

Lesson Plan

for the film *Niigaanibatowaad: FrontRunners*

A Note to Teachers

These activities are designed for students in Secondary 3, Grade 9 (Cycle Two, secondary, in Quebec) and have been written with provincial curricula in mind. The activities are inquiry-based and provide students with opportunities to develop their own perspectives, make connections and inferences, analyze information and draw conclusions. They also require active involvement of students in discussing, presenting, viewing of material and developing projects. All of the activities allow for individualization and adaptation to address the needs of a particular class.

I. Curriculum Connection

1. *Name of Main Course of Study* - Social Studies and Aboriginal Studies
2. *Cross-Curricular Opportunities* - Language Arts, Media Literacy, History, Citizenship and Community Life and Moral Dialogue
3. *Estimated Time Allotment* – 45-minute periods

II. Objective of the Lesson

To examine the injustice experienced by the seven First Nations men during the 1967 Pan American Games, as well as the role that residential schools played in the degradation of First Nations identity.

The students will:

- Examine the injustices presented in the film.
- Study the impact of residential schools on First Nations people.
- Make connections between the causes of injustices and how to approach injustices in a positive manner.
- Respect others through exposure to a way of life different from their own.
- Advocate for the rights of indigenous peoples.
- Realize the consequences of international economic decisions on indigenous groups and communities.

Issues

- Have attitudes towards First Nations people really changed?
- Are First Nations people still seen as second-class citizens?
- Did the treatment in the residential schools reflect society's views at the time?

III. Outcomes and Expectations

1. Knowledge and Understanding

Students are expected to understand the meaning and significance of being treated differently. They are also expected to see the racial inequalities that led to loss of cultural identity and self worth.

2. Values and Attitudes

Students are expected to combine multiple perspectives while maintaining an attitude of respect for diversity.

3. Skills and Process Outcomes

- Critical and Thinking Skills - Students develop these skills by weighing all the facts and taking context into account, by considering multiple perspectives on an issue or an event, by using logical arguments, by allowing for and accepting ambiguity, and by weeding out preconceptions. Students will learn to go beyond prejudices and intuitive assumptions, and to replace unconsidered opinion with judgment.
- Historical Thinking Skills - Students develop the ability to work with historical data, to empathize with people of the past, to understand how the past differs from the present, and to use historical knowledge to explore contemporary problems.
- Decision Making and Problem-Solving Skills - Students learn to recognize complexities of a problem. They use internal and external resources to think up various solutions and implement the one that seems most appropriate, given the context and their objectives. Students form opinions, express them and qualify them.
- Research Skills - Students develop the ability to ask questions and plan research based on those questions. They learn different research methods and learn how to locate relevant information from a variety of primary sources.
- Active Democratic or Citizenship Skills - Students develop good relations with others, and work in cooperative ways towards achieving common goals. Students focus on cooperation, conflict resolution, taking responsibility, accepting differences, building consensus, negotiation, collaborative decision making and learning to deal with dissent and disagreement. Students take part in the democratic life of the class or the school and develop an attitude of openness to the world and a respect for diversity.
- Communication Skills - Students listen respectfully to others; evaluate and respond to their perspective; read for comprehension; understand cause and effect; heighten visual literacy, through viewing films, still pictures and artifacts; and identify perceptions and bias.
- Information Technology Skills - Students use technology for communicating, gathering, identifying and classifying information; representing; exploring and inquiring; making decisions and solving problems. Students produce media documents that respect individual and collective rights.

Lesson Activities

I. Introduction

As a 5-minute quick write, ask:

- Do you feel that there have been times that you have been discriminated against?
- As a child, did you ever feel you could not participate in an activity because you were a boy or a girl?
- Discuss society's role in creating race distinctions.

****Discuss as a class (30 min)***

Read the attached personal narrative on residential schools and answer the questions that follow. **(45 min)**

II. Developing Understanding or Skills Activities

1. Show the film *FrontRunners*.
2. Write initial reaction to film.
3. Share initial reactions.
4. Watch the film a second time and have students take notes based on the questions listed below. Have a discussion about what students have recorded.
 - a. What does the film *FrontRunners* reveal about perceptions of First Nations people in the 1960s?
 - b. Do you think this film portrays certain prejudices of the era?
 - c. Do you think that the film contributes negatively to the image that is portrayed of First Nations people?
 - d. Do you think society views First Nations people differently today?
 - e. Do you think that this film could help to change views about First Nations people?

