



RCtv: Indigenous Realities Livestream

Lesson Plan

Grades 6-8

REEL CANADA

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Foreword

LESSON PLAN OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

This lesson guide accompanies the REEL CANADA Indigenous Realities Livestream for intermediate grade students.

The guide provides activities and resources to accompany a screening of the short films *Shin-chi's Canoe*, *Assini*, *Grandfather on the Prairies*, *The Orphan and the Polar Bear* and *Savage*.

Learning Objectives: Students will understand topics and concepts related to storytelling, culture, worldview and relationships, will identify connections between these themes as they relate to Indigenous realities, Canadian society and history, and will explain/apply these concepts and their importance to personal, social and cultural development.

Assessment Criteria: Students can:

- Contribute to and participate in group discussions respectfully
- Describe and explain their responses to and interpretations of short films
- Define and use terms related to Indigenous studies, language & media studies (e.g., messages, stories)
- Differentiate between perspectives of audiences, characters and creators of short films
- Communicate and make inferences and predictions from observations
- Identify connections between topics and films
- Identify and reflect on connections between the films and their own lives
- Contrast Indigenous and Western worldviews
- Explain the importance of storytelling and interconnectedness to Indigenous ways of knowing, learning and being
- Identify some examples of storytelling in Canadian history and describe some of the effects of these on various groups
- Demonstrate understanding of interconnectedness and explain its relationship to Truth & Reconciliation

Subject Areas: This lesson can be used to address curriculum expectations in Indigenous studies, English language, social studies and history courses. It may be relevant to additional subject areas with or without modifications.

Themes & Concepts:

- Stories
- Worldview
- Values (E.g., Seven Sacred Teachings, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit)
- “All my relations” (Interconnectivity)
- Truth & Reconciliation
- Residential Schools & Intergenerational trauma



Foreword



About this lesson

This lesson offers several activities to explore Indigenous realities, storytelling, history & Canadian society, and reconciliation, centred around the curated short films programme and Rctv livestream.

The structure of the lesson allows for you to work through all scaffolded exercises, or it can be customized to suit your needs. Some suggested learning paths are outlined below, or you can create your own way through the lesson. You can also pick out individual activities you want.

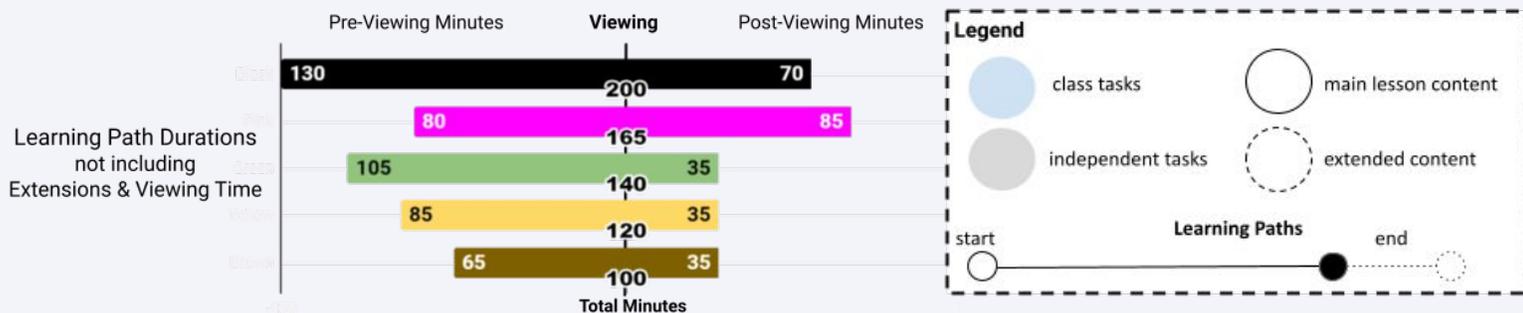
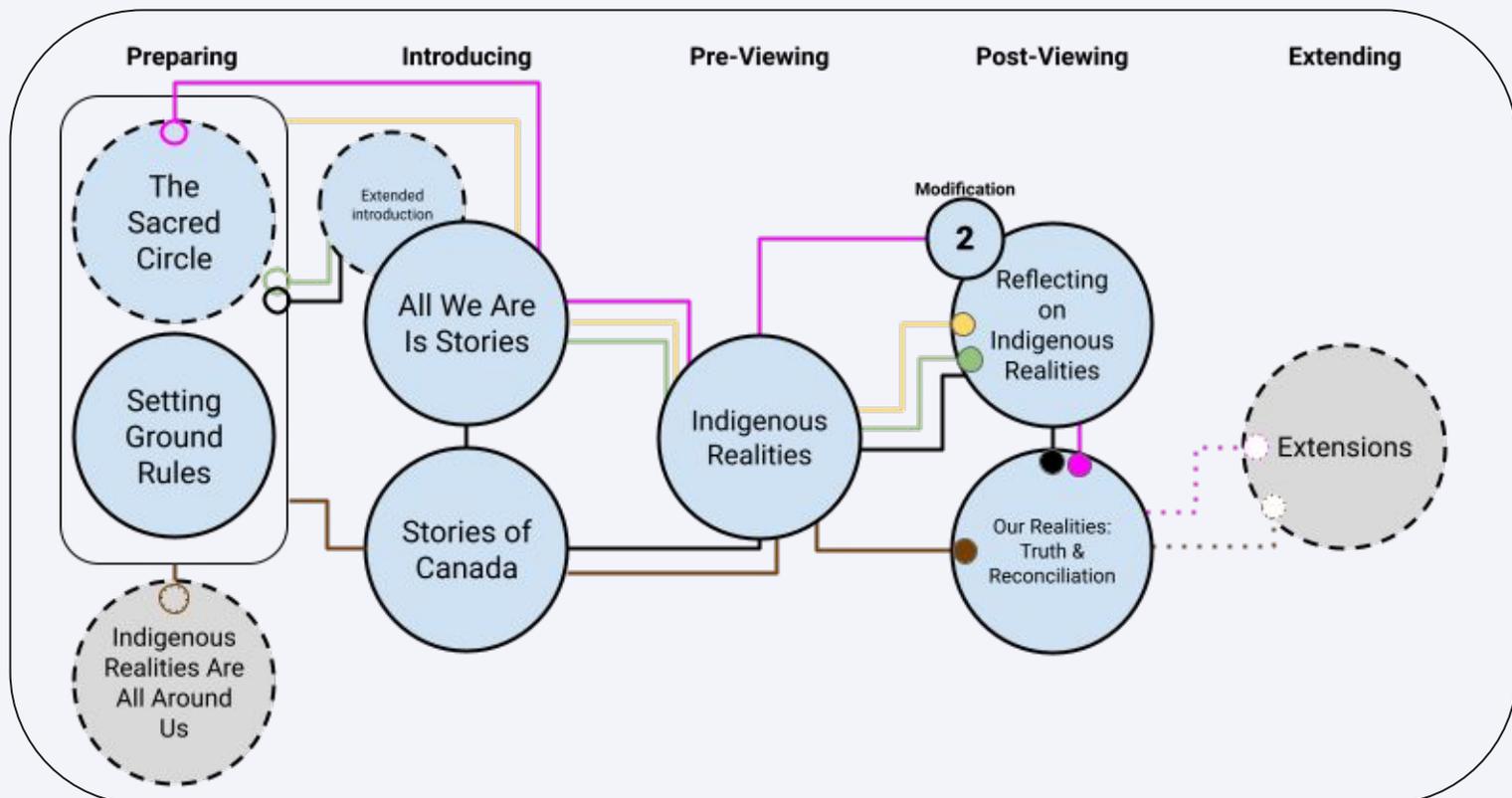
Main Lesson - Full Path

