Reading a Speech: How speakers move listeners, and whose view they bring

NBE3U, Unit 4: Living Words, Lesson 9. 75 minutes. Teacher lesson plan.

Lesson at a glance

Some of the most powerful contemporary oral texts are speeches: a young water protector at the United Nations, a judge who led the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. A speech persuades through structure, story, voice and presence, and every speech comes from a perspective.

What students do: Students analyse a teacher-chosen recorded speech by a First Nations, Métis or Inuit speaker, track how it communicates ideas and influences listeners, identify its perspective and the questions it raises about values and power, and evaluate its presentation strategies, suggesting others that could work.

Curriculum expectations

Code	Students will…
B2.7	analyse oral texts from and/or related to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures, including increasingly complex or difficult texts, focusing on the ways in which they communicate information, themes, ideas, and issues and influence the listener's/viewer's response
B2.8	identify and analyse the perspectives and/or biases evident in oral texts from and/or related to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures, including increasingly complex or difficult texts, and comment with growing understanding on any questions they may raise about beliefs, values, identity, and power
B2.9	evaluate the effectiveness of a variety of presentation strategies used in oral texts from and/or related to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures, including increasingly complex or difficult texts, and suggest other strategies that could be used effectively

From The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 12: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies (2019), English: Understanding Contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Voices, Grade 11, University Preparation (NBE3U). A = First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Perspectives and Text Forms in Canada, B = Oral Communication, C = Reading and Literature Studies, D = Writing, E = Media Studies.

Learning goals and success criteria

Learning goals	Success criteria
• We are learning to analyse how a speech communicates and persuades. • We are learning to evaluate presentation strategies.	• I can identify how a speech's structure, stories and language influence listeners. • I can identify the speaker's perspective and the questions it raises. • I can evaluate the effectiveness of presentation strategies. • I can suggest another strategy that would work.

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Materials and preparation

- **Slides:** Reading a Speech deck.
- **Handouts:** Speech Analysis (page 1), Evaluate the Delivery (page 2).
- **Media:** A teacher-chosen recorded speech (5 to 12 minutes) by a First Nations, Métis or Inuit speaker, from an official or trusted source. Suggestions in the teacher notes.

Lesson sequence

Time (min)	Part	Teacher	Students	Look for
0–8	**Hook**	What makes a speech land?	Discuss.	
8–18	**Tools**	Structure, story, voice.	Note.	
18–40	**Listen**	The speech.	Analyse.	Techniques identified.
40–55	**Perspective**	Values and power.	Discuss.	Perspective explained.
55–75	**Evaluate**	Delivery.	Evaluate.	Evaluation supported.

Differentiation

- **Support:** Captions; a transcript-free tracking sheet with time stamps.
- **ELL:** Glossary: appeal, anecdote, pause, emphasis, perspective.
- **Challenge:** Compare two speeches by different speakers on a similar topic.

Assessment

Type	Tool	Purpose
Assessment for learning	Speech Analysis and Evaluate the Delivery	Analysis (B2.7), perspective (B2.8) and presentation strategies (B2.9)

Reading a speech: key points

- **Structure:** How it opens (a greeting, a name, a story), builds and ends (a call to action, a return to the opening).
- **Story and image:** Personal anecdotes and concrete images make big issues human.
- **Voice and presence:** Pace, pauses, emphasis, eye contact, stillness, and speaking in an Indigenous language first can signal identity and authority.
- **Perspective:** Who is speaking, from where, to whom; what values are assumed; what questions about power it raises (for example, who controls water, land or history).
- **Evaluation:** Judge strategies against the purpose and audience; suggest an alternative, such as a visual, a statistic or a shorter call to action.

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Teacher notes

- Suggested speeches (verify the official recording before class): Autumn Peltier of Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory addressed the UN General Assembly on World Water Day, March 22, 2018, at age 13, about clean water. The Honourable Murray Sinclair (Mizanay Gheezhik, 1951–2024), Manitoba's first Indigenous judge, chaired the Truth and Reconciliation Commission from 2009 to 2015 and later served as a senator; many of his addresses are archived by the NCTR and universities. You may also choose a Métis or Inuit leader's address, such as one to a national assembly.
- Analyse the speech, not the speaker's identity or community; students do not critique testimony about personal trauma. If the chosen speech discusses residential schools or loss, use the care routine. This course discusses colonization, residential schools and their effects. Some students and families carry this history personally. Support: Hope for Wellness Help Line (for Indigenous people across Canada, 24/7, by phone or online chat at hopeforwellness.ca; English and French, with Cree, Ojibway and Inuktut on request at certain times), 1-855-242-3310; Kids Help Phone, 1-800-668-6868 or text 686868; 9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline (call or text 988); National Indian Residential School Crisis Line, 1-866-925-4419.
- Recorded oral texts are teacher-chosen from trusted sources (for example, a Nation's or organization's own channel, the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, APTN, the NFB or CBC Unreserved). Preview fully, confirm the speaker made the recording public, and don't reproduce transcripts.
- Quote only short phrases you have checked against the recording, and name the source.
- We strongly recommend reviewing this unit with your board's Indigenous education lead and, where possible, inviting a First Nations, Métis or Inuit Elder, Knowledge Keeper or guest speaker following your board's protocols (including offerings and honoraria). Local Nations' own sources come first.

Coming up

Lesson 10, Listening to a Teaching.

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