

## Inquiry Project Plan

**Inquiry Title:** STORYTELLING ACROSS CULTURES

**Time Frame**

4 WEEKS

**Inquiry Approach:** GUIDED & STRUCTURED

ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE  
ARTS AND  
SOCIAL

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**Subject(s):** STUDIES

**Grade(s):** 5

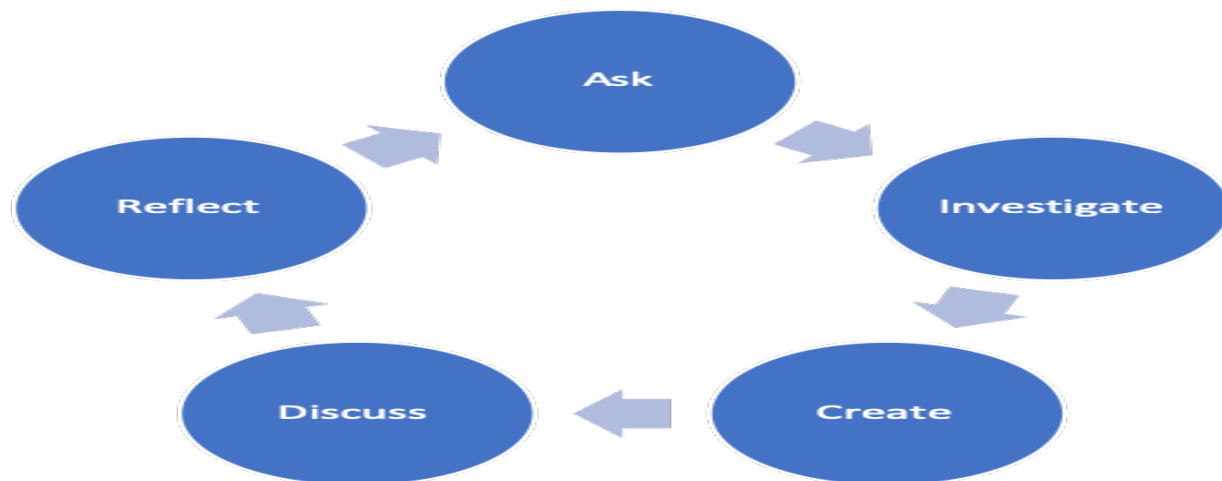
### Inquiry Project Rationale & Overview

This topic shall hold immense importance to students as it relates to owning yourself and others for who they are. The surroundings and cultural experiences form a stable frame for an individual's behavior. Cultural languages, norms, traditions, gender roles, and humor, were all transmitted through stories. Storytelling is a mode of teaching and learning that requires the learner to listen, visualize, and imagine. There is a natural shared experience between the storyteller and the listener that offers natural language experiences for all students and is a wonderful way to share and understand each other as cultural beings ((Dyson & Genishi,1994). Through this inquiry, the students may connect with different cultures of the world through the exchange of different stories and make personal connections with the cultures of the world. The focus of this unit resides on building a cultural understanding and development of a sense of self and interconnectedness with our world. Through this unit, we intend to explore and identify how we are all the same despite being framed by our cultural experiences by posing the **essential question: How can cross-cultural understanding help us understand the basic human values that remain the same across the socio-cultural landscape?** The instructor and the students shall engage in a brainstorming activity (Wonderwall, Curiosity & Questions), followed by the inquiry cycle whereby we begin with Ask and then investigate – create - discuss and at the end reflect.

### Key Questions For Inquiry

Core Question	Supporting Questions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the reasons that cultures and individuals create narratives of their experiences?</li> <li>2. Can we use storytelling and story writing to solve everyday problems?</li> <li>3. In what ways can we express ourselves in the absence of a language we do not understand?</li> <li>4. How does our understanding of the culture of other places and people help us communicate with them effectively?</li> <li>5. How can stories from different cultures lead to constructive change and a positive outcome for everyone involved?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How important is storytelling and how well versed am I in this?</li> <li>2. What is the purpose of storytelling and who uses it?</li> <li>3. How can storytelling add value to my life and the life of others?</li> <li>4. does storytelling possess the capacity to engineer real-world solutions for real-world problems?</li> <li>5. How does our understanding of the culture of a community help us communicate with them most effectively?</li> <li>6. In a culture full of ideas and images of what we should be, how do we form an identity that remains true and authentic for the individual?</li> <li>7. What are the reasons that cultures and individuals create narratives of their experiences and what makes a story effective for its purpose?</li> <li>8. What moves us to communicate through digital and non-digital media?</li> <li>9. What makes writing worth reading and why should we do it?</li> </ol>

