

Website Creation to Support Teacher and Museum Partnerships

Alana L. Kupersmith*

**Corresponding author*

Author's Note

This project was possible because of the support of the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve in Washington state, and is one of the vital sites that educate others about the Indigenous Peoples' cultures of the Pacific Northwest. This paper has been reformatted with excerpts, data, and research from an Educational Doctorate dissertation published by Alana L. Kupersmith conferred in May 2024. The website can be found under the [Teaching Resources](#) section titled the alkcurriculumproject.com

Abstract

This paper presents the successes and challenges of creating an online Indigenous Peoples curriculum. The website is embedded in the education section of the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve in Washington state. This project promotes unity between educators and museums. Constructivism, Community of Inquiry, New Museum Theory, and Indigenous New Museum Theory discussed. I had the support of the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve to conduct research, create content, and volunteer virtually.

Keywords: Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous New Museum Theory, New Museum Theory, Constructivism, Community of Inquiry, Museum Education Programming, Teaching Presence (TP), Cognitive Presence (CP), Social Presence (SP)

Alana Kupersmith, Ed.D. is a Special Education Teacher in the Issaquah School, Washington. Dr. Kupersmith can be reached at alana.kupersmith@gmail.com

Background

Teaching online through Learning Management Systems (LMS) and Canvas has been in practice for decades. When online instruction became a requirement, students had challenges accessing required programs for remote learning. These ranged from limited internet access to minimal assistance for logins that pertained to LMS, such as Google Classroom or Canvas. Studies have shown that online curriculum resources also “bears much resemblance with learning in the face-to face setting; but also has unique opportunities and challenges” (Huang, 2019, p.1882). One of the challenges was that students did not have printers and/or scanners at home. These technologies are needed for printing worksheets, submitting homework, and determining proof of participation in the remote education model. Other concerns revolve around student engagement and the consideration that “students are unlikely to engage in instruction if they do not find the instruction available to them meaningful or stimulating” (Domina & Renzulli, et al., 2021, p.3; Fredericks, et al., 2004). Therefore, teachers also needed to have direct methods of instruction for academic tasks. This could not be possible without teachers learning the skill first (Schrum & Levin, 2015).

Traditionally students attended field trips to engage in standards-based content for all subjects including the exploration of history and cultures. However, in 2020, 90% of museums closed to the public and relied on remote instruction models to support patronage. By 2021, 43% of museums remained closed to the public. Institutions increased or developed their online learning opportunities within the categories of family, school, and professional programming (Ennes, et al., 2021). By partnering with an institution, students and teachers benefit from a resource with open accessibility without logins supported by district web browsers. A partnership between the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve in Washington state and teachers is a free, engaging, comprehensive resource. The Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve is an example of an institution that is “a theoretical thoroughfare for understanding broad, social processes of representation, of identity formation, and the establishment, reproduction, and disruption of social inequalities” (Erickson, 1999; Trofanenko & Segall, 2014, p.57). In exhibitions there are items of invaluable importance honoring the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve.

The site is found in the [Teaching Resources](#) section with lesson plans, games, and links to relevant resources divided by grade level and topic. The grade levels represented with state standards and content encourages interactivity and discovery. However, the main audience for this research are the educators to help with planning and lesson presentation. This is a continuation of museum education programming (Hein, 2012) supporting the idea that “museum websites, in particular, provide new ways to interact with the museum” (Marstine, 2005, p.30). This partnership explored how a teacher can create academic content and lessons for an institution outside of the classroom with the intent to be “ready-to-use multimedia lessons” (Chong & Smith, 2017, p.175), including visual and audio methods to engage the learner. The technology in this project was not meant to replace the teacher (Sharples, et al, 2016). Digital learning opportunities establish and “engage the learner by allowing a certain degree of choice and control over the flow of information by mouse-clicking or screen-tapping” (Chong & Smith, 2017, p.169). The linked readings and videos allow for more passive learning (Saiki, 2010).

Whereas the language components were more interactive (Saiki, 2010) to support standards. Research also states that:

Some digital instructional materials might have been created to support noncontent goals, such as social/emotional development. Other materials might operate from a position that content standards represent a baseline of knowledge only, and students should be given the opportunity to go beyond the standards... (Noddings, 2013; Rice & Ortiz, 2021, p.986).

The curriculum's goals allow for multiple entry points and serve to engage and inform learners. The content is open to interpretation as it correlates to a specific exhibition on view at the time of website creation and development. Each lesson is independent of the others, representing stand-alone learning units used in museum education methodology (Chong & Smith, 2017). Within an online curriculum, this level of flexibility promotes the museums' digital presence (Chong & Smith, 2017). The information on the site provided data collection opportunities and extended activities available to students through visual/audio and text (Sharples, et al., 2016).

Research Questions

The questions below are intended to guide research and data collection, these questions emphasized curriculum development and participant reflection:

Guiding Research Questions

To what extent can online curriculums be used to teach accurate and critical topics in social studies?

- ☐ Which aspects of Washington State Indigenous Peoples' education curriculums are found in select cultural centers? (Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve, respectively).
- ☐ How does the creation of an online curriculum promote interest and participation in the content?
- ☐ Which activities were the most successful and how can that success be replicated?
- ☐ How can an online curriculum teach about cultural customs, traditions, and history?
- ☐ Which methods are most successful for educational programming? (Surveys were available on the site through Forms. The determination of a successful study was measured with data from the forms and reflection about the site from participants and a member of the museum education team at the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve)

The first question addressed planning and research efforts that are integral to the partnership with the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve and the requirements from Washington state curriculum about Indigenous Peoples. The second question discusses the idea of an interactive site. Questions three to five analyze the educational site in response to data collection, interviews, and findings. There is a focus on technology but at times there is a lack of supporting resources to teach to all student levels in the classroom.

In Washington state there is a requirement to teach about the history of Indigenous Peoples at the K-12 level in legislation passed in 2015 under Senate Bill 5433. This bill was modified from the original 2005 legislation and renamed in 2024. Legislature was passed as [House Bill 1879](#) changing the title of the curriculum in honor of John McCoy (*lulilaš*) (OSPI, Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State, 2024). The purpose of this curriculum site was to gain the interest of educators who may struggle with teaching this unit of social studies without enough suitable online resources.

