



On Indigenous Literature

Goals for today:

- ❖ *Reminder: your blog posts only have to be 1-3 sentences. Of course, you're welcome to write more, BUT it is not a requirement!*
- ❖ Explore a couple of Indigenous texts
- ❖ Strategize how we might infuse Indigenous content and pedagogy into the classroom



Storytelling to start



Why storytelling? As Mac-Lan and Wason-Ellan (2006) report, storytelling is important to Indigenous communities because:

- ◆ storytelling fosters a caring community;
- ◆ storytelling is teaching through analogy;
- ◆ storytelling Indigenizing the curriculum;
- ◆ storytelling facilitates culturally responsive teaching and
- ◆ storytelling professionalizes teachers.

Storytelling to start: 6 word memoirs

Because storytelling is foundational in indigenous pedagogy, we are going to engage in some storytelling to start today, with the added aim to get to know one another better!

WHAT
IS YOUR
SIX
WORD
MEMOIR?

6 word
memoirs:
Exemplars

— Alison Bechdel



Storytelling to start: 6 word memoirs

Try writing and sharing a 6 word memoir with the folks around you!

WHAT
IS YOUR
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Davidson's "Prove them wrong"

- ❖ Did Dr. Davidson's paper provide some insights into how Indigenous literature learners might be feeling in schools that lack representation?
- ❖ Is there Indigenous literature that you would be excited to share with a group of literature learners?
- ❖ Are there any Indigenous texts that you feel really powerfully combat negative stereotypes?



From English First Peoples 12 curriculum:



The following questions could be posted on chart paper at the start of the unit, revisited and added to throughout the unit.

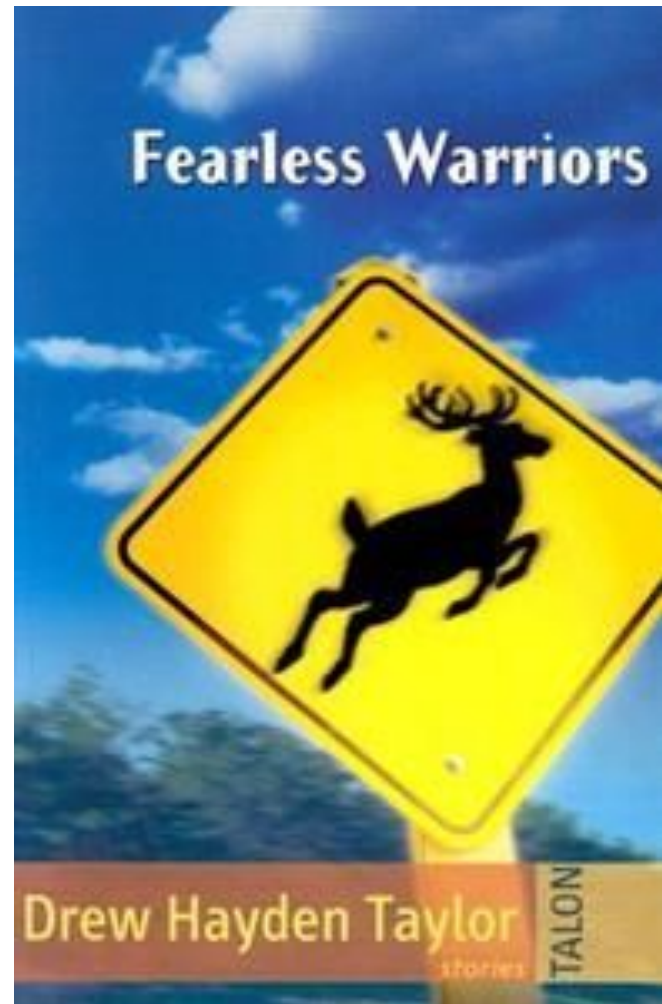
- How do stories by First Peoples writers reveal/respond to the “shared experiences of Aboriginal people?”
- How are the stories written by First Peoples writers unique in terms of voice, narrative structure, subject matter, symbolism, use of language?
- What are the purposes of stories written by First Peoples writers (e.g., entertain, enlighten, inform, escape, etc.)?
- How are stories written by First Peoples writers similar/different from stories written by non-Aboriginal authors?
- How do conventional tools for understanding short stories (e.g., plot diagram, character development, point of view) apply to the study of stories written by First Peoples writers?

An effective strategy is to have students use sticky notes and attach them to the appropriate question following discussion (exit slips). Alternatively, the questions can be used as part of a literature circle approach with students referencing these core questions along with other aspects typically dealt with in literature circles (plot summary, vocabulary, literary elements, etc.).

Keeping these questions in mind, let's read a couple of pieces of Indigenous literature:



1. “Strawberries” by Drew Hayden Taylor



Drew Hayden Taylor on using humour to combat racism



From English First Peoples 12 curriculum:



With these questions in mind, what do we make of “Strawberries”?

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2. “The terrible beauty of
the reserve” (poem) by
Billy Ray Belcourt



Everyone's uncle thinks that they are the world's most handsome NDN, and no one says otherwise.

Rez dogs roam about without having to perform emotional labour for humans. They eat where they are welcomed, which is everywhere. Most who live here do not know that they are in the ruins of a sick experiment that failed. Teens blaze to feel the euphoria of being outside of memory.

We all bathe in the sociality of the hangover. It is not that no one has time for themselves, it is that they are

always playing cards or talking about Connor McDavid or carpooling to bingo or babysitting their brothers' kids.

We all owe something to someone, so we congregate under the pretense of debt, and this is always-already.

We all joke about falling in love with our cousins, but we are all perpetually falling in love with our cousins in a platonic way, because we grew up together and no one was alienated by the tyranny of the couple form.

Vehicles pass through in droves, but no one looks, so we drown together in the freedom of utter anonymity.

Billy Ray Belcourt

Winning the Griffin Prize

*Start at 5:45



From English First Peoples 12 curriculum:



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