

Module 3 Video Transcript

Authentic Resources

Jo Chrona

So we've come to the point in our work where we talk about resources. Whether it be teacher resources or student resources. When we think about the resources that we're going to use, as we indicated previously, the choices need to be informed by our own learning. But there are a number of principles that we need to think about in what we choose to use, whether it's for learning or for students' use. One is we want to emphasize the use of authentic First Peoples resources. And these are resources that were developed by Indigenous peoples or in significant collaboration with Indigenous peoples. Some people in the province are familiar with the First Nations Education Steering Committee. And on that website, there is a tab entitled Learning First Peoples.

This website contains a number of teacher resource guides that are available to download for free, in a variety of curricular areas and for a number of different grades. For those who are not familiar with FNEC, I will just let you know, it is a non-profit independent organization whose membership are First Nations of BC. The organization works on behalf of First Nation learners to achieve quality First Nations education, for all First Nations learners, both on-reserve and off-reserve since 1992. In addition, FNEC has a formal protocol with the First Nations Leadership Council. I speak about this to help people understand that the resources that are found on the website for BC classrooms, are authentic Indigenous resources created by and with Indigenous peoples in this province.

While FNEC is a First Nations organization, we endeavor to create teacher resource guides that are inclusive and include support for teaching about Métis peoples and the Inuit in this country. One of the resource guides that FNEC has developed and made available to the province, is the English First Peoples 10, 11 and 12 Teacher Resource Guide. This course focuses on the experiences, values, beliefs, and lived realities of First Peoples in BC, Canada and around the world. Using a variety of oral, written, visual and digital texts. It presents authentic First Peoples voices. What's important to remember about EFP 10, 11, and 12, is they are the academic equivalent of ELA courses. EFP 12 is accepted by all BC's and most of Canada's post-secondary institutes for entrance requirements. And importantly EFP courses are not to be considered adapted English Language Arts courses.

In recent years, many teachers of English Language Arts have been using the EFP resource guide to help them integrate Indigenous content, respectfully and sensitively into English Language Arts courses. FNEC also has the Science First Peoples Five to Nine Teacher Resource Guide, which provides educators with resources to support the increased integration of unappropriated First Peoples knowledge and perspectives into BC classrooms. The guide contains multi-grade thematic units, information about Indigenous knowledge, support for making connections with local communities and support for developing locally-based resources. Including a framework rubric that educators can use, to see if what they're developing for locally-based content is respectful and sensitive.

This guide is used in a number of different contexts, not just for teachers teaching science in grades five to nine. You can see the feedback that has been provided, that indicates that this guide is a powerful way to integrate Indigenous education in science, but also leads to rich conversations among colleagues. Contains knowledgeable information that's especially helpful, no matter what people are teaching. And helps integrate inquiry and transdisciplinary approaches. Some people may be familiar with the Residential Schools and Reconciliation

Teacher Resource Guides. These are age appropriate resources for use at grade five, 10, 11, and 12, they respond to the TRC recommendations, they provide a unique BC focus and complement our provincial curricula. The Residential Schools and Reconciliation Teacher Resource Guides are designed to increase students understanding, of both the historical context of residential schools, to learn the truth of this country and understand that they can contribute to reconciliation.

The purpose of the guides is to help all students gain an understanding of the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada's history. The elementary guide uses published children's literature and enables a cross-curricular approach. While the secondary guides look at residential schools from a societal perspective, using an abundance of primary source materials. In *Our Own Words - Bringing Authentic First Peoples Content to K-3 Classrooms* is a cross-curricular resource, provides a variety of lesson and unit plans, ideas and suggestions that can be easily integrated into a kindergarten to three classrooms. The *First Nations Career Role Models* resources include a video series of interviews with First Nations Career Role Models from different areas around the province, a series of posters based on the videos. And parents/student and teacher handbooks, to help with the use and implementation of these resources. The goals of these resources are both to inspire and expose youth to a variety of rewarding careers. And also provide them with basic tools, for planning potential career choices. They can help teachers in career education programs. They can also help share with non-Indigenous learners, the diversity of Indigenous peoples in BC.

