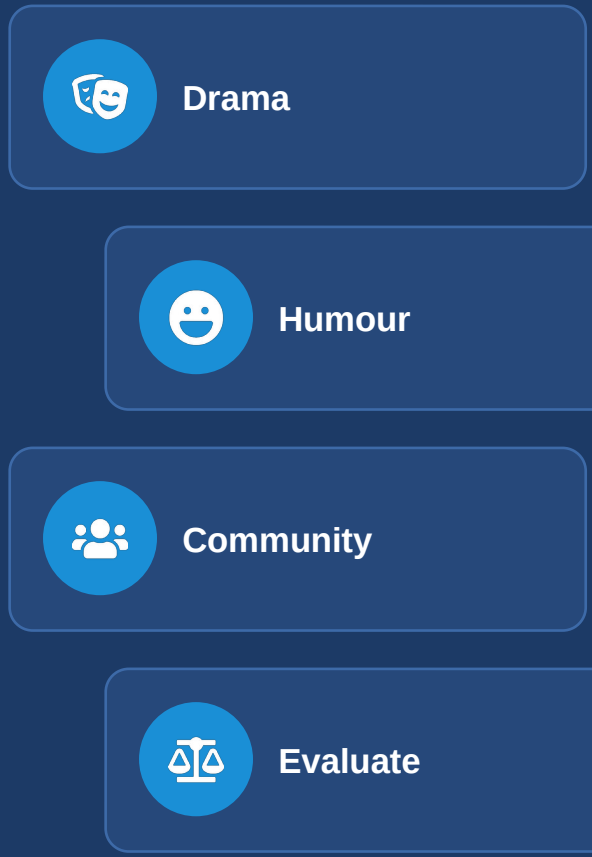
NBE3U Stories Now, Lesson 7

On Stage

Contemporary drama, humour and community



Today's goals

We are learning…

- To analyse a contemporary play.
- How literature can shape identity and heritage.

I can…

- Analyse how a scene uses humour and dialogue.
- Explain how a play presents a community.
- Evaluate a scene's effectiveness with evidence.
- Explain how plays like this influence identity and heritage.

Today's plan

Time	What we're doing	You will…
0–8 min	**Hook**	Discuss
8–20 min	**Context**	Note
20–45 min	**Scene**	Analyse
45–62 min	**Read aloud**	Perform
62–75 min	**Evaluate**	Write

What does humour do?

Choose one, then explain to a partner.



Protects

A way to survive pain.



Connects

Builds belonging.



Exposes

Shows what's wrong.



All of these

Depends on who's laughing.

Big idea

Plays by First Nations playwrights such as Tomson Highway and Drew Hayden Taylor put Indigenous communities on Canadian stages, often with sharp humour. Laughter can resist stereotypes, build community and make hard truths possible to hear.

Indigenous theatre in Canada



Plays by First Nations, Métis and Inuit playwrights put communities, languages and humour on Canadian stages. Tomson Highway's The Rez Sisters (1986) follows seven women from a reserve who dream of winning a giant bingo.

Learn about the playwright from their own words before you read.

Analyse the scene

On page 1, in groups:

1. Read the scene once silently.
2. Find the laughter: where and who is it on?
3. What stereotype is resisted or flipped?
4. What hard truth sits underneath?

Stagecraft words

stage direction	Instructions in the script, often in italics. *Who moves, how lines are said.*
comic timing	Pauses and pace that make a line land. *The beat before the punchline.*
subtext	Meaning beneath the words. *A joke that hides grief.*

Read it aloud

In groups:

1. Assign parts; mark pauses and emphasis.
2. Rehearse once.
3. Read for the class.
4. Focus on meaning and timing.

After the readings

Which line landed hardest when read aloud, and what was underneath the laughter?

Sentence starters

“When ___ said ___, I heard…”

“The pause before…”

“I laughed, then…”

How it works

- Whole class: 4 minutes.

Evaluate the scene

On page 2:

1. Consider four audiences.
2. What is the scene trying to do?
3. Does it succeed? Evidence.
4. How might plays like this shape identity and heritage?

Laughing with, laughing at

Laughing at

- The joke depends on a stereotype.
- The audience feels superior.
- The community is the punchline.

Laughing with

- The joke comes from inside the community.
- It exposes power or hypocrisy.
- It builds belonging.

Evaluating a scene

- What is the scene trying to do?
- Which choices help it?
- Which lines might different audiences hear differently?
- What would you cut or keep, and why?

Check yourself

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

Success criteria	Not yet	Almost	Got it
I can analyse how a scene uses humour and dialogue.			
I can explain how a play presents a community.			
I can evaluate a scene's effectiveness with evidence.			
I can explain how plays like this influence identity and heritage.			

Exit ticket

1. One line and what it shows about the community.

2. Who the humour was on.

3. Effective? One reason.

Next class: Short Fiction.

Teacher reveal

On stage: key points

Humour: Can build community, expose hypocrisy, deflate stereotypes and make pain bearable.

Dialogue: Characters argue, tease and care; the community is complex, not a single image.

Audience: A line may land differently for Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences; both responses matter.

Influence: Contemporary plays brought Indigenous stories and actors to mainstream stages, shaping how communities see themselves and how others see them.

Evaluation: Judge with evidence: what the scene aims to do, and whether its choices achieve it.