## **GRADE 12 ENGLISH FIRST PEOPLES:** *Monkey Beach* Novel Study

### **Summary of Learning Opportunity**

First Peoples Principles of Learning: Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story. Learning requires exploration of one's identity.

Monkey Beach is a coming-of-age novel set in Kitamaat. The protagonist, Haisla girl Lisamarie, seeks to understand her brother's disappearance at sea and her family's and her own privileges and struggles. Monkey Beach explores the main character's conflict as she navigates her own and her family's Indigenous and Western worldviews. The teacher focused her lessons and assessment on Lisamarie's relationship with money and finances, and how these factors affect her decisions in the book. Students were asked to document Lisamarie's travels to Monkey Beach, connecting numerical information gleaned from the novel to plot points and pivotal decisions made by the protagonist.

# **Curricular Competencies** and Content

#### **English First** Peoples 12

- Recognize and identify personal, social, and cultural contexts, values, and perspectives in texts, including...socioeconomic factors
- Analyze the influence of land/place in First Peoples texts
- Use writing and design processes to plan, develop, and create engaging and meaningful texts for a variety of purposes and audiences
- Transform ideas and information to create original texts, using various genres, forms, structures, and styles
- A wide variety of BC, Canadian, and global First Peoples texts
- Common themes in First Peoples literature
- Text features and structures
- Strategies and processes

## Literacy and Numeracy Connections

LITERACY:

## Instruction and Assessment

Developed, Practiced, and/or Assessed The teacher introduced the concept of personal finances and socioeconomics as literary themes and plot conflicts. Students built a knowledge base through discussions of texts such as the TV shows

Comprehends text-Makes connections **Applies** understandinginformation

Extracts ideas and LITERACY: Applies

understanding information

Extracts ideas and

LITERACY: Communicates— Presents ideas and information

LITERACY: Communicates— Justifies and defends decisions and/or ideas

Schitt's Creek, Trickster, and Ozark and the novel Great Expectations. The teacher explored Indigenous worldviews such as idea of "power with" (circle) rather than "power over" (hierarchy); stories in Thomas King's "The Truth About Stories" and the tale of "Skywoman" in "Braiding Sweetgrass" by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

2. Students use the lens of money and the influence of finances on decisions to collect information to analyze Lisamarie's decisions, major plot points in the novel, and the role of her journey.

- 3. Students chose a representation of the protagonist's journey.
- 4. Students presented and discussed individually with the teacher their process, choice in representation, and defended their decisions. Student self-reflection was considered in the teacher's assessment of the process and product.

Recognize and identify personal, social, and cultural contexts, values, and perspectives in texts, including...socioeconomic factors

Competencies

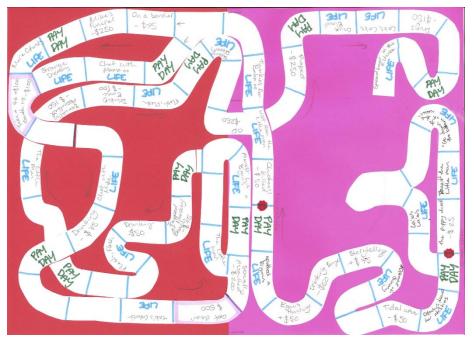
Analyze the influence of land/place in First Peoples texts

Transform ideas and information to create original texts, using various genres, forms, structures, and styles

Use writing and design processes to plan, develop, and create engaging and meaningful texts for a variety of purposes and audiences

#### **Proficient Student Work**

-	The Cittle man
-	Almost hit a B'gues
_	Tab's ghost V chat with with
-	chat with Nike
-	chat with maria . 00
-	tuinties for baba,00
-	the little man
-	Chosts /
-	drange dreams
-	"Flesh Flesh"
-	"Give blood
	Ca'es, go down to fle bollon
	dean
-	speedboat in the distance



Student reflection (in conversation with the teacher):

The student told the teacher that she curated events and aspects of the novel to include in her board game that were significant but also paralleled the elements of the board game [Life]. She included the complete plot and paced it out to cover the entire board and to have enough "spaces", "squares" and "turns" to have a fulfilling game play but also be true to the story. She did find the board game oversimplified the complexities and nuances of the struggles faced by the characters. By "gamifying" it, it removed the seriousness and importance of the events the author was intending. The student reflected that her game "trivialized trauma" and made it seem like these life circumstances were chance that could come and go with the roll of dice.

#### **Teacher's Assessment**

The final product was clear, effective, and represented the student's intentions. The student created a reasonable facsimile of a board game and included all the major plot points from the main characters of the novel. The student reflected that the game was not as detailed or structured in terms of the protagonist's journey and evolution with her issues around money, career and life choices as an essay would have been. By choosing to do a board game, while fun, it did not allow her to take an insightful, deep dive into the socio-economic realities and sensitive issues of trauma that other students may have done in their projects.

#### **Teacher's Reflection**

I appreciated assessing the students' reflection of their project process in addition to the final content and result of the project. It is an excellent opportunity for students to demonstrate their thinking and communicating skills in a metacognitive way that allows for ownership in their learning and selfawareness. It also aligns well with the First Peoples Principle of Learning that "learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational". The project allowed students to see that their thinking and communicating skills built during English class can be transferrable to any project/piece of learning regardless of the subject/class/topic of study.