



Classroom Connections

Research Project: Looking Back, Moving Forward

“We need to have the courage to look at our past. We need to have the courage to look at where we are now. And we need to work together to figure out how we can collectively heal moving forward.”
–Nikki Sanchez

Part 1: Looking Back

Research and explore how you or your ancestors came to live in what we now know as Canada. Write a short paper based on your findings, prepare a short in class presentation or create a family history timeline. Below are some questions to guide your research.

1. Where does your family come from?
2. When did you/they move to Turtle Island?
3. Why did you/they decide to move to Turtle Island?
4. Are there any stories/traditions that were passed down to you?

Conclude your paper (or presentation) by reflecting on how you and your family have benefited from or suffered from colonization (it might be some of both). How have you benefited or suffered more specifically from the colonial domination of Indigenous Peoples in Canada?

Part 2: Privilege Walk

The privilege walk is a way to collectively reflect on how we benefit from privilege or suffer from the lack of privilege in different ways. After having done the walk, in groups of 4-5 reflect on the following questions:

1. What happened?
 - What did you see around the room? Who did you see in front, middle, back?
 - How does this exercise inform who is in the room and who is not?
2. What were your thoughts and feelings as you did this exercise?
 - How do you feel about where you are relative to other people in the room?
 - What would you add to the list of the statements, or which of the statements would you phrase differently?
3. How did this exercise inform your social position and experience?
 - How has your social position (i.e., your privileged or marginalized position in society based on your social group membership) affected you, your family, and your community, in terms of opportunity and access?
 - What does your position in the room say about societal messages about your worth and the worth of people with similar privilege levels?
4. How have your privileges and under-privileges been shaped by history?
 - Which of the privileges did you inherit from your family?

How might your privileges or under-privileges today have been different if anything in your family history had been different? What could've been different?

