

# TEACHING STRATEGIES

Teaching strategies used in this curriculum focus on encouraging a variety of teaching methods that will challenge each child and encourage cooperation and individual growth while they make connections between themselves, their home, and tribal life.

## Individual Learning Styles

The eight lessons were developed with the understanding that all children learn differently. The lessons include strategies for teaching all individual learning styles. These styles include Linguistic (stories), Logical (problem-solving questions), Spatial (art), Musical (music/movement), Bodily (nature walks), Intra-personal (small group and individual time), and Inter-personal (large group) learners. When modifying the curriculum content the activities chosen by your program for lesson planning and implementation should also model this consideration.

## Learning Through the Five Senses

Another teaching strategy considered is that of learning through the use of the five senses. Young children use all five senses to make sense of new information and ideas. Multi-sensory experiences provide children with more than one way to process, understand, and remember abstract and concrete ideas. Discussion questions in the lessons include inquiries about what the characters in the stories were seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, and tasting. Some of the follow-up activities provide the children the opportunity to participate in some of the same experiences using their own senses. It is especially important to include guidance using the five senses during the nature walks as a way to deepen the learning experiences.

## Character Development

Character Development programs for school children have become a very effective teaching strategy across the nation. Providing opportunities for children to understand and develop positive values holds the result of children who have a higher level of commitment to, and expectations of, each other. Wisdom, Generosity, Courage, and Respect are highly regarded values of the Lakota culture. The values exemplified in this curriculum can be changed to reflect those of any culture. Moral issues and values are often at the heart of these lessons and are important in developing an understanding that Mother Earth is a living organism. Providing support, trust, and respect within these experiences will foster positive behavior, self-esteem, and environmental attitudes.



## Project Based Approach to Learning

Last, but not least, the development of this cultural curriculum has been modeled from the Project Based Approach to Learning. A project is an in depth investigation of a topic with related supporting activities. Teachers who successfully implement the project approach are apt to see children who are motivated, actively involved in their own learning, and who produce a higher quality of work. The projects allow for teachers and children to explore topics with more detail as well as longer exposure time to each topic. The end result is a higher level of understanding of the concept or topic.

