Through Our Eyes

Contemporary Aboriginal Voices

Grade 11 NBE 3U
This resource is accompanied by a DVD that contains video segments to support the grade 9, 10 and 11 Native Studies curricula.

If you need additional copies of this resource or DVD, please visit www.eoccc.org

Appreciation is extended to the following school boards, organizations and individuals who helped make this project possible.

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   Kirk Brant
   Brian Cyr
   Tracey Deer
Aurora and David Finkle
   Mosha Folger
   Robyn Gow
   Chris Herodier
   Tomson Highway
   John Kelly
   Jaime Koebel
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Teacher Writers – Manual

Eileen Conroy
Dale Henderson
Suzanne Keeptwo
Stacy Villeneuve
Overview

*Through Our Eyes* provides the viewer with video segments to support the Grades 9, 10, and 11 Native Studies curricula. Information is presented on Aboriginal cultures, contemporary issues from an Aboriginal perspective and how the First Nations, Métis and Inuit define themselves, their communities and their visions of the future. At the grade 9 level five different artists/presenters share their art forms and describe the relationships between their work and their traditions, philosophies and cultures. The grade 10 level focuses on a few of the contemporary issues that affect the lives of the Aboriginal peoples such as: the impact of residential schools, preservation of the environment, equity in education, and health and safety. At the grade 11 level contemporary authors and a film director share their experiences and perspectives through their comments, thoughts and reflections.

These video segments are designed to be a spring board for additional discussion, writing and research. The accompanying manual will provide a number of ideas for implementation in the classroom. It is our hope that the content enriches and supports your work.

Throughout this DVD the viewer may notice an underlying theme; the important role that Mother Earth plays in the lives of the Aboriginal people and the on-going desire to make our world a better place. Chief Dan George captured this philosophy of life when he wrote –

“The beauty of the trees,  
the softness of the air,  
the fragrance of the grass,  
speaks to me.

The summit of the mountain,  
the thunder of the sky,  
the rhythm of the sea,  
speaks to me.

The strength of the fire,  
the taste of salmon,  
the trail of the sun,  
and the life that never goes away,  
they speak to me.  
And my heart soars.”
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**Note:** The following activities have been created by teachers who are sharing their ideas for classroom implementation; however, each teacher needs to preview the websites suggested for appropriateness for their students.
Teacher Segment

Stacy Villeneuve
Department Head
L.B. Pearson Secondary
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Michael Bernards
Teacher
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Student
L.B. Pearson Secondary
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Grade 11 – NBE 3U

Contemporary Aboriginal Voices
Tracey Deer

Tracey is a Mohawk film maker whose work focuses on modern interpretation of identity issues.
Tracey Deer

About Tracey Deer:

- Tracey Deer is a Mohawk film director and newspaper publisher.
- She has written and directed several award winning projects for Rezolution Pictures.
- She is the editor of the Eastern Door, published in Kahnawake, Quebec.
- She was born in 1978 and grew up at Kahnawake which is a Mohawk Reserve in Quebec.
- Tracey graduated from Dartmouth College with a degree in film studies.
- She has produced a number of documentaries including: Living the language, Club Native, Mohawk Girls (co-produced) and One More River: The Deal that Split the Cree (co-directed - 2005)
- Deer became the first Mohawk woman to win a Gemini Award, for her Club Native, a documentary on Mohawk identity, community and tribal blood quantum laws. The film received the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television's Canada Award for best Canadian multi-cultural program, while Deer received another Gemini for best writing.[1] Club Native also received the award for Best Documentary at the Dreamspeakers Festival in Edmonton, the award for Best Canadian Film at the First Peoples' Festival and the Colin Low Award for Best Canadian Documentary at the DOXA Documentary Film Festival. The film was co-produced by Rezolution Pictures and the National Film Board of Canada.
- In 2009, Deer collaborated with Montreal writer Cynthia Knight on Crossing the Line, a live-action 3D short for Digital Nations, an NFB and Aboriginal Peoples Television Network joint project featuring Aboriginal talent at the 2010 Vancouver Olympics.
- Deer formed her own production company, Mohawk Princess Productions.

Viewing Questions

1. On what subjects do Tracey’s films focus?
2. Describe the difference between Aboriginal films done by Aboriginal film makers versus non-Aboriginal film makers.
3. What is blood quantum?
4. Describe the large issue that arose within her community.
5. In Tracey’s opinion what is the difficulty when the outside media covers an internal issue?
Who Am I?

Catholic Graduate Expectations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CGE1d</td>
<td>A Discerning Believer formed in the Catholic Faith Community who develops attitudes and values founded on Catholic social teaching and acts to promote social responsibility, human solidarity and the common good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE1e</td>
<td>A Discerning Believer formed in the Catholic Faith Community who speaks the language of life... “recognizing that life is an unearned gift and that a person entrusted with life does not own it but that one is called to protect and cherish it.” (Witnesses to Faith)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE1g</td>
<td>A Discerning Believer formed in the Catholic Faith Community who understands that one’s purpose or call in life comes from God and strives to discern and live out this call throughout life’s journey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE1h</td>
<td>A Discerning Believer formed in the Catholic Faith Community who respects the faith traditions, world religions and the life-journeys of all people of good will.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE1i</td>
<td>A Discerning Believer formed in the Catholic Faith Community who integrates faith with life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expectations:

Overall Expectations:

Identity
- Analyze and assess information, ideas, issues, and language as they pertain to Aboriginal identity in a variety of informational writings and Aboriginal literary works
- Analyze images in media works related to Aboriginal identity

Relationships
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships depicted in fiction, drama, poetry, and non-fiction by Aboriginal writers

Sovereignty
- Demonstrate an understanding of Aboriginal sovereignty issues, as expressed in Aboriginal literary works

Challenges
- Demonstrate an understanding of the barriers facing Aboriginal peoples in education and employment, as presented in the works of Aboriginal writers
- Demonstrate an understanding of Aboriginal writers; descriptions of the challenges faced by Aboriginal peoples

Writing
(Since this strand focuses on the writing process, the classroom teacher will need to select the appropriate overall expectations.)
Specific Expectations:

Identity:
- Explain social and historical values and perspectives on Aboriginal identity, based on examples from Aboriginal literature
- Compare the images of Aboriginal identity portrayed in media works by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal creators

Relationships
- Demonstrate an understanding of relationships portrayed in the works of Aboriginal writers

Sovereignty
- Identify different definitions of sovereignty as expressed in the works of Aboriginal writers

Challenges
- Identify challenges faced by Aboriginal peoples as presented in the works of Aboriginal writers
- Demonstrate an understanding of some of the solutions to challenges to sovereignty that have been presented in media works

Writing
(The teacher will want to select the specific expectations from the writing strand.)

Prior/Pre-learning:

Tracey Deer comments upon her exploration of First Nation identity issues of today - from an insiders’ perspective.

Students will have previously studied the impact of colonization, The Indian Act; status/treaty/non-status/Métis differentiation, current issues on FN reserves re: membership.

Suggested Activity:

1. Have students choose which topic they wish to research and write their essay on from the following topics regarding issues pertaining to Aboriginal Identity:
   - Prior to colonization, the First Peoples of what is now called Canada, identified themselves by their nation, linguistic group, traditional territory, customs and beliefs.
   - There is no such thing as an Aboriginal race. Race and ethnicity are social, cultural and political constructs.
• Since the imposition of the Indian Act, the question of Aboriginal identity is based on what is officially recognized by the authoritative Canadian government. Colonial denial of Aboriginal identity is usually on the grounds of blood-quantum.

• Status based differentiation and the forced dislocation of individuals, families and communities has directly impacted the spiritual and ethical core of the People.

• It has been six generations since First Nations Peoples have been dealing with the legally and militarily enforced separation of their people from their homelands and sacred places.

• Many First Nations individuals are disconnected from the land and unfamiliar with their own indigenous culture. As a result, many maintain ideas about identity which reflect colonial attitudes.

• For many First Nations people, liberal-democratic capitalist societal norms are the reference point for their own and their nations’ identity.

• First Nations people who live on reserve are governed by the federal government - not the provincial government - which makes them a marginalized people. They are the only legislated people in the world.

• By 2006, half of all First Nations were still having their membership determined by the Department of Indian Affairs’ Indian Registrar. Among those nations who have enacted their own membership criteria, a vast majority use rules either identical or equivalent to the Indian Act.

• When a People are defined by others, they misunderstand who they truly are. The growth and development of their own values and cultures is denied. This weakens and divides the indigenous nations and prevents true solidarity among and between First Nations.

Suggested Assessment:

English language curriculum standards of evaluation.
### Research Essay Rubric

**Student Name:** ____________________  **Block:** ______  **Topic:** __________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>15-12</th>
<th>11-8</th>
<th>8-5</th>
<th>4-1</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality of Information</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Information clearly relates to the main topic. Includes several supporting details and/or examples.</td>
<td>Information clearly relates to the main topic. It provides 1-2 supporting details and/or examples.</td>
<td>Information clearly relates to the main topic. No details and/or examples are given.</td>
<td>Information has little or nothing to do with the main topic.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>10-8</td>
<td>▪ The introduction is inviting, states the main topic and previews the structure of the paper.</td>
<td>▪ The introduction is inviting, states the main topic and previews the structure of the paper, but is not particularly inviting to the reader.</td>
<td>▪ The introduction states the main topic, but does not adequately preview the structure of the paper nor is it particularly inviting to the reader.</td>
<td>▪ There is no clear introduction of the topic/structure of the paper.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Details are placed in a logical order and the way they are presented effectively keeps the interest of the reader.</td>
<td>▪ Details are placed in a logical order, but the way in which they are presented/introduced sometimes makes the writing less interesting.</td>
<td>▪ Some details are not in logical or expected order and this distracts the reader.</td>
<td>▪ There is little sense that the writing is organized.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ A variety of thoughtful transitions are used and clearly show how the ideas are connected.</td>
<td>▪ Transitions clearly show how ideas are connected, but there is little variety.</td>
<td>▪ Some transitions work well but connections between other ideas are fuzzy.</td>
<td>▪ The transitions between ideas are unclear or non-existent.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>4 - Above Standards</td>
<td>3 – Meets Standards</td>
<td>2 – Approaching Standards</td>
<td>1 – Below Standards</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis Statement</td>
<td>Thesis statement names the topic of the essay and outlines the main points to be discussed.</td>
<td>Thesis statement names the topic of the essay.</td>
<td>The thesis statement outlines some or all of the main points to be discussed but does not name the topic.</td>
<td>The thesis statement does not name the topic AND does not preview what will be discussed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Text Citations</td>
<td>All sources used for quotes, statistics and facts are credible and cited correctly. (Min. 5)</td>
<td>All sources used for quotes, statistics and facts are credible and most are cited correctly.</td>
<td>Most sources used for quotes, statistics and facts are credible and are cited correctly.</td>
<td>Many sources are suspect (not credible) AND/OR not cited correctly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Spelling</td>
<td>Author makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distracts the reader from the content.</td>
<td>Author makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td>Author makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td>Author makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence and Examples</td>
<td>All of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author’s position.</td>
<td>Most of the evidence and examples are specific, relevant and explanations are given that show how each piece of evidence supports the author’s position.</td>
<td>At least 1 of the pieces of evidence and examples is relevant and has an explanation that shows how the piece of evidence supports the author’s position.</td>
<td>Evidence and examples are NOT relevant AND/OR are not explained.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APA Format</td>
<td>Correct Title Page Format. Original title page #’s and double spaced. References (min. 5)</td>
<td>Minor errors.</td>
<td>Multiple errors.</td>
<td>Incorrect format.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments: /45
Other Resources:

Text Resources:

*Eastern Door*, Kahnawake FN based newspaper archives re Residency issues.


Web Resources:

http://www.quebec-elan.org/raevs/direct/144 for a look at T. Deer discussing her films


http://www.statcan.gc.ca/concepts/definitions/aboriginal-autochtone2-eng.htm


www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_mecA2mDj4 a clip from *Club Native* (re identity)
The Issue of Residency: Debate & Written Reflection

Catholic Graduate Expectations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CGE1d</th>
<th>A Discerning Believer Formed in the Catholic Faith Community who develops attitudes and values founded on Catholic social teaching and acts to promote social responsibility, human solidarity and the common good.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CGE1h</td>
<td>A Discerning Believer Formed in the Catholic Faith Community who respects the faith traditions, world religions and the life-journeys of all people of good will.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE2c</td>
<td>An Effective Communicator who presents information and ideas clearly and honestly and with sensitivity to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE7f</td>
<td>A Responsible Citizen who respects and affirms the history, cultural heritage and pluralism of today’s contemporary society.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expectations:

Overall Expectations:

Identity
- Analyze and assess information, ideas, issues and language as they pertain to Aboriginal identity in a variety of informational writings and Aboriginal literary works.
- Analyze images in media works related to Aboriginal identity.

Challenges
- Assess the challenges of maintaining cultural identity that faces Aboriginal peoples, as represented in Aboriginal literature.

Writing - (The teacher can decide to focus on one or more of the expectations.)

Specific Expectations:

Identity
- Explain social and historical values and perspectives on Aboriginal identity, based on examples from Aboriginal literature.
- Compare the images of Aboriginal identity portrayed in media works by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal creators.

Challenges
- Identify challenges faced by Aboriginal peoples as presented in the works of Aboriginal writers.
- Demonstrate an understanding of some of the solutions to challenges to sovereignty that have been expressed in media works.

Writing
(The teacher may decide to focus on one or more of the expectations.)
Prior/Pre-learning:

Students must be aware of the Debate Format, and well informed of the issues revolving around Residency on the Kahnawake Reserve, QC - from an historic and cultural perspective.

Teacher Preparation: To examine the reserve system i.e. origins, intents, locations, treaty agreements, original land tracts, reduced land tracts, re-location, conditions of, etc.

Suggest Activity:


2. Student groups or pairs, or as a whole with the teacher, brainstorm and list all of the issues surrounding the Residency issue, pros & cons.

3. Establish the resolution e.g.: “Be it resolved that any Canadian has the right to reside on a First Nations reserve”.

4. Following an established Debate Format, students are formed into proposition and opposition teams, ensuring all students are given an opportunity to participate. (The job of the proposition side is to advocate the adoption of the resolution, while the job of the opposition side is to refute the resolution.)

5. Written reflection of the debate experience - Students will be asked to express their final viewpoint regarding the Residency issue based on insights derived from the debate(s). Present the reflective essay rubric before the students commence work.

Suggested Assessment:

Debate Rubric found at: http://www.markville.ss.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/history/history/ww1debaterubric.html
### Reflective Essay Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unsatisfactory 1</th>
<th>Needs Improvement 2</th>
<th>Good 3</th>
<th>Excellent 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>The writer simply restates facts rather than reflecting on his or her own experience.</td>
<td>Contains some interesting ideas, but the writer does not explore them thoroughly.</td>
<td>Essay shows thoughtful reflection.</td>
<td>Demonstrates fresh, original thought and ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The writer’s point of view is not evident.</td>
<td>Lacks detailed explanation or supporting examples.</td>
<td>Writer’s point of view is apparent.</td>
<td>Point of view is thoroughly explored and clearly expressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>No clear direction.</td>
<td>Includes an organizational skeleton (intro, body, conclusion), but often strays from the main idea.</td>
<td>Organization is generally good, but there may be some extraneous details or unclear transitions.</td>
<td>Organization enhances the main ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Main ideas are vague and connections are confusing or incomplete.</td>
<td>Lacks transitions.</td>
<td>Generally applies standard English usage and appropriate word choices.</td>
<td>Supporting information is presented logically, with no extraneous details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sentence Fluency and Word Choice</strong></td>
<td>Contains frequent grammar and word choice.</td>
<td>Some errors in grammar and word choice.</td>
<td>Sentences are grammatical, but sometimes stiff or choppy.</td>
<td>The writing flows and shows a high level of sophistication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sentences are choppy, awkward, and hard to follow.</td>
<td>Sentences may be incomplete or rambling.</td>
<td>Sentences are grammatical, but sometimes stiff or choppy.</td>
<td>Strong and specific words are used to convey meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary is limited and words are used incorrectly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>Frequent spelling, punctuation, and typographical errors.</td>
<td>Some distracting errors.</td>
<td>Contains occasional spelling, punctuation, and typographical errors, but the errors are not overly distracting.</td>
<td>Proofreading is thorough.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Resources:

Web Resources:

http://www.csun.edu/~dgw61315/debformats.html - debate formats


http://www.kahnawakevoices.com/page/about

http://www.kahnawake.com/council/docs/MembershipLaw.pdf


Newspaper Review & Journalistic Writing

Catholic Graduate Expectations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CGE1d</th>
<th>A Discerning Believer Formed in the Catholic Faith Community who develops attitudes and values founded on Catholic social teaching and acts to promote social responsibility, human solidarity and the common good.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CGE2b</td>
<td>An Effective Communicator who reads, understands and uses written materials effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE2c</td>
<td>An Effective Communicator who presents information and ideas clearly and honestly and with sensitivity to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE7f</td>
<td>A Responsible Citizen who respects and affirms the diversity and interdependence of the world’s peoples and cultures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expectations:

Overall Expectations:

Challenges
- Identify and assess solutions to challenges suggested in media works by Aboriginal creators
- Demonstrate an understanding of Aboriginal writers’ descriptions of the challenges faced by Aboriginal peoples

Writing
(The teacher can decide to focus on one or more of the overall expectations.)

Specific Expectations

Challenges
- Analyze efforts made by Aboriginal peoples to respond to challenges, as portrayed in the works of Aboriginal writers
- Demonstrate an understanding of some of the solutions to challenges to sovereignty that have been presented in media works

Writing
(The teacher can decide to focus on one or more of the specific expectations.)

Prior/Pre-learning:

Tracey Deer is not only a film maker, but a successful newspaper publisher. Her latter career is driven by the need to provide indigenous perspectives regarding First Nations events and experiences to compensate for mainstream media’s tendency to focus on dramatic and negative aspects of FN issues.
Prior Learning: Contemporary Aboriginal issues

Teacher Preparation: Background knowledge regarding journalism

Suggested Activity:

1. Teacher introduces the steps for writing a basic news story:

   - **Lead:** Ask yourself what the story is about. Try stating the idea in one sentence of fewer than 25 words.
   - **Statement of the problem or conflict:** What caused the action in the lead?
   - **Backup for the lead:** Provide details about how and why.
   - **Impact:** Was there any impact on the reader? What is the significance of the story?
   - **Background:** What background was relevant to the current action?
   - **Attribution:** Make sure you tell the reader where or from whom you got the information.
   - **Ending:** A good quote, the final action or the next step.

2. Review the news story rubric with the students.

3. Students write a news story based on a current issue within First Nations, Métis, or Inuit communities.*Suggestions: The seal hunt; reserve-based school funding; sports team names & mascots; preservation of rock art; murdered & missing Aboriginal women; land claims, etc.

4. Students must conduct research on the topic chosen (or assigned) to gain a sense of the different perspectives on the topic, both indigenous and non-indigenous.

5. Students create a scenario/event (that would typically be newsworthy), using fictitious names & Canadian locations to report upon their topic, providing different viewpoints about the issue being explored.

Enhanced Learning:

Student pairs or small groups may develop scenes which explore one of the themes listed above, then present to the class. The scenes can be used as a stimulus for others’ journalistic reporting.

