



# **Racially Marginalized Experiences on the Indigenization of Education**

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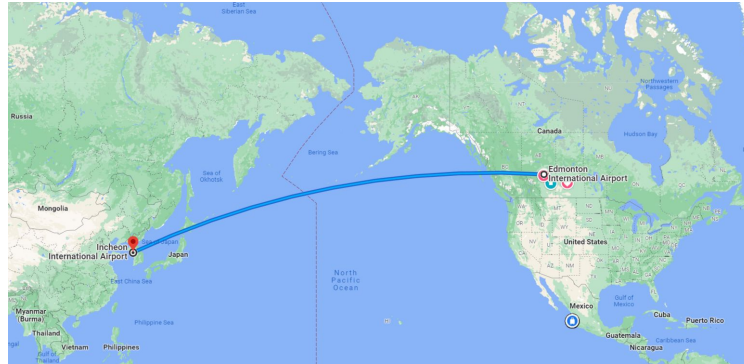
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Central Alberta Teachers' Convention  
February 23, 2024

# Personal Land Acknowledgement



Korean Peninsula as a Tiger

안녕하세요! *Hello!*



North America as a Turtle

# Parallel Colonialism: Before & After



조선말  
한국어



日本語  
にほんご

CHEROKEE

**WFOA.9**

HEITSUK

mámní?a

IN KITTIT

$$\wedge^q L_j \otimes \mathbb{C}^b \subset \mathbb{C}^c$$

LAKOTA

šaglóğan

LUSHOOTSEED

ɬix<sup>w</sup>ači? ʔi ti ču?

