Signal and Story: Unit Overview

NBE3U, English: Understanding Contemporary First Nations, Métis and Inuit Voices, Grade 11 (University), Unit 6. 12 classes of 75 minutes (about two and a half weeks).

The big question

When First Nations, Métis and Inuit creators hold the camera, the microphone and the platform, how do the stories change, and who gets to hear them?

Students trace the rise of Indigenous-led media in Canada, from the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation (1982) and Igloolik Isuma Productions (1990) to APTN and imagineNATIVE (1999), the Indigenous Screen Office, NFB Indigenous Cinema and Uvagut TV. They compare news from an Indigenous newsroom with mainstream coverage, learn how funding, distribution and regulation shape the industry, and analyse teacher-chosen Inuit film, documentaries by First Nations, Métis and Inuit filmmakers, music by Polaris Prize winners Jeremy Dutcher and Tanya Tagaq, Indigenous-hosted podcasts, and digital initiatives such as Idle No More, the game Never Alone and FirstVoices. In the last four lessons, students plan, produce, test and screen a spotlight media text about a contemporary First Nations, Métis or Inuit creator or initiative, using that creator's own public words with citation.

Lessons

#	Lesson	Classes	Question	Expectations	What's inside
1	**From Being Filmed to Filming**	1	Who holds the camera?	E5.1, E5.2, E1.1, A1.2	Timeline of Indigenous-led media; about vs by; unit inquiry
2	**On Air**	1	Same event, two stories?	E1.3, E1.2, E5.1, E1.5	APTN; comparing two news reports; framing; overt and implied messages
3	**The Money and the Rules**	1	Who pays, who decides?	E1.6, E5.3, E5.1	Five industry factors; four cases (APTN, ISO, NFB, Uvagut TV); access
4	**The Fast Runner**	1	What does Inuit cinema ask of its audience?	E5.2, E2.1, E1.3, E2.2	Isuma; Atanarjuat; form and meaning; influence
5	**Witness**	1	Testimony or argument?	E2.2, E1.3, E1.5, B2.7	Documentary conventions; a teacher-chosen Indigenous documentary; perspective
6	**Sound and Language**	1	Who is the music for?	E5.2, E2.2, E1.3, E1.4	Dutcher, Tagaq, The Halluci Nation, a Métis musician; audiences
7	**Podcasts and Voices**	1	Why audio?	E2.1, E1.3, B2.7, E5.1	Five Indigenous-hosted podcasts; conventions; evaluation

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8	**Digital Ground**	1	Online, on whose terms?	E5.3, E5.1, A3.5, E1.5	Idle No More, Never Alone, FirstVoices; literacy and access; four corners
9	**Plan Your Spotlight**	1	What, why, for whom?	E3.1, E3.2, E4.2, A3.2	Summative launch; topic, purpose, audience, form; respect checklist; sources
10	**Design and Conventions**	1	How will it look and sound?	E3.3, D3.6, E2.2, D1.4	Conventions by form; presentation features; storyboard, script or layout
11	**Production Studio**	1	Does it work on a real audience?	E3.4, D3.6, E4.2, D3.5	Production; audience test; fact and quote check; production log
12	**Screening and Reflection**	1	What did we learn as creators?	E3.4, E4.1, E1.4, E5.2	Screening (summative); audience responses; production reflection (summative)

Assessment

Type	In this unit
Assessment for learning	Media timeline, two-reports comparison, five factors, viewing guides, documentary toolkit, listening log, episode analysis, three initiatives, spotlight plan
Assessment as learning	Peer feedback on drafts, audience tests, fact and quote checks, self-checks, production log entries
Assessment of learning	Spotlight media text (Lesson 12) and production log with a reflection, with rubrics in the Summative Tasks file

Media texts

All media texts are chosen and previewed by the teacher and named, never reproduced:

- **Broadcast and news:** APTN News reports and a mainstream report on the same event
- **Film:** an excerpt from Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner (Isuma, 2001) or another Isuma film; a documentary excerpt from NFB Indigenous Cinema (for example, Alanis Obomsawin, Tasha Hubbard, Alethea Arnaquq-Baril or Katherena Vermette)
- **Music:** Jeremy Dutcher, Tanya Tagaq, The Halluci Nation and a Métis musician
- **Audio and digital:** Indigenous-hosted podcasts (This Place, Telling Our Twisted Histories, Muddied Water, Kiwew, Inuit Unikkaangit), Idle No More, Never Alone, FirstVoices

Several documentaries and news stories deal with violence, death and grief; lessons name these with care and include support resources (Hope for Wellness Help Line, 1-855-242-3310; Kids Help Phone; 9-8-8; the National Indian

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Residential School Crisis Line, 1-866-925-4419). Students spotlight creators in their own public words, cited; they never impersonate anyone, invent quotations, speak for a community, imitate cultural practices or use sacred images. Media facts were checked in November 2026: organizations, funding and leadership change, so check for updates. We strongly recommend reviewing the unit with your board's Indigenous education lead and inviting an Indigenous media maker, Elder or Knowledge Keeper following board protocol.

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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