

# *The First People's Principals of Learning*

*Using Them in the Classroom*

# What are the First People's Principals of Learning

- *What do they really mean?*
- *How to use them in the classroom?*
- *What are the underlying themes?*
- *What are Indigenous World Views Anyway?*



*Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, family, community, land, spirits and ancestors.*

*What does this mean?*

# Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits and the ancestors.

What we learn should support the well-being of the self.

- Learners are valued
- Learners are unique
- Learners have their own gifts
- Learners have diverse learning needs and styles
- Learners learn about themselves, their gifts and their strengths, to support further learning
- The well-being of self includes the whole self; heart, body, mind and spirit

What we learn should support the well-being of family and community.

- Indigenous views hold family and community in high regard
- Indigenous views support the concept that what is learned will benefit the family and community
- We are all interconnected. What affects one, will affect others and the world around us.

# Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits and the ancestors.

What we learn should support the well-being of the land.

- We need Mother Earth to survive. Mother Earth does not need us
- What we do, what we learn, should support the well-being of the land, for without it, we would not exist
- “We do not inherit this land from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.” Chief Seattle

What we learn should support the well-being of spirits and ancestors.

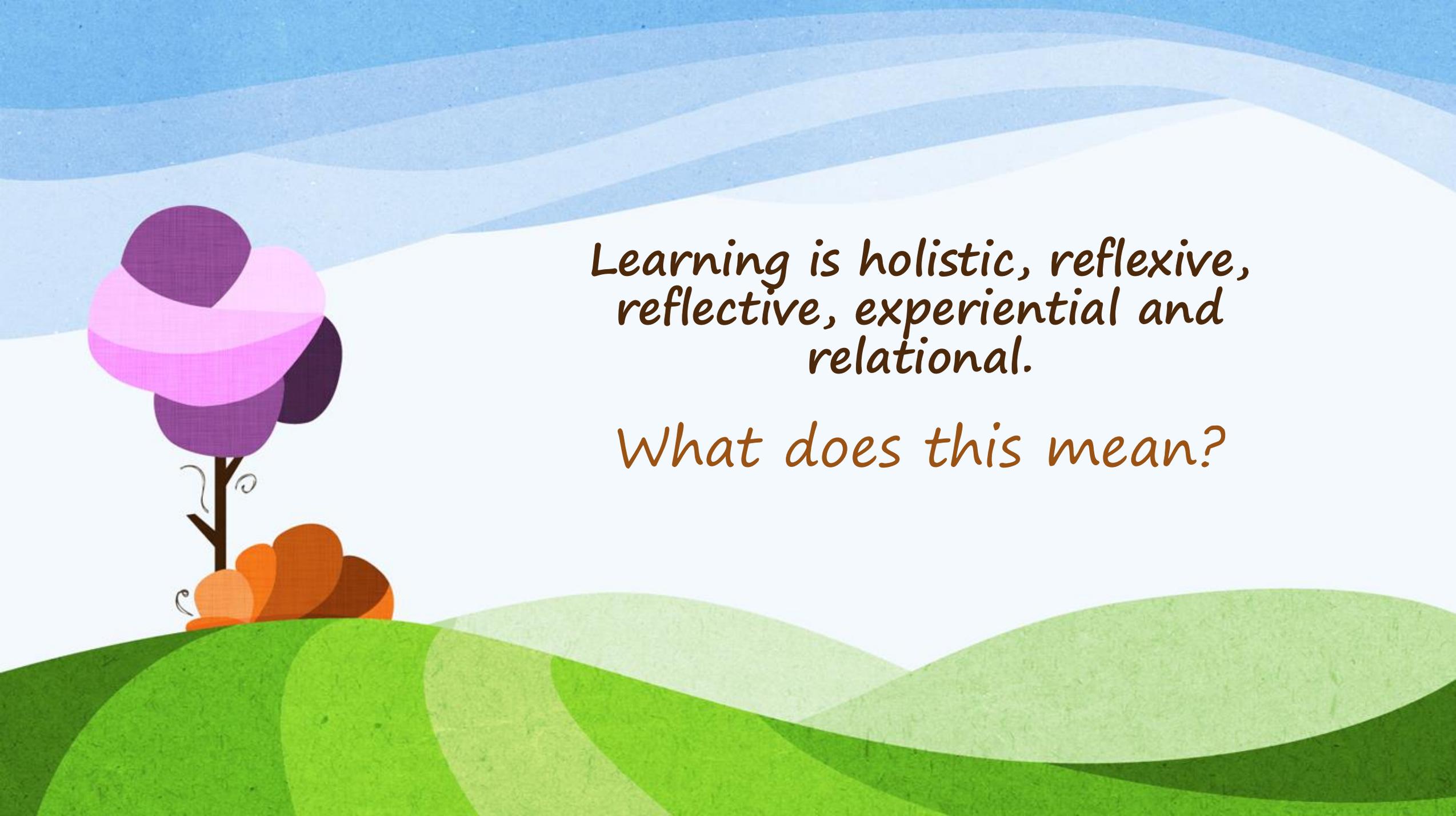
- We remember seven generations before us and we think of seven generations after us
- Those that came before us have paved the way and shared their teachings
- It is our job to learn from the past while being mindful of the future
- As our ancestors did, we try to leave the world a better place for future generations



*Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, family, community, land, spirits and ancestors.*

*What can teachers do?*

- Create a welcoming space – a home away from home
- Learn as much as you can about students
- Get to know families and connect with them often
- The deeper your relationship with your families, the deeper your relationship with community will be
- Get to know your student's strengths
- Learn your student's interests
- Teach to your student's interests
- Make learning relevant
- Show and tell the students why they are learning
- Teach the whole child; heart, body, mind and spirit
- Take students out into the community
- Invite community and/or family into the classroom
- Teach students about social responsibility (anger mountain/self-regulation)
- Let students know how they are growing and learning – show them
- Represent learning in a variety of ways
- Connect to the land often
- Practice gratitude often
- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, family, community, land, spirits and ancestors.



*Learning is holistic, reflexive,  
reflective, experiential and  
relational.*

*What does this mean?*

# Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential and relational.

## Learning is holistic.

- Learning is circular, with no start and no end
- Learning is life-long
- All learning is interconnected
- Learning affects the emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual

## Learning is reflexive.

- Learning builds upon itself
- One learns, understands, grows, and learns more

# Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential and relational.

## Learning is reflective.

- Reflection allows us to make connections
- Reflection allows us to process information
- Reflection takes time and patience
- Reflection takes into consideration the past, present and future
- Reflection takes into consideration our families and communities

## Learning is experiential.

- Learning is doing AND thinking
- Learning is hands on AND minds on
- Experiential learning requires reflection

# Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential and relational.