94-1 ISMAF

neku7pll7úpekst



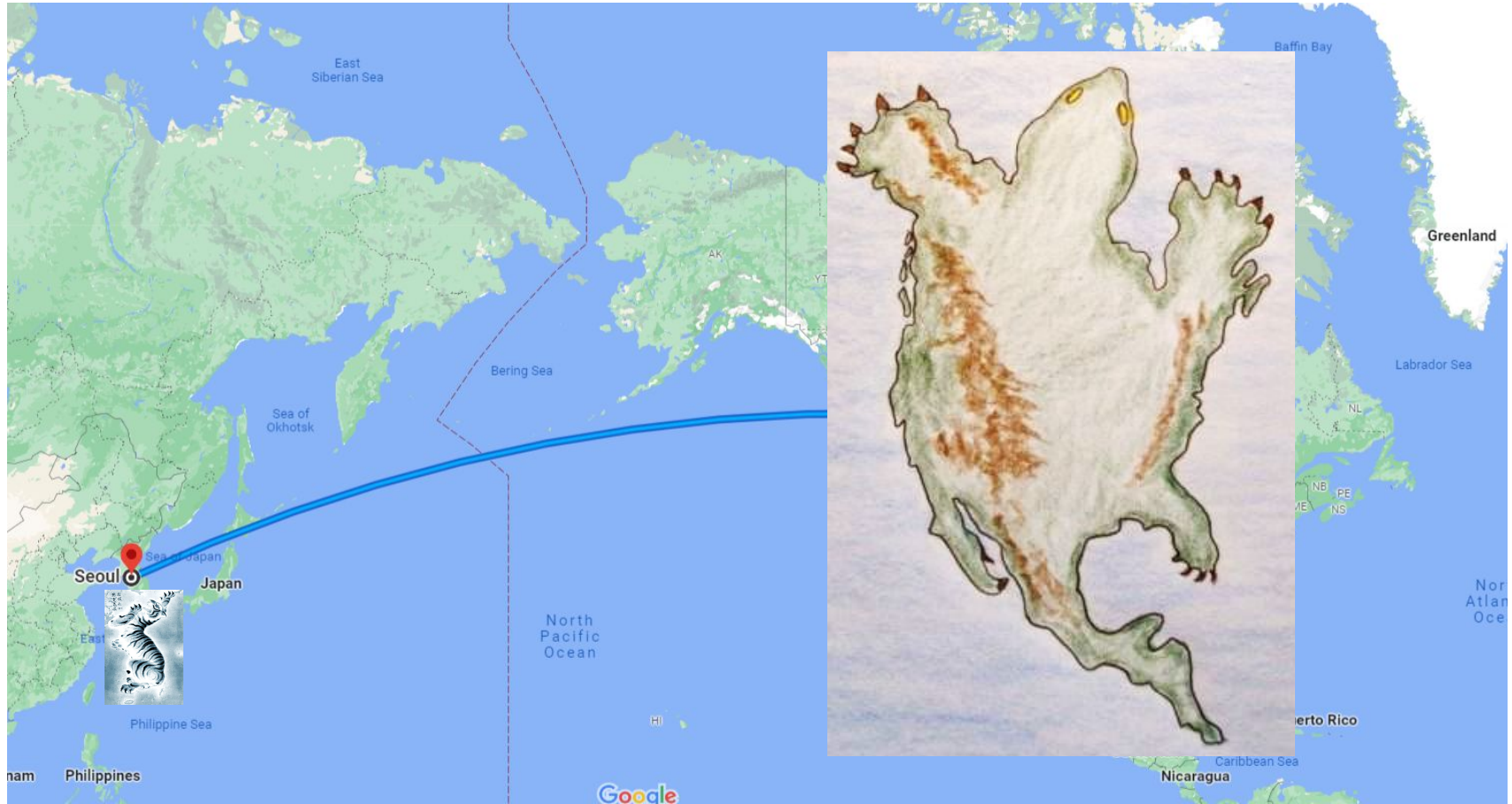
# Hello

**Bonjour**

# Hola



# Comparison of Land Size





# Personal Land Acknowledgement



Amiskwaciy Waskahikan,  
Cree name for Edmonton,  
meaning Beaver Hills House,  
traditional territory of the Nehiyaw, Denesuline,  
Nakota Sioux, Anishinaabe, and Niitsitapi peoples



Mihkwâpisimosos,  
Cree name for Red Deer,  
meaning Red Type of Deer,  
traditional territory of the Blackfoot, Tsuu T'ina,  
and Stoney Nakoda peoples.

# This is a Safe Space





# **Racially Marginalized Experiences on the Indigenization of Education**

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Capstone Research Paper Available Online:  
[www.JinMcRae.com/research](http://www.JinMcRae.com/research)

# Research Rationale: Origins

Potential research topics stem from personal lived experience (questions in life):

- Born in South Korea, immigrant to Canada
- Adapting to English, Euro-Canadian cultural norms
- Became a teacher, helping students like me (visible minorities)
- Faced with growing awareness and duty for Indigenous knowledge (PD, TQS, Classes)
- Disconnect observed and feeling “uneasy,” but different from colleagues/others