Main Lesson - Middle Path

Main Lesson - Short Path

History & Canadian Society Path

Indigenous Ways of Knowing Path





TEACHER MATERIALS

1. Preparing



Preparing the Classroom for Sensitive Topics

Topics around identity, racism, Indigenous realities and colonialism in Canada can be difficult for teachers and students to discuss. For educators participating in the **RCTv Indigenous Realities livestream**, we encourage taking the time and doing the work necessary to ensure a foundation for these discussions is in place in your classroom. As educators, we acknowledge that effective teaching and learning happen only when an anti-racist, decolonized approach is engaged.

Creating an inclusive and safe space requires teachers to be proactive in anti-racist education. If you have not done so, please consult our [best practices document for teachers](#).

Setting the Ground Rules

Distribute the [Classroom Agreements and Resources handout for students](#) prior to teaching these topics.

If you have not already done so, work together as a class to decide on rules for how to discuss with respect and space for differing points of view. It may be helpful to start with the Classroom Agreements handout. You can post the guidelines in the classroom and/or have students circle or rank the commitments that are most important to them as a way of entering into a lesson on difference and inclusivity.

Encourage self-reflection. You may want to have students respond in journal entries to any of the questions or topics discussed throughout the lesson.

Below are some general points to consider. These also figure into the lesson themes.

- We all have differences.
- We understand each other better when we get to know people who are different.
- Through sharing our stories respectfully, we are building community.
- But remember no one owes you their story.
- Emotions can be difficult to manage sometimes, so it's important to notice and care for them. Remember, emotions aren't inherently "bad", but managed carelessly, they can lead to destructive behaviours that hurt others. So, we have a responsibility to ourselves and to others to make an environment where we take care of each other.

This portion may be folded in with the [Sacred Circle activity](#) as a way to incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing in the classroom.

Preparing

These **optional** activities can be done in advance of the livestream and pre-viewing activities to engage students on the topics.



Indigenous Realities Are All Around Us

There are almost two million Indigenous people living in Canada. They are the fastest-growing segment of the population and their presence on these lands goes back thousands of years into time immemorial.

When we look around at Canadian society today, where (and how) do we see the historical presence of Indigenous realities acknowledged and not acknowledged?



Students can find evidence of Indigenous realities in their communities.

What stories are told here?

Discuss: Historical revisionism, colonialism, naming practices

1. When you find place names in your community (streets, rivers/lakes, parks, etc.) that hint at historical Indigenous presence there, what do these names tell us?
 - Are these places named for words, activities, or people?
 - Have the names changed from their original form? Have they been Anglicised? If so, what would they look/sound like in their original language?
2. What are the histories and legacy of the Indigenous peoples who have occupied this area?
3. What, if any, treaties or agreements exist that dictate how the land can be used?

The Sacred Circle (15 minutes)

This exercise can provide a basis for class discussions (and can be folded into the [Setting Ground Rules](#) stage on the previous page).

Students consider the differences between class configurations where they are arranged in rows facing the front of the class and where they are arranged in a circle. How does each configuration make them feel in relation to peers and the teacher?

Why is the shape of a circle important in a variety of Indigenous cultures?

What is symbolized by the circle?

- Non-hierarchical
 - Cyclical
 - Unbroken
- What can we infer about Indigenous ways of thinking from these qualities?

Discuss: Accountability, equality, community, respect

1. Where do we see circles used in Indigenous cultures & teachings?
2. How can we use circles as symbols to help us tell stories and understand our own lives?



Sources:

- First Nations Environmental Health Innovation Network - "[Cyclical Worldview: Understanding Environmental Health From a First Nations Perspective](#)"
- First Nations Pedagogy (June Kaminski) - "[Talking Circles](#)"
- Canadian Council for Learning: [First Nations, Métis & Inuit](#) holistic learning models

2. Introducing

1. All We Are Is Stories

~45-65 minutes



Premise:

This activity prepares students to consider the act of storytelling as they watch the films. By discussing questions related to storytelling in their own lives, they can better identify the ways storytelling functions in the context of personal growth, relationships, community, and culture, and the significance of these functions in Indigenous cultures and in the context of colonial narratives in Canada.

