

Canadian Studies Project 2

Focus on Citizenship, Multiculturalism, Aboriginal Peoples and Diversity.



Curricula

REPRODUCIBLE INSERT

STORYTELLING: The Art of Knowledge

(from the Museum of Civilization, www.civilization.ca/aborig/storytel/indexeng.html) by Helen Mertz

Planning for Learning: Overview

Storytelling - The Art of Knowledge

Purpose

The philosophical foundation of an Aboriginal worldview is readily found in the oral literary tradition of the Storyteller. This set of lessons is designed to introduce students to the concept of how First Nations people transmitted cultural expectations through the use of storytelling. The lessons will emphasize the First Nations oral tradition and how legends, myths and stories were used to pass down the traditions, the knowledge, the attitudes, values and beliefs. The students will develop an understanding of how the storytelling method was used to explain, to teach and to entertain. The students will explore the cultural ties and differences within Aboriginal nations.

The method used to produce these lessons is based on the design down model of curriculum design as adapted from *Understanding By Design: Professional Workbook*. Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins 2004.

In addition, attention will be paid to the development of literacy skills as outlined in the Ontario Ministry of Education document, *Think Literacy* (a cross curricular document for grades 7-12).

Subjects

Cross-Curricular Subjects
History, Geography, Civics,
English, Language Arts, Visual
Arts, Health and Well-Being

Grade Levels:

Grades: 10-12

Duration:

Four to six classroom periods

Key Issues and Concepts:

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www.teachmag.com/canadian_studies_2/index.html



Expectations/Outcomes

Planning for Learning (adapted from McTighe and Wiggins)

What are my students expected to learn?

(What are the most important ideas that I want my students to remember?)

Students will build on their prior knowledge to develop a deeper appreciation and knowledge of First Nations culture.

Students will demonstrate an awareness of, and respect for, the range of cultures, human behaviours, experience, emotions and ideas conveyed throughout the storytelling tradition.

Students will begin to understand how environment affects lifestyle and culture.

Critical Learning/Big Idea: Storytelling is the art of knowledge.

The oral tradition of the First Nations people is important to understanding the indigenous cultural heritage.

Students will understand that:

Oral stories pass on the attitudes, values, beliefs, knowledge and history of First Nations people.

Different First Nations groups passed along similar messages via their oral language tradition.

All cultures pass along knowledge from one generation to another.

Guiding questions:

What does the term knowledge mean?

How do you determine what is knowledge?

Why is storytelling an art?

What made the stories worth telling generation after generation?

Students will know:

Key facts about First Nations storytelling traditions.

That First Nations had a code of ethics that stressed honour and respect for all living things.

That First Nations cultures had a deep sense of spirituality.

Students will be able to:

Recognize and identify knowledge passed along in First Nations storytelling.

Compare and contrast different stories from different First Nations groups to determine knowledge.

Express their findings orally and in writing.

Links to curriculum:

Native Studies, History, Geography, English.

Links to Catholic Graduate expectations:

CE 1e, 1h, 2c, 6c, 7f, 7g

How will I know my students are learning:

- Use an Anticipation guide to assess students' prior knowledge and identify learning goals for the unit;
- Use Action strategies to inform and direct teaching strategies;
- Revise the variety of First Nations stories by including stories from print, video and oral stories on tape or DVD;
- Include other fictional reading as it relates to the big idea;



- Add non-fiction sources to accommodate various reading levels. Guide students in using a variety of resources to answer the guiding questions; and
- Look for primary sources on a variety of Web sites.

Rich assessment tasks:

- Write a journal reflection to your editor, include in your reflection the direction your story is taking after listening to and reading examples from the First Nations people; and
- Create and perform a story in the First Nations oral story tradition, to inform a younger sibling of expected behaviour at an important event.

Enabling and or other assessment Evidence:

- Oral and written responses to one of the guiding questions;
- Various strategies to ensure understanding and encourage discussion (i.e. Venn diagram, Hot Seat Think Aloud Anticipation Activities); and
- Reflections.

How will I help my students learn?

- Use of Literacy strategies to ensure understanding;
- Include other stories to assist in comparing and contrasting;



- Discussion;
- Self assessment forms, samples of work; and
- Journal responses, writing and oral storytelling rubrics.

How will I track learning? How will I report and communicate learning?

- Use of Achievement Chart categories
- Systematic observation and conferencing: Anecdotal records
- Goal setting forms: Self assessment tools

Storytelling: The Art of Knowledge

Objectives

Students will build on their prior knowledge to develop a deeper appreciation and knowledge of First Nations culture.

