

TEACHING TIP OF THE MONTH

Theme: Teaching and Learning Ideas for Indigenous Peoples Day

Tip 1: Incorporate Indigenous Perspectives.

Including material and resources that represent indigenous voices is one way to recognize Indigenous Peoples Day, even beyond its observance on October 10. Below are a few resources to explore indigenous people's artifacts, ideas, and research across disciplines.

1. **History and Artifacts.** The Smithsonian [American Indian Museum](#)'s website offers art, artifacts and stories in Indigenous people's voices. In addition, you can find other examples by searching the collections of tribal museums across the nation using the [American Alliance of Museums](#) search tool. (Note: Select "Ethnically/Culturally/Tribally Specific" from the Museum Type menu). These resources invite opportunities for object-based learning activities using digital representations of the artifacts.
2. **TED Talks.** Many Indigenous speakers have presented TED Talks on topics such as climate change, economic empowerment, artistic representation, and the trauma of oppression. A simple search of [TED Talks by indigenous people](#) will yield enough results to build a playlist to prompt students in writing, research, and critical thinking activities.
3. **Research Articles.** [AnthroSource](#) is one of many databases accessible to MC students and employees. This tool would be a good place to explore research and scholarly work related to indigenous populations and have students discuss critical questions about the research and the role of indigenous voices in the research.
4. **Poetry.** The Poetry Foundation maintains a collection of [Native American Poetry and Culture](#). The collection's poems represent established and new poets representing various tribes and include work from Joy Harjo, U.S. Poet Laureate (2019-2022) and member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

Tip 2: Address Land Acknowledgements.

Land acknowledgments have become popular in recent years, despite a long tradition of the Indigenous People recognizing the importance of the land and their connection to it. Whether written or spoken, recent versions of land acknowledgments are meant to "recognize, respect, and affirm the ongoing relationship between Indigenous people and the land" ([Michigan State University Native American Institute Guide to Land Acknowledgement](#)). Here are three ideas to consider if you want to address land acknowledgments in your course:

1. Incorporate land acknowledgment statements in your syllabus or your course. To create a land acknowledgment statement, consider these steps from "[Bringing Land Acknowledgements to Your Workplace](#)" (Powell, 2020) as a guide:
 - **Identify.** Research carefully and check multiple sources to identify the correct tribal group for the land to avoid controversy or division.
 - **Articulate.** The statement can simply acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of the land or incorporate more detail that speaks to the history of the land

and its original inhabitants, including an acknowledgment of the mistreatment and migration of the people.

- **Deliver.** Deliver the statement in a manner that honors both the people and the land and inspires the audience to consider what they can do to address the impact of colonization.

For additional ideas on meaningful land acknowledgments, see [Making Land Acknowledgements in the University Setting Meaningful and Appropriate](#) and [Native Governance Center's Guide to Indigenous Land Acknowledgements](#).

2. **Discuss:** While some view land acknowledgments as [empty gestures](#) that do not go far enough, others believe land acknowledgments can be a first step to inspiring. Engage students in a discussion about the merits and criticisms of land acknowledgments. (see [Going Beyond Land Acknowledgments | Arts Midwest](#).)
3. **Explore:** Consider projects that use the [Native Land Digital's Land Indigenous Land Map](#), an evolving resource that helps users identify the indigenous origins of the land we occupy and explore the history, current activities/events, and local policies that impact those tribes.

References:

Guide to Land Acknowledgements. (n.d.). Michigan State University Native American Rights Institute. Retrieved from <https://nai.msu.edu/about/guide-to-land-acknowledgements>.

Powell, E. (2020, December 15). *Bringing Land Acknowledgements to Your Workplace*. She Geeks Out. <https://www.shegeeksout.com/blog/bringing-land-acknowledgements-to-your-workplace>

More Info on Teaching Tips

"Teaching Tips of the Month" began as a project of Program for Active Learning in STEM (PALS) and Teaching to Increase Diversity and Equity in STEM (TIDES) grants. Many thanks to Ray Gonzales and Alla Webb, who served as Principal Investigators of the TIDES grants. You can view archived Teaching Tips of the Month on [The Hub](#). We welcome feedback and invite you to submit ideas for this publication to Angela Lanier, angela.lanier@montgomerycollege.edu

October 2022