Building bridges in indigenizing education: Digital narratives as a means of shifting non-Indigenous teacher horizons towards relationality

by

Alex Bissell

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Table of Contents

Abstract v

Acknowledgments vi

Chapter 1: Locating and Shifting Horizons in Indigenous Education 1

Locating Myself 1

Moving my Personal Horizon 4

My Research 6

Chapter 2: Understanding the State of Indigenous Education in Canada – Preparing to Move Forward 9

Introduction 9

Academic Underperformance of Indigenous Students 11

Socioeconomic Factors Influencing Academic Achievement of Indigenous Students 13

Historical Context of Colonization 14

Representations of Indigenous Peoples in Canadian Schools 17

Disconnect Between Indigenous and Western Worldviews 19

How Can We Initiate and Support Teacher Decolonization? 23

Teacher Relationships With Indigenous Students, Communities, Families and Cultures 28

Creating Space for Indigenous Student Voice 30

Digital Technologies and Indigenous Student Voice 32

Conclusion 37

Chapter 3: The Research Design – Embodying Respectful Relations in My Academic Journey **40**

Research Paradigm 41

Methodology 42

Research Design 44

Chapter 4: The Participants of the Relational Digital Narrative Project 59

Indigenous Students 59

Classroom Teacher—Adam 62

Dogsledding Instructor - Peter 63

The Teacher Candidates 65

Chapter 5: Digital Narratives as Bridges for Indigenizing Education 68

Bridge 1: Valuing Technology as a Teaching Tool 68

Bridge 2: Student Self-Representation 72

Bridge 3: Demonstration of Knowledge 83

Bridge 4: Record of Personal Strengths 89

Bridge 5: A Collaborative Process 96

Bridge 6: Reciprocation and Authentic Relationship 100

Chapter 6: Deconstructing the Colonial Logics of Education to Move Towards a New Shared Horizon 104

How Can Non-Indigenous Teachers use Multimedia Expressions to Shift Their Horizons? 110

What can Youth Teach Educators about Indigenous Identity and Self-Determination? 113

Proceeding with Hope: Many Small Scale Shifts can lead to Systemic Change 115

References 118

Appendix A **128**

Appendix B **130**

Appendix C **132**

Appendix D **134**

Appendix E **137**

Appendix F **142**

Appendix G **143**

Appendix H **144**

Appendix I **146**

Appendix J **149**

Appendix K **152**

Appendix L **154**

Appendix M **156**

Abstract

This thesis was developed in response to the pressing need to find methods for non-Indigenous teachers to actively teach for Indigenous student resilience, and to center Indigenous students and their families in an education system which consistently marginalizes and silences them (Canadian Council on Learning 2009; Dion, 2009). Digital narratives are explored as a means to address this need. Through the use of teacher research and photovoice I answer two research questions: **How can non-Indigenous teachers use multimedia expression to shift their horizons in order to better understand and support the resilient identities and academic potential of Indigenous youth**? **And, what can these youth teach these educators about Indigenous identity and self-determination in school and Canadian society?** Analysis of a variety of data sources, which included in-service and pre-service teacher interviews, autoethnographic journals, and Indigenous students' digital narratives (iMovies), revealed six thematic ways in which students' digital narratives, and the process of creating them, shifted teachers towards a more relational stance with their students and centered student voice in the classroom. In theorizing the outcomes of this study I interpret these themes as bridges. These pathways facilitate dialogue and encourage relationship to be built between Indigenous students and non-Indigenous. These bridges include 1) intrinsically valuing technology as a teaching tool, 2) reciprocation and authentic relationship, 3) collaboration, 4) student self–representation, 5) student demonstration of knowledge, and, 6) record of student strengths. The findings of this thesis provide a rich example of how digital narratives can be used in the classroom to move towards an indigenized approach in education, support Indigenous students' self-determination in schools and encourage relationality, a stance of acknowledging and moving towards better relations by recognizing a shard humanity and future (Donald, 2012), between settler-Canadian teachers and Indigenous students.

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Chapter 1: Locating and Shifting Horizons in Indigenous Education

Locating Myself

Where am I from? According to Moses (2004), this is a pivotal question in Indigenous culture. He states “not being asked that question about origins feels at first like not being acknowledged as human…as if he [the questioner] is imposing another set of cultural values, assumptions, and behaviors upon me” (p. 110). This perspective also resonates in the wisdom shared by Roy Thomas, a famous, influential and northern Ontario Anishinaabe artist. In his sacred circle (Figure 1), Roy Thomas illustrates that to understand any individual’s life journey we must first begin in the east to learn where he or she comes from. In an attempt to write in a way that is meaningful and responsive in this Indigenous respectful study, I begin by locating myself.

Figure 1: Roy Thomas’ sacred circle of life describes the steps that need to be undertaken to understand a person’s perspective, identity and life journey. (Panel of Roy Thomas’ friends and family, Thunder Bay Art Gallery, September 2012)

At the turn of the nineteenth century, my ancestors arrived in North America from Ireland, Scotland and England. While my family's history in Canada has taken place in many locations, primarily throughout northern and southern Ontario, my immediate family is now settled along the shores of Georgian Bay. My life has been enriched by the opportunity to learn, explore and thrive in the forests, waters and on the Canadian Shield located in the traditional territory of the Chippewa peoples of Beausoleil First Nation. I cannot imagine my identity without considering my connection to this Land[1] (Styres, Haig-Brown & Blimkie, 2013) and I am forever grateful to the Beausoliel First Nation for sharing the wonders of this area.

I recognize my Euro-White settler identity as placing me in a highly privileged location in Canadian society. In doing so, I must acknowledge that there are many common myths, sustaining people like me in a very privileged position of normative power and wealth. These myths state that we live in an era unique in its degree of freedom and equality. Men believe women are treated as equals, White people celebrate the end of racism, and settlers do not believe they live among the colonized. However, for those who live outside of the dominant classes/groups, such as Indigenous peoples, an equal society has never materialized and this myth of a good, decent Canada continues to fail Indigenous peoples. Sensoy and DiAngelo (2012) prompt us to consider that "structures of privilege are not just artifacts of a racist, sexist or classist past; privilege is an ongoing dynamic that is constantly reproduced, negotiated, and enacted" (p. 59). Close examination of Canadian society reveals that it is structured to maintain the privilege of dominant groups, while keeping these individuals in a state of cultivated ignorance (Godlewska, Moore & Bednasek, 2010), unaware of their own privilege (Johnson,

[1] In this thesis I capitalized the word Land, based on the protocol established by Styres, Haig-Brown and Blimkie (2013), as a way to acknowledge that Land represents all of creation (animals, insects, plants, trees and all natural elements such as wind and water), including the relationship with the Creator and one's ancestors.

2006; McIntosh, 1989). Pushing against all forms of inequality and injustice is important work, especially for those, like myself, who live within the empowered privileged group of settler Canadian society.

Compared to Indigenous people, life is made easier for me and success is more accessible, based upon many factors including my socio-economic and educational positions. In addition, I have recently become keenly aware of how my standpoint as a Euro-White settler profoundly privileges me. In Canadian society, this privilege, and subsequent oppression of Indigenous peoples, has become institutionalized in a variety of ways (Huff, 2001; LeFrancois, 2013; Mihesuah, 2003). Coming to understand the extent of settler privilege and working to disrupt this privilege is a process commonly referred to as decolonization (Battiste, 2013). I continually seek, through dialogue, relationship-building, academic inquiry, and personal experiences to work towards the goal of my ongoing personal decolonization.

Embracing and coming to terms with my settler identity, history and privilege, is pivotal to understanding my relationship with Indigenous peoples and topics; however, Absolon and Willet (2005) argue that you cannot sufficiently locate yourself by identifying your traditional country, nation, or origin. This does not provide adequate information to discern the unique intentions and paradigms that an author weaves into their research. To critically position yourself, you must provide deeper insight into your political, philosophical, economic, social, and cultural location. It is important, therefore, that the reader know that I am from a middle-class family and culture of teachers. I myself am a teacher, trained in the Western tradition of this profession. Of equal importance is the fact that my parents are educators. As a child, this influenced the way my family travelled, spent our recreation time, the values we upheld, and the beliefs we embraced about public education. The pathway that has led me to this research project

has challenged me to substantially adjust and reconfigure my foundational understanding of education.

I first became cognizant of my relationship with Indigenous peoples, not in Canada, but in Australia. While studying on exchange at the University of Canberra, I learned from strong Indigenous scholars about the Australian Aboriginal Dreamland and the impact of colonization. I cried as I watched Noyce's *Rabbit Proof Fence* (2002) and marveled as I walked the base of sacred Uluru in the Northern Territories. Perhaps most importantly, I returned to Canada aware of, and feeling shame for, my disconnection and lack of understanding of the Indigenous peoples in my own country. In my eagerness to remedy this place of cognitive dissonance, I spent two summers working in the Cree communities of Attawapiskat and Fort Albany. I then became a teacher in the Nishnawbe Aski (Oji-Cree) community of Sandy Lake First Nation. During this time, I developed deep connections with people and community. I became highly invested in the success of the resilient, intelligent Indigenous students, striving, although not always successful, to create strong relationships with each child and youth. When I shared my experiences of Sandy Lake with other non-Indigenous Canadians, trying to articulate the beauty and challenge of daily life in a northern community, I was shocked at the lack of understanding of all things Indigenous that they expressed to me. Faced with total unawareness, stereotyping and misunderstanding, I struggled to explain how my involvement in an Indigenous community had altered my worldview.