## Learning is relational.

- Relationships are important
- Relationship to self includes learning about the heart, body, mind and spirit
- Relationship to others is important
- Relationship to family and community is important
- Relationship to the land and all living things is important
- Relational learning reminds us that we are all connected
- Reciprocity is important. Take from the land – give to the land. Learn a lesson – share a lesson learned
- Sense of place in the world is important
- Connection to land is important
- “Sense of place comes from memories, emotions, histories and spirituality” (Wayi Wah pg 13)



*Learning is holistic, reflective,  
experiential, and relational.*

*What can teachers do?*

- *Connect to the land*
- *Show how learning is relevant*
- *Go outside as much as possible*
- *Go into the community*
- *Provide cross-curricular learning*
- *Provide cooperative learning; Big Buddies, Mentorship, collaborative learning*
- *Highlight Indigenous knowledge*
- *Do mindful activities and breathing exercises*
- *Develop stronger, healthier relationships*
- *Practice gratitude often*
- *Thank the land for all that it gives us*
- *Share about yourself*
- *Provide choice and flexibility*
- *Show learning in a variety of ways*
- *Allow learning to represent the heart, body, mind and spirit*
- *Build community within the classroom, within the school and within the wider community*
- *Share student learning and share student growth*
- *Celebrate learning and growth*
- *Reciprocate by sharing with students what they have taught you as their teacher*
- *Provide opportunity to self reflect*
- *Provide opportunity to self assess*
- *Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential and relational.*



*Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.*

*What does this mean?*

# *Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.*

- We are responsible for our actions*
- All actions have consequences*
- What we do affects others, our families and communities*
- What we do affects nature*
- We are all interconnected*



*Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.*

*What can teachers do?*

- *Allow students to make mistakes – mistakes are how we learn*
- *Share your mistakes as a teacher – role model your own learning*
- *Provide choice for students*
- *Teach the importance of interconnectedness*
- *Nurture empathy*
- *Teach students how to deal with conflict in healthy, respectful ways*
- *Learn about and practice restorative justice*
- *Teach how our actions affect the well being of the land*
- *Learning involves recognizing the consequences of ones actions.*



*Learning involves generational  
roles and responsibilities.*

*What does this mean?*

## *Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.*

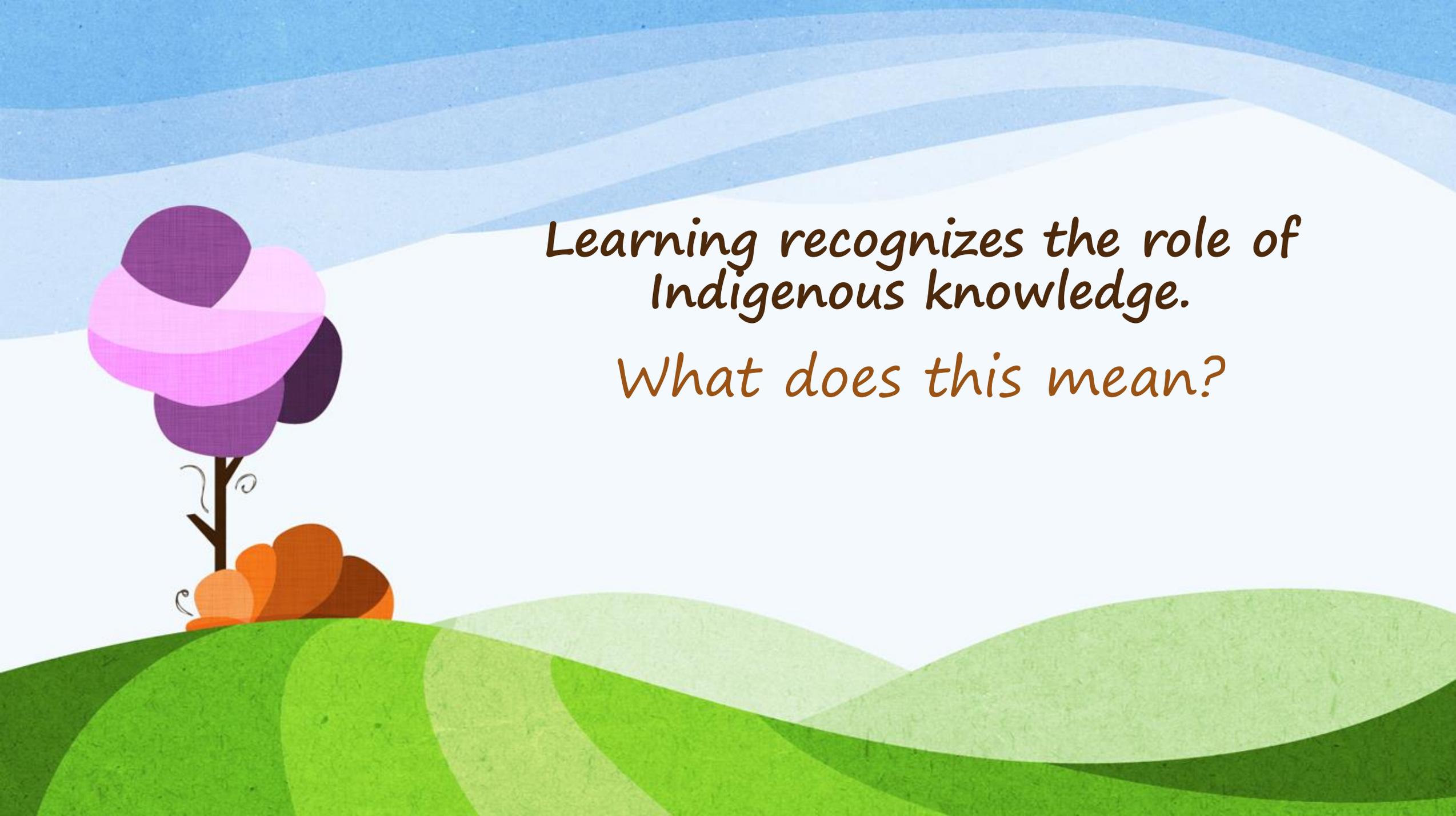
- Learning involves relationships*
- Learning is reciprocal*
- We all learn from each other*
- We are all learners and helpers*
- Mentorship comes in many forms*
- Babies teach adults. Adults teach children. Children teach Elders.*
- The circle of learning is continuous*
- The circle of learning is generational*
- It takes a community to raise a child*



