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### Resource Guide: Indigenizing Education

In my experiences learning in BC schools, there was little mention of Indigenous history included in my Social Studies classes. I remember being taught about contact and the Indian Act in Grade 10 like these were a series of consensual transactions, leaving out the history of oppression, violence, and the destruction of culture. The only exposure I remember getting to the human aspects of Indigenous history was when we learned about residential schools in Grade 11, but we were given little time to reflect, or to learn about the lasting impacts that have come from this cultural genocide. Indigenous history was rarely recognized, and when it was, Indigenous peoples were depicted as stereotypes and were not considered as a diverse group of people. This education perpetuated the damaging impacts of settler-colonialism, as we were not encouraged to be critical of Canada's past. I now see the importance of genuinely trying to Indigenize the Social Studies curriculum, and the resources chosen for this guide reflect this. They were all chosen to address the need to unsettle the negative representations of Indigeneity in the curriculum, to challenge the dominance of western ideals of education and knowledge, to center Indigenous history around Indigenous voices, and to recognize our role as settlers in perpetuating colonization and oppression. Given that I am a settler myself, I aimed to center my teacher resources around Indigenous perspectives of education and knowledge, and my student resources around Indigenous voices.

My selection of sources focus on looking at how to include Indigenous ways of knowing and principles of learning in the classroom, ways to unsettle dominant beliefs about Indigenous history and about our education system, and ways to center Indigenous perspectives when

learning about their lives and histories. My teacher resources are selected to inform pedagogical approaches and lesson plans, as they all include different frameworks and perspectives that I could include into my learning outcomes and activities. While these strategies would eventually be shared with students, these resources are at a more difficult reading level and are not intended to be given to students directly. For my student resources, I have aimed to include a multitude of different modes of sources, including videos, podcasts, interactive maps, artwork, books, and websites. All of my resources for students are from Indigenous perspectives, and aim to allow students to connect with this knowledge through stories, through grounding their understanding in land and place, and through recognizing the role and importance of intergenerational relationships and Indigenous knowledge. Where my teacher resources suggest potential strategies for Indigenizing education, my student resources are suggestions of media that could be used to achieve these goals and outcomes. While this guide was created with the curricular material of Social Studies 10 in mind, many of these resources could be used in a range of Social Studies courses.

### **Teacher Resources:**

Âpihtawikosisân. (September 2016). *Beyond territorial acknowledgments*. Âpihtawikosisân – Law, Language, Culture. <https://apihtawikosisan.com/2016/09/beyond-territorial-acknowledgments/>.

This website explains the history of territorial land acknowledgements in Canada, and details some of the issues that have arisen since they were introduced. The author explains that, while the intentions behind these acknowledgements are often positive, they tend to promote apathy when used in isolation without further discussion. The author also, however, offers some suggestions for making land acknowledgements more

meaningful, which I could aim to implement in my future classrooms. This article emphasizes the importance of unsettling societal norms, and about going a step further to learn from Indigenous peoples what can be done to address the fact that we are living, working, and learning on stolen land. This source could help inform my practice as a teacher, as the ideas will influence how I do land acknowledgements in class. Reading parts of this document to students and talking about it at the start of the semester could also encourage students to think of ways that they could work towards reconciliation and meaningful interactions with land acknowledgements both inside and outside the classroom.

FNESC. (2020). *Learning First Peoples Classroom Resources*. First Nations Education Steering Committee. <http://www.fnesc.ca/learningfirstpeoples/>.

This page compiles all the FNESC teachers guides into an easy to navigate page, and outlines what is included in each resource. Since I will be teaching Social Studies 10, the “BC First Nations Land, Title, and Governance Teacher Resource Guide,” the “English First People’s Guide,” and the “Indian Residential Schools and Reconciliation Teacher Resource Guides” would be the most useful for me presently, but the other guides might be useful in my future teaching as well. These teacher guides include interesting, authentic Indigenous resources that could be included in the classroom, along with lesson plans and suggestions of how to teach this material. Used alongside the First People’s Principles of Learning, these materials could help me respectfully and impactfully begin to decolonize the classroom and indigenize my teaching.