Moving my Personal Horizon

Alcoff (2006) describes our relationship with self and others as pivotal in the identity formation process and in determining our perspective for interpreting the world. Borrowing from

Gadamer (1975), she explains that positioning our self in relation to the world creates a cognitive horizon which subsequently defines our ability to relate to and understand those not in our own social group. According to Alcoff (2006),

> The concept of horizon helps to capture the background, framing assumptions we bring with us to perception and understanding, the congealed experiences that become premises by which we strive to make sense of the world, the range of concepts and categories of description that we have at our disposal. (p. 95)

In order to position myself in relation to my research, it is therefore important to explore the factors that have influenced and shifted the horizon defining my personal relationship with Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Strong-Wilson (2007) argues that narratives are a valuable tool for confronting and changing this non-Indigenous horizon. She states,

> A decolonizing education for white teachers involves 'bringing forward' the storied history presently subsumed within their teaching . . . for the purpose of provoking a different story that can open and shift their horizon. (p. 119)

Looking back at my own storied past, I recognize that my lived experiences in an Indigenous community had shifted my cognitive horizon. It was this shift, caused by immersion in Indigenous community, which created my sense of frustration and discomfort as I tried to express my new position to friends and family whose individual personal horizons had stayed static in my absence.

Reflexive examination of key moments that have shifted my personal horizon has revealed countless critical memories. Among these, a few that stand out include the following: the shock and ensuing sadness after seeing the condemned elementary school in Attawapiskat,

timidly overcoming the feelings associated with stranger and outsider in order to take part in a community feast for the first time, being engrossed and fascinated by the words of Thomas King while reading *A Short History of Indians in Canada*, joyously celebrating the births of new Sandy Lake community members, listening in awe as an Elder shared the story of Chikapesh and the Moon, and sobbing with appreciation and sadness as I boarded the plane that would take me away form Sandy Lake First Nation, a place where I no longer filled the role of stranger or outsider. As I look back on my personal history, I recognize that I have been blessed with many embodied experiences that have informed my current relationships with, and ever-evolving relational understanding of Indigenous students, families, communities, cultures, and knowledges. I begin this thesis research process by asking the difficult question, "how can I help shift the horizons of other non-Indigenous teachers who have not had the same opportunities to engage in diverse and rich lived experiences with Indigenous community?"

My Research

My research project has developed out of an ever-increasing awareness that non-Indigenous teachers, including me, are products of an ongoing colonial system. In Ontario, teachers are not prepared or trained to recognize and meet the needs of Indigenous students (Dion, 2009; Strong-Wilson, 2007). The work I engaged in while earning an Honours degree in History and a Bachelor of Education did nothing to challenge my position of normative privilege in Canadian society. However, in the Masters of Education program here at Lakehead University, I have sought out courses that have exposed me to critical indigenized academics. For most non-Indigenous teachers (and graduate students in education), an understanding of colonization and its continued negative impacts on Indigenous students and families remain

hidden or avoided. Most non-Indigenous teachers have limited knowledge of Indigenous-non Indigenous relations, Indigenous worldview, and current issues affecting Indigenous peoples (Dion, 2009; Iseke, 2009). Compounding this cultivated ignorance (Godlewska et al. 2010), most teachers are ill-equipped to recognize Indigenous cultural identity as the means for encouraging Indigenous student resilience and academic engagement (Riley & Ungerleider, 2012; Shick & St. Denis, 2005; Wilson, 1991). I personally experienced this as a teacher in the remote community of Sandy Lake First Nation. In this environment I threw myself into the profession of teaching, mustering every ounce of passion and dedication I could to create a supportive and engaging learning environment. Despite these best efforts, I still often felt at a deficit to teach intelligent and eager Indigenous students in a manner that would honour and facilitate the connection of cultural strengths and Indigenous knowledge with the Ontario school curriculum. This research project has evolved out of these lived experiences. It represents a commitment to finding culturally responsive methods for non-Indigenous teachers to actively teach for Indigenous student resilience by listening to Indigenous students' voices and engaging their cultural strengths. I proceed with optimism and hope, that in my own small way, I will be able to provide substance to the field of academic research aiming to enlighten and change an educational system that for the most part alienates and fails Indigenous students. Ontario's secondary schools are pushing Indigenous students out of their doors before graduation at a rate twenty times higher than the national average (Statistics Canada, 2011b). Reflecting on my participation in and the maintenance of these institutions provides me with ample motivation to persist in working towards the goals of this project.

With these goals in mind, I embark on my thesis research journey with the following objectives:

1) Explore strengths-based multimedia[2] expressions of Indigenous identity as a means of improving non-Indigenous teacher capacity.

2) Foster relationships of positive understanding between non-Indigenous teachers and Indigenous students.

In working towards these goals, I aim to answer the research questions: **How can non-Indigenous teachers use multimedia expression to shift their horizons in order to better understand and support the resilient identities and academic potential of Indigenous youth? And, what can these youth teach these educators about Indigenous identity and self-determination in school and Canadian society?**

[2] In this paper the terms multimedia and multimodal are both used to reference the digital narratives created by student participants. These terms are used to refer to projects integrating many different modalities: video, images, text, music, animation, and voice recordings. The term multimedia emphasizes the use of technology to combine various modalities while the term multimodal is often used to emphasize the literacy skills needed to create and interpret the digital narratives. At times, these projects are also referred to by the more specific term “iMovie”, the specific type of multimedia/multimodal projects created by students in this research.

Chapter 2: Understanding the State of Indigenous Education in Canada – Preparing to Move Forward

Introduction

The current socio-cultural context of education has created a divide between non-Indigenous teachers and Indigenous students, hindering the ability of teachers to connect student knowledge and abilities with classroom learning or curriculum. Among Indigenous students, this disconnect is expressed through higher attrition rates and poorer school performance when compared to their non-Indigenous peers. Social conditions experienced by Indigenous peoples in Canada are commonly identified as being the primary causal factor in the underachievement of Indigenous students (Benzies, Tough, Edwards, Mychasiuk, & Donnelly, 2011; Make First Nations Poverty History Expert Advisory Committee, 2009; Spence, White, & Maxim, 2007). In this review, I seek to not only acknowledge socio-cultural conditions of schooling as barriers to Indigenous student success, but also to stress that the maintenance of a colonial education system and the imposition of a Western worldview by non-Indigenous teachers is as great or a greater impediment to Indigenous student success than socio-cultural conditions. Given the pressing need to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students, how can we help non-Indigenous teachers break the cycle of colonial education in order to build stronger relationships with their Indigenous students and recognize their students' cultural identities as a means for strength and resilience?

Improving educational outcomes of Indigenous students is a concern that affects all Canadians. Continuation of the education system that is currently failing Indigenous students does a disservice to relationality of all treaty partners—Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Inclusion of Indigenous ways of knowing will benefit all Canadian students by encouraging

more holistic practices in education and ensuring that our schools consider physical, mental, spiritual and intellectual aspects of all students' health, learning and personal growth. The Canadian Council on Learning (2009) has created lifelong learning models (see Appendix A) reflecting Inuit, Métis and First Nations perspectives on learning. When these models are examined, it becomes clear that Indigenous cultures can enrich Canada's educational system by bringing new emphases and perspectives on community-based and Land-based learning as well as holistic and lifelong learning practices. In this paper Land is intentionally capitalized, based on the work of Styres, Haig-Brown and Blimkie (2013), as a way to recognize, respect and value the depth of meaning Indigenous peoples embed in the term Land. In Indigenous culture, when Land is spoken of it invokes a more than physical meaning, including the emotional and spiritual connections between all living beings (including earth elements such as soil, air and water).

Unfortunately, maintenance of the educational status quo by unaware teachers and administrators calls into question any school board's stance on educating for equity or social justice issues. In light of current educational data that demonstrate a growing disparity between the achievement of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, we must seriously consider the first Canadian principle of education or whether all Canadians, especially Indigenous Canadians, are being given fair access to education. Failure to act should really not be an option, even for those not ready or willing to accept the colonial nature of our education system. No one can deny that Indigenous peoples are the fastest growing, youngest population in Canada. Reports produced by Statistics Canada (2011a) show that between 2006 and 2011, the Indigenous population grew 20.1%, almost four times the 5.2% growth rate of non-Indigenous Canadians. Indigenous children represent 7% of the Canadian population under the age of fourteen. As these children

age, they will become a significant portion of the Canadian workforce. Creating an education system that supports all students, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, is not only the morally and ethically responsive action to take but it is also the only economically viable option for our country's future.

As teachers, we cannot control the lives that our students live outside of the classroom. We have no say in the social and economic factors that are often shown to be predictors of educational success. It is our responsibility, however, to decolonize our practices and ourselves into culturally responsive teachers who will not fail our Indigenous students. Decolonization involves the recognition of regular Indigenous oppression by a dominant settler society (including curriculum, school structures, and assessment) and the educational movement to disrupt this imbalance of power. In this review, I will present literature which provides evidence that decolonization is a vital process that teachers must undergo if we are to create school environments that recognize Indigenous knowledge, Indigenous worldview and resilience as well as connect Indigenous student strengths with school and classroom learning. This literature review will conclude by examining ways to support (non-Indigenous) teacher decolonization as an essential process in improving Indigenous student success. In this study, I also pursue Indigenous student success through the use of multimedia as a platform for Indigenous students' first-person expressions as demonstrations and examples for non-Indigenous teachers to engage in and create decolonized classrooms and resilience-based curriculum for their teaching.

