Class Description

My grade four/five combined class consists of thirty students. Two of the students have autism, one of which has a full time E.A, is on a modified IEP, and has considerable skills in visual arts. Several of the students in the class have been identified as struggling learners and have access to a resource teacher for smaller group learning. These students regularly leave the classroom to receive special attention and support, or often the resource teacher will assist them within the classroom. Specifically, one students has been identified as ELL level 2. Collectively, the students are enthusiastic, energetic, and relatively independent. The teacher has organized his classroom in varying sizes of table groups, including a mix of grade fours and fives.

Overview

The lessons included in this unit will cover material surrounding two different aspects of Northwest Coast First Nations' culture. First, students will be taught about the significance and purpose of legends and oral tradition. Students will be required to compare two legends from different First Nations groups as a means of understanding the core components, common characters and importance of place within a legend. Students will also participate in their own talking circle in order to appreciate the procedure, rules and responsibilities of such an event. To solidify students' knowledge of legends, they will be asked to collaborate and develop a dramatization of a First Nations legend. Finally, students will individually create their own legends in writing.

The second aspect of this First Nations unit will allow students to explore the history and cultural elements of the potlatch. After students gain an understanding of what a traditional potlatch ceremony entails, they will compare it to their own cultural celebrations. A story based on real events will be used to explain the devastation and confusion of the Canadian government's law to ban the potlatch. Students will write a letter to the Canadian government on behalf of the First Nations peoples, as a means of expressing their sentiment about the ban. The final two lessons in this unit will require students to draw from all that they have learned thus far. It will be explained that Canada's potlatch ban was repealed and that students will be able to prepare and host their own potlatch. Their potlatch celebration will be comprised of making and presenting a banner of First Nations spirit animal artwork, reading their individual legends aloud to their peers, and also making and eating bannock.

Lesson Name & Number: First Nations Legends #1 of 3
Grade 4/5

Date: January 16, 2015	**Time:** 45 minutes
Curriculum Area: Social Studies	**Unit of Study:** First Nations

PLOs:
Skills and Processes of Social Studies
- A1: apply critical thinking skills – including comparing, imagining, inferring and summarizing
- A4: identify alternative perspectives on a selected event or issue

Objectives:
- SWBAT explain what a legend is
- SWBAT explain the purpose of a legend
- SWBAT create a visual representation of a First Nations' legend

Materials / Preparation:
- The Loon's Necklace By Elizabeth Cleaver
- Black construction paper (30 sheets)
- 2 sets of pastels
- Newspaper (to protect desks)

Introduction:
- Write "Legends" on the white board and ask the students what it means
- Discuss the meaning of legend and what the purpose of a legend is
- Mention that many cultures have their own legends

Procedure:
- Think-Pair-Share → what do you think this legend will be about? What is the purpose of it? Review the various topics that can potentially be expressed in a legend
- Read "The Loon's Necklace"
- Pause and predict → stop when the old man is sitting by himself chanting and ask the students what they think is going to happen
- Have the students close their eyes for the last page (or don't show the illustration on the last page). After reading the final page, ask students what they imagined. Explain that they are now going to put that image onto paper.
- Give instructions on what the task entails →using pastels and black construction paper, create the final page of The Loon's Necklace)
- Mention that students need to keep one piece of newspaper under their construction paper to protect the desks
- Hand out materials and let the creating begin!

Closure: - Gallery walk - Ask a couple of students to share about a picture that stood out to them on their gallery walk. Get them to explain what they liked or found interesting about the one or two pieces of art that captured their eye.
Assessment Strategies: - Asking students to define "Legends" at the very beginning of the lesson is a good way to gain an understanding of their prior knowledge - The "think-pair-share" and the "pause and predict" are also a good way to see if they understand the meaning and purpose of legends - The gallery walk will allow for the students to give some feedback to their peers - Both teacher assessment and peer assessment will occur in this lesson
Modifications: - Help with giving ideas about what to draw - Spend one-on-one time (while students are drawing) using the illustrations in the book to further explain the events in the story and the idea of a legend
Extensions: - Students can be encouraged to add detail to their visual representation - Early finishers can write a short description (a few sentences) about the qualities that the characters in their picture represent - If the *class* finishes the art activity in less than 20 minutes, the discussion about their work could be extended or the class could have a group discussion about 'why people share stories.'

