

**PLACE CONSCIOUS THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE: PROMOTING RESPONSIVE  
DIALOGUE ABOUT PLACE THROUGH THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE**

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## Abstract

This paper outlines a Master of Education project website (<https://sites.google.com/epsb.ca/place-conscious-tok/home>) that explores teaching Theory of Knowledge using place conscious pedagogy and complementary approaches from place-based pedagogy. The website includes context-building resources for teachers that are new to Theory of Knowledge, new to place conscious pedagogy, or interested in the neurodevelopmental benefits of place conscious approaches to education. Teaching tools take the form of six flexible Pathways with related resources for formative assessment, summative assessment, and professional self-reflection. This paper outlines the benefits and rationale for each Pathway's collection of resources, and for *Parent Resources* and autobiographical *About Me* sections linked to the homepage. Through this website, educators can explore how place conscious pedagogy can enhance responsive dialogue, mindfulness, resilience, self-reflection, and community engagement for IB students, staff, and their surrounding communities.

## Acknowledgements

I've had the privilege of studying at two great Canadian universities. At the University of Alberta, in Treaty Six territory, I learned how to identify and disentangle the hegemonic structures of colonialism from great professors like Dr. Lahoucine Ouzgane and Dr. Lesley Cormack. I also learned the power of rhetorical brevity and the necessity of challenging false dichotomies from a great theologian and fellow person of faith, Dr. Denis Lamoureux. These spaces and the amazing mentorships that emerged during my undergrad journey made it possible for me to undertake graduate studies not once but twice, and after the adventures and misadventures in Edinburgh, Scotland, it was a great pleasure to find a second academic home at the University of Lethbridge. Situated in the heart of the coulees in Treaty Seven territory, the U of L campus and its incredible staff have been stalwart sources of encouragement and inspiration for our MEd cohort in Teaching, Learning and Neuroscience. Through pandemic Zoom calls and one celebratory summer in person, the staff at U of L offered unparalleled support and helped me to maintain the confidence to share my learning with others through my Master of Education (MEd) website, Place Conscious TOK. Special thanks go to Margaret Beintema, for her help with the Project submission process; to Dr. Jeffrey McCormack, for relentlessly thoughtful scaffolding of instruction; to Dr. Leah Fowler, for opening up our inner storytellers; to Frances Pope and to Dr. Robbin Gibb, for leading with integrity and opening to the public the wonderment and service possibilities of neuroscience learning; to Dr. Sharon Pelech, my committee member, who inspired this project in summer coursework in Play and Place-based Pedagogies, designed a flexible culminating project, and provided timely and thoughtful feedback to me in the drafting process; and finally to my supervisor Dr. Richelle Marynowski,

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I've also inhabited two professional spaces where exchanges with colleagues have molded how I think and move through the world. To the staff at Centre High, thank you for guiding my first years through teaching and to Dr. Robert Piazza in particular, thank you for modelling how to lead with intelligence, empathy and social justice. To past and present colleagues from Lillian Osborne (in particular Effa, whose podcast expertise made it into the website's final cut, and Alanna van Leeuwen and Christine Marlowe, my IB collab buddies) thank you for giving me a second professional home and enhancing my understanding with your excellent and always reflective practices. To the administrative teams past at present at Lillian Osborne High School, thank you for your unwavering support of my grad studies; your leadership, and the indispensable foresight of Edmonton Public's Professional Improvement Program, are what made this work possible.

Finally, huge thanks have to go to my family and friends. Joanna Huck, you are the best friend I could ask for and continue to inspire me in whatever spaces we share. Allen Jacobsen, your leadership of Cosmopolitan's Jazz Orchestra has filled each week of my MEd with stress-buffering humour and community belonging. To my family (the Picard, McGregor, Dolgoy, and Yeung clans), thank you for believing in me and supporting me in big ways and small. In particular to my parents, Mary and Norm: thank you for making our home a space of love, laughter, conversation, and care, and a place where learning was always precious. And to Joe, my partner and my love - thank you for caring for my whole person, and for celebrating each and every moment we share. 我愛你, 丈夫.

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## **Introduction: Personal Motivation and Context**

I joined Lethbridge's MEd: Teaching, Learning and Neuroscience cohort because I'm passionate about self-reflective interdisciplinarity, and the connection people experience when we question our categories and contexts to extend learning across educational domains. As an English Language Arts teacher, I've seen how students use portfolios, personal writing, and research projects to tap into passions and contemporary debates. In my experience, the deep learning that results from crossing disciplinary divides is highly connective: the relevancy students experience in extended 'deep dives' always leads to greater curiosity, shared successes, and class conversations about our rich communal tapestry. This "lived curriculum" (Aoki, 2005, p. 163) of our shared educational stories is intimately connected to the places we inhabit; as Donald pointed out, "curriculum can be understood as stories we tell about the world and our place in it" (2020, p. 160). It's this deep, socially-conscious storytelling that I set out to support with my MEd project, to help teachers "actualise" place conscious approaches to learning rather than simply "implement" piecemeal fragments within classroom walls (Chambers, 2003, p. 13).

My MEd studies helped me to re-evaluate how grounding learning in local contexts can nurture agency and belonging in students and teachers—the kinds of assets we desperately need to thrive amid the demands and challenges of our contemporary world (Barr et al., 2022; Code, 2022; Kelly & Pelech, 2019; Kelly & Pelech, 2020b; Picard, 2022). I increasingly saw how reconnecting with place through place conscious pedagogy (PCP) can reignite the relevancy and purpose at the heart of education (Gruenewald, 2008) at a time when the COVID pandemic's "rupture in the normal" offers the challenge and opportunity to "humanize with care and empathy and reconstruct our learning ecologies with equity and social justice" (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2021, p. 1). I also began to understand how to apply PCP in terms of an evolving

dialogue in community, rather than as a firm and segmented set of principles that can be applied across classroom contexts.

PCP is highly personal and intensely conversational is because it demands that we reevaluate our self-efficacy as educators and community members within living educational ecosystems (Benson & Scales, 2009; Horn & Little, 2010; Lerner, 2013). Self-reflection is fundamental to place conscious planning and assessment, as educators interrogate their relationship within their school, within local communities, and with the lands they inhabit. Chambers (2003) called such reflective practice the “difficult and dangerous work” (p. 8) of repositioning our teacher identities. To help students develop their own “capacity for self-determination and transformative agency” (Kelly & Pelech, 2019, p.734), teachers need to connect with communities and their place in community beyond the classroom walls; this extends teacher action and reflection beyond the familiar pedagogical controls of a teacher’s own classroom, which makes PCP transformative and agency-affirming for teachers as well as students (Kelly & Pelech, 2020).

However, reconsidering our professional practice with the complexity of local contexts in mind is anything but comfortable. This is partly because of the release of control demanded by PCP, which expands upon student interests and community issues as they arise in learning processes and routines, rather than following pre-determined trajectories familiar to many educators through set parameters of backwards design. Challenges are also endemic to projects that expand outside of classroom walls, which inevitably involve cost and calculated risks for administrative leadership. Over the pandemic, I’ve also seen how teachers are particularly vulnerable when stretched resources and community pressures leave many front-line workers teetering on the edge of burnout (Hoffmeyer, 2020; Stelmach et al., 2021). From pandemic shifts

online and returns to the classroom, many educators like myself personally experienced how professional reflection involves negotiating the ways that identity intersects with crises, change and trauma (Alberta Health Services, 2023). To be reflective in this way, and to be trauma-informed within school ecosystems, educators must rely on immense reservoirs of care, empathy and emotional regulation (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2021; Feshbach & Feshbach, 2009; Tran, 2020). Nevertheless, a teacher’s conversational care is a superpower of sorts (Picard, 2021), and it grounds their capacity for knowledge mobilisation since relationships are crucial to how teachers conduct action research and share new pedagogical practices (Farley-Ripple & Grajeda, 2019; Godfrey & Brown, 2019).