Academic Underperformance of Indigenous Students

There is no lack of research demonstrating the consistent underachievement of Indigenous students in Canada's education system. The Canadian Council on Learning's *The*

State of Aboriginal Education in Canada[3] (2009) affirms that Indigenous student deficits start early, with 39% of Indigenous children in British Columbia under the age of five deemed "not ready" for school. In comparison, only 25% of non-Aboriginal children were deemed "not ready" for school at the same age. This assessment was based on the child's physical well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language, cognition, communication and knowledge. This statistic illustrates that as measured by our education system, even in the earliest stages of school, Indigenous children are disproportionality ill positioned to succeed. The Canadian Council on Learning's report suggests that these early gaps in school readiness result in poorer academic outcomes for Indigenous students later in their schooling. The 2011 National Census and Household Survey (Statistics Canada, 2011b) found that in Canada, only one in four First Nations adults living on reserve have complete high school. While First Nations adults living off reserve showed slightly better educational outcomes, they still reported high school dropout rates three times greater than the national average. When examining statistics such as these it is undeniably evident that our education system is failing Indigenous students.

Richards and Scott (2009) in their Canadian Policy Research Network document entitled *Aboriginal Education: Strengthening the Foundations*, demonstrate that impediments to Indigenous student learning are not just evident when looking at level of academic attainment, but also when we examine performance measures collected about students working within the system. Performance data from the province of British Columbia reports that the percentage of students who met or exceeded curriculum expectations in reading, writing and numeracy at grades four and seven were examined. It was revealed that in all three curricular areas, the proportion of Indigenous students meeting or exceeding expectations was between 11% and

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[3] *The State of Aboriginal Education in Canada: A Holistic Approach to Measuring Success* was developed by the Canadian Council on Learning and its Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Centre, with the support and guidance of Aboriginal learning experts, community practitioners and researchers.

22% *less* than the proportion of non-Indigenous students. Data collected from Alberta showed that while 56.2% of Indigenous students in grade three, six and nine scored acceptable or excellent on the Provincial Achievement Tests, 93.6 % non-Indigenous students earned acceptable or excellent scores. Once again, disparity in these scores is undeniable.

The evidence is clear. Overall, Indigenous students are leaving school earlier and are achieving at a lower level than their non-Indigenous peers. Furthermore, achievement gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students only widen as these children progress through elementary and secondary education. It is unmistakable that our current system of education is failing Indigenous students. In order to find ways to support future Indigenous student success, we must examine why they are currently failing to achieve.

Socioeconomic Factors Influencing Academic Achievement of Indigenous Students

The same reports documenting the underachievement of Indigenous students suggest causation between academic results and social conditions experienced by many Indigenous students in Canada. The Canadian Council on Learning (2009) presents data that show nearly four times as many Indigenous people live in overcrowded houses when compared to national averages and over three times as many Indigenous peoples live in houses in need of major repair.

The Make First Nations Poverty History Expert Advisory Committee's (2009) report illustrates that in comparison to non-Indigenous Canadians, almost three times as many Indigenous Canadians are unemployed, with almost three times as many Indigenous peoples living in low income housing. In addition, this report demonstrates that disproportionately high numbers of Indigenous children are taken into the care of child welfare agencies. The most

common reason for Indigenous students to enter care is because their families are unable to provide for their basic needs due to issues of poverty, housing, and addiction.

Richards and Scott (2009) presented data that show both male and female Indigenous Canadians have life expectancies approximately eight years shorter than national averages. This is alarming as life expectancy is commonly used as an indicator of the general health standards of a community, demonstrating that Indigenous peoples in Canada are generally provided a poorer standard of heath care and quality of living than non-Indigenous Canadians.

It is evident that Indigenous Canadians experience a drastically different social and economic reality than most non-Indigenous Canadians. While it is undeniable that these conditions are having a large impact upon Indigenous student success, they are not the sole causal factor in determining the achievement and retention rates of Indigenous children. I would argue that these statistics give us an incomplete image of the challenges faced by Indigenous students in the Canadian education system. In order to understand the full picture we need to closely examine the nature of our education system as a colonial institution that maintains colonial power structures and privileges. Furthermore, examination of Canada's colonial history provides a context for interpreting the root causes of the social conditions present in the lives of many Indigenous Canadians.

Historical Context of Colonization

Schooling as an instrument of colonization is not a new concept. Battiste (2013) asks us to "consider that for more than a century, Indigenous students have been part of a forced assimilation plan – their heritage and knowledge rejected and suppressed, ignored by the education system" (p. 23). Along with many other mechanisms, such as religion, forced

relocation and biological warfare, schooling has been used by colonizers in North America to facilitate assimilation and cultural genocide.

Churchill (1997) argues that when Christopher Columbus made contact with Indigenous peoples in the Americas, a wave of oppression aimed at the ultimate extinction of Indigenous populations was set in motion. For many Indigenous peoples of the “New World”, for example, the Beothuk of Newfoundland, total annihilation did occur. In much of North America, however, Indigenous peoples persisted as oppressed peoples restricted to live on small reserves of land, often relocated to undesirable territory and enduring restricted rights and freedoms. I would argue that as the march of history progressed, the tools of oppression changed, yet there has remained a consistent effort by the colonizers to keep the colonized in a state of submission and to marginalize them to the outskirts of dominant or mainstream society.

Lawrence (2003) has argued that in Canada, legal documents, such as the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and the Indian Act of 1876, were created to control who was and who was not considered a legal “Indian”. In addition, these documents clearly established the differing rights of legal Indians in Canada in an attempt to control the lives of Indigenous peoples in this country. Rice and Snyder (2008) demonstrate that Indian Residential Schools were one of the most efficient and destructive tools utilized by the Canadian government in an attempt to fully assimilate Indigenous peoples into settler society. The authors report that while attending these schools, children were not allowed to speak their Indigenous languages, were indoctrinated into Christianity, and many were emotionally, physically and sexually abused. Further, Jacob and Williams (2008) argue that the effect of attending residential schools did not end once a child had returned to their community. Instead, their experiences at these schools initiated cycles of violence and abuse within Indigenous communities. With such devastating results, it seems only

logical that the effects of Indian Residential Schools have been long lasting and endemic for Indigenous families and communities in Canada (Bombay, Matheson & Aisman, 2014). Among the effects of this cumulative intergenerational trauma, mistrust and distancing of education is highly likely. Indeed, the Canadian Council on Learning (2009) found that First Nations youth living off-reserve whose parents attended residential school were less successful than First Nations youth whose parents did not attend residential school.

According to Harrison (2009) it would, however, seem that most Canadians remain ignorant of the devastating and continuing intergenerational effects of Indian Residential Schools for Indigenous communities in Canada. He argues that creating a common consciousness about the true history of residential schools and intergenerational impacts is imperative in order to establish authentic reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians. For this reason, he identifies the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as being one of the most important achievements of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.

Like Harrison, I believe that dispelling common mistruths about Indian Residential Schools is essential. I would argue, however, that schools and teachers have an extremely important role to play in this reconciliatory process. Furthermore, Canadian students do not merely need to understand the truth about Indian Residential Schools, but the entirety of historical and contemporary Indigenous-non-Indigenous relationships in Canada. Exploring and examining these historical relationships, as well as recognizing the historical and current contributions of Indigenous peoples to Canadian society, is an essential step that must be taken in order to improve Indigenous student outcomes in Canadian schools.

Representations of Indigenous Peoples in Canadian Schools

The first step in the journey to achieving decolonization in our school system is to make space for Indigenous histories, knowledge, and worldviews. At present, this content is lacking from our schools and, as compellingly stated by Godlewska, Moore and Bednasek (2010), "ignorance is a powerful social force" (p. 436). Education is an inherently political act. By ignoring Indigenous issues and Indigenous perspectives in the classroom, our 'null curriculum'[4] sends a message that these perspectives and voices are of little to no consequence.

Godlewska et al. (2010) critically examined the Ontario curricula to determine the Indigenous content that teachers are required to deliver in their classrooms. Their findings demonstrate that the curricula currently used in schools maintain a *cultivated ignorance* in regards to the history of Indigenous-non-Indigenous relations in Canada. Only an average of 1.9 percent of the content in all Social Studies and Canadian and World Studies curricula address Indigenous matters. Furthermore, high school curricula contain less Indigenous content than elementary curricula, and the content that does exist is concentrated in non-mandatory classes that students may elect to avoid. Hence, the vast majority of students can and do graduate with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma but with little to no working knowledge of the original peoples of this Land called Canada.

Godlewska et al.'s 2010 study also examined the Native Studies program in Ontario. This program was initiated by the Ontario Ministry of Education to increase the understanding and appreciation that all students would gain for Indigenous cultures and perspectives. When assessed based on this goal, Godlewska et al. declare the program to be an abysmal failure. Not

[4] The null curriculum is a term coined by Elliot Eisner borrowed from critical pedagogy. It refers to that which is left out or absent from the curriculum. When we consider what is not included in the curriculum it raises awareness about the people, concepts and issues that have been marginalized and excluded in an education system (Quinn, 2010).

only is every single Native Studies course *non*-mandatory, they are also rarely offered and at only a very small number of Ontario secondary schools. Based on the best information available, it was estimated that only an insignificant 0.02% of high school aged students in the province of Ontario have ever taken a Native Studies course. While the creation of a Native Studies curriculum can be seen as a step forward, clearly these courses are actually doing very little to address or educate Ontario's youth about Indigenous issues.

The lack of Indigenous content in our schools is certainly disconcerting, but perhaps it is even more concerning that when Indigenous peoples are included, it is often through representations that are stereotypical and frozen in the past. Dion (2009) argues that in our schools this approach encourages students to believe "that Native people must simply have disappeared, that Western society dominated and must therefore be better, that Native people were primitive savages who were not capable of defending themselves and their land" (p. 351). Dion contends that studies of Indigenous peoples often focus on surface level aspects of culture, such as creating replica totem poles and dream catchers, while deep cultural differences, such as worldview, are more often ignored. Furthermore, Indigenous peoples are often represented as "molded" by nature or their environment, while European settlers are represented as conquering the natural elements in order to advance their nation-hood and high-minded (intellectual) civilization. This maintains a common belief that prior to European contact, Indigenous societies were unsophisticated, un-evolving and primitive.

