

This learning guide is designed for use by Professional Learning Communities, learning coaches and teacher leaders or as a self-paced study.

Storytelling: Understanding Who We Are

Empowering the Spirit

This guide is intended to facilitate conversation after viewing the video clip,
Storytelling: Understanding Who We Are.



General synopsis

This video explores the power of stories in engaging students and helping them better understand themselves and the human condition. The central role of stories in First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) world views is discussed, as well as the role stories play in reflecting our universal experience.

Key understandings

- Stories can act as a bridge to literacy development.
- Stories can help students develop self-confidence and identity.
- Stories are central to First Nations, Métis and Inuit world views, yet also transcend culture to shed light on universal experience.
- Stories are key to understanding the human condition.
- By engaging students through plot and characters, stories convey information and help students reflect on their own lives.

Quote:

Christa Henderson, Alberta teacher shares : “... *no matter what culture you are from there are commonalities that come out when we tell our stories.*”

Questions for reflection and discussion

- In this video, which statements were most memorable for you? Why?
- Describe an example of how a story engaged you (or your students) and became a vehicle for learning. Why did this story have power?
- Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann believes that stories can be a bridge to literacy development. How does this align with your experience, either as a teacher or as a learner?
- Why is story-telling such an integral part of how First Nations, Métis and Inuit Elders share knowledge?
- Teacher Christa Henderson discusses how stories often break down students’ pre-conceived notions. How have you experienced this with your students?
- Christa Henderson also notes that stories give students a window into the full range of human behaviour from the ‘safe distance’ of the text. Why do you think this ‘safe distance’ can be engaging and beneficial for students?

(see more questions next page)

Questions for reflection and discussion (continued)

- Student Sayde Jayne Vockeroth states that “Watching characters grow and develop their own identity can help you develop your own identity.” How does this statement resonate with you?
- What happens when students do **not** see themselves in the stories they experience in school? What are some of the barriers that might get in the way of students being able to make authentic personal connections to stories?
- How do stories contribute to students’ appreciation and understanding of multiple perspectives?
- How might visual projects, such as the examples in the video, expand students’ experience of (and learning from) a story?
- Author Thomas King says “The truth about stories is that is all we are.” What does this quote mean to you?
- How can using stories enhance teachers’ practice and their ability to engage students?
- After viewing this video, what will you change about how you talk with students about the power of stories?
- Who would you share this video with? Why?

For more information

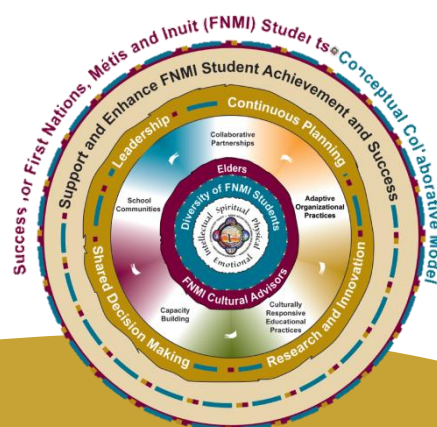
Walking Together: FNMI Perspectives in Curriculum. This Alberta Education digital resource is designed to help teachers understand the holistic nature of FNMI ways of knowing, to provide opportunity for FNMI Peoples to share their perspectives on topics important to them, and to demonstrate FNMI perspectives in teaching and learning experiences. (see topic area ‘Oral Tradition’) www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/

Our Words, Our Ways: Teaching First Nations, Métis and Inuit Learners. This Alberta Education resource provides information about FNMI cultures and perspectives, and sample strategies for meeting the needs and recognizing the gifts of FNMI students. <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/resources/cross/ourwordsourways.aspx>


The Truth About Stories by Thomas King. In his CBC Massey Lecture, King looks at the breadth and depth of Native experience and imagination.

FNMI Collaborative Framework: Building Relationships. A guide to strengthen collaborative processes between school authorities, parents, communities and other stakeholders. <http://education.alberta.ca/admin/fnmi/collaborativeframework.aspx>

Moving Forward: Implementing FNMI Collaborative Frameworks. A professional development resource supporting success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students as part of Alberta Education’s Business Plan. <https://education.alberta.ca/media/6664478/movingforwardbooklet.pdf>



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Alberta Regional Consortia