Students will demonstrate an awareness of, and respect for, the range of cultures, human behaviours, experience, emotions and ideas conveyed throughout the storytelling tradition.

Students will begin to understand how environment affects lifestyle and culture.

Students will gain an understanding of how our past affects our present and our future.

Students will be able to use and analyze primary and secondary sources of evidence.

Students will demonstrate the ability to read for meaning,

enjoyment and information.

Students will demonstrate the ability to interpret and respond to various types of literature.

Students will demonstrate the ability to use oral language to clarify and extend their personal understanding of what they observe, feel, hear and read through interaction with others.

Students will demonstrate respect for the ideas, language and communication styles of others and awareness of the need for sensitive and thoughtful responses.

Introductory Lesson

Talking Circle: how, why, expectations, talking stick.

Drums: the music of Mother Earth with examples.

Discussion to activate students' prior knowledge.

Introduce The Big Question.

Lesson Two

Presentation of *Mi'Kmaq Women Who Married Star Husbands*

Lesson Three

Discussion: Ensure Understanding by unpacking the learning.

Lesson Four

Presentation of other stories.

Lesson Five

Creation: RAFT Strategy .

Lesson Six

Culminating Activity: Look again at the BIG QUESTION.

Assessment and Evaluation

Evaluate content, thoroughness, effectiveness, teamwork and effort on various tasks assigned each day both individually and as members of the class community.

Rubrics will be prepared.

Optional Activities that may be considered include:

1. Creative Writing Activities might include writing a Poem/Song, Personal Letter, Biography, Allegories, Autobiography, Parody, Cartoon, Advertisements, Book Reviews, Newsletters and Oral Histories.
2. Research may be conducted into various tradition, Nations, etc.
3. Any and all of these may be presented in the Oral Storytelling tradition.

LESSON ONE

Time: One Period

Students will gain an understanding of the role that oral tradition plays in First Nations culture.

Introduction: Setting the stage

Invite students to sit in the Talking Circle (North point of the Medicine Wheel).

Elicit what, when, why they had been asked to sit in a circle (campfires, storytelling).

Introduce a Talking Circle by explaining how, why and what are the expectations of a Talking Circle.

See Appendix A for more information.

Present the Talking Stick and discuss how it might be used.

Explain that Drums were the music of Mother Earth.

Discuss oral tradition. What is the purpose of oral tradition? Define myth, legend, fable and folktale.



Provide students with some information about myths, legends and folktales. Define them as applied to the culture of First Nations people.

Have students listen to a First Nations storyteller.

Discussion to activate students' prior knowledge.

Introduce THE BIG QUESTION: Is storytelling the art of knowledge?

Assessment and Evaluation

With a partner have students compose three questions they have about storytelling in First Nations communities.

Have students present questions to the Circle.
Record questions.

Teacher Preparation / Materials / Planning Notes

Set up the class in a circle with drum music in the background.

Obtain the First Nations music (drum or flute).

Prepare the Talking Circle information rules, expectations, etc.

Have a Talking Stick/Stone or other natural article.

Read the story, *Mi'Kmaq Women Who Married Star Husbands*.

Make appropriate teaching/learning notes. Notice that the story has a break.

Photocopy the story for each member of class.

Questions to be researched:

- What is the oral tradition?
- What role does the oral tradition play in First Nations culture?
- Who is the author of the folklore passed on through oral tradition?
- Did the stories ever change?
- What is the difference between a myth, legend, fable and folktale?
- Do different cultural areas have different stories?

Resources:

Audio of First Nations storytellers can be found online at the following sites:

<http://website.nbm-mnb.ca/Koluskap/>

<http://cado.ayn.ca/index.asp>

Other Aboriginal Stories can be found at the following sites:

Native American tales at Eldrbarry's Raven Tales:

<http://www.eldrbarry.net/rabb/rvn/htm>

Creation Stories from Around the World at Myth*ing Links:

<http://www.mythinglinks.org/home.html>

Native American creation stories:

<http://www.wsu.edu:8001/~dee/NAANTH/CREATION.HTM>

LESSON TWO

Introduction

Talking Circle and Drum or Flute music (East point of the Medicine Wheel).

What is the Big Idea for today's discussion?

Storytelling is the art of knowledge.

Review questions from Lesson One.

The task for this lesson is to read a story.

The story has been divided into two sections.

Presentation

Prior to reading: Anticipation Guide Technique (See Appendix A for further explanation).

