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WAHKOTOWIN; A CREE WORD FOR OUR INTERCONNECTEDNESS WITH THE WORLD AROUND US

Facilitated by Britney Supernault

This workshop is created for grades 7+

Welcome, students and educators, to our workshop hosted by the inspiring Britney Supernault. Today, we have the privilege of hearing from Britney as she shares her profound cultural connection to the land and the challenges that Indigenous communities are facing in the wake of climate change. Britney will speak from her own lived experience, recounting the devastation her community endured during a forest fire and the profound loss it brought. Yet, amidst the hardship, she will also illuminate the resilience and strength of Indigenous peoples in the face of adversity. Prepare to be moved and inspired as Britney shares her journey and insights into how we can work together to address the urgent issues of climate change and its impact on Indigenous communities.

Britney Supernault (she/they) is Otipemisiwak Nehiyaw (Métis Cree) from East Prairie Metis Settlement. An artist, activist, and writer, Britney has spent the last 4 years writing on various topics, from traveling and productivity to contemporary Indigenous issues and climate change.



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We hope you enjoyed listening to Britney's story and spending time with her as she shares her traditional ecological knowledge with you. We invite you to start some classroom conversations by going through the following discussion questions in circle as a class.

Discussion Questions

- 1. One of the many hats Britney Supernault wears is climate activist, taking climate action and writing about climate change. What does climate change mean to you and what does climate action look like to you?**
- 2. Britney tells us about how she turned to writing after the government's inadequate response to forest fires that took everything from her, her family, and her peoples. How do you think the outlet of writing helps us cope with traumatic events? What other forms of art or creative outlets are there that help us process and cope with our experiences and what do you turn to in times of crises or emotional distress?**
- 3. A quote from Britany's interview is "when our land is changing, so is our way of life." What does this mean to you?**
- 4. What are some ways that you, as students, can work towards highlighting Indigenous voices to ensure they are not only heard, but also understood and respected?**
- 5. Britney says the most effective way non-Indigenous allies can help support indigenous-led movements is by creating spaces and opening doors that Indigenous Peoples can not open themselves due to the ongoing reality of colonial spaces that have not been built to accommodate or welcome Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Once that door has been opened and they now have that space, the next step is to take a step back. How do you think you can go about this? What are some actions you can take to be a good ally?**
- 6. Eating food from home, doing puzzles, listening to podcasts, drawing, and writing are Britney's chosen forms of self care, and are what help her ground herself after going through more taxing environments. What does self care look like for you and why is it so important to take care of ourselves, especially after going through hard things?**
- 7. What are some ways you can reconnect and foster that connection with the land?**
- 8. Storytelling was the main medium for how knowledge was passed down from generation to generation. What are some stories that were told to you growing up? Are there any stories that were told in your culture as a means of passing on knowledge?**

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In the form of either a piece of artwork or a written/video journal entry, we invite you to use the following project prompts to create something meaningful. Choose one prompt and decide how you are going to relay your thoughts, feelings, and knowledge about that prompt. It could include creating a presentation, creating a poster, a video, a journal entry, a poem, or anything that helps you cope with your feelings and emotions about the prompt and also relay these feelings to others.

Project prompts

1. Can you write about a time where you were very passionate about something but people were not paying attention or listening to you? What did that feel like?
2. Think of your own connection to the land; to some of the places you might love to visit. What would change in your life if these lands were taken from you in some way by either fire, the government, floods, etc.?
3. Britney talks about her upbringing and her childhood and how they shaped her. She talks about how eating home cooked meals is something that grounds her. Think about your relationship with food and think about where the food comes from. How do you think your access to food might change with climate change or natural and man-made disasters?

