

LGBTQ2 PDIG Final Report-May 25th,2020 by C. Bacon

This is the third PDIG in a series that was based around the idea of getting LGBTQ2 literature into the classroom. The canon of English Literature has been so often based around hetero-normative topics that we felt it was time to look at relevant inclusive short and long fiction, short and long media pieces that teachers could use in the classroom. We also felt that teachers do not individually have time to go through the plethora or onslaught of new trendy text pieces that are now available on the market to know what is grade level appropriate and topic appropriate.

The purpose of these PDIGs was to simply help teachers choose grade appropriate material to share in their classrooms either as a whole class piece or to recommend for individual readings/viewings.

This PDIG, in particular, was to look at documentaries; full length and short that would be classroom appropriate. We each watched a minimum of two full length documentaries, a few short ones, and read some biographies. We also included short knowledge-based explanation texts (I.e. Definition for Two Spirit) which could be used for introducing topics in the classroom. We also used this opportunity to update and review all of our charts which involved reading novels, short fiction and viewing movies and media shorts.

I have had the opportunity to present this PDIG at two conferences, QPAT and LCEEQ. In presenting the PowerPoint and releasing copies of the text and media Charts, I received so much positive feedback. The teachers attending expressed that this covered a missing component in the general English education canon. I had teachers, behaviour techs, guidance counselors and literary consultants approached me to ask for copies. The presentations were followed up with numerous emails requesting links and copies of the charts. I have included the charts, a sample text and our observations (in the PPT) as part of the final report.

We had also hoped to tie together some of our findings with the Quebec's Sex Education Program. We were hoping to link together certain aspects, I.e. grade level, and topic with certain texts to support the teaching of that material. However due to the Covid 19 Pandemic we were forced to abandon our last two meeting opportunities. We could not meet as a group, and consequently, had to let go of the last aspect of our PDIG.

Although our PDIG has come to an end, this could be easily carried on by another team if they were interested in updating the charts. The development and release of new novels, movies, interviews and documentaries are ongoing. Certainly, the charts could be seen as living documents where texts can be added and dropped as relevancy and needs evolve. Also there is an opportunity to develop a connection between certain texts and aspects of the Quebec Sex Education Curriculum.

This was a solid PDIG. It was much needed and appreciated by many. The number of students that have thanked us as classroom teachers, the number of books we were able to help the librarian choose to purchase for the library and the number of teachers and professionals (in and outside of our board) who used it to inform their classroom text choices speaks for itself. I feel proud to be part of something so timely, relevant and necessary in today's education system.