It encourages students to think about stories not just in the formal sense, but in how we create individual and collective meaning about the world around us.

Materials:

Quote slide (displayed or printed)

Extended Introduction

****optional**** (+20 minutes)

Materials:

Paper for free writing

“Stories We Tell” worksheet (optional)

Start by presenting only the partial Thomas King quote. Students reflect on it in a short, 1-2 minute timed free-writing activity.

“The truth about stories is that’s all we are.”

- *In your opinion, what is a story?*
- *What do you think the author of this quote means?*
- *Why are stories so important to this person? Do you agree?*

Remind students that during the free-write there is no editing, self-censoring, etc. for the duration of the exercise. Even if they have to repeat a word or phrase, they should keep the pen moving across the page until the timer goes off.

Students share their responses, and the teacher can record any important ideas that are read aloud.

Using a think-pair-share or other strategy, have students respond to the following questions. An optional worksheet for younger grades is provided.

1. What are some different kinds of stories?
2. What are some of the ways we tell stories?
3. What are some of the reasons we tell stories?
4. What are some of the main sources of stories?
5. How might stories be different depending on who tells them?

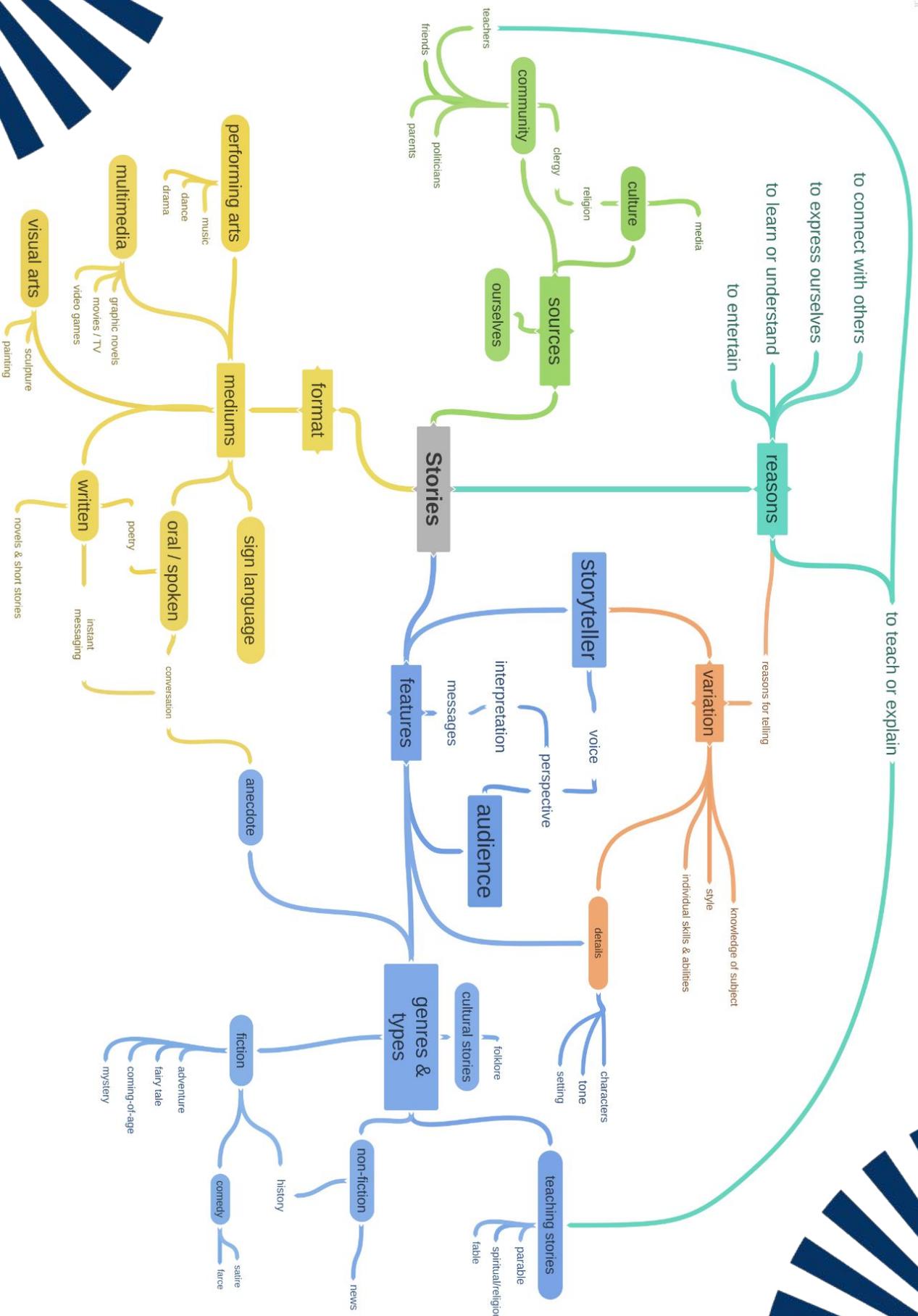
As they share their answers with the class, create a **mind map** or concept map together.

An example is included on the next page. To edit or use on your class’s digital blackboard, copy the diagram from Coggle.

Afterwards, continue as described.

Stories Web (example)

copyleak
made for free at copyleak.it



(Click the image to enlarge.)

All We Are Is Stories

MINDS ON (15 minutes)

Show the Thomas King quote slide. Give students a moment to read and reflect on the quote. Ask them to sum up the main point(s) of King's description of stories in their own words (i.e., what does he want readers to know?). Use these responses as a jumping off point to the questions below.

When discussing these questions, you can record relevant responses in columns indicating +/- effects of stories (e.g., add to the mind map, if you did one previously).

"Did you ever wonder how it is we imagine the world in the way we do, how it is we imagine ourselves, if not through our stories.