Suggested Assessment:

Did the student follow the guideline listed above? Did the student conduct relevant research of the topic? Did the student provide evidence of understanding the issue? Did the student present both an indigenous and non-indigenous perspective?
### Journalism Writing Rubrics (News Story Rubric)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Accomplished 10-11 points</th>
<th>Skilled 8-9 points</th>
<th>Developing 6-7 points</th>
<th>Needs Improvement 5 points or less</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effective &amp; Appropriate Lead</strong></td>
<td>Lead is original and catchy; fits well with the rest of the story; invites readers into the piece; contains a strong nut graph if lead is not a summary lead</td>
<td>Lead is appropriate to story and fairly effective at getting attention; shows some signs of originality; contains an effective nut graph, if necessary</td>
<td>Lead is adequate, but not extremely catchy or original; or there is no nut graph, even though it is necessary</td>
<td>Lead is neither original nor catchy; is boring, overused or trite, or is inappropriate to story; no nut graph</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adequate Use of Primary Sources, Mainly Interviews</strong></td>
<td>Evidence of reporter trying to get as many sources as necessary to adequately present all sides in the story; all are identified; info is properly attributed; all info is accurate, thorough; uses best sources</td>
<td>A minimum of three sources are used and clearly identified in story; most information is attributed to sources; information is accurate</td>
<td>Two or fewer sources are used; some sources are improperly identified or some info or opinion is given without attribution; most info is accurate but may not be as thorough; missing key sources; may use too general info</td>
<td>One or fewer sources used in story; or sources are improperly identified; much info is given without attribution; inaccurate or vague info</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quotes Show Evidence of Careful Reporting</td>
<td>Strong evidence of good research and interviewing by the use of effective, story-telling quotes that cover a broad range of the topic; good use of quote-transition formula</td>
<td>Most quotes show evidence of effective interviewing and use of good follow-up questions; quotes are interesting and story-telling</td>
<td>One or two of the quotes show evidence of good interviewing, but most do not help propel the story</td>
<td>Quotes are short, weak or ineffective; no evidence of follow-up questions being asked</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Organization and Flow (deals with structure)</td>
<td>Story is in inverted pyramid form with info in descending order of importance; strongly organized with clear transitions and logical connections that create a sense of being tightly woven together</td>
<td>Story is organized and most transitions and connections are clear, but either organization is somewhat lacking or the sense of flow is somewhat abrupt or story is not in inverted pyramid</td>
<td>Story lacks strong organization, jumps around too much or lacks effective transitions; not in inverted pyramid</td>
<td>Story is choppy; organization is unclear; few effective transitions; not in inverted pyramid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear Focus and Unity (deals with content)</td>
<td>Focus of story is clear; nothing detracts from primary focus; everything contributes to overall angle</td>
<td>Focus is fairly clear, but in or two areas detract from the primary angle</td>
<td>Story lacks strong sense of unity and focus; several areas seem to detract from angle</td>
<td>No clear angle; story is rambling and awkward</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interesting &amp; Effective Writing Style</strong></td>
<td><strong>Journalistic Style</strong></td>
<td><strong>Grammar and Spelling</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing is strong and effective with a clear voice and a variety of sentence structures; piece is tightly written; utilizes active verbs and vivid word choice; original writing</td>
<td>NO errors in journalistic style (quotes, dates, scores, numbers, money, percents, time, commas, etc.); short paragraphs; quotes stand alone</td>
<td>Story is well edited and virtually flawless; NO spelling errors; includes the proper spelling of all names</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing is adequate, but not extremely compelling or original; may be wordy or voice may be unclear; diction and sentence structure may not be as vivid or sophisticated</td>
<td>Has few (one or two) errors in journalistic style; or may have non-journalistic paragraph structure</td>
<td>Story is spell checked and all names are correct; contains few grammatical errors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing is rather bland; lacks a clear voice and/or sense of originality; is wordy or redundant; or diction and/or sentence structure may be repetitive</td>
<td>Has several errors in journalistic style or non-journalistic paragraph structure</td>
<td>Story is spell checked and all names are correct; contains several grammatical errors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing lacks a clear voice and original style</td>
<td>Has many errors in journalistic style and/or non-journalistic paragraph structure</td>
<td>Names are misspelled; or spell check was not run; or contains many grammatical errors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Resources:

Web Resources:

http://www.chompchomp.com/ - journalistic writing exercises

http://www.wadsworth.com/communication_d/templates/student_resources/0534562787_rich/authors_website/exercises.html

http://www.journalismcareers.com/training/findingtheangle.shtml

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Btz4LNaxF4c&feature=related – Inuit Way of Life


http://www.bluecorncomics.com/mascots.htm

http://www.rockart.org/

http://www.amnesty.ca/campaigns/sisters_overview.php - murdered & missing Aboriginal women

Divided Communities & Conflict Resolution

Catholic Graduate Expectations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Expectation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CGE1d</td>
<td>A Discerning Believer Formed in the Catholic Faith Community who develops attitudes and values founded on Catholic social teaching and acts to promote social responsibility, human solidarity and the common good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE1h</td>
<td>A Discerning Believer Formed in the Catholic Faith Community who respects the faith traditions, world religions and the life-journeys of all people of good will.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE2c</td>
<td>An Effective Communicator who presents information and ideas clearly and honestly and with sensitivity to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE7f</td>
<td>A Responsible Citizen who respects and affirms the history, cultural heritage and pluralism of today’s contemporary society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expectations:

Overall Expectations:

Writing
- Select and use appropriate writing forms for intended purposes and audiences, focusing on essays, narratives or poems
- Use a variety of organizational structures and patterns to produce coherent and effective written work
- (Also the teacher may decide to focus on other overall expectations.)

Specific Expectations:

Writing
- Organize and analyze information, ideas, and sources to suit specific forms and purposes for writing
- Select and use an appropriate form of writing to produce written work for an intended audience and purpose
- Use organizational patterns such as classification, definition, and ideas in essays, reviews, and summaries
- (Also the teacher may decide to focus on other specific expectations.)

Prior/Pre-learning:

Tracey Deer reveals how the Kahnawake Membership Law has created division of opinions on her reserve. In reference to her divided community, she states “the angry cycle keeps us trapped”.

Through Our Eyes
Contemporary Aboriginal Voices
Prior Learning:

Protocol and function of the Talking Circle; contemporary Aboriginal issues; historic agreements with Europeans/Canada.

Suggested Activity:

1. Brainstorming Circle: Teacher leads the Talking Circle posing the questions:
   a) What are First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples (generally) angry about?
   b) Do they have a right to be angry?
   c) What are some of the impacts/results of this anger?
   d) What is the solution?

2. Examining Conflict: Teacher posts the following:

   - **A conflict is more than just a disagreement.** It is a situation in which one or both parties perceive a threat (whether or not the threat is real).
   - **Conflicts continue to fester when ignored.** Because conflicts involve perceived threats to our well-being and survival, they stay with us until we face and resolve them.
   - **We respond to conflicts based on our perceptions** of the situation, not necessarily to an objective review of the facts. Our perceptions are influenced by our life experiences, culture, values, and beliefs.
   - **Conflicts trigger strong emotions.** If you aren’t comfortable with your emotions or able to manage them in times of stress, you won’t be able to resolve conflict successfully.
   - **Conflicts are an opportunity for growth.** When you’re able to resolve conflict in a relationship, it builds trust. You can feel secure, knowing your relationship can survive challenges and disagreements.
3. Using the information provided in Step 2, students are to produce a creative writing piece by developing a fictitious character who recounts a personal response to a chosen issue(s) explored in Step 1. The purpose is to evaluate the student’s understanding of the complexities of Aboriginal realities and the negative impact these complex issues often place upon individuals, families, and their communities. Prior to commencing, develop together or present a rubric that they will consider during the writing process and that will be used for assessment and that focuses on the skills that the teacher is emphasizing.

**Suggested Assessment:**

Assess the creative writing using the developed rubric. The teacher may wish to have the students do a self-assessment prior to submitting it to the teacher.

**Other Resources:**

**Web Resources:**

http://helpguide.org/mental/eq8_conflict_resolution.htm

http://www.ohrd.wisc.edu/onlinetraining/resolution/index.asp

http://www.crnhq.org/

http://www.learningpeace.com/pages/LP_04.htm

http://www.restorativejustice.org/university-classroom/04restorative%20justice%20theory/aboriginal

http://www.peacemakers.ca/bibliography/bib16indigenous.html

Mosha Folger

Mosha, an Inuit rapper, spoken word artist and author, uses his talents to share his culture.
Mosha Folger

About Mosha Folger:

- Mosha is the son of an Inuk mother and Brooklynite father.
- He has two sisters and was raised in both Iqaluit and North Vancouver.
- A writer and performer, Mosha has dabbled in journalism, been a playwright and poet/performer at the Weesageechak Begins to Dance festival.
- A visit to Mosha’s web site reveals his work – poetry, journalism, video, scripts and ghostwriting.
- Mosha’s video work, Never Saw It, (2008) melded spoken word, hip hop and visuals, and was an official selection at the Winnipeg Aboriginal Film Festival.
- Mosha turned from the spoken word to hip hop placing beats under his writing.
- He raps about issues that are close to him: identity, northern politics and suicide.
- He says, “My writing has been generally infused with my being half-breed. I have struggled in my life with this.”
- He has released two hip hop albums, Eskimocentricity and String Games.
- Mosha is currently filming a short documentary called Anaana (the Inuktitut word for mother).
- Mosha is active in the Ottawa poetry community, and is a member of the Bill Brown 1-2-3 collective.
- He shares his passion for spoken word and hip-hop by facilitating workshops for students.
- In April 2011, he presented at the 10th anniversary New Sun Conference on Aboriginal Arts at Carleton University, a conference dedicated to promoting artists, affirming contemporary Indigenous experience and increasing cross-cultural understanding.

Viewing Questions

1. What does Mosha hope for hip hop?
2. For Mosha what is sovereignty?
3. What influences his writing?
4. Describe the impact of his work.
5. What advice does he give youth about effecting change?
**Raise Your Voice**

**Catholic Graduate Expectations:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CGE2d</th>
<th>An Effective Communicator who writes and speaks fluently one or both of Canada's official languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CGE4a</td>
<td>A Self-Directed, Responsible, Life Long Learner who demonstrates a confident and positive sense of self and respect for the dignity and welfare of others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expectations:**

**Overall Expectations:**

**Identity**
- Demonstrate the concepts related to identity in Aboriginal literary works
- Analyze and assess information, ideas, issues and language as they pertain to Aboriginal identity in a variety of informational writings and Aboriginal literary works
- Demonstrate an understanding of how the different forms and styles used in Aboriginal literary works reflect Aboriginal identity

**Writing**
- Select and use appropriate writing forms for intended purposes and audiences, focusing on essays, narratives or poems (Teachers may choose to add additional expectations.)

**Specific Expectations:**

**Identity**
- Identify the perceptions of Aboriginal identity expressed by a variety of Aboriginal writers
- Analyze how Aboriginal writers reveal identity through their use of language

**Writing**
- Organize and analyze information, ideas, and sources to suit specific forms and purposes for writing
- Demonstrate an understanding of the uses and conventions of a variety of forms by writing persuasive and literary essays, reviews, short narratives or poems, and summaries (Teachers may choose to add additional expectations.)
Suggested Activity:

**Open Mic Native Studies Style**

1. Have the students read Mosha's spoken word poetry (Pages 224-226).

2. Discuss and analyze Mosha's lyrics as a class.

3. Have each student create their own “Rap” (Poetry Style) in any form they prefer.

4. The students must then memorize their poems and deliver them in front of the class. Each student must also submit a written copy of their poem to the teacher.

Alternate Ideas:

Have the students tell the class a true story that has been told to them by someone in their family. Storytelling can be a lot of fun and it is important that the students understand how important oral teachings are for all Native communities.
### Suggested Assessment:

#### Storytelling Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Level 1 (50-59%)</th>
<th>Level 2 (60-69%)</th>
<th>Level 3 (70-79%)</th>
<th>Level 4 (80-100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>- poor memorization of story with numerous mistakes / pauses</td>
<td>- developing memorization of story with some mistakes / pauses</td>
<td>- good memorization of story with few instances of mistakes / pauses</td>
<td>- excellent memorization of piece with no mistakes / pauses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Memorization of the story /15</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thinking</strong></td>
<td>- student fails to provide sufficient insight / detail in story</td>
<td>- student provides some insight / detail in story</td>
<td>- student provides good insight / detail in story</td>
<td>- student provides significant insight / detail in story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Story Selection /10</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td>- voice can rarely be heard - tone is flat - pace of speech is too fast or slow</td>
<td>- voice can usually be heard - tone is ordinary - pace of speech is suitable</td>
<td>- voice is clearly heard - tone is interesting - pace of speech is varied for suitable effect</td>
<td>- voice is always heard and modulated for effect - tone is varied - pace is varied, creating new meanings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of volume, tone, and pace /15</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Application</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of movement and gesture /10</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL /50</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comments:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through Our Eyes
Contemporary Aboriginal Voices

34
Please feel free to also use the *Medicine Wheel Rubric*- See Other Resources for a copy

Other Resources:

Print Resources:

Broad Winged Hawk: A Book of Poetry and Short Stories (2007) by Albert Dumont
Dreams and Thunder: Stories, Poems and the Sun Dance Opera (2001) by ZitKala-Sa

Web Sites:

[www.thymezone.com](http://www.thymezone.com) – This site provides access to a rhyming dictionary, rhyming words and rhymes.

[http://www.poetryteachers.com](http://www.poetryteachers.com) – This site is a poetry resource for teachers.
Ancient Patience

by Mosha Folger

If you look back to the North
A couple of thousand years ago
To where the Atlantic ice fields
Battle the granite shield of the Arctic coast
You’d find a man staking claim to a land
That just doesn’t seem inhabitable
an Eskimo
a patient hunter who stood unmoving for hours
crouched over small bumps in the ice
subtle seal-breathing holes
Wicked winds pushing the temperature back down
from the comfort of twenty below
Facing the low sun so his shadow fell back
away from his goal
Waiting for a freezing breathe-out
to break the crystal white flatness of snow

Arm cocked, harpoon ready
eyes unblinking, blazing their own little holes
in the ice floe
Mouth closed, breath low
Because less movement, less sound
meant the night’s dinner was more likely to show
Yet sometimes that hunter
stood till the moon rose
before he finally shifted, breathed hard
and set off for home with nothing but cold toes
Nothing to bloody his wife’s arms to the elbows
Nothing to warm the guts of five kids
or silence the dogs’ moans

Nothing but the knowledge that
the next day when he woke
to stand again over that hole
maybe, just maybe
a seal would finally show him his nose
so the harpoon could come down
to deliver its lethal blow
Or maybe, just maybe
No

It’s that patience that allowed my people
to settle down and call the Arctic
our home
Summer Play

By Mosha Folger

In the Arctic desert where
the earth is sand and rocks
and the lichen clings
to the frayed edges of life
in granite fields
and the wet season feels like
three days of monsoon rains

In that place patches of pavement
to a kid are
hallowed grounds
where devout children
offer their time
as sacrifice
with an endless circling of bikes
and an incessant bouncing of balls
like the pounding
and kneading
of rubber into cement
could stretch out
that holy land

How wondrous that
a tiny square of earth
can be home to so many
boundless dreams

But the reality is mostly
the sand and rocks
and gravel roads, and so
the games played adapt
games of writing
or drawing in the sand
and for one reason or another
chasing each other around

A television drawn in the dirt
with movies and shows
initialled inside
to be guessed at
D dot P dot S dot and
if someone gets it right
a frantic chase ensues
Or I Declare War
with a giant circle divided
into America and the USSR
Canada and sometimes Uganda
where the war of course
is chasing
and the fastest world leader
had dominion over all Man

And on the longest nights of daylight
baseball
Inuktitut style where groggy kids
up two days under constant sun
and stumbling
play with a rubber ball
by rules that themselves
are drowsy from the endless light
so the outfield
spans the whole town
making foul balls
as fair as any other
and the bases are run wrongwise
and whacking a runner
with the ball
is an out

Which means of course
the rest of the game is secondary
to learning how to throw
to anticipate
to picking off the right kid
in the right spot
every time

And so when a parent
with a voice that too
spans the whole town
finally calls in
one too many Expos
the real winners
aren’t on the team
but the team that
on the quick walk home
brags about the best
outs
## Discovering You

### Catholic Graduate Expectations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CGE4g</th>
<th>A Self-Directed, Responsible, Life Long Learner who examines and reflects on one’s personal values, abilities and aspirations influencing life’s choices and opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CGE4e</td>
<td>A Self-Directed, Responsible, Life Long Learner who sets appropriate goals and priorities in school, work and personal life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE5c</td>
<td>A Collaborative Contributor who develops one’s God-given potential and makes a meaningful contribution to society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Expectations:

### Overall Expectations:

**Identity**
- Demonstrate the concepts related to identity in Aboriginal literary works
- Analyze and assess information, ideas, issues and language as they pertain to Aboriginal identity in a variety of informational writings and Aboriginal literary works
- Demonstrate an understanding of how the different forms and styles used in Aboriginal literary works reflect Aboriginal identity

**Writing**
- Select and use appropriate writing forms for intended purposes and audiences, focusing on essays, narratives or poems (Teachers may choose to add additional expectations.)

### Specific Expectations:

**Identity**
- Identify the perceptions of Aboriginal identity expressed by a variety of Aboriginal writers
- Analyze how Aboriginal writers reveal identity through their use of language

**Writing**
- Organize and analyze information, ideas, and sources to suit specific forms and purposes for writing
- Demonstrate an understanding of the uses and conventions of a variety of forms by writing persuasive and literary essays, reviews, short narratives or poems, and summaries (Teachers may choose to add additional expectations.)
**Suggested Activity:** Discuss the following first:

1. Mosha is a proud Aboriginal writer, rapper, script writer and media producer. Through reading his works, how is he affirming all Aboriginal people?  
   http://www.alienfatherseskimo.com/mosha/

2. How does his work communicate cultural values?

3. How do Aboriginal communities maintain their identities?

4. Using the “I AM CANADIAN” rant as a guideline, create your own personal rant. This is a simple and fun way for you to answer the question “Who are you?” In your rant you can include anything and everything (appropriate) about yourself. Some suggestions are: what you do, groups / teams you are a part of, favourites of yours (i.e. foods, animals, colours, hobbies or pastimes, sports, music groups), unusual traits unique to you, values in your life, beliefs you hold dear...you get the idea.

Your rant should be four stanzas in length with each stanza being 4-5 lines. Be creative and try to include as many different facets / areas of your life as possible. For example, here is the **I AM CANADIAN Rant:**

Hey, I'm not a lumberjack, or a fur trader....
I don't live in an igloo or eat blubber, or own a dogsled....
and I don't know Jimmy, Sally or Suzy from Canada,
although I'm certain they're really really nice.

I have a Prime Minister, not a president.
I speak English and French, not American.
And I pronounce it 'about', not 'a boot'.

I can proudly sew my country's flag on my backpack.
I believe in peace keeping, not policing,
diversity, not assimilation,
and that the beaver is a truly proud and noble animal.
A toque is a hat, a chesterfield is a couch,
and it is pronounced 'zed' not 'zee', 'zed' !!!!