	<p>digital and non-digital media?</p> <p>9. What makes writing worth reading and why should we do it?</p> <p>10. Are our perceptions of good and evil shaped by our stories and how do different cultures shape our definition of the same?</p>
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### Inquiry Approach and Rationale

<p>A blend of structured and guided inquiry shall be taken up as the inquiry approach in this unit. Students shall develop their own questions gradually while taking up the different activities in different lessons, as the unit progress. All the activities to be designed by the teacher with the regular reflection, improvising, and reforming the structure if needed depending on the response of students, to help them present their understandings while they work to explore the essential question.</p>
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### Core Principles of Effective Teaching (Sharon Friesen)

<p><b>Core Principle 1:</b> Effective teaching practice begins with the thoughtful and intentional design of learning that engages students intellectually and academically.</p> <p><i>*What aspects of the inquiry are the most challenging and meaningful for students?</i></p>	<p>The students at this age can begin with teacher-guided questions shifting slowly to students' developed questions. Students will brainstorm their own thinking to develop ideas related to EQ's posed – use what they discover to represent ideas and create a narrative based on what they discover. It is also challenging for students to consider multiple perspectives. The teacher selects and prioritizes those that best suit the needs of the learners so that they can be given the depth of treatment they deserve and the learners move beyond a superficial appreciation.</p>
<p><b>Core Principle 2:</b> The work that students are asked to undertake is worthy of their time and attention, is personally relevant, and deeply connected to the world in which they live.</p> <p><i>*What makes this inquiry valuable, meaningful, and "alive" for the students and teachers?</i></p>	<p>Inquiry-based learning promotes inquisition and curiosity in the classroom. These are the natural instincts for 10-year-old children. With this inquiry, the design of the class shall help them to question what is "required". To ensure constructive utilization of student time, students will be encouraged to question the obvious and develop their understandings by finding answers to the key questions and developing their own questions. Allowing students to choose, select, and build on</p>

	<p>their understanding by finding answers to the key questions and developing their own questions. Allowing students to choose, select, and build on their learning increases their engagement thereby, enabling the learner to become actively involved in the lesson and participate in the discovery or acquisition of knowledge, attitudes, and skills.</p>
<p><b>Core Principle 3:</b> Assessment practices are clearly focused on improving student learning and guiding teaching decisions and actions.</p> <p><i>*How do I define learning and success in this inquiry? How is learning expressed and articulated in peer, self, and teacher assessments?</i></p>	<p>The class develops a set of criteria based on a scale for self-reflection/peer evaluation. The teacher may use Friesen's rubric for inquiry, adapted, and used as per the age requirements of the students. The teacher and students review the rubric to have a view of assessment for learning and engagement. A holistic approach shall be adopted throughout the unit.</p>
<p><b>Core Principle 4:</b> Teachers foster a variety of interdependent relationships in classrooms that promote learning and create a strong culture around learning.</p> <p><i>*How do I connect students with each other, with experts in the field, with larger communities and nature, and across disciplines?</i></p>	<p>The teacher starts the school year with a listening circle, getting to know each other as a community, and learning about each other's strengths and weaknesses. Building this trust among students will not only allow for collaboration but teach necessary 21st-century skills they will use throughout their life. Students will work as individuals, in pairs, and small groups to research, discuss and explore. Inviting an elder or a Storyteller will help the class understand and make connections to the significance of storytelling. Working as a community and from Elders helps build a classroom community centered around relationships including adults as well as peers, that can further student learning and help them evolve.</p>
<p><b>Core Principle 5:</b> Teachers improve their practice in the company of peers.</p> <p><i>*How do I reflect on the inquiry together, and/or collaborate with others?</i></p>	<p>Our classroom is bigger than our walls, reaching outside of those walls will bring expertise that the teacher cannot provide alone. The teacher can help arrange a workshop, a museum visit, or an excursion for students to come back with new knowledge backed up with experience. This will support research skills and in exploring social science theories to support storytelling and cultural concepts.</p>