FNESC also a Math First Peoples Grade Eight and Grade Nine Teacher Resource Guide. To support teachers in Math, make the school system more responsive to First Peoples cultures. The guide is currently being revised to reflect the changes to the BC curriculum and also to extend into other grades. Expect to see it completed and available to teachers in the summer of 2020. FNESC has recently launched the *Secondary Science First Peoples Teacher Resource Guide*. It includes foundational material that helps people understand about Indigenous knowledge, Indigenous science, how to involve local First Nations communities and connect with the land, how to develop locally based resources and find and use narratives in the science classroom. It includes thematic units, such as exploring themes and traditional knowledge, relationships to fresh water, shaping the land, salmon and interconnectedness, forests and First Peoples. It builds upon the work of *Science First Peoples Five to Nine*.

A timely resource just developed is the *BC First Nations Lands, Title, and Governance Teacher Resource Guide for Elementary and Secondary*. The goals of this guide include helping students understand that First Peoples had strong, unique and diverse systems of governance and nation-to-nation relationships before contact. The guide will provide examples of historical and present day impacts of colonization on First Peoples governance, explain how contemporary First Peoples government systems operate, and help people be aware of the reasons, goals and challenges of First Peoples self-government. It will also help students understand the people and the operations involved in the local First Nations governance bodies and identify reasons for the BC Treaty Process and the diverse perspectives of First Nations individuals and communities about treaties and their alternatives.

Another FNESC resource is the *Authentic First Peoples Resources for Use in K-9 Classrooms*. This guide is somewhat different than our other teacher resource guides, in that it is an annotated bibliography, which lists a number of resources that can be used by students, that have been reviewed by a team of educators and deemed to be authentic First Peoples resources. Authentic First Peoples Resources is an important concept. We see, especially in the last few years, an explosion of resources with Indigenous content for BC as we've undertaken curriculum change, but not all of these resources were created by or in significant collaboration with Indigenous peoples.

And when we talk about respectful use of resources in our schools and classrooms, we want to encourage the use of authentic First Peoples materials. According to our definition, that means that the resource has been created by or in significant collaboration with First Peoples. That it has themes that have resonance for Indigenous peoples. There may be other resources available about Indigenous peoples that are respectful and sensitive, but we want to ensure that we are addressing the lack of Indigenous voice in our education system and in our country and province, in the last 100 years. And part of that solution is ensuring that we have authentic materials in our classrooms that we're seeing, hearing and reading Indigenous voices. Another resource that is available for BC classrooms is the Métis Education for Reconciliation - Teaching Maps & Teacher Resource Guide. This resource was created by Métis Nation BC, a nation representing nearly 70,000 self-identified Métis and over 16,000 Métis citizens in BC.

This resource contains teaching maps and a resource guide. Part one of the guide focuses on Métis identity and why it matters. Part two of the guide explores who are the Métis contemporary perspectives, defining contemporary Métis living in BC. Any discussion about resources in our schools and classrooms could not be complete if we did not emphasize the need to use locally-based First Peoples resources. We know that Indigenous knowledge is locally held. So, we need to understand that it's important to ensure, that where possible we are using locally-based resources that have been developed by or in collaboration with local First Nations and other Indigenous peoples of our organizations. If a locally-based resource is not possible yet, then we can think about concentric circles of local. Think about what's available in the traditional territory on which our school or school district is located. If what we're looking for is not available there, then just think about the next concentric circle out, and then the next one beyond that, and the next one beyond that.

In the use of locally-based First Peoples resources, we think about ensuring that Indigenous voice is present, and guides the development, and is also part of the feedback. And those resources ideally would also include recognition of the diversity of First Peoples, not only across the country, but also within BC. As indicated in a previous discussion, the FNEESC Science First Peoples 5-9 teacher resource guide contains a rubric that may help schools and school districts assess whether or not the locally-based resources that are being developed are done respectfully and sensitively. Dr. Judy Thompson, a Tahltan and Ts'msyen educator who is now with the University of Northern BC, created this rubric. Which while developed for science can be helpful in any curricular area.

Common Concerns

Jo Chrona

One of the common concerns that educators in the province indicate right now, stops them from moving forward in this work is the fear of making a mistake. But I remind us that we need to put ourselves in the places that we ask our learners to be in every day. We ask them to understand that there's something that they can learn. And that part of learning means being vulnerable enough to take thoughtful risks, knowing that we will make mistakes and that making mistakes is part of the learning process. It also means that we're going to have to be okay with being uncomfortable when we do make mistakes. We're going to have to apologize sometimes and we're going to have to just promise to do better next time and do better. Part of recognizing that we're going to make mistakes, also acknowledges that we have to be okay with being uncomfortable.

