



Date: _____

Elder Digital Storytelling Project

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please read this Acknowledgement before the start of this lesson to respect the knowledge that is being shared and the Land of the People where the knowledge originates.:

We acknowledge the First Light Friendship Centre in Newfoundland and Labrador from where this lesson plan originates.

We respectfully acknowledge Newfoundland as the ancestral homelands of the Beothuk, whose culture has been lost forever and can never be recovered. We also acknowledge the island of Ktaqmkuk (Newfoundland) as the unceded, traditional territory of the Beothuk and the Mi'kmaq. And we acknowledge Labrador as the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Innu of Nitassinan, the Inuit of Nunatsiavut, and the Inuit of NunatuKavut. We recognize all First Peoples who were here before us, those who live with us now, and the seven generations to come. As First Peoples have done since time immemorial, we strive to be responsible stewards of the land and to respect the cultures, ceremonies, and traditions of all who call it home. As we open our hearts and minds to the past, we commit ourselves to working in a spirit of truth and reconciliation to make a better future for all.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this lesson plan, students will be able to:

1. explore the concept of culture and demonstrate an understanding of its role in students' lives; [Social Studies]
2. investigate how cultures are transmitted from generation to generation; [Social Studies]
3. create inquiry questions to gather information for multiple purpose. [Language Arts]

LIST OF ACTIVITIES

1. On the Land Learning and Storytelling

MATERIALS

- Handouts and Worksheets for this lesson
- Recording Equipment and Editing Software for recording Elders - To Be Determined



Social Studies

Origin

First Light Friendship Centre
St. John's
Newfoundland and Labrador

Learning Level / Grade

6



420 mins

Related Subjects

English Language Arts,
Indigenous Ways of Knowing
& Being

DESCRIPTION

In this lesson, students work with an Elder or Knowledge Keeper in the community to explore the concept of culture.

HOLISM AND ALL OUR RELATIONS

This lesson plan has been developed with an Indigenous lens that is holistic in nature, a way of being and knowing that acknowledges our relationships with 'all our relations', including plants and animals, other human beings, the water, land, wind, sun, moon, stars, and more - everything seen and unseen. With 'all our relations' in mind, this lesson plan has been developed with a focus on:

- Language and Culture
- Participatory and experiential learning activities
- Intergenerational learning with Elders/Knowledge Holders
- Relationship with family, ancestors
- Different learning styles; attention given to mind, body, and spirit
- Connections are made with everyday life
- Nurturing healthy relationships in school and community
- Ethics in the classroom: care, truthfulness and trust, respect, integrity
- Healthy relationship with self and identity
- Relationship with the land
- Personal reflection time (connecting with thoughts and feelings)

TEACHERS' GUIDE

Background/Foundational Information

- In preparation for this lesson, it is important for educators to research and acknowledge the ancestral territory in which they reside. The 'Acknowledgement' provided in this lesson plan can be read prior to either of the following. In Newfoundland and Labrador, educators can read First Light's Land 'Acknowledgement' provided in the link below.
<https://firstlightnl.ca/site/uploads/2020/08/First-Light-Land-Acknowledgment-1.pdf>

It is also important that educators acknowledge the Indigenous territory in their own province. Educators should research their local area for their own land acknowledgement and recognize the Indigenous groups in that area. It is good practice for educators to pass along this research and new knowledge to their students before the start of the lesson.

It is also essential that students and educators understand the role of an Indigenous Elder or Knowledge Keeper, and are aware of cultural protocols for asking for assistance, guidance, participation, etc. It is important for teachers to discuss the difference between an Elder and a senior. The teacher may contact a local Friendship Centre or local Indigenous community organization that the Elder or Knowledge Keeper belongs to, to discuss these protocols and talk about the Indigenous community of the territory where this lesson plan is being held.

Examples of Indigenous Protocols for Elders and Knowledge Keepers:

<https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/indigenous-elder-definition>

<https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/first-nation-elder-protocol>

The teacher can also invite a guest speaker from the local Indigenous community or local Friendship Centre, who is not an Elder or Knowledge Keeper, to talk about the teachings, traditions, and ceremonies of the specific Indigenous group of your territory.

This lesson is grounded in 'Inquiry-Based Learning.' *A Practical Guide to Inquiry-Based Learning* (by Jennifer Watt and Jill Colyer) has been provided for teachers to review prior to beginning this lesson (available in the section 'Where Can I Go for Additional Information?').

ACTIVITIES

1 - On the Land Learning and Storytelling**Purpose**

The purpose of this activity is to provide students the opportunity of working with an Elder or Knowledge Keeper to explore concepts of culture.