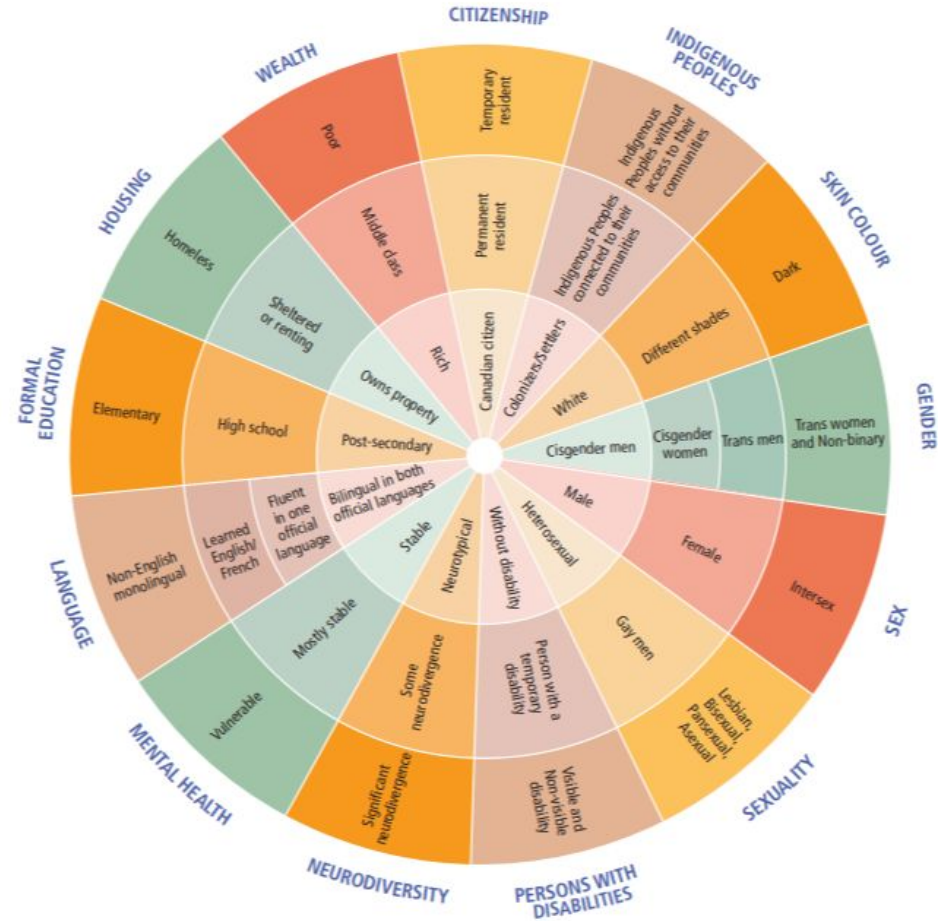


# A Person's Positionality

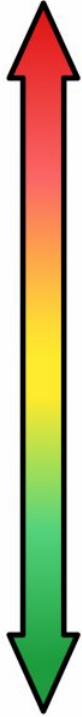
Considering an individual's privilege and "power" in society:

- Several dimensions of diversity (ex. Skin colour, gender, sexuality, wealth, education, health, etc.)
- "Centered" vs "Marginalized"
- Each person is uniquely positioned in each diversity dimension

**WHEEL OF PRIVILEGE AND POWER**  
(the closer you are to the centre, the more privilege you have)



# Correct Terminology



- ❑ “Visible Minority”
- ❑ “Person of Colour”
- ❑ “Racially Marginalized”
- ❑ “Ethnocultural”
- ❑ “Equity Seeking”
- ❑ “Equity Denied”
- ❑ “Equity Deserving”

# Research Rationale: Why?

Some questions I hope to help explain:

- How are newcomers to Canada responding to the Indigenization of schools?
- Where do racially marginalized Canadians fit in reconciliation?
- How can immigrant students understand the importance of reconciliation with the Indigenous peoples?

# First: Understanding Newcomer Expectations

How Canada portrays itself to the world:

- Poutine
- Natural Geographic Beauty
- Maple Syrup
- White/European Majority of “Nice” People

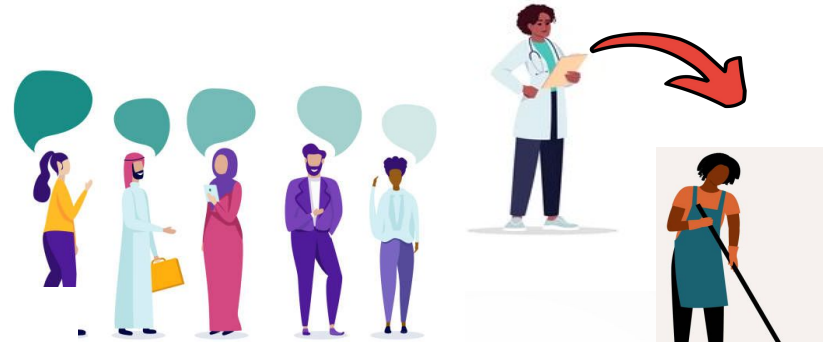




# But: Newcomer Realities in Canada

How Canada treats its marginalized populations:

- Not recognizing foreign credentials
- Dealing with the cold climate without experience
- Lack of support to receive social services
- Requiring fluency in English or French
- Lack of affordable housing
- Subtle, hidden forms of discrimination



# Newcomer Reality (2021)

## ‘Road’ scholars: Why every taxi driver possesses their own brand of genius

Where are you least likely to die of a heart attack? In a taxi, because chances are your cabbie is a cardiologist.

This joke, often told in Montreal, plays on the urban archetype of the taxi-driving doctor. The idea is hardly new. Back in 1970, taxi-driving Globe and Mail journalist Peter Churchill described such cabbies as “immigrants who have struggled to Canada bearing their glittering recommendations and qualifications from places with unpronounceable names: doctors of law, medicine or philosophy who suddenly find they must keep body and soul together while the New World figures out what to do with them – or to let them do for themselves.”



## Newcomer Reality (2014)

### Three Filipino workers killed in crash were returning from language class

*Three people died in a collision Saturday between a car and a truck on Highway 11 in central Alberta, RCMP say.*

“There was freezing rain earlier in the day and it could have contributed to the collision, and they’re saying possibly driver inexperience with those types of road conditions,” he said Sunday afternoon.

# Newcomer Curveball: Indigenizing Education

- National “Calls to Action” involving schools and public education by the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
- Indigenous topics required in the Teaching Quality Standards (TQS), the Leadership Quality Standards (LQS), and the Superintendent Leadership Quality Standards (SLQS) by Alberta Education.