Often times people indicate that they won't move forward because of fear. But I think if we're really honest, that's a choice people make. A choice to not do the work comes from a place of

privilege, and that's an uncomfortable concept for many of us to think about. In recent years, we've heard the term, "White privilege," and that sets off alarm bells for a lot of people. Because it challenges the status quo and it requires us to look at the systemic racism that exists in our society, and yes, within our education system. Not acting is an action and it does reflect values. So, my advice would be it's better to err on the side of trying to do something better and making a mistake, than sitting comfortably blind, doing nothing, allowing the system to exist in a way that has not been supportive of a number of our students.

Naomi Radewiec

I think at first, it's really easy to be afraid to take risks and with the fear of doing something that's inappropriate or inauthentic. And so instead of just kind of holding back with that fear, moving forward, consulting, talking to people about it, sharing what your questions are and what you're worried about with people. And then through that, I've been able to get a lot of answers and help with me as a teacher.

Denise Augustine

I think one thing that we need to keep in mind is that, again, coming back to that idea of this is uncomfortable work and we need to be incredibly kind to ourselves, and to each other. We need to remember to be compassionate because we're talking about a very wide spectrum of learning, and we are all in different places at different times. And it is not, what do you call it when it's all in one direction? It's not linear. It's not linear. And so, I guess I just urge people to remember that idea of compassion and kindness for ourselves and for each other, as we move in this work together. I get it wrong. We're all going to get it wrong sometimes. And to be able to forgive myself, and to forgive my colleagues, and to forgive my community members and be compassionate with them, is so key to this work.

Denise Augustine

I was at a session recently and we were talking about residential school and we had some residential school survivors there. And one of the ladies, Dorothy Jack, got up and she asked one of the participants to represent, the government who put in place a residential school system. And that person stood there, and she went up to them and she held their hands and she looked at them in the eye, this is a woman who went through residential school, and she said, "I forgive you. I forgive you for taking away my language. I forgive you for the trauma that I and my sisters and brothers experienced. I forgive you." And if Dorothy can do that, then I think that challenges all of us to equally be forgiven of ourselves and of each other. I've made mistakes and I'll continue to make mistakes. And we all will. And that is learning.

Language Reclamation

Jo Chrona

First, we need to remember that we're in a process of language reclamation. We're coming out of a dark history, of Indigenous peoples being told who they are, and language reclamation is messy. That means that we sometimes will be changing the words that we use to respect what communities and Indigenous peoples want to use to identify themselves. Generally, we're seeing a disuse of the word aboriginal. It was a term that was applied by provincial and territorial governments to describe First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. In some parts of the country, you will see the terms explicitly, First Nations, Métis and Inuit. In other parts of the country, you may see the term Canadian Indigenous peoples. When we're talking about First Peoples, that's intended to be inclusive of First Nations, Métis and Inuit as well.

Where possible, we also try to be explicit. If we're talking only about First Nations, then we say First Nations. If we're talking only about Métis, then we say Métis. If we know the nation that we're referring to, then we say the name of the nation. There are various resources that are available for educators to find out actually how to pronounce Indigenous names as well, including the names of different nations around the province. It is generally understood that languages reflect culture, that cultures are embedded in languages and language systems. We're coming out of a history in Canada of a systemic effort to destroy First Nations languages, through the residential school system and other policies. Right now, part of the reclamation of who Indigenous peoples are, is the resurgence of Indigenous languages. It's important to remember that this language work needs to be directed by First Nations communities. There are school districts that are interested in supporting First Nations, what we need to have the communities take the lead in this work.

Protocols

Jo Chrona

One of the questions that often comes up is around protocols. What do we mean about protocols with respect to Indigenous peoples? Different nations, different Indigenous organizations have protocols that guide behavior. And when we're thinking about interacting with Indigenous peoples, we need to be thoughtful about what those protocols are. There are protocols that we follow every day in our school system, about who we talk to about what issues, what is respectful to say in some circumstances. And what we need to do is think about the fact that there will be protocols that should guide our behavior with Indigenous communities and Indigenous peoples. And if we don't know what those are, we can ask.