### BC Curriculum Core Competencies

Communication	Thinking	Personal & Social
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting and engaging with others.</li> <li>• Creative use of language can help generate joy and happiness.</li> <li>• Vivacious and sportive use of language introduces us to new vistas that can open owing to language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generating and incubating</li> <li>• Thinking creatively and critically.</li> <li>• Questioning and investigating</li> <li>• Designing and developing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebuilding cultural beliefs.</li> <li>• Recognizing personal values and choices</li> <li>• Understanding universal characteristics common across cultures and valuing diversity</li> <li>• Building relationships</li> </ul>

### BC Curriculum Big Ideas (STUDENTS UNDERSTAND)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening and exploring stories from other times and places helps us to know more about others</li> </ul>
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**BC Curriculum Big Ideas (STUDENTS UNDERSTAND)**

- Listening and exploring stories from other times and places helps us to know more about others and allows us to form connections and know ourselves better.
- Empathy and respect for different points of view depending on their individual perception.
- The ability to articulate thoughts, feelings, and needs can contribute to academic, interpersonal, and professional success

**BC Curriculum Learning Standards**

(STUDENTS DO)	(STUDENTS KNOW)
Learning Standards - Curricular Competencies	Learning Standards - Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in speaking and listening skills that are essential to participating in adult culture.</li> <li>• Employ strategies that help understand written, oral, and visual texts.</li> <li>• Articulate thoughts, feelings, and needs.</li> <li>• Children can express their thoughts and feelings that assist them to ask for help and get what they need from adults.</li> <li>• Appreciate and identify the role of personal, social, and, cultural contexts in the text.</li> <li>• Respond to text and oral narrations to produce them creatively.</li> <li>• Decipher and discuss wisdom that the plotline preserved for future generations.</li> <li>• Establish purposeful personal connections between self, text, and world</li> <li>• Respond and reflect on the written and the spoken narratives in personal, creative, and critical ways.</li> <li>• Discuss their own and others' understanding of various community and cultural traditions, in various times and places, as portrayed in texts.</li> <li>• Recognizing the difference between ordinary storytelling and Aboriginal storytelling. Appreciate the role of story in the oral tradition in expressing First People's values, beliefs, and points of view as traditional stories contain some of the most authentic content and perspective of First people's values.</li> <li>• Use writing and unique design techniques to plan, develop, and create engaging and meaningful ways of presenting their narratives.</li> <li>• Include an explanation of a belief about the world, moral values, the origin of customs, or a natural phenomenon.</li> <li>• Assess and improvise as they develop their stories for better clarity and impact the audience for whom they prepare the creative piece of their choice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Features of Oral Language.</li> <li>• Metacognitive strategies.</li> <li>• Language usage and context.</li> <li>• Presentation techniques.</li> <li>• Narrative structure and characterizations.</li> </ul>

## Indigenous Connections/ First Peoples Principles of Learning

*How will I incorporate Indigenous knowledge and principles of learning?*

The oral tradition taught history and values and explained the world to young and old. Everything in the universe had a spirit, a place, a time, and a story that explained its personality and its relationship to man.

- Incorporating traditional knowledge helps in the understanding of the project better.
- Identifying relationships helps to make the inquiry alive.
- Organize the lessons that are holistic, experiential, and reflective in approach.

Students will work through activities that are designed to develop and value other ways of knowing. Students will work on developing perspective based on Indigenous ways of knowing alongside dominant culture to highlight the differences in worldview and build an understanding of interconnectedness through storytelling and the oral tradition.

## Respectful Relations

*How will I invite students of all backgrounds, interests, and skills into the inquiry?*

Students have access to supportive technology in the classroom. At the same time, students may choose to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways (write, draw, create a pattern, prototype, record(audio/video) ). The class develops a culture of inclusion and respect at the beginning of the school year and these expectations are referred to as a routine to reinforce the behavior.

## Project Overview

Time Estimate		Description of Teacher and Student Activities	Assessment Activities
Ask	2 classes	<b>I class</b> The teacher introduces the topic by using a video on the history of storytelling for the initial topic exploration. After introducing the concept of storytelling to the students, the teacher shall explain the project and the Essential Question to be addressed with this inquiry project. The teacher shall be posing a few key questions to the class and will divide them into different groups to discuss the same. The teacher would then be narrating a story (Aboriginal Story) and also use a video of the same story, with follow up activities.  <b>II Class</b> The teacher would take the students for a nature walk, for them to identify what inspires them and brainstorm using some words, phrases, and pictures, thereby setting the stage for what inquiry shall look like in the classroom. The teacher and students will then create an inquiry or a wonder wall using all the material given to them as quips and the new questions/ phrases that inspire students, per se storytelling and the questions helping them further their understanding of the project & explore EQ's and discuss initial understandings by employing new questions. Students would be asked to speak to the elders in their family and also think of an anecdote or a story they shall be narrating in their next class. The class will end with another story from the land.	Journal entry, Think, Pair, and Share. Discuss and explore the traditions and values they carry from their families, Notes can be used in a variety of ways. Completing the summary, checking with a partner for completeness, comparing to the teacher's idea of what the key ideas were. Small group presentation, Teacher observation