Lesson Name & Number: First Nations Legends #2 of 3
Grade 4/5

Date: January23, 2015	**Time:** 25 minutes
Curriculum Area: Social Studies	**Unit of Study:** First Nations
PLOs: <u>Skills and Processes of Social Studies</u> - A4: identify alternative perspectives on a selected event or issue	

Objectives:
- SWBAT gain an understanding of the components of a First Nations legend
- SWBAT write a legend that includes the components of a true First Nations legend
- SWBAT understand the significance of nature and animals in First Nations cultures

Materials / Preparation:
- Opaque bag or box with lid
- Various flash cards to include in 'black box' (one for each student. Cards will include traditional legends characters)
- Worksheet that uses an introduction to a legend as a story starter

Introduction:
- Show students the 'black box' and tell them that we will be using the contents of the bag in today's lesson
- Take a couple of guesses from the students about what they think is in the bag. Get them thinking!

Procedure:
- Quickly review what they know about legends
- Talk about the following components of a legend and the significance of each
    - The difficult to understand topic or issue
    - The importance of place, character, and spirit
    - The concept of conflict and resolution etc.
    - The notion that every story has a beginning, middle and end

- Read the beginning of a legend (ie. their story starter)
- Make sure that everyone has a strong understanding of the beginning of the legend and discuss possible directions that the story may take
- Explain that each student is going to pick an item from the "black bag" that they will need to incorporate into their story
- Hand out the worksheet and let students write
- Circulate and answer questions, help with formulating ideas, encourage descriptive writing

Closure:
- Ask if anyone wants to share their story (or whatever they have accomplished thus far)

Assessment Strategies:
- Assessment will be achieved through class discussion and student writing

Modifications: **-** Decrease the amount of writing that is typically required of the students - Help students with developing ideas on how they can integrate their 'black bag' item into their story
Extensions: - Students will be encouraged to be detailed in their writing - Students can be encouraged to incorporate a second 'black bag' item of their choice - Students can illustrate a scene from their legend

Lesson Name & Number: First Nations Legends #3 of 3
Grade 4/5

Date: January 23, 2015	**Time:** 45 minutes
Curriculum Area: Social Studies	**Unit of Study:** First Nations
PLOs: - E3: describe Aboriginal peoples' relationship with the land and natural resources - A5: create a presentation on a selected historical event or topic - A1: express a variety of ideas and perspectives through drama	
Objectives: - SWBAT read and learn about a First Nations Legend and respond to it by creating a short dramatization of the legend - SWBAT work in groups of five and develop collaboration and teamwork skills - SWBAT develop communication and drama skills	
Materials / Preparation: - 2 copies of three First Nations legends (one for each group and one for the teacher) - an open space for the students to practice and perform their dramas	
Introduction: - review the significance of legends and oral traditions - explain to students that they will be broken up into 3 groups of 5 and each group will be given a legend. They are to read the legend and prepare a 5 minute dramatization of the legend.	

Procedure: - review the parts of dramas (i.e. characters, setting, etc.) and explain that not all roles in dramatizations need to be of people or animals - that First Nations People considered the natural world (including plants trees etc.) to have spirits, so some students can take on the role of something in the natural role if desired. - form the groups of 5 and distribute legends and optional props - instruct students to practice in the classroom, outside (if weather permits) or in the pod - monitor all students while they are practicing
Closure: - gather students in the performance area and facilitate performances
Assessment Strategies: - Are students able to respond to their legend by performing a dramatization of the legend? - Are students collaborating and working well in teams? - Are students able to communicate ideas and meanings through their drama?
Modifications: - if students are struggling to comprehend the legend and how to dramatize it, read the legend through with them and suggest roles and ways to dramatize
Extensions: **-** Ask students who are excelling to add speaking lines and parts that may not be included in the written text of the legend

Lesson Name & Number: First Nations Potlatch #1 of 3
Grade 4/5

Date: January 30, 2015	**Time:** 45 minutes
Curriculum Area: Social Studies	**Unit of Study:** First Nations
PLOs: <u>Skills and Processes of Social Studies</u> - A1 apply critical thinking skills – including comparing, imagining, inferring, identifying patterns, and	

summarizing – to selected problems and issues
- A4 identify alternative perspectives on a selected event or issue
- A6 formulate strategies to address problems or issues

<u>Identity, Society, and Culture</u>
- B1 distinguish characteristics of various Aboriginal cultures in BC and Canada
- B3 identify effects of early contact between Aboriginal societies and European explorers and settlers

Objectives:

- SWBAT discuss the importance of the potlatch as a central element of First Nations culture
- SWBAT recognize that the Canadian government passed a law which banned the potlatch
- SWBAT understand that Canada's potlatch law was repealed

Materials / Preparation:
- Clue cards
- Write a letter worksheet
- Secret of the Dance By Andrea Spalding and Alfred Scow