Canada is the second largest landmass!
The first nation of hockey!
and the best part of North America

My name is Joe!!
And I am Canadian!!!
Suggested Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thinking &amp; Inquiry (out of 10)</td>
<td>Rant lacks creativity and provides little to no insight into the individual’s life &amp; personality</td>
<td>Rant is somewhat creative and provides some insight into the individual’s life &amp; personality</td>
<td>Rant is creative and provides good insight into the individual’s life &amp; personality</td>
<td>Rant is very creative and provides excellent insight into the individual’s life &amp; personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication (out of 5)</td>
<td>Poor ELS (numerous errors seriously impede understanding and linking of ideas)</td>
<td>Satisfactory ELS (errors somewhat impede understanding and linking of ideas)</td>
<td>Good ELS (errors do not impede understanding and linking of ideas)</td>
<td>Exceptional ELS (no or very few errors impede understanding and linking of ideas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application (out of 5)</td>
<td>Final product is of poor quality</td>
<td>Final product is of decent quality</td>
<td>Final product is of good quality</td>
<td>Final product is of high quality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suggested Assessment:

Please feel free to also use Medicine Wheel Rubric

Other Resources:

Print Resources:

First People, First Voices (1996) by Penny Petrone
Healing Through Art (2006) by Zoey Wood-Salomon

Web Resources:

http://www.experienceproject.com/surveys.php?s=1804
- 50 Questions to Get to Know Yourself or Someone Else
This Land is Our Land

Catholic Graduate Expectations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CGE3a</td>
<td>A Reflective and Creative Thinker who recognizes there is more grace in our world than sin and that hope is essential in facing all challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE5a</td>
<td>A Collaborative Contributor who works effectively as an interdependent team member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE7h</td>
<td>A Responsible Citizen who exercises the rights and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expectations:

Overall Expectations:

Identity
- Analyze and assess information, ideas, issues and language as they pertain to Aboriginal identity in a variety of informational writings and Aboriginal literary works

Writing
- Select and use appropriate writing forms for intended purposes and audiences, focusing on essays, narratives or poems (Teachers may choose to add additional expectations.)

Specific Expectations:

Identity
- Identify the perceptions of Aboriginal identity expressed by a variety of Aboriginal writers

Writing
- Organize and analyze information, ideas, and sources to suit specific forms and purposes for writing
- Demonstrate an understanding of the uses and conventions of a variety of forms by writing persuasive and literary essays, reviews, short narratives or poems, and summaries (Teachers may choose to add additional expectations.)

Suggested Activity:

1. Mosha mentions that there are outstanding land claims. What is meant by 'land claims'?
2. Once they know what land claims are, they should begin questioning and researching why they exist.
The Canadian Encyclopedia states that:

“Land claims are dealt with by a process established by the federal government to enable INDIANS, INUIT and MÉTIS to obtain full recognition of their rights under treaties or as the original inhabitants of what is now Canada (see INDIAN TREATIES; ABORIGINAL RIGHTS). At the core of the process is negotiation between native groups and the federal government, and in some cases the provincial and territorial governments and other third parties. The process is formally based on legal concepts such as land title, Aboriginal rights and treaties, and is intended to make economic and social adjustments between 2 different societies.”

The Standoff at Oka is a good place to start.

Standoff At Oka: Summer 1990

http://procanada.tripod.com/oka.html

“In the summer of 1990 a small band of Mohawks announced that they had had enough. The town council of Oka, Quebec, wished to expand the golf course. The land they wanted was the ancestral burial grounds considered sacred by the Mohawk people. The courts had rejected the Mohawks' claim of the land. The Mohawks decided not to stand by and allow the land to be taken. They erected a barricade across the road and a 78-day armed standoff began.

On July 10th, 1990, about 100 Quebec provincial police officers attempted to break through the barricades which were guarded mostly by woman and children. Mohawk men, armed with rifles, were off to the side in the woods. Police wore gas masks and carried assault rifles. Overhead a police helicopter hovered, attempting to spot the Mohawks in the brush. A few minutes before 9:00 a.m., an armed conflict began. Hundreds of rounds were fired, from both sides. A 31-year old police officer was shot, and later died.

Thirty kilometers to the south, the Kahnawake Reserve were outraged by the actions of the police. In their support they blocked off all roads into the reserve. These included two major highways, and the southern tip of the Mercier bridge. The Mercier bridge was a vital link to the Island of Montreal and several heavily populated suburbs. The Kahnawake Mohawks issued this warning; "We'll bring down the bridge if there is another police assault at Oka."

Over 100 chiefs from across Canada met at Kahnawake to show solidarity between Mohawks. They said that they would not stand by and watch the Mohawks be assaulted. The chiefs called international leaders to condemn Canada for it's handling of the crisis, and asked the U.N. to investigate.

Meanwhile, no progress was made toward negotiations. Early in August Prime Minister Brian Mulroney announced that the Canadian Military would be sent to Oka and
Kahnawake. They would replace the Quebec police. The decision to send in the army came at the request of Quebec Premier Bourassa.

Approximately 4400 Canadian soldiers were moved into Oka and Kahnawake. The troops were backed by armoured personnel carriers and heavy weapons. Military officials said that the mission was to peacefully remove the barricades. After tense negotiations the barricades came down on the Mercier bridge, and during the following weeks negotiations continued. On September 26th, the 11-week standoff ended.

The Mohawks viewed the standoff as a success for them. They had stopped the expansion of the golf course. However, they warned Canada that unless Canada respected their land there would be more Okas.”

After researching land claims and crisis’, students can debate or discuss these issues as a class or in groups.

Students write letters to the Canadian Government asking them to respect Native land.

**A few things to keep in mind when you are writing a letter:**

A letter has three parts:

- an introduction that establishes the purpose
- a middle that fully develops the message (as appropriate to the purpose)
- a courteous, graceful closing that makes clear what you expect to happen

- Plan and outline what you are going to say before you start writing
- Always be brief, clear, specific and respectful
- Focus your message so that it achieves your purpose
- Keep your paragraphs to one idea each
- Develop your ideas logically and carefully
- If you wouldn’t say it, don’t write it
- Be direct
- Be definite

**Alternate Ideas:**

Imagine you are the teacher of this course and are asked to teach the section on “Land Claims”. Working with one to two partners, create an activity and assignment about land claims and submit your work to your teacher. Once all the work has been submitted, other students in the class will have an opportunity to complete both your activity and assignment!
Aboriginal Land Claims

Each student must prepare a fact sheet relating to a current Aboriginal Land Claim in Canada. The one or two page result should have a combination of images and text information. You should likely have:

- A map of the region the land claim covers
- Background information on the Aboriginal group making the claim and any specific people involved.
- Reasons for the claim
- Timeline of some sort – when the claim was made, what if any negotiations have taken place, etc.
- Any issues/concerns that make the claim difficult to resolve
- Pictures of people, places and things that relate to the claim

Some examples you can choose from:

- Lubicon Lake Cree Land Claim
- Woodland Cree Settlement
- Loon River Settlement
- Mohawk – Oka dispute
- Temagami Land Claim
- Fort William Land Claim
- Siksika (Blackfoot) Submission
- Ipperwash Land Claim
- Algonquin Land Claim
- Mitaanjigamiing Treaty Land Entitlement Claim
- Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation Land Claim
- Pays Plat First Nation
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>The fact sheet contains limited knowledge of the people and region involved in the land claim.</td>
<td>The fact sheet contains some knowledge of the people and region involved in the land claim.</td>
<td>The fact sheet contains considerable knowledge of the people and region involved in the land claim.</td>
<td>The fact sheet contains thorough knowledge of the people and region involved in the land claim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking</td>
<td>The fact sheet demonstrates limited information and understanding of the details of the land claim presented.</td>
<td>The fact sheet demonstrates some information and understanding of the details of the land claim presented.</td>
<td>The fact sheet demonstrates considerable information and understanding of the details of the land claim presented.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Information provides limited explanation of the issues preventing the land claim from being easily solved.</td>
<td>Information provides some explanation of the issues preventing the land claim from being easily solved.</td>
<td>Information provides considerable explanation of the issues preventing the land claim from being easily solved.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>The fact sheet’s presentation demonstrated a limited degree of care in presentation and clarity.</td>
<td>The fact sheet’s presentation demonstrated some degree of care in presentation and clarity.</td>
<td>The fact sheet’s presentation demonstrated a considerable degree of care in presentation and clarity.</td>
<td>The fact sheet’s presentation demonstrated a thorough degree of care in presentation and clarity.</td>
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**Suggested Assessment:** Please feel free to also use *Medicine Wheel Rubric*

**Other Resources:**

**Print Resources:**

*Aboriginal Peoples: Building for the Future* (1999) by Kevin Reed


*Canada’s First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times* (1997) by Olive Patricia Dickason

Poetic Justice

Catholic Graduate Expectations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CGE1j</th>
<th>A Discerning Believer Formed in the Catholic Faith Community who recognizes that “sin, human weakness, conflict and forgiveness are part of the human journey” and that the cross, the ultimate sign of forgiveness is at the heart of redemption. (Witnesses to Faith)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CGE3c</td>
<td>A Reflective and Creative Thinker who thinks reflectively and creatively to evaluate situations and solve problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE7g</td>
<td>A Responsible Citizen who respects and understands the history, cultural heritage and pluralism of today’s contemporary society</td>
</tr>
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Expectations:

Overall Expectations:

Identity
- Demonstrate the concepts related to identity in Aboriginal literary works
- Analyze and assess information, ideas, issues and language as they pertain to Aboriginal identity in a variety of informational writings and Aboriginal literary works

Writing
- Select and use appropriate writing forms for intended purposes and audiences, focusing on essays, narratives or poems (Teachers may choose to add additional expectations.)

Specific Expectations:

Identity
- Identify the perceptions of Aboriginal identity expressed by a variety of Aboriginal writers

Writing
- Organize and analyze information, ideas, and sources to suit specific forms and purposes for writing
- Demonstrate an understanding of the uses and conventions of a variety of forms by writing persuasive and literary essays, reviews, short narratives or poems, and summaries (Teachers may choose to add additional expectations.)
Suggested Activity:

**We All Have the Ability to Affect Social Change**

1. Learn a little bit about different types of poetry: specifically ballads, free verse, image poems, carpe diem and sonnets.

2. Using any one of the forms, write a poem about affecting positive change for Native people around the world.

3. Use Mosha's discussion on affecting positive change to inspire yourself!

**Change Begins With Me**

Create a poster or collage about how YOU can affect positive change!

**People Helping People**

**How Can YOU Affect Positive Change in YOUR Community**

There are ways one person or any number of people can help in the community. As a class, or individually, what can you do to help? Here is a list to inspire you!

1. Volunteer to read to the elderly or to tutor the young or illiterate.
2. Organize the planting of a community garden in a vacant lot where those on low or fixed incomes can contribute to putting more food on the table.
3. Donate at or to a soup kitchen, a homeless shelter, or a shelter for abused women and children.
4. Start a neighbourhood watch group to help lower crime.
5. Adopt an impoverished family for the holidays, or any day, through your church or place of business - help them with food and clothing.
6. Volunteer to work with children via Boys & Girls Clubs or other similar organizations.
7. Start a book drive and make them available to the disabled or to children who have none at home.
8. Cook a meal or run an errand for an elderly, ill, or disabled person, or a veteran.
Alternate Ideas:

Create a Talking Stick

The teaching of the Talking Stick is an exquisite example of the combined sacredness of the Talking/Teaching Circle. The Talking Stick is a symbol of respect for the thoughts, stories and individual histories of each member participating in the circle.

Whoever is holding the stick speaks their truth at that moment in their personal history. The role of the rest of the participants is to sit quietly and listen. No one else should interrupt while the person holding the Talking Stick is speaking. When the individual has finished speaking (however long that takes), the Talking Stick is handed to the next person in the circle. If the receiver chooses not to speak, he or she simply hands it to the next person until the Talking Stick has been passed to everyone participating. In this way each person has had the opportunity to speak and listen.

Our class is our Talking/Teaching Circle. We will create our own talking stick as a class. Over the next week your job will be to bring in one small item that represents who you are. After explaining to our Talking/Teaching Circle why/how this item represents you, we will attach it to the stick. It will then represent each one of us and we will use it to lead our respectful Talking Circle.

Suggested Assessment:

Please feel free to also use Medicine Wheel Rubric

Other Resources:

Print Resources:


Web Sites:

http://dalependell.com/stacks/talking-sticks/how-to-make-a-talking-stick/ - How to Make a Talking Stick
Tomson Highway

Tomson is a Cree novelist, playwright and children’s author who discusses the art of writing.
Tomson Highway

About Tomson Highway

- Son of legendary caribou hunter and world championship dogsled racer, Joe Highway and artist, Pelagie Highway
- He was born 11th of 12 children in 1951 in a snowbank.
- He did not grow up on a reserve but in the beautiful landscape of the sub-Arctic.
- He is a full-blood Cree and is a registered member of the Barren Lands First Nation.
- He writes novels, plays and music.
- He studies music and English and when he graduated immersed himself in the field of Native social work.
- For many years he worked in the Toronto theatre industry
- He received national recognition for “The Rez Sisters” and “Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing”
- From 1986 to 1992 he was Artistic Director of Native Earth Performing Arts, Toronto’s only professional Native theatre company.
- In 1998 Tomson published his first novel, “Kiss of the Fur Queen” which was nominated for several awards and spent several weeks on Canadian bestseller lists.
- He has to his credit 3 children’s books: “Caribou Song”, “Dragon Fly Kites”, and “Fox on the Ice”. All are written in Cree and English.
- Tomson holds eight honorary doctorates
- He has been Writer-in-Residence at a number of universities.
- Several film and television documentaries on his work and his background have been produced.
- Today he divides his time between his summer cottage south of Sudbury and a seaside apartment in France.
- He is currently working on his second novel.
- He thanks all for his extraordinary journey.
Viewing Questions

1. Describe techniques that Tomson uses in his writing.

2. What types of relationships does he focus on in his writings?

3. Describe the connection between music and writing.

4. Why is it difficult to translate the oral traditions to written form?

5. What are the drawbacks of the introduction of technology to the north?

6. Explain “regeneration of ideas”.

7. What does he think are key ingredients for a good life?
What's He All About?

Catholic Graduate Expectations:

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<td>A Self-Directed, Responsible, Life Long Learner who demonstrates flexibility and adaptability</td>
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<td>CGE5a</td>
<td>A Collaborative Contributor who works effectively as an interdependent team member.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CGE5e</td>
<td>A Collaborative Contributor who respects the rights, responsibilities and contributions of self and others</td>
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Expectations:

Overall Expectations:

Identity
- Describe the concepts related to identity in Aboriginal literary works

Writing
- Use a variety of print and electronic primary and secondary sources to gather and assess information and develop ideas for writing
- Use a variety of organizational structures and patterns to produce coherent and effective written work

Specific Expectations:

Identity
- Identify the perceptions of Aboriginal identity expressed by a variety of Aboriginal writers

Writing
- Organize and analyze information, ideas, and sources to suit specific forms and purposes for writing
- Apply knowledge of essay structure to organize short essays or critiques, (a) using an introduction... (b) a body that develops ideas logically and coherently...c) conclusion that follows logically...

Prior/Pre-learning: Tomson Highway talks about his life, family, the focus of his writing and his concerns for his people.

Teacher Preparation: Pre-view the video segment and review the purpose, tips and directions for Rapid Writing and collaborative writing.
Required Materials: DVD

Suggested Activity:

1. The students view the video segment on Tomson Highway.
2. The teacher reviews the technique of Rapid Writing.
3. Review the purpose, tips and directions for Rapid Writing.
4. Present the question – What did you discover about Tomson Highway?
5. Give the students the signal to begin.
6. Time the students.
7. Give the signal to stop.
8. De-brief by counting the words and discussing the topic.
9. Organize the students into small groups to share their rapid writing and compose a short collaborative piece of writing that provides a snapshot of Tomson Highway.

Suggested Assessment:
Assess the group work skills of the students by using an observation checklist.

Other Resources:

Web Resources:

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/studentsuccess/thinkliteracy/files/Writing.pdf - Rapid Writing Strategy
## The Writings of Tomson Highway

### Catholic Graduate Expectations:

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<tr>
<td>CGE7f</td>
<td>A Responsible Citizen who respects and affirms the diversity and interdependence of the world’s peoples and cultures</td>
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### Expectations:

#### Overall Expectations:

**Identity**
- Describe the concepts related to identity in Aboriginal literary works

**Relationships**
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships depicted in fiction, drama, poetry and non-fiction by Aboriginal writers
- Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which Aboriginal writers depict relationships to promote a vision of Aboriginal communities

**Sovereignty**
- Demonstrate an understanding of Aboriginal sovereignty issues as expressed in Aboriginal literary works

**Writing**
- Use a variety of print and electronic primary and secondary sources to gather and assess information and develop ideas for writing

### Specific Expectations:

**Identity**
- Assess Aboriginal writers’ depictions of aspects of Aboriginal identity that have resulted from interactions with Canadian society

**Relationships**
- Demonstrate an understanding of relationships portrayed in the works of Aboriginal writers
- Demonstrate an understanding of how Aboriginal writers describe cultural and spiritual relationships in their work
**Sovereignty**
- Identify different definitions of sovereignty as expressed in the works of Aboriginal writers
- Describe the responses of Aboriginal writers to the barriers to Aboriginal sovereignty erected by Canadian society

**Writing**
- Organize and analyze information, ideas, and sources to suit specific forms and purposes for writing

**Prior/Pre-learning:**

Tomson Highway talks about his life, family, the focus of his writing and his concerns for his people.

**Teacher Preparation:**

Research the various writings of Tomson Highway, make arrangements for student research

**Required Materials:** computers, internet

**Suggested Activity:**

1. Brainstorm Tomson Highway’s writings.

2. Provide a complete listing for the students to select from.

3. Each student will select one of his works and research it.

4. Review with the students some of the key tasks and skills that will assist them in their research task:
   a. Review the importance of questioning while reading.
   b. The teacher might wish to provide a checklist of pre-, during, and post reading questions to students.
   c. As they read the articles they might ask themselves – What do I already know? What questions do I have before I begin to read? Am I paying attention to the information in the charts, captions etc?
   d. Review – what they might do if they don’t understand.
      i. Circle or underline words that they don’t understand
      ii. Write comments and questions for later reference
      iii. Highlight important words or phrases
5. Together discuss some of the key questions that might guide their research.

6. Provide time for the students to research.

7. Using the jigsaw method create small groups composed of students who researched the same work.

8. The students compile their findings and prepare to present to the other groups.

9. Then groups are formed with one presenter on each literary work and they share with one another.

10. Together discuss the following based on their research:
   a. What challenges faced by Aboriginal peoples are presented in Tomson Highway’s work?
   b. Identify different definitions of sovereignty as expressed in his works (personal sovereignty, spiritual sovereignty, political sovereignty).
   c. Describe relationships portrayed in Tomson Highway’s works (within the family, within plant, animal or spirit world).
   d. How did Tomson Highway depict some aspects of Aboriginal identity that resulted from interaction with Canadian society?

**Suggested Assessment:**

Teacher observes the research skills of the students.
Teacher observes the small group interaction using a checklist.

