



TDSB/OISE Action Research Team

Research Summary

Introducing the Teacher-Researcher, Students & School:

Laurie LaBrecque (Dokis First Nation) is the Land-Based Learning and Physical Education teacher at Kâpapâmachakwêw – Wandering Spirit School in Toronto. Her work centres Indigenous food sovereignty, traditional foodways, and environmental and sustainability education, creating opportunities for students to connect with culture through meaningful relationships with the land.

Kâpapâmachakwêw – Wandering Spirit School is an Indigenous cultural survival school within the TDSB, serving the urban Indigenous community in Toronto. Through the Land-Based Learning program, Laurie uses food sovereignty and traditional foodways as pathways to explore environmental education, and inspire climate action.

Research Question:

In what ways does incorporating traditional Anishinaabe foodsystems support my professional practice as a climate change/environmental & sustainability educator?

Curricular Implementation:

Practices aligned with the seasonal teachings of the Anishinaabe 13 Moon Calendar. These experiences included processing manoomin (wild rice), exploring the lifecycle and processing of misko-namegoz (salmon), participating in ziisbaakdoke (maple syrup production), and engaging in mikige miijim (urban foraging and medicine walks). Through these Land-based, culturally grounded practices, students developed a deeper understanding of sustainability and stewardship while exploring complex environmental issues such as environmental justice, invasive species, pollution, deforestation, and climate change.



Data Collection Strategies:

Literature review, personal reflection and notes, photos and videos

Insights from this Action Research Study

The insights from this study highlight the effectiveness of traditional food systems as a meaningful approach to integrating climate change and environmental and sustainability education in practice. Through hands-on, culturally grounded learning experiences, student engagement and reflection demonstrated the central role of food in fostering deeper understandings of these topics. These findings are supported by existing research, which emphasizes the importance of relationality, responsibility, and reciprocity in Indigenous food systems (Miltenburg, 2022). Participating in these systems strengthens relationships with the Land and all Creation, particularly in urban contexts, while reinforcing accountability to both community and environment. Ultimately, the relational nature of Indigenous foodways reflects the relationships we must cultivate with the Land in order to care for it, with food serving as a powerful connector.

Other Notes:

As a second-year member of the Action Research team, I have intentionally designed my study to centre my own pedagogical practices rather than positioning students as subjects of research. This approach reflects a commitment to ethical, respectful inquiry that prioritizes student and community well-being.

Info about the TDSB/OISE Action Research Team can be found on the [TDSB](#) and [OISE](#) websites