

AREA OF CHOICE: FOCUSED LITERARY STUDIES 11

Description

The Focused Literary Studies Area of Choice allows students to delve more deeply into literature. Students can explore selected First Peoples themes or authors through literary works in a variety of media. Focused Literary Studies enables students to:

- expand their development as educated Canadian and global citizens
- broaden their understanding of themselves and the world

Possible areas of focus include:

- Genre-specific study of First Peoples literature: poetry, short prose pieces, novels, drama, graphic novels
- Thematic study of First Peoples literature
- Global Indigenous literature
- Specific Indigenous author studies
- Indigeneity and feminism

Suggested interdisciplinary links

Various topics within this area of choice could potentially be paired with curriculum in Social Studies, Visual Art, Music, and Drama.

BIG IDEAS

The exploration of **text** and **story** deepens understanding of one's identity, others, and the world.

Texts are socially, culturally, geographically, and historically constructed.

First Peoples' **texts** and **stories** provide insight into key aspects of Canada's past, present, and future.

Self-representation through **authentic text** is a means to foster justice.

Indigenous literature plays a role within the process of **Reconciliation**.

Learning Standards

Curricular Competencies	Content
<p><i>Using oral, written, visual, and digital texts, students are expected individually and collaboratively to be able to:</i></p> <p>Comprehend and connect (reading, listening, viewing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply appropriate strategies in a variety of contexts to guide inquiry, extend thinking, and comprehend texts • Synthesize ideas from different texts/sources • Articulate how different forms, structures, and features of texts reflect various purposes and audiences • Think critically, creatively, and reflectively to explore ideas within, between, and beyond texts • Explain the impact of personal, social, and cultural contexts, values, and perspectives in texts • Recognize how language constructs and reflects personal, social, and cultural identity • Construct meaningful personal connections between self, text, and world • Access ideas and information from a variety of sources and evaluate relevance, accuracy, and reliability in relation to purpose • Assess how literary elements, techniques, and devices enhance and shape meaning and impact • Explain the role of story and oral tradition in expressing First Peoples' perspectives, values, beliefs and points of view • Describe the diversity within and across First Peoples' societies represented in texts • Assess the authenticity of First Peoples' texts 	<p><i>Students are expected to know the following:</i></p> <p>A wide variety of First Peoples literary texts</p> <p>Oral Tradition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the legal status of First Peoples' oral traditions in Canada • elements of oral texts • rhetorical devices <p>Protocols</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issues related to the ownership of First Peoples' texts and protocols for their use <p>Text features and structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • narrative structures, including those found in First Peoples' texts • form, function, and genre of texts • features of oral language <p>Strategies and processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reading strategies • metacognitive strategies • writing processes • oral language strategies

Learning Standards (continued)

Curricular Competencies	Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate awareness of how First Peoples' languages and texts reflect their cultures, knowledge, histories, and worldviews • Discern nuances in the meanings of words, considering social, political, historical, and literary contexts • Explain the significance of First Peoples language words and phrases used in English texts • Identify and challenge bias, contradictions, and distortions <p>Create and communicate (writing, speaking, representing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respectfully exchange ideas and viewpoints from diverse perspectives to build shared understanding and extend thinking • Use the conventions of First Peoples' and other Canadian spelling, syntax, and diction proficiently and as appropriate to the context • Recognize the difference between intellectual property rights and community protocols and apply as necessary • Use writing and design processes to plan, develop, and create engaging and meaningful texts for a variety of purposes and audiences • Express an opinion and support it with evidence • Assess and refine texts to improve their clarity, effectiveness, and impact according to purpose, audience, and message 	<p>Language features, structures, and conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • language change • elements of style • rhetorical devices • usage • conventions • persuasive techniques • literary elements and devices • literal and inferential meaning <p>Text functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bias • propaganda • manipulation • omission