Jo Chrona. (2014). *Background of FPPL and Current Contexts*. Wordpress.

<https://firstpeoplesprinciplesoflearning.wordpress.com/background-and-current-context/>.

This resource outlines the FNESC “First People’s Principles of Learning,” explains where they came from, and outlines how they have been or could be implemented in BC classrooms. It explains the significance of the term “First People’s,” and emphasizes that these principles represent a fraction of the diverse pedagogical approaches of different Indigenous groups in Canada. This source could be incredibly useful for me in my lesson and unit planning, as I could refer to this list of principles and work towards incorporating them into my learning goals and objectives, just as I might do with the core, curricular, and content competencies of what I’m teaching. I could also show these to my students, to encourage them to approach their own education in these terms, and to critique how our current education system tends to go against these.

Kelm, M.E. & Smith, K. D. (2018). *Talking Back to the Indian Act: Critical Readings in Settler Colonial Histories*. University of Toronto Press.

Although this source is not written directly by an Indigenous author, it is written by two BC scholars who have studied Indigenous history, and it includes Indigenous perspectives and voices. The introduction to this book gives some important methods for analyzing and understanding the Indian Act, and Indigenous history more broadly. It emphasizes the importance of looking at Indigenous history through the 5 C’s of historical thinking- change over time, context, causality, contingency, and complexity, and details an Indigenous methodology of the 4 R’s- relationship, responsibility, respect, and reciprocity. These frameworks could be implemented when looking at primary sources related to Indigenous history and experiences, as they could encourage students

to think critically and reflectively about these sources. They could also help me as a teacher in developing my own knowledge of these histories, as using these frameworks might help me better understand Indigenous histories in a more in-depth and well-rounded way.

Simpson, Leanne. (2014). Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 2 (3).  
<https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/des/article/view/22170>.

This article emphasizes how it is crucial to include Indigenous pedagogy into teaching practice, as the dominant forms of pedagogy that we passively accept can be damaging and problematic all students, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike. Simpson explains how our current education system serves to continue the process of colonization, as Indigenous children are implicitly and explicitly forced to give up their own ways of knowing to conform to the dominant system. She details Nishnaabeg education and pedagogy, and explains how it is predominantly based in land and relationships. She further explains the importance of teaching from Indigenous perspectives in decolonization and in preserving cultures. This article could help me understand some examples of Indigenous pedagogy and knowledge, and could help me recognize how many of these are fundamentally incompatible with our current education system. Recognizing this, I could consider how to potentially reconcile these differences through my teaching, and I could consider ways to reform our education system to be more inclusive of these frameworks.

**Student Resources:**

APTN National News. <https://www.aptnnews.ca/>.

This website compiles news stories from Indigenous perspectives about many current events. It is organized by time and by topic, so students can look into specific issues like the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women investigation, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Mi'kmaw fishing rights, or child welfare, for example. As many of the news sources that students are exposed to are not from Indigenous perspectives, this source encourages students to acknowledge how Indigenous voices are often lost in many mainstream sources. This could be used when learning about current events, where students could be encouraged to look at multiple perspectives of news stories. It could also be used to learn more about the present-day issues that have come from past and present discrimination towards Indigenous peoples.

Carey Newmanor Hayalthkin'game. (2015). Witness Blanket [Artwork]. Retrieved from <http://witnessblanket.ca/blanket/>.

This piece of artwork was made by Kwakwak'awakw artist Carey Newmanor Hayalthkin'game. It is a large wooden carving, that has been filled in with remnants of different residential schools cross Canada, and it aims to bring together these remnants to tell stories through visuals. Through bringing these pieces together, the artist intends for this to be a way of reclaiming this history, as he states, "Individually, they are paragraphs of a disappearing narrative. Together they are strong, collectively able to recount for future generations the true story of loss, strength, reconciliation and pride." In non-pandemic times, this blanket is brought to different parts of Canada, so if it was in the

Lower Mainland, I might be able to take a class to look at it and analyze it in person. For now, however, the online depiction would be great to bring into the classroom, as students could, individually or as a group, zoom in to details and discuss what these fragments might tell about the story of residential schools. It provides a non-textual, but powerful source of this history, and shows a unique approach to reconciliation, memorialization, and remembrance.