For my MEd exit project, I created a website resource, [\*Place Conscious TOK\*](#) (Picard, 2023) for high school teachers that explores how PCP (Kelly & Pelech, 2019; Gruenewald, 2008) can nurture agency and cross-curricular collaboration in and beyond the International Baccalaureate (IB) Theory of Knowledge (TOK) course. I chose to integrate PCP into TOK because it is a core component of the IB Diploma Program (IBO, 2020) and it is intended as a TOK is a “porous” subject, in Pinar’s sense of the word (2012, p. 28). TOK is already institutionally integrated to promote collaboration and a common language of critical reflection between subject cohorts and across an individual student’s course of studies (Brunold-Conesa, 2010). Combining this interdisciplinarity with a place conscious approach can help teachers plan and integrate flexible paths for students to extend learning into their local contexts in ways that nurture relevancy, choice, perspective awareness, and systems of responsive dialogue. PCP’s focus on student-directed learning taps into insights from self-determination theory, adolescent neuroscience, and thriving research. As Kelley and Pelech (2020) pointed out, “As teachers provide local context for issues by embedding them in real-world projects and contemporary

concerns, they also call on students to engage in re-thinking and re-making the place they encounter” (p. 112). By supporting student-driven reconsideration of place—and offering concrete tools for responsive, flexible, localised implementation of curricula—I also hope that this project will add to ongoing reconciliatory work in my school, Edmontonian, and Canadian contexts.

### **Knowledge Mobilisation: Choosing Teachers as the Primary Audience**

My website focuses on providing tools for secondary high school teachers because teacher-to-teacher exchanges are effective and essential networks of knowledge mobilisation (Cooper & Read, 2018; Farley-Ripple & Grajeda, 2019; Godfrey & Brown, 2019; Prenger et al., 2021). I wanted to create some concrete tools that begin with teacher-student collaboration and work outwards into the local community. I also wanted an organizing structure that contained flexibility and multiple points of entry and exit; such flexibility supports PCP’s student-centric approach to community projects and reflects research into the need for conversational openness in perspective-building programs and culturally responsive teaching (Ozakman, 2017). I also wanted to promote interdisciplinary exchanges within staff groups, since I continue to be inspired and stretched by collaboration with colleagues within English Language Arts (ELA) and across other disciplines (Crumpton, 2023; Gross, 2019; Marlowe, 2016). TOK seemed a natural ally in supporting interdisciplinary collaboration because its integration throughout a school’s IB programming is already a requirement for IB world schools. At a time when secondary teachers increasingly specialise in content areas (in courses arranged and accredited by curricular divisions by grade and by stream) intensive departmental collaboration has become a necessary norm underpinning secondary teachers’ role as “subjects and agents of curriculum reform” (Gerrard and Farrell, 2014, p. 639). Time constraints and shifting divisional priorities can make

some teachers skeptical about professional development (PD) initiatives and buzzwords (Roediger, 2013), so I felt it was important to pick a pragmatic area of implementation for place conscious planning, where the benefits of a place conscious approach could naturally stretch outwards in connective threads to include insight and participation from other subject specialists. I've been intrigued but ultimately dissatisfied with “stance” models of mentorship and collegial exchange (such as Lipton and Wellman's 2017 approach to calibrating, consulting, collaborating, and coaching), so it's my hope that the flexible and invitational orientation of my website's *TOK Pathways* will allow for responsive dialogue and conversational literacy (Picard, 2021) about the complexity of the spaces we inhabit I also hope that the process of re-examining and contributing to the betterment of the places we share will fuel teacher recognition of their own efficacy and connectedness in their communities, since this has arguably the largest impact on students' learning and teacher resilience.

### **Setting Clear Boundaries: Website Design and Place Conscious Pedagogy**

I knew from the start that I wanted my website (Picard, 2023) to focus on teachers as a primary audience, and I also knew that PD resources needed to be highly targeted, providing enough context to make the website useful but collapsing details where possible for time-strapped colleagues. To set clear boundaries, my website includes a *Context* section that helps to define PCP (its origins and goals), demonstrate the benefits of a place conscious approach to learning, and connect PCP within the structures of a caring IB school community.

One tension that the *Context* page negotiates is the interplay between place-based pedagogy (PBL), critical pedagogy (CP), and PCP. Place based pedagogy grounds learning in issues related to shared, place-based experiences; it usually focusses on local ecological concerns and rural spaces (Gruenewald, 2008), and the cultural, environmental, economic, and political

concerns of the local community (Smith, 2007). PBL may involve routines of mindful noticing (Piersol, 2010) to help students and teachers reconnect with the storied, active, unpredictable natural world. Smith (2007) argued that PBL emerged out of concerns about standardized approaches to education that focus on external controls rather than student self-determination. Spatial awareness at the core of PBL can foster empathy and destabilize top-down hierarchies in education because PBL positions “teachers and students... more as collaborative team members than as bosses and employees” (Smith, 2007, p. 190). This concern with education and citizenship beyond “learning to earn” (Gruenewald, 2008, p. 314) is shared by PCP. As scholars delved into critical pedagogies that interrogated power (Freire & Macedo, 1987 in Gruenewald, 2008), scholars applied critical pedagogy’s focus on social and urban contexts to PBL, guiding reflection and community action towards the cultural issues “nested in ecological systems” (Gruenewald, 2008, p.309). PCP, then, evolved out of interconnected investment in examining place within student-centred educational processes. PCP’s unique emphases on student and teacher agency, communal healing, active ecological engagement, and personal transformation (Kelly & Pelech, 2020) therefore retain interconnections with PBL and CP that needed untangling on the website.

### **Defining Place Conscious Pedagogies**

In the *Context* section of my website, I define PCP as "creating space within current structures and practices of schooling for more relevant and engaging learning that focuses on local situations and experiences" (Gruenewald & Smith, 2010, p. 350). I began with Gruenewald and Smith’s space-building metaphor to emphasise how PCP is agentic for students (Smith & Sobel, 2010) in the ways it nurtures resilience and emancipative action (Kelly & Pelech, 2019). For my teacher audience, the website focuses on how place conscious teaching involves

intentional instructional design and relational understanding (Gallo et al., 2015), but many materials draw from place-based learning sources that help teachers and students “track [themselves] into place” (Piersol, 2010, p. 2). My website centres on classroom-linked *Pathway* projects with extended communal outreach potential because I wanted to reinforce that there should be no dichotomy between place-based approaches to teaching and academic content or accountability (Gruenewald & Smith, 2010). Even though interrogating place usually leads to larger community-based projects (where students and teachers contribute to research or social outreach), there is also a substantial part of critical reflection and critical re-positioning that can be done in classroom contexts using the “Knowledge Framework” and “Knowledge and the Knower” centrepieces of the TOK curriculum (IBO, 2020). Since *Pathway* design and resources drew from PCP’s rich interconnections with PBL and CP, I decided to supplement the website’s context precis with videos demonstrating the differences and interconnectivity of these approaches.

