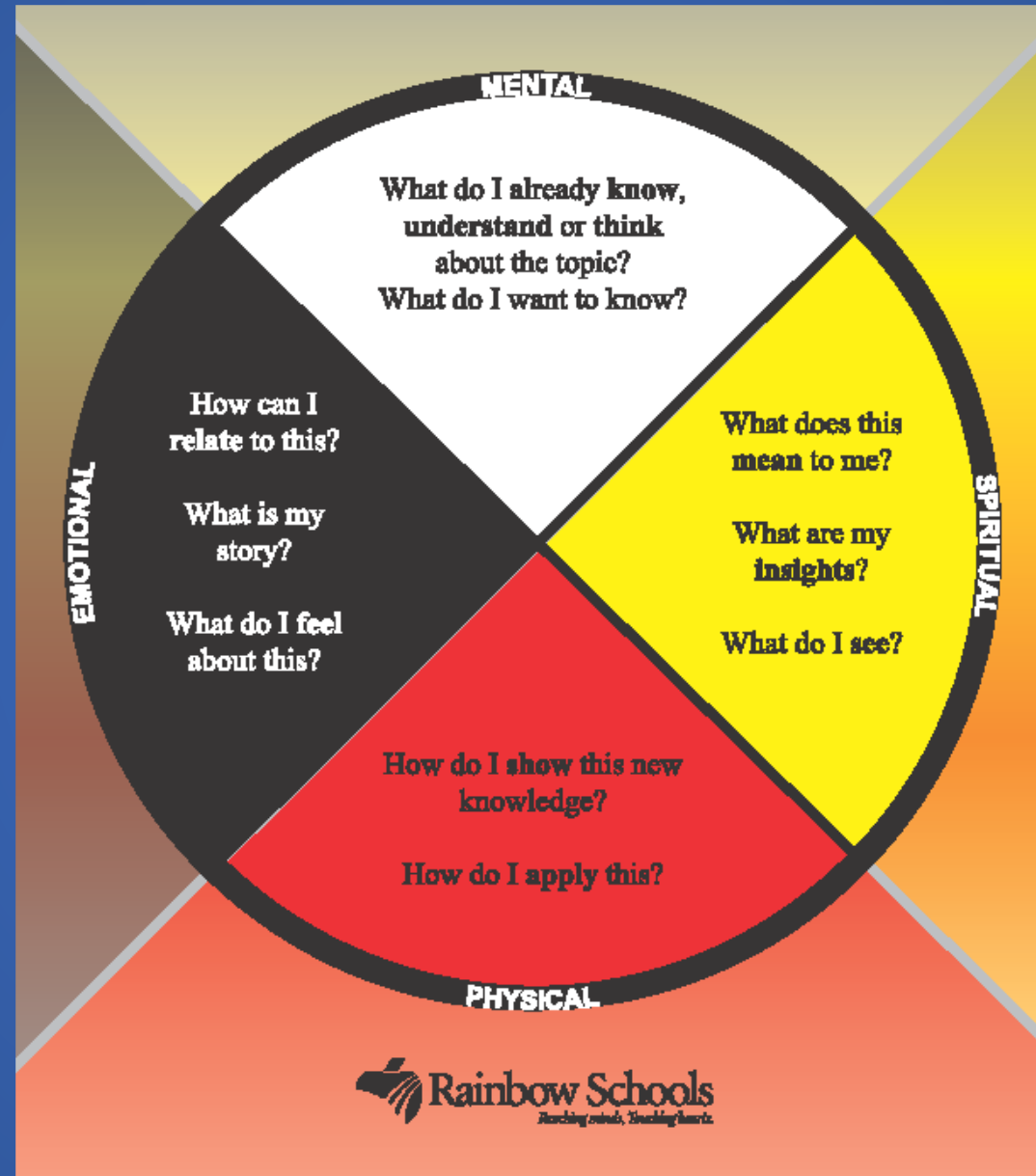- **Traditions and Values**

Stories and Storytelling

}

Passed on by means of spoken word

Learning In The Story Circle

© S. Peltier 2016

Indigenous Pedagogical Process

© S. Peltier 2016

Story Circle Experience

Mnjikaning

Engaging ALL ASPECTS of the Learner

THINKING

- Activating prior knowledge and experience. What does the participant bring?

- What the participant has come to know as a result of the story

FEELING

- What does the story-teller's/ message mean to me?

- What will I always remember about this topic?

- So what? How has my story changed because of this experience?

Engaging ALL ASPECTS of the Learner

PHYSICAL – SHOWING & APPLYING

- How does the story connect to my behavior?

- What can I do to honor my connection to this story?

SPIRITUAL – VISIONING & INTROSPECTION

- What are the enduring understandings? What am I putting into my bundle?

- What does the story mean to me?

- What cultural understandings do I see?

First Nations "Language Communication Profile"

- **Reflection of <u>cultural differences</u>**
  - conceptual knowledge
  - vocabulary
  - interpersonal communication styles
- **Reflection of <u>environmental factors</u>**
  - exposure
  - dual language learning
  - transition
  - setting
- **Reflection of <u>World-View</u>**

World View DIFFERENCE

❖ A wholistic perception or world view among Aboriginal people is supported by the Indigenous language and culture and this persists in socialization structures and pedagogy

❖ Schools and clinics are based on Western-European epistemology Learning and language assessments problematize Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

11

Analytical Thinking
Examining Similarities and Differences

<u>Comparing/Contrasting</u> - identifying similarities and differences among or between things and ideas

❖A wholistic perception or world view among Aboriginal people is supported by the language and this persists genetically – how Aboriginal children are "hard-wired"

❖With specific teaching and practice, this type of thinking skill is quickly acquired (Test-Teach-Retest approach)

- **<u>Classifying</u>** - grouping things that are alike into categories based on their characteristics

- Aboriginal students world view and language supports a different appreciation for features and characteristics (eg. Characteristics of *"horse"=one toe* versus farm animal/animal you can ride)

<u>* Simple Activity</u> – Teacher presents categories to students and they are asked to sort content/items into groups (students must know the characteristics associated with each category and the characteristics associated with each element)

- **<u>Creating metaphors and analogies</u> –** identifying a general or basic pattern that connects information that isn't related to the literal or surface level

  * A is to B as C is to D…the Teacher excludes one or two elements that the students are expected to fill in (eg. Bone is to skeleton as word is to ____.)

