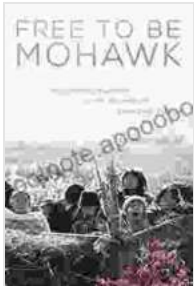


Indigenous Education at the Akwesasne Freedom School: New Directions in Native Education



Free to Be Mohawk: Indigenous Education at the Akwesasne Freedom School (New Directions in Native American Studies Series Book 12) by Ernest Albert Savage

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 8015 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 245 pages



Traditional Western education systems have often failed to meet the unique needs and aspirations of Indigenous students. In response to this challenge, the Akwesasne Freedom School (AFS) was established in 1979 as an alternative educational institution rooted in Indigenous values and traditions.

Located on the Akwesasne Mohawk Territory, AFS is a vibrant and innovative learning environment that empowers Native students and revitalizes Indigenous knowledge and culture. This article explores the groundbreaking approaches to Indigenous education implemented at AFS, shedding light on their impact on student success and the broader struggle for decolonization.

Decolonizing the Curriculum

One of the core principles guiding AFS's educational philosophy is the decolonization of the curriculum. This involves critically examining the Eurocentric biases inherent in traditional textbooks and pedagogical approaches, and replacing them with content that reflects Indigenous perspectives and experiences.

At AFS, students learn about their own history, culture, and language from a respectful and affirming perspective. They engage in traditional ceremonies, storytelling, and art forms, connecting with their ancestral roots and developing a strong sense of identity.

Empowering Students

AFS fosters a culture of empowerment and self-determination among its students. The school's small class sizes and individualized approach allow teachers to provide personalized support and guidance to each student.

Students are encouraged to develop their critical thinking skills, question authority, and take ownership of their learning journey. They participate in decision-making processes and have a voice in shaping the school's curriculum and policies.

Community Engagement

AFS recognizes the importance of community involvement in education. The school actively collaborates with parents, elders, and community organizations to create a supportive learning environment for its students.

Parents are involved in school governance and decision-making, while elders share their knowledge and wisdom with students, fostering intergenerational connections and cultural continuity.

Transformative Outcomes

The innovative approaches implemented at AFS have led to transformative outcomes for its students. Graduates of the school demonstrate high levels of academic achievement and go on to pursue higher education and successful careers in various fields.

More importantly, AFS students develop a strong sense of cultural pride and a deep commitment to their community. They become leaders and advocates for Indigenous rights, contributing to the revitalization and empowerment of their people.

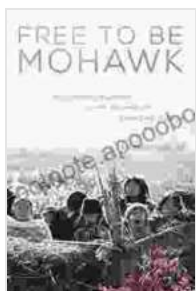
A Model for Indigenous Education

The Akwesasne Freedom School has become a model for Indigenous education worldwide. Its innovative approaches to decolonizing the curriculum, empowering students, and engaging the community have inspired other Indigenous-led schools and educational initiatives.

AFS's story demonstrates that Indigenous education can be transformative when it is grounded in Indigenous values, knowledge, and ways of being. By embracing these principles, we can create educational systems that truly empower Native students and foster their cultural and intellectual development.

The Akwesasne Freedom School is a beacon of hope and innovation in Indigenous education. Its groundbreaking approaches challenge traditional notions of schooling and provide a blueprint for decolonizing education and empowering Native students.

As we continue to strive for educational equity and social justice, we can draw inspiration from the transformative work being done at AFS and other Indigenous-led educational institutions. Together, we can create educational systems that honor and celebrate Indigenous knowledge, cultures, and aspirations.



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