*Learning involves generational  
roles and responsibilities.*

*What can teachers do?*

- *Build strong, genuine relationships*
- *Teach life cycles and the circle of life*
- *Use Big Buddies*
- *Be a Big Buddy class*
- *Provide Mentorship opportunities*
- *Use community members, Elders and Knowledge Holders, family and grandparents*
- *Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.*

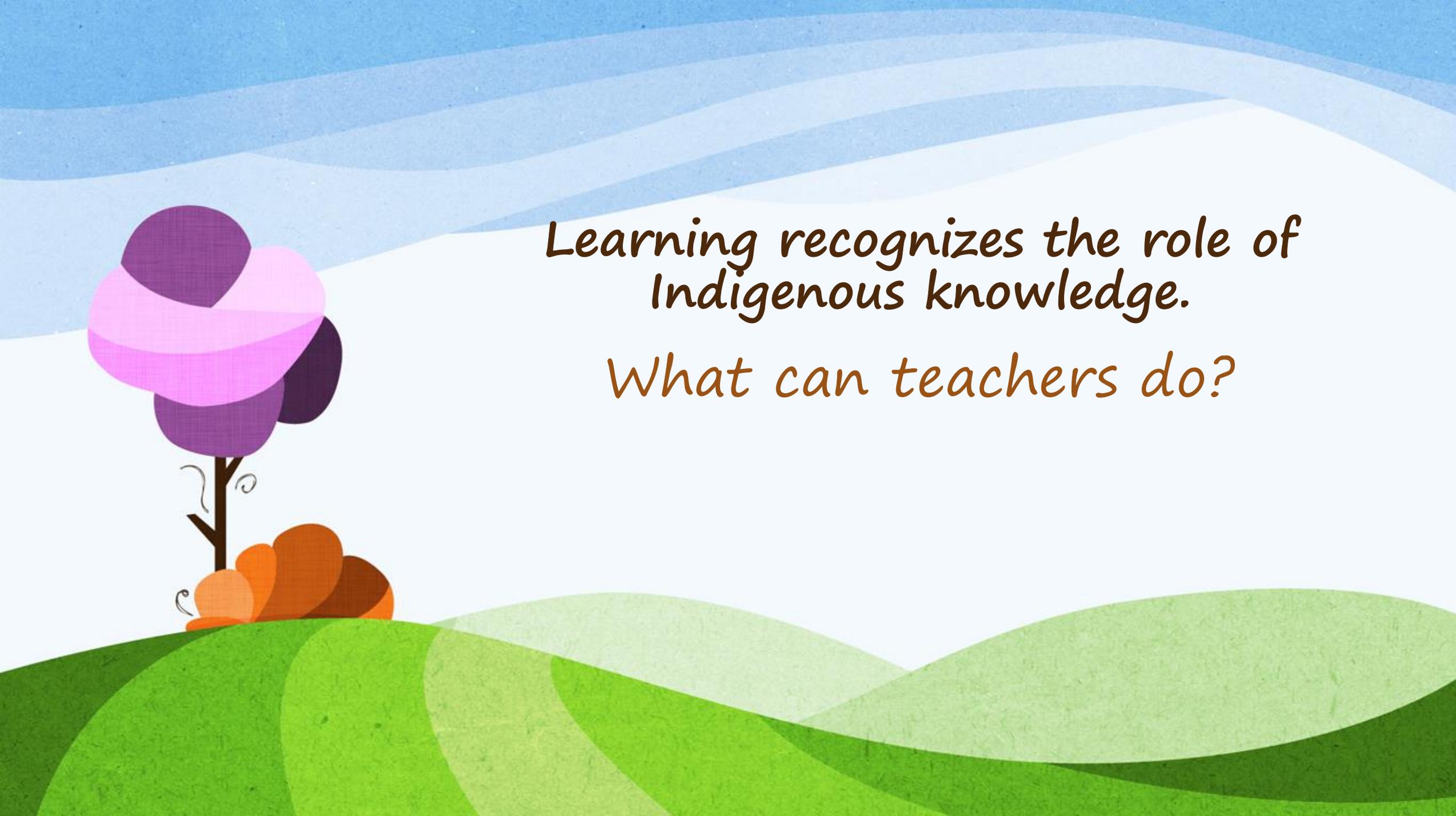


*Learning recognizes the role of  
Indigenous knowledge.*

*What does this mean?*

# Learning recognizes the role of Indigenous knowledge.

- Indigenous knowledge is complex and intricate
- Indigenous knowledge reflects a complex understanding of the natural world
- Indigenous knowledge is embedded in language and relationship to the land
- Indigenous knowledge includes complex social and political systems
- Indigenous knowledge is important to highlight in western education so that Indigenous students can see themselves reflected in it
- Indigenous world views share the idea that we are all interconnected
- Indigenous world views share the importance of relationship, to each other and to the land



