

Indigenous Narratives in History

PDIG Final Report

Project Description Describe/show to what degree the project was carried out as planned. Include what went well and what proved to be a challenge. Include a synthesis of your journal entries.

This was a very exciting project. Beyond developing our ideas together of what decolonized social studies lessons could look like, we were afforded the opportunity to spend time together developing personal and working relationships. This was first and foremost the most important aspect of this project, regardless of outcome because reconciliation is based on relationship. The question we took up in this project was to think about what we were reconciling; our relationships with each other as well as our relationships with knowledge as where we started. This began from our very first session where we started off by creating tobacco ties to set our intentions. We discussed which narratives we wanted to rethink in terms of the history curriculum. As we focused on the strengths of each participant, we moved forward with two separate projects that we are combining into one document. Each working session went really well, and although we ran out of time with our PDIG specific days, we are continuing to finish the work with one more day funded through the school for release. I would emphasize that this indicates that it went well because not only did the team create valuable resources, but the school they work for recognizes that the work is important and supports it.

Project Goals Describe/show to what degree the goals of the approved project were met. If the goals were only partially met or not met at all, describe the reasons for this.

At the outset of this project, we wanted to create a guide for alternative narratives in the history curriculum. The original focus was on one grade level, and in the end, not only did we tackle two grade levels, but we also moved cross-curricular with the integration of ELA components for the grade 8 portion of our teaching guide. The challenging part of a project like this is that there is so much work to be done, and so while we did not successfully create resources all of the grade 10 curriculum, we have a comprehensive assignment that can be take up in any classroom with respect to language use in the History curriculums. We achieved our goals by also practicing the Mi'gmaq concept of *Etuaptmumk* (two-eyed seeing) in our work. As we started unpacking the curriculum, we questioned language throughout, and based our developed resources on how to explore the implications of language from an Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspective, revealing that some interpretations really only speak to one narrative. Reconciliation or decolonization in this context then means we need to rethink the language we are using. This was a goal that developed as we worked, and it was whole heartedly achieved in this project!

Project Outcomes Describe/show the gains that the participating teachers achieved through this project.

This project was very valuable for the participating teachers in that they were afforded much needed time to actually be able to work on curriculum development and research. Further, they were also given opportunity and access to their Indigenous consultant to be able to touch base and collaborate on the resources in real time. Education is fast paced; this project created opportunity to slow down and really consider ones own relationship to curriculum and pedagogy. Time, which is very restrictive concept, was

exactly what everyone needed. Ultimately, the unstructured and organic sessions enabled the teachers to be creative, inquisitive and patient with their learning when considering Indigenous perspectives and world view. All teachers could benefit from an opportunity such as this.

Reinvestment: Clearly describe how the resources created and/or the learning achieved by the participants can be of benefit to the educational community at large. If applicable, comment on whether this project should be carried out by other teams and if so, how it could be improved.

The intentions are to share the final product with as many people as possible. The Indigenous Consultant sits in a committee of other consultants and liaisons who take care of their Indigenous dossiers across English School Boards. This will be shared with all of them, as well, in conversations with them, the proposal is there to continue the work for other subject areas and even across boards.

This work most definitely should be carried out by every team in every school. More so, the opportunities to work on projects like this across boards, and even in some cases, alongside Indigenous communities is so key. Reconciliation in education starts with the very thing that schools are designed for: curriculum and pedagogy.