		The class will end with another story from the land.	
Investigate	2 classes	<p><b>I class</b></p> <p>The teacher shall invite an Elder or a storyteller for presenting a story. This would familiarize students with the selection of stories. They can either read them on their own or in groups.</p> <p>Students will then work in pairs and groups through various activities – draw, present, and write the quote and values that they have learned from the story of others and ponder on the similarities and differences in their cultures.</p> <p><b>II class</b></p> <p>The class starts with a story (folklore from Indian origin) narrated by the teacher and also with the help of a video. (handout of the story will be distributed to all)</p> <p>This story gives the students an impetus to narrate the stories they have learned and prepared to share in their groups.</p> <p>They will discuss and identify, as a class, the common elements found among the stories (i.e., moral of the story, explanation of a phenomenon, etc.).</p>	<p>Journal Entry. (Each day students write about 2 things they learned (use of a journal could incorporate reviewing the key points of the lesson.)</p> <p>Teacher Observation</p> <p>Self Evaluation</p> <p>Students quickly and verbally share one thing they learned in the class today. They could toss a ball from one to another (to have a safe trusting environment is important here so that everyone feels safe to share without fear) 3 things they learned, 2 things they have a question about, 1 thing they want the teacher to know. They may write it on post-its/index cards.</p>
Create	3 classes.	<p>The classes will be held in nature and inside the classroom in an informal setup and the students will be working in the classroom in collaboration with their peers and the teacher.</p> <p>Once the students are more familiar with the genre, they will be able to begin writing a story of their own. Students may write a story from their own cultural perspective or select a familiar story to change and re-write.</p> <p>The students may use all available resources to support their interpretation of the essential question. If a student writes his/her own story, the story must include one or more of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.An explanation of a belief about the world</li> <li>2.A moral</li> <li>3.The origin of a custom</li> <li>4.The origin of a natural phenomenon</li> </ol> <p>If the students re-write a familiar story they may:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.select a fairytale, fable, myth, or a favorite cultural story;</li> <li>2.change the setting, introduce new characters or remove characters;</li> <li>3.modify the beginning, climax or resolution;</li> <li>4.change the moral or lesson learned, etc.</li> </ol> <p>Students may create a storyboard to help plan their stories.</p>	<p>Journal entries</p> <p>Presentation in the form of a script for a play/skit.</p> <p><b>Story Circle</b></p> <p>One person begins a tale and stops after a few sentences. The next person picks up the story thread and continues it, then stops. The next person adds to it and so on until the tale comes to a resolution. The story could begin with a pre-selected title or subject to guide the improvisation. Try recording the story circle on a tape recorder for later listening.</p>

		<p>Students may create a storyboard to help plan their stories.</p> <p>Students may illustrate their stories using a variety of techniques. The teacher may have them go through the selection of stories they reviewed at their group meetings and discussions in previous classes to get inspiration from the different styles of presentation-illustration, video, play, skit, audio record.</p> <p><u>Go online!</u> Students may submit their stories and have them posted online as part of the virtual exhibition for “We are the World”</p> <p>The teacher may provide online instructions for the same.</p>	
Discuss	1 class	Students work individually and in small groups to discuss their understanding of the EQ and develop discussion points/main interpretations – Socratic Discussion is used to develop critical thinking and expand ideas to incorporate multiple perspectives through peer interactions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The teacher may encourage Socratic Discussions</li> <li>2. Peer and self-evaluations.</li> </ol>
Reflect	1 class	<p>Students finalize the handiwork of learning and share it with the class.</p> <p>They may choose to present as a group or individually.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students may use any medium to present their learning. Their work may be in the form of a handwritten document/illustrations/create graphic representations, etc.</li> <li>2. Students may either share out the posters or students can move from station to station – writing questions or comments, noting similarities and differences, reflect on what they might do differently if they were to repeat the process.</li> <li>3. The groups may also compile and hand over the best journal entries.</li> </ol>

### Materials

Chrome books, large paper with markers/pens/pencils, sticky notes, tape, handouts of the stories narrated in the class, projector w/screen, journals.