The truth about stories is that's all we are.

Stories are wondrous things. And they are dangerous. For once a story is told, it cannot be called back. It is loose in the world. So you have to be careful with the stories you tell. And you have to watch out for the stories that you are told."

Thomas King
The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative



GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to say that stories are "all we are?" How do stories both create and reflect our worlds?
2. How do stories help us understand ourselves, others, and the larger world we live in?
3. How are stories related to our worldviews and values? What are some of the big questions in life that stories can help us answer?
4. Why do you think King says stories can be both "wondrous and dangerous?" How can they be wondrous or dangerous?
5. Do you think stories are as powerful as King describes? What are some examples of stories having the power to create positive or negative effects?
6. How do we engage with stories as both storytellers and audiences? How can we be responsible storytellers and audiences?

ALL WE ARE IS STORIES (30 minutes)

How do stories make up our realities?

Give students the "My Realities" circle diagram. Draw the same circles on the board. Fill in the middle circle with 'life facts' — you can use your own as an example.

These may include:

- descriptions (age, physical appearance, nationality, location, etc.)
- details about your identity (cultural, religious, gender, family, etc.)
- details about relationships (friends, family, community, mentors, etc.)
- experiences (accomplishments, places lived, challenges faced, work done, etc.)

Individually, students fill in the middle circle on the handout with facts about themselves.

In the next circle, students can think of any 'stories' that come from the centre. What do we tell ourselves (and what do others tell us) about who we are? Remind them they only need to share what they are comfortable with.

These may include:

- self-perception (e.g., traits, interests, goals, etc.)
- worldview (values, beliefs, etc..)
- talents & abilities (what we're good at)
- reflections (how we explain/understand/react to experiences)

Students can include phrases or images that reflect their own stories.

All We Are Is Stories



In the outside circle, students expand the idea to include the larger stories about themselves in relation to others. This can include conflicts or contradictions between various parts of themselves or between their self-perception and the expectations of others. This gets them thinking about the challenges of ‘walking in different worlds.’

- family & friend dynamics
- community identity & history

Ask for volunteers to share examples from their circle. Compare these among the class.

- Why is it that no two students have exactly the same circles?
- When you consider everything we see in the circles, why might it be difficult to know and tell our own stories? For example, how are our stories affected by other people’s treatment and expectations of us?
- How do our circle(s) demonstrate relationships between facts about our lives and the stories we tell (and hear) about ourselves? What does this tell us about how we learn to understand ourselves and others?
- Why might good experiences and bad experiences both be included in someone’s circle? Why might experiences that happened to our ancestors fit?

Through this exercise, students see there are similarities and differences among students in the classroom. Parts of our circles may be familiar to others: for example, we all come to this same school. But there is a lot more to our identities and our stories than the name of our school or the grade we’re in.

More than 38 million people live in Canada. They all share in common that they are living on this land. They may share other experiences too. But their circles are like fingerprints. No two are exactly alike; their stories are unique to their lived experiences.

With that in mind, students can be encouraged to appreciate the different perspectives and experiences that we all bring to our interactions with each other, and to approach telling our stories as sharing gifts respectfully with one another.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. How are the experiences of diverse Canadians (including Indigenous people and non-citizens/new arrivals) different from one another?
2. Think about times you might have made assumptions about others, or had assumptions made about you, based on real or perceived differences. What do these situations tell you about the experience of telling or hearing stories and their effects? For example, how have you felt when someone has made assumptions about you?
3. Why is it important to know about other people’s experiences and hear their stories? How can we learn about, from, and with others in a respectful way?

Introducing

2. Stories of Canada

~25 minutes



Premise:

After looking at the role of stories in our lives generally, students will more specifically look at the ways stories can shape cultural beliefs and values over the long term, with particular attention given to Indigenous realities and the effects of residential schools.

Materials:

[Image slide](#) (displayed or printed)
Projector/internet (for video)



MINDS ON (10 minutes)

Students can be asked to reflect on their circles diagram and to imagine another ring on the outside. This ring includes

broader stories about not just individuals but about societies and cultures, and the beliefs that come to seem 'normal' over time. Discuss:

1. How are our assumptions about individuals relate to stories we tell about other people as groups? How are these stories and beliefs related to stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination?
2. How can stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination affect how someone views and experiences the world and how they understand their own identity? For example, what are the effects of repeatedly hearing negative stories about ourselves from other people?
3. What might be the benefits of challenging our own assumptions (biases) about other people's stories?

STORIES OF CANADA (15 minutes)

Show the images on the [image slide](#).

1. What are the stories that are told in these images? What is being said about Canada, about Indigenous people(s), about the land and about relationships between settlers, Indigenous people and the Crown?

Watch video: [Residential Schools in Canada: A Select Timeline \[Historica Canada\]](#) [6:49]

Students discuss the following topics in groups.

1. What are the stories that allowed residential schools to occur? Why do you think so many people believed and told these stories?
2. How did residential schools shape Indigenous peoples' stories? How did Indigenous people maintain their stories through hardship?

Reconvene as a class to share responses and expand the discussion together.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. How did the stories & worldviews of early Canadian settlers conflict with those of Indigenous peoples already living here? How did these conflicts affect the lives of each of these groups? How have stories shaped relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada?
2. What are some stories that supported the creation of Canada? How did this process involve controlling who was allowed to tell stories? When some people's stories have been ignored, how has this affected Canadians' understanding of their own identity & history?
3. How are examples of stories being "dangerous" or "wondrous" demonstrated in these images and video, or in other portrayals of Indigenous people in media?

3. Pre-Viewing

3. Indigenous Realities

~20 minutes



Premise:

When we talk about “Indigenous Realities,” it is important that students understand that there is no one reality that all Indigenous people share. One of the effects of colonial and assimilationist policies in Canada has been to erase distinctions between Indigenous peoples (e.g., creating a “status Indian”), while at the same time enforcing state violence on successive generations of Indigenous people such that nearly all Indigenous people alive in this country today share in a common story of surviving ongoing acts of colonization.