Big Ideas – Elaborations

- **text/texts:** any type of oral, written, visual, or digital expression or communication:
 - visual texts can include gestural and spatial components (as in dance) as well as images (some examples of image-based visual texts are posters, photographs, paintings, carvings, totems, textiles, regalia, and masks)
 - digital texts include electronic forms of oral, written, visual expression
 - multimodal texts can include any combination of oral, written, visual, and/or digital elements and can be delivered via different media or technologies (some examples of multimodal texts are dramatic presentations, web pages, music videos, on-line presentations, graphic novels, post-modern picture books, and close-captioned films).
- **story:** a narrative text that shares ideas about human nature, motivation, behaviour, and experience; stories can record history, reflect a personal journey, or explore identity; stories can be oral, written, or visual, and used to instruct, inspire, and/or entertain listeners and readers.
- **authentic text:** a written, oral, visual, digital, or multimodal text that
 - presents authentic First Peoples voices (i.e., historical or contemporary texts created by First Peoples, or through the substantial contributions of First Peoples)
 - depicts themes and issues important to First Peoples cultures (e.g., loss of identity and affirmation of identity, tradition, healing, role of family, importance of Elders, connection to the land, the nature and place of spirituality as an aspect of wisdom, the relationships between individual and community, the importance of oral tradition, the experience of colonization and decolonization)
 - incorporates First Peoples storytelling techniques and features as applicable (e.g., circular structure, repetition, weaving in of spirituality, humour)
 - includes respectful portrayals or representation of First Peoples, their traditions, and beliefs.
- **Reconciliation:** the movement in Canada to heal the relationship between First Peoples and Canada that was damaged by colonial policies such as the Indian residential school system.

Curricular Competencies – Elaborations

- **text/texts:** any type of oral, written, visual, or digital expression or communication:
 - visual texts can include gestural and spatial components (as in dance) as well as images (some examples of image-based visual texts are posters, photographs, paintings, carvings, totems, textiles, regalia, and masks)
 - digital texts include electronic forms of oral, written, visual expression
 - multimodal texts can include any combination of oral, written, visual, and/or digital elements and can be delivered via different media or technologies (some examples of multimodal texts are dramatic presentations, web pages, music videos, on-line presentations, graphic novels, post-modern picture books, and close-captioned films).
- **strategies:**
 - make predictions, ask questions, paraphrase, form images, make inferences, determine importance, identify theme, and draw conclusions
 - consider titles; beginnings; key details; extended descriptions; names; changes in direction, setting or point of view; repetition; surprises, and endings
- **variety of contexts:** distinguish independent or collaborative settings, formal or informal situations

Curricular Competencies – Elaborations

- **Synthesize:** combine ideas from two or more sources to construct a meaningful whole
- **reflectively:** includes metacognitive strategies such as: identifying strengths and areas of focus, setting goals, making plans for improvement, and self-assessment
- **how language constructs and reflects personal, social, and cultural identity:** register includes jargon, colloquialisms, vernacular, dialects, accent, diction, slang
- **Access ideas and information:** consider prior knowledge
- **variety of sources:** includes print, digital, visual, artistic, and diverse cultural sources
- **relevance:** consider the extent to which material has credibility, currency, and significance for the purpose, and whether it resonates with personal experience
- **reliability:** students should be prompted to consider point of view, bias, and propaganda; voices left out or omitted
- **how literary elements, techniques, and devices enhance and shape meaning and impact:** students are encouraged to delve deeply into text and consider the function of literary elements, techniques and devices (e.g., allegory parallels the real and fictional, paradox reveals seemingly contradictory truths)
- **oral tradition:**
 - the means by which cultural transmission occurs over generations, other than through written records
 - among First Peoples it may consist of told stories, songs and/or other types of distilled wisdom or information, often complemented by dance or various forms of visual representation such as carvings or masks
 - in addition to expressing spiritual and emotional truths (e.g., via symbol and metaphor), it provides a record of literal truth (e.g., regarding events and/or situations)
 - it was integrated into every facet of life and was the basis of the education system)
 - it continues to develop in contemporary contexts.
- **writing and design processes:** such as, pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, publishing; use of sketch, shade, and colour; selecting appropriate format and layout
- **Assess and refine texts:** creatively and critically manipulate language for a desired effect; consciously and purposefully make intentional, stylistic choices, e.g., sentence fragments, inverted syntax, and hyphenated modifiers for emphasis or impact
- **audience:** students expand their understanding of varied audiences and refine evidence-based writing

