

A collection of quotes to consider by In

“A man who stands alone is strong, but a man who stands with his people is stronger.” – Chief Dan George, Tsleil-Waututh Nation

“Education has gotten us into this mess and education will get us out.” – Honourable Justice Senator, Murray Sinclair (Peguis First Nation)

“My goal is to help raise a generation of First Nations children who never have to recover from their childhoods.” — Cindy Blackstock (Gitxsan)

“Indigenous languages are Canada’s national treasures. They are our identity. We simply have to put greater effort into rejuvenating and revitalizing them. It is key to moving forward.” – Perry Bellegarde, Little Black Bear First Nation

“We must protect the forests for our children, grandchildren, and children yet to be born... We must protect the forests for those who can’t speak for themselves.” Qwatsinas, Nuxalk

“We are not individuals but a great accumulation of all that lived before.” – Tanya Tagaq, Inuk

“There are no such things as dead ends. Only people who find dead ends.” – Drew Hayden Taylor, Curve Lake First Nation

“We have a choice in life – we can choose how we are going to behave. We can determine whether we reflect the good around us or lose ourselves in the darkness.” – Wab Kinew, Ojibway

“This story deserves to be told; all stories do. Even the waves of the sea tell a story that deserves to be read. The stories that really need to be told are those that shake the very soul of you.” – Lee Maracle, Sto:lo

“When the last tree is cut, the last river poisoned, and the last fish dead, we will discover that we can’t eat money.” Alanis Obomsawin, Abenaki

“Resilience is not about surviving, it’s about transforming pain into wisdom.” – Lillian Dyck, Cree Nation

“Words don’t change children’s lives. Real action by the government and equality would.” — Cindy Blackstock (Gitksan)

“My people will sleep for one hundred years, but when they awake, it will be the artists who give them their spirit back.” – Louis Riel, Metis

“We protect the land because we belong to it — it does not belong to us.” – Judy Da Silva, Anishinaabe

“Climate change is not just an environmental issue. It is a human rights issue — it is about the survival of our people.” – Sheila Watt-Cloutier, Inuit

“There is no economy on a dead planet. Protecting the land is the ultimate act of responsibility.” – Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, Okanagan

“All that we are is story — from birth to death, we are stories inside stories.” – Richard Wagamese, Ojibway

“We live in a culture of stories, and every story is an act of survival.” – Tracy Linberg, Cree-Metis Nation

“Strong nations begin with strong families — grounded in love, respect, and truth.” – Viola Robinson, Mi’kmaw Nation

“Our greatest strength has always been how we lift one another — that’s the heartbeat of our nations.” – Chief Wilma Jacko, Sagamok Anishnawbek

“Healing is remembering who we were before the hurt came.” Dr. Evelyn Voyageur, Kwakwaka’wakw Nation

“Justice, in our way, is about restoring relationships, not punishing wrongdoing.” – Marion Buller, Cree

“Resistance is not always standing on a barricade — sometimes it’s raising your children to know who they are.” – Waneek Horn-Miller, Mohawk

"It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change." – Chief Seattle, Suquamish

“Courage is not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it.” – Chief Dan George, Tsleil-Waututh Nation

“Every child matters — not just in words, but in the actions we take every day.” – Cindy Blackstock, Gitksan

A set of “A Collection of Quotes to Consider” was distributed to students. They were asked to consider these four questions as they read through them.

What does it mean?

Why do you think someone said this?

What is the message?

How can you connect with the ideas in the quote?

They then selected a quote that they felt they connect to. Meeting in pairs, they discussed their quote, their understanding of the quote and how they thought they could connect to it. The pairs were asked to find another set of partners and repeat the process, now in a group of four. If they had selected or highlighted more than one quote, they had permission to discuss a different quote each time they met in small groups.

For the larger class discussion, students were asked to consider why they chose the quote, and what they thought it might communicate about them. Students were able to respond to and pose questions about interpretations of the quotes.

Why did you choose the quote?

What do you want it to communicate about you?