

# Lesson 4: Daḡota Wiḡoh'aṅ: Daḡota Values in Action

**Main Idea:** Within a Daḡota worldview, it is important to live Daḡota wiḡoh'aṅ (Daḡota ways of living).

**Essential Question:**

- What does living Daḡota wiḡoh'aṅ (Daḡota ways of living) mean to Daḡota people?

**Learning Goals: (Students Will Know That):**

- A value is a principle that a person, family, or community believes is important.
- Many Daḡota people, both young and old, hold certain values that support mitakuye owas'iṅ and Daḡota wiḡoh'aṅ.

**Students Will Be Able To:**

- Identify and interpret how people's choices and activities reflect their values and beliefs.
- Understand what we mean by Daḡota wiḡoh'aṅ and some ways it is lived by Daḡota people.

**Student Tasks:**

My Values in Action

Daḡota Values in Action interview reflection

**Assessment Tools:**

My Values in Action worksheet

Daḡota Values in Action worksheet

Daḡota Values in Action reflection (optional: Exit Slip)

**Main Lesson Activities** (all times are suggested as a guide):

1. Review "They call me" in Daḡota – 5 min
2. Introduction to Daḡota wiḡoh'aṅ – 5 minutes
3. Discussion about how values affect our actions + My Values in Action worksheet - 10 minutes
4. Daḡota values introduction + Daḡota Values in Action worksheet (optional) – 10 minutes
5. Daḡota Values in Action – Lacrosse interview – 15 min

**Prior Knowledge Activated:**

Lessons 1-3

Personal, family, and community values and worldview

## 4.1 In the Classroom

Learner Resources	Teacher Materials
<p><b>Media Resources:</b>            Login by clicking Login button or going to:  <a href="http://dakotawicohan.org/my-account/">http://dakotawicohan.org/my-account/</a>            - <b>Username:</b> DW            - <b>Password:</b> dakota123            Then go to:  <a href="http://dakotawicohan.org/lessons/lesson-4-dakota-wicohan-dakota-values-in-action/">http://dakotawicohan.org/lessons/lesson-4-dakota-wicohan-dakota-values-in-action/</a></p> <p><b>Dakota Community Interviews:</b>            - Lacrosse Video (11:33 Minutes)</p> <p><b>Dakota Language in this Lesson:</b>            - <b>Dakota wicoh'anj</b> – <i>Dakota ways of living</i>            - <b>emakiyapi ye/do</b> – <i>they call me</i>            - <b>mitakuye owas'inj</b> – all my relations; we are all relatives            - <b>wounšida</b> - <i>humility</i></p>	<p><b>Handouts:</b>            - Values in Action worksheet            - Core Dakota Values            - Dakota Values Worksheet</p> <p><b>Vocabulary:</b>            (add to ongoing wall chart or student notebooks)            - <b>culture:</b> a broad term to describe the way a group of people live; includes their language, food, social interactions, worldview, belief systems, etc.            - <b>value:</b> beliefs or principles that matter to people; usually describes an ideal way of behaving            - <b>humility:</b> to be humble; not proud; to believe that you are no better or worse than anyone else</p> <p><b>MN 6th grade Social Studies Standards Alignment:</b>            6.4.4.15.1 Compare and contrast the Dakota and Anishinaabe nations prior to 1800; describe their interactions with each other and other indigenous peoples. (Before European Contact).</p>
<p><b>Recommended Additional Reading for Instructors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Dakota Values</i> – end of lesson</li> <li>- <i>Dakota Language</i> – end of lesson</li> <li>- Dakota Language and Culture Workbook excerpt – end of lesson</li> </ul>	<p><b>Other Instructional Materials</b></p>
<p><b>Northern Lights Connections</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chapter 1: Studying Minnesota; Investigation: What is Your Story?</li> </ul>	

## 4.2 Review “They Call Me” in Daḡota

Ask students to practice again introducing themselves in Daḡota.  
Go around the room to hear from everyone.

[Find pronunciation link at Lesson 3: Mitakuye Owas’iḡ: Our Relative the Land <http://dakotawicohan.org/lessons/lesson-3-mitakuye-owasiḡ-our-relative-the-land/> ]

Females: \_\_\_\_\_ *emákiyapi ye.*

Males: \_\_\_\_\_ *emákiyapi do.*

Note: Accent is on the second syllable— *emákiyapi*

## 4.3 Introduction to Daḡota Wiḡoh’añ

Review main idea, essential questions, learning goals and any vocabulary for the day.