5. Divide class into equal groups; provide each group with large chart paper with one of the five questions listed above at the top of the chart. Each group has five minutes to answer the question; then rotate the charts until each group has had an opportunity to answer all five questions:

****Display the charts in the classroom walls so everyone can read the ideas.***

III. Application Activities

1. Using the Internet with a partner, create a timeline on the history of Indian residential schools. Final product can be a paper format project or PowerPoint presentation.
2. In a short essay compare the treatment of Indian and non-Indian youth in school and on the running team. Has the treatment and attitude of society changed? Support your opinions with reference to published information.

IV. Extension Activities

- Read novels on residential school experiences
- Create a poster about racial awareness
- Invite a First Nations person to class to share their experience of attending a residential school
- Invite a Native youth who has achieved success in sports or academics to share their accomplishments with your class.
- Research the history of residential schools.
- Create a radio jingle to make people aware of the effects of residential school and racism.
- Create a collage on how contemporary society views First Nations people.
- Compare and contrast on reserve schools and residential schools.

Assessment Strategies

1. Create a rubric to evaluate the timeline. Judge for clarity, creativity, accuracy of information.
2. Create a rubric to evaluate the essay. Judge for content, mechanics and accuracy of information.
3. Participation records should be kept throughout the course of the unit. Both oral and short written responses should be recorded on a chart as a record of participation in the daily activity.
4. Collect daily work and assess accordingly.

***It is important that students know what is being assessed at the beginning of an activity. This can be done with rubrics or checklists.**

Below is a list of sites focusing on assessment as well as step-by-step instructions to create rubrics to meet your students' needs. It is crucial that a rubric reflect the content, classroom and skills being emphasized. Students need to know what is expected!

http://intranet.cps.k12.il.us/Assessments/Ideas_and_Rubrics/Create_Rubric/create_rubric.html

http://edweb.sdsu.edu/triton/july/rubrics/Rubric_Template.html

<http://www.rmcdenver.com/useguide/assessme/definiti.htm?>

http://teachers.teach-nology.com/web_tools/rubrics/project/

Possible Products for the Lesson Activities Described

- Brainstorming (graphic organizer, chart)
- Timeline
- Essay
- Comparison Chart
- Interview (tape, video, transcript)
- Presentations
- Collages
- Research (notes, post its, cue cards, etc...)
- Role playing
- Multimedia presentation
- Debates
- Posters
- Oral reports

Personal Reflection of My Residential School Experience

What can I say about my school educational experience? From Grade 1 to Grade 8, my school consisted of a big brick building. It kind of reminds me of a jail in which you went into the front doors but you never came out. During these years, learning was about survival not knowledge. Your dignity and pride were taken away from you and you had no control over how it was taken from you. You became a number, a person without a face or name. I cried myself to sleep knowing that during this time no one there cared. I went to a school with priests and nuns as my teachers.

At the young age of 6, I was taken from my small First Nation community to go to a boarding school that was run by the Catholic Church. The church's responsibility was to teach the Native students to be civilized. Imagine you are taken from your only family when you are 6 years old and removed from your community that you know. You are taken somewhere you are not allowed to get in touch with or see your parents. My parents were told if they didn't let their children be educated then they would be put in jail. I can still remember that day as it was just yesterday, as my mother tried to take me off the boat and the RCMP police pushing her aside. I was not the only child from my family going; I had two older brothers going to the same school. I hung onto my older brother's arm, hoping that he could protect us as we left our community.

When I arrived at the other community, my brothers were taken to another place and I was taken somewhere else because they didn't want the Native students to mix. I started to cry because I was alone for the very first time in my life. I can remember going to the lady's house that I would spend the eight years with and she said it was her job to turn me into a normal person because I was considered a savage. I didn't know what that word meant and I always felt that I was normal like everyone else in my community. I realized that I had different skin than the lady. She was very pale and my skin was very dark. This did not change the inside me, the feelings that I had or my needs.

The very first day walking to school was very scary because I didn't know anyone. I hung my head low because I was afraid to look at anyone. As I arrived at the school, I was excited because my two brothers were standing there. I ran to them crying but I never got close to them because the priest stopped me and told me I was not allowed to talk to the other Native children. I couldn't believe they would not let me talk to my brothers. I can remember getting angry at the priest and tried to get away from him to run to my brothers. However he was too strong for me to accomplish this.

I can remember my Mom's last words were to never forget where you come from and be proud of who you are. After spending eight years in that school system, my mother's words were lost just trying to survive. My brothers were beaten often for not obeying the rules of the school. I tried my best to stay out of trouble but sometimes I got the strap for not responding fast enough. I finally learned how to stay one step ahead of them. One day, the word was that two Native boys had stolen a boat and tried to return home. They drowned trying to escape. So that put the scare in some of us not to escape. Today my brothers carry many scars. One brother finally admitted that he was sexually abused by the priests.