Truth and  
Reconciliation  
Commission of Canada





# Potential Problems

- Cultural appropriations of Indigenous topics.
- Oppositions from Eurocentric White Canadians.
- Questions from Racially Marginalized Canadians.
- Confusion from Newcomers to Canada.

Educators & Institutions hesitant as a result.



# Some Questions on Indigenization

- Why do we need to learn this?
- Are you confusing history with current events?
- What about my (non-White) culture?
- Are you trying to indoctrinate?
- Why bring up the past again?
- Are you trying to make me feel bad/guilty?
- What about other minorities?



# Educator Tip: Avoid Cultural Appropriation

Go deeper than the 5 F's:

- Food, Flags/Colours, Fashion/Costumes, Festivals/Parties, and Folklore/Stories.

Incorporate deeper culture by:

- Learning the Historical Background and Geographical Context of the culture.
- Understanding the Reasons for Attitudes, Beliefs, Dispositions, and Values.
- Connecting with Real People from the culture and develop relationships (Interculturalism over Multiculturalism).



# Research Rationale

Based on:

- Personal experiences in Canada as an immigrant
- Observing similar patterns with other Newcomers
- Wishing to learn more about Reconciliation as an educator
- Realizing a gap/disconnect of what Canada is for Newcomers vs. White/Europeans vs. Indigenous





## **Recap: Questions For Today**

- How are newcomers to Canada responding to the Indigenization of schools?
- Where do racially marginalized Canadians fit in reconciliation?
- How can immigrant students understand the importance of reconciliation with the Indigenous peoples?

# Literature Review: Existing Info.

## 3 Themes:

- Visible Minorities exist in a Third Space with overlapping dualities in the dichotomous binary of Reconciliation.
- Canada has to decolonize first, individually and institutionally, as well as inwardly and outwardly.
- Reconciliation requires allyship from all settlers to continually center Indigenous worldviews in Canada



# Theme 1: Visible Minorities

- Common view of reconciliation as a Indigenous and European/White issue.
- Visible minorities are neither, which often excludes them from reconciliation.
- Visible minorities share experiences with both sides: colonizer and colonized:
  - Benefiting from settler privilege.
  - Marginalized by Eurocentrism.
- Newcomers adopting and perpetuating Eurocentric colonialisms in Canada.
- “More research needed for differently positioned settlers” (Hiller, 2017).
- Reconciliation in Canada needs to recognize Ethnocultural diversity that is not always represented.



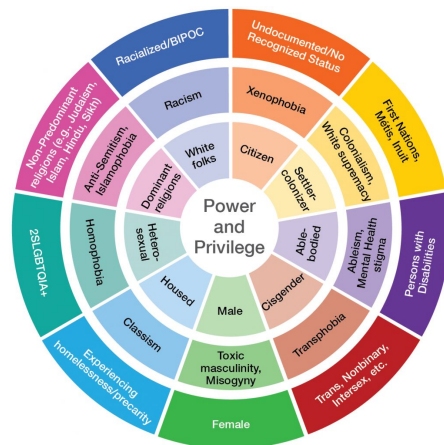
# Theme 1: Colonial Victims?

- Literature - Visible Minorities as Colonial Victims in Canada:
  - Historical discrimination by the government (ex. Komagata Maru Incident, Chinese Head Tax, Japanese Internment Camps, etc.)
  - Continuing incidents of racism individually and systematically (ex. Eurocentric Citizenship Test & Requirements, Black Lives Matter, Islamophobia, Stop Asian Hate, etc.)



# Theme 1: Privileged Settlers?

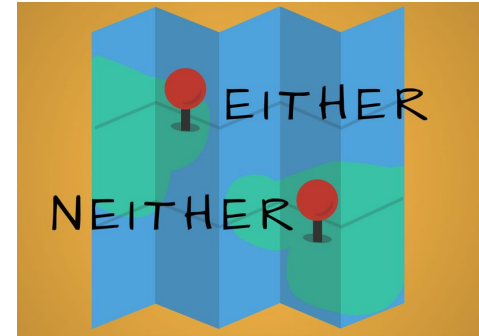
- Literature - Visible Minorities as Privileged Settlers in Canada:
  - Even though visible minorities are victims of racism, they still benefit from colonialism and settlerhood in Canada, which exploits Indigenous lands and peoples for settler gain.
  - Significant differences in quality of life reported between Indigenous communities and visible minority communities (ex. Educational attainment, geographic proximity to urban opportunities)





# Theme 1: Uniquely Positioned

- Literature - Visible Minorities as Uniquely Positioned in Canada:
  - Dual-role of being both the colonizer and the colonized, as neither White/European and Indigenous.
  - Visible minorities could show the way forward in reconciliation based on hybridity and pluralism in Canada.



