

French Indigenous Resources

Andréa Schnell

The goals of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), formed as part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA), were to make the history of the residential schools in Canada known, and to make recommendations for building a more equitable future for all Canadians.

The TRC's final report and Calls to Action were released in 2015 and highlight the role that education must play in reconciliation. Calls to Action 62 and 63, in particular, communicate the need to develop age-appropriate curricula dealing with the residential school system, and the integration of Indigenous perspectives across the curriculum. In responding to the Calls to Action, many teachers and teacher-librarians have discovered that finding these resources is often challenging and finding them in French is doubly challenging. In this piece, I will briefly discuss what I learned from my experiences developing a collection of resources for the bilingual Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa.

The first step to finding resources that meet the needs of students or users, in any language, is finding out what is available. For pedagogical materials, visiting the website of a supplier such as GoodMinds.com or Strong Nations is a good place to start. Both companies specialize in teaching materials and provide French-language resources. While novels and picture books are available through these suppliers, consulting the websites of publishers specializing in literature by Indigenous authors is a good way to find out about new

developments in the field. Portage and Main Press, based in Winnipeg, Man., publishes stories written by Indigenous authors as well as pedagogical materials. Lesson plans for some of the stories are available for free on the website. Éditions des Plaines, also based in Winnipeg, is a French-language publishing house that also publishes Indigenous authors from Canada's Prairies. Inhabit Media is an Inuit-owned publishing house based in Iqaluit, Nunavut. Some of their materials are available in French. To determine if an English-language work has been published in French, Worldcat is very useful. Using the advanced search function, search the author's name and click on French in the left-hand column. This will show all the of the author's works that have been published in French.

The above will help educators find resources but do not provide much in the way of recommendation. American Indians in Children's Literature, a website founded by Debbie Reese provides reviews and analysis of young adult works and picture books depicting Indigenous peoples from across North America. Reese is an Indigenous educator and librarian, and though the reviews are in written in English, many of the books have been translated into French. In general, when considering materials that discuss Indigenous peoples, it is important to always keep in mind the diversity of these cultures across North America, and to avoid always presuming that their situations are tragic. Though finding books and teaching materials that provide an Indigenous perspective can be sometimes prove difficult, the wealth of fascinating literature to be discovered makes it more than worth it. ■

**JOURNÉE CONGRÈS
DE L'ABO-FRANCO**

Prenez date pour la première journée congrès de l'ABO-Franco pour les professionnels de l'information

Un évènement à ne pas manquer pour discuter de problématiques et d'idées, pour les résoudre, pour parler de vos bons coups, et pour vous insérer dans un réseau de collègues francophones et / ou francophiles.

le 27 mai
Ottawa

Inscrivez-vous :
bit.ly/Journeecongres

abo-franco
Association des bibliothèques de l'Ontario-Franco

2019