

Annotated Bibliography: Indigenous Languages and Language Revitalization

Introduction

Most adults in Canada grew up in an education system that did not teach about Indigenous Peoples. The history of colonization (including the residential school system), contemporary Indigenous issues, and Indigenous cultures, traditions, and worldviews are therefore unfamiliar to many Canadians - including teachers. This can make the prospect of teaching Indigenous content a daunting one.

Indigenous Elders, activists, politicians, artists, and community members often say that the role of non-Indigenous Canadians in the Reconciliation process is to listen and learn. This calls upon non-Indigenous teachers to listen and learn alongside their students.

We have compiled a short annotated bibliography of resources created from Indigenous perspectives to help get you started. These resources focus on Indigenous history, education, and languages in Canada, and can be a helpful “next step” after reading *Secret Path*. You can share the resources listed below with your students, use them for your own learning, or both!

1) Akiwenzi-damm, K. et. al. (2019). *This Place: 150 Years Retold*. Winnipeg, MB: Portage & Main Press.

This graphic novel is comprised of stories written by Indigenous authors, retelling the past, present, and providing visions of the future from Indigenous perspectives. The vibrant and captivating illustrations and fresh takes on historical narratives make this one book that will capture the attention and imagination of teachers and students alike.

2) Barman, J., & Battiste, M. A. (1995). *First Nations Education in Canada: The Circle Unfolds*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

This anthology explores the history of Indigenous education in Canada while explaining topics and issues that remain relevant and influence the education system in Canada today. Written almost exclusively by Indigenous authors using a variety of forms (from academic writing to first-person interviews), this book does a great job of answering how Indigenous education was undertaken in the past and how the current system came to be.

3) Battiste, M. (2016). *Decolonizing Education: Nourishing the Learning Spirit*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

For anyone who has wondered what it means to decolonize education, or how education has been colonial to begin with, this book helps build a foundation of understanding based on history, law and Indigenous knowledge. Possibilities for the preservation and integration of Indigenous knowledge in schools are explored and practical suggestions are provided.

4) Joseph, B. (2018). *21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act: Helping Canadians Make Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples a Reality.*

Many Canadians are unaware of the multitude of ways in which the Indian Act has affected, and continues to affect, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. This short and easily-digestible read is based on an article by Bob Joseph that went viral online. Divided into 21 concise and informative chapters, *21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act* is a great learning tool for adults that can easily be adapted into a teaching tool for middle and secondary students.

5) King, T. (2013). *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America.*

Thomas King is a world-renowned storyteller and his unique style transforms historical narratives in *The Inconvenient Indian*. Using his own personal experience and years of academic study, King tells the history of Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations since contact in a personal way that establishes the relevance of Canada's complicated history to its complicated present.

6) Little Bear, L. (2000). "Jagged Worldviews Colliding" in *Reclaiming Indigenous Voices and Vision*, edited by Marie Battiste. Vancouver: UBC Press. pp 77-85.

How exactly do Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews differ, and what is a worldview anyway? Elder and scholar Leroy Little Bear gives a quick run-down of some of the fundamental differences between the ways of knowing, thinking, and doing in Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures. He also explores how these differences come into play in the daily lives of Canadians.

7) Truth and Reconciliation Canada. (2015). *Honouring the truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Retrieved from http://www.trc.ca/assets/pdf/Honouring_the_Truth_Reconciling_for_the_Future_July_23_2015.pdf

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released its final report on its investigation into the history and legacy of the Canadian residential school system. The report contains first-person accounts of residential school experiences, and proposes actions that Canadians can take towards Reconciliation. The TRC's Calls to Action are an important read for any teacher, as they call for fundamental changes to the education system as we know it.

- 8) **United Nations, Australian Human Rights Commission, & National Congress of Australia's First Peoples. (2013). *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 13 September 2007.***

https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf

Articles 13.1 & 13.2 of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) define Indigenous rights to language. These articles are short and densely packed with a great deal of information. For teachers, it is useful to know about UNDRIP's stance on Indigenous languages to situate oneself while teaching about language revitalization and Indigenous issues. For students, it can be eye-opening to see that Indigenous languages are a global priority, and unpacking the articles in this document can provide for an excellent learning activity.

- 9) **Thomas, Rebecca. (May 26, 2016). *Etuptmumk: Two-Eyed Seeing* [Video File]. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bA9EwcFbVfg>**

Rebecca Thomas is an Indigenous scholar and poet who, in this talk, speaks about the importance of acknowledging the nuances of Indigenous identity, the power and significance of Indigenous languages, and the necessity of decolonizing the education system. She begins with a speech and finishes with a slam poem, making this an excellent video for adult viewing and one that can easily be adapted for classroom viewing.

- 10) **Whitebean, Roxanne (Producer, Director). (2017). *Karihawanoron: Precious Things* [Motion Picture]. Canada: CBC. Retrieved from:**

<https://gem.cbc.ca/media/short-docs/season-1/episode-30/38e815a-00c>

In Kahnawake, Quebec, Indigenous language revitalization is making strides through a Kaniénkeha:ka immersion program for students from K-6. In this short documentary, parents and students share their experiences and perspectives on Indigenous language revitalization and cultural resurgence.