### For Teacher:

*So far we have been learning about a core Daḡota worldview, mitakuye owas’iḡ, and what it teaches us about the Daḡota and perhaps even our own relationship to Mni Sóta Maḡoce. We learned that a worldview can be defined as the ways that a person, community, or society sees, understands, and makes sense of his or her life. Our worldviews usually influence our values, our attitudes, decisions, and our behaviors. Across the globe and within Mni Sóta Maḡoce, different people and different communities have unique worldviews.*

*For the Daḡota people who look at the world through the lens of mitakuye owas’iḡ (we are all related), each step, each action they take reflects how they value good relations with one another and with all beings. For many Daḡota people who hold this Daḡota worldview of mitakuye owas’iḡ, a central part of living in good relation to everyone and everything means living Daḡota wiḡoh’añ (a Daḡota way of life).*

*Daḡota wiḡoh’añ means different things to different Daḡota people, but in general it means that Daḡota people are living in a way that keeps important parts of their culture and history alive. Some examples: they follow Daḡota kinship rules (that is, interacting properly with other Daḡota people); they speak (or learn to speak) the Daḡota language; they dance at a Wacipi (pow wow); they participate in traditional ceremonies; they prepare traditional Daḡota foods; they do bead or quill work using traditional Daḡota methods and designs; or they play traditional games like takapsicapi (lacrosse). For some Daḡota, Daḡota wiḡoh’añ also means living according to certain values. We’ll learn more about those in a moment.*

*Add Daḡota wiḡoh’añ to ongoing vocabulary chart or have students add it and its definition to their notebooks.*

## 4.4 How Values Affect Our Actions

### For Teacher:

*Before we look at some important Dakota values let's look at our own values and how those affect our actions. You can often tell what matters to a person or to a society by looking at what they pay attention to or spend money or time doing. You can also find out what matters to people by looking at their language or how they communicate with each other. Our own values come to us from many sources: our local communities of friends and family, our religion or belief system, and popular culture.*

*Sometimes people say they value something but act otherwise. Or they don't think that they care about much of anything or anyone, and that they don't have any values. But even saying you don't care about anyone or anything in particular is a kind of value.*

For Teacher	For Students	Additional/Optional
<p>Stop and ask students to respond to all or some of these questions and post their responses. Or have them fill out the <b>Values in Action</b> worksheet and then discuss their responses as a group.</p> <p>You may need to model some of your own responses to these questions.</p>	<p><b>1) What do you spend a lot of time doing each day? Think about things you do in or out of school or with friends and family.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have students first respond individually or as a pair and share with someone else.</li> <li>• Go over the wording of the questions as necessary with students.</li> <li>• Depending on your students and the amount of time you have, you may want to stop and respond to all these questions or only some.</li> </ul>

For Teacher	For Students	Additional/Optional
	<p><b>2) How do those activities show what you value (or do they)?</b></p> <p><b>3) Where do you think these values come from? How did you learn them?</b></p> <p><b>4) What values do you share with members of your family or of your classroom?</b></p> <p><b>5) When do you think you are living according to your values?</b></p> <p><b>6) In what situations do you not always speak or act according to your values?</b></p>	<p><i>Example: "play video games"</i>  <i>Possible values:</i>  <i>"having fun"</i>  <i>"individual accomplishment"</i>  <i>or perhaps if they like multiplayer games they value "community" or "competition" or "collaboration"</i></p> <p>Do a group share to find out.</p> <p>Ask students to consider if they sometimes feel like they are living other people's values, like their parents' or teachers', and not their own.</p> <p>Why does that happen to us sometimes? What's the conflict?</p>

## 4.5 Dakota Values Introduction

For Teacher	For Students	Additional/Optional
<p><i>Living Dakota wicoḥ'aṅ means living according to certain values that many Dakota people share. Let's take a look at these together.</i></p> <p>Pass out or share list of Core Dakota Values. <i>This is not a complete list of Dakota values but many of these values are an important part of Dakota identity and teachings. Many different individuals and communities, not just the Dakota, share them.</i></p> <p>Example: <b>wóuṅsida – humility.</b></p> <p><i>Dakota worldview begins with humility, an understanding founded in our origin stories. When we comprehend mitakuye owas'in, we acknowledge that we are but one small part of the universe. We were created with gifts to work together, not have dominion over anyone or anything.</i></p>	<p>Circle or check off the values that you also share or work in a small group to select one that you all share.</p> <p>Then answer: <b>What do you do in your own life that shows that you share that value?</b></p> <p>Here's an example of how to do this exercise with the value <b>Wóuṅsida</b> or Humility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post Dakota values in room or create a handout for students to keep.</li> <li>• Divide students into 4 groups and have each group pick a value to talk about.</li> <li>• Or decide for yourself and your students on which values you want them to focus.</li> </ul> <p>Students (individually or in groups) can write in their notebooks or use the Dakota Values in Action Worksheet.</p> <p>Example of <b>wóuṅsida</b> in action: Not bragging about one's own accomplishments. Or, more spiritually, approaching the food that we eat everyday with an awareness of how our relatives (plants and animals) give us nourishment, beyond the people who helped produce it and cook it.</p>