In schools, discussion of Indigenous peoples is almost entirely concerned with historical representations. Dion (2000, 2009) argues that the school system is silent when it comes to addressing Indigenous issues that matter today, such as land claim controversies and self-determination. She insists that if we are to create a system of education that is supportive and

inclusive of our Indigenous students, it is imperative that deep cultural differences be examined and critical contemporary issues included. Furthermore, this content must be infused throughout the entire curriculum, rather than contained in discreetly packaged units or tokenistic add-ons at the end of other units of study.

Dion (2009) acknowledges that many teachers will likely meet the idea of altering curriculum in this way with fear and apprehension. This is supported by the experiences of Couros et al. (2013) who found that even when teachers were supported through high quality resources, such as Treaty Education Kits, there remained a passive resistance to including Indigenous perspectives in their teaching. This included clinging to inappropriate and outdated sources of misinformation. I would argue that this, and other instances of teacher resistance stems from the continuing state of cultivated ignorance where teachers themselves are located. When faced with the unknown, many professionals often take a defensive position, clinging stronger to their personal truths and tightly closing doors to new sources of contradictory knowledge. In the case of including Indigenous content in the curriculum, the difference between what is known versus the unknown runs much deeper than facts and figures to the very core of teacher worldviews. In order to break down barriers, it is critical that the nature of Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldviews be understood so that we may find ways to help teachers build bridges between these different ways of knowing and interpreting the world.

Disconnect Between Indigenous and Western Worldviews

Ermine (2000) explores the vast differences between Western and Indigenous epistemologies and worldviews. He describes Western ways of knowing as founded on fragmentation, categorization and hierarchy. Science, a cornerstone of Western epistemology, is

fixated on breaking the world into increasingly smaller pieces and providing each piece with a label. The physical world and inner mental worlds are seen as being distinctly separate, with value placed on measurable, reproducible and testable knowledge. Within this Eurocentric hierarchical system, humankind is viewed as special, distinct and separate from other living and non-living things, endowed with a power to control and manipulate the world around us. In contrast, Ermine describes an Indigenous worldview as holistic. The inner (mental, emotional and spiritual) and outer (physical) worlds are inherently interwoven, with each informing the other. Brooks (2008) describes how the inner and outer worlds shape each other by stating, in reference to Indigenous knowledge holders: "They tell us that the thinking that creates the world is an ongoing activity with which we, as human beings, are engaged in" (in Whiteduck, 2013 p. 77). As a result, in an Indigenous worldview, dreams and prayer play important roles in the way knowledge is generated and understood.

In Indigenous ways of knowing, value is placed on finding ways in which living and non-living things are connected rather than categorizing and separating knowledge. As such, Indigenous worldviews lack a hierarchical structure. In the writing of Cole (2002), we are able to understand how the lack of this hierarchy affects interactions of Indigenous peoples with the world around them. While a Western way of knowing encourages one to see the wealth stored in natural resources, Indigenous peoples view the natural world as being in relation to themselves. Cole asks his audience to consider: "what it meant at the level of the body and the place of spirit to call life to call living things our relations 'resources'?" (p. 458) This question reveals a moral dilemma and sense of confusion or alienation that Indigenous students may feel when they are asked by educators to view the world through a Western lens.

Ermine (2000) also explores how the concept of individuality differs between Western and Indigenous worldviews. In a Western system, ideas of individualism are often expressed based on competition and accumulation of wealth. Learning processes are often seen as standardized. In contrast, in an Indigenous worldview, individualism is expressed through a freedom to learn, grow and explore at one's own pace. Value is placed on finding an individual's personal strengths with an acknowledgement that together, each person's strengths combine to serve the common good of the community. Hence, personal accumulation of wealth or goods is de-emphasized.

These differing conceptualizations of individuality have consequences in the classroom when we consider how each worldview affects the understandings of childrearing techniques, learning styles and learning patterns. In Western society, it is expected that all children will follow a similar developmental progression where they will be ready to acquire knowledge and skills in predictable ways following a predictable or standardized pattern. Children are expected to follow specific predetermined rules and when they do not, punishments are administered. Contrastingly, in Indigenous societies, children are not expected to follow a predetermined pattern but are believed to learn from their surroundings when they are ready. This idea is very closely linked to the concept of non-interference child rearing, where children learn from natural consequences rather than punishments imposed by adults (Muir & Bohr, 2014). As a result of these differences, when Indigenous children enter into a Western education system that does not reflect the values and beliefs of their community they often find them selves in what Battiste (2013) refers to as a "fragmented experience" (p. 24).

Whiteduck (2013) examines the central importance of stories as teaching tools in Indigenous culture. In the process, she reveals an example of how Indigenous teaching methods

differ from those used in Western societies. In a school classroom, a teacher delivers a common lesson to all students, who are expected to meet the same learning outcomes based on that experience. In Indigenous storytelling, this is not the case. Within one story, there may be many lessons to learn. What a listener takes away from a particular story is dependent upon the intricate interactions of the storyteller, the situation, and the lesson or meaning that the learner is ready to hear.

In her discussion of stories, Whiteduck (2013) uncovers another essential way in which Western and Indigenous epistemologies differ. In Western systems, events are organized linearly, with time used as the essential organizing feature. Beginnings and endings are often used to discretely package units of knowledge. In contrast, Indigenous ways of learning are organized circularly, with Land generally being used as the essential organizing feature. As a result, stories and histories progress in a very different manner. This can cause confusion when shifting between one system of knowing and the other (Whiteduck).

Nakata, Nakata, Keech and Bolt (2012) remind us that there is value in both Western and Indigenous systems of knowing and that these systems should not be looked at through binary terms. These authors encourage us to think of Indigenous worldviews as evolving systems that have undergone adaptation prior to and since the time of contact with Europeans. I agree that there is value in the inclusion of both ways of knowing in our education systems. A problem does arise, however, when one system is valued over another, as has been the case in Canada since first contact. The Canadian education system has been demanding Indigenous students to set aside their traditional and cultural ways of learning and knowing in order to be successful in a Eurocentric sense of success. As evidenced by attrition rates and performance measures, for many students this is not feasible and certainly not an ethical expectation. It is critical that

Canadian teachers make serious efforts to include Indigenous worldviews and epistemologies in classroom practices; however, many scholars recognize this as a very challenging task for individuals who have been learning and rewarded in Western ways of knowing. As Battiste (2005) explains, “Eurocentrism is the dominant consciousness and order of contemporary life. It is the consciousness in which all of us have been marinated” (p. 124).

Based on the biases of the education system revealed by Dion (2000, 2009) and Godlewska et al. (2010), it is only to be expected that teachers would place a higher value on a normative and privileged Western worldview. Given this consideration, finding ways to encourage teacher decolonization--the process of recognizing and disrupting settler ignorance, misrepresentations, and oppressions of Indigenous peoples--is clearly and critically vital.

How Can We Initiate and Support Teacher Decolonization?

When we consider the question of teacher decolonization, it is important to remember that non-Indigenous teachers are products of the Canadian colonial education system. They have been educated in a way that maintains the current status quo in this country. As a result, many teachers either lack an understanding of Indigenous culture, knowledge, issues and worldview, or have misinformation in these areas (Dion, 2000, 2009). Donald (2012) describes the separation between Indigenous and settler-Canadian society by using the analogy of the colonial fort. Donald states that the persistence of colonial fort logics are highly problematic because “the high historical status given to the fort in Canadian history has been telescoped to the present context as a socio-spatial organizer of peoples and cultures that delimits *and* explains differences as irreconcilable” (p. 100). Within the fort, settler Canadians are centered and normalized, while Indigenous peoples and knowledge are marginalized to the outskirts of society. The vast majority

of Canadian teachers live and think within the walls of this metaphorical fort; they have little knowledge or experience that allows them to relate to Indigenous students and Indigenous ways of knowing. Those teachers who are confronted with the role of educating Indigenous students see their responsibility as the successful delivery of these students to the inside of the fort or to make Indigenous students more like their (mainstream) settler-Canadian peers. As explained by Donald, in this system, success is measured by settler standards such as school attendance and standardized test scores; tools that often only further marginalize Indigenous students and reinforce non-Indigenous teachers' deficit perceptions.

Donald (2012) argues that in order "to defy the colonial logic, we must be able to see oneself related to and implicated in the lives of others" (p. 106). An essential part of this decolonizing reform is to liberate space for un/usual (outside the "mainstream") narratives to be heard. Tupper and Cappello (2008) describe un/usual narratives as those perspectives that are normally absent from mainstream settler education, namely narratives belonging to non-White Canadians. Sharing these different frames or stories is an important part of unsettling mainstream education systems in which:

> curriculum and the ways in which teachers enact curricular documents are implicated in the tacit and overt reproduction of dominant cultural norms: attitudes are shaped, knowledge is sanctioned or castigated, relationships to knowledge are formed or deformed, access to cultural capital is given or denied (or both) across the boundaries and intersection of the multiple identities in which students are located. (Tupper & Cappello, p. 567)

Considering the systemic and historical roots of colonial logics, engaging teachers in the process of decolonization is certainly a daunting task comprised of many steps including exposing

Canada's historical establishment and contemporary maintenance of colonial power structures through institutions such as education. One of the first actions that can be taken in this process is to encourage teachers to identify their own privileged social location in Canadian society.

