The Money and the Rules: Funding, distribution and regulation

NBE3U, Unit 6: Signal and Story, Lesson 3. 75 minutes. Teacher lesson plan.

Lesson at a glance

Every media text depends on money, a way to reach audiences and rules about who may broadcast. Indigenous creators in Canada have fought for funding that they control, for distribution that reaches their communities and for regulations that protect Indigenous-language programming.

What students do: Students learn how production, marketing, financing, distribution and regulation shape the Indigenous media industry through four cases (APTN's mandatory carriage, the Indigenous Screen Office's funding, NFB Indigenous Cinema's free streaming and Uvagut TV's 2024 CRTC decision), map the path of a media text from idea to audience, and analyse how access and media literacy affect which creators are heard.

Curriculum expectations

Code	Students will…
E1.6	explain how production, marketing, financing, distribution, and legal/regulatory factors influence the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit media industry
E5.3	analyse the role of media literacy and media access in promoting the work of contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit media creators, drawing on evidence from a variety of technological initiatives to support their conclusions
E5.1	describe the contributions of a variety of individuals, organizations, and initiatives to the development and production of contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit media texts

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 how money, distribution and rules shape Indigenous media. • We are learning how access affects whose stories reach audiences.	• I can explain production, marketing, financing, distribution and regulation. • I can describe how one decision (funding, carriage, streaming) affected Indigenous media. • I can trace a media text's path from idea to audience. • I can explain how access and media literacy help creators reach audiences.

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Materials and preparation

- **Slides:** The Money and the Rules deck.
- **Handouts:** Five Factors (page 1), From Idea to Audience (page 2).
- **Devices:** Optional: the Indigenous Screen Office (iso-bea.ca), NFB Indigenous Cinema and CRTC news pages.

Lesson sequence

Time (min)	Part	Teacher	Students	Look for
0–8	**Hook**	Who pays?	Discuss.	
8–25	**Five factors**	Terms.	Note.	
25–50	**Four cases**	Jigsaw.	Read and teach.	Factors applied.
50–65	**Idea to audience**	Map one film.	Map.	
65–75	**Access**	Who gets heard?	Write.	

Differentiation

- **Support:** Case cards with key terms highlighted.
- **ELL:** Visual flow chart of the five factors.
- **Challenge:** Read the Online Streaming Act summary and predict its effect on Indigenous creators.

Assessment

Type	Tool	Purpose
Assessment for learning	Five Factors and From Idea to Audience	Industry factors (E1.6), access and media literacy (E5.3) and contributions (E5.1)

The money and the rules: key points

- **Production:** Who makes the text and controls decisions (crew, language, story).
- **Financing:** Who pays: funds, broadcasters, grants. The ISO advocates for Indigenous creators and administers funding.
- **Distribution:** How it reaches audiences: TV carriage, streaming, festivals. NFB Indigenous Cinema streams over 200 films free.
- **Regulation:** The CRTC licenses broadcasters; APTN must be carried in basic service; Uvagut TV was added to basic service in 2024.
- **Marketing:** How audiences learn about a text: festivals such as imagineNATIVE, awards, social media.
- **Access and literacy:** Free platforms and Indigenous-language channels widen who can watch; media literacy helps audiences find and judge Indigenous-made texts.

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Teacher notes

- Sources (checked November 2026): APTN's national licence (February 1999) and mandatory basic carriage (The Canadian Encyclopedia). Indigenous Screen Office: announced June 12, 2017 by the Minister of Canadian Heritage; 2021 federal budget, $40.1 million over three years; 2024 federal budget, $65 million over five years for permanent support (The Canadian Encyclopedia). NFB Indigenous Cinema: launched March 22, 2018, over 200 free films, part of the NFB's Indigenous Action Plan responding to the TRC (Government of Canada news release). Uvagut TV: launched January 2021 by the Nunavut Independent Television Network; in October 2024 the CRTC approved adding it to the basic TV package across Canada (news reports, October 2024). Online Streaming Act: Royal Assent April 27, 2023 (Canadian Heritage).
- Amounts and decisions change; check for updates before teaching.
- 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 4, The Fast Runner.

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