David Alexander Robertson. (2012). *Sugar Falls- A Residential School Story*. Portage & Main Press.

This graphic novel, written by Indigenous author David Alexander Robertson, tells the story of one woman's experience in residential schools through artwork and words. It is told in the form of a narrative, where a child is interviewing an elder about her experiences, and the elder is remembering and retelling her story. While the story is fictional, it is based on the experiences of residential school survivors, and provides a visual narrative for students to understand and connect to. It tells the stories of the traumas that some residential school survivors faced, but it also highlights resilience of Indigenous culture to this oppression. As it is a graphic novel, it could be easier for students to read and engage with, and it could help them visualize and emotionally connect with this history. While I could assign this novel as a whole to students, I could also include excerpts of this novel throughout the unit to illustrate what we are learning about.

Desnomie, Tessa (Director). (2008). *Second Stories- It Had to Be Done* [Film]. National Film Board of Canada. [https://www.nfb.ca/film/second\\_stories\\_it\\_had\\_to\\_be\\_done/](https://www.nfb.ca/film/second_stories_it_had_to_be_done/).

This short, Indigenous-made NFB film tells the residential school experiences of two women from their point of view, with accompanying images and artwork to go along with these stories. The two women detail their experiences in the schools, and talk about how they have resisted and made changes to try to break the intergenerational trauma that Indigenous people continue to face. This film gives important insight into the lived experiences of residential schools, and allows students to learn about them from the point of view of these survivors. Although this film might be shocking or upsetting for students due to the graphic nature of the abuses detailed by these women, it encourages students to feel uncomfortable with this history and to recognize the need to learn about it and make efforts towards reconciliation. It humanizes these experiences more than textbooks or strictly text-based sources might. This source could be used to teach about residential schools, but also about the residual and continued trauma, and the resilience of Indigenous peoples to the impacts of these schools.

Harp, Rick & Raven Sinclair. (2016). *Sixties Scoop Survivors Take Canada to Court: Ep 25* [Podcast]. Media Indigena. <https://mediaindigena.com/category/episodes/>.

This short podcast goes into detail about the Sixties Scoop from the perspective of Raven Sinclair, an Indigenous woman who was taken away from her family when she was young, who also studies child welfare academically. She speaks openly about how she felt this disconnected her from her culture and identity, and speaks about how this damaged communities as well. She also goes into detail about how the foster care system has had similar impacts on Indigenous children through a more subtle, but still damaging



form of oppression. This podcast gives important statistics and personal stories that explain the impacts of the Sixties Scoop and the foster care system on Indigenous populations. This podcast could be used when learning about past and present discriminatory policies, as it reflects the subtle, but dangerous forms of government oppression that still occur. It encourages students to see settler colonialism as ongoing, systemic process that did not end with the closure of residential schools. In doing so, this podcast encourages critical thinking and ethical judgement of government policies.

Jessica Willms and Elizabeth Melito. (2018). *Beyond 94- Truth and Reconciliation in Canada*.

CBC. Retrieved from <https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/longform-single/beyond-94?&cta=1>.

This CBC project lists the 94 “Calls to Action” of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and allows viewers to see if they have been achieved, are in progress, or have not been achieved. It provides detail on what the issues are, explains possible barriers to progress, and details the impacts of these projects. It also includes infographics that give a big picture on the progress towards these promises. This source is great because it makes the 94 “Calls to Action” accessible for students, and provides an easy-to-read explanation on the efforts being made to remedy past issues. It also, however, brings attention to how much work still needs to be done towards reconciliation, as the majority of these resolutions have not been addressed. Although this database itself is not from an Indigenous perspective, it includes Indigenous voices in the write ups, and could be used alongside other Indigenous sources to better understand the issues that Indigenous peoples presently face.

