



Indigenous Relationship and Cultural Awareness (IRCA) Courses: Interactivity Guide Answers

Module 10: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

*Note that the answers provided below are not exhaustive and merely provide relevant information/
points to consider for each question.*

Chapter 1 - Residential Schools

1. Reflection: The following quote was said by Sir John A. Macdonald, Prime Minister of Canada:

“When the school is on the reserve the child lives with its parents, who are savages; he is surrounded by savages, and though he may learn to read and write his habits, and training and mode of thought are Indian. He is simply a savage who can read and write. It has been strong pressed on myself, as the head of the Department, that Indian children should be withdrawn as much as possible from the parental influence, and the only way to do that would be to put them in central training industrial schools where they will acquire the habits and modes of thought of white men.”

How does this make you feel knowing this was the true objective of Residential Schools?

Answer: Self-reflection question.



Ontario Health

Cancer Care Ontario

2. After reviewing this chapter and reflecting on the intergenerational effect of residential schools on First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, how might this impact the self, the family and the community for First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples? Fill in the chart below with the appropriate effects listed below.

Loss of bonding between siblings	Unhealthy living conditions	High rates of suicide and family violence
Personal loss of culture, language, traditional modes of spirituality, and pride in cultural origins	Lack of communication within the family	A belief system that denies the value and importance of women
Discomfort in expressing love for children in physical ways (i.e. hugs)	Feelings of isolation within the community	Deep-rooted feelings of humiliation, shame and abandonment leading to low self-esteem
Addictive and self-destructive behaviours: substance abuse, sexual abuse, sex trade, gambling or violence	Families where no nurturing or affection was present for generations	Communication barriers, especially an inability to express affection

Answer:

Impact on Self	Impact on Family	Impact on Community
Personal loss of culture, language, traditional modes of spirituality, and pride in cultural origins	Discomfort in expressing love for children in physical ways (i.e. hugs)	High rates of suicide and family violence
A belief system that denies the value and importance of women	Lack of communication within the family	Unhealthy living conditions
Deep-rooted feelings of humiliation, shame and abandonment leading to low self-esteem	Loss of bonding between siblings	Feelings of isolation within the community
Communication barriers, especially an inability to express affection	Families where no nurturing or affection was present for generations	Addictive and self-destructive behaviours: substance abuse, sexual abuse, sex trade, gambling or violence



Chapter 2 - The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

1. After watching the video featuring Truth and Reconciliation Commissioner, Dr. Marie Wilson, why is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada so unique among all Truth and Reconciliation Commissions in the world?

Answer: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada is the first and only Truth and Reconciliation Commission created by the actions of the victims (i.e. Residential school survivors involved in the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement). With the support of the Assembly of First Nations and Inuit organizations, former residential school students took the federal government and the churches to court to form an agreement to begin repairing the harm caused by residential schools. Their cases led to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (ISSRA), the largest class-action settlement in Canadian history, which applies to about 80,000 former students who attended residential schools, which ultimately led to the formation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

2. Reflection: The following is a list of all 94 Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls_to_action_english2.pdf

After reviewing the 94 Calls to Action, which of the following have you already begun addressing? Which of the following would you like to learn more about?

Answer: Self-reflection question. Points to consider:

Already begun addressing:

- Call to action #24 calls upon medical and nursing schools in Canada to require all students to take a course dealing with Indigenous health issues, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Indigenous rights, and Indigenous teachings and practices.
- Is the above point something you can work towards in your organization, healthcare practice or personally?

Learn more about:

- Call to action #22 specifically addresses the need recognize the value of Indigenous healing practices and use them in the treatment of Indigenous patients in collaboration with Indigenous Healers and Elders where requested by Indigenous patients.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). Honouring the truth, reconciling for the future: summary of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Retrieved from:

http://www.myrobust.com/websites/trcinstitution/File/Reports/Executive_Summary_English_Web.pdf



Chapter 3 - Implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action

1. Various levels of government have begun to address the 94 Calls to Action. Match the following actions with the Government level that has implemented them.

Adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	Cultural competency training	National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
City of Toronto raises flags from 5 First Nation, Inuit and Métis nations	Mandatory learning expectations in Ontario's public education system curriculum	The First Nations School of Toronto expanding
The Upper Canada District School Board hosted Truth and Reconciliation Commission Feast and Celebration	Bilateral meetings with Indigenous leaders	Teachers' union pushing to remove Sir John A. Macdonald's name from Ontario schools

Answer:

National	Provincial	Municipal
Adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	Cultural competency training	City of Toronto raises flags from 5 First Nation, Inuit and Métis nations
National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls	Mandatory learning expectations in Ontario's public education system curriculum	The First Nations School of Toronto is expanding
Bilateral meetings with Indigenous leaders	Teachers' union pushing to remove Sir John A. Macdonald's name from Ontario schools	The Upper Canada District School Board hosted Truth and Reconciliation Commission Feast and Celebration



Chapter 4 - The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

1. Put the following events related to the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) by various countries in order of date.

A. The General Assembly adopted the Declaration - 144 states in favor, 4 states against (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States) and 11 abstentions (Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burundi, Colombia, Georgia, Kenya, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Samoa and Ukraine).
B. The United States reversed their position on UNDRIP and endorsed the declaration.
C. The New Zealand Government removed their objector status and adopted the UNDRIP.
D. The Canadian Government decided to formally endorse the declaration as opposed to accepting or rejecting it.
E. Canada officially removed its objector status by adopting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
F. Australia reversed their position on UNDRIP and endorsed the declaration.

Answer:

1. A
 2. F
 3. C
 4. D
 5. B
 6. E
2. Reflection: After reviewing the following chapter, what are your thoughts on the importance of adopting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?

Answer: Self-reflection question. Points to consider:

The document emphasizes the rights of Indigenous peoples to live in dignity, to maintain and strengthen their own institutions, cultures and traditions and to pursue their self-determined development, in keeping with their own needs and aspirations.

The Declaration is a large component of the TRC Calls to Action.

In order to achieve full respect for diversity, countries will need to adopt participatory approaches to Indigenous issues, which will require effective consultations and the building of partnerships with Indigenous peoples.