*Learning recognizes the role of  
Indigenous knowledge.*

*What can teachers do?*

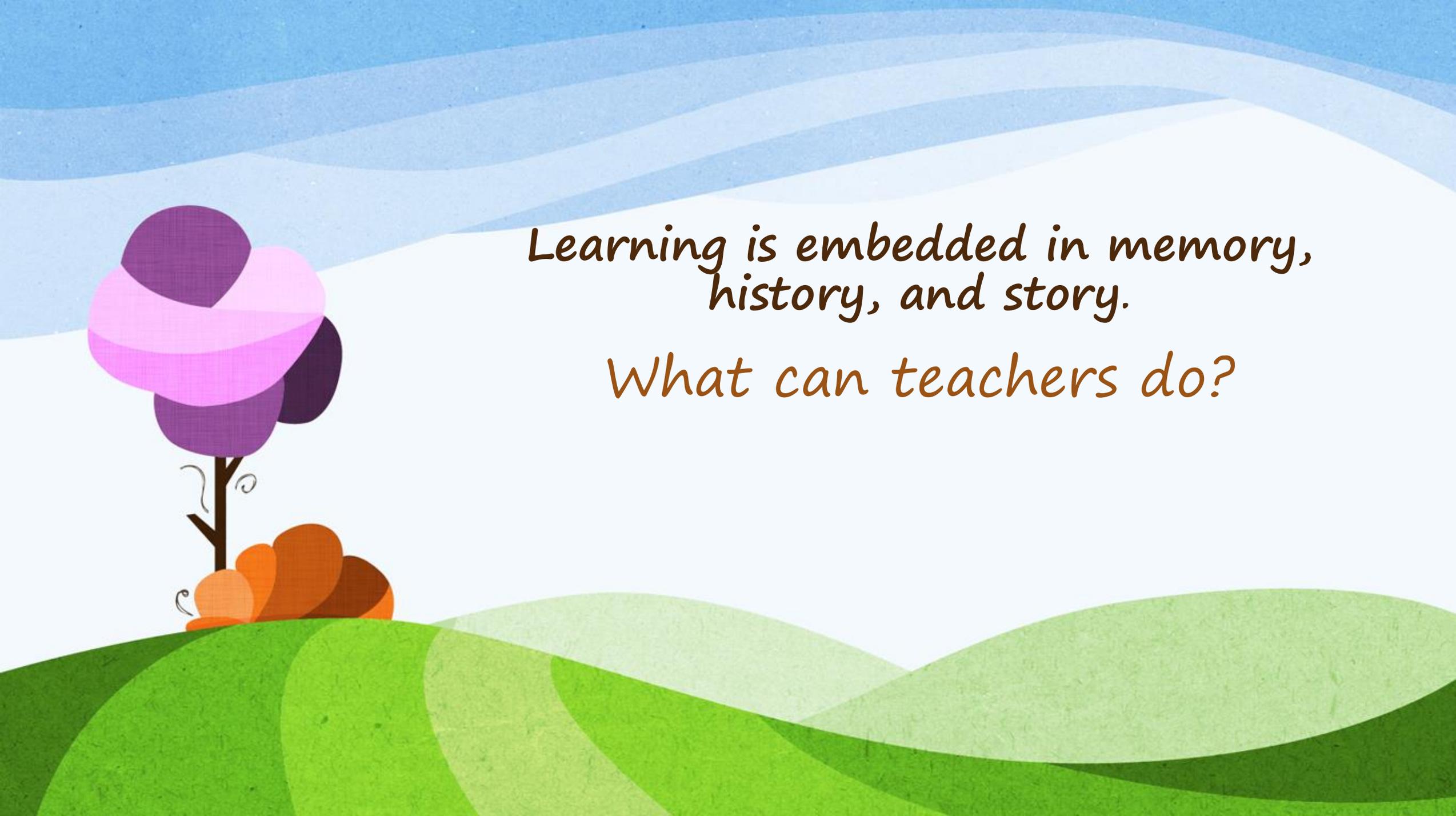
- Learn about the land you are on, the people, the names and the history
- Educate yourself, learn through reading, listening to podcasts, watching videos, joining book clubs
- Have Indigenous resources in the classroom
- Advocate for Indigenous resources
- Talk about interconnectedness with students
- Share with students that teachers themselves are also learning about Indigenous knowledge
- Try not to do one offs, instead weave Indigenous knowledge through all content
- Teach students how to self-locate
- Practice doing self-locations often
- Learn how to do a personal Land Acknowledgement
- Teach students how to do Land Acknowledgement
- Learning recognizes the role of Indigenous knowledge.

*Learning is embedded in  
memory, history, and story.  
What does this mean?*



# *Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.*

- History is shared through stories*
- Memory is passed on through stories*
- Oral stories are rich in Indigenous culture*
- Stories teach lessons*
- Stories teach morals*
- Stories teach history*
- Stories entertain*
- Stories teach values*
- Stories teach skills*
- Stories explain the unexplainable*
- Stories hold records*
- Stories connect the heart, mind and spirit*
- Stories are interwoven and interconnected*



*Learning is embedded in memory,  
history, and story.*

*What can teachers do?*

- Use stories often as a whole class
- Give opportunities to share stories in small groups, in partners or with other classes
- Listen – listen – listen
- Allow students to tell family stories
- Teach the power of stories, how they teach lessons and morals and stir emotion and excitement and how they can be transformative
- Teach Indigenous stories
- Use the Sharing Circle to give students the opportunity to share about themselves
- Learn stories from around the world
- Compare and contrast stories
- Share all forms of stories; videos, oral, written and graphic
- Use stories in all areas of the curriculum
- Give students opportunity to use their voice
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.

*Learning involves  
patience and time.  
What does this mean?*



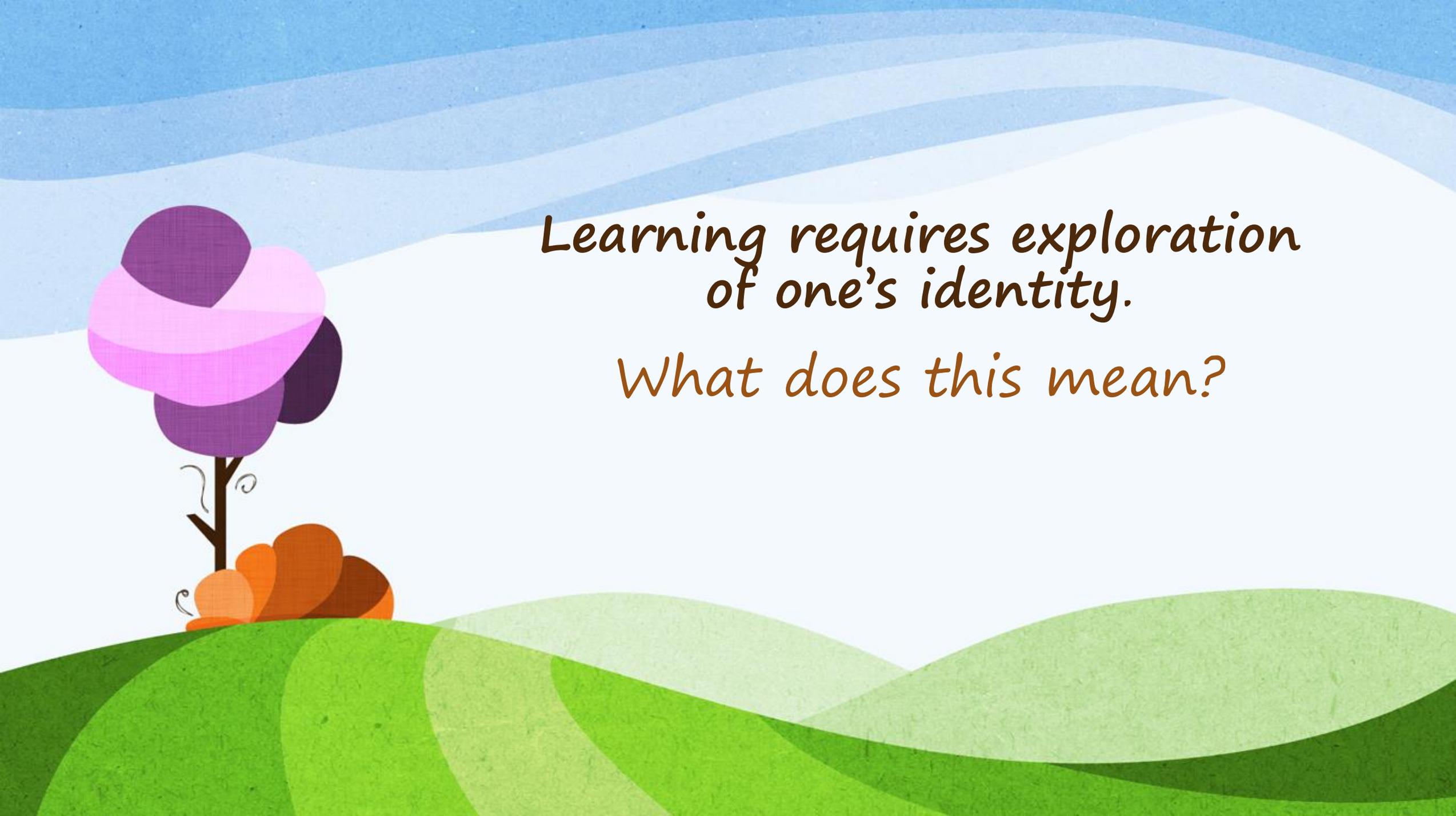
# *Learning involves patience and time.*