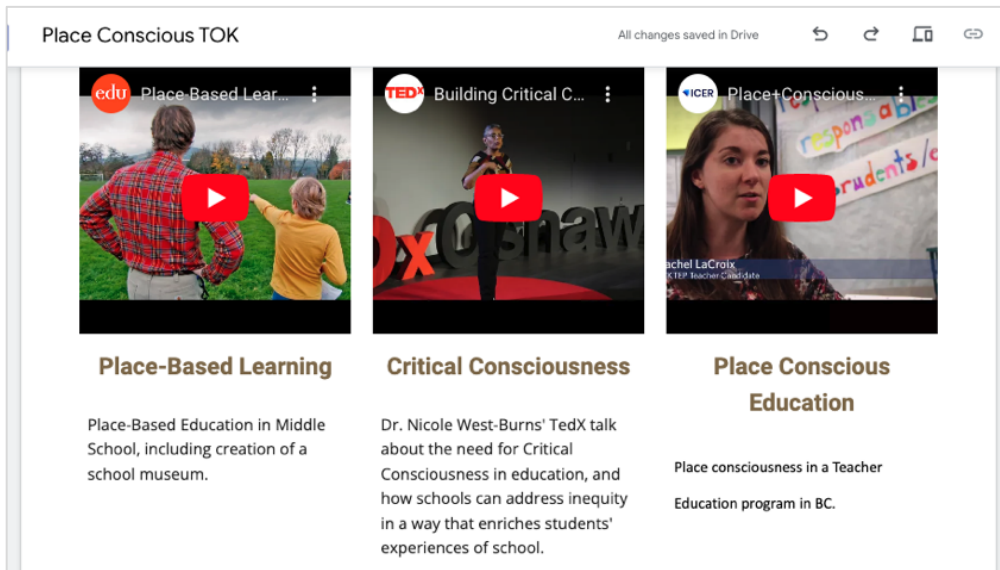
### **Demonstrating the Origins of Place Conscious Pedagogy (Ecological, Place-based and Critical Scholarship)**

To contextualise my project choices and give fellow educators a crash course into the origins of PCP, I included three videos that show the component pieces of a place conscious approach. Taken together, the three videos demonstrate how “critical literacies pedagogies and place-based education are complementary and inseparable” (Celebi, 2022, p. 1). The videos (Figure 1) offer a trimmed-down look at the origins of a place conscious approach, and how the combination of ecological stewardship and the social justice concerns of critical theory led scholars to examine the "nexus between environment, culture, and education" (Gruenewald, 2008, p. 320). First, the Edutopia video (2016) follows how middle schoolers in Oregon engage

in place-based learning (PBL) around the stories, landscapes and buildings in their local community. Its conclusion points out the safety, connectivity, and achievement that follow student engagement in authentic, embedded local learning. Second, Dr. West-Burns' TedX lecture (2020) outlines the rationale and social justice implications of applying critical pedagogy in classrooms. West-Burns demonstrates how marginalization, privilege, and microaggressions inhabit school spaces and how teachers can be changemakers for social equity by acknowledging these forces and reimagining their practice accordingly. Since critical consciousness is one of the major distinguishing factors of PCP and its evolution from PBL, I placed Dr. Nicole West-Burns' TedTalk (2020) in central position in the series (Picard, 2023). Third, I embedded an informational video on PCP in teacher training contexts created by the Institute for Community Engaged Research (2017). The third video details the “learning by doing” approach of engaging in collaborative community partnerships with the local community. Teacher testimonials outline the longevity of collegial connections forged in the process of practical, agenic learning (La Croix in Institute for Community Engaged Research, 2017). They also show the affirmation and inspiration young teachers take away when PCP draws on their passions and areas of expertise, and their passion to help students “love a place before [they] change it” (Strand in Institute for Community Engaged Research, 2017).

**Figure 1**

*Screen Capture of the “Context: Place Consciousness” Page*



Below the videos, I included Edutopia articles, hoping that this long-established, easily accessible, nonpartisan, and academically respected source of PD (George Lucas Educational Foundation, 2023; Kayalar, 2016; Pugh, 2002) would inspire even deeper dives into place-based and place conscious pedagogical tools.

The *Context: Place Conscious* page and *Teacher Resources: Pathways Overview* page both emphasize that place consciousness involves communal outreach: that typically, students and teachers reflect on, reconnect with, and examine their local environment (both the natural world and the dynamics at work in human communities) as a first step in digging deeper into an issue that matters in that local setting, eventually working alongside community members and organisations to investigate, steward, and reflect on the spaces that they share. The *Pathways* are the key mechanism I've constructed to allow for teacher flexibility and responsivity to student interests; each is adaptable to a teacher's existing TOK programming but involves reaching out to members of the greater community. For example, interviewing elders is a part of *Pathway 1's*

reimagining of campus spaces; it uses culturally responsive interview tools piloted by Carleton University. *Pathway 4* incorporates similar scaffolding for students to engage with local community; small groups complete an Areas of Knowledge (AOK) Unboxing Project linking familiar disciplines with pressing issues of interest at a local level, and then students share their work (and any extended projects that follow) as part of the public celebration of the TOK Exhibition.

### **Establishing the Benefits of Place Conscious Learning**

To reinforce the practicality of place conscious pedagogies in TOK, the *Context: Place Conscious* pedagogy page includes a simple bullet list of research-backed benefits for grounding teaching and learning in local spaces. The bullet points of “addressing eco-anxiety and addressing disconnection” draws on preeminent place conscious advocate Gruenewald’s argument that “Nurturing a caring relationship with the natural world moves students away from an overwhelming sense of environmental crisis that can lead to ‘anxiety, fear, and hopelessness’ (2008, p. 315). I wanted teachers to know that it is agency-building for students to develop “a tangible sense of their capacity for questioning and restructuring their world” (Kelly & Pelech, 2020, p. 733-734), and such thriving can trickle-out to positively impact staff and the greater educational community. Moreover, place conscious activities can address some of the wellness issues connected to ways of living that distance some students from regular interactions with nature (Cormell & Ivey, 2012; McMillan & Wilhelm, 2007).

The second listed benefit, “enhancing the relevancy of learning”, builds on Roberts’ argument that “an ethical, experiential, reflective model” of place consciousness “gives an immediacy to students and the intense first-hand experience allows it to be fully embedded in what they remember.” (2018, p. 42). This claim is backed up by neuroscience-backed practices

regarding relevancy (Scalise & Felde, 2017) and also by thriving research. Ryan and Deci (2017) pointed out that, community connection is essential to thriving because it fuels our human "need to feel responded to, respected, and important to others, and conversely, to avoid rejection, insignificance and disconnectedness" (p. 96). Grounding learning in local spaces allows students to become action researchers, contributing to their communities in ways that nurture their needs and promote more just relationships with one another.

Acknowledgement and truth-telling as connective acts of reconciliation underwrite the fourth bulleted benefit, "promoting complicated understandings of identity and place." It is increasingly important to lean into the complex layers and ethics involved in inhabiting spaces on our planet, particularly in my Canadian context and the Truth and Reconciliation's Calls to Action for education (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). Orr described this as "Good inhabitation...an art requiring detailed knowledge of a place, the capacity for observation, and a sense of care and rootedness" (1992, p. 130). For Korteweg and Oakley, place-based theories of Gruenewald and others allow educators "to identify, recover, and create material spaces and places that teach us how to live well in our total environments" (2014, p. 9). Living well may involve complicating personal perceptions of "character, values, action, [our] sense of self, and direct experiences with nature" (Thomashaw, 1995 in Korteweg & Oakley, 2014, p. 139), making PCP a seminal tool in necessary narrative shifts about the world around us. Once crucial narrative shift is the centering of Indigenous knowledge and voices in learning about place; I hope that place conscious tools can be of use in raising awareness of other ways of knowing and the "Indigenous Métissage" (Donald, 2009) that move beyond more traditionally colonial approaches to "reinhabitation" (Gruenewald, 2008). At the bottom of the *Teacher Resources: Pathways Overview* page, I also modelled advice for connecting with community off

of Singleton’s model for “courageous conversations about race” (Singleton, 2012); his suggestions to stay engaged, expect discomfort, speak your truth, and expect and accept a lack of closure seem healthy guidelines for engaging in local issues and community relationships with empathy and care.

Finally, to close out the *Context: Place Conscious* page, I listed “deepening self-determination and relational networks” as two final benefits of experimenting with place conscious approaches to education. Many teachers today feel forces of disconnection in education that can leave students and educators with "abstracted, dislocated or decontextualized" senses of the curriculum (Kelly & Pelech, 2019, p. 737). Studies have shown that even students who initially feel disconnected from local issues or their local environment can become engaged contributors and even "champions" of community connection, if they have a sustained opportunity to engage authentically with the identity and "social capital of an area" (Rausch, 2020, p. 17 citing Donovan, 2016 and Esposito, 2012; see also Manookin, 2018; Motallebzadeh & Kafi, 2015). By empowering student leadership in local spaces, we open up myriad possibilities for their insights and growth to reshape how we care for one another in and beyond our school’s learning spaces.