Students consider stories that have played out throughout history and today, and what it has meant that Indigenous people have had their stories mistold by others for so long.

Materials:

[K-W-L chart](#) (optional)

["Stories of Me" worksheet](#)

Getting Started (10 minutes)

Students recall what has been discussed so far. **We’ve seen that our individual realities contain all the small details and the big stories about everything we’ve experienced. That means our realities include times we’ve enjoyed and times we’ve found challenging or painful. These are all parts of our stories, but our stories can’t be reduced to any single part.**

Students will apply these ideas to specific stories of Indigenous realities in Canada. The livestream and films they will be watching are about experiences of Indigenous people.

Students can start filling out a [K-W-L chart](#) at this time in response to the following prompts or the topic of Indigenous realities generally.

1. What are some ways that Indigenous people have been prevented from telling their own stories in the past? What has been the result of having their stories told mainly by non-Indigenous people for so long? How are they being empowered to tell their stories now?
2. While each person’s story is unique, what are some of the events and experiences that have created shared realities between Indigenous people in Canada today? How are these shared realities acknowledged in the works of Indigenous storytellers?

If you plan to have students complete an independent summative assignment, they can identify topics & questions of interest now that will help direct them in what to explore further later on.

Preparing to View the Films

Images of Indigenous Realities (10 minutes)

Show students the [film posters](#) and have them predict what the films are about and how they . What can they infer from the words and images about what stories each of the films might tell? What might be “dangerous” or “wondrous?”

You may hand out the film viewing worksheet here and/or read through the [film-specific questions](#) as a class to prepare for viewing and discussing the films and to ensure students understand what's being asked and what to look/listen for in the film.



4. Post-Viewing

4. Reflecting on Indigenous Realities

~35 minutes
(or longer)



After watching all the films, students can reflect on what they've learned about Indigenous realities from these stories.

Materials:

- ["Indigenous Realities" worksheet](#)
- [Film viewing questions](#)

FILM QUESTIONS (20 minutes)

Divide students into five groups. Each group is assigned the questions for a specific film. They can discuss the questions in group for a few minutes, as well as the question of :



What examples of stories (wondrous and dangerous) did you see in this film?

During this time groups also elect a speaker. As a class, each group shares one or two interesting points from the discussion and their examples in response to the above question.



DISCUSSION & REFLECTION (15 minutes)

Each group speaker takes a turn, then students have the chance to respond or ask questions in discussion. During this time (or after), they should also complete the **Indigenous realities circle handout** — you may have given them this before the film.

Format:

- What are some words & phrases you would use to describe Indigenous realities, based on the short films in this programme?
- Write these inside the circle. If any of the words describe more than one film, make these words bigger or bolder.
- Use two different colours to indicate 'wondrous' or 'dangerous' stories.

This portion can take as long as you need.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Did any of these films challenge your existing ideas about Indigenous realities? If so, how? What do our responses in class say about our understanding of indigenous realities from a class perspective?
2. What kinds of stories are Indigenous filmmakers telling? How might these stories affect our understanding or perspective of the "Canadian story?"
3. Think about the realities each of these characters is dealing with in the movie? In what ways do you feel like you can relate to their situation or feelings? Do the movies give us any insight about ourselves and others? Do the movies connect in any way to our school as a community or our broader community?

MODIFICATIONS & NOTES

1. If doing this exercise digitally: Create a class word cloud from students' responses. Display the word cloud to review together as part of the class discussion.
2. An alternative to this circle exercise: students choose a character from one of the films and complete a ["My realities" diagram](#) for that character (see Pre-Viewing ["All We Are Is Stories" section](#)).

Post-Viewing

5. Our Realities: Truth & Reconciliation

~35 minutes
(or longer)



Now that students will have had an opportunity to view the films and the livestream and to engage with other students and with Indigenous filmmakers they can reflect on what they've learned about Indigenous realities, Canada's Indian residential school system, and what reconciliation means.

If we think about interconnectedness as a core tenet of Indigenous ways of being, we must consider the ways colonization has been a *disconnecting* force. What has been lost in disconnections? What have Indigenous people lost due to colonization and racism, and what have Canadians as a society lost in refusing to listen? As we live in a highly complex, rapidly changing 21st Century world, multiple factors add to the complexity of the changing relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada.

The struggles of the films' characters with identity and connection may be relatable to students as they strive to find a balance in their many stories. The findings and recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission provide a framework for this balance, as we are each on our own journey to understand personal, communal and cultural identities and to, collectively, write the story of the future.

Big Question: What would true reconciliation look like?

Materials:

- [All My Relations](#) handout

TO START (5 minutes)

As we learn and acknowledge all our individual stories, we also acknowledge the collective stories of what it means to all live together on these lands.

How do you think our stories are connected to and reflected in each other? If that's the case, what does that mean for our collective future living here?

All Our Relations (15 minutes)

"All my relations"

Have you heard this phrase before? What do you think it might refer to?

Pass out the [handout](#) and read together as a class.

Explain to or remind students that Indigenous peoples, while distinct in many ways, share the idea of interconnection as a core part of their worldviews. Many other belief traditions and even the science of ecology also emphasize the interdependence of beings and their environments.

In small groups or as a class, reflect on the questions below:

- *What does interconnection mean to you?*
- *How can interconnection inform our understanding what it mean to be responsible to ourselves and to each other and to have good relations?*

Indigenous ways of knowing and being

Our Realities: Truth & Reconciliation

Indigenous Ways of Knowing*

DISCUSSION (15 minutes)

Remember the ways we talked about shared realities and big stories that we share in with others. Students are encouraged to imagine and create metaphors for how their individual circles interconnect with others (e.g., as beads sewn together, ripples on a pond, etc.).

* connects to 'Sacred Circle' activity in prep activities.