In 2016, Washington State law mandated that all K-12 schools adopt an Indigenous Peoples' curriculum. Instruction aimed to "examine the historical impact of physical geography, such as the need to be near salmon, a centerpiece of early tribal life. Currently, students learn about the hardships of reservation life and problems created when people moved from their established homeland" (Bandici, 2016). These lessons support the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve mission to further public knowledge of Indigenous Peoples' history, present and future, through content supported by state-wide initiatives.

Project Rationale and Description

This research is from the perspective that the educational landscape and methods change over time. The goal was to create a resource for educators used in conjunction with the video created by the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve and various educational websites. When beginning to create the components of the site, the plan was to create an extension of their education materials into online activities with games containing worksheets, links, and videos along with input from the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve. The videos, lessons, worksheets, rely on what was already present through exhibitions and academic standards. The Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve staff agreed to view any work and make edits or corrections if I erred in language, concept, image, or source. This aligns with the idea that, as someone who is non-Indigenous, I sought the approval of both Indigenous Peoples, and the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve (Younging, 2018).

This was especially important as there are laws that protect the rights and items of importance of Indigenous Peoples through the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), passed by Congress in 1990 (Marstine, 2006). NAGPRA protects Native American burial sites and requires museums to inventory Native American remains and ceremonial artifacts, as well as provide a list of archived objects to federally recognized tribes. "NAGPRA states that tribes have a legal right to request the return of these objects" (Marstine, 2006, p.20). This contains aspects of property law and civil rights legislation that necessitates increased contact between the Indigenous nations, archaeologists, and museums (Nash & Colwell, 2020; Wheeler et al, 2022, p. 9). Through enforcing the legislation, maintenance of such collections has provided empowerment for these communities. The initiation of NAGPRA has led to the founding and/or expansion of museums and cultural centers on ancestral lands (Marstine, 2006, p. 20). Despite these efforts, items that belong to Indigenous Peoples from various Nations and tribes are still in museum collections (Nash & Colwell, 2020; Wheeler, et al., 2022;).

Discussion and Theory

The theories that support this view are rooted in Constructivism defined as the thought “that human learning is constructed, that learners build new knowledge upon the foundation of previous learning” (Bada & Olusegun, 2015, p.62). Learners possess knowledge gained from previous experience recalling prior knowledge attributing to new experiences (Bada & Olusegun, 2015; Phillips, 1995). This is contingent upon the teacher or student and how they are using the curriculum resource. By contrast, Community of Inquiry (COI) is a collaborative-constructivist process model rooted in Dewey’s educational philosophy and social constructivism (Castellanos-Reyes, 2020; Garrison, 2017).

It has multiple definitions, depending on the educational philosopher, and defined as “students are in control of their own learning” (Howlett, 2008, p.2; Milbrandt, 2004) and as students serving as active participants to construct knowledge (Howlett, 2008). This supports educational philosophies that reference prior knowledge as espoused by Dewey. The philosophy states:

An experience has pattern and structure, because it is not just doing and undergoing in alternation, but consists of them in relationship ... The action and its consequence must be joined in perception. This relationship is what gives meaning; to grasp it is the objective of all intelligence. The scope and content of the relations measure the significant content of an experience. A child’s experience may be intense, but, because of lack of background from past experience, relations between undergoing and doing are slightly grasped, and the experience does not have great depth or breadth. (Dewey 1934; Hein, 2012, p.32)

Schools and institutions can achieve learning through experience by collaboration via in person and remote instruction opportunities. Research conducted in 2021 on the impact of online programming for museums after the events of the pandemic cited recommendations that support the potential for change. Moreover, “museums need to invest in partnerships and professional development for their educators in order to create sustainable museum-based online programming” (Ennes et al., 2021, p.468). Thus, within a cultural institution, the creators of the site, lessons, and exhibitions are responsible for planning and research that aligns with preexisting onsite programming, or state and national standards (Ennes, et al, 2021). The students and teachers may not be able to internalize all the knowledge, either at the museum or on the website, but they will be able to construct new knowledge from their experience.

COI falls between two different schools of thought that are part of Constructivist theory. In one, teachers provide access to predetermined answers within the content, whereas the other path is to have students follow new knowledge and come to their own conclusions regarding the materials presented (Golding, 2009). However, integrated within these two ends of the Constructivist spectrum is COI, defined as “a discussion about ‘topics of interest’ in the service of constructing knowledge and common understanding, and internalizing the discourse of the inquiring community” (Golding, 2009, p.474-475; Pardales & Girod, 2006). This implies that the materials and information presented will facilitate discussion based on interest level. Teachers

have a role, but it is the student who participates in autonomous learning through discovery of new or prior knowledge about the content. In Constructivism, there is also the idea that “subject matter is about concepts rather than facts” (Black, 2005, p.140), meaning that there are layers in students’ comprehension of the content.

Museums today are cognizant that technology is a key factor in maintaining and attracting interest in exhibitions and providing educational opportunities that were not available before such advances (Chong, Smith, 2017). The most common technological forms museums embrace is through digital collections. Digitization allows for more of the collection to be on view in an alternate space and opens new avenues of knowledge for patrons farther away (Løvlie & Waern, 2022). Constructivism and COI support a variety of learners and allow for content to be repurposed. Researchers also hold the view that:

designed to only complement visits to the physical institution. This idea supports research that suggests museums should use online media to support activities rather than replace them.
(Liew, 2006; Saiki & Robins, 2008; Saiki, 2010, p.53).

It is beneficial to have resources available to the public that correlate to a specific online learning experience (Chong, Smith, 2017). Thus, museum educators and teachers can include technology that applies formal and informal elements of learning with digital and interactive aspects (Chong, Smith, 2017). Criticisms of these theories come in the form of three presences: Cognitive Presence (CP), Social Presence (SP), and Teaching Presence (TP). CP refers to the level of discourse and reflection. Students who are working online may need more guidance in this goal. SP is defined as “the ability of learners to feel effectively connected with peers and perceive their full personality through computer mediated communication” (Castellanos-Reyes, 2020, p.557; Garrison, et al. 2000; Swan & Ice, 2010). SP contrasts the criticisms of CP through students’ ability to connect through technology. TP is “the design, facilitation, and direction of cognitive and social processes” (Anderson, et al. 2001, p.5) and includes peer-to-peer learning, which facilitates (Castellano-Reyes, 2020; Swan & Ice, 2010,) a path for learning to occur. Each presence in isolation, however, does not have an impact on learning, especially within the online environment. According to COI theory the three presences of (TP), (CP), and (SP) in the educational environment overlap and are interdependent (Huang, et al, 2019). COI scholars have determined that TP is fundamental for both SP and CP (Huang, et al., 2019).