### **Place Consciousness as a Nexus of Inquiry and Communal Care**

Because critical reexaminations of place can be intensely personal, I initially debated whether or not to create teacher tools for TOK or a core course like English Language Arts (which has built into the Program of Studies outcomes for independent inquiry and personal reflection). However, I thought the flexibility of assessment structures in TOK—and the possible adaptability of my project into other global contexts—outweighed the drawbacks of tailoring models for the narrower audience IB educators. As I developed assessment materials that

included criteria for community involvement and collaboration, I found substantial common ground between research into conversation, literacy, and co-creation of assessments and the kinds of tools I wanted to make available for flexible TOK course design. I ended up borrowing substantially from Alberta Education's Guide to Implementation in English Language Arts (2003), and from colleagues' expertise with podcasts and other collaborative forums. In the future, I would love to extend my project to provide tools for implementing place conscious projects in core courses like English Language Arts and Social Studies, especially for grade 10 students in an Albertan context; however, I believe such extensions lie beyond this MEd project's focus and scope.

Ultimately, combining TOK's interdisciplinarity with a place conscious approach helped me to develop tools that nurture relevancy, choice, perspective awareness, and systems of responsive mutual support. My website's place conscious approach to TOK also addresses concerns about the efficacy of IB fostering care in demonstrable community action; researchers have expressed concerns about the ability of IB core courses to cultivate an empathetic global mindedness, despite undeniable gains that individual students make in critical thinking and self-regulation (Garcia-Huidobro, 2017). The lived experience of many teachers is that students thrive when they feel connected, and my MEd studies have convinced me that centering collaboration in a thoughtful interrogation of place can enhance the "tribal" community in schools (Cozolino, 2013). TOK's curricular positioning requires learning transfer across subject areas (Picard, 2022; Roberts, 2018) and is already a fertile zone for collegial exchange and innovation; I hope that my project can bolster the amazing collaboration already present in TOK courses by enhancing student ownership and leadership in cross-curricular projects. Grounding TOK in student-directed extensions of local experiences can also address scholarly concerns that

the implementation of TOK may benefit individual student critical thinking without impacting connection and care for the greater global community (Bergeron & Rogers, 2019).

### **Website Design and Cognitive Load**

To me, collegial websites are an efficient way of communicating with early adopters and innovators within my professional communities. My choice to do a website was therefore inspired by personal experience and research into digital avenues of professional learning. In English Language Arts, instructional design sites like Jennifer Crumpton's guide to ELA 30-1 (2022) have been invaluable repositories of student and teacher-friendly tools. I firmly believe in sharing as I learn as a professional, and for me part of the lived curriculum of teaching has always involved collaboration in digital forms. Google is highly integrated into my division and provides simple, tile-like interfaces that reduce some of the cognitive load of early website builders.

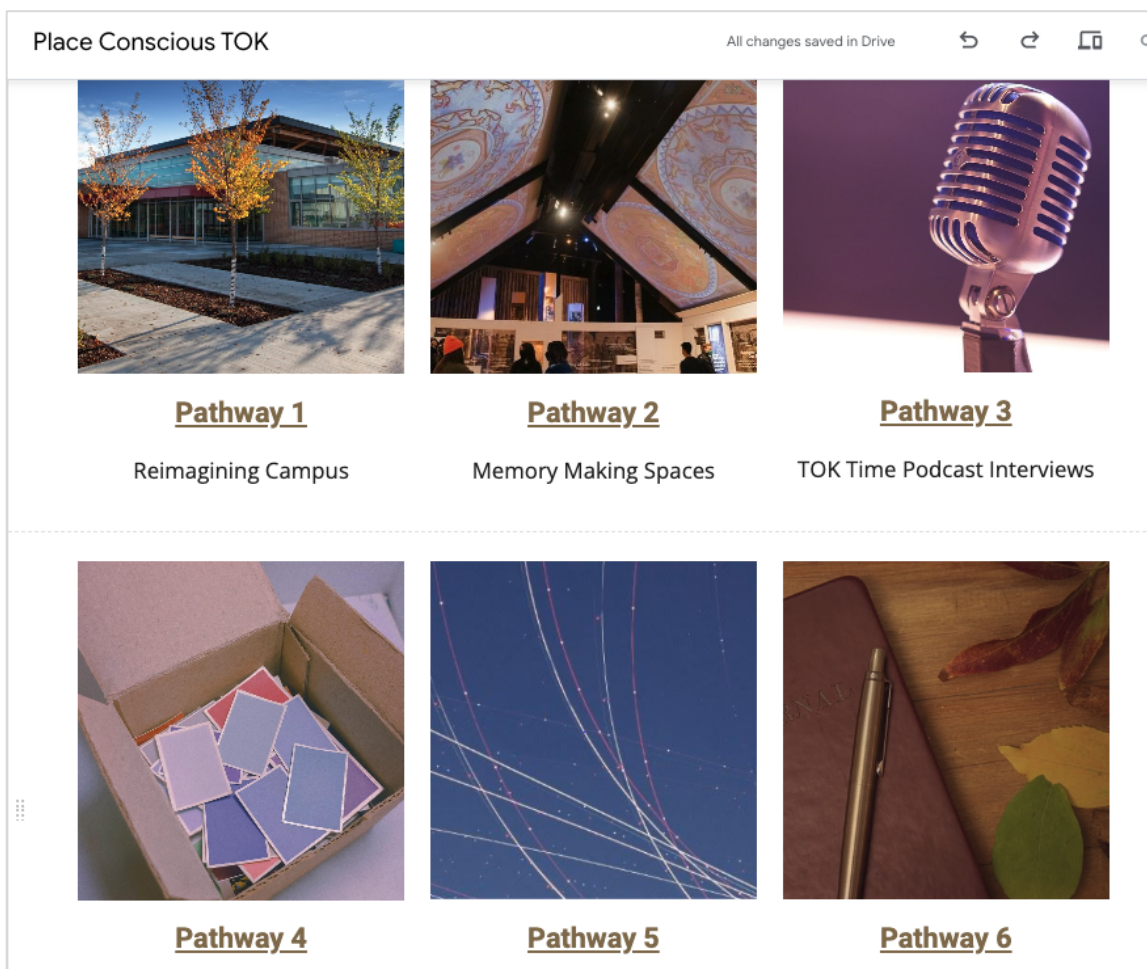
### **Cognitive Load**

In the design of the website, I've intentionally modelled best practices for reducing cognitive load where appropriate (Sweller et al., 2019), and maintaining necessary load where needed. I tried to consistently reduce cognitive load in a number of ways, recognizing that cognitive load features heavily in how students and teachers negotiate digital learning online (Abeysekera et al., 2015; Eryilmaz et al., 2009). First, I simplified the context-building overviews. By providing a few lines of context, I'm hoping to capitalise on expertise reversal (McCormack, 2020) and the need for less and less scaffolded information about place consciousness. However, I've kept featured content and further reading sections as condensed as possible and have decided to deliberately avoid excessive hyperlinks with the understanding that teachers who need to revisit the basics of place consciousness can revisit context resources.

Second, I've tried to use clear subtitles, frame divisions and image divisions to help with chunking content, and avoid isolating/interacting load (Sweller et al., 2019). Most pages operate on a horizontal, square-button interface akin to the buttons on smartphones (Figure 2), with either brief captions or drop-down menus that hide extended text content.

**Figure 2**

*Screen Capture of “Teachers Resource: Pathways Overview” Button Interface*



Third, I've tried to reduce element interactivity to keep the website relatively free of clutter to allow working memory to make necessary interconnections. This was particularly challenging and led to the creation of far more sub-pages than I originally predicted. However, by having visitors opt in to branches of *Pathway 1*'s campus explorations, or subsets of *Pathway*

2's interrogation of memory spaces, I was able to simplify the text-heaviness and scrolling required to navigate on computer or smartphone. Finally, I'm hoping using the notion of pathways creates something of a goal-free effect with its multiple entry and exit points, eliminating the extraneous load of conceptualising a whole problem and figuring out a single path (McCormack, 2020) striking an appropriate balance of offering flexible structure (environmental organising and linking principle) without boxing resources into disciplinary, textbook or unit divides.

