

## BOOKS TO BUILD ON

# Teaching and Learning Ideas

**Thank you for downloading this Books to Build On Teaching and Learning "Seed" for you to plant in the garden of your professional practice! We are excited for you to use it in a good way to further Indigenous Education and reconciliation for you and your students. Please take them as inspiration and adapt them to your needs. See below for some important information.**



### Books to Build On: Indigenous Literatures for Learning

Ok! Ába wathtech, Danit'ada, Taanishi, Hello, Welcome!

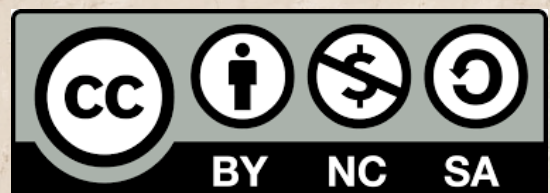
#### Call for new lesson plan donations

Are you interested in contributing to the lesson plan selection available on Books to Build On? Have you written a lesson plan that accompanies an existing resource, or a resource you think we should include? Or, are you interested in creating a lesson plan for one of the resources? If you answered yes to any of these questions, the Books to Build On team would love to hear from you. We

These teaching and learning ideas originate from the Books to Build On: Indigenous Literatures for Learning website. Please check out the website, as well as the Indigenous Education resources at the Werklund School of Education, for more information on working with Indigenous literatures! We would love to hear your feedback on our educational materials! Please find our contact information on the website.

<https://werklund.ucalgary.ca/teaching-learning/indigenous-literatures-learning>.

## Open Education Resource



Teaching and learning ideas have been gifted to Books to Build On and are free to use. In this spirit of giving, all of the lesson plans are Open Education Resources. They all have a Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported (CC BY-NC-SA 3.0) License. For more information on what exactly this means, visit this website: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>. Under this license we welcome you to share the lessons with anyone you wish and adapt the lessons to your own unique needs for your own specific students and teaching situation. You may not, however, use these lessons in a commercial setting to earn money, and you must always credit Books to Build On when you share the lessons. Finally, remix, transform, or build upon the lesson; you must use the same Creative Commons licence as we picked.

*How do we engage with Indigenous literatures in teaching and learning?*

*By Erin Spring & Aubrey Hanson*

“Starting with Story” allows us to centre Indigenous voices, knowledges, people, and experiences in our teaching and learning

Why do we believe in teaching and learning with Indigenous literatures? During our years of engagement with Indigenous knowledge systems, communities, literatures, and scholarship, we have come to know that stories are at the heart of our work. Stories embody communities and their ways of knowing, being, and doing in an appealing form—reaching the heart, not only the head. Stories are inherently relational, in that a teller and listener are drawn into relationship with each other and with the story being told. And because relationships call for mutual responsibility, storytelling as a mode of sharing knowledge draws people into reciprocal webs of connection. Stories are not just for entertainment; they are there to guide how we live our lives. Thomas King’s oft-repeated line at the end of each chapter in the Truth about Stories lecture series is an illustration of this principle. King (2003) tells the reader that the story is “yours. Do with it what you will . . . But don’t say in the years to come that you would have lived your life differently if only you had heard this story. You’ve heard it now” (p. 29). When deciding how to engage others in the work of Indigenous education, then, we believe in starting with story. We appreciate storytelling for how it respects Indigenous knowledge systems, ensures that knowledge remains rooted in context, and emphasizes the value of personal voice and collective listening. Stories are a key way into relational work in education.

*Social responsibility is at the heart of our work, we are working for better futures*

Teaching and learning with Indigenous literatures is part of the broader work of Indigenous Education. We believe that work in education must be socially responsible and committed to communities. Significant social impact is being created by the process of reconciliation and with Indigenous-focused teaching and learning happening across the country. We see our task as working to nourish Indigenous communities and knowledge systems, while challenging racism and colonialism. This work is also about fostering open and reciprocal relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. This call for social responsibility informs our collaborations in the Books to Build On project.





**DATE:** METIS WEEK  
**GRADES:** 1-6  
**ROOM:** YOUR CLASSROOM

**TOPIC:** RESILIENCY + FAMILY  
**CLASS:** ELAL AND WELLNESS

### OUTCOMES:

#### ORGANIZING IDEAS FROM WELLNESS CURRICULUM:

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS: PERSONAL WELL-BEING IS SUPPORTED THROUGH POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS BUILT ON COMMUNICATION, COLLABORATION, EMPATHY, AND RESPECT.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT: EXPLORATION OF LIFE OPPORTUNITIES AND VIRTUES DEVELOPS RESILIENCE AND PERSONAL TALENTS AND PROMOTES LIFELONG LEARNING.


