A New Tool: Land Acknowledgment Resource Cards (LARC)

by Grace Crowley-Thomas

Throughout Canada, New Zealand, and parts of the United States, educators and leaders are engaging in a practice called “land acknowledgment.” Generally, this is a practice that is meant to recognize and pay respect to the Indigenous people first who inhabited and stewarded the currently occupied land. As we know, Indigenous people have lived, and continue to live, in just about every part of the world. The goal of these cards is to help educators introduce and grow an understanding around land acknowledgments. It is vital that educators recognize this as a starting point and that to pay true respect, action needs to accompany acknowledgement. These “each-one-teach-one” style cards can be used in a variety of ways and this article provides a few suggestions around how an educator might engage with them with learners. These cards are not necessarily intended to be used all together, rather as a resource for the educator to pick and choose what cards are most appropriate for their group. Some of the cards are more appropriate for certain maturity levels than others. While these cards are a resource, it is the responsibility of the educator to learn about the issues of the local tribe and build relationships. Acknowledgement alone is not enough, there must also be action. Without action, we are just being performative and tokenizing of Indigenous peoples and cultures. In what ways are we simultaneously decolonizing our practice? Our minds? Educators should use these cards as a jumping off point to dive further into Indigenous ways of knowing and being and issues that local nations are dealing with.

- Learn more about Indigenous sovereignty
- Learn more about Indigenous treaty rights
- Use images to introduce Vi Hilbert, political cartoons, youth activism, Indigenous art
- Write the name of the original inhabitants of the land you are currently on
- Open discussion

Opportunities for Use

Pass them out to students and have each person share something from their card. Prompts may include:

- Why are land acknowledgments important?
- What is something new you learned?
- Can you create your own land acknowledgment?
- If we were to create our own land acknowledgment, what would be important for us to consider?

Choose specific cards that center the information you want to teach and present them to the group

- Could be used in conjunction with a Suquamish basket lesson
• Discussion of Lushootseed language and dictionary. How does language live and die?
• Political cartoons
• Discuss what the artist is conveying

Ask learners to make their own political cartoon
• Environmental issues
• Justice Issues
• Youth Issues
• Treaties and sovereignty

Land acknowledgment examples
• What is a land acknowledgement?
• What are common components?
• What are some differences?
• Why is it important?

Use the cards as each-one-teach-one cards
Create your own land acknowledgement with students
Have students look at the artwork and form a discussion around them
• What patterns do you see?
• What shapes do you see?
• What do you think the artist is trying to tell us?

Use the artwork and native land maps to have your students investigate and write the name of the ancestral lands you are on. Refer to this daily.
• Write the name of the tribes whose land you are on the provided artwork
• Why would the artists make this work?
• Youth made this artwork
• Ask about artwork that has a purpose
• Ask learners if they have ever made art with a message
• What was that message?
• Did they show anyone?
• How was it received

Sources

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To see the full set of Land Acknowledgement Resource Cards (LARC), visit https://clearingmagazine.org/archives/16880