**Other Resources:**

**Web Resources:**

[http://www.ocup.org/resources/documents/companions/telrstast02.pdf](http://www.ocup.org/resources/documents/companions/telrstast02.pdf) - This resources provides a variety of teaching/learning strategies.
A Difficult Process

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Expectations:

Overall Expectations:

Identity
- Describe the concepts related to identity in Aboriginal literary works

Relationships
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships depicted in fiction, drama, poetry and non-fiction by Aboriginal writers
- Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which Aboriginal writers depict relationships to promote a vision of Aboriginal communities

Writing
- Select and use appropriate writing forms for intended purposes and audiences, focusing on essays, narratives or poems

Specific Expectations:

Identity
- Assess Aboriginal writers’ depictions of aspects of Aboriginal identity that have resulted from interactions with Canadian society

Relationships
- Demonstrate an understanding of relationships portrayed in the works of Aboriginal writers
- Demonstrate an understanding of how Aboriginal writers describe cultural and spiritual relationships in their work

Writing
- Demonstrate an understanding of the uses and conventions of a variety of forms by writing persuasive and literary essays, reviews, short narratives or poems, and summaries.
Prior/Pre-learning

In conversation with Quill and Quire, Tomson Highway talks about his life and his writing.

Teacher Preparation: Pre-view the web site http://www.quillandquire.com/authors/profile.cfm?article_id=1216.

Print off the article for the students.
Identify relationships and make connections among ideas and information.
Strategies for webbing and mapping include:
- Clustering – looking for similarities among ideas, information or things, and grouping them according to characteristics.
- Comparing – identifying similarities among ideas, information, or things.
- Contrasting – identifying differences among ideas, information, or things.
- Generalizing – describing the overall picture based on the ideas and information presented.
- Outlining – organizing main ideas, information, and supporting details based on their relationship to each other.
- Relating – showing how events, situations, ideas and information are connected.
- Sorting – arranging or separating into types, kinds, sizes, etc.
- Trend-spotting – identifying things that generally look or behave the same.

Required Materials: Article from Quill and Quire, sticky notes, chart paper

Suggested Activity:

1. Students brainstorm what they already know about Tomson Highway.

2. Using the article, “The Universe of Tomson Highway” they highlight on sticky notes points that did not surface during their brainstorm session.

3. In small groups they share their findings placing their stickies in the centre of the table.

4. Together they organize their notes into meaningful clusters on chart paper.

5. The students discuss connections that they have with the points.

6. Tomson Highway stated that, “the writing process was rendered difficult ...It was a struggle every step of the way.”
Using the meaningful clusters on the chart paper, the students individually make comparisons and contrasts to their experience as writers. Example: some students may experience difficulty in finding the correct works to convey their thoughts. An ESL student may be thinking in his/her native tongue and translating or a student may find writing “a struggle every step of the way.”

7. Then they generate a personal essay analysing Tomson Highways writing challenges and compare them to their own.

**Suggested Assessment:**

Assess the group work skills of the students using an observation checklist.

**Other Resources:**

**Print Resources:**

*Webbing Ideas and Information. Info Tasks for Successful Learning*, pp. 23-32, 87, 90, 98.

**Web Resources:**

[http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/studentsuccess/thinkliteracy/files/Writing.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/studentsuccess/thinkliteracy/files/Writing.pdf) - Think Literacy
John Medicine Horse Kelly (Cle-alls)

John, a professor from Carleton University, talks about the importance of language preservation to the Aboriginal peoples.
“...not only we, but the entire world must do everything possible to keep these languages, songs, dances and stories alive. If they die, our people and our children – and the human race – will lose something that no one can ever recover. Our languages, celebrations and traditions define who we are, and they keep our heritages alive.”

About John Kelly:

- John Medicine Horse Kelly is Haida.
- His Haida name is Cle-alls.
- Currently, he is a journalism professor at Carleton University.
- He is also coordinator of the Centre for Aboriginal Culture and Education, Research and Culture.
- He has been working with Elections Canada to develop outreach materials for First Nations. “Canada needs to build bridges that make native people feel like the (country) is in their neighbourhood.”
- He is author of *The Returner: A First Nations autobiographical study: Understanding the causes of First Nations language decline and extinction from the perspective of a First Nations language worker.*
- He is passionate about the need for language preservation.
- As an educator and First Nations man he sees the need for resources for First Nations students. *Path of the Elders* is one of the resources that he sees as valuable in meeting the needs of youth.
- John is concerned about the disconnect in Aboriginal communities and talks about the need to show Aboriginal youths that they are part of a deep and meaningful tradition and culture.

"We need Aboriginal youths to look in the mirror and see somebody, a person, a real person, not a stereotype ... right now, they look in the mirror and see nothing, their reflection is a ghost."

**Viewing Questions**

1. What are some of the key components of culture?
2. Prove that many languages are endangered. Why is this happening?
3. “There is nothing that can replace language.” Explain.
4. Why is it important for the youth to know who they are?
Language is Life

Note: Teachers may prefer to split this activity into two days, depending on the independent work abilities of the students.

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<td>A Reflective and Creative Thinker who recognizes there is more grace in our world than sin and that hope is essential in facing all challenges</td>
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Expectations:

Overall Expectations:

Identity
- Analyze and assess information, ideas, issues, and language as they pertain to Aboriginal identity in a variety of informational writings and Aboriginal literary works

Relationships
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships depicted in fiction, drama, poetry and non-fiction by Aboriginal writers

Sovereignty
- Demonstrate an understanding of the language used in Aboriginal works in connection with sovereignty issues

Challenges
- Demonstrate an understanding of the barriers facing Aboriginal peoples in education and employment, as presented in the works of Aboriginal authors
- Assess the challenge of maintaining cultural identity that faces Aboriginal peoples, as represented in Aboriginal literature
- Demonstrate an understanding of Aboriginal writers’ descriptions of the challenges faced by Aboriginal peoples

Writing
- Select and use appropriately writing forms for intended purposes and audiences, focusing on essays, narratives, or poems

Specific Expectations:

Identity
- Analyze how Aboriginal writers reveal identity through their use of language
- Compare Aboriginal writers’ expressions of identity
Relationships
- Demonstrate an understanding of how Aboriginal writers describe cultural and spiritual relationships in their work

Sovereignty
- Assess the impact of Aboriginal sovereignty on Canadian society, as portrayed in the works of Aboriginal writers

Challenges
- Analyze Aboriginal writers’ depictions of challenges faced by Aboriginal peoples that have resulted directly from societal influences
- Describe challenges to the maintenance of Aboriginal oral language traditions
- Recognize, describe, and use correctly in oral and written language the language structures of standard Canadian English and its conventions of grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, as prescribed by this course, when describing challenges identified in this course.

Writing
- Demonstrate an understanding of the uses and conventions of a variety of forms by writing persuasive and literary essays, reviews, short narratives or poems, and summaries

Prior/Pre-learning:

Use the “Summary: Community based internet projects for youth” (found on student worksheet) to become acquainted with Cle-alls’ (John Medicine Horse Kelly) work and projects at revitalizing Aboriginal languages before you begin.

Cle-alls (John Medicine Horse Kelly) is a proud member of the Haida Nation who is presently serving his Nation as an assistant professor at Carleton University where he is a heritage language conservationist. His clan name (Cle-alls) means fireweed or the orator.

Cle-alls understands that dance, music, stories and songs are all part of our identity and at the heart of all of these is language. Cle-alls has worked to promote his language because he understands that if the language is lost, it can never be recovered. Cle-alls states that for the most part half of 53 Native languages in Canada can be found in British Columbia, and most of these are in great danger as the Elders and the language keepers pass on.

In 1993 Cle-alls became the First Nations Education Coordinator in Skidegate on Haida Gwaii. At that time there were between 30 and 35 Elders in Haida Gwaii who were fluent speakers of the language. Now there are only five or six who are still alive. There is now a language program in place (the Skidegate Haida Immersion Program) but it is becoming more and more difficult to get fluent speakers for the program. Cle-alls described the terrible smallpox epidemic between 1890-1910 that killed 70-94 percent of population. The number of people living in Haida Gwaii dwindled from 12000 to just
350 people. It was thought that the people and their language would soon all disappear, but it did not – there is a resiliency there and the people continue to dwell on Haida Gwaii although there are fewer families than there were before. However, the replacement generation of Elders are now passing on and it is critical that the language be kept alive. Cle-alls has established two beautiful websites to help keep the language of the Haida Gwaii people and of other Aboriginal People alive and vibrant.

Visit http://www.native-dance.ca/ native dance website and http://www.native-drum.ca/ native drum website to see his work.

Cle-alls states that nothing can replace a language – it is hewn in the everyday life and expressed through such things as kinship; basket-weaving; cooking; playing; singing; storytelling and political structures.

As well as fluency, language speakers must develop a deep understanding of what the words mean. The language learner must see all their ancestors ‘in the mirror’ when they look at themselves so that when pressures come they will look in mirror and see ‘somebody’ and this will help them build self-esteem and a sense of value and worth to help combat the high rates of suicide within our communities.

1. Preview the DVD selection on John Medicine Horse Kelly.

2. Copy the file from the ‘Educators For Immersion’ website-http://www.educatorsforimmersion.org/LI_pdf/summaries.pdf . There are 24 educators who discuss their particular immersion language program. Cut the file up so that there will be 24 individual selections. Prepare one selection for each student to review.

3. Preview the websites that introduce Amos Key Jr, and the native dance and native drum websites to become familiar with them. Bookmark these sites for students to view.

Suggested Activity:

1. Introduce John Medicine Horse Kelly and share his video-clip with the class. Discuss his vision and goals for Aboriginal language and his accomplishments. Use the prior/pre-learning information to help students begin to appreciate this poet and his passion for building language skills through immersion classes and programs.

2. Discuss the importance of being able to speak in our Aboriginal language, and the determination of Aboriginal people to keep their language alive and vibrant.
in today’s world, and introduce the growing number of immersion language schools and programs.

3. Show a copy of the poem “Haida Gwaii Is” on the board. Carefully examine the poem, analyzing the words, syntax, and searching for meaning in the poem. Ask students to comment on the font and size of print in the poem and the layout of the ‘verses’. Discuss how this poem reflects the identity and sovereignty of the Haida people. Remind students that identity, sovereignty and language are tied together, just as sweetgrass is braided- each of the strands becomes stronger in combination.

4. Introduce the summaries of the immersion education discussions that are contained in “WHY IMMERSION EDUCATION.” Provide one summary to each student and have them briefly review it, and then compile a 5-W’s point form note that they will share with the class, introducing the speaker and their topic and briefly explaining the educator’s perspective. A student worksheet has been included for teacher use or the information can be written on the white board or chalk board.

5. Students present their summaries. Record their 10-word ‘tweet’ on the board. When all the tweets have been viewed, discuss the common themes that run through these and the great importance that is being placed on language acquisition through immersion-type programs. The funding for these programs is always minimal or must be taken from other budget accounts at the band level, and the immersion schools face the constant threat of closure.

6. COMPUTER LAB ASSIGNMENT: One of the initiatives that is being explored in several communities across Turtle Island (Canada) at this time is the “Language Nest” – a concept that has been shared from the Maori People of New Zealand. Grandmothers and grandfathers who are fluent speakers are the heart of this program. Infants to school aged children attend at a home every day and participate in the everyday activities of the grandparents, who speak only in their language. Children very quickly acquire the language in a natural manner, learning in sentences, and phrases in a participatory setting. The students help with the cooking, cleaning, shopping, and child-care ‘chores’ and are exposed to the culture and traditional teachings of their people.

Provide the students with the listing of the websites (See the Student Worksheet) that demonstrate and discuss the language nests and the other new approaches to an old way of learning your language. The Akwesasne Freedom School and the language nest programs at
Tyendinega and at Trent University are found in Eastern Ontario. Divide the websites up between partners or groups of 3 to research and report back to the class, using a 3-4 paragraph written report to share with the class.

7. Introduce the Amos Key Jr. interview. Provide students with a copy of the interview and share the reading of the interview. Have students highlight those parts of the text that are important to the concept of language acquisition through immersion. Discuss the essay that is being assigned. Will students be required to hand in a rough draft of their essay before they produce the final product? Design a rubric with the class and determine a date when the essay will be due. (See Student Worksheets)

8. Show the native drum and native dance websites to the students and provide time for them to visit the various aspects of each site.

Extended Learning:

Divide the class into small groups and have them visit the website to discover the various Canadian efforts to promote First Nations languages. The site is divided by province and territory and also contains some international information. This site could be made available to students researching for their essay.


Suggested Assessment:

1. Design a rubric with the students to assess the essay.

2. Collect student summaries of the immersion educator’s presentations. Students complete a self-evaluation of their oral presentation.

3. Student group reports (3-4 paragraphs) of the WEB search.

Other Resources:

Website Resources:

http://www.native-dance.ca/ native dance website

www.native-dance.ca/index.php/Interviews/Key - Amos Key Jr Interview by Elma Miller

http://www.educatorsforimmersion.org/LI_pdf/summaries.pdf - Comments and presentations from the discussion on Why Immersion Education (24 summaries)
Student Worksheet

Language is Life – Immersion

http://www.educatorsforimmersion.org/LI_pdf/summaries.pdf - comments and presentations from the discussion on Why Immersion Education? (24 summaries). Read your educator’s comments and prepare an oral sketch of the person and their comments.

Why Immersion Education???

I am introducing...

WHO?

WHAT?

WHERE?

WHEN?

WHY?/HOW?

IN A NUTSHELL.... (what are they saying?)

My tweet will say: ____________ ____________ ____________

___________ ____________ ____________ ____________ ____________

______________.
Web Searching for Information

Work with a partner or a group of three. Read the introduction to Language Nests and similar immersion programs. Choose a website from the list provided. Visit the website and become familiar with the information that is being shared. Prepare a 3 – 4 paragraph report on the contents of the site- include: name of the program; location; organization that sponsors or has initiated the program; clients that are served by the program; examples of the learning that occurs; challenges and issues...

From – “Out of the Jungle”, Monday May 1, 2006 concerning Language Nests

The Boston Globe Magazine on Sunday, April 30, 2006 featured a story about the Penobscot tribe in Maine working to teach children to speak the Penobscot language before the last native speakers die out. This is a problem for other Aboriginal peoples. From Maori tribes in New Zealand, to Hawaiians, to Nizpuh (Blackfoot), Arapaho and Mohawk tribes in North America, to Welsh and Irish speakers of Gaelic, as native speakers age, there is a growing urgency to save languages on the brink of dying.

As long ago as 1905, the speaking of Maori was banned in New Zealand schools. Like other Aboriginal people, the Maori became ashamed of their language and culture after being punished in school and taught that it was somehow lower or less cultured than the European colonial cultures.

Faced with alienation and aging native speakers, the Maori elders developed on their own, Immersion programs for children in the early 1980's, called Te Kohanga Reo, or Language Nest Schools. The children are placed with native speaking elders in the school, where nothing but the native language is spoken. Even science and math and English are taught in Maori language. Part of the program is to increase pride in one’s heritage, and therefore there is no smoking, and the school is kept scrupulously clean. One of the problems is to maintain the speaking of Maori and cultural habits once the children leave the language nest and move into mainstream schools. The New Zealand government began to fund the language schools for elementary and secondary education. The Kohanga Reo schools are uniquely integrated with the families and communities, because the school board and principals are answerable to the community as a whole. Maori children are thriving in the schools according to the Maori
reports, although the New Zealand Ministry of education is concerned with the schools meeting requirements before being funded.

In 1983, Hawaii began to offer family-based pre-school with native speech immersion. In 1987, the state changed its English-only education law, and Pūnana Leo immersion schools became available funded by the state.

The mission statement for these schools explain in a moving way, what the Native Peoples working to save their language (and culture) see in these language nests. The Pūnana Leo Movement grew out of a dream that there be re-established throughout Hawai‘i the mana of a living Hawaiian language from the depth of our origins. The Pūnana Leo initiates, provides for and nurtures various Hawaiian language environments, and we find our strength in our spirituality, love of our language, love of our people, love of our land, and love of knowledge. (Aha Pūnana Leo, 2003).

In 1999, the first Hawaiian immersion students graduated from high school, and the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo has a Hawaiian immersion teacher-training program to staff new immersion schools.

There are newer language nest schools for the Nizpuh or Blackfoot tribe in Montana, Arapaho, and another for the Mohawk tribe in Akwesasne in New York state. There is a great deal of interest in saving native languages among other tribes, such as the Wampanoag and the Penobscot on the east coast.

Darrell R. Kipp, who co-founded the Cut-Bank Language Immersion School that teaches the Blackfoot language in Montana gives the following advice:

* Rule 1: Never Ask Permission, Never Beg to Save the Language. Go ahead and get started, don’t wait even five minutes. Don’t wait for a grant. ...

* Rule 2: Don’t Debate the Issues

* Rule 3: Be Very Action-Oriented: Just Act

* Rule 4: Show, Don’t Tell. Don’t talk about what you will do. Do it and show it.
Student Worksheet

Web Searching for Information

Native Language Immersion by Jon Reyhner  http://www2.nau.edu/~jar/TIL_3.html

“The Natural Approach” – The best way to acquire a second language is the same way children acquire a first language; Immerse students in a second language-rich environment, rather than the traditional teaching-learning situation.

The four principles of the natural approach to Immersion education include:

1. Comprehension Precedes Production –
   * The teacher always uses the language he or she is teaching;
   * The lesson (what is talked about) is focused on a topic that the students are interested in; and
   * The teacher works continuously to help students understand using gestures, visuals, and real objects.

2. Students learn new languages in stages, beginning with a “silent period” where they just listen and then by starting to speak single words, then a few words, then phrases, and finally moving to sentences and complex discourse. Errors in grammar and pronunciation that do not interfere with understanding should not be corrected.

3. The objective of learning a language is to be able to carry out a conversation in that language. Lessons should center on an activity rather on a grammatical structure.

4. Classroom activities need to lessen student anxiety. They need to focus on topics of interest and relevancy to the students and “encourage them to express their ideas, opinions, desires, emotions, and feelings.” The teacher needs to create a warm, friendly, welcoming classroom to ensure language learning.

(Adapted from Reyhner, 1992, pp. 75-76)

For more information visit  http://www2.nau.edu/~jar/TIL_3.html .
Websites to Visit

http://www.kohanga.ac.nz - Te Kohanga Reo About the Maori Language Nest program.

http://www.turtletrack.org/Issues02/Co11022002/CO_11022002_Saving_Culture.htm - November 2, 2002, Issue 73, ‘Saving a Culture” article by Reed Lindsey...the story of the Blackfoot language nest. Here is their home page http://www.turtletrack.org/index.html


http://www.turtleisland.org/culture/culture-language.htm - Turtle Island Native Network on cultures and languages. Includes links to hear spoken language and live radio in various First Nation languages...full of interesting links.

http://www.ed.gov/pubs/ModStrat/pt3a.html - A report on The American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI)and the Southwest Memory Project. AILDI was founded in 1978 by Hualapai tribal educators, Native American parents, and experts in linguistics to help several Southwest tribes develop a written language and curriculum materials that reflect attention to Native American students' heritage, needs, and learning styles. Dated 1995.

http://www.pieganinstitute.org/tribalimmersionschoolsrescuelanguageandculture.pdf - A short article describing various initiatives and the importance of language

http://www.iroquoismuseum.org/kanatsiohareke.html - The Akwesasne immersion program

Student Worksheet

Language is Life - Essay

Read these selections (see below) from an interview between Elma Miller and Amos Key, Jr, Cayuga speaker and educator at the Woodland Cultural Centre, Six Nations Reserve, Brantford, Ontario. Sept. 26, 2006. Compare this selection with the poetry selections of Cle-alls (John Medicine Horse Kelly), with his Commentary on Racing with Spiders, and with the work that he has done to promote Aboriginal languages in Canada, and with your own independent research on the language acquisition programs that are growing throughout Aboriginal Canada (i.e. language nests).

