



## PLACE-BASED MULTILITERACIES

**Place-Based Multiliteracies** is a **curriculum design approach** that establishes a framework honoring both places and diverse forms of literacy. The goal is to convey learning holistically, as students take on roles as designers of their own knowledge systems, building upon local understandings, skills, and experiences to create responses to challenges faced in real world contexts.

**Place:** Place can refer to a specific community or territory (including built and natural and environments and the people, animals, and plants that inhabit them) of significance to the targeted students, or it can be expanded to examine, for instance, a national historic trail. Ideally, a Teaching that has a connection to a particular place will promote a deep and balanced understanding of the richness of historical and cultural landscapes, along with the importance of context. A place under study might be central to students' identity, as they can embrace place through the personal, firsthand experience of lives lived. Places such as parks, buildings, trails, mining sites, and urban settings can also be introduced to learners through field trips. Additionally, places can be experienced vicariously through media, such as film, digital photographs, audio recordings, memoirs, and stories.

**Multiliteracies:** The multiliteracies framework embraces multiple ways of knowing, being, and doing (Martin, 2008),\* using cognitive activities that focus on visual, auditory, tactile, spatial, smell/taste, movement/gestural, linguistic, and spiritual abilities in order to appeal to a wide range of learners on more than a perfunctory level, with the intention of encouraging their creative responses. Diverse expressions and outcomes in these student responses are similarly appreciated, as learners develop their capacities to comprehend, explain, interpret, use, and evaluate material through literal or metaphorical language, through matrices, through sensory experiences, and through a holistic philosophy that interconnects all aspects of life.

**Process:** The place-based multiliteracies approach involves a process of **situated practice**, whereby prior knowledge serves as the foundation for new knowledge; **overt instruction**, whereby design modes and factors are explicitly taught; **critical framing**, whereby multiple stakeholder perspectives are considered and underlying assumptions are analyzed; and, **transformed practice**, whereby learning is connected to specific lives with real-life concerns for a real purpose or outcome.

This table draws from our demonstration Teachings, such as the work of Julie Cajune (Salish) and Shane Doyle (Crow) and Megkian Doyle, and the educational philosophies of CHiXapkaid and Ella Inglebret. It also draws page 8 of volume 1, and pages 33, 75, 103, and 122 of volume 2 of the Honoring Tribal Legacies handbook. <https://blogs.uoregon.edu/honoringtriballegeries/handbook/>

\* Martin, K. (2008). The intersection of Aboriginal knowledges, Aboriginal literacies, and new learning pedagogy for Aboriginal students. In A. Healy (Ed.), *Multiliteracies and diversity in education: New pedagogies for expanding landscapes* (pp. 58–81). South Melbourne, Victoria, Australia: Oxford University Press.