I can remember finally going back to my own community for the first time after being away for eight years. It was confusing trying to fit back in. I had lost my culture and identity. I was not the 6-year-old child but a teenager trying to find out where I fit in. It was hard but with the help of my grandfather, he taught me how to believe in myself again. I remember starting my first day of school and I was not looking forward to going back to any school. I can remember walking into our new school building and was glad

for what I saw. On the wall, during the summer my grandfather had done a mural of a traditional picture from our community. It made me proud of who I was and where I came from. For the first time I was not embarrassed to say that I was Native.

As I walked into my new classroom, I walked in with pride in my heart but was crushed as soon as I saw my teacher for the first time. There was a non-Native person and by this time I had a fear of non-Native people. I walked to my desk just as the others students did. I sat very quietly. The teacher started to ask us questions about us. Everyone looked at each other and didn't know how to respond. This was the first time that someone has asked us something. He talked about education and how we should enjoy learning and take pride in where we came from. Everyone thought this was a big joke and there was some hidden agenda by the way he was talking to us. That same day he invited the elder into our classroom to talk about the language and the culture and how important it was to hold onto it so that future generations can carry on our culture. He made us look at our self for the very first time and dig deep to find our true self.

This teacher made a big influence on how I now see education. I have taken responsibility to achieve my own goals in life. That teacher's attitude has opened many doors in life for me. As I became a teacher for the first time, I look back on how that one teacher made me love learning and never give up on my dreams; I realized I had to teach the same way to my students. I had to encourage them to believe in themselves and never forget their culture and where they came from. I have become like that teacher that made a difference in my life because I encourage students to develop confidence and pride in their abilities.

They always say that a person comes along that awakes the passion inside and I wanted to allow that with my students. They also say that if a child is to succeed in life they must develop a positive relationship with at least one teacher. I want to be that teacher for my students. Many students have wonderful gifts given to them by the creator and can be enhanced with the help of a teacher, I find it is my responsibility to help students find, improve and develop their gifts. Many students may not have academic skills but have other talents like drawing, music or even being a good listener for other students. We as educators have to develop this talent so students can feel good about themselves.

As a person that is strong and has survived the effects of a harsh school, I have become a strong person in how I teach my classroom and develop my curriculum. I treat my students just as I would treat my own children. As an educator, you need to build pride and confidence in each student that walks through your classroom door and treat them the way you would want to be treated.

By: Jackie L.

Questions:

1. How would you feel if you were taken away from your family when you were 6 years old?
2. How would you deal with moving to a new community without your parents when you were 6 years old?
3. What does the word *pride* mean?
4. What part of school makes you understand who you are and where you are going?

References

WEB SITES

Health and Wellness: List of resources plus lesson plans for elementary and secondary levels on residential schools and its impact on First Nations peoples.

http://www.edukits.ca/aboriginal/health/teachers/school_intro.htm

Residential Schools: Videos, articles and lesson plans about residential schools.

<http://education.uregina.ca/web/foster7a/project/residential.htm>

Healing and Reconciliation: Students are encouraged to look at various media and how residential survivors can heal themselves to overcome the effects of the past.

http://archives.cbc.ca/for_teachers/524/

History of Indian Residential Schools: A detailed history of residential schools in Canada.

<http://www.afn.ca/residentialschools/history.html>

Living Traditions Writers Group: A list of plays dealing with residential schools.

<http://www.firstnationswriter.com/Myhistory.htm>

BOOKS

As Long as the Rivers Flow, Larry Loyie with Constance Brissenden

Behind Closed Doors: Stories from the Kamloops Indian Residential School, Jack Agnes

The Circle Game: Shadows and Substance in the Indian Residential School Experience in Canada (revised edition), Roland Chrisjohn

Finding My Talk: How Fourteen Canadian Native Women Reclaimed their Lives after Residential School, Agnes Grant

Healthy Choices, Healthy Schools: The Residential Curriculum, Louis M. Crosier

Kill the Indian, Save the Man: The Genocidal Impact of American Indian Residential Schools, Ward Churchill

Magic Weapons: Aboriginal Writers Remaking Community after Residential School, Sam McKegney

A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System (Manitoba Studies in Native History), John S. Milloy

Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School, Celia Haig-Brown

Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools, J.R. Miller

Victims of Benevolence: The Dark Legacy of the Williams Lake Residential School, Elizabeth Furniss

Additional Lesson Plan

Objectives:

- Explore the concept of self-esteem
- Analyze personal strengths and weaknesses
- Consider the role self-esteem plays in a healthy life

Materials:

- paper and pencils
- newsprint and markers
- construction paper and coloured pencils
- old magazines
- scissors and glue
- computer with Internet access

Procedures:

Ask students to define the term *self-esteem*. Write their ideas on a sheet of newsprint. Help students understand that self-esteem refers to how we understand and value ourselves.