The guiding questions below can be used to extend the discussion on interconnection. This portion can take as much time as you need.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Can you think of examples of interconnection in your own circles? Or between your circles and those of other people?
2. Where do you see interconnectivity in the films?
3. What differences do you think you would see between worldviews that value either interconnection or disconnection/individuality? Do you think it is possible to balance these two ideas? How?
4. How might the philosophy of 'All My Relations' contribute to resolving or addressing challenges that result from conflict between and within our various circles?
5. How does 'All My Relations' shape or challenge your understanding of what reconciliation means and how Canadians might work towards it?



5. Extending



Extensions

- Create a representation of your response to the films, class activities and the livestream that reflects your personal learning. You can base this around completing the “KWL chart” if you started one earlier.
- Complete the suggested Interconnection Expression activity on the [First Nations Pedagogy](#) site. Create an art response.
- Look at other traditional Indigenous values. How do they relate to/are reflected in interconnectedness? What are some other common values between various Indigenous worldviews?
- Can your students connect with an Indigenous elder or organisation within your community? If you do this, pay attention to what this process looks like and what is shared between them and your students.
- Create an artistic response to tell a story about the specific history of your region that highlights Indigenous realities.
- Students can reflect on their own individual and collective stories related to reconciliation and interconnectedness through writing personal journals and class discussions.
- What stories might we tell about our own personal, family, or community and learning journeys we’ve been on? Classes can create a mosaic of these stories (record an audiobook, a tapestry of images, etc.)



ADDITIONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the impacts of using stories in a careless or harmful way? What kinds of stories do you think can contribute to a future in Canada that is more equitable?
2. What do you think the films say about having people in our lives to tell us the right stories?
3. What role do films and storytelling play in building community and reconciliation? Use examples from the films and from your experience watching the films.
4. How do you think understanding Indigenous realities (as told by Indigenous storytellers) can help change the broader relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people? What new stories can we tell about the future of Canada and Indigenous realities?





References & Resource Links

Residential Schools

The Canadian Encyclopedia. [Residential Schools in Canada: A Timeline](#)
[Shi-shi-etko](#) (2009). [short film, 6 min. — a prequel to *Shin-chi's Canoe*]

Interconnectedness

First Nations Pedagogy (2006 - 2017). [Website](#) by June Kaminski.

- [“Interconnectedness”](#) (2013).

[Walking Together: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Perspectives in the Curriculum](#). Government of Alberta (2012).

- Well-being: All my relations (Excerpt from *Aboriginal Perspectives*) [\[PDF\]](#)

SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES

Indigenous Worldviews & Ways of Being

[Religion and Spirituality of Indigenous Peoples in Canada | The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)

Seven Sacred Teachings (“Seven Grandfather Teachings”)

[Seven Grandfather Teachings First Nations Métis Inuit Student Education Resources Alberta Educators](#)

[Teaching of the Seven Grandfathers | Town of Collingwood](#)

[The Gifts of the Seven Grandfathers - Ojibwe.net](#)

[Seven Teachings | Southern First Nations Network of Care | Manitoba](#)

Cree Stories, Values & Beliefs

Cree cultural values ([Cree Literacy Network](#))

[Cuthand: Spiritual belief in the natural world can tell us so much | The Star Phoenix](#)

Wahkohtowin (“kinship”) ([Andrea Smith - The Tyee](#))

Inuit Stories, Values & Beliefs

Inuit Art Foundation. [Your Guide to the Monsters in Inuit Art](#)

Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ) & Inuit social/cultural values ([Government of Nunavut](#))

Métis Stories, Values & Beliefs

Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada. [Métis](#). (Canadian Geographic)

Métis Gathering. [History & Culture | Storytelling](#).

Stó:lō Stories, Values & Beliefs

[Set in Stone: Stó:lō Ancestors' Spirits Live in Fraser Valley Landmarks](#) (CBC News)

[Siwal Si'wes Digital Library](#)

[Species Are Sacred: A Stó:lō World View on Species at Risk in S'ólh Téméxw \(Fraser Valley\)](#) (South Coast Conservation Program)



SLIDES

Note:

Slide content is included here for your convenience and for printing.

To show your students, please click through to the [external slideshow](#) that is formatted for displaying on a screen.

“Did you ever wonder how it is we imagine the world in the way we do, how it is we imagine ourselves, if not through our stories.

The truth about stories is that’s all we are.

Stories are wondrous things. And they are dangerous. For once a story is told, it cannot be called back. It is loose in the world. So you have to be careful with the stories you tell. And you have to watch out for the stories that you are told.”

Thomas King
*The Truth About Stories: A
Native Narrative*



CANADA WEST



DESIGNED BY
HON. JAMES ALEXANDER ROBB
MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION
AND COLONIZATION
Ottawa, Canada, 1925

CANADA - THE NEW HOMELAND

Campaign Title Canada —The New Homeland
Year 1925

Advertisement in *Canada West Magazine*, by the
Minister of Immigration and Colonization

Library and Archives Canada, no. 2958967

Artist David Garneau
Title *Not to Confuse Politeness with Agreement*
Year 2013





STUDENT MATERIALS



“All My Relations”

At the heart of First Nations, Inuit and Metis worldviews is the concept of **interconnectedness**, the awareness of how everything in the universe is connected. Indigenous ways of thinking and being emphasize relationships and balance with the world around us. These interconnected relationships comprise the Sacred Circle of Life, the understanding that all living things extend from the Great Spirit and are worthy of respect and caring. This philosophy forms the basis for traditional Indigenous practices of living sustainably within the environment, and also for Indigenous societies in which everyone is seen to have responsibility to everyone else.

The English phrase “**All My Relations**” is used to refer to interconnectedness.