Content – Elaborations

- **legal status:** First Peoples’ oral histories are valid evidence of ownership of the land within Canadian law. The Supreme Court of Canada recognizes that First Peoples’ “oral tradition” is as important as written documents in considering legal issues; see resource disputes (e.g., Delgamuukw or Xenigwetin), treaties and title cases (e.g., Nisga’a), and environmental impact studies (e.g., Puntledge River Dam, Berger Inquiry).
- **First Peoples’ oral traditions:**
 - These are the means by which cultural transmission occurs over generations, other than through written records. Among First Peoples, oral traditions may consist of told stories, songs and/or other types of distilled wisdom or information, often complemented by dance or various forms of visual representation such as carvings or masks.
 - In addition to expressing spiritual and emotional truth (e.g., via symbol and metaphor), these traditions provide a record of literal truth (e.g., regarding events and/or situations).
 - They were integrated into every facet of life and were the basis of First Peoples’ education systems. They continue to endure in contemporary contexts.
- **rhetorical devices:** some examples include figurative language, parallelism, repetition, irony, humour, exaggeration, emotional language, logic, direct address, rhetorical questions, and allusion
- **protocols:** Stories often have protocols — when and where they can be shared, who owns them, who can share them
- **Text features:**
 - key words, titles, captions, maps, illustrations, photographs, and sidebars/text boxes
 - include elements of visual/graphic texts
- **narrative structures, including those found in First Peoples’ texts:** circular, iterative, cyclical
- **form:** within a type of writing the writer chooses a form based on the purpose of the writing
- **features of oral language:** intonation, enunciation, volume, pacing, expression, purpose, diction, acoustics
- **reading strategies:**
 - consider what strategies students need to use to “unpack” text
 - there are many strategies that readers use when making sense of text. They employ strategies with increasing independence depending on the task, text, and context
 - strategies include but may not be limited to connections, predictions, inferences, vocabulary, questioning, paraphrasing, visualizing, summarizing, identifying big ideas
- **metacognitive strategies:**
 - identifying strengths and areas of focus
 - setting goals
 - making plans for improvement
 - self-assessment
- **writing processes:** there are many writing structures and processes; writers often have very personalized processes when writing; writing is an iterative process
- **oral language strategies:** speaking with expression; connecting to listeners, asking questions to clarify, listening for specifics, paraphrasing
- **elements of style:** what make one “writer” distinguishable from others; can include diction, vocabulary, sentence structure, tone

Content – Elaborations

- **usage:** common usage errors include double negatives, mixed metaphors, malapropisms, and word misuse such as affect/effect, anyways, their/there, lay/lie, a lot/allot, gonna/going to, could of/could have, and less/fewer
- **conventions:**
 - active and passive voice
 - punctuation: colon, semi-colon, dashes, ellipsis, brackets, parentheses
 - citation formats
- **persuasive techniques:**
 - repetition, parallel structure, irony
 - ethical, logical, and emotional appeals
- **literary elements and devices:** texts use various literary devices, including figurative language, according to purpose and audience
- **inferential:**
 - reading “between and beyond the line” — coming to a conclusion based on evidence and reasoning
 - connotation versus denotation
 - ask, What’s important? Why? So what?
 - consider diction, tone, theme, imagery, ideas, syntax
- **bias:** consider questions such as Who is the writer? Speaker? What is their “lens”? What is the writer’s motivation for creating the texts? When and where was it created? How did the “writer” create the text?
- **propaganda:** consider questions such as What is the intended result? What is the writer’s purpose/motivation? Who is the targeted audience? Why? How is it misleading/inaccurate/biased?