Design and Conventions: Storyboards, scripts and layouts

NBE3U, Unit 6: Signal and Story, Lesson 10. 75 minutes. Teacher lesson plan.

Lesson at a glance

Every media form has conventions that audiences recognize. Choosing them on purpose, and designing presentation features such as fonts, graphics and layout, is how a creator turns a plan into a text that communicates clearly and respectfully.

What students do: Students identify the conventions of their chosen form, study how presentation features shape clarity and appeal, draft a storyboard, script outline or layout for their spotlight, and give and receive feedback using the rubric.

Curriculum expectations

Code	Students will…
E3.3	identify a variety of conventions and/or techniques appropriate to a media form they plan to use, and explain how these will help communicate a specific aspect of their intended meaning effectively
D3.6	use a variety of presentation features, including print and script, fonts, graphics, and layout, to improve the clarity and coherence of their written work and to heighten its appeal and effectiveness for their audience
E2.2	identify conventions and/or techniques used in a variety of media forms and explain, with increasing insight, how they convey meaning and influence their audience in the context of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures
D1.4	identify, sort, and order main ideas and supporting details for writing tasks, using a variety of strategies and selecting the organizational pattern best suited to the content and the purpose for writing

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 choose conventions and design features on purpose. • We are learning to draft a media text with a storyboard, script or layout.	• I can identify conventions of my form and explain how they will help communicate my meaning. • I can use fonts, graphics and layout to improve clarity and appeal. • I can organize my content in a storyboard, script outline or layout. • I can give specific feedback using the rubric.

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Materials and preparation

- **Slides:** Design and Conventions deck.
- **Handouts:** Conventions Plan (page 1), Draft Frame (page 2).
- **Students:** Spotlight plans and source logs.
- **Devices:** Design, audio or video tools your school provides.

Lesson sequence

Time (min)	Part	Teacher	Students	Look for
0–8	**Hook**	Good design you didn't notice.	Discuss.	
8–25	**Conventions**	By form.	Choose.	Conventions chosen.
25–38	**Presentation features**	Fonts, graphics, layout.	Note.	
38–65	**Draft**	Storyboard, script or layout.	Draft.	Draft organized.
65–75	**Feedback**	Rubric check.	Peer review.	

Differentiation

- **Support:** Templates for each form.
- **ELL:** Labelled example storyboards and layouts.
- **Challenge:** Plan an accessible version: captions, transcript or alt text.

Assessment

Type	Tool	Purpose
Assessment as learning	Draft and peer feedback	Conventions (E3.3, E2.2), presentation features (D3.6) and organization (D1.4)

Conventions by form

- **Podcast segment:** Cold open, host narration, clips of the creator's own words (cited), sound bed, clear sign-off.
- **Short video:** Hook in the first five seconds, captions, B-roll, title cards with sources.
- **Infographic:** Clear headline, three to five key facts, icons, visual hierarchy, sources at the bottom.
- **Web feature:** Headline, deck, short sections with subheads, pull quote (exact, cited), links.
- **Presentation features:** Two fonts at most, strong contrast, consistent colours, white space, credits.
- **Organization:** Order main ideas for the audience: hook, who, what, why it matters, where to find more.

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Teacher notes

- In this unit's media texts, students spotlight a creator or initiative using that creator's own public words (interviews, artist statements, organizations' own sites), always cited. Students never impersonate an Indigenous person, invent quotations, speak for a community, or use sacred or ceremonial images, songs or regalia.
- Accessibility counts as design: captions for video, a transcript for audio, alt text and readable contrast for graphics.
- Images: students use their own photos, icons, public domain or openly licensed images with credits, or images an organization explicitly allows. No sacred images, regalia or ceremonies.
- Do not ask Indigenous students to speak for their communities, to share personal or family histories, or to act as experts. Every student's participation in sharing is optional.

Coming up

Lesson 11, Production Studio.

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