Here are just a few versions of this phrase in Indigenous languages:

Mitákuye Oyás’iŋ
(Lakota)

kahkiyaw niwâhkômâkanitik
(Cree)

Nii’kinaaganaa
(Anishinaabemowin)

Msit No’kmaq
(Mi’kmaq)

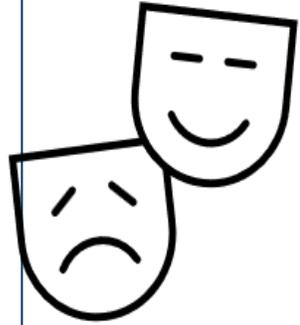
“All my relations” is the English equivalent of a phrase familiar to most Native peoples of North America. It may begin or end a prayer or speech or a story, and, while each tribe has its own way of expressing this sentiment in its own language, the meaning is the same. “All my relations” is at first a reminder of who we are and of our relationship with both our family and our relatives. It also reminds us of the extended relationship we share with all human beings. But the relationships that Native people see go further, the web of kinship to animals, to the birds, to the fish, to the plants, to all the animate and inanimate forms that can be seen or imagined. More than that, “all my relations” is an encouragement for us to accept the responsibilities we have within the universal family by living our lives in a harmonious and moral manner (a common admonishment is to say of someone that they act as if they had no relations).

— Thomas King, *All My Relations*

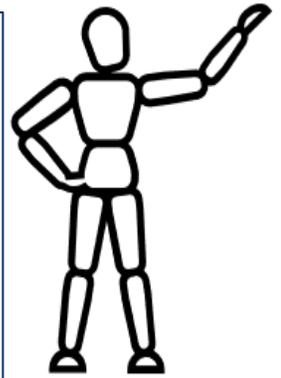
The philosophy and practice of “All My Relations” can teach people a lot about relating to others and to themselves. When we take the time to really ‘be’ with someone we utilize our inner knowing to sense deep levels within the person. Listening attentively and respectfully to what others say, allows us to ‘know’ them better with much more than our rationale minds. This helps us to engage with others in holistic and meaningful ways that support health and well-being. By going further and regarding them as someone who is genuinely connected to us, we go even deeper to feel the inner essence of the person. It is this deep connection that serves as the foundation of relationship with our world, supported by interconnected knowing.

— June Kaminski, “[Interconnectedness](#)”

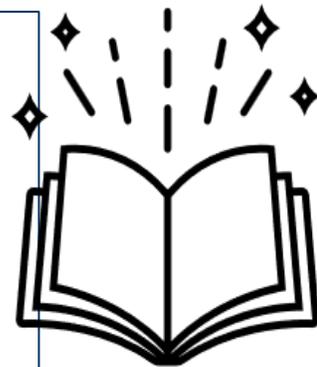
1. What are some of the different **kinds** of stories we can tell?



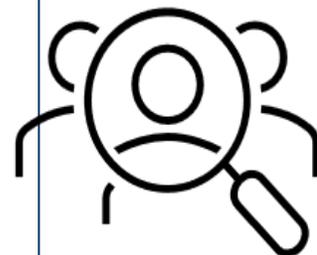
2. What are some of different **reasons** we tell stories?



3. What are some different **ways** we tell stories?



4. How are stories different depending on **who** tells them?



My Realities

Inside the circles, write or draw any words, phrases or images that you feel reflect your own story.

Inside (facts about me):

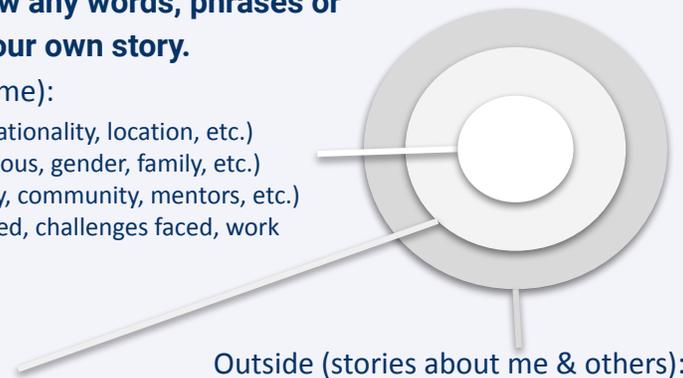
- descriptions (age, physical appearance, nationality, location, etc.)
- details about your identity (cultural, religious, gender, family, etc.)
- details about relationships (friends, family, community, mentors, etc.)
- experiences (accomplishments, places lived, challenges faced, work done, etc.)

Middle (stories about me):

- self-perception (e.g., traits, interests, goals, etc.)
- worldview (values, beliefs, etc..)
- talents & abilities (what we're good at)
- reflections (how we explain/understand/react to experiences)

Outside (stories about me & others):