#### ORGANIZING IDEA FROM THE ELAL CURRICULUM:

ORAL LANGUAGE: LISTENING AND SPEAKING FORM THE FOUNDATION FOR LITERACY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVE COMMUNICATION, COLLABORATION, AND RESPECTFUL MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES/LESSON SEQUENCE

1. Introduce to your students that your school is starting to celebrate Metis week. Refer to Rupertsland Institute if you need to learn more about Metis Week before starting this lesson. <https://www.rupertsland.org/teaching-learning/resources/metis-week-resources/>
2. Show students the book, Jenneli's Dance, and tell them that this book is the opening book for your school's Metis week this year (or how you plan on using it)! Talk to them about the author (bio link below)
3. Using a doc cam, or by gathering your students close, read Jenneli's Dance to your students
4. Pick from the following discussion prompts to further digest the book with your students:
  - What was Jenneli's challenge and how did she overcome it?
  - How did Jenneli feel about learning the jig, and how did that feeling compare to when the competition came?
  - Can you tell your neighbour a time that you were scared to do something, but a friend or family member helped you?
  - How was Jenneli brave? What is a time you were brave?
  - How can we make our school/our classroom a place where people feel comfortable to do hard things?

### RESOURCES

- Jenneli's Dance book by Elizabeth Denny and illustrated by Chris Auchter
  - Books to Build on Webpage for Jenneli's Dance  
<https://werklund.ucalgary.ca/teaching-learning/jennelis-dance>
  - Elizabeth Denny Biography  
<https://www.nativeearth.ca/elizabeth-denny/>
  - Rupertsland Institute Metis Week  
<https://www.rupertsland.org/teaching-learning/resources/metis-week-resources/>
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## Interested in learning more? Resources for additional reading:

- Archibald, J.-a. (2008). *Storywork: Educating the heart, mind, body, and spirit*. UBC Press.
- Battiste, M. (2013). *Decolonizing education: Nourishing the learning spirit*. Purich.
- Donald, D. (2016). From what does ethical relationality flow? An Indian Act in three artifacts. In J. Seidel & D.W. Jardine (Eds.) *The Ecological heart of Teaching: Radical Tales of Refuge and Renewal for Classrooms and Communities*. Peter Lang (pp.10-16).
- Garneau, D. (2012). Imaginary spaces of conciliation and reconciliation: Art, curation, and healing. *West Coast Line*, 46(2), 28-38.
- Hanson, A. (2017). Reading for reconciliation? Indigenous literatures in a post-TRC Canada. *English Studies in Canada*, 43(2-3), 69-90.
- Hanson, A. (2018). Relational encounters with Indigenous literatures. *McGill Journal of Education* 53(2), 312-330.
- Hanson, A. (2020). *Literatures, communities, and learning: Conversations with Indigenous writers*. Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Hanson, A., King, A.-L., Phipps, H., & Spring, E. (2020). Gathering stories, gathering pedagogies: Animating Indigenous knowledges through story. *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, 32(3-4), 63-87.
- Justice, D.H. (2018). *Why Indigenous literatures matter*. Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- King, T. (2003). *The Truth About Stories: a Native Narrative*. House of Anansi Press.
- MacDonald, J., & Spring, E. (2021). Learning with the river: Honouring place as white women teaching Indigenous education. In J. Macdonald & J. Markides (Eds.), *Brave Work in Indigenous Education*. In press.
- Martin, K. (2016). On the hunting and harvesting of Inuit literature. In D. Reder & L. Morra (Eds.), *Learn, teach, challenge: Approaching Indigenous literatures* (pp. 445-458). Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Simpson, L.B. (2017). *As we have always done: Indigenous freedom through radical resistance* (pp. 191-210). University of Minnesota Press.
- Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 1(1), 1-40.
- Proulx, S. & Srivastava, A. (2002). A moose in the corridor: Teaching English, Aboriginal pedagogies, and institutional resistance. In R. Eigenbrod & J.-A. Episkeneu (Eds.), *Creating community: A roundtable on Canadian Aboriginal literature* (pp 187-208). Penticton, Canada: Theytus Books.
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). *Truth and reconciliation commission of Canada: Calls to action*.