McIntosh (1989) reveals the importance of locating personal privileges in her reflections of her own school experience. She states:

> My schooling gave me no training in seeing myself as an oppressor, as an unfairly advantaged person or as a participant in a damaged culture. I was taught to see myself as an individual whose moral state depended on her individual moral will. (p. 2)

I would argue that the majority of Canadian teachers were taught to view themselves in this uncritical manner. They believe that if they are not engaging in clear, identifiable, individualized acts of oppression or racism then they cannot possibly be maintaining a system of oppression. Providing teachers with the opportunity to see the extent of non-Indigenous (White) privilege may provide a counter-narrative for this normative worldview. With this purpose in mind, McIntosh devised a list of twenty-six privileges that white individuals experience. Such privileges include: "When I am told about national heritage or about 'civilization', I am shown people of my colour [or race] who made it what it is", "I can swear, or dress in second hand clothes, or not answer letters without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race" and " I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group" (p. 4). Going through this list can give teachers the opportunity to recognize that they experience privileges, the cost of which is often the lack of privileges for members of other racialized groups. While McIntosh's exercise does not address the specific forms of oppression

exemplified by colonization, it can still be helpful to place non-Indigenous teachers in a position where they could identify invisible neo/colonialism and begin a journey of decolonization.

Dion (2007) argues that in an attempt to avoid taking responsibility for the maintenance of colonization, non-Indigenous teachers tend to adopt the position of a "perfect stranger" (p. 330). Teachers prefer to remain 'strangers' to the issues and realities by avoiding Indigenous content in their teaching because they reason that they do not believe they have the knowledge to teach this material effectively or 'properly'. As a result, a teacher may be able to acknowledge the power imbalance in Canadian society, yet remain silent on Indigenous issues in their classrooms. Dion proposes one method for disrupting teachers out of this position and encouraging them to embark on a journey of decolonization; she has teachers collect artifacts reflecting their relationship with Indigenous peoples. These artifacts may include books, photos, postcards, newspaper articles or any other media object that represents an interaction with mis-representations or mis/information about Indigenous culture and history that has influenced teachers' perceptions. These artifacts become a reference point allowing teachers to examine the flaws in their own personal framings of Indigenous peoples, histories and issues. Dion states that, "teachers, like most Canadians, require increased opportunities to learn about and 'learn from' the history of the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and Canadians" (p. 140). One of the major goals of Dion's activity is not to provide answers about Canadian history but to promote critical thinking on these topics. In doing so, Dion hopes that she can encourage teachers to recognize a shared humanity and human experience with Indigenous peoples.

Strong-Wilson (2007) provides a similar, but slightly different process for assisting teachers along the decolonizing pathway. She argues that childhood stories are a particularly strong source in the development of a personal relationship with Indigenous peoples. It can be

very difficult, therefore, to change thought patterns that have been cemented through early literary encounters with Indigenous cultures and peoples. Strong-Wilson argues that this is particularly true for "White teachers, [who] research tells us, are among the more reticent learners when it comes to social justice education" (p. 115). Rather than trying to confront teachers' understandings of Indigenous cultures and peoples with facts and figures, Strong-Wilson asks teachers to pinpoint early stories of Indigenous encounters and works of literature with which they identify and then provides a piece of literature that can act as a disrupting counter-narrative. The lived experience of a story creates a unique opportunity for readers to "experience" events and emotions that would otherwise remain unknown. An example of such a counter-narrative is Shirley Sterling's *My Name is Seepeetza* (1992) that recounts the fictionalized autobiographic journey of a young Indigenous child who is taken from her home community to attend a residential school. Asking teachers to revisit the stories and literature of their own childhood can reveal to themselves the inaccuracies and misrepresentations of noble savages or primitive representations of Indigenous peoples that these stories often contain.

McIntosh (1989), Dion (2009), and Strong-Wilson (2007) all provide frameworks for assisting teachers to embark on their own personal journeys of decolonization. All three scholars offer methods for allowing teachers to locate themselves and to reveal misinformation. In doing so, we can assist these teachers in shifting their cognitive horizons. As Gadamer (1975) explains, "a horizon is not a rigid frontier, but something that moves with one and invites one to advance further" (p. 217).

Part of this perceptual shift, as Alcoff (1996) explains, involves assisting teachers in identifying their privilege, "to acknowledge that one is inherently tied to structures of domination and oppression" (p. 208). Teachers must also consider the core idea that:

> . . . when I refuse to listen to how you are different from me, I am refusing to know who you are. But without understanding fully who you are, I will never be able to appreciate precisely how we are more alike than I might have originally supposed. (Alcoff, 1996, p. 6)

Dion and Strong-Wilson have demonstrated how we can encourage teachers to try to reframe their relationship with Indigenous peoples and cultures in a positive way, emphasizing a shared humanity. I would argue, however, that this should only be seen as a starting point for teacher decolonization. In order to allow teachers to reach a place where they are fully committed and open to supporting Indigenous students in their classrooms, it is critical that they become engaged in the experience of building relationships with real Indigenous peoples, communities and cultures, rather than relying on distant or third-party representations. In doing so, teachers can come to realize the "possible expansion of horizon, or the opening up of new horizons" (Gadamer, 1975, p. 269).

Teacher Relationships With Indigenous Students, Communities, Families and Cultures

In her examination of the decolonizing journeys of White, outdoor environmental educators, Root (2010) found that the most important factors in initiating and propelling educator decolonization were: relationships with Aboriginal peoples, exposure to Aboriginal cultures, relationships with non-Aboriginal peoples, cultural self-awareness and time on the Land. Similarly, Costello (2011) found that non-Indigenous teachers identified relationships with Aboriginal students, families and Elders as critically important to create their own "counter stories" to confront or dispel the dominant discourse and normative acceptance of colonization. Through these relationships, she found that teachers were able to progress through a process of

decolonization that included developing an understanding of their own personal formative relationship with Indigenous peoples, recognizing the power imbalances in schools and developing an appreciation for the uniqueness of Indigenous communities and culture. Once these understandings were in place, teachers were able to include Indigenous perspectives in their classrooms and practice a culturally responsive teaching pedagogy. Furthermore, the teachers honored Indigenous cultures, knowledge, communities and knowledge holders, creating conditions that welcomed Indigenous students and supported their success.

The importance of relationships with Indigenous people and community is further highlighted by the work of Goulet (2001) who examined the effective practices of two teachers of Indigenous students. Both teachers identified building strong relationships with students and families as essential factors to their success. Furthermore, these teachers identified several practices that aided in the development of these positive relationships. The teachers believed it was important to invite Indigenous community members into their classrooms and to emphasize families as equal partners in education. Goulet found that "education needs to be viewed holistically, that what happens in school cannot be separated from the family lives of the teachers and students or communities where it takes place" (p. 80).

Root (2010), Costello (2011), and Goulet (2001) all highlight the importance of building strong relationships between teachers and Indigenous communities and families. All three of these authors suggest that it is essential that teachers seek Indigenous knowledge holders and include Indigenous ways of knowing in their classrooms. I agree unequivocally that building and maintaining these relationships is a critically important ingredient in creating successful teachers of Indigenous students. I would argue, however, that it is equally important to take steps that will ensure non-Indigenous teachers are open to hearing and responding to the voices

of their Indigenous students. Creating spaces for student voices and responding in a receptive manner can aid teachers in developing deeper personal connections with their Indigenous students. In turn, these relationships can help teachers to inform their practices to best meet the needs of these students. Godlewska et al. (2010) state, "many Aboriginal People are desperately trying to communicate with Canadians. How do we open our minds to listen and learn?" (p. 437). It is of the utmost importance that teachers recognize that Indigenous students are among those trying to communicate with them. The question remains, how can we aid teachers to create a context and meaningful space where Indigenous students can gain confidence that they will be heard?

Creating Space for Indigenous Student Voice

In her 2009 graduate study, Parent interviewed urban Indigenous youth about their perspectives on community programs. Although she was not gathering information directly about formal education, the results of her work can be used to inform the practice of teachers as we consider ways to include Indigenous student voice in the classroom. Parent found that her youth participants not only recognized Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing as distinctly different from other knowledge systems, but that they also viewed Indigenous knowledge as important, holistic and integral to the continued growth and revitalization of Indigenous communities. Perhaps even more important for educators to consider was the insight into their school experiences that these Indigenous students shared. Many youth reported that they were the target of racism by classmates and teachers. A sense of deep frustration can be detected in these student responses, showing a clear desire to be heard and recognized in education but feeling that this was not permitted or their efforts thwarted. One participant stated, "Not many

people take the time to listen to youth. Youth have all different kinds of knowledge to share and it is important for people to know who I AM!" (p. 102). The results of Parent's study clearly establish that Indigenous youth are often aware of their own personal and cultural strengths and have a strong desire to communicate their cultural identity, but are either unsure of how to share who they are or afraid that they will be denied.

Hare and Pidgeon (2011) supported Parent's findings in a study which asked 39 First Nations youth living on reserves in northern Ontario to share their reflections on the experience of attending public and reserve schools. The students interviewed by Hare and Pidgeon also reported regular incidents of racism directed at them by non-Indigenous students and teachers. Beyond this, even when they could not identify specific acts of racism, students reported feeling as if they did not belong at school or were not capable enough to experience success. One student stated, "[Attending high school] made me feel like I wasn't smart enough" (p. 101). Another participant contrasted her experience in provincial schools with the experience of attending what they identified as a Native school by stating: "[teachers] don't act like you're some stupid kid and they don't care about you. They actually cared about the students and they tried to help them as much as they can in that school" (p. 103). These remarks emphasize the importance of positive student-teacher relationship. Students who lacked this supportive school environment reported drawing strength from their families and communities. Similar to the findings of Parent (2009), these Anishinaabe students recognized their cultural identity as a tool for experiencing school success.