Some educators indicate that they are nervous about integrating Indigenous content into their classroom because they don't want to appropriate knowledge. They have heard that some stories and narratives are sacred and only used with permission, and some circumstances. It's helpful to remember that when we don't know if we can use knowledge that what we can do is respectfully ask. Generally, some guidelines we can follow, are that if an Indigenous person has published a story, that's a story that is available to be shared. If we have heard a story, heard a song or seen a dance that doesn't imply that there is implicit permission to share. And if we're uncertain, we need to ask.

Conditions and Supports

Denise Augustine

It's a really, really good time in history and I am really hopeful. We have many pieces in our society right now that are inviting each and every one of us, to step into the work of understanding the truth of our collective history and trying to figure out together, how we repair the relationships between First Nation and non-First Nations, that piece of reconciliation. We have documents and policies that are creating space and support for this work. So, if you look at things like UNDRIP or the TRC or our current curriculum. Those are all things that inform us about this work and create space for our work. So, we also see the media making space to tell more stories about relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to celebrate the strength and resilience of our Indigenous people.

There's so many ways into the learning today compared to 10 years ago and compared to 20 years ago. So, that gives me great hope. I also am inspired by the fact that right now the generation that's in school is the first generation that's learning our collective history in a more fulsome way.

Reciprocal Relationships

Jo Chrona

When we think about Indigenous voice, it's easy when the Indigenous voice is reflected in a printed text or a digital text or a video. But when we think about the opportunities that exist for Indigenous voice in our classroom, that requires bringing people into the classroom or bringing our classroom and our students outside into community. The learning experiences that happened within community can be quite powerful. The opportunity for rich learning that happens when students are able to hear from Indigenous peoples is quite powerful. It's also important for us to remember that we need to be thoughtful and respectful about what we ask, to ensure that when we're asking things from community, that we are also providing something in return, so that it's a reciprocal relationship. And that we're not bombarding people with the same questions. So, a general rule of thumb in guidance for working with local Indigenous communities, is to work through school districts Aboriginal education department, who might be able to funnel some of the requests, who might be able to provide additional resources to teachers and the schools.

Lynne Tomlinson

So when I talk to teacher candidates, I do remind them about being very careful of the deficit lens. We're not here to look at the terrible things that have happened in the past, and to always look at things from that lens. It's really important to celebrate and value the rich, beautiful history of our Indigenous people. And so, teachers need to come from understanding and helping their kids look at eight to 10,000 years of history in Canada from our Indigenous communities and make sure the kids understand that before they get into the most recent, terrible history that we have to also teach. And so, I think it's important to remember that it's a reciprocity, the reciprocal relationship between our Indigenous communities and non-Indigenous. We all have something to give, we all have wonderful things to learn from each other, and we need to keep the bar high for all students.

Heidi Wood

You have to be present. You have to actually put yourself out there. So, if we're not going to be willing to attend a local event, attend your own learning, be a part of workshops. We just had

Hobiye. Go to the Hobiye celebrations and learn, experience what it actually means to be a part of these ceremonies and these celebrations and these teachings firsthand. It develops the relationship. It takes time. But I think if we put ourselves out there, that relationship occurs. And when we have that reciprocal relationship where we can learn from each other, I think it's going to really foster that growth and that strength.

Judy Halbert

I think that we have found in our work with the Spiral of Inquiry and with the Indigenous network, is starting with the kids is the first place to creating community. So, we just really encourage teachers and principals and support workers to listen to their learners, and to find out more about their experience and then to be open to listening to the community as well. So, we've seen really powerfully encouraging examples where schools shift from being, "We are the teachers and the holders of knowledge." to "We are learners alongside our young people and our communities." And to see the gifts that community has to offer.

Denise Augustine

I guess I would start by asking the question back, how do we create meaningful relationships with anybody? How do we connect meaningfully with anyone? And why would that be different than trying to reach out, and create meaningful relationships with our Indigenous neighbors and community members? And I guess part of that is, if I want to develop a relationship with somebody new, I do a little bit of homework and understand what interests they have, what's important to them before I just launch in. Or I have some questions to ask around that, to build connections. And so again, why would that be any different than sitting beside a First Nations elder and genuinely being interested and curious about who they are, and also being willing to be open about who I am. I think, and that leads us to that idea of reciprocity.