Other risks are the potential to take focus away from physical exhibits when students have already had visual access through an online platform (His, 2003; Løvlie & Waern, 2022, p. 35). There are fewer opportunities for making meaning when interacting with the material because of a limited SP (Løvlie & Waern, 2022; Mortimer & Scott, 2003). The ability to participate in open discussions facilitated a continuum as research suggests that a “COI framework provides guidance for both research in online teaching and the design of online learning experiences” (Castellanos-Reyes, 2020, p.558). These discussions support the idea that, to be successful at presenting potentially abstract information, there needs to be a consideration of visitor needs addressed in conjunction with learning theory (Black, 2005). Determining that there must be direct instruction to provide prior knowledge if the students are not aware of the content. Solutions for hands-on learning were a concern in studies conducted in 2021. A viable option

was the use of “hands-on components through activity prompts and materials kits” (Ennes, et al., 2021, p.475).

Before COVID-19, materials loaned out to classes from the Hibulb Cultural Center Preserve served as kits. There is a syllabus discussing cedar and salmon and the impact that those resources have on the past, present, and future of the Tulalip Indigenous Peoples. Inside the education box, there are examples of roots, representations of salmon, miniature canoes, baskets, and woven items, such as mats. However, the box was not available again until after the events of the pandemic for safety reasons. During this period, the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve were fully operational, and the contents created by museum educators were available online. The inspiration for the interactive online curriculum concept connects to the educational philosophy of Dewey. Experiential learning reflected a return to museums and the creation of pre- and post-materials to support standards or lesson-based student learning and is a cornerstone of education. In lieu of consistent involvement, museum experiences can guide students and teachers in experiential learning practices either in person or online. Museums allow for critical thinking skills to develop and grow in a public or virtual environment.

As museums embrace constructivism, they create experiences that are relevant to their exhibitions. This philosophy transferred to remote instructional opportunities through sites that require museum educators to be more open to different modes of learning, separate from traditional classroom models (Crow & Din, 2010). The more abstract concept derived from constructivism is New Museum Theory (NMT) defined as:

...things are more than just things; museum narratives construct national identity and legitimize groups. When we look at a museum object, we might think that we see something pure and “authentic” -- untouched since its creation. We have a tendency to see museum objects as unmediated anchors to the past.
(Marstine, 2006, p.6).

Within NMT there are elements of constructivism and Indigenous New Museum Theory (INMT) specific to the topic of the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve exhibitions. INMT defined as

...an Indigenous specific set of guiding techniques or rules a museum or exhibit uses to engage new voices, interpretations, and dialogues, attempting to combat colonial narratives or harmful representations of indigenous peoples and cultures within the museum.
(Baudino, 2013, p.62)

Museum workers make changes in the narrative to challenge or reverse the status of the content or practice as it pertains to Indigenous Peoples (Baudino, 2013; Marstine, 2006). Other aspects of the project are technology-focused to support the overall goals of the curriculum site. These views differ from the previous definition of museums and make cultural “institutions responsible for conserving and classifying historical objects” (Greenhill, 1992, p.41; Løvlie & Waern, 2022). The Tulalip Indigenous Peoples possess intellectual and physical control of the items that are on display (Pohawpatchoko, et.al., 2017) and the theories of NMT and INMT

extend to historical and current knowledge of tradition, language, social issues, and education (Baudino, 2013).

According to Colin Beard, a Dewey scholar, “for an experience to be ‘educative,’ it also had to lead the learner on to new experiences and adhere to what is called the principle of continuity” (Beard, 2018, p.28; Dewey, 1938;). Learning occurs when there is an intriguing and motivating aspect that will engage and enlighten us based on experience. This claim discusses constructivism as a central philosophy and describes how learning occurs:

...through meaningful and interesting experiences that involve individual, social, and environmental interactions. Dewey’s notion of interaction is acknowledged as central to contemporary thinking about curriculum perspectives relating to transmission, and transformative orientations. (Beard, 2018, p.28; Miller & Seller, 1985).

Experiential learning in any capacity can allow students and teachers to express their interest in the topic within a formal school-structured setting or an informal experience. The individual has a “direct encounter with the phenomenon being studied rather than merely thinking about the encounter or only considering the possibility of doing something with it” (Keeton & Tate, 1978, p.2; Kolb, 2014). Based on this approach, learning occurs by doing. Teachers model how to perform a task or show interactive/audiovisual examples first. Then they guide students in independent practice of the task. In remote instruction, this occurs in separate ways depending on technology or application. The most common methods found are screen sharing and direct access to age- and content-appropriate links, which are easily transferable to modeling for a game or online worksheet.

Methods

After creating the basic structure of the site through Google, I compiled information, videos, and links. I created lessons and set them to open as new pages on the site. I also found tools to create games. Through the interactive curriculum, teachers access a resource from a reputable institution with ease and minimal to non-existent planning. The materials presented on the curriculum site are one fraction of the information and resources available for use in remote instruction. Data collection from focus groups were synchronous because “participants are essentially confined (but perhaps not as much with face-to-face groups) to the full length of the focus group” (Abrams, 2017, p.431). This allowed data about the site to share in real time and transcribed using tools available through ZOOM. Alternatively, participants typed their responses on the Google form provided as a part of the focus group.

The 4A Framework devised by scholars Rice and Ortiz in the text, *Evaluating Digital Instructional Materials for K-12 Online and Blended Learning*, (Rice & Ortiz, 2021, p. 978), defines the methodology of instructional planning prior to the data collection phase. Planning the website required accessibility, active engagement, advocacy for inclusion, and accountability. In terms of accessibility, lessons were user-friendly with games to reflect active engagement. Through game-based learning opportunities, evidence suggests that “games can contribute to a number of benefits to education, in particular, modeling principles of effective teaching and

learning” (Burn, 2016, p.4). Partnering with the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve correlates to the advocacy for inclusion as Indigenous Peoples were central to the intentions of the project.

