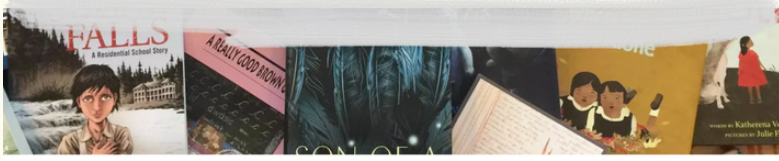


## BOOKS TO BUILD ON

# 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

What is this website?

Where does this website come from?

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



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## 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.



## Literary Analysis: A Coyote Columbus Story by Thomas King and William Kent Monkman

Resources used and possible concerns	A Coyote Columbus Story by Thomas King & William Kent Monkman
Author/creator and/or literature background	<p>Thomas King</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Novelist, short-story writer, essayist, screenwriter, and photographer.</li><li>- Cherokee and Greek descent.</li><li>- Noted for his use of humor addressing Indigenous issues and topics (historical and current).</li></ul> <p>William Kent Monkman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Interdisciplinary Cree visual artist.</li><li>- “A member of Fisher River Cree Nation in Treaty 5 Territory (Manitoba), he lives and works in Dish With One Spoon Territory (Toronto, Canada).”</li><li>- “Known for his provocative interventions into Western European and American art history, Monkman explores themes of colonization, sexuality, loss, and resilience—the complexities of historic and contemporary Indigenous experiences—across painting, film/video, performance, and installation.” (Kent Monkman Biography, n.d.).</li></ul>

<p>UPE course connections (not exhaustive)</p>	<p>EDUC 420 Issues in Learning &amp; Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Current realities in society, political and social issues.</li> <li>- This text represents an example of a source/prompt to be used in the classroom which disrupts the Caucasian colonial narrative and invites Indigenous voice and perspective. This course dealt with social justice issues, the political nature of teaching and recognized the oppressive power structures both within the school system and society at large.</li> </ul> <p>EDUC 530 Indigenous Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Indigenous content and creators, examines perspective (challenges colonial narratives) and offers a prompt for discussion surrounding teaching Indigenous knowledge.</li> <li>- Humour as part of culture- the book challenges limiting stereotypes such as “noble” “stoic/serious” etc. (King draws on this in his book “The Inconvenient Indian: A curious account of native people in North America” (2013).</li> </ul> <p>EDUC 435 Literacy, Language &amp; Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The use of colloquial and simplistic language allows for a greater number of readers to understand the story (at least at face value) as opposed to complex language which can alienate ELL and/or other learners.</li> <li>- This text allows for discussion surrounding linguistic diversity.</li> <li>- Connects language and culture with multimodal literacy (drawings-visuals combined with text), which allows for multiple access points for learners.</li> <li>- Reading the text out loud while showing visually at a class allows for an added oral communication of the story.</li> </ul>
<p>K-12 connection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Secondary ELA (Grades 10-12) * Could be used for Jr. High as well, to sift through and analyze literary devices, for example.</li> <li>● Text and Context: Broadening the definition of text (Alberta Education, p. 4)</li> <li>● Text study and Text Creation (Alberta Education, 2003, p. 10-11).</li> <li>● <i>General Outcomes (not exhaustive):</i></li> <li>● 1.2.1. Consider New Perspectives (Alberta Education, 2003, p. 12).</li> <li>● 2.1 Construct meaning from text and context</li> <li>● 2.2 Understand and appreciate textual forms, elements and techniques</li> <li>● 2.3 Respond to a variety of print and nonprint texts.</li> </ul>

<p>Materials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Projector/Smart Board</li><li>● Book or E-Book “A Coyote Columbus Story”</li></ul>
<p>Rationale</p>	<p>Big idea:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- This resource allows for multimodal ways to access and engage with the literature due to the vibrant illustrations combined with text, while providing an opportunity for higher grade-level content learning.</li><li>- The book’s complexity and nuance allows the educator to decide how many layers to unpack and expand on, as well as adjust the depth of analysis according to the class level or intended outcome.</li><li>- To build on students’ prior knowledge, prompt deeper learning and critical thinking surrounding historical narratives.</li></ul> <p>Purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Students engage with the story to consider a different perspective in the retelling of the story of the arrival of Christopher Columbus.</li><li>- The exploration (and exposure to) Coyote as trickster and creator.</li><li>- By reading the text, students are provoked to question stereotypes and think about perspective, question historical narratives, as well as identify and interpret King’s various literary devices. Monkman’s illustrations add an extra layer to the analysis, giving students multiple ways to interpret and interact with the text.</li></ul>