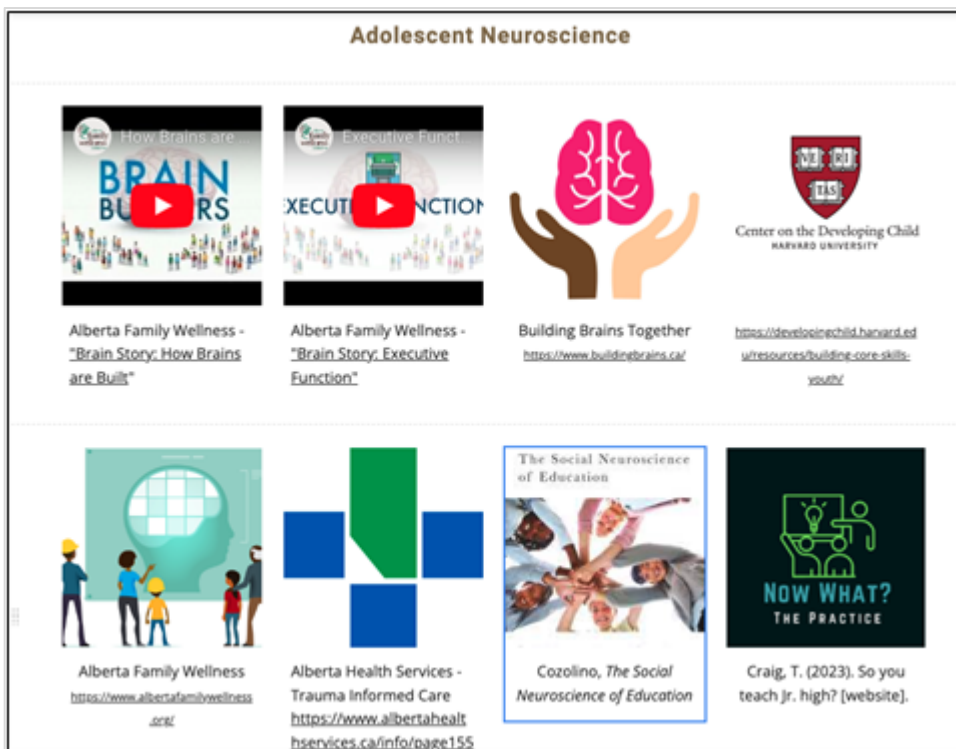
### **Integrating Neuroscience**

Though my site showcases some best practices for simplifying cognitive load, I made several intentional compromises to integrate resources for parents and teachers related to neuroscience, adolescence, and place. Though teachers are my primary audience, I recognize that parents and students as longstanding participants in “transformative” online learning spaces (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). I wanted to have audience-based interfaces for them as well, in particular tools useful for adolescents in the “sensitive period” of executive function development (Phillips, 2012). Teenage brains are primed to encode prefrontal pathways needed for lifelong regulation and resiliency (Papasideris et al., 2021), so the safety of online tools can appeal to adolescents who sometimes shirk from the very social learning experiences that build better brains (Phillips, 2012). My website offers slimmed down lists of curated resources on Neuroscience, Place, Trauma-Informed Literacy, and Community Engagement (Figure 3), stressing video resources that build literacy about the brain science behind regulation and community connection. Links to “Building Better Brains” (2023), Alberta Family Health and Wellness’ “Brain Story Certification” (2020), and Alberta Health’s “Trauma-Informed Care Modules” (2021) reflect my personal appreciation of the rigorous but accessible modular

learning in my own grad school training. The modular organization of these tools also fosters a degree of “challenge by choice” (Gibb & Pope, 2021), structured learning that allows students to stretch skills at their own pace, with multiple entrance and exit points. Though adolescent neuroscience may seem slightly tangential to a PCP approach to TOK, there are numerous developmental and learning benefits to the mindfulness, self-regulation practice, and self-determination students experience through flexible and student-driven engagement with local community.

**Figure 3**

*Screen Capture of “Parents: Adolescent Neuroscience” Button Links*

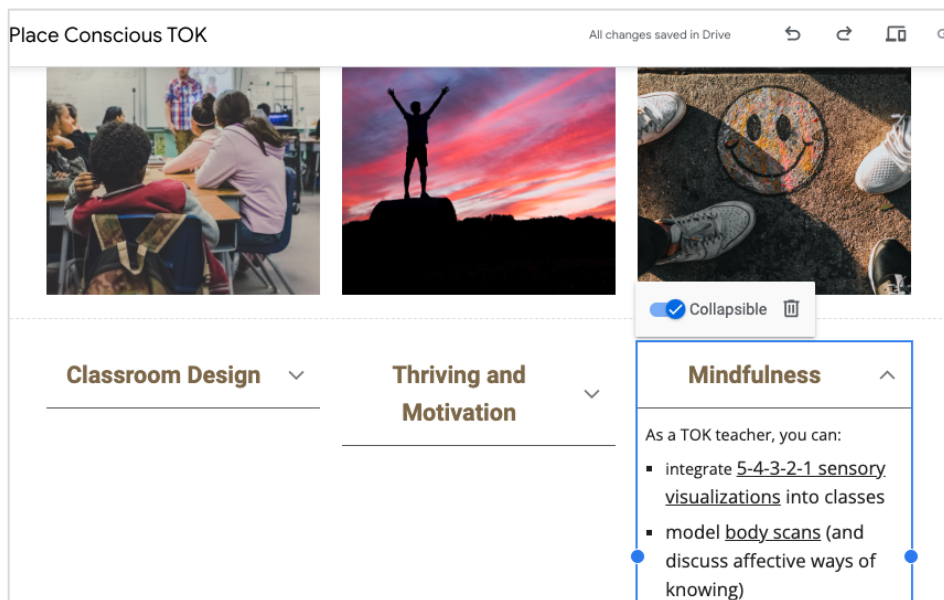


I integrated neuroscience tools for teachers, parents, and staff pertinent for classroom belonging (Cozolino, 2013), regular exposure to nature (Boere et al., 2022), developing adolescent executive function (Philips, 2012), and mitigating stress responses (Scalise & Felde, 2017). These sections coalesced under capability language (Markle, 2017) on the *Context: Place*

and the Brain page in the form of a number of “you can” lists (Figure 4) designed to give teachers a practical sense of how they can integrate more inclusive class spaces, reflective writing, and mindfulness practices into a *Place Conscious TOK* classroom. Here is an innate logic to thinking about education as a “tribal” brain story that parents, students, and teachers are all a part of (Cozolino, 2017). When educators today prioritise relevancy, engagement, and relationship in the classroom, they are supporting “cumulative, experience-dependent changes in brain architecture” (Hinton, Fischer, & Glennon, 2020, p. 9) that occur in the brain during deep learning processes. In this way, the mantra "what wires together, fires together" (Siebert, 2020, p.15; Sweller et al., 2019) grafts fluidly onto constructivist understandings of learning as fluid, active, and highly relational. To further emphasise the brain benefits of place conscious approaches, I provided colleagues with a synopsis of research into the cognitive benefits of outdoor experiences (Bailey et al., 2018; Berman et al., 2008; Vella-Brodrick & Gilowska, 2022; Boere et al., 2022).

**Figure 4**

*Screen Capture of “Context: Place and the Brain” Drop-down Menus*



*My Place and the Brain* page leaned heavily into Cozolino (2013) and the idea that classroom belonging is not accidental but hardwired into the tribal connectivity of students and staff (Cozolino, 2013). However, care alone does not necessarily make a learning interaction productive and lasting (Horn & Little, 2010; Scalise & Felde, 2017). A student's "joint experience of development and success" (Brown, 2017, p. 2) is highly personal and depends on an asset-rich educational ecosystem where students and educators constantly re-evaluate the efficacy of their practices (Benson & Scales, 2009; Horn & Little, 2010; Lerner, 2013). Being deliberate about addressing the complexity of space can help teachers orient learning towards what's relevant for a given community of students, and it can foster agency and motivation as students and teachers make a difference in their communities. From a capability's perspective, cultivating strategy-based discernment is a cornerstone of citizenship, agency, wellness, and the dignity of autonomy and choice (Markle, 2019).

