

Planning Foundational Learning Lessons

Ribbon Skirt Day Lesson Plan:

Dates: January 4

Duration: 60 Minutes (Adjustable)

Background Information: <https://www.7generations.org/story-of-the-ribbon-skirt/>

Materials: Images of ribbon skirts, short reading, whiteboard

What is Ribbon Skirt Day?

The ribbon skirt is a traditional skirt worn by many Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people. It represents identity, pride, and connection to culture and community.

Ribbon Skirt Day began after an Indigenous student was treated unfairly for wearing her ribbon skirt to school. Indigenous communities and allies responded by standing together, saying that Indigenous culture should always be respected. Today, people across Canada recognize Ribbon Skirt Day as a reminder that cultural expression is important and deserves respect.

For adult learners and newcomers, Ribbon Skirt Day is an opportunity to learn about Indigenous Peoples and the history of this land. Learning about Indigenous cultures helps build understanding, respect, and stronger communities. Participation can be as simple as learning, listening, and having respectful conversations.

#1 Check-in with learner (10 minutes)

Goal: Build connection and introduce the purpose of Ribbon Skirt Day

Facilitator Prompts:

- Welcome everyone and introduce Ribbon Skirt Day
- Ask “Is there clothing in your culture that is worn for special days?”

#2 Check on previous lesson (5 minutes)

Goal: Connect Ribbon Skirt learning to previous sessions (if applicable).

- Review what was learned in previous lesson.
- Ask how the learner practiced the skills between lessons.
- Explain that today they are going to learn something new.

#3 Access learner’s prior knowledge of new topic (5 minutes)

Goal: Activate curiosity and connect new content to what learners already know.

- Ask “What do you already know about Ribbon Skirts?”
- Ask “What has confused them in the past about Indigenous peoples wearing Ribbon Skirts?”

Use the whiteboard to capture what learners already know about Ribbon Skirts and what they want to know about Ribbon Skirts.

#4 Skill development activity (15 minutes)

Goal: Develop vocabulary that connects to the Ribbon Skirt text.

Key vocabulary:

- Culture
- Connection
- Pride
- Identity
- Respect

Discuss meanings using examples rather than definitions.

Practice (Learner Involvement):

- Invite participants to write the new vocabulary down in a notebook.

#5 Explicit teaching with practice activities (15 minutes)

Goal: Practice Guided Reading with a Ribbon Skirt text (below).

1. Listen as the facilitator reads aloud.
2. Read the text together.
3. Invite a participant to read a section of the text independently.

Discussion questions:

- What does culture mean to you?
- Why do you think cultural clothing is important?
- How can schools and workplaces show respect for different cultures?
- What does belonging mean in a new country?

Practice (Learner Involvement):

- Encourage learners to respond in short sentences or phrases.
- Invite participants to write their sentences in a notebook.

6 Review of lesson (10 minutes)

Goal: Reinforce key takeaways and ensure understanding.

Summarize key ideas:

- Indigenous Peoples are the first Peoples of Canada.

- Cultural expression should be respected.
- Learning about each other builds community.

Choose one option for a reflection activity to close the session:

1. Learners write one sentence: “Belonging means _____ to me.”
2. Learners share one thing they learned today.
3. Small-group discussion with sentence starters.

7 Practice between lessons (5 minutes)

Goal: Encourage ongoing learning and practice.

With the learner, come up with ways they can use these skills in their everyday lives between lessons.

Optional Hands-On Activity:

Sew a mini-Ribbon Skirt https://youtu.be/WwOZxfI2_DY?si=F2bx5xMYelo0EVgo