Denise Augustine

So, I struggle when I hear a folks wanting to come into the First Nations community. And for instance, I'm asked, "Can you just teach me everything I need to know?" That's not my job. That's your job as a learner, to learn everything you need to know. I also struggle when folks ask my family or my community to, keep coming into schools or out into the larger community to provide information and knowledge and so on. It does need to be reciprocal. As a larger community, we can't keep taking from our First Nations family and community, we need to also be prepared to give back. And so, I think we need to think deeply about that. And that is very different than looking for ways to provide charity. That is not reciprocal. A reciprocal relationship means that we each have value to share back and forth, and that we can't do this without each other.

Supporting Indigenous Learners

Jo Chrona

We need to start rethinking, how we approach supporting Indigenous learners. When we see that a student needs support, the first thing we might ask ourselves is what support is necessary, regardless of whether that student is Indigenous or not. Have relationships been established with that student? Have relationships between the classroom teachers and school personnel been established with that student's families? We cannot rely on other people to do the work that we need to do.

Jana Fox

When I first started teaching, and throughout my, probably I remember making connections to when I was a student in high school and even elementary. There's always a label for Aboriginal Indigenous students. We're always the ones struggling. We're always labeled as the poor

attenders. We're not quite meeting the mark of the other or the total population. My hope is that, that's not going to be the case in my lifetime. Schools are going to be more equitable. And our Aboriginal students are not going to feel like they're the ones who have to play catch up or have to adjust themselves to be able to fit into the school system and to be successful. So, I think that's one of my greatest hopes.

Jo Chrona

Indigenous parents and families and community members want the same thing for their children as parents, families, and other members of other communities. They want their children to graduate from education system, with the skills and knowledge set to be able to go on to do what they want to do after grade 12. And they want them to be able to graduate with a strong sense of who they are, proud of their identity. Parents and families want to ensure that we have high expectations of their children, that we did not allow the system to continue with the racism of low expectations. Like other students, there are some Indigenous students who will need increased support, that happens in any education system. And it's up to the system to discern what those supports are, and how to provide them so that those high expectations can be achieved.

Andrea Davidson

Every student, every young person who comes into our lives wants to be successful. There is no young person who wakes up in the morning and says, "I'm going to be a failure today, or I'm not going to be recognized for who I am or I'm going to be treated unfairly." And it is a moral imperative as educators to create communities where kids feel safe, where they have a sense of belonging, where they can see themselves in the curriculum, where they have a place to thrive and to showcase their gifts, and to not experience failure because they weren't able to check off this box even though they have the skills and abilities to do something that's incredibly unique, on this side of things.

Indigenous Culture

Jo Chrona

Some people have had concerns about the integration of Indigenous knowledge and perspectives because they've interpreted as having to teach Indigenous cultures. That's not what's being asked for. A non-Indigenous person cannot teach Indigenous cultures, but they can teach about Indigenous peoples cultures and histories in respectful and sensitive voice, with the guidance and support of Indigenous peoples. But again, it requires each person to recognize that they have a role to play, in changing the system and that role requires their own learning.

Diversity as Strength

Jo Chrona

First of all, it's important for us to remember that there's as much diversity between Indigenous learners as there is between any other group of learners in our system. And we want to ensure that our schools and our classrooms are places of safety, places of belonging, places of relevancy. The key point here, and I think the shift in some of the discussion that we've been having recently, is the difference between an adult, an educator saying this is a safe place and a student feeling that it's a safe place. There's a difference between me as a teacher saying

something is relevant and a student seeing it is relevant. It's important for us to remember that our students like our colleagues, are more likely to engage in learning in places that they feel are safe and places that they feel that they belong and places that they see is relevant to who they are.

Denise Augustine

It sounds a bit of a cliché right now; diversity is our strength. But I invite everybody to think about that. Because it's also rough when we're in environments with diverse perspectives and opinions, those aren't easy places to be. But we need each other. I liken it to a natural environment. We don't want all flowers of one kind. We don't want all animals of one kind. We want a variety of organisms in our environment because that's what keeps us healthy. It's the same in our relationships with each other and in community. We need diversity and as a society, we need to figure out how to live collaboratively and harmoniously, is that the right word? But we need to live in a good way amidst that diversity.

Denise Augustine

That's tough. That's tough work. And so, I invite everybody to pick up that conversation. How do we do that? Because to be quite honest, at the end of the day, I want to be with people who think like me, who look like me and who act like me because it's relaxing, but it's not going to help me grow. I really need those diverse opinions and worldviews and thoughts and ideas to challenge me and inspire me and provoke me. So how do we get to be feeling safe in that kind of an environment?