Introduction:
- Give students a scenario in which something is taken away from them with no further explanation (for example, recess/lunch is cancelled)
- Cause confusion as to why recess has been cancelled and ask students how they feel
- Ask students to remember their feelings and get them to try and make a connection with the next activity

Procedure:
- Building from clues activity
    - Hand out cards and get students to walk around, talk to each other and read the clue cards together in order to try to figure out what the story will be about
    - Form groups of 3 and get the teams to come up with an "I think the story is about…" phrase

- Read story
- Do a picture walk and get students to think of "I wonder questions" in order to create discussion
- Ask the group
    - What is a potlatch? → create a full definition together and write on white board/chart paper
    - Why do you think the Canadian government made a law against having a potlatch? Do you think this law was it fair, why or why not? Connect back to the 'cancelled recess/lunch scenario' and their emotions

- 10 Minute Write activity: Write a letter to the Canadian government explaining why the potlatch should not be banned.
Closure: - Students can exchange papers and read a partner's letter. They can discuss the similarities and differences between their written approach to create change - Make clear that the Potlatch ban was lifted
Assessment Strategies: - Assessment will be achieved through class discussion, I wonder questions, student writing and peer writing comparison
Modifications: - Letters can be shortened - students can write a letter in pairs
Extensions: - Read and discuss the historical context of the story as a class or group together early finishers that have completed a quality letter and have them read through the historical context page at the back of the book

Lesson Name & Number: First Nations Potlatch #2 of 3
Grade 4/5

Date: February 6, 2015	**Time:** 45 mins
Curriculum Area: Social Studies	**Unit of Study:** First Nations
PLOs: - A1 apply critical thinking skills – including hypothesizing, comparing, imagining, inferring, identifying patterns, and summarizing – to a range of problems and issues - B1 distinguish characteristics of various Aboriginal cultures in BC and Canada	

Objectives:
- SWBAT create First Nations animal artwork using construction paper
- SWBAT make First Nations bread (Bannock) and develop an understanding for its significance and history (as well as follow health and safety standards for handling food)
- SWBAT go through preparations for a Potlatch simulation

Materials / Preparation:
- red banner paper
- black animal silhouettes
- coloured cut out shapes
- markers, glue sticks, scissors
- flour, water, butter, baking powder, & salt
- baking trays

Introduction:
- Divide class into two groups (group 1 will be guests, group 2 will be hosts)
- Explain to the groups that we will be having a Division 6 Potlatch after recess and that there are preparations that need to be done in order for this event to run smoothly (just like how First Nations people prepared long in advance for Potlatches)

Procedure:
Group 1:

- Make bannock (with half of the group)

*once bannock is ready to be baked, bring it to kitchen and ask EA to periodically check on it while its baking)

- Make banner (with the other half of the group)
- Prepare thank you message
- Gather legends to be read during Potlatch

Group 2:

- Make bannock
- Make First Nations art
- Prepare welcome message
- Gather legends to be read during Potlatch

Closure:
- Thank the students for their hard work in preparing for our class Potlatch

- Explain that when they return from recess, the guests will enter the classroom and be greeted by the hosts of the Potlatch - Explain that there will be reading of legends, eating of bannock, sharing/displaying artwork, talking in a talking circle, and the possibility of a First Nations traditional children's game
Assessment Strategies: - Are students participating in the preparation activities? - Are students handing the making of the food properly (according to health and safety standards)?
Modifications: - For students who are slower to complete their work, they will have the option to finish at a later date
Extensions: - For students who finish their artwork quickly, there will be extra supplies for them to continue making the banner/artwork

Lesson Name & Number: First Nations Potlatch #3 of 3
Grade 4/5

Date: February 6, 2015	**Time:** 45 mins
Curriculum Area: Social Studies	**Unit of Study:** First Nations
PLOs: - A1 apply critical thinking skills – including hypothesizing, comparing, imagining, inferring, identifying patterns, and summarizing – to a range of problems and issues - B1 distinguish characteristics of various Aboriginal cultures in BC and Canada	
Objectives: - SWBAT review important newfound understanding of First Nations in BC (the legends, and Potlatch) - SWBAT gain a richer understanding of the elements and function of Potlatch by participating in a simulation Potlatch	
Materials / Preparation: - iPod and speakers (to play music) - cooked bannock (pre-cut into small pieces)	

- jam (2 kinds - NO peanut)
- paper plates (30), plastic knives (30), napkins
- the legends that the students wrote several weeks ago
- a talking stick (for the talking circle)
- a string and a ring (for the First Nations game)
- garbage bag for paper plates and leftovers

Introduction:
- have First Nations background music playing
- have the hosts (Group 1) welcome the guests (Group 2) and both groups exchange welcome/thank you message
- showcase the decor that they made in the previous block (banner and artwork)
- gather students and explain the significance of Potlatch and review the why, the where, the how, and the who (of Potlatch)