### **Emphasizing Mindfulness**

With the *Context: Place and the Brain: Mindfulness* page (and resources linked on the *Parents* section), I show how cultivating responsiveness to place can help students develop mindfulness skills, community supports, and environmental connection. As a starting point for personal self-reflection, I tried to show how teachers can easily pair place-based activities (like the "Wonder Walks" of *Pathway 1*) with classic mindfulness practices such as: 5-4-3-2-1 sensory visualizations, body scans, reflective journaling, or mindful breathing. Myriad of researchers (Finlay-Jones, 2017; Loiacono, 2016) show how mindfulness training can help improve a student's self-compassion, emotional regulation, and perspective-taking, which can be assets when taking part in challenging conversations about place but can also contribute to students' ability to show flexibility and empathy in a variety of challenging circumstances. For even more

resources on stress regulation and mindfulness training, I've provided parents with a "Living with Stress" slide deck (Francom et al., 2020) and teachers with highlights from that slide deck; I also used Puddicombe's TedX Talk about the power of 10-minute mindfulness breaks as an additional "deep dive" resource linked to adolescent brain science.

Though mindfulness cultivation is only one small subset of a students' place conscious experiences outdoors, I feel that our MEd cohort explored again and again how relevancy and communal connection make learning lasting, help to mitigate stress responses (Scalise & Felde, 2017) and build resilience. I hope I've made space for some of this process to be intuitive, while showing how other learning may require deliberate scaffolded cultivation and interleaving over time.

Overall, my *Context: Place and the Brain* page is much more curated than I originally intended. I chose early on to pursue a cautionary scaling back of some of our cohort's neuroscience foci. I'm very aware that neuroscience education possesses a dangerous authority (Im et al., 2017) and "allure" (Roediger, 2013, p. 2); teachers are eager to mine brain science for piecemeal supports, but popular models may or may not hold up to sustained scrutiny, implementation, and further academic study (Dekker, 2012; Grospietsch, 2020). I settled on offering highly selective resources strongly connected to core components of the Alberta Family Wellness *Brain Story Certification*; my hope is that these videos, in combination with the overview presentation I prepared for colleagues (Picard, 2020), will encourage colleagues and parents to dive more deeply into the science according to their own comfort and needs.

### **Creating a Common Language**

The *TOK Basics* page, an offshoot of the *Context* section, creates a common language for teachers new to TOK implementation and experienced TOK teachers who may be new to PCP. I

borrowed heavily from Kognity's online resources for students (Kognity, 2023), in order to reinforce descriptions with clear visual tools. I wanted to create a similar primer with even more accessible language and classroom ties, and so relied principally on a selection of videos to allow parents to sample what it is like to look at TOK with an eye to critically questioning knowledge and perceptions. A similar spray of video tools provides parents with neuroscience and wellness highlights.

## **Website Organisation**

### **Home**

My *Home* section provides an interface that is invitational, with detailed drop-downs from a top menu bar as well as three simplified paths for exploring *Context*, *Teacher Resources*, and *Parent Resources*. I deliberately used free license Unsplash images that showed a mixture of urban and undeveloped Edmontonian spaces to disrupt mythologies of Canadian landscape that misrepresent place as beautifully uninhabited (Donald, 2009).

### **Context**

My *Context* section provides a clutter-free overview of the three context-building pages that follow: an overview of *Place Consciousness*, a primer on *TOK Basics*, and a synopsis of research into *Place and the Brain*. Though I hope visitors explore all three, each is organized with an independent set of resources and references, to allow for maximum flexibility and choice. All three taken together provide background for maximising classroom benefits of a *Pathways* approach to TOK.

### **Teacher Resources**

I originally imaged a flexible set of *Pathways* as part of my EDUC 5850A coursework into "Play and Place-Based Pedagogies". I was initially extremely hesitant about embracing

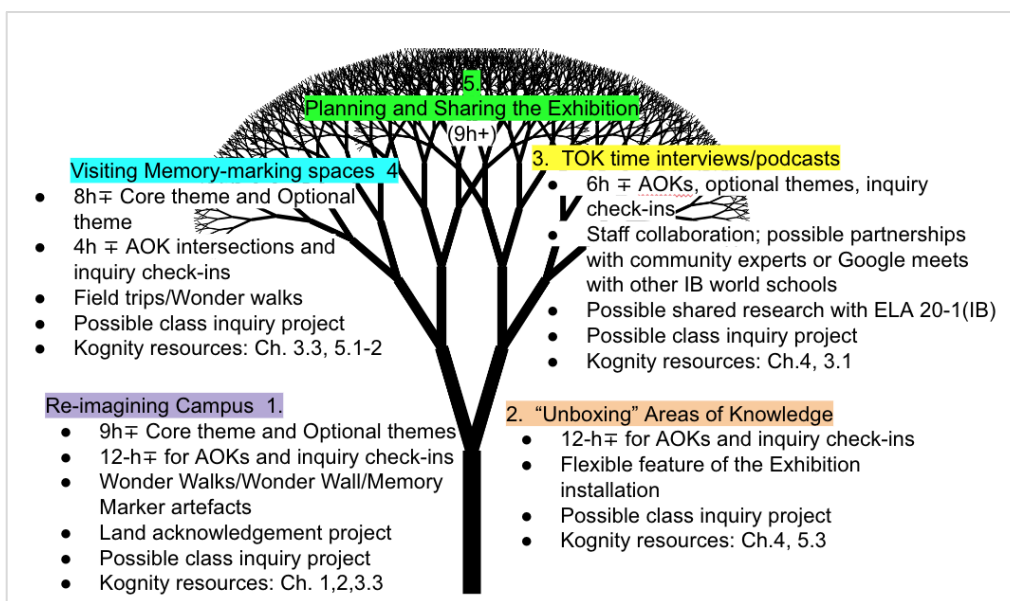
place-based and PCP in regular classes, worried such experimentation would derail the backwards design of ‘my’ year, especially if students ventured into local issues, I was unfamiliar with. I was worried that students might misapply “the power to walk away” (Holloway, 2018, p. 41-42), and I was petrified that unforeseen pressures on my time might impact personal and physical wellness. However, in crafting tools for this website I’ve leaned into communal places to see the possibilities for deep learning and connection rather than distraction, possibilities that can support and demonstrate curricular outcomes in tangible ways that have a positive social impact.

Each imagined ‘pathway’ for a “Place Conscious TOK” class contains a macro level of organization to give students disciplinary understanding of the AOKs, with the two optional themes deliberately woven across all units to create points of tension and connection within the AOK divisions and disciplinary knowledge frameworks. In the teacher self-reflection section, I’ve superimposed curriculum-as-written requirements over a fractal tree to show both the tension and compatibility of flexible PCP and time allocations in TOK’s written curricular requirements. One TOK requirement is the student-designed Exhibition (explored in *Pathway 5*), which will necessarily involve collaborating with stakeholders within our building, there are expansion points in several *Pathways* where a more extended inquiry project could begin to take shape and move beyond the confines of the TOK classroom (this is particularly true for *Unboxing and Podcast Pathways*). Per the emergent and student directed nature of place conscious community projects, I have not yet outlined exactly what those projects will be, only potential mechanisms for opening up the time and space to discover them, assess curricular objectives, and collaborate with other teachers and community stakeholders as part of the process. I should also mention that in my context, TOK 25 is a 3-credit course with two after-

school scheduled meeting times per week (3:30-5:00pm). Students complete the hours of the TOK curriculum over two years, with one assessment in grade 11 (the Exhibition) and another in grade 12 (the TOK essay). Curriculum defined instructional hours for half of TOK (16 hours for Knowledge and the Knower, 25 hours for AOKs, and 9 hours for the Exhibition assessment) are included in the Fractal Tree diagram (Figure 5), though these allotments are approximate and flexible, in keeping with openness to a potential inquiry branch arising from the paths that students walk.