Native Land. <https://native-land.ca/>.

This interactive map is an amazing pedagogical tool that could be used in all Social Studies courses. It is an interactive map of the world, that allows students to see the overlap and variation of Indigenous territories. It has different toggles and switches that show the unceded territories, treaty designated land, and languages spoken. Students can type in or zoom in to specific locations, and learn more about the specific Indigenous groups who have ancestral claims to this territory. It provides a stark visual of the diversity of Indigenous territory, and the different toggles allow students to understand whose land they live and work on, and whose land the historical events we are learning about are occurring on. This map could be used in a lesson about the Indian Act, as it shows the drastic contrast between ancestral land and what has been allotted through treaties. It could also be used alongside a land acknowledgement, to provide a tangible visual of this acknowledgement to students. I could also see how this could be integrated throughout the year, however, as all learning could be grounded in the place where it occurs. It could also help students visualize Indigenous presence, and see the diversity in Indigenous history that is often lost in Social Studies classes.

*Residential Schools in Canada Interactive Map.* (2020). The Canadian Encyclopedia.

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/residential-schools-in-canada-interactive-map>.

This interactive map shows the locations of residential schools in Canada, and gives basic information of who ran these schools, when they were opened, and when they closed. It is created using Google Maps, and allows users to zoom in and out to see where exactly these sites were throughout Canada. Although less detailed than the “Native Land” map,

this map could help students ground their understanding of residential schools in a sense of place, as many of these sites existed where the students live and learn today. Looking at this map could open up conversations about how this history has been erased, and about what exists on this land presently. It could also help students understand and recognize how close to home this history is, as having the visual might help students understand it more than reading or hearing about it.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission. (2015). *The Survivors Speak- A Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. McGill-Queens University Press.

This Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) document gives survivor testimonies of residential schools, and shows the varied experiences of survivors. It has chapters about all different aspects of the residential school experience, that are taken verbatim from the words of the survivors. The TRC is also in the process of publishing oral history accounts as well, that could also be used in the classroom to learn about this history. This source is great because it includes chapters on survivor's experiences with all aspects of residential schools, as it includes sections on life before residential schools, the different aspects of life at these schools, the emotional and cultural damages that these schools had on survivors, and the impacts that these experiences had on them later in life. There are over 30 chapters in this document, that students could look at and incorporate into their understanding of the trauma that residential schools caused for students. While I would not assign this entire document to students, I could allow students to look into parts of it, to learn about these experiences from the voices of these survivors. I could also compare it with the TRC calls to action, to see where some of them might have come from.

Wilbur, M. & Keene, A. (2019-2020). *All My Relations* [Podcast].

<https://www.allmyrelationspodcast.com/podcast>.

This podcast series is produced by photographer and storyteller Matika Wilbur and professor Adrienne Keene, two Indigenous activists in different areas of the United States. Through their podcast, they aim to challenge dominant stereotypical representations of Indigenous peoples, through bringing attention to the diversity of Indigenous cultures and experiences. They also aim to show a positive representation of Indigenous identity, that is often lost when talking about the oppression that Indigenous people continually face. In the podcast, Wilbur and Keene give Indigenous perspectives on many different past and present issues, as they talk about Indigenous feminism, cultural appropriation, language rights, land issues, and a variety of other topics. They interview Indigenous artists, writers, and activists, and put extensive research and personal experiences into their episodes. Episodes are easy to listen to and incredibly informative, and could easily be either used as a basis for lessons, or given to students as a form of “preloading” information about important topics. Given that I will be teaching a few “blended,” half-online classes during my practicum, assigning some of these podcast episodes to listen to and reflect on outside of class time could work well in this setting. I could also use them to inform my pedagogy, and to ensure that my teaching is truly representative of Indigenous experiences.