Based on these studies, it is clear that Indigenous students are able to recognize their own sources of strength. In many cases, they desire positive relationships with teachers and peers and would like the opportunity to have their opinions heard. It would seem, however, that

for many Indigenous students, their experience in school has not allowed them to express their personal sources of strength and identity. Creating space for these expressions of identity is important if educators are to embrace a model that leads to greater Indigenous student success.

Digital Technologies and Indigenous Student Voice

The use of digital technologies is one promising avenue for encouraging and embracing student voice and perspective in the classroom. Brant (2013) an Aboriginal scholar, shared her experiences of participating in an online, digital based, doctoral course stating,

> . . . it was my first experience sharing my reflections with all of my classmates and responding through interactive dialogue. This was a unique and rewarding experience, as I could be … described as a quiet student who seldom participates in class discussion through oral contributions. The course was set up in such a way [with the technologies] that I simply could not remain a silent observer. Rather, we were required to participate by engaging with the online dialogue through weekly postings and reflective responses to the postings of our peers. (p. 78)

Such experiences demonstrate that alternative digital pathways for interacting and contributing to classroom discussion and community may be especially helpful for Aboriginal students who may feel too uncomfortable to contribute in standard oral classroom discussions. As Brant describes, the online digital forum allowed her to “find my voice and gain the confidence to participate” (p. 79) because “the online nature [of this course allowed me the time I needed to reflect on the readings and the responses of others,] … step out of my comfort zone and clearly articulate my viewpoints [through digital technologies]” (p. 82).

Photography and video journaling can provide additional digital multimedia avenues to support the inclusion of Indigenous voice and identity in the classroom. Although her work did not specifically focus on Indigenous youth, Sutherland (2013) developed a community arts-based project in a rural northern Ontario high school. The student participants in the program were able to use photography to challenge negative community narratives and, in the process, develop and communicate strong artistic identities. Community members, including teachers, were invited to view the finished student projects. Sutherland reported that many teachers were surprised by the profoundness of the messages in the student representations as well as the artistic quality in their work. Viewing these pieces of art allowed teachers to develop a new appreciation and understanding for the strengths, identities and capabilities of their students. In this case, these students were able to take control of their own self-representation in order to influence how others viewed them.

Beilke and Stuve (2004), who used digital video production with urban youth, reported a similar effect. They found that this approach "allows urban youth not only to create and publish their own narratives, but to choose how they will be re-presented to others" (p. 165). Digital tools such as iMovie software have a powerful ability to integrate images, videos, voice recordings, text, animations and background music to create finished products that are both highly polished and professional but also extremely personal. As a result, these tools allow students to be in control of their own self-representations, constructing projects that simultaneously instill pride in their own abilities and engage their audience in a meaningful way (Flottemesch, 2013; Pirbhai-Illich, 2011; Wexler, Eglinon, & Gubrium, 2014).

Furthermore, digital tools such as iPads can increase student engagement and are a natural tool for twenty-first century learners. Couros et al. (2013) emphasized this in their study

using iMovie as a tool for teaching treaty education. These researchers found that students "received the iPads with amazing enthusiasm – they literally could not wait to get their hands on them … We noticed that the tablet's gesture based interface – flicking, pinching, tapping – allowed for a very natural and intuitive experience for these learners" (p. 552). This reaction demonstrates that the students had both a strong desire to use iPad technology in their learning and they found the use of this technology to be quite instinctive or user-friendly.

Despite twenty-first century students' natural engagement and ease for working with these learning tools, creating digital narratives can be a time intensive process. While any complex project can be challenging in a classroom setting with curricular and scheduling pressures, the lengthy process of creating digital narratives does provide the time and space for deep reflection and meaning making that may be absent in other pencil and paper formats (Castledon, Daley, Morgan & Sylvestre, 2013; McKnight, Hoban & Nielson, 2011). Digital narratives can further encourage students to take control of their own self-representations as they review and revisit their projects during development and editing.

In other studies, visual mediums such as photography have been effective in allowing Indigenous peoples to communicate their unique perspectives and knowledge. Maclean and Woodward (2012) found that using participant generated photography was a highly successful means to discuss Aboriginal Australian's beliefs around water conservation. They found this method "proved to be a powerful tool that revealed in-depth information including Aboriginal values, knowledge, concerns and aspirations" (p. 94). In Shea, Poudrier, Thomas, Jeffery and Kiskotagan's (2013) study, it was found that engaging Indigenous girls in discussions around body image was facilitated by youth generated photography. These photos allowed the participants to express personal concerns and perspectives, and "helped foster and enhance

collective collaboration and relationship building between participants, community stakeholders, and university researchers" (p. 289).

I argue that the ability of visual imagery to prompt personal expressions of identity and strength, while simultaneously supporting the development of relationships and collaboration, make multimedia projects an excellent medium for prompting a dialogue between Indigenous students and non-Indigenous teachers. These projects allow Indigenous youth to frame their experiences for settler teachers, and settler researchers such as myself, creating potential for the "use of visual research methods in extending the dual processes of decolonizing education and educator, as well as centering Indigeneity and decentering Eurocentrism and Whiteness" (Higgins, 2014, p. 156).

The integration of arts-based approaches to Indigenous education is further supported by Patterson, Restoule, Margolin, and de Leon's 2010 Canadian Council on Learning report entitled, *Art-based Teaching and Learning as an Alternative Approach for Aboriginal Learners and their Teachers*. This report stresses that mainstream approaches to education are failing Indigenous students and the inclusion of arts-based approaches is supported by their holistic qualities. Digital narratives may be a particularly appropriate tool to use with Indigenous youth because, as Flottemesh (2013) states,

> . . . digital storytelling (DST) is a multimodal approach that brings the ancient art of telling stories to life using technology. While the art of oral history has been around for thousands of years, the incorporation of multimedia has added another layer of understanding to the narrative voice. The ability to personalize stories with pictures, personal narration, video, animation, artifacts and music supports deeper levels of understanding and meaning to the story for the listener and audience. (p. 54)

This connection between storytelling and digital narratives position this instructional strategy at a key intersection of a modern technology that youth intrinsically connect with and an Indigenous cultural tradition of storytelling. This is further supported by the work of Pirbhai-Illich (2011) who found that the use of digital multiliteracy projects increased Indigenous student engagement and that these students reported a clear preference for this style of learning to more traditional Western formats.

It is clear from these studies that the use of arts-based learning strategies, including digital multimedia approaches combining text, audio, video, and imagery, can provide the means for Indigenous students to express pride in their traditional culture and knowledge as well as develop more effective means of communicating with their non-Indigenous teachers. In addition to providing a platform for students to express talents and concerns, student generated digital multimedia projects aid teachers in developing an understanding of their Indigenous students' identities to a degree generally not achieved in mainstream education; as such these projects take a strength-based educational approach.

As explained by Cox (2008), "the strengths perspective is founded upon the belief that all children have strengths" (p. 19). Such approaches can be especially powerful because they build on the capacities, interests and resources of youth. German (2013) argues that strength-based practices which employ a narrative approach can be particularly successful because "narratives are reflective of the culture's social beliefs and, therefore, can represent and shape reality and the sense of identity . . . Our experience of life is mediated through the stories that we tell, and that are told, about who we are" (p. 77). Student-generated digital narratives that highlight a student's abilities and capabilities can offer a means to express pride in a student's rich cultural and community background, allowing them to take control of how their own stories

are represented. As a result, multimedia projects focusing on strength-based expressions of Indigenous student identity can become a tool for resilient education, allowing the development of strong relationships between non-Indigenous teachers and their Indigenous students.

The used of use of arts-based approaches to support resilient education has been demonstrated by the work of Wexler, Eglinon and Gubrium (2014) who worked with Aboriginal young people in Alaska to produce digital stories representing their everyday life, values and identities. The youth in this study used images, audio recordings of their voices, music, and text to create these first person accounts. The researchers found that viewing these multimedia products provided “insights to help pinpoint mechanisms of resilience and well-being that provide youth with meaningful pathways into adulthood” (p. 418) and that “the digital stories offer researchers and community members unprecedented opportunity to learn about the lives of young people through the eyes, voices, and perspectives of youth themselves” (p. 483-484).

Due to the combination of student self-determination and strengths-based representations through first voice, it is highly probable that arts-based expressions will allow teachers to view their students in new ways. Consequently, student-produced digital narratives have the potential to spark movements or shifts in teachers’ framings of students and their perceptual horizons, similar to the counter-narratives suggested by Dion (2009) and Strong-Wilson (2007). More investigation is needed to understand how these expressions may become an entry point for non-Indigenous teacher decolonization, as well as a vehicle for assisting teachers in adopting Indigenized perspectives and practices in their classroom approaches.

Conclusion

The evidence in the literature is clear and convincing. Canada's current education systems are mostly failing Indigenous students and the need for Aboriginal educational reform is irrefutable. As so aptly put by the Association of Canadian Deans of Education in their 2010 Accord on Indigenous Education "the time is right for a concerted and cooperative effort that creates transformational education by rejecting the 'status quo,' moving beyond 'closing the gap' discourse, and contributing to the well-being of Indigenous peoples and their communities" (p. 2). History demonstrates that Canada's colonial past is regularly being reproduced as unproblematic by an Ontario curriculum that lacks meaningful Indigenous content as a counter-narrative. Classroom teachers, who currently teach in an education system of mostly "cultivated ignorance" (Godlewska et al., 2010), are not well equipped to effectively teach the small number of units addressing Indigenous peoples in a way that does not perpetuate stereotypes and misunderstandings. The vast disconnect between Indigenous and Western worldviews makes changing the current education system difficult and challenging for any teacher. In order to move towards the task of improving Indigenous education, we must first offer non-Indigenous teachers counter-narratives that afford possibilities to dislodge deep-rooted stereotypes and initiate journeys of decolonization. To encourage teachers to embrace indigenized perspectives and practices, and thereby support Indigenous learners, opportunities must be given to create genuine relationships with Indigenous peoples, communities and cultures. Connecting with Indigenous students constitutes a special type of relationship requiring specialized attention. I have raised the question of how to best support the development of teacher-student relationships in a manner that allows teachers to hear and respond to Indigenous student voice. I propose that multimodal, digital, multimedia-based expressions of identity may be rich, potent means for achieving this

goal. The effectiveness and possibilities provided by this approach of digital narratives requires further exploration and investigation that will be provided in this research project.