**Figure 5**

*Fractal Tree Map of TOK Pathways, Originally Designed for Picard (2022).*



For each *Pathway*, I decided to include short rationales and reference pages in order to provide visitors with flexible entry points and curated lists of scholarship for teachers interested in deeper dives into pedagogical theory. The opt in/opt out structure of a *Pathways* model would demonstrate how professional “positioning and repositioning” is possible as we experiment with new pedagogy and help students reconsider their geographies and place in community (Biddulph, 2011, p. 393). I chose to number the *Pathways* in order to subtly steer teachers

towards *Reimagining Campus* as a starting point for applying PCP in a school's immediate context. This choice is to demonstrate the personal, critical reflection at the heart of place conscious approaches, and Freire's idea that "reading the world always precedes reading the word, and reading the word implies continually reading the world" (Freire & Macedo, 1987 in Gruenewald, 2008, p. 311).

### ***Pathway 1: Reimagining Campus***

Many of the activities of Pathway 1 are imaginative or question focused, reflecting Davis, Sumara and Luce Kapler's idea that "Teaching and learning seem to be more about expanding the space of the possible and creating conditions for the emergence of the as-yet-unimagined" (2015, p. 225). The Community Map, Wonder Wall, Read Alouds, Elder Project, and Land Acknowledgement activities are all designed to anchor keystones of TOK (like knowledge questions, interrogating knowledge processes, and working through the knowledge framework) in critical reflections about a student's specific local communities. Additionally, the TedX, Walking Together, and Elder interview resources will also provide concrete next steps for schools to critically examine their reconciliatory actions at a school and community level.

### ***Pathway 2: Memory Making Spaces***

My *Pathway 2: Memory Making Spaces* page draws inspiration from my first undergraduate degree in English and History, which stressed the cultural conversations and power disparities that impact the ways we remember and create art. This section introduces website visitors to the historiographic and postcolonial scholarly idea that spaces inevitably involve interrogating assumptions and power structures:

Memory sites never neutral (Gazi, 2014). They are "storied" spaces that can mythologize landscapes and entire peoples according to the prejudices and assumptions of a given time, place, and community (Donald, 2009). They can also be active agents in symbolic reparation and reconciliation (Lleras et al. in Janes, 2019).

Because we are in many ways products of our shared histories (Britzman, 1986), *Place Consciousness* would ideally integrate field trip visits and partnerships with local memory sites already established in the school's local community. In my context, TOK students visit Fort Edmonton Park and the Indigenous Peoples' Experience installation there. Our work on and off site provides a place conscious reflection on the knowledge framework and first-hand experience with local Reconciliatory ventures related to the optional theme of "Knowledge and Indigenous Societies". The hope is that "by becoming aware of the long-existing histories and cultures of our local spaces...place conscious education acts to create exigency, a desire and need, to speak to the concerns and issues that were once hidden" (Olivas in Kupsh, 2020, p. 266). A range of resources (quickwrites, articles of the week, field trip journal prompts, and object inquiries) allow teachers to build students' preparedness for the Exhibition with resources that promote a complicated, multi-perspective understanding of "Knowledge and the Knower" and "Knowledge and Indigenous Societies".

### ***Pathway 3: TOK Time Interviews***

I created *Pathway 3: TOK Time Interviews* based on scholarship on podcasting and student engagement, and also to support TOK's optional theme of "Knowledge and Technology". McNamara and Drew (2019) argued that the podcast medium is uniquely oriented to be responsive to the listener's own contexts in ways that are agentic and socially just, especially since podcast episodes tend to be listened to from beginning to end in intimate

settings. This medium allows learning to be flexible and self-directed while overcoming accessibility and cost barriers (McNamara & Drew, 2019, p. 301). With this in mind, and with the help of a colleague (Effa, 2022), I curated support tools for classes to look into different methodological approaches for interviews, contact and protocol procedures, methods of sharing interview data, citation and accreditation.

The podcast project asks each AOK “unboxing” group to co-construct questions for a person in their discipline (student, staff member, community member) and conduct a brief interview exploring their questions (5-10 mins; the time period likely needs to be limited to promote staff participation and sustain wellness in my division’s 4 of 4 timetabling). This project could interface well with ELA outcomes for inquiry and managing information (Alberta Education, 2003), so there is collaborative potential for combining assessments with the ELA 20IB teaching staff. Moreover, I hope that these interviews will facilitate manageable staff horizontal collaboration, relationship-building with students, and broader community reflection about the “living topographies” (Jardine, 2000, p. 6) of learning spaces as paths of action. By practising mindful interviewing, students develop the advocacy skills to "speak up", "speak against", "speak with" and "speak for" as responsible citizens in their communities (Kupsh, 2020, p. 264). Developing conversational skills is therefore part of the “emancipatory” work of PCP (Kelly & Pelech, 2019, p. 732): it activates student agency and helps “foster empathy...[needed] for the exploration of local places” (Gruenewald, 2008, p.318). Conversational literacy is also central to a PCP that embeds learning “in relationships, culture, family, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, community, land, connections, memory, and history” (Government of Alberta, 2017, p. 5 in Kelly & Pelech, 2020c, p.3).

Reflective checklists for students crystalize some conversational skill building milestones and loosely encourage awareness of several principles of design outlined by a cognitive theory of multimedia learning (McNamara & Drew, 2019): coherence, signaling, redundancy, segmenting, temporal contiguity, pre-training, voice, and personalization. Based on McNamara and Drew's research (2019), I also included check-ins about affective elements of engagement and learning in podcast creation, particularly issues of motivation and emotional engagement.

I created diagrams for the two timeline rollout plans in order to reduce cognitive load and allow teachers an at-a-glance preview of hyperlinked materials. Daniel Wang and the podcast editing tutorials were recommendations from a teaching colleague (Effa, 2022) who had exceptional expertise in integrating new media, podcast creation and zines into high school English Language Arts. These resources are designed to help any subject-area teacher to equip students to pursue their interests and community engagement through podcasting.

#### ***Pathway 4: Unboxing Areas of Knowledge***

The *Pathway 4: Unboxing Areas of Knowledge* project ended up being a set of personally created resources (assignment sheets, rubrics, and a mini-lesson for gallery labels). This assignment is the most likely to spawn student research and community projects, if TOK teachers are open to dedicating additional class time towards such a project. As such, I wanted to create a framework that was supportive of student choice and personal interests; the main parameters of the project are to get small groups working within a disciplinary AOK as defined by IB, and then invite them to augment and disrupt the disciplinary boundary with tools like the knowledge framework, but also with connections out into local community issues. Please visit *Pathway 4* of the website for more details

I did not integrate extensive secondary sources in this section but instead provided a simple rationale for the unboxing project to show how student group work would contribute to a space of community dialogue. Though I was initially hesitant that this section lacked substantial secondary material, I think that the simplicity and flexibility of the project page and co-created rubric resource (unpacked further in the *Teacher Resources: Assessment* page of my site) will help this project to be easily implemented across a variety of contexts. The assignment itself deliberately requires students to engage with local issues and to share their engagement as part of the public Exhibition space.

### ***Pathway 5: Mapping the Exhibition***

For *Pathway 5: Mapping the Exhibition* page, I modeled and contextualized TOK's Internal Assessment with the power dynamics involved around the use and misuse of objects around the world (hence the rationale reference to Blood, 2012). I also wanted to make sure visitors considered active student involvement in the planning of the Exhibition space itself, hence recommendations to involve student community groups. Because of the cultural complexity of displaying objects as mediators of personal knowledge-making processes, I deliberately kept a fairly full and complete rationale setup to this part of the site, while simplifying some of the content into hyperlinked supporting documents.