- *Learning takes practice*
- *Practice takes patience*
- *Patience takes time*
- *Learning involves relationships*
- *Relationships take patience*
- *Relationships take time*
- *Learning requires reflection*
- *Reflection takes patience*
- *Reflection takes time*

*Learning involves  
patience and time.  
What can teachers do?*



- *Allow students opportunity to apply their knowledge to real life situations*
- *Be patient with students*
- *Be aware of different learning styles and needs*
- *Teach students that patience goes hand in hand with perseverance*
- *Revisit concepts multiple times to deepen knowledge and understanding*
- *Practice, practice, practice*
- *Allow students to show what they know at various stages during their learning*
- *Be flexible*
- *Allow students time to process*
- *Continue to build community within the classroom, allow time for this to happen*
- *Learning involves patience and time.*

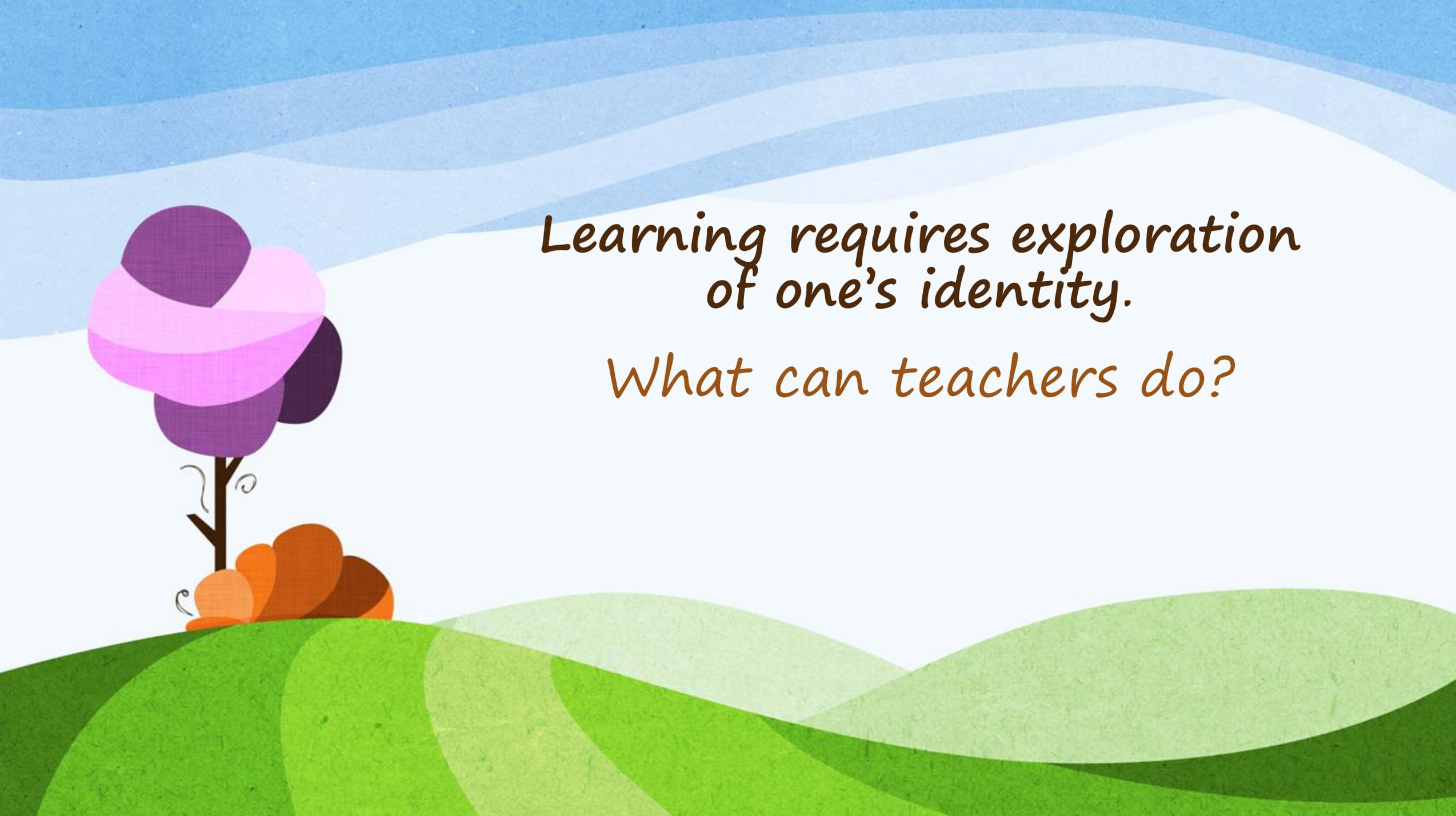
A stylized illustration of a landscape. The foreground features rolling green hills in various shades of green. On the left, a purple and pink flower with a dark brown stem and small white curls grows on a hill. The background consists of a blue sky with wavy, layered bands of light blue and white. The text is centered in the upper right area.