Chapter 3: The Research Design – Embodying Respectful Relations in My Academic Journey

In this chapter, I discuss the research design of this qualitative study including the research paradigm of Indigenous-respectful approaches that was employed as I aimed to answer the research questions, "How can non-Indigenous teachers use multimedia expression to shift their horizons in order to better understand and support the resilient identities and academic potential of Indigenous youth? And, what can these youth teach non-Indigenous educators about Indigenous identity and self-determination in schools and Canadian society in order to work towards transforming education?" In order to gain insight into the experiences of non-Indigenous teachers and Indigenous students, I utilize a two-pronged methodological approach, involving both teacher research, based on the work of Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993, 2009), Klehr (2012) and Shagoury and Power (2012), along with photovoice methodology as established by Wang and Burris (1997). The methods of study involved collaboration with an in-service non-Indigenous teacher to deliver lessons incorporating iPad technology for the production of digital narratives by senior high school students in an Indigenous-focused school, assisted by non-Indigenous teacher candidates for their service learning in Indigenous education. Data collection included the following; interviews, research journal, field notes and student-generated multimedia presentations.

Ethical considerations for my study were reviewed and approved by Lakehead University's Research Ethics Board (Project # 108 13-14). The information presented in this chapter is consistent with the REB application, including all attached appendices (see Appendices B, C, D and E for full forms).

Research Paradigm

Any research conducted by a non-Indigenous researcher needs to explicitly answer a set of epistemological questions posed by the prominent and internationally recognized Canadian Indigenous (Mi'qmak) scholar, Marie Battiste (2013):

> Whose experiences are normalized as center? What is imagined within the terms 'Aboriginal', and ' First Nations' or 'Indigenous'? How do we know each other, and what methodology do we employ to acknowledge the cultural interface or the dialogue? How are the Indigenous multiple voice represented? What role does the 'other' have in their own self-representing, in defining, as well as speaking and being heard? What does the outcome look like after these issues have been determined? (p. 107)

As I embarked on my research journey, these questions from Battiste's book (2013), *Decolonizing Education: Nourishing the Learning Spirit*, served to guide and ground the path I took during this study (and beyond). My primary goal, as a researcher and educator, is to support the self-determination of Indigenous students and aid in creating a space where their voices can be heard in education. As a non-Indigenous settler-Canadian graduate researcher, it is imperative that I challenge myself to approach research from an indigenized perspective. Smith (2012) states that, "'research' is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary" (p. 1). I must always remain cognizant of the paternalistic and colonial history of research done to Indigenous communities. Historically, for these communities, research has served little purpose except to mostly exploit, appropriate, or debase their cultural, spiritual and intellectual lives. There is a long tradition of research done by non-Indigenous academics as a

tool against Indigenous peoples, and as a means to support cultural and racial hierarchies that perpetuate belief in the Indigenous "other" as being lesser (Smith, 2012).

Based on this critical awareness, I research first and foremost from an Indigenous research paradigm, informed by the work of Indigenous scholars such as Battiste (2013), Smith (2012) and Kovach (2009), and founded on a model of respect and honour where Indigenous peoples guide and advise the research process and goals. As such, I seek to use collaboration in order to disrupt the power imbalance embedded within the roles of researcher and participant. As a model of working towards this goal, I refer to Kirkness and Barnhardt's (1991) "4 Rs" of First Nations education: 1) respect, 2) relevance, 3) reciprocity and 4) responsibility. Based on the suggestion of Parent (2009), I am also including a fifth R of *relationship* as a guiding principle for my research. With these reference points in mind, I move forward in this chapter through all the design phases of my research from methodological selection to data analysis.

Methodology

In order to fulfill the goals of my research, I sought to enable and capture two simultaneous and intertwined processes; 1) facilitating first-person digital multimedia expressions of identity and resilience by Indigenous students through the use of iMovie technology, and 2) understanding how teacher perceptions of student identity are informed by these multimedia expressions. As a result of the twin goals of my study, I combined two research methods, photovoice and teacher research.

Photovoive methodology uses visual images as a catalyst for the sharing of first person narratives. It was established by Wang and Burris (1997) and was conceptualized as a means to ensure that researchers and participants work as partners. Photovoice facilitates the inclusion of

participant voices in the design and focus of the research. Wang, Yi, Tao and Carovano (1998) explain that when participants are engaged in "sharing and talking about their photographs, they use the power of the visual image to communicate their life experiences, expertise and knowledge" (p. 1). The nature of photovoice methodology causes it to be responsive to my goal of indigenizing research, as it ensures that research proceeds "with" the participants, rather than "on" them.

In this study, iPad technology was used as the photovoice medium, similar to the digital storytelling methods used by Couros, Montgomery and Tupper (2013) and Lundby (2009). This approach allowed students to imbed photographic images, video, text and audio components into their storytelling. This created a space where students were free to express their first person narratives and convey resilient identities. Storytelling is an important part of Indigenous culture, as Archibald (2008) explains, "Stories have the power to make our hearts, minds, bodies and spirits work together" (p. 12). By providing Indigenous students with space to share their own narratives, I aimed to blur the lines between student, teacher and researcher, to recognize that knowledge, learning, and relationship often flow along many pathways in many directions.

I approached this research project as an active participant in the learning community where my research occurred. In this work I found myself located in a place of multi-identities, between teacher and researcher. I embraced both of these identities by actively engaging in collaborative teaching and lesson development. Given this duality of roles and identities, the use of teacher research methodology seemed most appropriate to help me examine my own experiences and the experiences of other educators working alongside me. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) define teacher research as "systematic and intentional inquiry by teachers about their own school and classroom work" (pp. 23-24). Klehr (2012) explains, "teacher inquiry

diverges from most other forms of educational research in that teaching and researching are actively intertwined and conducted at the same time" (p. 123). Based on these definitions, teacher research was able to speak to my identity as a teacher-researcher.

Building on the work of Sleeter (2011, 2012), my approach to teacher research was embedded within a culturally responsive pedagogy. I sought to embrace teaching as an act of:

> Holding high academic expectations, and offering appropriate support such as scaffolding; acting on cultural competence, reshaping curriculum, building on students' funds of knowledge, and establishing relationships with students and their homes; and cultivating student's critical consciousness regarding power relations. (2012, pp. 46-47)

Embracing a methodology of teacher research allowed me to critically examine and learn from my own experiences as teacher, as well as learn from the experiences of the other in-service and pre-service teachers with whom I shared the teaching and learning spaces.

Research Design

The Research Site. While all Indigenous students face barriers in their quest for educational success, students who must relocate to an urban center in order to complete their secondary education must overcome the additional challenges of adapting to a foreign environment, both inside and outside of school. For many of these students, making the journey from their boarding parent's home to the school's front door is equivalent to travelling a maze without a map. The urban world of sidewalks, paved roads, stoplights, and city buses in no way resembles the remote communities where these students grew up. For these Indigenous students

it may be especially challenging, but also critically important, to develop strong relationships of respect and understanding with their teachers.

My research was conducted at an urban First Nations high school administered by a First Nations education council. Only students registered as band members in First Nations with membership in this council are eligible to attend. Hence, the student body is comprised of only Indigenous students who come from remote Nishnawbe Aski (Oji-Cree) and Anishinaabe (Ojibway) communities in the western district/region of the NAN territory. While all students who attend this school are Indigenous, many of the teachers are non-Indigenous, making this school setting ideal for the goals of the study. My research intention for partnering with the First Nations high school was to benefit all people involved. The project provided meaningful professional development to teaching staff, provided Indigenous student participants with an opportunity to incorporate their voices and perspectives into classroom learning while gaining skills working with iPad technology, and allowed pre-service teacher participants to engage in a rich and meaningful learning experience that could inform their future teaching.

In order to conduct research that was respectful to the culture of the school, its principal was consulted during the planning stages of the project. As the administrating representative of the education council, the principal was able to advise my supervisor and me to ensure that our research plan was responsive and respectful for the Indigenous student participants. As the research project progressed, we continued to consult with the principal regularly to maintain cultural responsive practices during data collection, analysis and representation of the research.

Research Participant Selection and Recruitment. In consultation with the school's principal, it was decided that Adam[5], a non-Indigenous in-service teacher, would be invited to participate in the research project. Adam was teaching a dual credit Grade 11 Healthy and Active Living and Grade 12 Recreation and Fitness Leadership course combined in double course blocks, meaning Adam had the same students for two consecutive periods each afternoon. This provided the flexibility and time to incorporate a Land-based dogsledding unit at a professional musher's business outside of town. In this unit, students were asked to consider and communicate their ideas about individual strength, teamwork, leadership and goal setting. This class was a good fit for my project as iPad technology, specifically the use of iMovie software, provides a rich opportunity to incorporate students' first person narratives and perspectives on these topics.

As a practicing in-service teacher, Adam has considerable experience working with Indigenous youth. Previous to this unique high school position, Adam lived and taught in a remote First Nation community where he formed his foundational understanding of Indigenous students, families and communities. In addition, prior to this project Adam had already built a strong relationship with many of the students in his class, through his involvement in the school athletics program and from pervious experience teaching the students in other courses. The digital narrative project was designed to assist Adam in deepening and strengthening his understanding of his students' strengths and cultural identity. I did, however, realize that Adam's extensive background knowledge of and lived experiences with Indigenous community had already provided opportunities for him to develop counter-stories to disrupt the mainstream

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[5] All participant names have been changed to pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality and privacy as outlined in the Tri-Council Policy Statement 2.

colonial discourse. It seemed logical, therefore, that he would view the students' digital narratives differently than teachers who lacked his embodied experiences.