For Teacher	For Students	Additional/Optional
		Optional homework or task: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask students to select two or three Dakota values that they share and then learn and memorize how to say them in Dakota</li> </ul>

## 4.6 Dakota Values in Action

*Let's watch a short video about some Dakota people and what matters to them.*

### **Lacrosse video - (11:33)**

Find at Lesson 4: Dakota Wiçoh'an: Dakota Values in Action

<http://dakotawicohan.org/lessons/lesson-4-dakota-wicohan-dakota-values-in-action/>

Reflection questions:

- *What matters to the Dakota people in this video?*
- *What are the values that people in this video talk about?*
- *What words, phrases, images, or stories did you hear or see that makes you say that?*

Have students write their responses in their notebooks or as an Exit Slip. As time allows, ask students to share their responses with the larger group.



## My Values in Action Worksheet

What are 3-5 of my favorite things to do?



Activity	Amount of time spent	Who else does this with you?	What value does it represent?	Source of value (family? religion? culture? other groups or communities to which you belong?)	Is this value <b>similar to or different</b> from the values of your family and your ancestors, or to the Dakota people you have heard from so far or from other groups or communities? <b>How?</b>
1)					
2)					
3)					
4)					
5)					

## 4.7 Core Dakota Values

*This is not a complete list of Dakota values but many of these values are an important part of Dakota identities and teachings. Many different individuals and communities, not just the Dakota, share them.*

**Wóuŋšida** – Humility. Dakota worldview begins with humility, an understanding founded in our origin stories. When we comprehend mitakuye owas’iŋ, we acknowledge that we are but one small part of the universe. We were created with gifts to work together, not have dominion over anyone or anything.

**Wauŋšida** - Compassion. The foundation of our Dakota spiritual lifeways was the concept of Wauŋšida, compassion. It teaches us to treat everyone as a wotakuye, relative, and as such we were to be compassionate with one another, to be a good relative. Everything you do is done in a good way—from using the language in a respectful, kind way, to your actions—to not make anyone feel bad.

**Wóbdiheic’iya** – Positiveness. Dakota values, language, and actions should stem from positiveness. If we understand that everything we do and say affects each other and the universe around us (mitakuye owas’iŋ), then we want to make sure that our words and actions embody a positive attitude and that we are doing our best.

**Wóohoda/Oho’da** – Respect. Dakota view the land as their relative. The land has shaped Dakota people. When we understand that the land and all the creatures that live on the land, in the air, and water offer us gifts, and we act responsibly towards these relatives, then we demonstrate respect. Also, with respect, we can appreciate the unique gifts each person has as an individual.

**Wóksape** – Wisdom. Putting into practice the value of wisdom means having the knowledge, ability, and teachings to know how to recognize these values– and not just use, but live these values. For example, Dakota people have long identified significant places through language and story throughout Mni Sóta Maŋoce. These place names are based upon significant gifts or resources offered and significant events at specific sites and places. Experience and connections to Mni Sóta Maŋoce have provided insights that remain relevant today. Learning about and sharing these insights appropriately exhibits wisdom.

**Wóokiya** – Helpful. From birth Dakota people are taught their role in the family and community. Each person is bestowed special gifts from the creator that are nurtured and honed into strengths that need to be exercised. Each gift is also a responsibility, the proper use of these gifts support a healthy and well-working family and community.

**Wówaciŋya** – Dependable. Individual dependability is part of being a good relative and being an ally or friend. Our communities function well when can depend upon one another to live our values and carry out our responsibilities. Furthermore, Dakota people depend

upon their stories to provide teachings and valuable lessons. Dakota people are reminded through stories how and how not to behave and act.

**Wóinina** – Silence. Dakota people have learned the value of quietness during times of struggle and significant change. Dakota people draw upon the strength of silence for resiliency during difficult times. Through silence, inner peace and fortitude can be gained; insight and lessons can be gathered; continued spiritual strength is maintained.

**Wóohitika** – Courage. It takes courage to be resilient and strong despite challenges. Dakota people do not view themselves as mere victims but as resilient and strong people, drawing upon a courage that has been practiced by Dakota people for generations to resist, persist, and adapt.