### Organizational Strategies

Checklist the resources before lessons, ensure the seating plan is comfortable with (teacher approved), consistent classroom/class routine well established, each day’s plan defined and written on the display board providing details for students to see and refer to, conform to individualized attention as needed.

### Proactive, Positive Classroom Learning Environment Strategies

## **Proactive, Positive Classroom Learning Environment Strategies**

Establish classroom ground-rules and expectations that promote respectful and inclusive interactions, pre-define the role of group members, peer support, technological supports, preferential seating for struggling students, conducive environment.

## **Extensions**

Students may interview a relative, Elder, or important person in their lives and listen to their stories. Students can record these (with permission), then re-write and illustrate their stories that address the Essential question. They may create a collage of thoughts, quotes, pictures (jam board) that progresses through the key questions to the core EQ and their personal connection with the project.

## **Reflections (to be completed after Project Completion)**

### **What did I learn about Inquiry-Based Pedagogy?**

I have learned that inquiry-based pedagogy is necessary, and essential to a rich classroom experience. It is a process that allows the freedom of an inquisitive mind. It permits us to look for things that are not obvious and shakes both the learner and the facilitator out of their comfort zone to not blindly accept what is being served already and is obvious. It gives the person a way of life, whereby he/she can begin by asking and looking for meanings to things and enhances one's power of thinking. (Bai). It prepares a person for the uncertain and unpredictable aspects of life (Bai, 45) and students do need to be better prepared for the world outside of a classroom and the only way to prepare them for that is to bring the world to the classroom. Problem-solving, asking critical questions to themselves, and each other provides valuable learning opportunities and helps to build the skills that students need to understand the complexities of the world. At the same time, "Inquiry" is not just random inquisition but a purposeful activity, that is driven by the method as well as results. A practice that expands a person's horizon by fostering imagination and creativity. Inquiry-based learning enhances the motivational factor of the students and also helps the teacher and students to have a better understanding of each other as well. Friesen & Scott explained the key principles of three "E's"- engaged thinker, ethical citizen, and entrepreneurial spirit. These principles encompass the process of both inquiries as well as discovery to support and foster learning and also to promote a knowledge-based society (Friesen & Scott).

Choosing a good inquiry topic holds immense importance as it requires us to be open to adapt varied approaches to learn and accept others' viewpoints. Inquiry-based learning rests on the quality of questions asked devoid of planning every aspect of the lessons. We develop an inquiry lesson gradually and base our progress on questions that are indicative of the depth of understanding that goes behind carrying an inquiry project and its relevance in the real world (Focus On Inquiry). Encouraging students to make use of technology purposefully cannot be undermined as it is essential in accomplishing any task in this age and time. However, It must establish and bring about freshness to the existing ways of thinking and doing.

### **What challenges and successes did I experience?**

This is perhaps a new experience for me to adopt a complete unit in the form of an inquiry although, I have adopted PBL earlier with a combination of instructional and Inquiry learning approach. It was indeed a learning experience without any major challenge than to be able to understand the various forms of inquiry. Planning my unit has taken me more time than I would usually take only to ensure the flow of inquiry remains at the core of the unit. I feel I have succeeded so far in planning a project that was perceived very well in the class presentation for one lesson. Also have been successful in employing the principles of inquiry to the detailed outline of my plan. It would be truly nice if I shall be able to execute this unit plan and experience the final preview of class presentations.

### **What would I adapt for next time?**

I would be able to adapt inquiry-based pedagogy in planning more projects with my students after I execute this plan. I am confident that this will pave a new way of learning for me and my students.

### **What questions do I still have about Inquiry-Based Pedagogy?**



execute this plan. I am confident that this will pave a new way of learning for me and my students.

### **What questions do I still have about Inquiry-Based Pedagogy?**

At this point in time, I do know as to how this project would be perceived, but I shall try to adopt and put to use the principles of inquiry into my practice and encourage the three “W’s” what, where, and why in all my lessons. Reflection has always been my nemesis and I enjoy learning and sharing my ideas and also reinvent and upgrade my learnings.

#### **References**

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