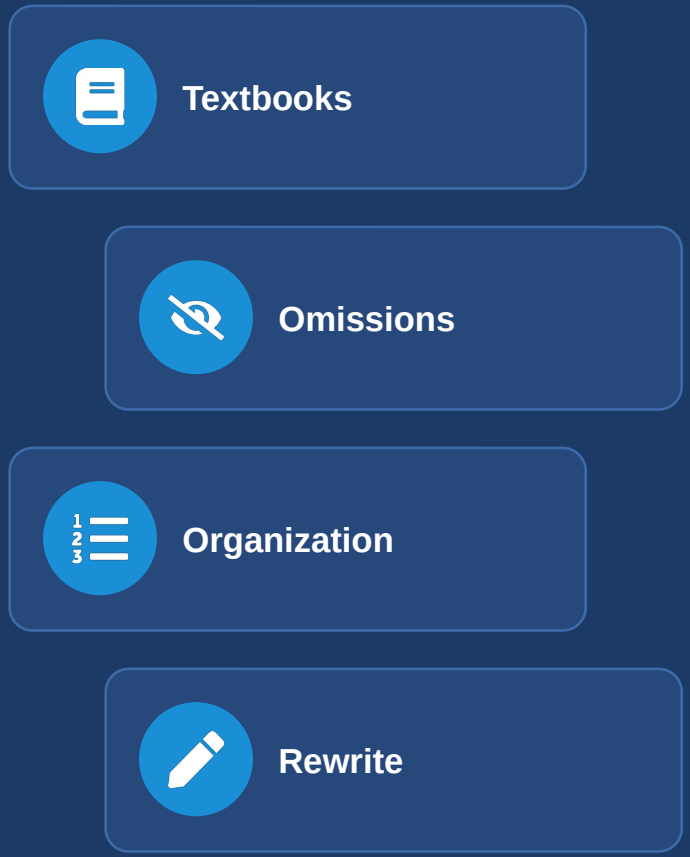
NBE3U Behind the Image, Lesson 7

In the Textbook

What schools taught, and what they left out



Today's goals

We are learning…

- How informational texts represent, or under-represent, Indigenous diversity.
- To organize accurate information for a clear purpose.

I can…

- Identify features of an informational text and how they shape meaning.
- Find what a text leaves out or under-represents.
- Identify contradictions in a text.
- Organize accurate information into a better paragraph.

Today's plan

Time	What we're doing	You will…
0–8 min	**Hook**	Discuss
8–25 min	**The old paragraph**	Analyse
25–40 min	**Diversity**	Note
40–68 min	**Rewrite**	Write
68–75 min	**Share**	Share

Warm-up



What did you learn about First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples in elementary school? What do you wish you'd learned?

Sentence starters

“I remember learning…”

“We never learned…”

“I wish…”

How it works

- Pairs: 3 minutes.
- Speak from your own school experience only.

Big idea

For generations, Canadian students learned about Indigenous peoples from textbooks that described them in the past tense, grouped them as “the Indians,” and told history from the explorers' canoes. What a school text includes and leaves out teaches as much as what it says.

An old-style paragraph

In the early days, the Indians of this land lived as wandering hunters. They had no written language and no settled homes. When the explorers and missionaries arrived, they brought the light of civilization. Some tribes were friendly and helped the newcomers with the fur trade, while others were warlike. Today, only a few Indians remain on reserves, where the government takes care of them.

Original model text written for this lesson in the style of older textbooks. Not a real textbook.

Think about it

What tense is it in?

Who is the hero?

What is left out?

Features of an informational text

tense	When the text places its subject. *Past tense makes living peoples sound gone.*
generalization	A claim about a whole group. *“The Indians” erases more than 600 First Nations, the Métis and Inuit.*
point of view	Whose eyes the history follows. *Explorers' canoes, not the shore.*
passive voice	Hides who acted. *“Reserves were set aside” (by whom?).*

Read it closely

On page 1, in pairs:

1. Find an example of each feature.
2. Explain its effect on a student reader.
3. List what is left out.
4. Find a contradiction.

What's missing

Distinct peoples

First Nations, Métis and Inuit: not one group.

Nations

Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Cree, Mi'kmaq… each with its own name.

Treaties

Agreements between Nations and the Crown.

Records

Wampum belts and birch bark scrolls are texts.

Residential schools

Missing entirely.

Today

Living Nations, cities, governments, artists.

Consequences



What are some consequences of the ways First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures were represented in school texts?

Sentence starters

“Students might have believed…”

“That could affect…”

“Indigenous students reading it would…”

How it works

- Groups: 4 minutes.
- Share one consequence each.

Organize, then rewrite

On page 2:

1. Choose a purpose and audience (for example, Grade 7 students).
2. Write a topic sentence.
3. Find three accurate facts with sources.
4. Order them logically and add a conclusion.
5. Write 120 to 160 words.

Model: a better topic sentence

Task: Rewrite the old paragraph's first sentence.

The lands now called Ontario are home to many distinct First Nations, including the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Cree, as well as Métis communities, each with its own language, laws and history that continue today.

Why it works

Names Nations.

Includes Métis.

Present tense: “continue today.”

Check yourself

Be honest. This helps you choose what to work on next.

Success criteria	Not yet	Almost	Got it
I can identify features of an informational text and how they shape meaning.			
I can find what a text leaves out or under-represents.			
I can identify contradictions in a text.			
I can organize accurate information into a better paragraph.			

Exit ticket

1. One feature of the old paragraph and its effect.

2. One thing it under-represents.

3. Your best rewritten sentence.

Next class: In the News.

Teacher reveal

In the textbook: key points

Features: Past tense, generalizations (“the Indians”), hidden agency (Indians simply “remain”; the government “takes care of them”), a heroic frame for explorers, no named people or Nations.

Omissions: No specific Nations, no Métis or Inuit, no treaties, no residential schools, no present-day life, no Indigenous sources.

Contradictions: Calls peoples “wandering” while describing their central role in the fur trade; says they had no written forms (ignoring wampum and birch bark scrolls).

Consequences: Students grew up believing Indigenous peoples were few, past and alike, which shaped attitudes and votes.

A better paragraph: Names Nations, uses present tense for living peoples, includes First Nations, Métis and Inuit, and cites sources.