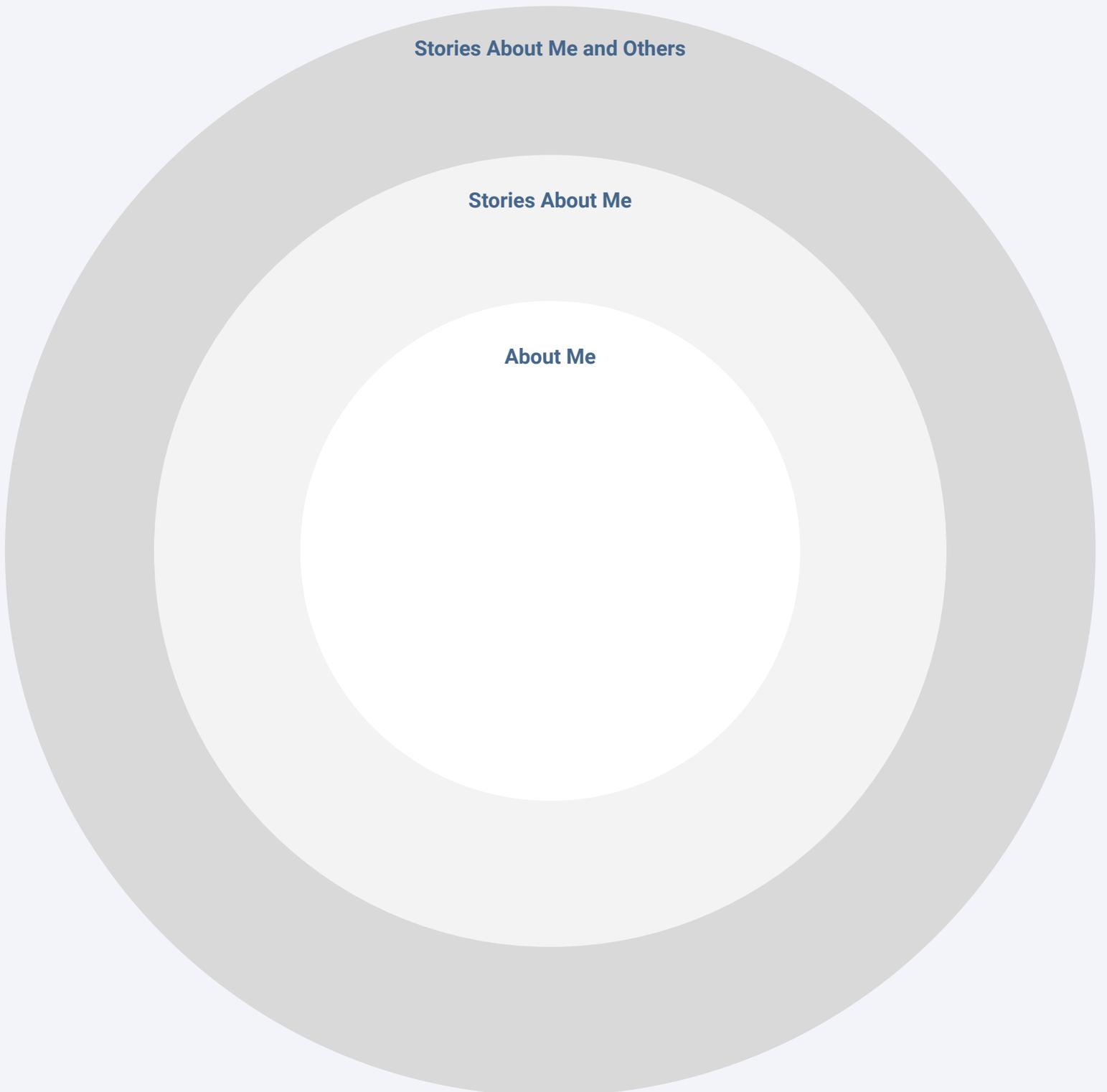
- family & friend dynamics
- community identity & history



Stories About Me and Others

Stories About Me

About Me



Indigenous Realities

What are some words & phrases you would use to describe Indigenous realities, based on the short films in this programme?

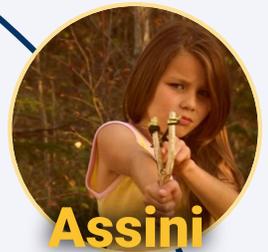
Write these inside the circle. If any of the words describe more than one film, make these words **bigger** or **bolder**.

Use two different colours to indicate 'wondrous' or 'dangerous' stories.

- Wondrous stories
- Dangerous stories



**Shin-chi's
Canoe**



Assini



Savage

The Orphan



**and the
Polar Bear**



**Grandfather
on the
Prairies**

Film Questions (Next Five Pages)

Questions are also available as [slides](#) for displaying on a screen.



Film Chronology





Stó:lō
a people of the
Coast Salish



What is special about Shin-chi's toy canoe? Why is it significant that he keeps the canoe for the whole school year?

How are the children's lives at the school different from their lives at home?

How does the film end, and what is the significance of the ending scene?

What feelings do the children experience at various points in the film?

What does Shi-shi-etko mean when she asks her grandmother to cut her hair "in a good way"?

How are the children affected by, and how do they respond to, the residential school environment?



Métis



Who is telling the story? How can you know? What might be their reasons for telling this story?

How would you describe the way the way the students and teacher(s) feel and act towards each other?

What does Assini mean when she says she did “a lot of growing up” over just a few days?

How does the boy dressed as a cowboy act towards the other children? Why?

Why is Assini surprised to learn she is Indigenous (“Indian”)? How does she feel about it?

What do you think Assini’s grandmother means when she says Jack yells at Bertah because he is scared of himself?

What messages do the children receive, and from where/whom? How do these messages affect them?



Grandfather on the Prairies

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nêhiyawak
the Plains Cree



What does Jason learn from his encounter with his ancestor?

How do you think Jason feels about this conversation?

What do Jason and his ancestor disagree about?

How does Jason's great-great-great grandfather suggest he acquire buffalo meat?

Why might it be important or unimportant whether Jason knows how to hunt?

Why do you think the filmmaker chose to use humour to tell this story of a conversation between different generations? What is the effect of this choice?

The Orphan and the Polar Bear

△_o△^c
Inuit
the Inuit

Where do you think this film is set? How can you tell?



What do you think the narrator means in saying “never doubt the power of these old stories?”

How do you think the orphan feels at different points in the film?

The narrator mentions that “our world is changing.” How is the world changing, and why is this significant?

What gift does the polar bear give to the orphan that he says no one can take away? Do you think he could have received this gift from anyone else?

How would you describe the boy’s experiences in his home community and in the bear community?

How is the boy changed or affected by the experience of meeting the polar bear?

Savage

ᑎᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ
nêhiyawak
the Plains Cree



What feelings are expressed by various characters in the film? How are these feelings reflected by the music?

What do you think is communicated in the children's dancing when the teacher leaves the room?

What is the environment of the school like?

What do you think is the significance of the children having their faces painted in pale makeup?

What is the significance of the film's title?

What does the mother wish for her child in the song she sings?

The filmmaker describes *Savage* as a “residential school musical.” Do you find this description surprising? What is the effect of using music and dance in telling this story?