In reference to accountability, the lessons and content created to support the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve and data collection remained anonymous. These are two methods explicitly connected to the original idea for a curriculum site. They are representations of the interconnected nature of educational methodology. The project is an existing open resource to learn about the culture of Indigenous Peoples with guidance as needed for comprehension from their teacher.

Data Analysis

The data from surveys, interviews, and focus groups analyzed mixed methods approaches. Quantitatively, the surveys utilized Google Forms, which charted responses and tracked choices made by participants in the survey. This applied to the survey on the site. Focus group responses were more detailed and had a separate Google Form. Interviews with Museum Assistant Courtnie Reyes and ZOOM focus group participants had their responses organized by question or transcribed for clarity depending on the discussion method. This contributed to the overall academic and cultural effectiveness of the site by providing clear responses from interview participants about methodology.

Participants and Data Collection

The Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve is the hosting site for the curriculum to maintain a collaborative relationship between the program and the institution. As a part of data collection educators evaluated the site and completed an anonymous Google Forms survey or participated in pre-planned ZOOM focus groups. Teachers and school districts within Washington State benefit most, as the location of the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve is in the same state. Teachers and students outside of Washington State can use the concept of the curriculum site and apply it to their own units on Indigenous Peoples, nations, and tribes.

Through their participation, educators examined how the website could benefit their instructional needs. Data collection began with a Google Forms survey at the bottom of the curriculum site that teachers completed. Google was the most familiar and comprehensive for website design and editing, as well as cost; regardless of other scholars’ comments about limitations (Ransick, 2015). Focus groups had participants view the site and provide input in further data collection opportunities.

The second method of data collection was interviews with teachers and in focus groups through forms, questions, and a select Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve staff member. Questionnaires followed the focus group participation.

Interview Questions

The reference *Anthropologists and Museums* inspired the questions. Throughout the educator interview, teachers spoke about the ambitions and challenges of teaching. A focus group evaluated the website within the following parameters:

They may be given specific tasks (or no particular task) and could then provide feedback during the hands-on part as well as overall feedback during conversations with their peers.
(Henning & Roberts, 2016, p.179).

Synchronous focus groups allowed participants to express their opinion and ask questions as needed after the event. This was key, as the exploration of the site was the main task, and this also made it possible for participants to remain anonymous as requested.

Findings

Participants

Courtne Reyes, museum assistant at the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve, described the role of the institution in a ZOOM interview. Reyes confirmed that instruction aligned with the standards to support the curriculums for Indigenous communities throughout Washington state for grades K-12. There are materials with worksheets created by Lena Jones, education curator. The lessons she created reflect community members' understanding of events as found in PDF- and video-linked lessons on the [Teaching Resources](#) page. In the lessons, there is extensive inclusion of the Lushootseed language. This signifies that there is careful attention to the specific language versus a general reference to an Indigenous Peoples' community (Burke Museum, 2022). Educators and students can forge connections with the content from the exhibitions and lesson materials. This is especially pertinent if they are forming a connection to their own culture. An exhibition that was particularly impactful was the replica of a longhouse. Reyes described this as an immersive space that allows the visitors to gain exposure to traditions in an engaging way. The Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve also had elders consulted on the design of the building to provide a true meaning of what is to be Tulalip. The inclusion of the surrounding Indigenous Peoples' [Tulalip] community in the construction of the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve supports the idea that identity has an integral role in the environment. Research also states that:

...land is engrained in us as Indigenous peoples, as it runs through our veins and fills our spirit. Our bodies are indeed children of the land. Moreover, it is my belief that we are connected to Mother Earth and all that she has to offer us. It is by that connection that we find our identity as Indigenous peoples. Mother Earth serves to influence many aspects of our life: teachings, ceremony, medicine, languages, construction, craft, and art.
(Merasty, 2022, p.145)

Acknowledging this, the Tulalip as a community is supporting their past, present, and future by ensuring that there is a central location where anyone can gather and learn about or be a part of the culture. Therefore, there is the development of a “respectful relationship” (Merasty, 2022, p.147). Further contributions discussed in the interview were how school districts support through the availability of an educational box containing representation items (salmon, woven objects, miniature canoes) available after schools reopened.

Education boxes as a tool for educators began in the social progressive movement. Historically, advocates have developed the mission to forge a school-museum partnership lending materials, much like a library (Peniston, 1999, p.163; Shaffer, 2018). Lending these items, or using them during a field trip visit, provides an opportunity for exploration. Worksheets created by Lena Jones, education curator, work in combination with materials from the education boxes and provide the opportunity for the strategy of in-depth exploration and their use:

... seeks to engage the learner actively in a process of gathering information through the senses of sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell. This approach is particularly salient for the young child as a sensory learner. Information gleaned from interaction with an object can be documented in many ways, aligning strategies through written narrative or poetry, discreetly describing observations and assumptions, while the pre-literate child can share ideas through drawing, photo documentation, and role play or dictate personal thoughts and interpretative ideas to a companion.
(Shaffer, 2018, p.46)

Further information about the school trip options is found on the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve [field trip](#) page. There is also no limit to where school groups may come from; however, although there are generally more from local Washington State districts. Washington State history was a main area of research and interest, and Reyes expressed that:

...we are very lucky that we get to provide a place like that for children to continue to learn about their surrounding tribes. Even Tulalip tribes, we're very lucky to have a space like that.
(C. Reyes, Personal Communication. 2022)

The Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve forges a connection between the past and present through artifacts and artworks that represent the Tulalip Indigenous Peoples who have occupied the land. The items on display are donations from the family of Chief William Shelton, a notable artist, author, and leader. The artifacts and symbolic art pieces are central to the educational concepts taught to school groups. The displays at the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve aligns with NAGPRA and the initiative for the repatriation of Native American objects (Marstine, 2006).

Survey Data, Quantitative

The information presented in these charts is from anonymous survey data through the website link. Teachers and school-based educational professionals viewed the site at their leisure and responded to the questions.

