

Cultural Arts Engagement Session Guide

Artist Holly Rae Yuzicapi Dakota/Lakota

Holly Rae Yuzicapi is a proud Dakota/Lakota woman from the Standing Buffalo Dakota Nation in Southern Saskatchewan. Growing up in a Dakota family, Holly has learned a lot about traditional arts, foods and dance. She is a Cultural Arts instructor that has travelled across Canada delivering sessions to all ages. Holly has done a lot of youth engagement and has a passion for helping youth make stronger cultural connections. She has a strong belief that traditional art and cultural experiences will share the history of First Nations people and believes art can create a strong sense of identity and confidence for young people. Holly also believes that creating unique common cultural sharing opportunities will help create a strong foundation for building relationships.

As a former Cultural Arts Consultant with the First Nation, Metis and Inuit Education unit with Edmonton Public Schools, Holly has travelled to many schools facilitating whole school, four-day cultural engagement visits. These visits have been well received in schools and have also been featured on CTV Edmonton and in the Alberta Teachers Association newsletter.

Holly has been providing professional learning sessions for educators. Hosting different topics to help educators become more culturally engaged in the classroom from a First Nations, Metis and Inuit perspective. Providing First Nation influenced activities to schools and professional learning opportunities for teachers has encouraged positive cultural discussions among students and staff as well as bringing understanding to a foundational level.

- Participants will have the opportunity to participate in meaningful discussions and interactive activities exploring the fundamental elements of culture.
- Authentic engagement and experiential learning with activities in themes such as: Introduction to Culture, Traditional Foods, Cultural Arts, Identity, Traditional Games and Design.

Introduction to Culture

Description: Participants will learn about the core elements of culture and gain an understanding of how aspects of culture can be similar and different. Participants will engage in discussions about the elements of culture and will be able to identify where their identity fits within the culture.

**This session is recommended to be delivered before any other sessions.*

Introduction to Traditional Games

Description: Participants will learn about the history of traditional games and gain an understanding of how games were a part of the traditional way of life. Participants will have the opportunity to play games from different developmental stages of life and gain a greater appreciation of this element of culture. Participants will make a game that they can take home.

Introduction to Traditional Foods (25 people, supply cost \$50)

Description: Participants will learn about the traditional gathering and preparing process of foods, gain a better understanding of what a traditional diet consisted of and its importance. They will compare

traditional perspectives of food with the modern day view and gain a greater appreciation of this element of culture. Participants will have the chance to make a grocery store version of Pemmican.

Introduction to Traditional Cultural Arts (25 people, supply cost \$50)

Description: Participants will learn about different types of art and how they are connected to the land and identity. They will also learn about the gathering and preparation and uses of materials. Participants will have the opportunity to learn traditional art techniques through observing a demonstration and experience the original intent of this element of culture. This session is recommended before any arts based activity sessions.

Design and Identity (25 people, supply cost \$80)

Description: Participants will learn about the significance of design and how it is connected to identity. They will learn about traditional designs and the impact of image and symbols. They will be able to identify most First Nation groups based on traditional designs. Participants will also have the opportunity to create a design that best reflects themselves and gain a greater appreciation of this element of culture.

Arts Based Projects (25 people, supply cost \$100 each topic)

- **Parfleche** - Participants can create a mini parfleche pouch or container.
- **Quill Wrapping** - Participants will learn the technique of quill wrapping and complete a bracelet.
- **Quill Sewing** - Participants will learn how to sew quills as a decorative technique.
- **Fish Scale Art** - Participants will learn the technique used to create fish scale flowers.
- **Beading Techniques** - Participants will have an opportunity to try a couple beading techniques. Appliqué and Lane/Lazy stitch.
- **Hide Painting** - Participants will have an opportunity to explore the original forms of documentation. They will complete a small painting.
- **Birch Bark Biting** - Participants will learn how to bite designs that can be done on birch bark.
- **Red Willow Baskets** - Participants will learn about harvesting willow, creating the frame and weaving red willow to create a basket.
- **Image Transfer on Leather Painting** - Participants will learn how image transfer works after creating a background for their painting. All paintings will be done on leather.
- **Memory Bags** - Participants will create a small leather bag and learn about 2 different sewing stitches to assemble the bag. They will then have an opportunity to decorate the bag.

Other art techniques are welcome for suggestion and collaboration. I also offer artist-in-residence opportunities. Please feel free to contact me to discuss how we can design the best opportunity for your group!

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