*Learning requires exploration  
of one's identity.*

*What does this mean?*

# Learning requires exploration of one's identity.

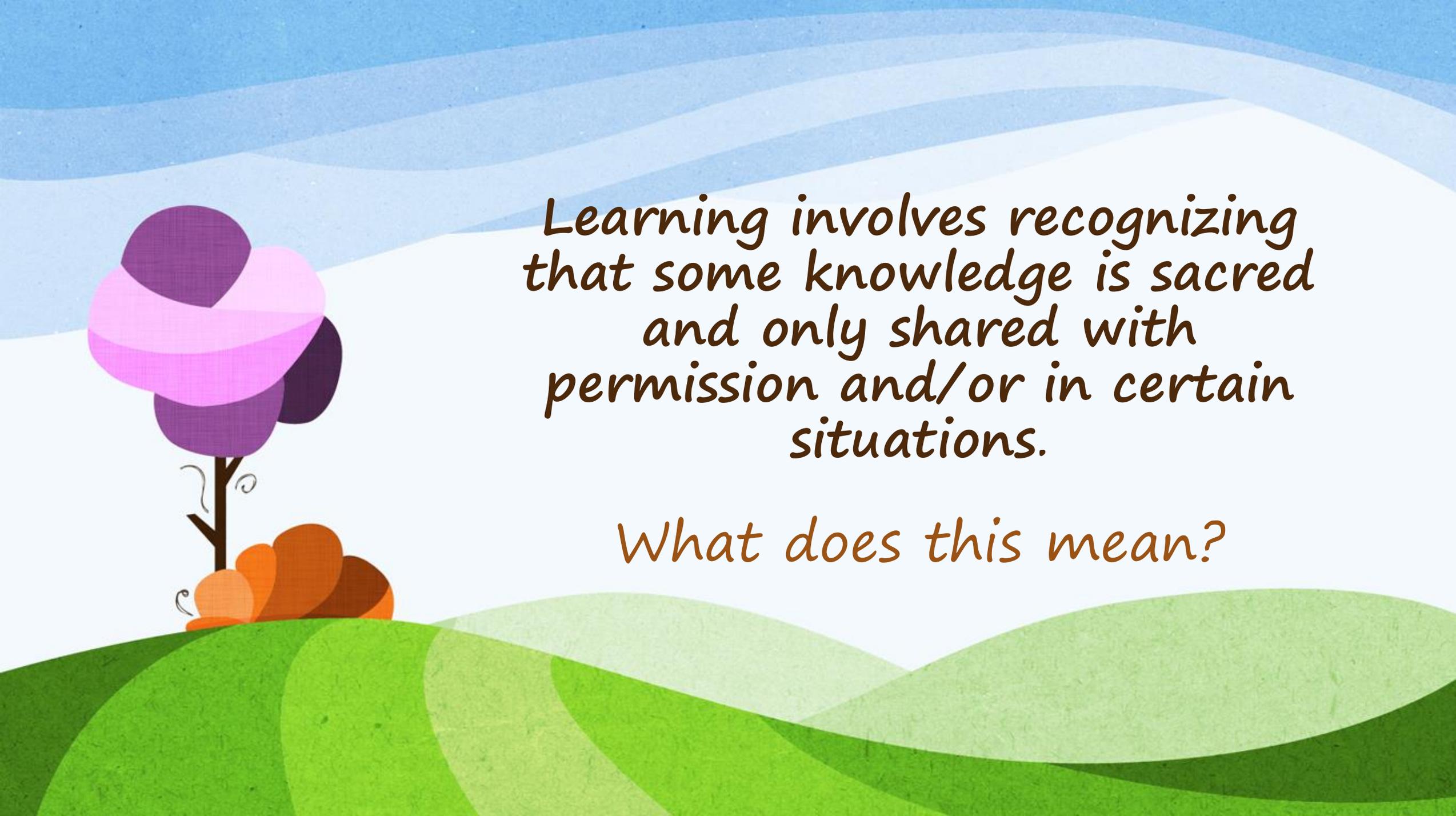
- We are all the same because we are all human
- We are all unique
- We are all diverse
- We all have gifts
- We all have family; who is yours?
- We all have history; what is yours?
- We all have story; what would you like to share about yourself?
- We all come from different places in the world – where do you come from?
- Take time to share and learn about each other
- We are all connected
- We all share the earth
- We all belong to the earth
- Who you are matters; share about yourself
- When we share our gifts, our stories, our similarities and our differences; when we learn to celebrate all that connects us, this is when the world will prosper

A stylized illustration of a landscape. The foreground features rolling green hills in various shades of green. On the left, a purple and pink flower with a dark brown stem and small white curls grows on a hill. The background consists of a blue sky with wavy, horizontal bands of light blue and white. The text is centered in the upper right area.

