

BLM 1 *A Local Focus: Quotations*

With a partner, read the attached quotations from people around British Columbia on their thoughts about the importance of local places and their relevance especially to our education system. As you are reading these quotations, consider and respond to the following questions:

- Which quotation resonates with you most? Why?
- Are there any quotations that you disagree with? Why?
- Is there a quotation that makes you think differently? Explain.

In 2015, a dialogue was held in four regions of British Columbia about Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives in the classroom. The following quotations are from participants. They are comments about the importance of schools having a local focus.

“If we start from the point of view of where we stand, we are able to immediately and comfortably bring Aboriginal worldviews and perspectives to the classroom. We all share the history of place on which we stand, but education needs to recognize the language and people that came originally from this place.”
- participant, Burnaby

“The focus needs to be on the local experience, culture, history (the language, etc.) and on being able to connect that with the experience of the non-Aboriginal students’ families.” – participant, Williams Lake

“Place Based Education: We could do a better job of teaching a balanced local history and encourage our education partners to expand the use of local Aboriginal place names. These names have been there for generations and reflect our sense of connectedness to the environment. The Ktunaxa name for Sparwood, for example, means “special place on the river” and evokes our links and connections to the river. Just as its waters came from the surrounding creeks and streams and flows on to eventually feed into the Columbia River, so they connect people to one another.” – participant, ?Aq’am

“Learning is in the land –history and story are in the land; land should be the starting place.” – participant, Tsaxis

“There is a feeling of sacredness within all Aboriginal ways of leaning, particularly focused on relationship to the land.” – participant, Tsaxis

(from *Aboriginal Worldviews and Perspectives in the Classroom: Moving Forward*, 2015)