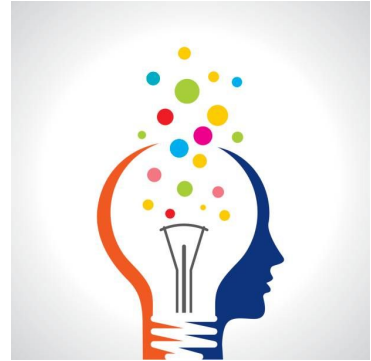
# Theme 2: Decolonize Systems

- Decolonize institutionally (systems):
  - Indigenizing & Decolonizing simultaneously (add and stir model) creates tokenistic appropriations.
  - Hybridity and pluralism (aka multiculturalism) forces Indigenous worldviews to compromise while diversifying and strengthening the status quo of Eurocentric colonial system in Canada.
  - Remove Eurocentric superiority over Indigenous knowledge systems and worldviews.
  - Decolonization is about undoing colonialism, not achieving racial equity or justice.



# Theme 2: Decolonize People

- Decolonize individually (people):
  - Inward reflections and personal commitments to unlearn Eurocentric and colonial thoughts and attitudes.
  - Compare and contrast current thoughts and attitudes with Indigenous worldviews to determine if it is colonial and Eurocentric.
  - Requires ongoing and repeated introspection, becomes a lifelong process (similar to lifelong learning).



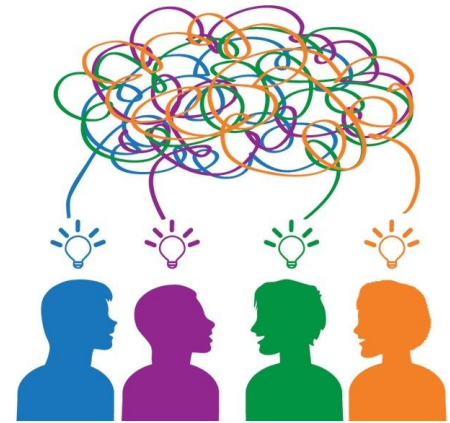
# Theme 3: Reconciliation

- Current reality: Indigenization is occurring at the same time as, or even before, decolonization, moving towards a hybrid/pluralistic approach. This creates a façade of reconciliation by Canadian institutions, resulting in more harm.
- The fix: Always center Indigenous worldviews with sincere respect to avoid tokenism and appropriation (ex. not mirroring Indigenous knowledges with Eurocentric systems, as they are not compatible). Also, replace Eurocentrisms with Indigenous worldviews when welcoming newcomers to Canada.
- Remember: decolonization and Indigenous allyship requires continually recurring reflection and committed efforts.



# Research & Findings:

- Central Question - “How are visible minority teachers responding to decolonization, Indigenization, and reconciliation?”
- Qualitative Research Design - open ended to allow for multiple perspectives, interpretations, and realities to be collected.
- Data Analysis - open coded interview transcripts, deductively grouped using a matrix chart.
- Research Participants - visible minority teachers in an urban charter school in Alberta, with at least 5 years of experience, with a variety of teaching assignments.



# Findings Theme 1: Allyship (Initially/Superficially)

- Participants demonstrated Indigenous awareness
  - Lack of meaningful and effective funding and support
  - Lower educational attainment, houselessness, addictions
  - Residential Schools, generational trauma, poor quality of life on Reserves
- Empathy & Solidarity
  - Residential Schools, Orange Shirt Day - defining narrative for empathy and solidarity
  - More quality Indigenous-related Professional Development needed for educators
  - Cultural appropriations and misrepresentations empathized
  - More incentives, time, and resources needed for educators
  - Victimhood from Eurocentric meritocracy empathized
  - More Indigenous topics needed in schools
  - Being denied belonging in Canada due to non-White features
  - Shared experiences against racism and bullying





# Findings Theme 2: Paradoxes (Conflicting Analysis)

- Participants' personal reports:
  - Canada does not seem to want reconciliation, truly and sincerely.
  - Prefer not to give back land to the Indigenous and not have to relocate.
  - Immigrants are actually grateful for opportunities provided by “White” Canada.
  - Indigenization should take place at the cost of “White” Canadians, not visible minorities.
  - Visible minorities help their own first, rather than contributing to Canadian society broadly.
- Participants' reported actions, professionally:
  - Wish to segregate Indigenous content as a separate subject to keep remaining subjects.
  - No Indigenous content due to lack of age-appropriate materials and resources.
  - Quality Indigenous content and resources are not readily available.
  - Indigenous content is irrelevant to certain subject matter.
  - More guidance, funding, materials, and support needed.