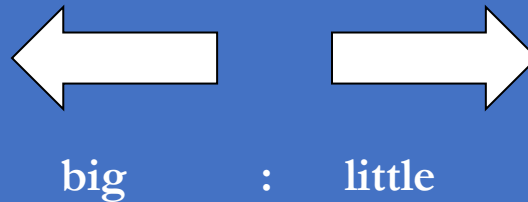 * Students are asked to state the relationship that ties the two sets of items together.

14

Patterns/Relationships for Analogies

- Synonyms

big   :   large

- Antonyms

big   :   little
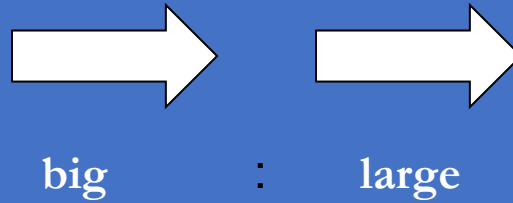
- Item and Category eg. Bird : Animals

- Item and Feature eg. Mouse : Small

- Part and Whole eg. Steering Wheel : Car

- Item and Function eg. Knife : Cuts

- Item and Location eg. Food : Refrigerator

15

Book Resources

- Teachers cannot assume that material now coming out for Aboriginal education is appropriate

- Critical review of books, toys and other materials is key for educator/clinician learning and acquisition of appropriate resources for children

Guidelines for Resource Evaluation

- **Validation and/or Involvement by Aboriginal People**

- **Historical Accuracy**

- **The Origins of Aboriginal People**

- **Cultural Authenticity**

- **Cultural Diversity**

- **Negative Images**

- **Presentation of Aboriginal Women**

- **Language/Terminology**

- **Photos/Illustrations**

- **Aboriginal Viewpoint**

Validation and/or Involvement by Aboriginal People

- Were Aboriginal people involved in the development of the resource?

- Was the resource validated by an Aboriginal group or elders?

- Are the author and/or illustrator well-qualified to deal with specific Aboriginal content?

Cultural Authenticity

- Accurately portray the traditional world views and the cultural meaning of artifacts, such as headdresses, peace dances, and pipes?

- Avoid taking sacred stories out of context and translating/ writing them down?

- Avoid equating sacred stories to fables, fairy tables or magic?

- Accurately portray the traditional world views and the cultural meaning of artifacts, such as headdresses, peace dances, and pipes?

Collaborative Efforts

- **Cultural and linguistic sensitive lens for professionals, educators to view child's presenting profile of communicative behaviors**

- **Parent/cultural informant interview to identify contextual evidence supporting FN's dialect – survey of adults' English/dialect, Aboriginal language and worldview**

- **Observe/identify child's interests and familiar activities and use in assessment, programming sessions**

- **Dynamic assessment (test-teach-retest)**

Group Action Planning

- What action are you committed to?

- What is your vision?

Reflect on it and put it into practice…

- ✓ Make cross-curricular connections by including Aboriginal experiences and contributions to science, art, music, language, history, geography, social studies
- ✓ Discuss and address bias in resources and stereotypical images
- ✓ Authenticate Aboriginal knowledge
- ✓ Honor Aboriginal pedagogy
- ✓ Check terminology/language
- ✓ Elicit parental and community participation
- ✓ Acknowledge traditions and celebrations

Other Ideas….

Miigwech/Thank you.

Dr. S. Peltier

Peltier, S. (2017). An Anishinaabe Perspective on Children's Language Learning To Inform "Seeing the Aboriginal Child". *Language and Literacy Journal,* University of Alberta.

Peltier, S. (2016). *Demonstrating Anishinaabe Storywork Circle Pedagogy: Creating Conceptual Space for Ecological Relational Knowledge in the Classroom.* PhD Dissertation - Laurentian University. Available at National Library Thesis Canada. Available at: www.collectionscanada.ca/thesescanada

Peltier, S. (2014). Assessing Anishinaabe Children's Narratives: An Ethnographic Exploration of Elders' Perspectives, *Canadian Journal of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology,* Vol 38, No. 2, Summer 2014, pp. 174-193.

Peltier, S. (2011). Providing Culturally Sensitive and Linguistically Appropriate Services: An Insider Construct. *Canadian Journal of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology* (35, 2, Summer 2011, 126-134) Available at:http://www.caslpa.ca/english/resources/database/files/2011_CJSLPA_Vol_35/No_02_103-213/Peltier_CJSLPA_2011.pdf.

Peltier, S. (2010).First Nation English Dialect and Language Literacy Development in Schools. Canadian Journal of Native Education, Vol 32, pg 114-142

Peltier, S. (2009). *First Nations English Dialects in Young Children: Assessment Issues and Supportive Interventions* Canadian Language and Literacy Network Website – Encyclopedia of Language and Literacy Development

http://literacyencyclopedia.ca/indes.php?fa-items.show&topicId=276