Search for similarities in their understanding of the importance of heritage language and language conservation in the acquisition and passing along of culture and traditions to the next generation.

Prepare a four to five page essay detailing the importance of Indigenous languages to the cultures and traditions of the Aboriginal Peoples of Turtle Island. Some ideas to help focus your investigation –

What are Kelly’s and Amos Jr.’s views of the importance of Aboriginal languages to the culture of the people? Use examples from their work and from your research to describe community efforts at keeping the language strong. Are these efforts showing signs of success? Defend your response with examples from your own research and from class readings on the following:

- the interconnectedness of language, dance, story, song, and culture
- efforts being made to re-establish language learning programs
- our identity is defined in our language, dance, stories, songs, and culture
- strong language speaking skills are helping raise the self-esteem of our youth and providing them with valuable skills and leadership
- on-going struggles for funding these initiatives
Student Worksheet

Language is Life – Essay

September 26, 2006: Interview with Amos Key, Jr.
Interviewer: Elma Miller
Location: Woodland Cultural Centre, Six Nations Reserve, Brantford, Ontario

Elma Miller: “Would you please identify yourself and your position in the community?”

Amos Key: “My name is Amos Key. I have a 20-page curriculum vitae, but I am not giving you that today. In relationship to your interest in the Mohawk language as having written a choral work using that language, I am just going to give you some background as to where I come from.

At Six Nations here there has been a huge paradigm shift, socially and intellectually, and I think spiritually as well. It has to do with taking control of our own institutions, restructuring them and putting them out there, and letting people come and enjoy them again. A lot of our institutions, our cultural traits and the impact of our civilization are well documented. In the last 20 to 25 years this paradigm shift has occurred, even in identifying who we are. We do not say we are Indians any more. We talk about who we are in our language, our clan, in the Six Nations Territory. Our arts have shifted and who we are in spirit has changed. It has a lot to do with our institutions and building up new institutions. This huge shift I have seen in my own lifetime, even within the 25 year period that I have been working at the Woodland Cultural Centre. I consider myself very lucky to be working in this period even though you do wonder philosophically if everything might collapse. We have reclaimed and created new institutions that have allowed people to grow after the era of the residential school.”

Elma Miller: They have to reclaim lost generations.

Amos Key: Yes, and fight against marginalization. Education has done it and Christianity has wreaked such changes. We are fighting all of that and trying to find ways to overturn it. Here at the Woodland Cultural Centre that is what we have been trying to do. A major part of the change has been the establishment of an immersion bilingual school system, essentially a private school. That in itself changed the paradigm even though we had our critics and detractors within the community, and certainly politically outside, as there were many hurdles put in our way to establish a bilingual system, including some persons of our own community who would say: “Oh, they are going to teach witchcraft.” They wanted to be part of Indian Affairs, and I even went through that too, thinking success was a swimming pool and a two-car garage. Anything that was First Nations, including my language, was just not ‘cool.’ The Longhouse was stripped away from us; it was not recognized...It was not even tolerated. It all went underground for the most part...
I talked to elders in the [Cayuga] language about the situation in which I had grown up. Their ideas became interwoven with the tool of the wampum belt of two rows, or two boats going down the same stream. The two-row symbolism I then took to another level and asked myself how one could bridge that: to take your actions, the philosophy of the dominant society and at the same time bring your own [culture] back, and this seemed possible because of my Western education...that is where I am coming from in relation to music and dance. The importance of dance is for socialization, and even the psychological side of dance. It is amazing what happens to your body when you are involved physically. It also affects the mind, as ultimately you want to get to euphoria through music and dance. What did that do for us traditionally, you start asking yourself.

We had that, a civilization that allowed this to happen. There were medicine societies, music societies, healing societies, and they are still around today to help with psychosomatic illnesses, what have you. All of that is there. Those institutions, if you want to call it that, are alive. Our spiritual one is there with our music, our dance, and our ceremonies. It is alive and well and you do get to euphoria. Then you say, we need the language as well, as that is how you get to that level...

The language you use also affects the way you think...if you have a ceremony in English, then that is the way you look at it, but if you use the traditional language you see much more beauty, as that was how it was conceived...If your own language is first and English comes second, your mindset opens up differently...At universities in this country they tend to look at us as only having cultures, not civilizations. [In Western thought] we tend to look at cultures as very secularized, and compartmentalized. But I am saying we have a living civilization. In my work in language, there is a group of us in Ontario working towards the incorporation of a First Nations Language Commission based on civilizations. This is a new concept. We have more than a culture. If we talk about people as only having a culture, we miss the big picture...Civilization is a power word. We have to emphasize that we do have a philosophy, and we do have a spirit...

I am encouraging some new thinking as I am looking at who I am. When you look at all of the parts of our civilization, we did not want for anything. We had our own governments, our own succession system for leadership, our own faith, our own medicine with herbs, and if it were psychosomatic, we had our healing society. We had means to deal with anything. We also had a moral code of how to treat others, including our younger brothers coming across the ocean. Our civilization believed that you were born without sin, but you might acquire it...

When I look at our civilization, it is so tied to the spiritual level as I have grown up in it. When I dance, for example, it is something inside me nourished along with the singing of my parents when I was a child. When I went to university, I was shocked to find young men not dancing except when they go to a bar. We have a set of songs for planting and it is like a lullaby that women use. I grew up with that so it was natural to
want to dance. Sadie Buck and I are cousins and our grandfather sang to us before the
days of television. That was what we were surrounded with. He would sing in the living
room and we would be dancing. Even my younger brother who does not dance much
any more was right in there with us. That was where for me dance came in. Then when I
started examining our civilization and asking the questions about what dance does, how
it is utilized, you start to learn more; you read descriptions of euphoria and realize how
it occurs in dance...

You start with education. Music and dance is part of their curricula every day. For me it
is very exciting to see how it is a part of their everyday life in a similar fashion to what I
experienced. That gives them a good base to prepare for when they are at a position of
decision-making personally and in the community. Then you start to understand power
words in your own language. It gives you a philosophy on life and how to manage in
your home and in society. Along with that is the Creator watching what you are doing
and wanting to hear the song, the drum, and the rattles...

When I go to a Longhouse ceremony, it is like watching a tableau of our civilization,
beginning with the Thanksgiving Address. We have four main events, like the cycle of
Life. There is the Great Feather Dance which is the central event for Longhouse people.
The music for this is very extensive, going on for some 25 minutes. You cannot help but
reach euphoria and be one with the Creator because the endorphins are running in
overdrive at that point. The music, rhythm, and vocals are all happening...

The importance of an oral tradition really is the key here... It all has a cadence, a rhythm
expressed in the language. This expresses providence and shows those present the path
that they need to follow...

We are told that we are born through the Creator, not our parents, so we are there to
find the path that we are supposed to follow...

...as teachers in the Immersion system, we are packed with all of that knowledge if they
have the language. With that, the spirit of the music and the dance remains intact. But
day to day it seems like a struggle and I sometimes wonder what I am doing. Then I
think back at the situation 25 years ago, and realizing the paradigm shift, I understand
that it is worthwhile. It is making a difference. I see a pride in our culture and our
identity...

Elma Miller: Is it also because the language you use to address the Creator is different
from what you use every day?

Amos Key: Oh yes. In our language we have fourteen pronouns, many more than are
found in English, some related to age levels... we are doing research on that as some of
those have been getting lost, such as the ones referring to particular clans, but also
because of intermarriage. Even when we are called to ceremonies, references are made
through specific relationships, plus the actions you must carry out to be prepared for the ritual...

Amos Key: Here at the Woodland Centre we have a large collection in oral recorded and written documentation of the Longhouse people. We have been doing that since 1986. I remember meeting in this room with some Elders who are now all gone. At the time they were reluctant to record. As part of my role in trying to impart how important it would be to have records of these old ceremonies I stressed the need for our civilization. I was much younger than they, just out of university, but they seemed to catch on to what I was trying to do. After the recording I can remember walking out of this room in a daze, because it had all been so powerful to hear this sacred material. It was a record of history and it was amazing that it happened in this place.

Now we can see that those aspects of our civilization are alive and well, including our music. To help support the airing of our music and our language, I organized a radio station [CKRZ]. Other things have subsequently come along taking it to a new level, such as the Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards and the Festival in Toronto. And regionally in Ontario I am planting the seeds to address our language needs and solidify where we are right now and not lose any more ground through our Anishinaabe-Mushkegowuk-Onkwehonwe Language [AMOL] Commission. Hopefully this will have influence in public policy and social justice so that we can have an equal place in this country, but it has to be organized.

...We have recorded the Elders and now we have added on to that, the immersion school system, the radio station, the private school board, so we are reconstructing our civilization through our language. The spin-off is that the character traits of the individuals going through that system are just astounding. I can now speak openly about who I am but that was not possible until I was into my thirties. Some young people I have brought to our language commission meetings have blown these academics away. Members of other First Nations communities note their high confidence level, their ability in their own language, and knowing who they are as individuals.

If a community is given that opportunity we are seeing the fruits of it. We had to fight for it in this community because critics said they are not going to know what a fork is or be able to speak and write in English. We have been tracking our Grade 12 graduates, 98 percent of whom graduate. Of those, only one was subsequently on social assistance. We have the highest retention rate of any school board in Ontario. Of course, we have different levels, but we have some studying law, chemical engineering, statistics, medicine, for example. They are in all walks of life, but at the same time, filled with the spirit of the community, donning their regalia, and speaking the language. In just one generation we have seen this big change. If you allow a community to do that, then you are bilingual or even trilingual! I can say this now, but I sat once on a commission that was granted $50 million to look into bilingualism. A nice report was produced, but it did not have any teeth and it just sits there.
in Ontario the amount for Aboriginal language projects, not even programs, is less than $20,000 a year. Of course, funding for the arts is just as puny. We believe that we have a civilization of life that includes music and dance every day. That needs financial support as well. We have done it on a shoestring budget. Our school buildings are crumbling around us, but we still have the spirit. We have K-to-12 language training. We do not have all of the accoutrements of the average school, but we somehow manage…

At the August language conference held in Cornwall, one speaker reiterated that one way of ensuring a lower rate of teen suicides among Aboriginals is to give them cultural knowledge of their heritage. What better way to do that than through language, along with its important components of music and dance. It was great to hear him say that twice along with the admonition: “Do not let anyone distract you from that goal.” …in so many parts of the world the disappearance of languages is being noted…Here we had some 500 speakers of Onondaga twenty years ago, but now it is less than a hundred. The best speakers are those in their sixties. I am not as fluent as my older sister. When I started here, I got my sister and brother both into teaching because I knew they could speak well. When they are using it all the time they are at another level.

We are looking into programs such as Mosaic to improve the level of language teaching. Certain people have an eloquence in using the language through shape and turn of phrase. What we are losing is the storytelling language practice. My dad could tell stories by the hour. A number of those have been captured on recording, but few can do that oral presentation any more. Spinning a yarn or telling a story would just come out without thinking about it. Now when I ask my brother to tell us about something, he has to stop and think before expressing his ideas. He is teaching the language, but that is not the same as speaking it all the time as we did when we were kids. I had a wonderful experience not long ago when an Ojibwe woman was speaking in her language to an assemblage of dancers. She told them that from where she was standing and looking out, it was like “flowers in a garden.” Now that is eloquence in a language! They are lucky to still have speakers who can turn a phrase like that. And they can compose music with that language.

Elma Miller: It all comes back to language.

Amos Key: Yes, I call it oratory. When we have a gatekeeper at our ceremonies who can speak for twenty minutes or more in our high language it is so moving. You get to that level through attrition, as people are “going home”, as we call it when they go to meet their Creator. The people who are coming out of immersion are not doing that even though they have the confidence, something that I do not have along with the facility. I had a good education, but I resent the fact that I was not able to have a bilingual education.
Elma Miller: Yet you have played a major role in bringing about this remarkable resurgence of the language.

Amos Key: When I think of that, it is one of my 'eureka' moments. Somewhat similar was the experience I had when I went to the opening of the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC. Tom Hill, the then director of this Museum and his wife also went. There were some 35,000 of us from all of these different nations and we had this grand parade, many of us in our specific regalia. It was amazing, particularly as the representatives of each Nation present were announced.

Elma Miller: It must have been spectacular.

Amos Key: My low points come when trying to deal with Indian Affairs. It is very difficult to get them to move any distance outside of the box. They cannot understand the importance of language for our well-being, although we have loads of statistics to show it does work. There are very few immersion schools in Ontario at this point. I just hope they will not pit us against the English-stream schools in trying to find money.

Meanwhile, we are trying to do the best we can, but we have too few trying to do too much. Our elders are becoming less and less. The ones that do work with us are amazing. One gentleman is here at 8:30 in the morning to begin working with the children and explaining ceremonies. However, after he finishes the school day he has to fulfill private ceremonies for the community. Often he does not get home until 10:30 or so in the evening. An older gentleman cannot keep up that agenda for an unlimited period of time!

Elma Miller: Thank you so very much for your generosity."
Haida Gwaii Is

Winter deaths; births, peace, conflict, elders living, elders dying, children playing, youths leaving, adults returning, salmon spawning, life, relatives, friends, adversaries, working together, working apart, loss, gain, food sharing, traditions, our people here, our people in the cities, our people united against the world, some people divided against each other, stinging gossip, mutual trust,

*Home: the hearth that warms,  
Also can consume.*

Weakness, shame, anger, joy, strength, myself, others, good, bad, greed, generosity, the Indian I sometimes wish I were not, the Haida I am proud to be, chiefs, fishermen, poets, loggers, argillite carvers, Lyell Island, blocking roads, chiefs and elders arrested, the voyage of the Looitas, Haida canoe rammed by a scaplane, six Haida in Vancouver for contempt of court, supreme court judge at a potlatch, Haida fighting for the right to fish, pole raisings, band politics, linguists,

*But Haida Gwaii is us;  
We fight for us.*

Sobriety, spirituality, occasional abuse, shattered relationships, nunni’s love, uncle’s guidance, traditional clans, traditional songs, taking food home from a potlatch, trees silhouetted under an aurora, eagles wrestling in mid-air, the whoosh-whoosh of raven wings, cousins, blood, despair, celebration, smallpox, tuberculosis, diabetes, residential schools, anthropologists and archaeologists coming and going, and still after thousands of years we are

Haida Dancing!

20 December 1994
The Poet and His Poetry

NOTE: Teachers may prefer to split this activity into two or three days, depending on the independent work abilities of the students and the need to give students a class period to work on their poster, rather than assigning it as an independent at-home activity.

Catholic Graduate Expectations:

| CGE5g | A Collaborative Contributor who achieves excellence, originality, and integrity in one’s own work and supports these qualities in the work of others |
| CGE7e | A Responsible Citizen who witnesses Catholic social teaching by promoting equality, democracy, and solidarity for a just, peaceful and compassionate society |

Expectations:

Overall Expectations:

Identity
- Analyze and assess information, ideas, and language as they pertain to Aboriginal identity in a variety of informational writings and Aboriginal literary works

Relationships
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships depicted in fiction, drama, poetry, and non-fiction by Aboriginal writers
- Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which Aboriginal writers depict relationships to promote a vision of Aboriginal communities

Sovereignty
- Demonstrate an understanding of the language used in Aboriginal works in connection with sovereignty issues

Challenges
- Demonstrate an understanding of the barriers facing Aboriginal peoples in education and employment, as presented in the works of Aboriginal writers

Writing
- Select and use appropriate writing forms for intended purposes and audiences, focusing on essays, narratives, or poems

Specific Expectations:

Identity
- Compare Aboriginal writers’ expressions of identity
- Explain social and historical values and perspectives on Aboriginal identity, based on examples from Aboriginal literature
**Relationships**
- Compare their own ideas, values, and perspectives with those expressed or implied in a text by an Aboriginal writer

**Sovereignty**
- Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of forms of Aboriginal expression that have been used to affirm sovereignty

**Challenges**
- Identify challenges faced by Aboriginal peoples as presented in the works of Aboriginal writers

**Writing**
- Analyze the characteristics of literary and informational texts as models of writing for specific purposes and audiences

**Prior/Pre-learning:**

Cle-alls (John Medicine Horse Kelly) is a proud member of the Haida Nation who is presently serving his Nation as an assistant professor at Carleton University where he is a heritage language conservationist. His clan name (Cle-alls) means fireweed or the orator.

Cle-alls understands that dance, music, stories and songs are all part of our identity and at the heart of all of these is language. Cle-alls has worked to promote his language because he understands that if the language is lost, it can never be recovered. Cle-alls states that for the most part, half of 53 Native languages in Canada can be found in British Columbia, and most of these are in great danger as the Elders and the language keepers pass on. The National Geographic Society’s *Enduring Voices Project* stated that, “Every 14 days a language dies. By 2100, more than half of the more than 7,000 languages spoken on Earth - many of them not yet recorded – may disappear, taking with them a wealth of knowledge about history, culture, the natural environment, and the human brain.”

In 1993 with Wendy Campbell’s assistance, Cle-alls launched a language renewal effort on the Haida language at a time when there were only 30 speakers who could converse in the Haida language fluently. The renewal has become the Skidegate Haida Immersion Program (SHIP).

Cle-alls states that nothing can replace a language – it is hewn in the everyday life and expressed through such things as kinship; basketweaving; cooking; playing; singing; storytelling and political structures.

As well as fluency, language speakers must develop a deep understanding of what the words mean. The language learner must see all their ancestors ‘in the mirror’ when they look at themselves, so that when pressures come they will “look in the mirror” and see...
‘somebody’, and this will help them to know who they are (identity) and to build self-esteem, as well as a sense of value and worth to help combat the high rates of suicide within our communities.

1. Preview the DVD selection on John Medicine Horse Kelly.
2. Prepare the student handouts for Racing With Spiders and upload the poem to the whiteboard.
3. Prepare two copies of each of Kelly’s other poems to provide to students for their group activity.

**Suggested Activity:**

4. Introduce Cle-alls (John Medicine Horse Kelly) to the class by sharing the DVD clip of his interview. Elicit comments from the students about his enthusiasm and his understanding of the importance of language. Share the Prior/Pre-Learning segment that summarizes Kelly’s background and his goals for language.

5. Use the white board to open the native drums website at www.nativedrums.com, visit the site and click on various pages to view some of the contents so that students will gain an understanding and appreciation of the site and its creator.

6. Hand out worksheets to the students for Racing with Spiders. Work with the students to read and analyze the poem. Have students reflect upon the richness of the language that Kelly has chosen to use in this poem and to think about the message(s) contained within the poem. Note the structure that he has used and the manner he chooses to present the work using different sizes of text. Discuss the message that Kelly wants to impart to the reader/listener.

7. Divide the class into partners. Have them read the poem to each other—sharing the reading—stanza by stanza. Ask them to imagine John Kelly reading the poem to them—how would his voice sound? Where would he place emphasis in the poem?

8. Provide the students with the worksheet on the Commentary on “Racing with Spiders” that John Kelly has prepared for the Ketchikan Indian Corporation. Have students highlight the references to language in the commentary. Ask students to find examples of metaphor, rhythm, symbols, similes, sound devices, and figurative language, etc. as they complete the worksheet that accompanies this activity. When the students have completed the worksheet, take it up together.

