

Grade 4 Language

Media Literacy

Aboriginal Teaching Strategy

Comparing Media Texts – Who Says?

Students analyse and compare two media texts, one with an Aboriginal perspective and one with a non-Aboriginal perspective.

Related Curriculum Policy

- *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Language, 2006*

Specific Expectations

Understanding Media Texts

- 1.1 identify the purpose and audience for a variety of media texts (e.g., this print advertisement is designed to interest children in taking karate lessons; this website is designed to provide information to fans about a favourite singer; this CD cover is designed to attract classical music fans/pop fans/rap fans)
- 1.2 use overt and implied messages to draw inferences and construct meaning in media texts (e.g., overt message on packaging for a video game: *In this adventure game, characters take big risks and perform amazing deeds*; implied message: *If you buy this game, you can share in the excitement and be more like the daring characters*)
- 1.5 identify whose point of view is presented or reflected in a media text, citing supporting evidence from the text, and suggest how the text might change if a different point of view were used (e.g., explain how the point of view reflected in an advertisement is conveyed and describe how the advertisement might change to reflect the point of view of a different audience; describe how a TV show might change if it were told from the point of view of a different character)

Aboriginal Context

Aboriginal people in Ontario are not a homogeneous group. They hold viewpoints that range from extremely conservative to extremely liberal, as in any population, and even those within a single region of the province may disagree on an issue. Similarly, there are differences in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal viewpoints.

All such differences result in the creation of different texts, and the texts, in turn, result in different perceptions of those texts. In addition, some texts may contain multiple perspectives, some in agreement with the mainstream view and some running counter to it.

Teaching Strategies

- Have students examine two media texts (e.g., two newspapers, two television programs, two websites, two magazines, two films) – one from a non-Aboriginal source, the other from an Aboriginal perspective.
- Ask them to identify the overt and implied messages in each of the texts.
Teacher prompts: Who created the text? Who is the audience? How do you know? From whose point of view is the text being presented? How might someone with a different perspective retell what is said in the text? How would a different audience interpret it? What messages are being conveyed? What messages are missing from the text? How does the fact that there is something missing influence how you think about the text and its messages?

Resources

- Local or national newspapers, television programs, websites, magazines, and films.
- Aboriginal television programs, such as those broadcast on APTN (the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network). For information, see <http://www.aptn.com>.
- Aboriginal websites such as www.perspective.ca and www.aboriginalcanadaportal.com.
- Aboriginal publications such as *Anishinabek News*, *Windspeaker*, *Haudensaunee Runner*, *Tansi*, *Wawatay*, *Tekawaneke*, *Aboriginal Voices*, *Spirit Magazine*, *Say Magazine*, and *Sage*.
- Films with a high degree of Aboriginal creative input and control such as *Smoke Signals*, *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner*, and *The Business of Fancy Dancing*. See also the Aboriginal Perspectives section of the National Film Board of Canada website, at <http://www3.nfb.ca/enclasse/doclens/visau/index.php>.

Making Community Connections

- Have students create a media text that represents a local voice or viewpoint, or that interprets the news for a local audience.

ABOUT THE TEACHER'S TOOLKIT

This teaching strategy is one component of *Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit*, a collection of resources designed to help Ontario educators bring Aboriginal perspectives into the classroom. Based on the revised Ontario curriculum, the collection includes resources for educators at both the elementary and secondary levels. Other resources in this series can be found on the ministry website, at www.edu.gov.on.ca.