Present a set of five to ten questions similar to the following to students and have them formulate an answer:

1. First Nations stories were important to indigenous people.

Agree / Disagree

2. First Nations stories were more than just stories.

Agree / Disagree

3. First Nations stories instruct people.

Agree / Disagree

And so on.

Present the first part of the story to be read.

Students may read individually or in pairs.

As students read have them underline the part that is important to them.

At the end of the first section of the story ask them to Think Aloud .

In particular, have the students tell you what they see in this story:

The colour of the sky;The size of the rock;The setting; and The mood.

Create a word picture with the students.

Have students tell you what the storyteller is trying to say. You will be asking them to draw inferences in order to help them make critical judgements and unique interpretations. For example, have students tell you:



I'm guessing that...

I predict...

It would be better if...

I really liked how...

If I were the main character...

What I didn't like was...

This method will help students explain connections between prior knowledge (Anticipation Guide Technique) and the experiences they are having with the Mi'Kmaq legend.

Hot Seat Activity or Character Chair

At this point students are halfway through the story. Have one student become the Younger Sister. This person will sit on a chair or stool at the front of the class, summarize the story and answer questions about her life and role in the story.

She has to talk herself into or out of turning over the rock. What decision does she have to make?

The student playing Sister selects three other students to be her advisors for one side of the decision and selects another three students to be her advisors for the opposite side of the question. Weasel Sister then listens to all six people and then says, "What am I going to do?"



The other students may ask questions focused on the decision to be made.

Weasel Sister makes a decision and announces it to the class.

The students vote on the decision with a hand gesture:
Agree (thumbs up)

Disagree (thumbs down)

Not sure (flat hand)

Students are then asked to complete the reading of the story.

Assessment and Evaluation

Students are to think and reflect on the story. They are to summarize the story and draw conclusions based on using the I READ / I THINK / THEREFORE graphic organizer.

Create an observation checklist to evaluate the engagement of individual students.

Teacher Preparation / Materials / Planning Notes

Develop questions and techniques to go along with the following literacy strategies.

Anticipation Guide Technique

A method by which students are asked to activate prior



knowledge to the story we are about to read in order to generate interest. An anticipation guide is a series of statements usually between 5 and 10, to which students must respond individually before reading a certain text. The statements are designed in such a way as to activate thought about particular events, ideas, plots or

issues that will be introduced in the text about to be read. Having students engage in these thoughts before reading prepares them to read as more active participants. They get a sense of the major ideas they will encounter in the text and they have an opportunity to reflect and respond to these ideas individually before being influenced by the group.

Prepare five to ten questions.

Think Aloud

This strategy helps students to create a picture in “my mind about what I am reading”.

The students will create visual, auditory or other sensory connections that will help deepen understanding.

For example, ask students to answer the following types of questions:

I visualized...

I could see (smell, hear, taste)...

I could orally give you answers to any of the following types of statements.

Drawing Inferences

Students will make connections between prior knowledge. They will be able to use this with a variety of appropriate texts in order to share responses, identify key elements of fiction (plot, characterization, setting), mood, descriptive language and common figures of speech (simile, metaphor, personification) in other oral and literacy tests.

Hot Seat (or Character Chair)

Activity Action strategy for deepening comprehension

One student becomes a character from a familiar story. The “character” sits on a chair or stool at the front of the class, summarizes the story and answers questions about her life and role in the story. This can first be done with many types of stories and also with other types of situations found in most subject areas. After the students understand how it works, a second character can be introduced and could appear, one after the other, or at the same time. The characters may have advisors who help them field questions posed by the classmates in order to provide information on a topic or insight and perspective on a character. This is the way to practice and participate in respectful and purposeful interaction, share and/or consolidate information, present and defend a point of view. This method will help students develop higher order thinking skills, refine questioning skills, demonstrate and share areas of knowledge and expertise and develop listening skills.

I read / I think / therefore strategy

This strategy is used to summarize the story and draw conclusions. Readers/listeners draw conclusions based on the ideas and information they read or heard from one or more sources. Providing a graphic organizer before and after reading helps students to organize their thinking during and after an activity in order to analyze, make references and draw conclusions after reading. The main purposes of this strategy are to actively use prior knowledge and experiences when reading and listening and to read and respond to the important concepts and issues and therefore making inferences and drawing conclusions. Students will develop content and opinions and become thoughtful speakers during whole class and small group discussions.

Essentially, the strategy asks students to think and reflect about something so that they can say what the conclusion is.

Prepare a rubric to evaluate I read / I think / therefore assignment.

Prepare an observation checklist for participation, teamwork and engagement.