Stories Now: Unit Overview

NBE3U, English: Understanding Contemporary First Nations, Métis and Inuit Voices, Grade 11 (University), Unit 5. 15 classes of 75 minutes (about three weeks).

The big question

What do contemporary First Nations, Métis and Inuit writers make possible when they tell their own stories, and how should we read them?

Students sample teacher-chosen contemporary novels by First Nations, Métis and Inuit writers at a book tasting, form literature circles with six rotating roles (including a Context Researcher and a Representation Tracker), and read a whole novel together. Along the way they study narrative voice and who controls the story, contemporary poems that bring Indigenous languages into English, a scene from a contemporary play, and short fiction including an Inuk writer. They evaluate how accurately their novels represent real lives, research the publishers, prizes and organizations behind contemporary Indigenous literature (Theytus Books, Kegedonce Press, Inhabit Media, the Gabriel Dumont Institute, the Indigenous Voices Awards), and analyse how technology helps writers reach readers. The unit ends with a personal response, a literary essay and circle-led seminars. A Circle Guide gives roles, a calendar and a menu of titles. No contemporary text is reproduced: teachers choose titles from board-approved resources.

Lessons

#	Lesson	Classes	Question	Expectations	What's inside
1	**Book Tasting**	1	What makes a novel worth reading together?	C1.1, C5.2, C4.1	Book-tasting stations; choosing a novel; purposes for reading
2	**How Circles Work**	1	How do circles work?	C1.2, C1.3, C4.1	Six roles; norms; reading calendar
3	**Opening Pages**	1	What does an opening promise?	C1.4, C1.3, C2.2	Stated and implied; text features; predictions
4	**Who Is Telling This?**	1	Who controls the story?	C2.3, C1.6, C1.4	Point of view; outside and inside; style and theme
5	**Poems Now**	1	What does a word carry?	C3.3, C2.3, C1.5	Teacher-chosen poems; Indigenous-language words; devices
6	**Circle Meeting 1**	1	What does the evidence say?	C1.5, C1.8, C4.2	First full meeting; testing predictions; connections web
7	**On Stage**	1	What can laughter do?	C1.6, C1.7, C5.2	A teacher-chosen play scene; humour; reading aloud

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8	**Short Fiction**	1	Who decides who you are?	C1.6, A3.4, C1.7	Teacher-chosen short stories; turning points; representation check
9	**Checking the Picture**	1	Is the picture accurate?	A3.4, C1.8, C1.7	Accuracy audit with authors' words and Indigenous-led sources
10	**Who Makes Literature Happen?**	1	Who gets books to readers?	C5.1, C5.2, C1.3	Theytus, Kegedonce, Inhabit Media, Gabriel Dumont Institute, Indigenous Voices Awards
11	**Stories and Screens**	1	How do stories travel now?	C5.3, C5.1, C4.2	Crowdfunding, Canada Reads, a virtual museum, audio; access
12	**Circle Meeting 2**	1	What does the ending value?	C1.6, C5.2, C1.5	Endings; theme statements; evidence bank
13	**Where I Stand as a Reader**	1	What do I bring as a reader?	D2.5, D2.2, C4.1	Personal response: beliefs, values and a world view
14	**Essay Workshop**	1	How do I prove it?	D2.7, D3.7, C1.4	Thesis, outline, integrated quotations, respectful revision
15	**Literature Circle Seminar**	1	What do our novels mean?	C1.7, C4.2, D3.7	Seminars (summative); reflection; essay due

Assessment

Type	In this unit
Assessment for learning	Tasting menu, inference ladder, voice map, word work, meeting records, scene analysis, story arc, accuracy audit, jigsaw notes, evidence table, evidence bank, thesis and outline
Assessment as learning	Reading purposes and strategy reflections, skills reflections, peer revision checklist, self-checks
Assessment of learning	Literature circle seminar (Lesson 15) and a literary essay on the circle novel, with rubrics in the Summative Tasks file

Texts

Included in the Start Here folder:

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- **Circle Guide:** roles, sentence starters, a unit calendar and a menu of teacher-chosen novels by First Nations, Métis and Inuit writers (titles only; not included), with content to preview
- **Teacher-chosen texts:** a novel per circle, two or three contemporary poems, a play scene and one or two short stories, from your board's approved resources
- **Skill models:** original model texts written for the lessons from a student reader's point of view, and short public domain passages by E. Pauline Johnson and Zitkála-Šá (historical context)

Several suggested novels deal with residential schools, violence, sexual violence or loss; preview every title and offer alternatives. Lessons include support resources (Hope for Wellness: 1-855-242-3310 (24/7). Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868 or text 686868. Call or text 988. Residential School Crisis Line: 1-866-925-4419.). We strongly recommend reviewing the unit with your board's Indigenous education lead and inviting a First Nations, Métis or Inuit author, Elder or Knowledge Keeper following board protocol. Do not ask Indigenous students to speak for their communities.

What's in each lesson

- Teacher lesson plan with expectations, timed sequence, differentiation, look-fors and answer guides
- Slides with speaker notes
- Student handouts and organizers
- Editable Word and PowerPoint files, plus PDFs

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