# Findings Theme 3: Barriers (Hidden/True Findings)

- Analysis of participants' declarations of allyship and paradoxical realities: additional barriers exist for visible minorities to truly partake in reconciliation.
- Barrier 1: Having to assimilate to Eurocentric Canada
  - Crucial for survival in Canada - all newcomers have to assimilate, but it is a greater task for racialized newcomers than those who have a European/White background.
  - White privilege affecting reconciliation - White/European settlers have more opportunities and availabilities to learn about and engage in reconciliation, while Racialized settlers are preoccupied with assimilating to the White/European systems.
- Barrier 2: Lack of awareness for Settler Privilege
  - Disconnect between “settler” and “immigrant” - past vs. today, White vs. Racialized.
  - Racialized settlers unable to see their own privilege as colonial settlers.
- Instinctual preference for one's own culture
  - Double-edged relationship to Eurocentric Canadian culture (to assimilate and to reject).
  - Preserve one's own language & culture, cannot advocate/ally with Indigenous as effectively



# Implications: So What?

- Distance exists between reconciliation and racialized settlers, but racialized settlers wish to be allies to the Indigenous.
  - Feelings of impossibility of decolonizing and reconciling with the Indigenous.
  - Education system too deeply rooted in Eurocentric Canadian industrialism.
  - Countless Indigenous languages and cultures have already been lost.
- Racialized settlers share marginalization with Indigenous peoples, but racialized settlers also benefit from colonization in Canada.
- Racialized settlers must work to decolonize as well as White/European settlers.
- Racialized settlers have additional barriers to decolonizing and supporting reconciliation, compared to White settlers.
- Additional supports are needed for racialized settlers.



# How To Decolonize (Return to Literature)

- Confront the settler within:
  - Compare any thought/attitude with Indigenous worldviews to reveal harmful colonial ideas.
  - Marginalized individuals can channel the feeling of being “othered” into decolonizing from Eurocentric oppression and internalized racism/discrimination.
  - Requires ongoing, repeated, commitments, and is a lifelong process.
- Center the Indigenous:
  - Multiculturalism is a Eurocentric colonial framework - instead, try Interculturalism.
  - Build reciprocal relationships with Indigenous peoples and focus on shared humanity.
  - Connect your Indigeneity with Canada’s Indigenous peoples - we are all Indigenous somewhere.



## **Answer Key: Questions For Today**

- How are newcomers to Canada responding to the Indigenization of schools?
  - Barriers to learn and understand, let alone to commit.
- Where do racially marginalized Canadians fit in reconciliation?
  - Uniquely positioned third space of duality.
- How can immigrant students understand the importance of reconciliation with the Indigenous peoples?
  - Connect with shared humanity and Indigeneity.

# What Works (sort of)...

The 5 F's are great starting points:

- Food, Flags/Colours, Fashion/Costumes, Festivals/Parties, and Folklore/Stories.

But remember to incorporate deeper culture by:

- Learning the Historical Background and Geographical Context of the culture.
- Understanding the Reasons for Attitudes, Beliefs, Dispositions, and Values.
- Connecting with Real People from the culture and develop relationships (Interculturalism over Multiculturalism).





# More Questions To Research

- How can educators portray Canada as an Indigenous-centered place and community, to visible minority and newcomer students and families, rather than portraying Canada as a White/Eurocentric society?
- How do we open visible minority students' eyes to the settler privilege they enjoy in Canada, compared to the colonial oppression experienced by the Indigenous peoples and the Indigenous lands?

It is everyone's responsibility to decolonize, but it is the Indigenous peoples that can lead us towards Indigenization.



# Thank you

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Presentation Slides: [www.JinMcRae.com/presentations](http://www.JinMcRae.com/presentations)

Capstone Research Paper: [www.JinMcRae.com/research](http://www.JinMcRae.com/research)