Anonymous Survey Data

Figure 1

Grade Level (Check all that apply)
27 responses

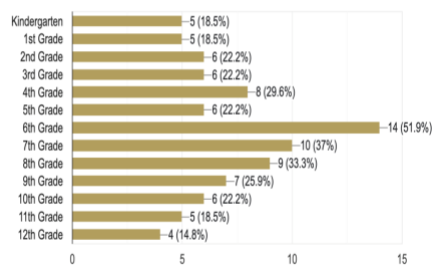


Figure 2

Do you feel prepared to use this content in a lesson?
27 responses

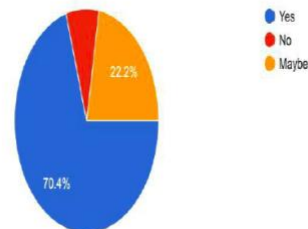


Figure 3

Which aspects of the curriculum were most useful?(There can be multiple responses)
27 responses

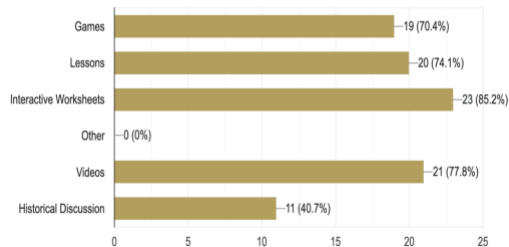


Figure 4

Would you recommend this site?
27 responses

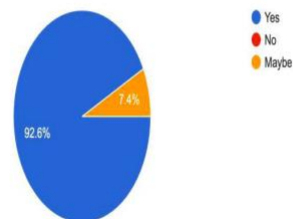
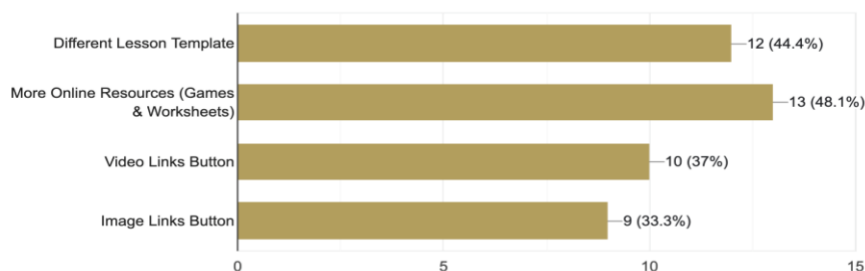


Figure 5

How can the curriculum be presented more effectively?
27 responses



(Kupersmith, 2024)

Survey Data, Qualitative

Over the span of four months, there were two ZOOM focus groups conducted. The agenda of the focus group was to introduce the guidelines derived from research planned as:

- o Intentions of the focus group.
- o A set amount of time to view the site.
- o Group discussion or questions.
- o Focus group survey completion for more detailed responses.

For anonymity, participants had pseudonyms. Prior to the focus group, participants gave consent and the only identifying information shown below to facilitate discussion of their specific responses to the Google Forms survey. This was a small focus group that allowed for detailed responses and revealed definite areas of improvement on future iterations of the website. The details of their responses found in the Appendix and participant details listed below

ZOOM Focus Group Participants

Catherine: Location: Issaquah School District, State: Washington State Grade Level: Middle School, Content Area(s): ESL/MLL
Josephine: Location: Issaquah School District, State: Washington State, Grade Level: Elementary, Content Area(s): Special Education
Sara: Location: New York City Public Schools, State: New York State, Grade Level: High School Content Area: Art
Michelle: Location: New York City Public Schools State: New York State, Grade Level: High School, Content Area(s): Music and Japanese
Miriam Location: Issaquah School District, State: Washington State Grade Level: High School, Content Area: Special Education

(Kupersmith, 2024)

Summary and Website Survey Analysis

Out of 27 responses, 51.9% of the K-12 anonymous respondents taught sixth grade. The second survey question revealed that the interactive worksheets were the most useful feature followed by lessons, games, and historical discussion opportunities. Overall, 70.4% rated it as a positive experience and would use it in their classes. Surveys also showed that 48.1% of respondents believed that the site could have more worksheets and games. In total, 92.6% of respondents said that they would recommend the website to other educators.

ZOOM Focus Group Summary and Analysis

Question 1: What is the importance of teaching about local Indigenous Peoples of Washington State in your classroom/district?

Focus group participant responses varied in this question. Catherine, Josephine, and Miriam all taught in Washington, where they had familiarity with but did not have to teach about this content specifically. Whereas, Sara and Michelle taught in New York City where there is no such requirement.

Question 2: Where are you finding the most applicable resources for teaching this content?

Catherine, Josephine, and Sara taught courses or groups of students that could directly benefit from the content on the website. Miriam was not teaching this content in her classroom but was aware of the curriculum required by Washington State and cited the phrasing from known policies. Michelle, a music and Japanese language teacher, requested guidance on how to answer the first and second questions from the forms survey. My response as facilitator was to use the standard “Not Applicable” (N/A) based on my understanding of their roles in the classroom. As assumed, the Washington State educators were aware of, and cited components of, the “Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State” (OSPI, Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State, 2022) curriculum and the benefits of the content on the site published by OSPI. By contrast, the New York State educators appreciated the inclusion of local books and videos that could be useful for concepts they teach.

Question 3: What role has technology played in teaching this topic? How can there be a larger role?

In reference to technology and the larger role it can play, the responses were more personal in one set of reflections and less so in the others. Sara suggested that the lessons incorporate adaptations for more arts and music into the site. Michelle stated that they use videos and interactive games to support instruction, whereas Catherine and Josephine described the benefits as a general concept. Miriam had a view that her students are highly engaged by using their cell phones and computer programs versus textbooks. This response implies that teaching social studies through an interactive website can lead to more engagement, especially for high school students (Miriam, Personal Communication, 2023). These comments speak to the idea that it is essential to have different opportunities to explore content through technology.

Question 4: How have you used museum education resources in your teaching for teaching your content area(s)? If they have not been considered, why or why not?

The fourth question was especially enlightening as all participants had varied responses. Catherine cited the Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State curriculum. Josephine stated that they had used resources from local Washington State Tribal Centers in the past. Sara used museum resources with art curriculums. Miriam stated that she was inspired to give museum resources a try (Miriam, Personal Communication, 2023). Finally, Michelle had used resources “sporadically from museums and other institutions” (Michelle, Personal Communication, 2023). She often needs to design materials specific to her students' needs and subject areas.

Question 5: After viewing the website, what do you think can aid students in understanding the content? If there were more questions than answers, why?