*Learning requires exploration  
of one's identity.*

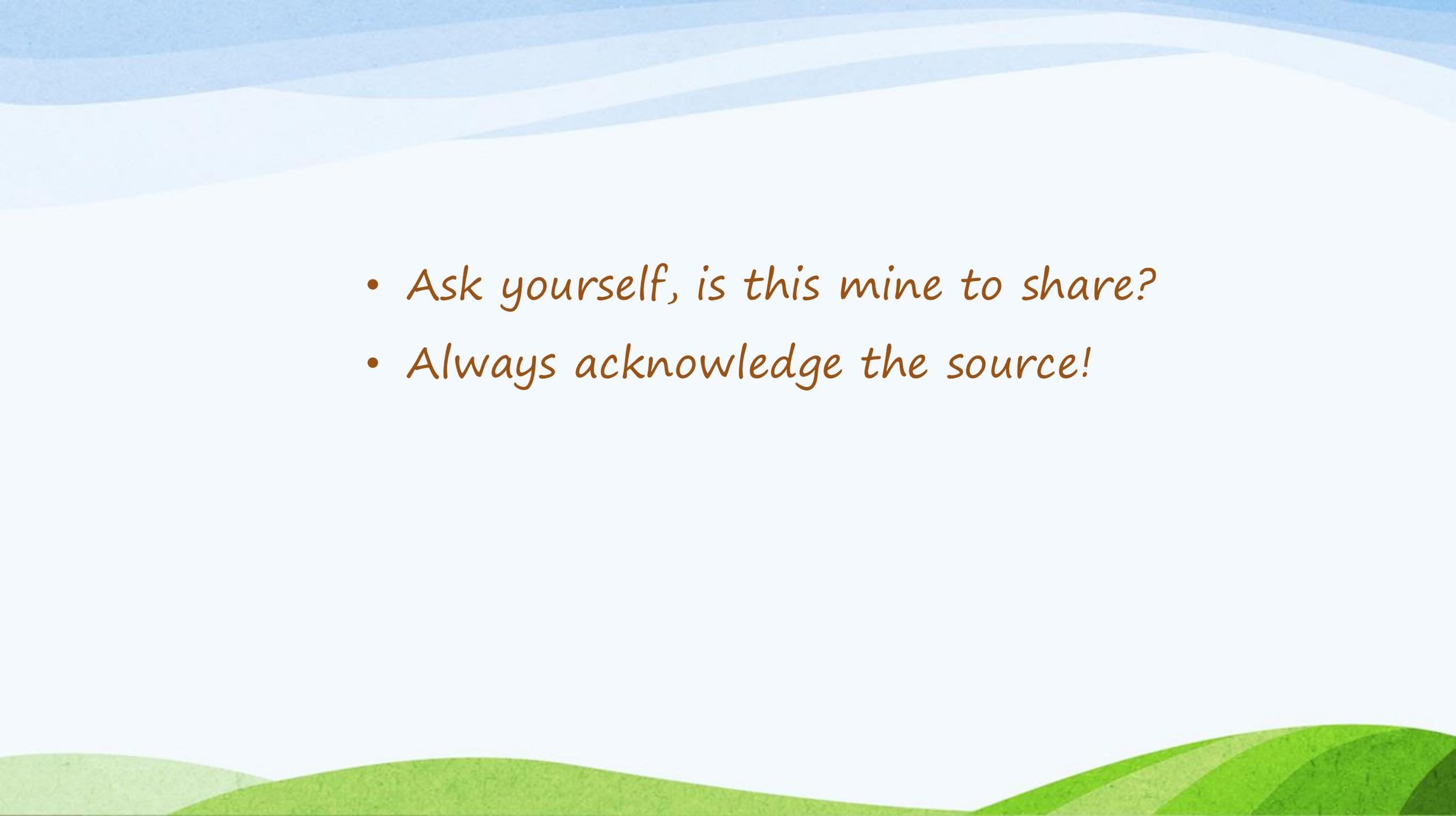
*What can teachers do?*

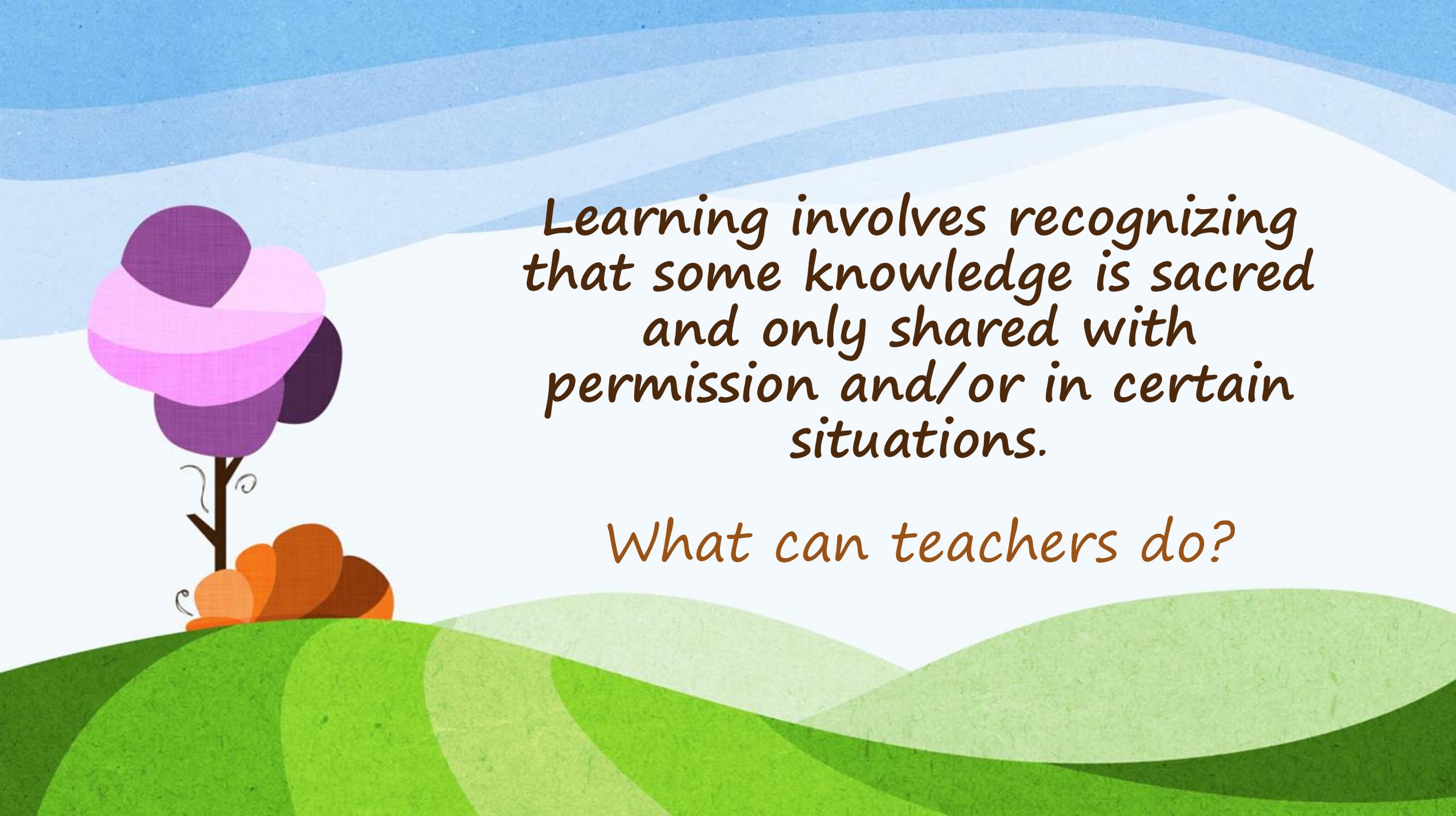
- *Be careful of stereotypes*
- *Understand that learners are different with different needs*
- *Know your own biases and privilege and how that affects your teaching*
- *Try to not generalize learners*
- *Create safe spaces for students*
- *Create welcoming spaces for learning*
- *Have a diverse variety of resources, pictures, posters and memorabilia in your classroom*
- *Allow students the opportunity to share their family history*
- *Share where in the world student's families come from*
- *Share how we are all similar as well as how we are different*
- *Celebrate our uniqueness*
- *Learning requires exploration of one's identity.*



*Learning involves recognizing  
that some knowledge is sacred  
and only shared with  
permission and/or in certain  
situations.*

*What does this mean?*

- 
- *Ask yourself, is this mine to share?*
  - *Always acknowledge the source!*



*Learning involves recognizing  
that some knowledge is sacred  
and only shared with  
permission and/or in certain  
situations.*

*What can teachers do?*

- Be sure that Indigenous resources being used are authentic and written by Indigenous authors
- If you aren't sure about something, ask
- Become familiar with local protocols
- Understand the diversity that exists within Indigenous people
- Accept that not all Indigenous knowledge can be translated into other languages
- If you use the internet to find Indigenous materials, be careful of what you use as it may not be authentic or true
- Reciprocity is important. If you are going to use Indigenous knowledge, how can your students reciprocate? How can they share what they learned?
- Indigenous knowledge should not be trivialized nor should Indigenous knowledge be used only as performative
- Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.