Time: 420 mins

Activity Instructions**Background Knowledge:**

Prior to starting the project, the teacher will hold a session with the students to explore local Indigenous groups and their cultures. Awareness should be directed to learning about local Indigenous peoples as contemporary and progressive societies and not with a 'museum approach' (i.e. living in the past).

Community Connection: If the teacher is not familiar with local Indigenous communities, they can contact their local Friendship Centre; local or district school board's First Nations, Métis, and Inuit representative; or Indigenous organizations to inquire if there is someone interested in coming to the class to hold this session.

If possible, students will be working with local Elder(s) or Knowledge Keeper(s) to learn more about how culture is passed down from generation to generation. (It is important to note that there are aspects of Indigenous culture that are sacred and cannot be shared). If there are no Elders or Knowledge Keepers available, students can ask senior family members such as a grandparents, aunts, and uncles (also referred to in this lesson plan as 'guests').

Once a community connection has been made for guests, the project details and any protocols and permissions for Elders or Knowledge Keepers are established. Teachers may also want to use class time to discuss the specific Indigenous culture of the Elder(s) or Knowledge Keeper(s) in preparation for their visit.

Activating Prior Knowledge:

Teachers should consult with someone in their local Indigenous community (suggestions listed above) about Elder protocols and, if an Elder or Knowledge Keeper is visiting the class, to learn about their specific culture and protocols. Information on the definition of 'Elder' and 'Elder Protocols' can be found in the following links:

<https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/indigenous-elder-definition>

<https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/first-nation-elder-protocol>

Activity #1: Discussion (60 Minutes)

Once the teacher and students have a foundational knowledge of local Indigenous groups, the teacher can work with the class to develop a KWL chart (included with this lesson - handout #8). This chart explores: 'K' - what students know; 'W' - what they need to know, and 'L' - what they want to learn through the project.

In small groups of 3 to 5, students: i) decide what the final product is that they want to produce with the guest, for example a slide show or a video (some guests may not be comfortable being filmed, in which case they can be involved with a slide show that does not include using their image); and ii) determine a list of devices needed, such as iphones, video cameras, ipads, digital cameras, etc. Students can write their ideas down in their notebooks or use a 'Thought Web' (included with this lesson plan) to help guide their ideas.

*Handout #1: Thought Web***Activity #2: Active Listening Strategies (15 minutes)**

Prior to guests visiting the class, the teacher will review active listening strategies with the students. These strategies include ways to clarify meaning, give feedback, and summarize what has been said. The teacher will also discuss the definition of 'Inquiry Questions' and suggest that during the project students write down any "I wonder" questions that come to mind while working with the guests. (Refer to the 'Inquiry Questions' document attached to this lesson plan).

As students are working with classmates and guests throughout the Elder Digital Storytelling project, teachers can

make observations and anecdotal notes to use to assess students' active listening strategies.

Handout #3: Teacher Checklist - Active Listening Skills

Activity #3: Getting to Know our Elders (60 minutes)

Prior to this activity, teachers can create a list of "I wonder" questions as a whole class, derived from Activity 2. Doing so allows teachers to talk about respectful questions to ask an Elder or senior family member (i.e. guest) before they visit the classroom. Throughout the activity, students can continue adding "I wonder" inquiry questions for the guests to the 'Thought Web'.

Guests can be made welcome by being invited to the classroom in advance of the project to get to know the students and teacher, such as a casual "meet and greet" to develop relationships over refreshments.

Students will work with the guests in small groups of 3-5. Depending on how many guests are taking part in this project, there can be one guest per group or guests can move amongst the groups. Small group work such as this enables students to get to know the guests personally through sharing a conversation and listening to their stories. Students will use active listening strategies during this time.

Handout #4: I Wonder - Inquiry Sheet

Resource: Inquiry Questions

<http://blogs.ubc.ca/stevemcg/files/2014/09/inquiry-questions.pdf>

Activity #4: Homework Reflection Activity

Students will be given the 'Self-Reflection' worksheet (handout # 6) and 'Making Connections' worksheet (handout #5) as homework. They will be asked to: i) reflect on the experiences of the digital project; ii) discuss elements of culture that have been passed on to them within their own homes; and iii) to reflect on the importance of tradition and culture.

Handout #5: Making Connections; Handout #6: Self-Reflection

Activity #5: Creating a Story Board (60 Minutes)

The teacher introduces the concept of a Story Board (see handout # 2) as a means to organize illustrations that students use to plan the visualization of the Elder Digital Storytelling project. Students will be working with the guests to develop a story line from start to finish, allowing the guests to take the lead on the story they wish to tell. Students can use some of their inquiry questions to add to the storytelling process, e.g., "I wonder when the Elder first started to practice smudging".