The fifth question was especially revealing in its responses. Catherine saw the intended connection between the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve. Josephine expressed the view that firsthand examples are more helpful. However, the topic has more questions than answers. Sara suggested a general statement in correlation to the link stating that “answers/responses are found within the information on the Lesson/Links” (Sara, Personal Communication, 2023). Overall, Sara thought the lesson plans were informative and the role of the teacher and their presentation using the site can pique student interest. Michelle encouraged more “human interaction” (Michelle, Personal Communication, 2023) and fast-paced materials. Finally, Miriam expressed the view that the directions section edited for more clarity (Miriam, Personal Communication, 2023).

Data showed that the intentions of the curriculum and its resources were clear and allowed for adaptation and choice from the facilitator standpoint. Furthermore, this view I supported by the fact that 70.4% of respondents said that the games were useful for instruction, contributing to the argument that constructivism applied to online learning (Ennes, et al., 2021). After conducting data collection through these means, there are also inconsistencies with that which were evident. Michelle recognized that there were limited opportunities to have the learner fully engage with more dynamic games and resources (Michelle, Personal Communication, 2023). This is a limitation within the site in its current iteration. The concept of three presences CP, SP, and TP apply as the site is inconsistent with peer-to-peer learning (Castellanos-Reyes, 2020; Swan, Ice, 2010).

Survey data implied that there were limited opportunities for multiple modes of historical discussion. This conclusion demonstrated from the question *Which aspects of the curriculum were most useful?* Survey respondents overwhelmingly chose the interactive worksheets {85.2%}, lessons {74.1%}, games {70.4%}, and videos {77.8%} over historical discussion {40.7%}. This returns the discussion to the need to establish prior knowledge and use the materials to lead discussion to implement CP, SP, and TP with more complex topics. These findings from the anonymous surveys and ZOOM focus group data indicate that while being effective, there is room for improvement. Survey and focus group data indicated that the games, videos, and interactive worksheets were the most accessible for educators. Through the online

curriculum, the culture and traditions of this specific Indigenous Peoples' group represents and supports outside of the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve. This project allowed data to show that educators would be receptive to content created for engagement.

Implications and Limitations

The creation of the interactive curriculum in collaboration with the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve is a tool to lead educators to content in more convenient ways in the classroom or through remote instruction models. The website's contents support topics in social studies that can be difficult to find for varying cognitive levels. Depending on the teacher and learner, within a Constructivist mindset and Dewey (1938), the method of delivery for this content is new. The learner, teacher, or student has exposure to the content at various levels through the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve materials from the OSPI and the accompanying online source.

This creates a form of "continuity" for that individual or group (Beard, 2018; Dewey, 1938;). As described in the discussion of CP, SP, and TP, students benefit more from firsthand exposure to content (Castellanos-Reyes, 2020; Garrison, et al., 2000; Swan & Ice 2010). Within the process of COI, CP, SP, and TP are also varied in terms of student comprehension and ability. There were modifications for efficacy as a part of a complete learning experience (Huang et al., 2019) in curating an online learning experience (Huang, et al, 2019).

Findings did not differ from the expectation that the more interactive the source, the more engaged the viewer/user would be. Before beginning this project, I assumed that the more familiar methods would be the most popular. These included videos, worksheets, and games. The intention of moving forward with the site for data, qualitatively in small groups and quantitatively in an anonymous survey response, was to compose a sample of information to determine the success of the future iterations of similar projects.

This concept is not the first of its kind with websites from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) complete with links, videos, programs to log into, language learning materials, and other pertinent information for Canada-based educators found at [Infusing Indigenous Perspectives in K-12 Teaching](#) (Wong, 2023). Further resources can be found in [The Alberta Teachers' Association: Foundational Knowledge for Indigenous Education](#). Within this site, there is information that allows educators to access details about different Indigenous Peoples of Canada. Under the games tab, there are more interactive choices. Examples are [Growing Up Ojibwe: The Game](#) and [When Rivers were Trails](#). There are also Minecraft games created by outside parties:

- [Indigenous Rights in Canada](#)
 - [Traditional Indigenous Home](#)
- (Microsoft, 2024)

In game creation, there is the risk that there will be more focus on rewards versus content. As a result, online and game-based tasks need to have a thoughtful design. This maintains focus on what designers want players to do and experience, rather than on the reward system (Deterding, 2011; Løvlie & Waern, 2022). Design and intention in academic content can support

gamification and has connections to COI and meaning making for learning online (Castellanos-Reyes, 2020; Garrison, et al., 2000).

The games located in the links are examples of what professional collaboration between designers and educators can accomplish. This was not possible in the creation of the curriculum site. Today students have more opportunities to explore complex topics through gamification than they did twenty years ago. In creating this curriculum site and planning for data collection, there were limitations within the sphere of three outlooks. I developed this curriculum because I had school servers block access to educational websites. The second was that I had an interest in contributing to standards-based content through a museum. This was a pertinent role to consider as I did not want to diminish the role of museums and the impact they have when viewed in person. Finally, I wanted to have the ability to use the site in my own classroom.

The primary limitation I had experienced was through the development of tasks centered around technology. I used familiar resources from my own teaching experience. I researched data or tasks that would be easily transferable to a website under construction and comprehensible for a wide population of students and educators. I was also aware that I had no control over creating new video sources without the concern of cultural appropriation or impropriety. I had limited knowledge of building an extensive list of curriculum materials from scratch or how to maintain them once created and this project presented a learning curve from the beginning of its inception.

The secondary limitation was access to participants for data collection. In comparison to website creation and research, and data collection was a formidable challenge. Once I established a partnership and created the curriculum website, I was not able to obtain surveys or focus group participants with the numbers that I had previously planned in initial Instructional Review Board documents. Consequently, the number of participants and data collection completion dates changed multiple times over a year. The Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve, two separate Washington State school districts, Kansas State University, and social media invitations through Facebook were sources of data collection. I fell short of my data collection goal but received informative data. The anonymous surveys were positive and allowed me to understand what educators needed from the source materials. The focus group participants showed how the curriculum can impact teaching.

Conclusion

The climate in which students learn revolves around competing attention for traditional forms of learning. Schools can lean on institutions that embrace technology for the enhancement of abstract concepts that are taught through videos and games. These forms of teaching would not be possible without New Museum Theory, Community of Inquiry, and Constructivism and imply that students benefit from exploration of content with guidance from a facilitator or teacher with multiple visuals and hands-on tasks. This project is an example of what can be done from available resources.

The Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve was the inspiration for the content that drove the website, and they contributed by allowing use of audio/visual materials,

topics from exhibitions, and guidance on respectful terms and presentation. By partnering with the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve, I was able to narrow down content to support field trip with options for content through lessons. Through these experiences, both through the interactive curriculum site and potential visits to the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve, students can gain a more well-rounded understanding of the content.

Appendices

Focus Group Responses by Subject

ZOOM Focus Group Questions: Catherine
1. What is the importance of teaching about local Indigenous Peoples of Washington State in your classroom/district? We occupy their land and acknowledging the people through exploring museums, cultural centers, and events lend us that insight and discovery. The Tulalip history and culture is rich to explore and learn in the form of “The tree, fish, seasonal lifeways,” etc., as depicted in the lesson plans on the website.
2. Where are you finding the most applicable resources for teaching this content? The website caters to all types of learners – be it visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or writing/reading learning styles. I find the “Educational Interactive games” inspired by the “Lushootseed Language resource” can engage students with the content in many ways and teach important skills like creativity, teamwork, and focus. I loved the “Totem Pole Maker.” In addition, the “live worksheets” can be easily integrated into an ELA/ SS classroom with the variety of skills, comprehension, article summary, etc.
3. What role has technology played in teaching this topic? How can there be a larger role? Technology has brought the past cultures ALIVE for the students to be engaged in it and at the same time learning from it.
4. How have you used museum education resources in your teaching for teaching your content area(s)? If they have not been considered, why or why not? WA OSPI website has a resource section called “Since time immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State.” It has a section devoted to all the tribal museums.
5. After viewing the website, what do you think can aid students in understanding the content? If there were more questions than answers, why? I believe the website is a window to implement a plethora of activities in one’s curriculum while getting acquainted with the Hibel Cultural Center and forming a connection with the Tulalip People and outside party.
ZOOM Focus Group Questions: Josephine
1. What is the importance of teaching about local Indigenous Peoples of Washington State in your classroom/district? So we can recognize that we are all tribal land and we need to honor this culture. To be culturally relevant educators we need to embrace this important heritage.
2. Where are you finding the most applicable resources for teaching this content? I have found local books and videos. The Duwamish log house is a wonderful resource as well.

3. What role has technology played in teaching this topic? How can there be a larger role? Technology has let us have access to more research and provided opportunities for many indigenous people to speak their truth which has often been told in history.

4. How have you used museum education resources in your teaching for teaching your content area(s)? If they have not been considered, why or why not? I have used resources from local tribes as well from the Seattle School District center for indigenous studies. I would like to use more museum resources.

5. After viewing the website, what do you think can aid students in understanding the content? If there were more questions than answers, why? I think the hands-on examples will really help students understand the content. I feel that this topic does have more questions than answers due to many misconceptions. This website has really helped provide clarity.

ZOOM Focus Group Questions: Sara

1. What is the importance of teaching about local Indigenous Peoples of Washington State in your classroom/district? The artistic aspects of the culture can be a leading topic to understand other people and the traditions within a community. Teaching about the local Indigenous Peoples of Washington State in New York City would not have a direct connection but a more global one as it could lead to students to find information about the local Indigenous Peoples within their area.

2. Where are you finding the most applicable resources for teaching this content? The most applicable resources for teaching this content is under the lesson plans which contain information that is easily accessible through the links provided

3. What role has technology played in teaching this topic? How can there be a larger role? Technology has played a large part as it was the gateway to finding information on the Indigenous Peoples of Washington State. A larger role could be having access to a picture file resources for adapting lessons for other academic areas such as visual arts and/or music.

4. How have you used museum education resources in your teaching for teaching your content area(s)? If they have not been considered, why or why not?
Yes, the use of museum education resources was used in conjunction with the social studies teacher to expand the learning of history through visual arts by creating an illuminated manuscript. Also, the museum education resources from art museums have been useful to develop lesson plans as well as visual references when teaching the content area.

5. After viewing the website, what do you think can aid students in understanding the content? If there were more questions than answers, why?

The Educational Game link would need to have a general statement that the answers/responses are found within the information presented in the Lesson links. This would need to be a preference unless using the game link could intrigue the students when the teacher is introducing the topic. The Lesson Plans are quite informative and are structured to provide sequential learning as well as a stand-alone lesson. The teacher's presentation of the content can aid the students' understanding through the provided worksheets and videos which are a good length to pique interest and have the students ask questions.

ZOOM Focus Group Questions: Michelle

1. What is the importance of teaching about local Indigenous Peoples of Washington State in your classroom/district? N/A

2. Where are you finding the most applicable resources for teaching this content? N/A

3. What role has technology played in teaching this topic? How can there be a larger role? Videos, interactive games, etc.

4. How have you used museum education resources in your teaching for teaching your content area(s)? If they have not been considered, why or why not? I have never used museum education resources in my content area other than borrowing some materials sporadically from museums and other institutions. This is because I always need to design my own teaching materials to meet the particular needs of my classes and exam preparations.

5. After viewing the website, what do you think can aid students in understanding the content? If there were more questions than answers, why?

The website was good and informative overall. However, I felt that learners needed more "human" interaction, such as a narrator who presents storytelling in a more engaging way. I assume this website will be used while a teacher is teaching/talking to the learners. However, I felt something that pulls the audience towards the material might be missing. The audience today is used to seeing stimulating, easy-to-understand, and fast pacing videos. If you could design the website to meet the contemporary trend a little, it will be more attractive, I think.

ZOOM Focus Group Questions: Miriam

1. What is the importance of teaching about local Indigenous Peoples of Washington State in your classroom/district?

First Peoples lived in what is now Washington State for thousands of years and in harmony with the land. We have much to learn from them. And they should be respected as our predecessors in this land.

2. Where are you finding the most applicable resources for teaching this content?

I'm not actively engaged in teaching this content at this time.

3. What role has technology played in teaching this topic? How can there be a larger role?

I teach high school. My students are on their cell phones most of the time. They do use their computers but rarely their textbooks. I have started trying to distribute educational resources that my students can access right there on their cell phones. They find this approach more engaging than even using computers. I think it is a methodology we learned in teacher training – go to where the student is and bring him/her into your instructional content from that place.