People with high self-esteem are realistic about their strengths and weaknesses and are able to set goals and work toward them with optimism and humour. They also feel competent in areas they consider important and do not take other people's negative impressions of them too seriously.

People with low self-esteem have a hard time honestly evaluating their strengths and weaknesses and often have an unrealistic, negative impression of themselves. They take other people's opinions of their strengths and weaknesses more seriously than they should. Also, they do not feel competent in areas they consider important. People with low self-esteem tend to be pessimistic.

Web sites:

National Association for Self Esteem

<http://www.self-esteem-nase.org/>

The Self-Esteem Institute

<http://www.theseesteeminstitute.com/AboutSelfEsteem.htm>

Tell students that an important first step in building self-esteem is taking a realistic look at their strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes. This helps them know what goals are realistic, which aspects of their personality and lifestyle to seek to improve, and how to identify their weaknesses without worrying about how others perceive them.

Explain to students that self-knowledge helps lay the foundation for high self-esteem.

Explain to students that they are going to complete **a personal inventory** during this lesson to help them achieve better self-understanding.

Students will follow the directions, filling in blanks or checking the answers that apply to them. You may copy the inventory for students, read it out loud, or write it on a piece of newsprint and post it in the classroom.

Personal Inventory

School Subjects

1. I like _____.
2. I don't like _____.
3. I am good at _____.
4. I'm not good at _____.
5. I'm good at this subject, but I don't like it: _____.
6. I'm not good at this subject, but I like it: _____.

Activities

1. I like _____.
2. I don't like _____.
3. I'm good at _____.
4. I'm not good at _____.
5. I am good at this activity, but I don't like it: _____.
6. I'm not good at this activity, but I like it: _____.
7. I prefer being involved in individual activities ____ or group activities _____. (Check one.)

Relationships with Friends and Adults (Check the statements that apply to you.)

1. I am generally well liked: _____.
2. I am generally not well liked: _____.
3. I have a group of friends: _____.
4. I prefer having one or two friends: _____.
5. I am a leader: _____.
6. I am a follower: _____.
7. I prefer people who like the same things I like: _____.
8. I prefer people who like different things: _____.
9. I have the support of significant adults in my life: _____.

10. I have the support of a group of peers: _____.

Food Preferences

1. I like to eat _____.
2. I don't like to eat _____.
3. I do ____ do not ____ eat a balanced diet. (Check one.)

Relaxing

1. I relax by _____.
2. I like relaxing alone ____ or with other people _____. (Check one.)

3. After this activity, I always feel calm and peaceful. _____.

Give students 10 or 15 minutes to complete the inventory. Then ask them to take the information and create a drawing, collage, or short essay that illustrates who they are. Provide the necessary art supplies and magazines to cut up. Give everyone about 20 minutes to finish the project.

During the next class period, ask for student volunteers to share their artwork or essays, and their personal reflections, with the class.

Ask students what they learned about themselves? How can they apply this information to their lives? How does it affect the goals they set for themselves? Tell them that understanding their own strengths, weaknesses and preferences is essential in boosting their self-esteem.

Closing: Conclude the lesson by asking students what role they think self-esteem plays in leading a healthful life. If students feel good about themselves, do they think they will make good decisions about friends; diet; exercise; sex and abstinence; dangerous habits such as drugs, smoking, and drinking; and overall work habits? Why do they think this is so? Help students understand that if they feel good about themselves, they will want to take care of themselves.

Discussion Questions:

Using what you learned about self-esteem, do you think that it would be possible for residential school youth to develop into healthy citizens?

What do you think the relationship is between poor self-esteem and becoming involved with drugs, alcohol, or other unhealthy life choices?

How does being denied the honour of running the torch in the 1967 Games speak to the value of First Nations people in history?

Evaluation:

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' involvement in class discussions, their attitude toward completing a personal inventory, and the quality of their projects:

- 3 points: was highly engaged in class discussions; demonstrated positive attitude toward completing the personal inventory; created a realistic project highlighting the results of the inventory.
- 2 points: was moderately engaged during class discussions; demonstrated mostly positive attitude toward completing the personal inventory; created a project that highlighted some key points from the inventory.
- 1 point: was not engaged during class discussions; demonstrated negative attitude toward completing the personal inventory; was not able to produce a project highlighting the results of the inventory.