The Story Board includes the location for where the project will be shot and clothing or materials to be used in the video or slide presentation. If the slide presentation option is chosen, students work with the guests to decide which pictures to use (these may be pictures from their home, community, or the location of the project shoot).

When choosing a location, to ensure the production has a connection to land, educators, students, and guests can brainstorm ideas as to where students feel most connected in the area of their school or community. Suggestions may include a forested area near the school, a trapper's tent, or in a Wigwam. Teachers allow students and guests the opportunity to decide which setting best fits their personal story and final production.

Handout #2: Story Board Worksheet

Activity #6: Video or Slide Presentation Production (60-120 minutes)

In Activity 5, students decided on a location for the video shoot or for photographs for the slide presentation option. Once a location has been decided as a whole class, permissions need to be confirmed ahead of the shoot. Teachers must confirm with their school administration that the appropriate travel protocols and procedures are in place. Media Consent forms (handout # 7) are required from Elders, students, and family members who are to in the video or slide presentation.

Once all requirements have been met, the teacher, students, and guests can visit the location. They will start the filming process with the device of choice and use their Story Boards to guide the process.

Supporting guests:

- Some guests may need the support of a script therefore the option of reading cue cards or notes will be made available.

- Some guests may appreciate having a support person with them. Throughout this process, the Elders and guests may become more comfortable with the concept and experience of making a video.

Handout #7: Media Consent

Activity #7: Video or Slide Presentation (60 minutes)

(Students may want to use flip charts to support their presentation. If so, they will work collaboratively with their classmates and the guests to do so).

Students and guests will present their finished 'Elder Digital Storytelling' project to the class, and the teacher may decide to invite other classes to view the presentations as well. Other Elders, Knowledge Holders, and family members can also be invited to the presentation, which will be a celebration of the students' and guests' work and also an opportunity to continue and expand learning.

Teachers can hold a talking circle as a culminating activity for this project. For more information on talking circles, please see the following links:

http://www.rpiassn.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/2015_Armstrong_Classroom-circles-building-positive-relationships.pdf

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/strategygr05lancircle.pdf>

Additional Background Information for this Activity

Allow students the time to explore video production apps, software. Some of these apps and software include: 1) for Apple iPhone/tablets - Splice; 2) for PC desktop computer software: <https://filmora.wondershare.com/video-editing-tips/video-editors-for-teachers.html>

This activity is designed to connect with learners with these learning styles...

- Spiritual (e.g., Relational) Learners
- Physical (e.g., Tactile, Experiential, Visual) Learners
- Intellectual (e.g., Rational, Logical) Learners
- Emotional (e.g., Feeling, Intuitive) Learners

... in the following ways:

Spiritual - Shared discussions, group work, and independent work.

Emotional - Videos used to connect with Elders and their personal stories.

Physical - Land-based activities, e.g. using the woods or a wigwam as a context.

Intellectual - Working with the Elder to tell their story and to organize the sequence of events on a storyboard.

Materials

Click the 'Link' to open and view videos.

To open and print files, please go to the 'files' folder accompanying this downloaded lesson plan.

Resource Title	Type
Handouts and Worksheets for this lesson	File (Handouts-Elder Digital Storytelling.pdf) 📄
This file has all the handouts and worksheets needed for this lesson plan, including a Thought Web, Story Board, Teacher Checklist, 'I Wonder' Questions, 'Making Connections' worksheet (for homework), a Self-Reflection handout, a sample Media Consent form, and a KWL Chart.	

Resource Title	Type
Recording Equipment and Editing Software for recording Elders - To Be Determined	Supplies 📋
<p>The type of equipment needed will be based on discussions with the Elders and what they are comfortable with. This could be video-recording equipment (if they consent to being video-taped) or audio-recording equipment and cameras (if they only want their voices to be recorded and overlaid atop a photo slideshow, for example).</p> <p>Editing software, depending on the type of technology used, will also be required.</p>	

TEACHING NOTES

ASSESSMENT

This section contains information for assessing progress in students' learning. While Indigenous approaches to assessment may be highlighted, conventional assessment methods may also be discussed.

Note Taking:

The teacher can take observational notes throughout the project to determine if students are working collaboratively with their classmates and guests. The teacher will note if Elder protocols are being followed and if not, teachers will have breakout sessions to review the protocols. Acting as a guide and model, the teacher will demonstrate the desired behaviours.

One-on-One Discussions:

Through use of the 'Self-Reflection' worksheet (Handout # 6 with this lesson plan), and one-on-one discussions with students, teachers can assess the student's ability to make connections between the digital project experience and their personal life, their families, and their culture.