<p>Lesson/ activities</p>	<p><b>1. In-class reading/visual display of text:</b> Project the book onto board (or display on Smartboard) to analyze collectively as a class. Students will take notes, and consider the different elements (images, language, literary devices etc.) for discussion and assignment to follow.</p> <p><b>2. Debrief:</b> Despite the simplicity of the language, there is a lot going on in the text. This time can be used to address concerns or questions before proceeding into analysis, as well as explain some concepts students may not understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Important to explain that there exists a huge variety of differentiation across Indigenous communities – aka. not just one generalized culture and set of beliefs.</li> <li>- Contextualize: colonial history (in this case specifically the story of Columbus): how does this differ from the story you may have been told about the arrival of “explorers” to north America? <i>Perspectives, narratives, power dynamics, terminology – who writes history? For example, Is “explorer” an accurate term? It has an implication of innocence, just as “sailing the ocean blue” does in the story - how do the artist/author challenge this characterization?</i></li> <li>- Coyote is referred to as the Trickster in the book summary <i>depicted as female in this story (not common)</i>. Refer to the anthology “Troubling Tricksters: Revisioning Critical Conversations” (2010) edited by Deanna Reder and Linda M. Morra to guide your conversation surrounding the Trickster in order to avoid generalizations/stereotypes, containment and de-contextualized definition (complex).</li> <li>- <i>Positionality – model this and explain the importance – can draw upon Kent Monkman’s biography explanation (see author category above) of where he is from, as example (University of British Columbia, n.d.). See article on positionality if you require explanation:</i> <a href="https://indigenusinitiatives.ctlt.ubc.ca/classroom-climate/positionality-and-intersectionality/">https://indigenusinitiatives.ctlt.ubc.ca/classroom-climate/positionality-and-intersectionality/</a></li> </ul> <p><b>3. In-class analysis of text:</b> Guided discussion and analysis, projecting the text on the board again and posing/answering questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Characters: How are the various characters depicted? What do the illustrations suggest about the characters (i.e. Columbus, Coyote, animals, humans)?</li> <li>-Images: Do you notice a difference in the colours of the characters or groups of characters? What might the colours suggest or how do they describe the author(s)/artists perspective? <i>i.e. Columbus and</i></li> </ul>
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*the Europeans depicted as green/purple, gaudy (even vulgar) and in colourful, patched clothing, high heels (resembling clowns), carrying guns (power dynamic/intent), greedy, morally inept.*

- Language: What kind of language is used in the text? Why does the author choose to use this style of language? *Academic vs. Colloquial language – how does the use of colloquial language set the tone in the story? For example, author’s use of “that one” throughout. This could be read as a children’s book, however, language also reflects authors’ voice, cultural nuance.*  
*–“They act as if they’ve got no relations” – Can discuss this meaning, phrase (aka interconnectedness) as it pertains to Indigenous knowledge.* The following article by June Kaminski from her website has a general explanation of interconnectedness, philosophy “All My Relations”, and the Sacred Circle: *“First Nations relationships fully embrace the notion that people and their families are strongly connected to the communities they live in, their ancestors and future descendants, the land they live on, and all of the plants, animals and other creatures that live upon it.”* (June Kaminski, 2013).  
<https://firstnationspedagogy.com/interconnection.html>. Other resources are available on this topic to expand on these concepts.
- Voice/Tone: What tone is conveyed by both the author and the artist? Why is humour used as a way to tell the story? *Columbus brings “boxes of junk”, “I.M. Laust (final page), repetition of the phrase “Bad manners”.*
- Context: *Contrast of historical eras (Juxtaposition of Columbus/Cartier (early explorers) with modern capitalist entertainment, cars, clothing. Mistake of “India”, origin of incorrect term “Indian”.*

#### **4. Assignment: Critical Analytical Response to Text**

**Part A.** Write a critical response to *A Coyote Columbus Story* using your observations and notes from our class discussion. Think about your own positionality and identify this within your response.

Sample Questions/Prompts for response:

- What is valued/considered “wealth” by the different characters in the text? *Animals are happy and content living in a pond (representing pre-contact), humans begin to participate in capitalistic ventures/entertainment*
- What themes can be identified? *Morality, perspective, colonialism etc.*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What might the artist be trying to illustrate about the characters through their images?</li><li>- What literary devices are used in the story? How do the text and images work together?</li><li>- How might positionality influence how you think about this? <i>*Dependent upon depth of aforementioned in-class discussion of positionality &amp; intersectionality.</i></li><li>- Discuss the ideas presented by the author and illustrator about the impact of the arrival of Columbus and early Europeans. How do the author/artist convey these ideas?</li></ul> <p><b>Part B.</b> Add a photo to your response, and a few sentences of rationale that explain why you chose the photo and how it connects to your response. (This offers students a second way to respond and connect to the text.)</p>

Supporting Sources (APA):

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## Interested in learning more? Resources for additional reading:

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