

# The Way of the Tireless Runner: An Aboriginal Pedagogical Guide for Kwantlen University College Faculty



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### Kwantlen

The name Kwantlen is derived from an aboriginal word meaning “tireless runner” or “tireless hunter” and refers to the Sto:lo Nation, now called the Kwantlen First Nation, living along the historic Fraser River. The Kwantlen were the largest group on the lower Fraser, with a traditional territory extending from Mud Bay in Tsawwassen, through the Serpentine and Salmon Rivers and along the Fraser River, east past Mission.

### Aboriginal Population in Kwantlen Catchment Area

Surrey experienced the largest influx of First Nations people in the GVRD area since 1996 (1,830 people from 1996 - 2001), representing 32% of region's aboriginal population growth, while Surrey, Delta, Langley, Burnaby together accounted for 68.2% of the growth across GVRD.

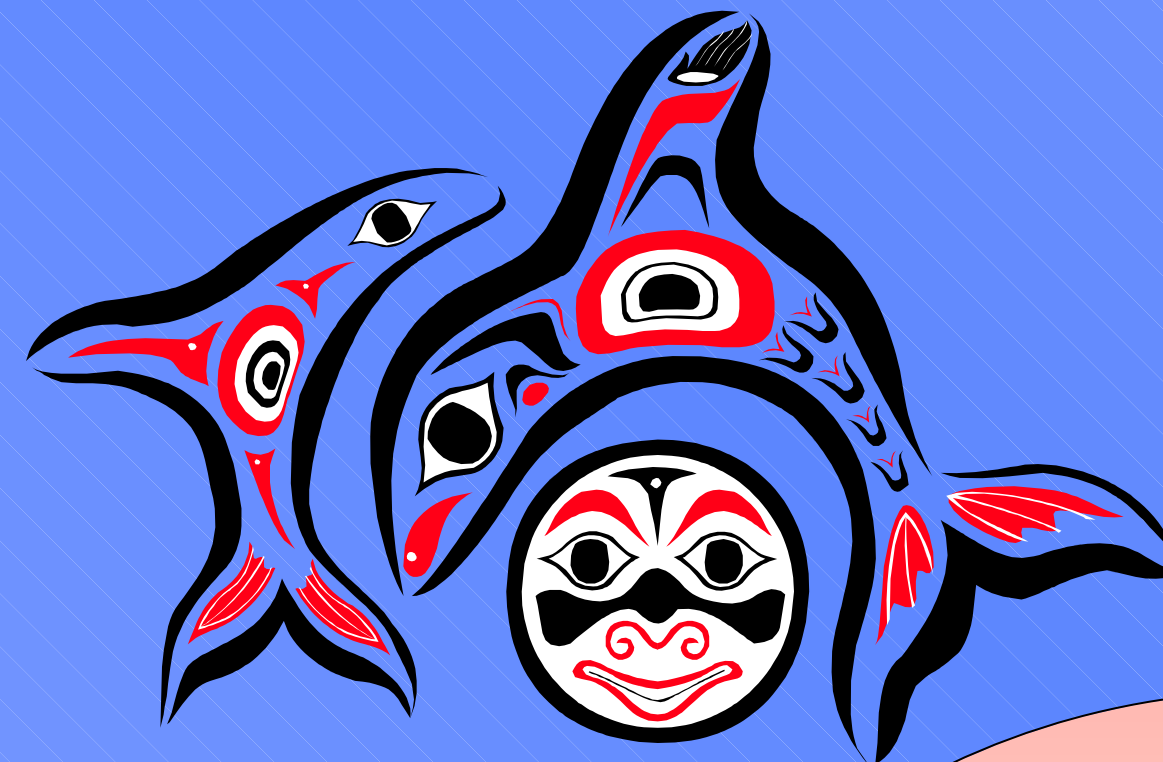
### Story Telling

Story-telling plays a major role in the oral transmission of knowledge, skills and values needed to live. Stories speak of the origins of life, proper relationships to various forms of life and life experiences. Also, the sharing of one's life story and experiences is a well-established method of teaching. Stories act as mirrors wherein the learner is allowed to view him/herself and thus gain insights and understandings to help him/her along the road of life.” (Pitawanakwat, 2001).

### First Nation Pedagogy

Traditional educational approaches are profoundly different from those of the mainstream educational system. Holistic (physical, mental, spiritual, emotional) growth and development of the person, experiential learning, oral tradition, and student-centeredness are key elements of the traditional approach.