Some guiding questions that support personal reflection and discussions include:

1. How do the Elders' and Knowledge Keepers' cultures remind you of your own?
2. Is there an element of your culture that was passed on to you from your family?
3. Why are culture and traditions important in your life?

Holding a talking circle gives students the opportunity to consolidate their learning through sharing final thoughts about the project.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Click the 'Link' to open and view videos.

To open and print files, please go to the 'files' folder accompanying this downloaded lesson plan.

Resource Title	Type
Territory Acknowledgement	Link 
This link provides an example of an Acknowledgement for Newfoundland and Labrador territories, which is read as a class prior to the lesson.	
Indigenous Elder	Link 
This link provides information on, and a definition for, Indigenous Elder. This information should be shared with the class by the teacher, particularly when clarifying the difference between 'Elder' and 'senior'.	
Elder Protocol	Link 
This link provides information on the Indigenous cultural protocols for communicating with, making requests of, and engaging an Elder or Knowledge Keeper with your class.	
A Practical Guide to Inquiry-Based Learning	File (A Practical Guide to Inquiry-Based Learning.pdf) 
This guide by Jennifer Watt and Jilly Colyer is a ". . . practical tool for Grades 7-12 social studies, history, geography, and civics teachers" that "explains the inquiry process and offers practical suggestions and tools for successfully implementing inquiry-based learning in the classroom."	
"Siyamtelot and Swelimeltexw" Hearing from our Elders	Link 
An Interview with Mary Jane Joe	Link 
Videos: Youth Digital Storytelling Project with First Light Friendship Centre, St. John's, NL	Link 

Resource Title	Type
First Light, the St. John's Friendship Centre, collaborated with youth to create these videos, sharing stories about what is important to them in their culture. Inuit and Mi'kmaq youth took part in this project.	

HOLISM AND ALL OUR RELATIONS

This lesson plan has been developed with an Indigenous lens that is holistic in nature, a way of being and knowing that acknowledges our relationships with 'all our relations', including plants and animals, other human beings, the water, land, wind, sun, moon, stars, and more - everything seen and unseen. With 'all our relations' in mind, this lesson plan has been developed with a focus on:

Relationship with the land
This lesson plan revolves around land-based activities, for example, using the woods or a wigwam as the location for the project.
Participatory and experiential learning activities
Language and Culture
Students explore language and culture through working with Elders and Knowledge Keepers, who may decide to use their own traditional language in the digital project (whether video or slide presentation).
Relationship with family, ancestors
Students ask family members (parents, guardians, or grandparents) about an element of culture that is important to them that was passed on from previous generations.
Connections are made with everyday life
Students are encouraged to reflect and think about the ways in which the lesson plan applies to their everyday lives. Students reflect on their own culture and what elements are part of their everyday lives that have been passed on to them from previous generations.
Intergenerational learning with Elders/Knowledge Holders
Were Elders or Knowledge Holders involved in the development of this Lesson Plan? Yes Can Elders or Knowledge Holders be invited to help teach part of this lesson plan? Yes
Intergenerational learning with Elders/Knowledge Holders
Ethics in the classroom: care, truthfulness and trust, respect, integrity
<p>Integrity - The lesson plan practices integrity in the classroom through the development of relationships with peers, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and teachers.</p> <p>Respect - Students will learn how to show Elders and Knowledge Keepers respect when interacting together during this lesson.</p> <p>Trust - An atmosphere of trust is created when sharing sacred and traditional teachings.</p> <p>Care - Students learn about elements of Indigenous culture and how culture is passed on through the generations, thus developing care for one another.</p>
Different learning styles; attention given to mind, body, and spirit
Healthy relationship with self and identity
Students are encouraged to reflect on their own identity through the reflection activity and the talking circle. Teachers can direct questions specifically about identity and what parts of their culture are important to them.
Personal reflection time (connecting with thoughts and feelings)

Students are given prompting questions in a 'Self-Reflection' worksheet (provided with this lesson - 'Handout #6) to guide their self-reflections on the project. The self-reflection process allows students to identify what was the most challenging part of the digital project and what parts of the project they enjoyed the most. Students can share their thoughts on what they would improve and what they would have done differently. The teacher may give the students the option to express their thoughts and feelings in a talking circle.

OTHER DETAILS

RELATED LESSON PLANS

- [Understanding Indigenous Stories and Storytelling](#)

CONTRIBUTORS

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QUESTIONS/MORE DETAILS

For Questions contact: [Verlé Harrop \(vharrop@alum.mit.edu\)](mailto:vharrop@alum.mit.edu) for more information.