**Wówaçinṭaṅka** – Patience. Despite significant attacks on Dakota life ways, Dakota people are reclaiming their Dakota values and life ways. It requires significant patience and fortitude to continue on. Patience for oneself and patience with others is needed in order to not feel defeated.

**Wówaditika** – Bravery. When we understand the Dakota worldview, when we're learning to be a good relative to Mni Sóta Maḵoçe, to oneself, to family, and community, it requires bravery to meet the challenges to do something different—to live within mitakuye owas'ín.

**Teḥiṅda** – Cherish, Value, Love. Value what you already have. Love one another in a good way. Cherishing something, like the Dakota language, includes the actions of both love and protection.

**Wówaḥba** – Gentleness. When we have compassion and respect for one another, we should approach in a gentle manner. Behaving with noninterference can be an expression of gentleness. For example, when addressing conflict, one should remember that we are all related.

**Wówicąke** – Honesty. To hold honesty high is honorable. Our language is sacred and we should always be honest in order to respect the gift of language and honor the words we say.

**Oḥaṅwašte** – Generosity. We must show compassion towards each other and share what we have. In the Dakota way, our character is measured by how well we take care of one another.

**Wówaśake** – Strength. We ask for strength in prayer and everyday life so we can live through all the values described here. Living our wicḥaṅ is not easy. It takes great strength to live ones values.

*\*In addition to conferring with Dakota elders, some material is adapted from other sources, including Dakota Wiçoh'aṅ & University of Minnesota.*

## 4.8 Dakota Values in Action Worksheet

Which Dakota value(s) out of the list do you also share? What do you do in your own life that shows that you share that value?

Shared value: \_\_\_\_\_

**2 things I do or say that show  
that I share this value:**

1.

2.

Shared value: \_\_\_\_\_

**2 things I do or say that show  
that I share this value:**

1.

2.

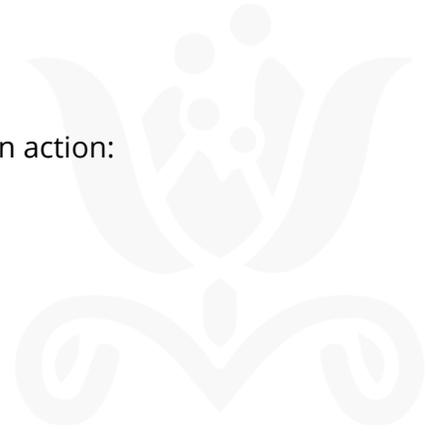
## 4.9 Background Reading for Instructors

These readings provide additional information on Dakota values in action:

### 1 Dakota values

### 2 Dakota language

### 3 Dakota Language and Culture Workbook



### 1. *Dakota Values*

Many of us share similar values, however some values are different or assume a higher priority. For example, individualism is often valued in American mainstream society. However for Dakota people, kinship is highly valued. The idea of kinship is clearly expressed in the Dakota language throughout, including simple introductions. For example, when introducing oneself, the literal translation is, “They call me \_\_\_”, as opposed to “My name is \_\_\_”; with “they” implying one’s relatives. Dakota words reflect a relationship (kinship) that they have with place, people, events. Ella Deloria (1970) provides further insight into this understanding.

Kinship was the all-important matter. Everyone who was born a Dakota belonged in it; nobody need to be left outside...the aim of Dakota life, stripped of accessories, was quite simple: One must obey kinship rules; one must be a good relative...every other consideration was secondary – property, personal ambition, glory, good times, life itself. Without that aim and the constant struggle to attain it, the people would no longer be Dakotas in truth (pp. 24-25).

Furthermore, to maintain relationships, Dakota people strive to be positive-minded in their thought, speech and actions. Deloria (1970) highlights just how Dakota relationships are maintained through a positive spirit.

To be a good Dakota, then was to be humanized, civilized. And to be civilized was to keep the rules imposed by kinship for achieving civility, good manners, and a sense of responsibility toward every individual dealt with. Thus only was it possible to live communally with success; that is to say, with a minimum of friction and a maximum of good will (p. 25).

One of the ways we maintain a positive spirit is through the words we use. Dakota people often use humor as a way to discuss something that might be challenging, difficult to address, or to break the ice.

Teachers today can apply the Dakota value of positiveness in the classroom, too! For example, humor can be used in difficult or tense situations to balance and guide the group.

## 2. *Dakota Language*

Like other languages, within the Dakota language, one can find the values people embody. It is often said that our Dakota way of life is embedded within our language. This is why it is so important to learn and use our Dakota language.

See the Dakota alphabet and pronunciation guide on the next page. For further Dakota language lessons please refer to the Dakota Language and Culture Workbook by Joanne Zacharias and/or visit <http://beginningDakota.org/> for audio resources.