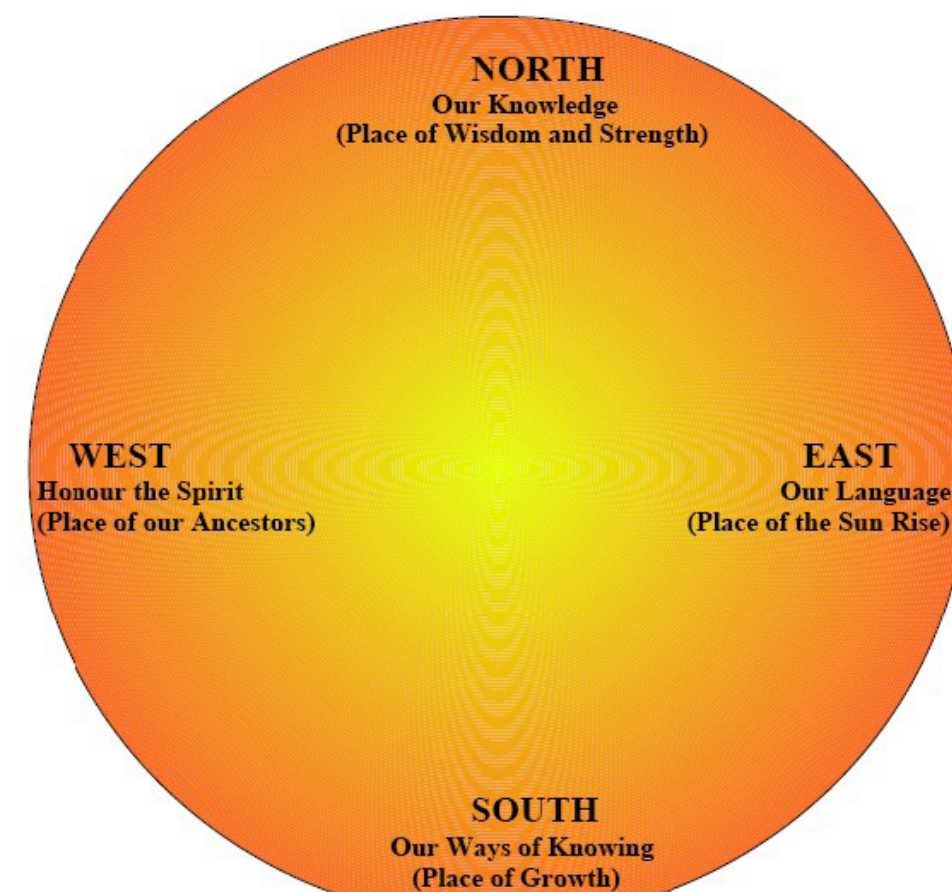
Further, and of vital importance, is the fact that it is grounded in spirituality. The pedagogical activities include teaching in a way that learning includes respectful relations, building on experiential learning, listening well, allowing space, story-telling and story-making, supporting quaternity, dialogue, positionality, relevance, reciprocity, reflectivity, and utilizing a strong Elders - informed, ecologically situated, creative, visual-auditory learning space within a self-governance philosophy and natural world context.



### Inherent Aboriginal Values

Rights and freedoms of the individual  
Rights and freedoms of the group  
Respect for elders  
Respect for land and Community  
Respect for self  
Sacredness of life  
Spirituality  
Wisdom  
Honour and Fortitude  
Generosity  
Extended family  
Peace, Harmony  
Acceptance  
Quietness, Patience, Dignity  
Connectedness of all living things

### TEACHINGS OF THE FOUR DIRECTIONS for First Nations Educational Planning



### Circle Talks

In its simplest form a circle talk:

- is done in a complete circle
- only the person holding the stick talks, all the rest listen
  - the stick is passed around in a clockwise direction
- a person talks until they are finished, being respectful of time
  - the circle talk is complete when everyone has had the opportunity to speak
- a person may pass the stick without speaking, if they so wish
  - if desired, the stick may be passed around again
  - what is said in the circle stays in the circle
  - a circle is used to discuss issues of importance
- is extremely respectful of everyone as individuals and what they have to say.

### RESPECTFUL RELATIONS

- Accept and live with other's differentness
    - Resolve conflicts
  - Compassion, empathy, understanding
    - Listening well
    - Allowing space
    - Respecting self
    - Respecting others
    - Respecting nature
- Respect stems from the belief that every individual is responsible for themselves, and it is the responsibility of others to teach respect.
- In the past, before European influences, First Nations people had their own social systems which addressed issues such as discipline and respect.
    - Respected personal space.
    - Code of silence is taught from an early age.

