



## Cultural Appreciation vs. Appropriation in the Life Promotion Toolkit

Understanding the difference between appreciation and appropriation helps school staff respectfully implement life promotion activities while honoring Indigenous knowledge.

### What's the difference between appreciation and appropriation?

Appreciation	Appropriation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learning about Indigenous cultures with respect</li> <li>• inviting a Knowledge Keeper to share teachings</li> <li>• acknowledging Indigenous contributions</li> <li>• supporting Indigenous-led initiatives</li> <li>• admiring Indigenous culture without claiming it as your own</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• using Indigenous symbols, stories or activities without proper understanding</li> <li>• teaching ceremonial or cultural practices without guidance</li> <li>• presenting Indigenous knowledge as universal or personal expertise</li> <li>• adapting cultural activities in ways that misrepresent or erase meaning</li> </ul>

### When do I need a Knowledge Keeper?

Some activities can be facilitated by anyone, but others require cultural expertise.

- Activities that can be facilitated by anyone: nature walks, reflective journaling, discussions about connection to land.
- Activities that require a Knowledge Keeper: teachings about medicines, making drums or dreamcatchers, ceremonies.

### How can I engage respectfully?

- Refer to our [Facilitation Guide for Non-Indigenous School Staff](#) — it outlines when and how non-Indigenous school staff can facilitate activities in the Life Promotion Toolkit.
- Practice [cultural humility](#) — recognize your role as a facilitator, not a knowledge holder.
- Consult with Indigenous education teams, Elders or Knowledge Keepers before introducing cultural components.
- Create space for Indigenous students to engage with their culture on their terms, without placing the burden or expectation of teachings on them.

Visit our website for a link to the Life Promotion Toolkit and companion resources

[smho-smso.ca/online-resources/life-promotion-toolkit-and-supporting-resources/](https://smho-smso.ca/online-resources/life-promotion-toolkit-and-supporting-resources/)

