



Discover Who You Are: *Guiding Voices*

Jennifer Podemski

“You are not alone.”



Who is Jennifer Podemski?

- Jennifer Podemski is an actor, writer, producer and entrepreneur.
- She is Saulteaux and Israeli.
- She is an award winning, Gemini nominated actor and has appeared in more than 100 television series and feature films.
- Growing up she had a very weak sense of self and felt shame of who she was.
- At the age of ten, she found a great love of performing.
- A New York critic saw a small play she participated in, wrote a smashing review about her performance and it gave her the courage to go on.
- She believes that we are here to leave something behind, to continue our culture and languages and keep our communities alive and strong.
- When she was growing up she watched a lot of television but she never saw anyone who represented her. She came to the realization that if people are not reflected in media and popular culture they are invisible to the world.
- Now she uses her skills and training to provide a platform for Indigenous youth to tell their stories and share them with other kids who have no representation.
- She followed her roots and found her passion.



What is she currently doing?

Currently, Jennifer:

- Can be seen as Dr. Crowshoe on the award winning drama series, Blackstone and in FireSong directed by Adam Garnett.
- Is a story teller behind and in front of the camera.
- Makes time for training Indigenous youth in film and TV, mentoring and holding self-esteem workshops across the United States and Canada.



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Teacher Notes - Jennifer Podemski

After viewing the video segment discuss the following:

As seen in this video segment Jennifer works to bring realistic portrayals of First Nations people to television and film, as she felt “invisible” in the media while growing up. Do you feel that you truly self-identify with characters on TV and film? What kinds of new characters would you like to see in film and television, and why?

Suggested Tasks:

Back to My Roots – Family Traditions (Junior)

CGE A collaborative contributor who respects the rights, responsibilities and contributions of self and others.

Oral Communication Expectation - Junior

1.6 Extend understanding of oral texts by connecting the ideas in them to their own knowledge, experience, and insights; to other texts, including print and visual texts, and to the world around them.

Writing Expectation - Junior

2.1 Generate ideas about a potential topic using a variety of strategies and resources.

Action:

Indigenous people have used the oral tradition as the means of passing on information from generation to generation. They would sit in a talking circle and pass around the talking stick. Review the rules of the circle and talking stick. The teacher shares a family tradition and asks the students to think of one of their family traditions and record it in their journals using descriptive words. The students will form a talking circle, take turns holding the talking stick and share their traditions.

Writing Using RAFTS (Intermediate)

CGE An effective communicator who listens actively and critically to understand and learn in light of gospel values.

Writing Expectation - Intermediate

2.1 Write complex texts of different lengths using a wide range of forms.

Action:

Introduce students to the Comparison Matrix. Discuss its components. The students jot down notes about their ancestry, hobbies, beliefs, important people... While watching the video, students record information about Jennifer in the appropriate sections of the matrix. Review the RAFTS (role, audience, format, topic, strong verb) writing technique. Provide the students with the RAFTS graphic organizer so that they can complete their brainstorming. Then the students write a rough draft in the role of Jennifer.