

Allison Hall

Connected Library

Explore Indigenous Issues With A Twist of Tech

There are many rich activities in our schools and libraries that explore Indigenous issues. Here are three examples that can help start you on your journey.

Grade 7 Indigenous Heroes Inquiry:

Himale Wijesundera, Teacher-Librarian, Beryl Ford Public School

Before the start of this inquiry, we provided some context by engaging students in a discussion about early interactions and treaties between First Nations Peoples and the European explorers. Students also were introduced to the Royal Proclamation of 1763, The Indian Act, residential schools, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Through strategic questioning, students were able to describe these government directives as evidence of the forced assimilation and systemic racism faced by Indigenous people over the past 300-400 years.

Having touched on the historical and contemporary challenges faced by First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples, we proceeded to read the book *Go Show the World* by Wab Kinew. Students were given an inquiry template to guide them as they worked through a cycle of inquiry on a famous Indigenous person that was of interest to them. Students synthesized their findings to create a biographical report in a format of their choice. Finally, students paired up and used the information gathered through inquiry to design a storyboard, write a script, film and edit a mini documentary about their Indigenous hero. We took inspiration from the “Heritage Minutes” videos presented by Historica Canada (e.g. youtu.be/mVVD9yYCKiI.)

After their “premieres,” the class voted on their favourite videos. The top three videos were then shared with the school through our daily e-announcements.

Video Production Tips

Start with a storyboard:

- a plan will make the filming process easier for students and keep them on track
- there are many different printable storyboard templates available online
- another option is to have students create a storyboard online using a free program such as Pixton Comics (licensed by the Ministry of Education) (pixton.com/ca/Ontario)

Teach different video shots and angles:

- using varied shot and angles, students can create videos that are more engaging and avoid long static shots
- there are many videos on YouTube about camera shots and angles
- invite a community member to the school that works in the film or television industry

Have students create a schedule and stick to deadlines:

- a schedule will discourage excessive retakes that extend the length of the project

Finish with a student reflection:

- post learning goals and success criteria and have students individually reflect on the process