9. Students choose from one of John Medicine Horse Kelly’s other poems (See Student Worksheets) and work either individually or with a partner to read the poem, reflect upon it, and create a poster or illustration that would express the poem to the world.
This is an independent activity that may be assigned as ‘homework’.

When completed, students read their poems to the class and share their posters.

Teachers may choose to photograph the posters and send a copy of them to John Medicine Horse Kelly as an appreciation for his work and efforts.

**Suggested Assessment:**

1. Assess group work and participation/cooperation/time management skills of students.
2. Provide a group assessment of the commentary activity, and keep anecdotal comments as students work through the assignment within their group.
3. Assess the interpretation of the individual/partner work on the other poems that are shared through the oral reading and the posters. Ask students to self-evaluate according to criteria such as: work completion; on-task; oral presentation skills; illustration skills – use of colour, space, lettering, etc.

**Other Resources:**

**Web Resources:**

[www.nativedance.ca](http://www.nativedance.ca) – This site has a wealth of information on dance traditions from coast to coast.
Student Worksheet

The Poet and His Poetry

Read and discuss the poem “Racing with Spiders” by Cle-alls (John Medicine Horse Kelly). Find evidences of the following in his poem and be prepared to defend your choices:

Images -

Symbols -

Sound Devices -

Metaphor -

Simile -

Reference to Haida identity -

References to Sovereignty -

References to Challenges -

References to Relationships -

Circle any part(s) of the poem that stands out for you or confuses you or is important to you.

Highlight words and phrases that indicate the meaning of this poem to you and determine the them.

Draw arrows to lines that support the theme as you understand it.

Did you enjoy this poem? Why, or why not?
Work within a group of four students. Re-read the commentary, and highlight the references to identity; sovereignty; relationships; and challenges that you find in the commentary. Share with your group members the highlights you have chosen.

In your group, discuss each of the following questions. Then divide the questions among you, and each of you writes a response for one question. You may draw on the knowledge of your table partners, but each question’s final written answer is the responsibility of the person who “volunteers” to answer it.

1. “Racing with Spiders” and its commentary, focus on the importance of language as an integral woven and living way for the Haida people to self-identify. The poet uses the image of the little spider weaving its web to express his identity and to illustrate the efforts of the people as they re-establish a population of fluent language speakers. What is the significance and purpose of using the spider?

2. “Racing with Spiders” and its commentary examine some of the historical challenges that have been and continue to impact the acquisition of language. Identify several of these challenges, issues and describe how they are being solved today. Reflect on the meaning of ‘resiliency’ and indicate how the people have worked through the challenges.

3. “Racing with Spiders” and its commentary provide several glimpses of sovereignty that is expressed through the words and images. Identify several examples of these and comment on the poet’s attempts to remind the reader of the sovereignty of the Haida people. How has the Haida Nation established its sovereignty and maintained its place and space over time?

4. “Racing with Spiders” and its commentary provide the reader with an opportunity to build relationships with the Native people, not from a colonizer’s perspective, but with a new understanding and awakening of awareness of past issues and transgressions that were put in place to extinguish the spirit of the people. How can the comparing and sharing of ideas, values, and perspectives lead all people to a new level of understanding and relationship? Give examples from your own experiences.
Racing with Spiders

A brown spider races across the cobbles.
"The Founding Fathers must have missed you," I say.
"Too bad we were not so tiny."

Reading Indian poetry on a bright Winter day.
The Sun crawls low over
icicle-blue Skidegate Inlet:
A slow moving tetherball	
tied to a dancing chain of fire.

Moresby Isle’s mountainous multitudes,
one proud and bristling with green-black spires,
now lie sullen and barren as shaven bears.
"I wonder how the hills keep warm at night?" I ask.

Indian poetry is powerful, the preface says;
Indians know the spirit of words.
The editor enjoys “working with Native writers,
many of whom would be famous,” she says,
“If they were not Indian.”

“Famous to whom?” I respond.
If the Colonizers ignore us,
it is not because we are Native,
it is because they do not want

*the remembering;*

despite

they do not want us reminding them
that we who once were, still are;
that, as long as the children live,
so will live the memories of our ancestors.
That as long as bigotry haunts the human soul,
so will live our anger and our suffering.
We are an unwelcome and unsolicited

twinge;

on hot and soul-tossed nights
between sheets too white for comfort.

No, we are not famous.
We dash softly over darkened walls,
then weave our webs in window panes
of a people who so utterly
have hidden the Sun
that silk-laced Moonlight equally

*is agony.*

Perhaps the children of a thousand winters
hence will read our Native words,
and finally understand.

As I write I remember
the little spider speeding so lightly
across the cobbles.
“They never noticed you,” I say.
and I am glad.
You spin enchantment;
we now know
to snare the enemy in
his own language starkly knit
in the realities and nocturnal dreams
of our Native spirits.
I am glad, Kuhljuyaang, that *We,*
and you

are not so tiny.
Commentary on *Racing with Spiders*

As Requested by the Ketchikan Indian Corporation

A poem is words; *its* Truth, more than words. Truth is a high mountain lake. Words, merely the surface, mirror the outer world. The inner spirit, the *soul* of poetry, dwells within the waters: transfused with unfathomable realities that sometimes even poets do not understand.

To dive deeply into poetry is to experience Truth.

The poem, *Racing with Spiders* speaks of an enemy; not an outer enemy, but an inner one. The enemy is the colonial spirit that allows a particular gender of a particular people to claim to be “The Founding Fathers” despite the fact that First Nations men -- and women -- have been here, solidly *founded*, since the beginning of time.

Language unifies. Knowing this, the Colonizer tried to take away our tongues, claiming that English was superior. Yet it would be a mistake for us to be reactionary, to denigrate English, because it too has a rich heritage.

Language is more than words. Our Native spirit *itself* speaks through the Haida carver’s art, the potlatch and the dance. The carver’s legacy, the communal *web*, the sweep of an Eagle dancer -- and poetry -- this language of spirit invalidates the bigotry of the Colonizer; it unifies *all* living beings.

Language and culture are inseparable. To speak English and other tongues in addition to our Haida language is to ascend the higher *mountaintop*: to see the world from the consciousness of more than one culture. As First Nations people powerfully alive, we can communicate from whatever height of mind and depth of heart we choose, in more than one culture’s ability to hear. We can articulate our Native spirit eloquently, even -- when we *choose* to do so -- in the very language of the Colonizer.

Language is a strand that weaves the *fragments* into the *all*. We are Haida. We value our own language. But by whatever means we communicate, our spirits must be strong. We must see ourselves as one. We must not be deceived into denying this, nor into forfeiting our heritage.

This truth is the essence of *Racing with Spiders*.

The reality is that the language of the Colonizer is the only tongue many of us know. To survive we must appreciate who we are. We must breathe deeply, sensing that we are *related* to the sea, to the mountains, to the forests and to one another. We are the *all*.

Without our languages we do not cease to be First Nations. We no more lose our Nativesness than do any of our relatives who are mute. Words are not the only form of speech. Truly, many languages exist: from the cry of the eagle, to the manifold voices of the raven, to the subtle whispers that pass lightly between the trees.

*All* life communicates *soul*; the essence of *life itself* is a language. Across the generations, our ancestors and *all* living beings speak of the power to survive in the face of overwhelming odds. We who are alive today are exact testimony to that language of spirit. It behoves us, then, to commit our hearts unselfishly to our Native ways. When our heritage and our hearts are strong, our children are strong. When our children are strong, *we* are strong.
For our children’s sake we must keep our Native tongues, for each language is a silken strand in the larger web of the all: the pattern of the Whole. When a Native language dies, part of us -- part of all humanity -- further crumbles into fragments.

Together we must weave the dream that catches our own visions; our own dreams; our own realities; in our own languages. We must wrap in spider’s silk the foreign English tongue, lest that tongue instead transform us into what most of us can never be successfully: The Colonizer in brown skin.

Racing with Spiders was a real experience. I actually did see a spider speeding across the cobbles last Saturday. This reminded me that, as the Colonizer’s own Bible says, “The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in king’s palaces” (Proverbs 30:28).

The biblical analogue is not perfect. Spiders are real; in a house or in a forest. The self-proclaimed “kings” are not. I honour Kuhljiyaang, the Haida spider. I honour our First Nations. Our ability to shape cedar and poetry creatively -- using our own honed stone and the Colonizer’s steel -- is our ability culturally to dwell where we choose. In our reintegration with the all, we are empowered to dash across even the Colonizer’s walls at night, weaving webs of Truth in places that cannot be ignored.

In this regard, the brown spider is my teacher. She lives on, true to her nature, spinning her silk and gathering her food. Despite the fragmentation of her environment, she continues faithfully to weave, spinning from her inner being a pattern of the Whole.

We must do the same.

Spiders and indigenous people are close relatives: both are intelligent and spiritually powerful. In fact, as our ancestors know, everything that exists is intelligent and powerful. If some choose not to see Native artists as significant, then that is their choice and their loss. We are not tiny, and we will not go away. We are the children of our grandparents, of our Nunami and our Chinni. Our thousands of years upon this land are enough to sustain us through this crisis, or any crisis to come.

How’a!
Mitakoyasin!

26 January 1995
Haida Warrior

(My apologies to Chief Skidegate's boat)

War has changed
(the old Haida Warrior
lamented).
The old way is gone.
We kill now,
without shedding blood.
We bleed,
but no one sees it.
We die,
but never lay down
to rest.

The old war was easier:
We fought
with honour. We knew
our enemies;
knew who could be
respected
and who could not.
But, now --
the enemy has

no colour.

Brothers and sisters, why?
among
ourselves, do we fight
without
scrutiny or sight?
How did
our warriors lose
their

honour?

If our nations are
to survive,
(the old Haida warrior
sighed, from
bloody wounds
hidden deep
inside), I think, now,
we must
learn who the enemy is;
learn why,
and for what, we are
fighting.

It is time, now, he cried,
we must
learn a new way:
Our warriors
must learn how to fight
without
being at war;
we must
learn how to be at war
without
fighting; so that all
First Nations
that did survive the
old wars,
can win without
any

Child

Of any colour

losing.

17 January 1994
Deep Waters

I am like sunlight in water
Ever-changing with each Dancing shaft of light.
I am a man, but
I, too, contain multitudes;
A pattern of light Scattered through The deep waters Of my ancestors.

10 October 1894
Haida

Environmentalists fight to preserve the land. We are not environmentalists. We are Haida. Environmentalists fight for the trees. They are not the trees.

See the trees? The trees are us. *All* the green things -- *all* the blades of grass -- are us; the animals are us; the waters are us; the swimming creatures in the inlets are us; the eagles and the ravens who fly above the trees are us; the land itself is us. We do not live on Haida Gwaii, *we are Haida Gwaii; the Islands of The People.* We are fighting to preserve ourselves. The survival of our land is the survival of ourselves; the survival of our children; the survival of *all* children.

That is why we fight. We do not fight for the land alone; we do not fight for human rights; we do not fight for the environment alone; we do not fight for the eagles alone; we do not fight for the killer whales alone. *All* that is here, and *all* that we fight for, is *us.*

We fight for *us.*

6 November 1994
Eagles and Ravens

Wisdom with a little knowledge
Is far better than
Knowledge with little wisdom

But, wisdom with

knowledge

Is Power

Still, the wisest Eagle
Needs to watch out
For Power lines.

17 December 1994.
Racist

One day you’ll look around
And, to your surprise,
Every one of us will be gone.
All the “Indians” escaped.
And then
You’ll look around again
And realize
That all the time
You were wrong.
You never owned us.
We were born free.
It was you . . .
You were the one
Trapped in the prison.

27 October 1994
For April Love

And that’s when you find things:
When you’re not looking.
When you’re looking for things
Is when you can’t find them.
And it’s those who learn to love
The small things
That they find;
Those are the ones
Who find the greatest
Things of all.

20 November 1994
Progeny

We are not sovereign.
We are wiser than that.
We do not need to reign;
We are the children of rain;
The offspring of oceans and inlets;
The progeny of wind.
We circle with the seasons;
With the Moon and Sun;
We flow with the tides;
With the rivers and streams.
We are not sovereign.
We have no need to be.
We are the people, YES!
We are Haida Gwaii;
We are Whole;
We are kindred;
We are free.

25 February 1995
Declaration of a Non-Indian

I, for one, will not fulfill
the Colonizer’s fantasies.
I will not be savage
like a beast for him;
I will not be childlike
and spiritual for him.
I refuse to be the wild Indian;
I refuse to be the tame one, too.
In fact, I will not be Indian at all.
Why should I allow myself to be named
by the 500-year-old mistake
of a lost Italian?
My grandmothers have named me.
I am Cle-alls

By day, I stride
strong upon the Sea.
and, by night, I rest in
Earth-woman’s embrace.
I am not an Indian;
I am not a savage;
I am not a spiritual-child.
I am a man.
I breathe honour;
I am Haida

21 October 1994
The Knowing

Native language is a conspiracy:
Code words scrawled
On dog-eared matchbooks
Spirited between First Nations;
Slipped past generations.

Native language is a conspiracy:
Watchful trepidations
Under cover of moonlight;
Stealthy whisperings:

"We are The People, YES!"

23 March 1995
Soul Stealers

Against we and we alone
Yaats’ Xaadaay,

Have we sinned.

Our longhouse is fallen,
our tongue is silenced,
our disincarnate names
drift like spirits’ shadows.

Oh, Yaats’ Xaadaay!
How could we allow you
to cross our souls saying,

“Jesus, was brown like us?”

How, in the Name of He,
from the cradle board
to the mortuary tree,

did we shatter
the Whole of we?

“Jesus, if you were brown like us!”
tell us!

Which of all
our endless fragments,
can we call home, now

that
the Iron Men have come?

We have neither been
bought nor sold
like the trees and the fish,
and yet

heartless

agony

exists.

Our arms reach outward
and crack the brittle Sky;
the splinters pierce our bleeding sides,
“Father forgive them!
They know not what they do!”
But Mother Earth is dead to us;
she neither quakes nor answers,
and brown and broken clouds
yield no tears nor thunders.
Our heads hang. We moan,

“Yaats’ Xaadaay, into your spirit
we commend our hands.”

“Jesus, why were you brown like us?”
we sing, but no sound comes.

Our ancestors own no song for the death of Trust.
Ferry Tale

Queen of the North;
Inside Passage
On Canada Day.
Red Roses on every table.

Emblazoned with
Red ovoids and
Proud Killer Whales:
Haida Canoes
Slip past to starboard
Unnoticed.

The red roses are plastic.
My muffin, organic.
Or maybe?
The red roses are organic;
My muffin, plastic.

Unseen oarsmen slap the water,
Warriors raise their ghostly paddles,
And singing an ageless song,
Vanish in the mist.

The Queen moves on.

1 July 1995
Potlatch

Why can’t you understand,
Why   we wouldn’t dance for you?
Why   you went home
Empty.
   It’s our soul;
That   is not for sale.
It’s Argillite poles
   For which, years ago,
   You paid
   Twenty-five cents an inch,
Or it’s a dance that celebrates
The relationship
   Between our children
   And our past.
   It’s All living things,
And it’s    not for sale
At twenty-five cents
An inch,
And it’s not for sale
At twenty-five cents
A step.  But, come,
Come      If you’ll Celebrate
   Life with us!
Celebrate!

You’ll never go home
Hungry.

20 November 1994
Love is not happiness
Love is not pain.
Love takes more courage than both.
The mystery is:
How could anything so fragile as love
Be so strong?
How could anything so hard,
Be so soft?

21 February 1995
Summary:
Community-based Internet projects for youth.

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CIRCLE (Centre for Indigenous Research, Culture, Language and Education) at Carleton University was founded in the 1990s to serve First Peoples’ communities, students, youth and researchers. At that time, its name was the Centre for Aboriginal Education, Research and Culture (CAERC). In 2003, CIRCLE took its present name as an amalgamation CAERC and the Canadian Musical Heritage Society. We work in close collaboration with First Peoples’ communities and likeminded organizations such as BlackCherry Digital Media, Inc., Pinegrove Productions and others.

Among our other activities is a campaign to help in the work to promote cultural continuity at the grassroots level. Our belief this: Cultural continuity and strength can cut the First Peoples; youth suicide rate from as high as 800 per cent above the Canadian baseline to the norm, and in some cases zero or nearly zero (See Michael J. Chandler & Christopher Lalonde, 1998, Cultural Continuity as a Hedge Against Suicide in Canada’s First Nations. BC: University of British Columbia).

Our conviction is that the Internet can be a powerful community-based tool to build strong communities. CIRCLE and our collaborators invited First Peoples’ community members and others to build two websites: www.nativedrums.ca (2005) and www.nativedance.ca (2007). Both projects were largely funded through the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Currently, CIRCLE, BlackCherry Digital Media, Inc., Pinegrove Productions/Our Incredible World, Inc. and First Peoples’ communities are working to develop a new Website with the James Bay Cree that will engage youth in a treaty negotiations role playing game.

Summaries of these three projects follow:

On the Path of Elders

A new Internet initiative, On the Path of Elders (www.pathoftheelders.ca) is a web-based project that seeks to strengthen the identity and self-respect of First Peoples’ youth. Specifically, it will reach those of the James Bay area whose ancestors negotiated Treaty No. 9 in 1905 with the Canadian federal government.

A key feature of the website will be the first-ever Role Playing Game (RPG) based on the First Peoples’ history surrounding Treaty No. 9. Youth who take part in the quest will qualify to assume the role of community elders and gain firsthand experience of their decisions’ consequences, both historical and contemporary. Youths will face problems they must solve. Guided by the experiences of their Elders, the young people will try to find alternatives to historic decisions during negotiations with the Canadian government.
This popular RPG format will foster the youths’ leadership skills and positive self-identity. The experience will prepare them to take a real role in strengthening their communities. The full project will create a rich web-based learning environment on Cree traditional and contemporary culture and lifestyle. It incorporates audio/visual interviews with elders and youth. Products will include community videos, research essays and classroom education kits.

*Native Dance* and *Native Drums*:

*Native Drums* and *Native Dance* to deliver information about music, instruments, songs and dances, both traditional and contemporary, of the First Peoples within Canada through essays, educational kits, photos, and streamed film excerpts.

The Websites are insiders’ views of First Peoples’ music and dance, plus the cultural values and power. The authors, artists and musicians are almost entirely Aboriginal.

*Native Dance* has been enlarged to include French and First Peoples’ languages (Mi’kmaq, Mohawk and Kwakwala).

Both *Native Dance* and *Native Drums* were a joint project of Carleton University with technological development by the Sumner Group Inc. funded by Canadian Heritage.