### ***Pathway 6: Reflective Journaling***

My *Reflective Journaling* page supports teacher and student inquiry into the nexus of place and personhood (Jacobs, 2011) by providing journaling resources that are both imaginative (Young, 2018) and localized (CPAWS, 2022). I outline five journal-based scenarios for writing in TOK classrooms, and also provide *Pathway 2* and video resources for mindful journaling in nature or in local memory sites. The "Other Recommended Resources" have select activities

highlighted in some of my favourite English Language Arts compendiums and websites. I've provided quick, 10-minute prompts (Clark; New York Times) and a great resource of identity-focused mentor texts and critical theory with *Teaching for Joy and Justice*. Each is very focused on a writer's individual reflections and sense of self, which fits well with Rauch's suggestion that "secondary learners require radically student-centered instruction and academic guidance that is engaging and motivating to push them to higher levels of achievement, not based on their peers, but instead measured against their own former selves" (Raush, 2020, p. 22 paraphrasing Motallebzadeh & Kafi, 2015). Overall, I believe these resources support existing research on the benefits of place-based writing (Rausch, 2020, p. 13; McMillan & Wilhelm, 2007), which show promising trends towards more engaged writing and greater improvements in skill and self-regulation over traditional writing practices (Donovan, 2016 in Rausch, 2020. See also Jacobs, 2011; Abrouq, 2022).

### ***Assessment***

Beyond the *Context* and *Pathways* resources, my website walks visitors through the rationale and options available for flexible assessment. The *Assessment* page contains some tools designed for specific pathways and others that support rubric co-creation according to an individual class' needs and interests. A *References* page provides deeper dive reading for teachers interested in the achievement and self-regulation benefits associated with rubric co-creation (Fraile et al., 2017). I hope the range of tools allows for feedback consistently throughout the learning process (Bailie et al., 2011), from developing program goals and their relationship to outcomes to the benchmarking, data analysis, and results review of the assessments themselves. By separating out "Assessment" (rather than hyperlinking tools within each *Pathway*) I would ratify the centrality of assessment processes to a rigorous TOK

curriculum-as-lived. As Nolen et al. (2011) pointed out, “Assessment tools and artifacts, as boundary objects, facilitate engagement of teachers, administrators, students, and their families in coordinating activity across social boundaries and are central to the function of educational organisations” (p. 88). My website creates a simple focus on using common TOK language and stressing student engagement in assessment co-creation throughout this section. I included a curated list of academic papers on rubric co-creation to support colleagues to do additional deep dives or use scholarship to adapt provided materials to their own contexts.

### ***Teacher Self-Reflection***

Finally, I included a *Teacher Self-Reflection* page specifically for teachers to promote pre- and post- reflections with implementing place conscious tools. I wanted to include encouragement for teachers to reflect and even journal alongside students as a part of their professional routines, in order to reflect *currere*: the cyclic and recursive consolidation of best practices over time, based on ongoing phenomenological repositioning of a person’s past experiences, present understandings, and future goals (Pinar, 2014). John & Thomas (2018) have shown that such self-reflection can be part of the larger motivating structure that leads to better planning, artistic scholarship, introspection, action research, and portfolio creation. Much of our professional world as teachers involves classroom interactions and in-the moment decision-making that spin past at breakneck speed. Because teachers need a chance to connect past, present and future in cycles of reflection (John & Thomas, 2018; Kanu, 2006; Pinar et al., 1995), I’ve collated some resources for pre- and post-reflections on planning TOK, as well as my own reflective Fractal Tree (used in my EDUC 5850 culminating reflections on how to structure place conscious pathways for TOK). I hope that by providing both, teachers are able to feel anchored

but still open to the unexpected discoveries that appear when experimenting with PCP (Warkentin, 2011).

### **Parent Resources**

The *Parent Resources* page curates context-building tools from elsewhere on the website (Cozolino, 2013; Craig, 2023; Francom et al., 2020; Siebert, 2020), and supplements neuroscience and TOK content with parent-friendly video resources and training modules. Interactive and multimedia resources dominate the selections, in keeping with research that reflects positive parental engagement with sources that provide autonomy and interactivity (Dworkin et al., 2013; Hutchison et al, 2020).

### **About Me**

The *About Me* section of the site expanded as I worked on my project; I found myself returning to multiple papers, presentations, reflective journals, and projects that formed the core of our MEd work over the last three years. I felt more and more the weighty responsibility to pass on the varied learning that occurred throughout my MEd program, not only in the final project. It felt like a true recursive *currere* cycle (Pinar et al., 1995), looking forward and backward in time to curate and create selective resources based on highly personal phenomenological and narratological reflection, but I also found that I wanted to celebrate some of the unexpected discoveries and accomplishments that were part of my path into the website project. I hope website visitors not only forgive the indulgence but better understand my own positioning, context and perspective from engaging with these extra materials, and I labelled them “Additional shareables from my MEd journey” to reflect how each assignment became a steppingstone in my understanding of adolescent neuroscience and also myself. It seemed an

inevitable part of how I track myself into place (Piersol, 2010). For this, I beg a bit of indulgence (and wish visitors happy explorations of this imaginative walk through my MEd learning space).

### **Final Notes about Website Revisions**

Throughout the process of revising my paper and website, I felt the push and pull of implementing PCP in ways that allowed for community action in and out of the classroom. I added then removed explanations of how it is not absolutely necessary to root place consciousness in a controversial local issue that divides a learning community; how honest and authentic engagement with the layers of a student's community identity is an excellent starting place (McMillan & Wilhelm, 2007), as is utilizing projects that allow students opportunities for self-publication and sharing their work. This sometimes-apologetic stance may stem from my own relative inexperience with place conscious approaches. Nevertheless, I remain confident that facilitating lived experience and appreciation in nature is key to renegotiating place in equitable and meaningful ways, especially given how "The diminishing opportunities for nature exposure, and immersion in the technology saturated lives of young people, heighten the importance of embedding nature in the everyday experiences of young people to enhance mental health" (Vella-Brodrick & Gilowska, 2022, p. 1246). From immersion, students will develop their own complex understandings of local issues, environmental relationships, and their role as citizens in a greater community. As Raush notes, "Although place-based writing is not always rooted in the local community, it will always illuminate the path to real-world problems and solutions that nurture learning that...extends beyond the walls of the classroom" (Raush, 2020, p. 15). I hope my website adds to that illumination process for colleagues and their students.

## **Future Directions**

If there's one area of my website that I'd like to develop further it's the relatively small emphasis placed on concrete resources to develop community partnerships. Interfacing with local organisations is a key step in many place conscious projects that play out in localised settings, and there's a long tradition of mindful collaboration with community partnerships in education that acknowledges the unique makeup of a variety of communities (Bray, 2001). In industrialised countries, early studies of community collaboration often focused on parent agency within school decision-making processes, narrowing attention on the financial and educational benefits of a "closer liaison between schools and homes" and the "political and administrative benefits" of problem-solving at a local rather than central level (Bray, 2001, p. 15). Early shifts in community partnership thinking acknowledge tiers or spectrums of participation (Arnstein, 1969; Shaeffer, 1994; Reimers, 1997) and the limitations that power can put on altering the status quo (Bray, 2001). From these roots, and Freire's understanding of praxis, PCP prioritises the active agency of students inevitably reshaping local spaces. Still, as my website developed, more and more resources were geared towards teachers' implementation of TOK in the classroom with students making outward connections into their own communities. I retained a curated list of scholarly readings on community partnerships because I hope that in the future, more resources will help teachers develop capacity as community intermediaries and ambassadors (and as coaches for student intermediaries and student community ambassadors).

## **Conclusion**

Van Eijck and Roth said that "We can only understand place as the result of a dialogue" (2010, p. 896). I am incredibly excited to see how TOK teachers around the world will welcome local communities into their conversations about knowledge processes, and I hope that my

website encourages and equips colleagues for responsive dialogue between teachers, students, and their community partners. Teachers are central to the challenging but supportive conversations that ground students' constructive actions (Biddulph, 2011, p. 393); I hope my website's flexible *Pathways* can unlock new perspectives and community action for students and colleagues, and I'm grateful for the conversations that have woven PCP into my professional imagination.

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