Do you notice some  
common themes?

Land/Environment  
Family/Community  
Heart, Body, Mind, Spirit  
Interconnectedness  
Relationship  
Reciprocity  
Relevance  
Responsibility  
Respect  
Gratitude  
Stories  
Holism



*What are Indigenous World  
Views Anyway?*

*Good question.....*

# Indigenous World Views Are.....

- Ideals that have been around for thousands and thousands of years
- Holistic
- A relationship with the land that is top priority
- Working as a collective, as a community rather than in isolation
- Different from the Eurocentric world views
- Based on relationship
- Based on connectedness and interconnectedness
- Based on values such as respect, honesty, sharing, kindness and gratitude
- Knowing that Mother Earth does not belong to us, we belong the Mother Earth
- Knowing that we all have unique and beautiful gifts to share, and it is in the sharing and celebration of these gifts that the world will prosper
- Putting children at the center of the community
- A deep respect and appreciation for Elders

## Indigenous World Views Continued

An understanding of the circle of life that exists all around us; from the moons and tides, to darkness and daylight, from the cycle of plants, animals and humans, to the water cycle, from the seasons to the return of the salmon upstream.



# Indigenous World Views Continued

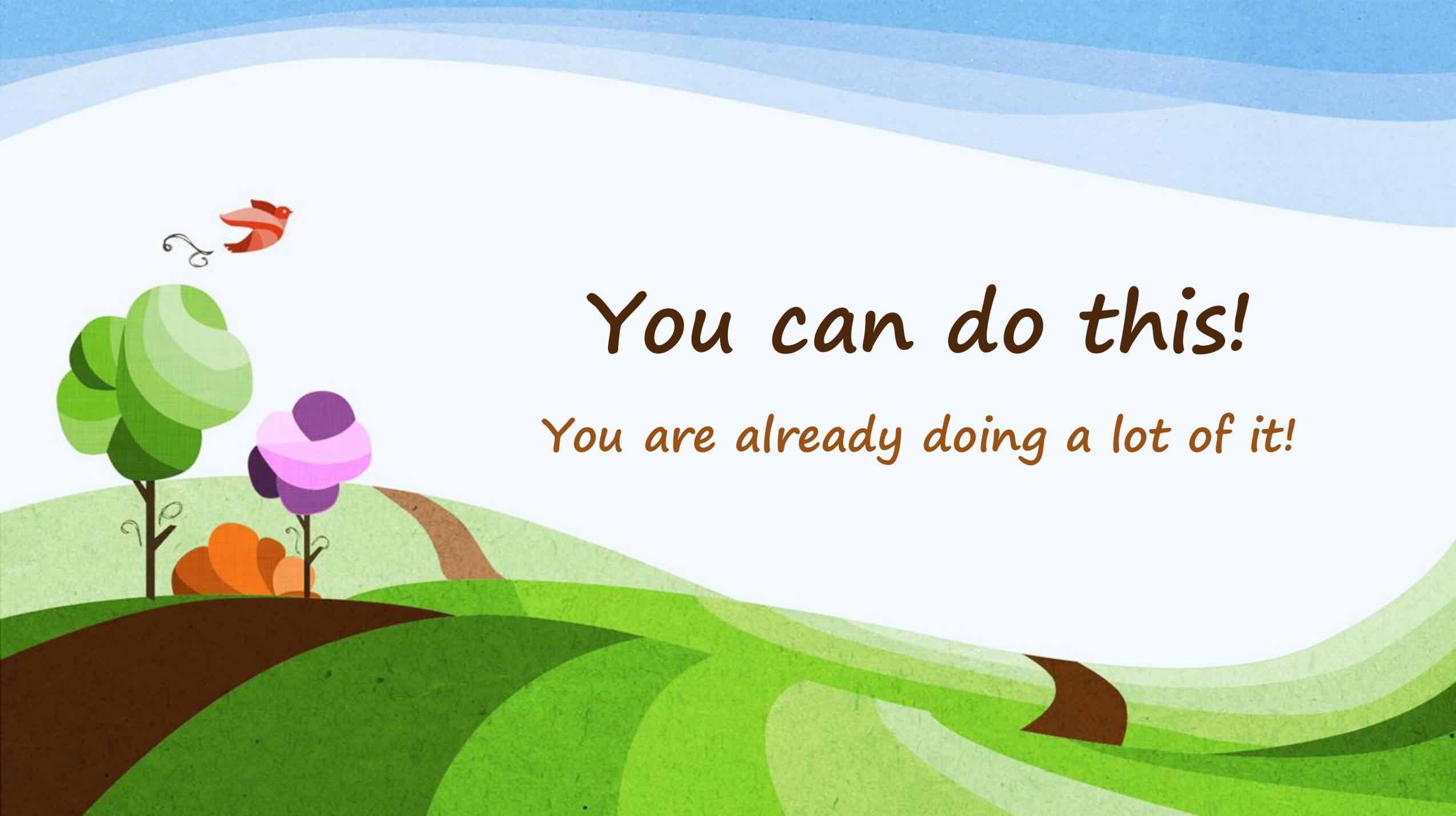


Indigenous World Views are rooted in relationship to the land, air, water, plant relatives, animal brothers and sisters, grandfather moon and grandmother sun. Language is rooted in the land. Stories are rooted in the land. Names are rooted in the land. Mother Earth is the land. She gives us everything we need. Respect for, reciprocity toward, and relationship with Mother Earth are of the utmost importance.

These are Indigenous World Views.

# A Recap of How Teachers Can Bring FPPL Into Their Classroom

- Create a welcoming environment
- Build strong relationships
- Help students build strong relationships
- Make learning relevant
- Teach to the whole child; heart, body, mind and spirit
- Involve the community and the family
- Teach students to be responsible
- Get out on the land often
- Practice gratitude often
- Teach about interconnectedness
- Role model respect
- Take care of yourself
- Share stories
- Listen more, talk less
- Be patient
- Be flexible
- Teach reciprocity – give and take



*You can do this!*  
*You are already doing a lot of it!*



*Children are our  
most valuable natural  
resource.*

*We do not inherit this land  
from our ancestors. We  
borrow it from our children.  
(Chief Seattle)*

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*Thank you for taking the time to read about  
the First Peoples Principles of Learning.*

*SD61 IED Teacher Consultant Team*