- *Native Drums* covers communities and cultures throughout Canada – from the West Coast to the East and far north.
- *Native Dance* essays are culture specific for the following: Kwakwakw’wakw (Kwakiutl), Dene, Anishinaabe (Ojibwe), Ooniyoke (Algonquin), Eeyou (East Cree), Mi’kmaq, Innu, Baffin Island Inuit.
- Additional essays deal with renewal and adaptation of dances, dance notations of Gertrude Kurath.
- Interviews with specific dancers range across a wide spectrum from traditional dancers of different First Peoples’ cultures, through those involved in powwow dancing, ballet, and contemporary styles of dance.
- Film excerpts of many of the dances referred to in essays are featured. Some of these come from archival footage but most are newly created for this website.
- More than 500 photos are on the site. Many of these are archival dating back to the late nineteenth century or early twentieth century and have not hitherto been readily available to examine dance steps, or forms of regalia.
- In addition to audio accompanying film excerpts of dances, we have obtained permission to mount a few examples of archival audio that have never been commercially available.
- Educational kits are available in connection with each of the main essays for use at educational levels from kindergarten through secondary school. Clear outcome guidelines accompany the teachers’ guides.
- Partners include First Peoples’ cultural organizations from across Canada.
- As much as possible members of First Peoples’ communities are writers, editors, and researchers for *Native Dance* as well as well as *Native Drums*. 
Personal Stories as Poetry Prompts

Catholic Graduate Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CGE2b</th>
<th>An Effective Communicator who reads, understands and uses written materials effectively</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CGE2c</td>
<td>An Effective Communicator who presents information and ideas clearly and honestly and with sensitivity to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGE5a</td>
<td>A Collaborative Contributor who works effectively as an interdependent team member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHE7g</td>
<td>A Responsible Citizen who respects and affirms the diversity and interdependence of the world’s peoples and cultures</td>
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</tbody>
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Expectations:

Overall Expectations

Identity
- Analyze and assess information, ideas, issues, and language as they pertain to Aboriginal identity in a variety of informational writings and Aboriginal literary works

Sovereignty
- Demonstrate an understanding of Aboriginal sovereignty issues, as expressed in Aboriginal literary works

Challenges
- Assess the challenges of maintaining cultural identity that faces Aboriginal peoples, as represented in Aboriginal literature

Writing
- (The overall expectations will be determined by the teacher and reflect the needs of the students.)

Specific Expectations

Identity
- Analyze how Aboriginal writers reveal identity through their use of language

Sovereignty
- Analyze how Aboriginal writing reflects personal sovereignty as well as encroachments on personal freedoms

Challenges
- Identify challenges faced by Aboriginal peoples as presented in the works of Aboriginal writers

Writing
- (The specific expectations will be determined by the teacher and reflect the needs of the students.)
Prior/Pre-learning:

John Medicine Horse Kelly emphasizes the importance of original language as a vehicle of cultural insight, self-esteem, and survival.

Prior Learning: Knowledge of the impact of the residential school system; assimilation policies of the Indian Act.


“Government, church and school officials believed that Native people should lose all vestiges of their culture, including language. (…) There was a time when my mom, aunts, and uncles could speak the language. But when enrollment in school took place, these individuals began to shun the language. (…) The school I attended as a child also had a negative impact on me (…) On many occasions I was taunted and teased for being a Native person. (…) Unfortunately, I began to pretend I could not understand Ojibwa. (…) Low self-esteem and feelings of inferiority are how the assimilation policies have affected many Native people. (…) Regrettably, that feeling of being cheated tended to provoke me into lashing out at the dominant society. (…) More and more of us have come to understand the importance of keeping our language and culture intact. Returning to our language and ceremonies is giving back our pride and dignity.”

Suggested Activity:

1. The students read the excerpt provided. Discuss the content.

2. Students may be asked to do one, all, or choose from the following prompts:
   
   • On a slip of paper list any 15 words that relate to the key points made in the excerpt provided. Use the 15 words in a poem by describing them with adjectives or emotions. *Variation: Create and exchange a list with another person. Then use their list of words to write a poem.

   • Ask students to create a “poetic title” for the excerpt provided. Write a poem that repeats this word or catch phrase. Suggestions: another language; between silence, broken words, etc.
• Write a poem in three parts with each part assuming the voice/perspective of three different people connected to the same issue.

• Write a poem to create a progressive story chain that follows the life trail of the above author, filling in the blanks of the life you imagined based on the hardships he speaks of.

3. Form small groups for students to share their poems

4. Groups are asked to combine the “best” lines from each individual work to create a collaborative poem.

5. Student groups share their poems.

**Enhanced Activity:** Student groups are to orally present their poem to the class using vocal techniques such as: repetition, echoing, variation of sound & tone, solo, pairings, and whole group recitation.

**Suggested Assessment:**

Medicine Wheel rubric and/or English Curriculum Standards of Evaluation.

**Other Resources:**

**Web Resources:**

[www.nativedrums.ca](http://www.nativedrums.ca)


[http://www.turning-point.ca/?q=node/21856](http://www.turning-point.ca/?q=node/21856)

[http://www.ctv.ca/CTVNews/Canada/20091106/dying_languages_091108/](http://www.ctv.ca/CTVNews/Canada/20091106/dying_languages_091108/)

[http://kzadmin.com/LearningAlgonquin.aspx#tpsec](http://kzadmin.com/LearningAlgonquin.aspx#tpsec)
Tradition, Ceremony, and Culture: Poetry as Stimulus

Catholic Graduate Expectations:

| CGE2b | An Effective Communicator who reads, understands and uses written materials effectively |
| CGE2c | An Effective Communicator who presents information and ideas clearly and honestly and with sensitivity to others |
| CHE7g | A Responsible Citizen who respects and affirms the diversity and interdependence of the world’s peoples and cultures |

Expectations:

Overall Expectations:

Relationships
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships depicted in fiction, drama, poetry and non-fiction by Aboriginal writers

Sovereignty
- Demonstrate an understanding of Aboriginal sovereignty issues, as expressed in Aboriginal literary works

Challenges
- Assess the challenges of maintaining cultural identity that faces Aboriginal peoples, as represented in Aboriginal literature

Writing
- (The overall expectations will be determined by the teacher and reflect the needs of the students.)

Specific Expectations:

Relationships
- Demonstrate an understanding of relationships portrayed in the works of Aboriginal writers

Sovereignty
- Analyze how Aboriginal writing reflects personal sovereignty as well as encroachments on personal freedoms

Challenges
- Analyze efforts made by Aboriginal peoples to respond to challenges, as portrayed in the works of Aboriginal writers

Writing
- (The specific expectations will be determined by the teacher and reflect the needs of the students.)
Prior/Pre-learning:

John Medicine Horse Kelly states that language is honed within the contexts evolved around traditional constructs such as basket making, ceremony, kinship systems, and political structures. The following poem explores one’s inherent connection to the drum.

Teacher Preparation:

Provide copies of the poem by Lana Whiskeyjack (Saddle Lake First Nation, Alberta) included at the end of this activity or access this poem for class review directly from the Native Drums Website http://www.native-drums.ca or google Lana Whiskeyjack.

Suggested Activity:

1. Students read the poem silently to themselves (2x)

2. Seated in a circle, have students read one line at a time (1x) going in the Anishnabek direction (clockwise), then in the Haudenosaunee direction (counter clockwise). *A new starting point may also be considered.

3. Repeat Step 2 with added instruction to: place emotion, play with rhythm and pace, add tone and/or volume appropriately.

4. Group discussion based on the teacher prompt: Where are the indicators of culture found within the poem? (e.g. drum, dreams, language use, etc.)

5. Students answer the following questions as a writing/comprehension exercise. *Note - Questions taken from (and accessible on) the Native Drums website
Poem by Lana Whiskeyjack

Questions: Taken from the Native Drums website - http://www.native-drums.ca

1. Find where the poet refers to drums and dancing in the first half of the poem. How does the sound of the drum make her feel? Use examples from the poem to support your answer.

2. When the poet says, “In an instant it was gone”, what is she referring to?

3. How does she feel when silence replaces the music of the drum?

4. The poet refers to the silence as “unspoken chaos”. Discuss the possible reasons why. (i.e. The absence of the drum implies the absence of what else?)

5. When she finally hears the drum once again, what is she hearing?

6. To what does the drum bond her? The drum is obviously much more than a musical instrument. What else is it? Explain using examples from the poem.

7. Discuss the use of metaphor in this last part of the poem from “Slowly I felt sinew...to a circle of love, kindness, wisdom and laughter.”

8. The drum is obviously much more than just a musical instrument. What else is it? Refer to examples from the poem

9. How are the drum and the poet connected? What type of imagery is used to emphasize this connection?

10. How do people draw strength from their culture? What happens when people are denied/separated from their culture? Think of current examples.

Suggested Assessment:

Medicine Wheel rubric and/or English Curriculum Standards of Evaluation.
Other Resources:

Print Resources:

*Teaching Poetry in High School*, by Albert Somers

*Native Poetry in Canada: A Contemporary Anthology*, Edited by: Jeannette Armstrong & Lally Grauer

Web Resources:

http://catherineowen.suite101.com/writing-exercises-that-teenagers-will-enjoy-a77944

http://www.kristinegeorge.com/poetry_power.html

http://stacienaczelnik.hubpages.com/hub/Five-Poetry-Writing-Exercises

Poem by Lana Whiskeyjack

The first drumbeat sang me back to sleep.
In dreams I danced to a harmonious pulse.
Familiar voices tickled my skin.
“Wan’ska” they whispered.

I awoke with a sigh
surrounded by reflecting light
and cried.
Mother held me tight
the drumbeat still there.
I closed my eyes without a care.

Nohkom gently smiled,
“A-how nitanis nimihito!”
“dance my girl!”
I danced.
I flew.
There was nothing I couldn’t do.
In an instant it was gone.
Not knowing where, how, or why it went wrong.
I lived in silence,
waiting, restless and unaware.

Then one day from an eagle’s eye view
meandering confused in a concrete web.
Stuck in a crevice of books, words and menace
I wept.
I yelled
and prayed.
Then there was silence.

In the unspoken chaos I heard the drum,
familiar voices and tender tones.
I shuffled between doubt and happiness.
Each song I danced.
Drained and exhausted
the beat grew louder.
Slowly I felt sinew coiling me,
inside and out,
then tighter.
A final yank,
a pull from my heart
bonded to a circle of love, kindness, wisdom and laughter.
Ay-ay.

*Translation of Cree words: Wanska = wake up; Nohkom = my grandmother; A-how= an expression to get attention; Nitanis = my daughter; Nimihito = dance; and Ay-ay = thank you with the greatest respect."
Vera Wabegijig

Vera is a young Anishinabe author who discusses the role of writing in her life.
Vera Wabegijig

“I know a lot about some things and know very little about many things.”

About Vera Wabegijig:

Overview
- Vera is a writer, media artist and mother.
- She comes from the Mississauga First Nation and Wikwemikong Unceded Reserve. She is a member of the Bear Clan, a member of the Tricksters’ Fireball Society, a founding member of Fresh Tracks – an Indigenous arts collective in Ottawa, and also a board member at SAW Video Co-op.
- Vera has lived a nomadic learning style.
- She is also a contemporary storyteller and has lived in Penticton, Victoria, Vancouver, Toronto and Ottawa.
- She has been the recipient of the Louis Armstrong Literary Award, and many grants and scholarships from Canada Council, Ontario Arts Council, BC Arts Council, First Citizen’s Fund, National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, City of Ottawa, SAW Video Co-op, and First People’s Cultural Foundation.

Poet
- She has been printed in many anthologies including: XXX NDN, Surviving in the Hour of Darkness, Breaking the Surface, Our Words, Our Revolutions, Reclaiming the Future, and, Sweetgrass Grows All Around Her.
- She has been a featured poet at the Talking Stick Festival, VerseFest, Uts’am/Witness, The New Canoe, and this fall at Voices of Venus.

Media Artist
- Vera is also an emerging media artist. “Granny Braids”, a visual love poem, has been screened at ImageNations 6th Annual Film and Video Festival, ImagineNative 4th Annual Film and Video Festival. “The Mole on My Ass is Named Winona”, a dramatic short, was screened at ImageNation 4th Annual Film and Video Festival, and “Follow the Eagle”, a NFB short documentary, was screened at Dawson City Film Festival.

Vera gives thanks to all creation that provides the best inspiration for creative expression.
Viewing Questions

1. Why did Vera want to become a writer?

2. What inspires her poetry?

3. How is the past and present part of her writing?

4. How does she give back to the community?

5. What impact does she hope to have on the reader?
Poetry in the Outdoors

Catholic Graduate Expectations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CGE3a</th>
<th>A Reflective and Creative Thinker who recognizes there is more grace in our world than sin and that hope is essential in facing all challenges</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CGE5g</td>
<td>A Collaborative Contributor who achieves excellence, originality, and integrity in one’s own work and supports these qualities in the work of others</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Expectations:

Overall Expectations:

**Identity**
- Analyze and assess information, ideas, and language as they pertain to Aboriginal identity in a variety of informational writings and Aboriginal literary works

**Relationships**
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships depicted in fiction, drama, poetry, and non-fiction by Aboriginal writers

**Sovereignty**
- Demonstrate an understanding of Aboriginal sovereignty issues, as expressed in Aboriginal literary works

**Challenges**
- Demonstrate an understanding of the barriers facing Aboriginal peoples in education and employment, as presented in the works of Aboriginal writers

**Writing**
- Uses a variety of print and electronic primary and secondary sources to gather and assess information and develop ideas for writing

Specific Expectations:

**Identity**
- Analyze how Aboriginal writers reveal identity through their language

**Relationships**
- Demonstrates an understanding of relationships portrayed in the works of Aboriginal writers

**Sovereignty**
- Assess the impact of Aboriginal sovereignty on Canadian society as portrayed in the works of Aboriginal writers
Challenges
- Identify challenges faced by Aboriginal peoples, as presented in the works of Aboriginal writers

Writing
- Organize and analyze information, ideas, and sources to suit specific forms and purposes for writing
- Revise drafts to refine voice in written work
- Communicate complex ideas using a variety of sentence structures

Prior/Pre-learning:

Note: This activity will take more than one class period to complete.

Vera Wabegijig is an Anishinabe urban mother to Storm and Grace, freelance writer and videographer and has been a featured writer in Breaking the Surface, Redwire Magazine, Gatherings V, VII, IX, X, Sweetgrass Grows All Around Her, Home As I Remember and Reclaiming the Future: Women's Strategies for the 21st century.

Vera Wabegijig is from the Odawa and Ojibway tribes and a member of the Mississauga First Nation of Ontario, Canada. She is a multi-disciplinary artist that uses the written and spoken word, photography, and media art to express the creativity thriving from deep inside. Vera was inspired at a pow-wow listening to the drums. She draws upon the energy from the Earth and is thankful for other Indigenous artists who inspire her. Vera studied Creative Writing at the En’owkin Centre; Fine Arts and Women/Gender Studies at the University of Victoria; Film and Video Production at Capilano University; and Media Arts Professional Development at Indigenous Media Arts Group.

“I find the hardest thing to do is to write about my legacy as a First Nations woman. But it’s important, very important. This is the main reason I write and I feel like there’s something that’s always there urging me to write. It’s that creative spirit. I just hope that I always have the courage and strength to create.”

Vera hopes that readers and listeners will see themselves in the stories and poems that she writes. She believes that our stories parallel each other – the themes of love, relationships, forgiveness, rising up to the occasion, making things better, having a sense of humour permeate all writings. Vera likes to hear from the public about what inspires them from listening to her.
**Suggested Activity:**

1. Introduce Vera Wabegijig by reading the prior/pre-learning section to the class. Show the DVD clip of the interview with Vera. Discuss with the class Vera’s perspectives on her work and the motivation that drives her to create.

2. Use the whiteboard to access Vera’s website at [http://verawaabegeeshig.wordpress.com/](http://verawaabegeeshig.wordpress.com/). The website contains some samples of Vera’s beautiful poetry: drum - a love song; snagging blankets; they passed on; insects, wind, strawberries, sun; blood part two; blood part one; Reflections; dreamcatcher; it is a women’s world.

3. Provide students with a copy of the poem, *drum – a love song* (Worksheet 1). Read the poem silently. Read the poem to the class using rhythm to help students hear the beat of the drum – discuss the drum as a symbol for Aboriginal people. Remind students that Vera attributes the drum at a pow-wow having awakened her creative spirit of writing. There are other symbols that have a powerful meaning for Aboriginal people. Make a list of the symbols that are equated today to Aboriginal people of Turtle Island (North America) – shaker (rattle); turtle; regalia; jingle dress dancers; grass dancers; pow-wow music; medicine wheel; beading; moccasins, etc. Ask students to reflect on what motivates them to write or to express their creative thoughts. Is there a symbol that comes to mind that has significant meaning for them?

4. Briefly examine some of the other poems that are found on Vera’s website. Read them – begin to look for patterns – free verse; rhythm; varied use of line length for emphasis; font and size of font, etc.

5. Provide students with a copy of *insects, wind, strawberries, sun* (Worksheet 2). Ask the students to take out a pencil and a piece of blank paper. You will read the poem twice; once while the students have their eyes closed and are focused on the voice of the poem, and once while the students quickly sketch the images around the page that come to them while the poem is being read. Provide students with a few minutes to complete their sketches. Have the class close their eyes again while the poem is read one more time. Have students share their sketches and the images that came to them while they were focusing only on the words and thoughts of the poet. Discuss the importance of the outdoors to Vera and reflect upon her interview on the DVD clip where she spoke of the importance of the environment to Aboriginal people.

6. Take the class outdoors to a quiet area. They will need a notebook or journal or blank sheet of paper and something to write with. Ask students to sit alone and to focus on the outdoors. Have them close their eyes for a few minutes to heighten their ability to listen and to focus on the sounds of the environment.
Students open their eyes and focus on observing their surroundings. Provide students with an environmental theme to think about – season; change; biodiversity; or community. Ask them to write down their thoughts - no sentences, but words and phrases and sketches. Encourage students to use descriptive adjectives and adverbs as well as verbs and nouns in their writing.

7. Return to the class. Review what students have experienced in their time outdoors. Did they find it easy to express their emotions on the paper? How important is it for them to find a quiet place in the outdoors where they can reflect and be creative? In her poem, Vera speaks to the calming effect the outdoors has on her spirit and her physical being. Ask students to think about the effect the outdoors has on them – did they find their body becoming more comfortable - their heart rate slowing down- their senses becoming more aware? Many people find this kind of response to be very healing. How can we ensure that everyone is able to find such a place?

8. Alternatively – or at another time- use a CD of outdoor sounds in the classroom to encourage creative ideas for poetry. Compare the response of the students to a CD as opposed to actually being outdoors. Is there a change in their creativity level?

9. The use of white space and line breaks are important tools for a poet – they can:

   a. Make you stop to think
   b. Make you stop to question
   c. Make you stop to wonder
   d. Control the speed at which you experience the images of the poem
   e. Make your eyes move to create movement within the poem
   f. Place emphasis on special words or ideas and force you to notice them
   g. Control where stanza breaks will be (i.e. where images or ideas change, or when opposites occur that contrast ideas)
   h. Share several of Vera’s poems with the class and examine the poem for line breaks and stanza breaks and white space. Ask students to think ‘why’ Vera has chosen to use line breaks and do the students feel that these are effective?

Break the class into groups of 3 or 4. Provide each group with a copy of Vera’s poem ‘They Passed On’ that has been taken out of its form and written as a paragraph (Worksheet 3).
Break the class into several groups and provide them with a few minutes to reconstruct the poem, by cutting it apart with scissors and gluing the lines onto a new piece of paper, including line and stanza breaks and white spaces into the poem. When the groups have completed the activity, share the group reconstructions and discuss varying ideas and choices in their editing process. Have each group read the poem the way they have reconstructed it. Then show the class the poem the way Vera constructed it and read it to them (Worksheet 4).

Use the Student Worksheets to introduce a variety of unique ways to form our words thoughts and phrases into a poem.

10. Provide students with time for independent work and reflection (homework) while they prepare thoughts and rough drafts for each of the following themes: love; community; peace; change. (see Student Worksheet).