Procedure:
- taking turns, have students come and collect bannock and jam
- have students sit in a circle and ask for volunteers to read their legends out loud while they eat their bannock
- in groups of 2 or 3, have students sign their name on the banner
- at the end of the lesson, have students sit in talking circle, and have each student share a newfound understanding of either legends, or Potlatch and an 'I Wonder' question they still have (use talking stick and explain that it is OK to say something already said)
- have everyone participate in the clean up

Closure:
- after clean up, have students sit at their desks and we will lead a debrief (ask students what they thought of participating in a class Potlatch, ask them what they will would be similar and different about a real First Nations Potlatch when compared to our class Potlatch)
- collect a sample of student work to the displayed at the Expo (ask permission first)

Assessment Strategies:
- are students participating respectfully in the class Potlatch?
- the talking circle and sharing of newfound understandings will be a method of assessment

Extensions:
- if time permits, we can play a First Nations children's game (involving a string and a ring) that involves the entire class

Resource Critique

1. **Cleaver, E., & Toye, W. (1977). *The loon's necklace*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.**

The Loon's Necklace is a children's picture book about a traditional Tsimshian legend. When the sight of an old man was restored by a loon, he gave the loon his precious shell necklace as a reward. The story goes on to explain how this is why the loon as a white collar and speckles on its back. This book was used for the oil pastel artwork, and students were instructed to draw a visual representation of the legend. It was a fantastic resource for this activity due to its descriptive language and imagery. It was easily found on the UBC Education Library website. It is also a well-known book and is prominent in bookstores.

2. **Coyote and grizzly bear make day and night in *Coyote as the sun and other stories*. (1993). Kamloops, B.C.: Secwepemc Cultural Education Society.**

Coyote and Grizzly Bear Make Day and Night is a Shuswap legend found in the larger book, *Coyote as the Sun and Other Stories*, published by the Secwepemc Cultural Education Society. This book is full of simple and short British Columbia First Nations legends. I used this legend for the comparison lesson, where we read two First Nations legends from two different groups on the topic of how the sun was created. Upon reflection, this legend was too simplistic and short compared to the other book we read for this activity. It might have made for a smoother and more effective lesson had the two books been on a similar level in terms of length, complexity, and quality of illustration. It was easily retrieved from the UBC Education Library.

3. **Williams, M., & Vigil, F. (2001). *How Raven stole the sun*. New York: Abbeville Press.**

How Raven Stole the Sun, by was the second book that was read in the comparison lesson. It is a beautifully illustrated hardcover book from the Tlingit First Nations group about how the sun was created. It was used to be compared to Coyote and Grizzly Bear Make Day and Night and the students seemed to really respond to it. It is well written, imaginative, engaging, and wonderfully illustrated. At the back of the book, it has a glossary of terms and explains important concepts and vocabulary used throughout the story. It highlights the cultural significance of the raven to the Tlingit people and also describes who the Tlingit people are and facts about their culture. The book was easily retrieved from the UBC Education Library and comes highly recommended.

4. **Spalding, A., & Gait, D. (2006).** ***Secret of the dance*****. Victoria, BC: Orca Book.**

Secret of the Dance, by Spalding, Scow, and Gait was used during the lesson on the history of First Nations Potlatch to illuminate the ban that was imposed on First Nations People in 1885. The authors do a great job taking a serious topic and writing a story about it through a child's eye so that young students can understand this dark and serious event in Canadian history. It is written through the eyes of a young First Nations boy whose cultural celebrations were taken away and made illegal by the government. There are wonderful illustrations and uses real First Nations language and words. It also has a section at the back about the historical context of the story. This was an effective book to introduce the topic of Potlatch and students responded well to the story when they wrote their letters to the government about the ban of Potlatch. It was easily retrieved from the UBC Education Library, but is also a popular book and can be found in many libraries.

5. **Goldsmith, D., & Migdale, L. (1997).** ***Potlatch: A Tsimshian celebration*****. New York: Holiday House.**

This non-fiction information book is about the cultural elements and historical significance of First Nations Potlatch. This was used during the lesson on the cultural elements of Potlatch and was available for students to look at pictures of the cultural regalia, food, dances, totem poles at Potlatch. It is written from the perspective of a young Tsimshian boy who is narrating through the text. Included in the book are maps, photographs of real First Nations art, food, and regalia, as well as pictures of actual Potlatch celebrations in action. Some of the language is quite advanced and I would recommend this book for upper intermediate students as a resource for information and research. It can be found at the UBC Education Library.