4. How have you used museum education resources in your teaching for teaching your content area(s)? If they have not been considered, why or why not?

I haven't used museum education resources before. It never occurred to me to do so. But I'm glad to see that someone thought to do this – I'm inspired to give it a try!

5. After viewing the website, what do you think can aid students in understanding the content? If there were more questions than answers, why?

As we discussed, I'd just ensure that the instructions for making use of each page/section is made clear. Once a learner understands what is expected on any one of the sections, from there the content is both interesting and engaging. I think this approach to teaching Indigenous Peoples studies is fresh and will be very successful.

References

- Abrams, K. (2017). *Online Focus Groups*. In *The SAGE Handbook of Online Research Methods*. (pp.435-450). SAGE Publications, Ltd.
- Bada, S. O., and Olusegun, S. (2015). Constructivism Learning Theory: A Paradigm for Teaching and Learning. *Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 5(6), 66-70.
- Baudino. (2013). A Place of Memory and Possibility: Creating Sites of Power and Meaning with Indigenous Collections. *Museums & Social Issues*, 8(1-2), 59–73.
- Beard, Colin. (2018). Dewey in the World of Experiential Education. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2018(158), 27-37.
- Black, G. (2005). *The Engaging Museum: Developing Museums for Visitor Involvement*. Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Burke Museum. (2022). *Tips for Teaching about Native Peoples*.
- Castellanos-Reyes, D. (2020). 20 Years of the Community of Inquiry Framework. *TechTrends*, 64(4), 557–560.
- Chong, C., and Smith, D. (2017). Interactive Learning Units on Museum Websites. *Journal of Museum Education*, 42(2), 169–178.
- Crow, and Din, H. (2010). The Educational and Economic Value of Online Learning for Museums. *Journal of Museum Education*, 35(2), 161–172.
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and Education*. Touchstone.
- Domina, Renzulli, L., Murray, B., Garza, A. N., and Perez, L. (2021). Remote or Removed: Predicting Successful Engagement with Online Learning during COVID-19. *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*, 7.
- Ennes, Wagner-Pelkey, A., and McVey, M. (2021). Museum-Based Online Learning One Year After Covid-19 Museum Closures. *Journal of Museum Education*, 46(4), 467–480.
- Golding, Clinton. (2011). *The Many Faces of Constructivist Discussion*. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 43(5), 467-483.
- Hein, George E. (2012). *Progressive Museum Practice: John Dewey and Democracy*. Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Henning, G., Roberts, D., and Ludvik, M. B. (2016). *Student Affairs Assessment: Theory to Practice*. Stylus Publishing, LLC.

- Howlett. (2008). Remote Access Museum Education: Next Steps in Moving toward Constructivist and Inquiry-Based Learning Online. *The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum*, 1(4), 1–14.
- Huang, Law, V., and Lee, S. J. (2019). The Role of Learners' Epistemic Beliefs in an Online Community of Inquiry. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 50(4), 1882–1895.
- Kolb, D. (2014). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*, Second Edition. Pearson Education, Inc.
- Kupersmith, A. (2024). *Online Curriculum Development, Review and Resource Contribution in Partnership with the Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve*. [Publication No. TX 9-410-581] [Doctoral Dissertation, Curriculum and Instruction, Kansas State University. Proquest Dissertations and Theses Global.
- Løvlie, A. S., Waern, A., Eklund, L., Spence, J., Rajkowska, P., & Benford, S. (2022). Hybrid Museum Experiences. In A. S. Løvlie and A. Waern (Eds.), *Hybrid Museum Experiences: Theory and Design* (pp. 31–56). Amsterdam University Press.
- Marstine, J. (2005). *New Museum Theory and Practice: An Introduction*. John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Marstine, J. (2006). *New Museum Theory and Practice: An Introduction*. Blackwell.
- Merasty, R. (2022). *Resurgence: Engaging with Indigenous Narratives and Cultural Expressions in and Beyond the Classroom. Indigenizing Spaces: Identity in the Built Environment*. (pp.145- 158) Portage and Main Press.
- Microsoft Corporation. (2023). *Minecraft Education*.
- Reyes, C. (2022, November 17). *Courtne Reyes on Hibulb Cultural Center and Natural History Preserve Educational Programming*. Personal Communication.
- Pohawpatchoko, Colwell, C., Powell, J., and Lassos, J. (2017). Developing a Native Digital Voice: Technology and Inclusivity in Museums. *Museum Anthropology*, 40(1), 52–64.
- Ransick, Kelsey J. S. (2015). *Free and Easy Website Design for Museums and Historic Sites*, (pp. 135-155). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Rice, M. F. and Ortiz, K. R. (2021). Evaluating Digital Instructional Materials for K-12 Online and Blended Learning. *TechTrends*, 65(6), 977–992.
- Saiki. (2010). Interacting Online: A content Analysis of Museum Education Websites. *Journal of Learning Design*, 4(1), 52–62.

- Schrum, L., and Levin, B. (2015). *Leading 21st Century Schools* (pp. 137-166). Corwin.
- Shaffer, S. (2018). *Object Lessons and Early Learning*. Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group
- Sharples, M., Taylor, J., and Vavoula, G. (2016). *A Theory of Learning for the Mobile Age*. In C. Haythornthwaite and R. Andrews (Eds.) *The Sage Handbook of E-learning Research*. SAGE Publications, Ltd.
- Trofanenko, B. and Segall, A. (2014). *Beyond Pedagogy Reconsidering the Public Purpose of Museums*. Sense Publications.
- Washington Office of Public Instruction (OSPI) (2024). *Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State*.
- Weiss, J., Wali, A., and Dominguez, V. R. (2018). Anthropologists and Museums: An Interview with Joseph Weiss. *American Anthropologist*, 120 (4), 808–812.
- Wheeler, Arsenault, J., and Taylor, M. (2022). Beyond NAGPRA/Not NAGPRA. *Collections* (Walnut Creek, Calif.), 18(1), 8–17.
- Wong, Desmond. (2023). *Infusing Indigenous Perspectives in K-12 Teaching*. University of Toronto, OISE, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.
- Younging, G. (2018). *Elements of Indigenous Style: A Guide for Writing by and About Indigenous Peoples*. Birchbark Books.