Students will use their rough drafts of each of these themes to create different poems. The rubric for this activity is found on the Student Worksheet.

11. Students take their ideas and create a free verse poem. When all the poems have been completed, gather the poems together into a booklet.

Suggested Assessment:

1. Poetry Rubric- See Student Worksheet
2. Interview students and assess their rough drafts

Other Resources:

Web Resources:

http://verawaabgeeshig.wordpress.com/ Wild Rice Dreams - Vera’s official website – contains her poetry and publishing history


Film & Television Resources:

Our City, Our Voices: Follow the Eagle. 11:00 Digital Video. National Film Board. 2004.
Screenings: Official Screening 2005 Vancouver, BC; Dawson City Film Festival 2005.
Poetry in the Outdoors

drum – a love song
By vera waabegeeshig

i wanna be a drum made from deer skin
stretching, reaching for the edges
sinew meets and braids criss-cross
a hand holds in a firm grip
yielding to the songs you will sing

yielding to a beat you carry deep within
and a breath you hold steady
as a song forms from dreams and spirit speak

i wanna be a drum you carry in the bag nokimis made
from an old pair of wranglers and a left-over ribbon shirt
stitched together in a seam of protection
you carry me close, protecting me from bad medicine
bad thoughts and bad memories

i wanna be a drum you bring on the pow-wow trail
wrapped in a star blanket
you paint me with sacred ochre and tie eagle feathers around me
you offer me saymaa
and pray for me to become one with you

i wanna be a hand drum at a round dance
with one hand you hold me close to your body
while another hand circles,
round and round as you murmur prayers to me
heating my surface
so that i will speak true with a strong voice
and my deer hide skin breathes
responding deep resonating beats
insects, wind, strawberries, sun
By vera waabegeshig

coasting down the hillside
a summer breeze filled with sun ripe strawberries
flows over my body in waves
under a pine tree i rest
the shade offers me comfort
as the insects sing in a melody
that makes me take deep
slow breaths
sweat streams down the back of my head
there is a breeze but it is slight
enough to hear it blow through the tall grasses

i listen
i hear this glorious rhythms of these insects
i wonder who they are
where they are
and what they are singing

it does make me slow myself
and meditate
and listen to this song with so many layers
in 5.1 surround sound

i think this is the point of this song
is to stop and listen
and wait for the rhythms
to be learned
and to connect it to the rhythms
of the slowing beat of my heart
passed on

many words words that make up stories, stories that breathe life into me stories that remind me of who i am where i come from the blood that flows stories and songs begin and do not end they passed on knowledge and the strength in knowledge knowledge that digs into my soul like roots from a redwood tree those roots spread beyond any sense of time ancestors root deep into my being my blood memory they passed on the sacredness of life they passed on songs that carry heart beats a beat pumps blood to words words carry knowledge words pump knowledge carries a beat carries a song they passed on and breathed words resonate beat rhythm beats songs life beats stories stories breathe life to me, to you, to creation.

By vera waabegeeshig

dedicated to our elders who have given us many teachings and stories to live by.
chi-miigwetch. this is one of the first poems i ever wrote. thanks for reading.
they passed on

By vera waabegeeshig

dedicated to our elders who have given us many teachings and stories to live by. 
chi-miigwetch. this is one of the first poems i ever wrote. thanks for reading.

many words

words that make up stories

stories that breathe life into me

stories that remind me of who i am

where i come from

the blood that flows

stories and songs begin and do not end

they passed on knowledge

and the strength in knowledge

knowledge that digs into my soul like roots from a redwood tree

those roots spread beyond any sense of time

ancestors root deep into my being

my blood – my memory

my blood memory
they passed on the sacredness of life
they passed on songs that carry heart beats
a beat pumps blood to words
words carry knowledge
words pump knowledge
carries a beat
carries a song

they passed on and breathed words
words resonate beat
rhythm beats songs
life beats stories
stories breathe life
to me, to you, to creation.
Student Worksheet

Poetry in the Outdoors

You have had an opportunity to spend some time outdoors listening, looking, feeling, reflecting and gathering ideas, sketches, words, and phrases that speak to the theme of friendship.

This gathering of your creative thoughts will form the base for a poem and will serve as your rough draft.

On your own – find another spot or another time, and repeat the process of sitting quietly with eyes closed; then looking and listening and thinking – to create rough drafts for four more poems. Choose four from the following themes: friendship; community; change; rise up to a challenge; peace or come up with your own subject.

Create a poem that will describe each of four themes. You may choose to illustrate your individual poems by placing shapes, symbols, pictures, etc.

Other Criteria:

- One poem needs to be written as a poem for two voices.
- One poem needs to be in a shape (using white space and line spacing creatively).
- One poem needs to be written from the perspective of the subject (theme) doing the speaking – “I am...”.
- In one poem the poet must speak to the theme.
- One poem needs to be written in a style unique to yourself.
Student Worksheet

Poetry in the Outdoors

How to write a poem for two voices -
Each voice takes its’ turn reading a line aloud. Occasionally some lines are read together by both voices. Divide your page into three columns. The first voice is written in the left hand column. The second voice is written in the right hand column. Words and phrases that will be spoken by both voices are placed in the middle column. This is meant to be a dialogue (one voice might be the poet and the other the might be the theme).

Shape Poem – Use your creativity to place your words and phrases into a shape by using white space and line space on the page. Begin with a shape in mind.

The “I am...” Poem - The theme (i.e. change) becomes the subject - and is personified in the poem.

The poet speaks directly ‘to’ the theme – The voice of the poet directs his/her comments and thoughts directly to the theme.
it is a women’s world

By vera waabgeeshig

it is a woman’s world

this skin that covers me head to toe is white birch bark
with layers and layers that collect year after year stories, memories, laughter, pain, struggles, celebration

we share experiences and learn from each other like we have always done since we were little girls sitting beside our grandmothers and aunts and mothers as they talked while cleaning fish, making baskets, braiding hair, weeding in a garden, putting up a teepee, starting a fire

we all heard stories of how our women became mothers teachers, executive directors, environmentalists, linguists, lawyers, doctors, writers, sex educators, midwives and the reason why women do it because there are women in this world that need us to do it for them women need us to believe in them women need us to fight for them women need us to write down their stories women need us to educate the ignorant ones women need us to teach others about safer sex, having the right to say no, to stand up and say i am worth it

women, and men, need us to help give birth to a new generation who will carry on what we do today understanding that we need to work together in solidarity to have each other’s back because what we do today is not just for ourselves but for all humanity, and the natural world because all is at stake
and to bring it all back to having skin like a white birch bark tree
when i look at the peeling bark
i can see generations and generations of women
who are just like me
who make decisions based on that responsibility of being a woman
and that responsibility
is life
and making things better for those who will walk after us

dedicated to all the beautiful and fabulous indigenous women attending women’s world
2011 on unceded algonquin territory aka ottawa, on.
Student Worksheet

Poetry in the Outdoors

Poetry Rubric ____

Name: ________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poetry</th>
<th>Novice</th>
<th>Apprentice</th>
<th>Veteran</th>
<th>Master</th>
<th>Score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to captivate the reader</td>
<td>Unfocused; author seems unsure of direction (1-2 pts)</td>
<td>Some focus, but lacks continuity (3-4 pts)</td>
<td>Well focused and interests reader throughout. (5-6 pts)</td>
<td>Captivates and involves reader deeply. (7-8 pts)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sensory Images</td>
<td>Difficult to visualize image or emotion (1-3 pts)</td>
<td>Some use of image, idea, or emotion (4-6 pts)</td>
<td>Clear use of sensory images to portray ideas or emotions (7-9 pts)</td>
<td>Vivid, detailed images and intensely felt emotion (10-12 pts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of Language</td>
<td>Imprecise or inappropriate choice of words (1-2 pts)</td>
<td>Expresses thoughts marginally (3-4 pts)</td>
<td>Appropriate choice of language (5-6 pts)</td>
<td>Uses rich and imaginative language (7-8 pts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Punctuation</td>
<td>Arbitrary punctuation (1-2 pts)</td>
<td>Some meaningful punctuation (3-4 pts)</td>
<td>Punctuation meaningful throughout (4-5 pts)</td>
<td>Punctuation enhances conveyance of thoughts and images (5-6 pts)</td>
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</table>

Poetry rubric adapted from: [http://www.eop.mu.edu/greg/Sample_Poetry_Rubric.html](http://www.eop.mu.edu/greg/Sample_Poetry_Rubric.html)
Other Resources

Medicine Wheel Rubric

Sample Native Studies Self-Evaluation

Image Sources and PowerPoint Presentations
Medicine Wheel Rubric

Knowledge & Understanding

- Knowledge of facts
- Understanding of concepts
- Understanding of relationships between concepts

Critical and creative thinking skills
- Inquiry skills (e.g. formulating questions; planning; selecting strategies and resources; analyzing and interpreting information; forming conclusions)

Communication
- Communication of information and ideas
- Use of language, symbols, and visual images
- Communication for audiences and different purposes
- Use of various forms of communication

Application
- Application of ideas and skills in similar contexts
- Transfer of concepts, skills and procedures to new contexts
- Use of procedures, equipment & technology
- Making connections

Thinking & Inquiry

Through Our Eyes
Contemporary Aboriginal Voices
Sample Native Studies Self-Evaluation
(Revise to fit your course content.)

We have done many things in Native Studies.

For each of the following items, give yourself a mark. How well did you understand, participate in and/or were affected by each of the following? If you did not do something, you should choose NE. Be honest with yourself – in the spirit of all that the course has tried to impart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning:</th>
<th>NE</th>
<th>&lt;1</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2+</th>
<th>3-</th>
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<th>3+</th>
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| Experiencing                     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Museum of Civilizations          |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Shannen’s Dream Rally            |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Trial of Louis Riel play         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Art Gallery                      |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Camping                          |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Powwow                           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |

| Guests                           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Joseph Naytowhow                 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Roy Barnes                       |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Christopher Snowboy              |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Christopher – Smudging           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |

| Doing:                          |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Personal History object/story   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Dream Catcher                    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Shannen’s Dream letter           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Talking stick                    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| Inukshuk                         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
| School yard cleanup              |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |

Through Our Eyes
Contemporary Aboriginal Voices

135
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the MOST important thing you have learned in this course? Why is this so?</td>
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<tr>
<td>In what way has this course changed the way you view Aboriginal peoples?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Should other people take this course? Why?</td>
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<td>If you were to give yourself an “overall” mark in the course, what would it be?</td>
<td>Level: _______ Grade: _____%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain why you gave yourself this mark.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Image Sources
PowerPoint

Métis Symbols
http://www.metismuseum.ca - The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture

Bead Work Images – Gary Johnson

Beading Images
http://www.kstrom.net/isk/art/beads/art_bea2.html
http://www.kstrom.net/isk/art/beads/art_bea2.html

Images for Woodland Art
http://www.google.ca/search?q=woodland+art&hl=en&qscrl=1&nord=1&rlz=1T4ADRA_enCA389CA389&biw=1008&bih=506&site=webhp&prmd=imvns&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=dr2xTtPI8T10gGjhZisAQ&ved=0CDQQsAQ#hl=en&qscrl=1&nord=1&rlz=1T4ADRA_enCA389CA389&biw=1008&bih=506&site=webhp&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=dr2xTtPI8T10gGjhZisAQ&ved=0CDQQsAQ#hl=en&qscrl=1&nord=1&rlz=1T4ADRA_enCA389CA389&biw=1008&bih=506&site=webhp&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=dr2xTtPI8T10gGjhZisAQ&ved=0CDQQsAQ#hl=en&qscrl=1&nord=1&rlz=1T4ADRA_enCA389CA389&biw=1008&bih=506&site=webhp&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=dr2xTtPI8T10gGjhZisAQ&ved=0CDQQsAQ#hl=en&qscrl=1&nord=1&rlz=1T4ADRA_enCA389CA389&biw=1008&bih=506&site=webhp&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=dr2xTtPI8T10gGjhZisAQ&ved=0CDQQsAQ#hl=en&qscrl=1&nord=1&rlz=1T4ADRA_enCA389CA389&biw=1008&bih=506&site=webhp&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=dr2xTtPI8T10gGjhZisAQ&ved=0CDQQsAQ#hl=en&qscrl=1&nord=1&rlz=1T4ADRA_enCA389CA389&biw=1008&bih=506

Christi Belcourt


Norval Morrisseau
Ben Chee Chee
Maxine Noel
David Johnson
Alex Janvier
PowerPoint Presentations
(available on the EOCCC web site)

Métis Symbols

- Métis Symbols
- The Métis Flag
- Métis Sash

Floral Beading

Beading Techniques

- BEADING TECHNIQUES
- APPLIQUE – TWO -BEAD
- ROSETTE BEADING

Woodland Art

- WOODLAND STYLE OF ART
- Carl Ray - Communication
- Carl Ray – Recreation Myth

- Daphne Odjig – The Indian in Transition
- Daphne Odjig – Powwow Dancer
- Norval Morriseau - Family
"We are resilient as a weed and beautiful as a wildflower. We have much to celebrate and be proud of."

"The plants within my paintings have become metaphors to parallel our own lives. The roots show that all life needs nurturing from the earth to survive, and represent the idea that there is more to life than what is seen on the surface. It also is to represent the great influence our heritage has over our lives. The lines which connect the plants symbolize our own interconnectedness with each other and all living things within Creation. The flowers and leaves reach upwards as we seek out our individual spirituality and look to our uncertain future."
The contrast created by the black stems and large, bold blooms against the white background is meant to reflect the beauty as opposed to wasteful negativity. The result is a painting which is meant to inspire and be enjoyed.

The white dot in the centre symbolizes the “source” of all life, the Great Spirit, the one-ness from which we emerged. An umbilical-like wire of beads and shell representing our birth from the spirit world into the physical world we know in life.

The pattern is inspired from a traditional quillwork rosette design historically applied to items such as jackets and saddles. Most often the symbolic element of the quillwork rosette was to convey the state of movement from the source to the end of the universe. In this work, it is to represent the idea that there is more to life than what is seen on the surface. It also is to represent the connection between the physical and spirit worlds.

The lines which connect the plants symbolize our relationships to everything around us, our spiritualism, our beliefs, our everyday life. The pressures were there from all sides very easily could have been absorbed into the mainstream society. The pressures were there from all sides; however, the Metis and from the Two Row Wampum by Christi Belcourt represented the idea that there is more to life than what is seen on the surface. It also is to represent the connection between the physical and spirit worlds.

The Metis and the Two Row Wampum by Christi Belcourt

Belcourt takes the diminutive bead and transforms it into large acrylic landscapes and beadwork images inspired by traditional quillwork rosette design historically applied to items such as jackets and saddles. Most often the symbolic element of the quillwork rosette was to convey the state of movement from the source to the end of the universe. In this work, it is to represent the idea that there is more to life than what is seen on the surface. It also is to represent the connection between the physical and spirit worlds.

Belcourt finds sources of inspiration in the work of Woodland School artists like Norval Morrisseau and Blake Debassige.

The plants within my paintings have become metaphors to parallel our own lives. The roots show that all life needs nurturing from the earth to survive, to counter balance the actions taken in Iraq with an act of love and respect to the natural world. The blooming flowers and growing stems are a way to represent the sheer expanse of life from molecules to universes— and everything we see in between.

Beadwork motifs. The two halves of the painting are mirror image elements: earth, water, sun (fire) representing the four directions and rules with a wavy line at the top, a flowing stream at the bottom with two wavy lines at the sides.

The continuing reality of Metis existence in Canada. The large pink flower in the left side signifies the Metis existence in Canada. The large pink flower in the center signifies the Metis creation of the belts, there was no way to foresee the history in which we would emerge as a people. The blossoms of many ages are represented in the work to symbolize the state of our lives. The wavy line signifying the combination of the four rules. The wavy line is inspired from a traditional quillwork rosette design historically applied to items such as jackets and saddles. Most often the symbolic element of the quillwork rosette was to convey the state of movement from the source to the end of the universe. In this work, it is to represent the idea that there is more to life than what is seen on the surface. It also is to represent the connection between the physical and spirit worlds. The wavy line is to represent the concept of hope that is apparent in the work of the Metis people. The wavy line is to represent the concept of hope that is apparent in the work of the Metis people.

“...the flowers and leaves reach upwards as we seek out our individual spirituality and look to our uncertain future.”

Other plants featured in this piece are the Milkweed, Purple Cone Flower, Fiddleheads, and Birch.

The white dot at the centre emerges from the plants to draw attention to the state of the Metis people and culture. The dot is a traditional symbol of hope. The white dot is intended to draw the viewer’s attention to the state of the Metis people and culture.

The large yellow hairy Pitcher’s Thistle is an endangered species found around the world. Other plants featured in this piece are the Milkweed, Purple Cone Flower, Fiddleheads, and Birch.

The Prominent within this piece are the large yellow hairy Pitcher’s Thistle, an endangered species, found around the world. The flowers and leaves reach upwards as we seek out our individual spirituality and look to our uncertain future.

“The plants within my paintings have become metaphors to parallel our own lives. The roots show that all life needs nurturing from the earth to survive. The flowers and leaves reach upwards as we seek out our individual spirituality and look to our uncertain future.”

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The painting invites quiet contemplation as viewers are drawn into and absorbed by the study of individual plants. Maple leaves, the symbol of Canada, leap out from the centre of the image. They also appear on the left and right sides of the canvas. Their presence suggests that the Métis are an integral part of this country and its history.

Tolerance and respect are some of the fundamental lessons that Belcourt has learned through her study of nature and they are lessons that she wishes to teach people through the medium of her art. The coexistence of a multitude of plants in the natural environment, each with their own unique beauty and healing powers, points the way to a more just world in which diversity is honoured and the Forgotten People and their contributions are recognized.

We humans, although each one different, are of the same species and therefore we as individuals make up part of a whole. Our existence is inexplicably interwoven with each other as it is with the existence of so many other species on this planet. When looking at the whole picture of our existence, racism and other imagined divisions such as religion seem utterly ridiculous.

Song for the Night Sun
David Beaucage
Johnson's paintings reflect a great care for his traditional past as well as the spiritual future of his people. His latest works include explorations of the ancient drawings and the petroglyphs known as the Teaching Rocks.

Sacred Colours
Visit Christi's website for an interview with this Métis artist and to view more of her works.
http://christibelcourt.com/home.html

An Anishinaabe (Ojibwa) from Treaty 9, living on the northwest shores of Lake Superior, Morrisseau started to paint in 1959. He is considered to be the first to illustrate the legends and teachings in picture form. He is credited with being the founder of the Woodland Indian Art movement. Morrisseau used bright colours in his works.

Flock of Loons
http://whetung.com/shop/a_johnson1.html

Spirit of Spring
Spirit of Summer
Spirit of Autumn
Spirit of Winter

Although a prominent member of the second generation of woodland Indian painters, Benjamin Chee Chee pursued a more economical graphic style, distilling his image to simple lines of grace and motion.

Good Morning
Friends

Autumn Flight
Spring Flight

Rick Beaver belongs to the Mississauga Ojibway of the Rice Lake area (Alderville) in Ontario. He has been painting for over 30 years. A trained biologist, he fuses art with science to honour and protect Mother Earth. His art has been noted for vibrant colour and line which creates motion for his subjects including wildlife, native lifestyles and particularly dynamic landscapes rendered in gouache (opaque watercolor) or acrylics.

http://rickbeaver.com/