To study and research how the use of multimedia student-generated first-person narratives can help beginning teachers understand and develop respectful relationship with Indigenous students, I invited three pre-service teachers to participate in the study. These pre-service teachers were selected based upon two criteria: 1) their enrollment in ED4000, a specialized Honours course focusing on indigenizing practices and perspectives in education; and 2) ED4000 students who wanted to participate in this project as part of their ED4000 required informal placement (service learning) hours assignment. Participation in this study was useful and beneficial for these three pre-service teachers because they could apply the project's hours as partial completion of their alternative practicum hours. However, the three teacher candidates were grateful for this project opportunity that went beyond an instrumentalist view for their course completion. Finding ways to assist beginning teachers in developing respectful relationships with Indigenous students is crucial, because many teacher candidates are employed by First Nations communities as brand new teachers (just as I was after the completion of my BEd). As a result, not only do new teachers struggle to juggle transitioning into the new role of teacher, but they also have to transition into and make sense of living and working in a different culture and community. Providing tools for new teachers to better understand the strengths and resilient identities of Indigenous students is critically important for both groups; non-Indigenous new teachers and Indigenous students/communities.

Informed Consent. Teacher and pre-service teacher participants were provided with information summary letters and appropriate consent forms (attached as Appendices C and D),

which they were asked to read and then to sign if they agreed to participate in the study. I clearly informed participants of their right to withdraw from the study at any time up to the final stage of data analysis. No data was gathered prior to the obtaining the written consent from each participant.

The pre-service teachers were informed that their decision to participate in the study would not influence assessment in ED4000 (Indigenizing Education). Indeed, their choice to participate or not, was only revealed to the course instructor after the completion of all course work and submission of final course marks. As researcher and Graduate Assistant (GA) for ED4000, I was aware of the participants' identities; however, I did not assess any of the work submitted by these participating pre-service teachers during the Winter term, however, I did assess work during the Fall term as participation in the study had not been determined at this point.

Students enrolled in Adam's double Grade 11 Healthy and Active Living and Grade 12 Recreation and Fitness Leadership course were invited to participate in the study. In order to ensure informed consent, I partnered with the school's principal, acting *locus parentis* for underage student participants, and representative of the administering education council. Partnering with the principal allowed me to ensure that procedures aligned with and respected the values and beliefs of the Indigenous student participants and their respective communities. The principal was given an information letter outlining the purpose of the study and the research procedures (please see Appendix B), which he previously discussed with my supervisor during the planning stages of the project. The principal was asked to sign the attached consent form if he agreed to allow me to conduct my study at this First Nations high school (please see Appendix B). In addition, the consent form asked for the principal's permission to be consulted for consent,

in the role of *locus parentis*, for any students sixteen years or younger who wished to participate in the study.

In order to avoid Eurocentric and culturally insensitive practices, an information letter and standard written consent procedures were not used when obtaining consent from the Indigenous student participants. For many Indigenous peoples, written signed consent may be perceived as an attempt to legalize or formalize the consent process and therefore may be interpreted by the participant as a lack of trust (or cultural respect) on the part of the researcher. In accordance with TCPS-2 Article 3.12, and the protocol established by my supervisor, Dr. Lisa Korteweg, I followed a procedure that is more ethically acceptable in Indigenous (Nishnawbe-Aski) culture. My first priority as a (education) researcher working with Indigenous students is to establish strong educator-student relationships of service and trust which is comparable to consent. Prominent Indigenous scholars, such as Wilson (2008) and Kovach (2010), have established that building a strong researcher-participant relationship is essential when researching with Indigenous peoples. In order to ensure I built a relationship of trust I consulted with both the First Nations High School principal, as well as the Indigenous students, as to what was most respectful in this relationship (how I could be present for service/assistance in the education project while observing the situation to learn more and improve Indigenous education). Participating students at the First Nations High School were provided an oral summary, rather than a written summary letter (please see Appendix E). In addition, in order to honour the importance of building strong relationships with Indigenous communities and participants, I situated myself, my personal history as educator/researcher with Indigenous students and what I wished to accomplish with my research, before I asked students to consent to

participating in the study. The oral summary was based on the attached script (see Appendix E), and included the following information;

- Title of project and purpose
- Who is conducting this project?
- What is this project about?
- What will this information be used for?
- Who is this research funded by?
- What is required of me to participate?
- What if I participate and then change my mind?
- Who will have access to my information?
- Will there be any risk to me?
- Who can I contact if I have more questions?
- How can I get a copy of the research findings?

Once this information was shared, students were informed that copies of the script would be left with their teacher and would be accessible to them at any time upon request. At this point, students were given an opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification about the study and their potential participation in it. Students were then asked for oral consent to participate in the study, including a description of the students' rights as participants, including the right to withdraw from the study at any time and the protocol for keeping data confidential (please see Appendix E). Food was provided as a culturally responsive means of demonstrating mutual respect when asking the Indigenous students to share knowledge and when seeking participation.

Most participating students, at aged 17 or older, were able to provide free and informed consent. The principal was consulted and acted as legal guardian for any students who, due to

their age, were unable to provide their own informed consent. In order to ensure fully informed consent, students were asked at the completion of each multimedia project if they were willing to allow me to include that specific project in my study as data.

After completing their multimedia iPad projects, students were asked for permission to allow the use of these projects as examples of good work for other Indigenous students participating in the study at a later date. At this time, students were asked to provide an email address that may be used to contact them in the event that at a future date myself or my supervisor plan to share the student generated multimedia projects outside of a research context, or though a large media stream (such as television). This form can be viewed in Appendix E.

Data Collection and Analysis. As a teacher-researcher, one of the goals I brought to this research project was to better understand my own professional practice as an educator. In addition to developing a research plan, I acted as a co-instructor while researching in the high school classroom, assisting in the delivery of classroom lessons. As a result, my fiend notes and research journal served dual purpose, to record my observations of research participants and activities, as well as to record my own experiences working directly with Indigenous students and in-service and pre-service teachers.

In collaboration with Adam, the classroom teacher, it was decided that the main multimedia project students would develop during this research was an iMovie, expressing their first person narratives on the experience of participating in a Land-based unit on dogsledding. This unit was delivered in collaboration with Peter, a local professional musher who has the technical skills and physical resources needed. Over the course of six weeks, students visited the dog yard five times. During these visits they were matched with a dog, learned how to care for

their dog as well as the skills needed to independently drive a dogsled. During one of these visits to the dog yard I accompanied the students and brought the iPads used for their projects. The Indigenous high school students were paired with a participating teaching candidate and they took turns filming each other while introducing their assigned dogs and completing dog-handling skills. In addition, Peter volunteered to take an iPad with him on the trail to capture footage of the students in action driving the dogsleds, as well as to capture footage from the perspective of riding in a dogsled.

In a sixth lesson, Peter brought the dogs and sleds to the school. A small track was set up in the field behind the school and students were given the opportunity to drive school staff and students around the track. I was present during this lesson, and brought the iPads to the field so additional footage of the Indigenous students working with and talking about their dogs could be captured for future use in their iMovies.

Occurring concurrently with the dogsledding classes, myself and the participating teacher candidates, began visiting Adam's class on a weekly basis to familiarize students with the iPads. Over the course of 8 weeks, I visited the First Nations high school nine times; six visits were made during Adam's regularly scheduled classes, two visits occurred during after school tutoring sessions, and one visit was made to view the finished iMovies. During the classroom sessions, the classroom teacher and teacher candidates worked alongside the Indigenous students to develop and share their own iMovies.

My final visit to the school was both a celebration of the students' good work and a time to debrief the process of developing their iMovies. Several guests were invited to view the finished iMovies including the school's principal, a school counselor, and a graduate student involved in the dogsledding unit. Pizza was ordered and I brought in homemade baked goods to

try and create an atmosphere of celebration in the room. After viewing the movies the guests left and Adam, the students, and I participated in a sharing circle to discuss how they perceived the process of creating their iMovie. A sharing circle was chosen as the method to illicit students' perceptions and reflection on the project because it is an Indigenous respectful and culturally responsive method for sharing and building community knowledge. As described by Ledoux (2006) a sharing circle "is used to bring people together in a quiet, respectful manner for the purposes of teaching, listening, learning, and sharing. Participates are encouraged to speak not only from the mind, but also from the heart" (p. 277). For the purposes of data collection this final sharing circle was recorded and transcribed.

Students were not engaged in formal interviews or focus group sessions; rather, questioning occurred *in situ* throughout the study period. There was, however, a short optional written questionnaire (see Appendix F) that students could elect to complete. This questionnaire was included in response to a request from one of the Indigenous students who stated that she would be more comfortable sharing her thoughts and opinions this way, rather than answering questions verbally. Data collection from Indigenous students was on-going in the form of field notes taken during regular classroom time as well as field trips, which occasionally extend beyond regularly allotted time for specific courses, but remained within the timeframe of the school day.

Pre-service teachers provided support for Indigenous students during the development of their multimedia projects. As a result, these pre-service teachers received special training on integrating technology into the classroom that is not normally available in Lakehead's Bachelor of Education program. Furthermore, participating in this project provided these pre-service teachers with experience working closely with and supporting Indigenous student learners.

Data collection from pre-service and in-service teachers was ongoing in the form of field notes taken during sessions with the high school students. As a requirement for ED4000 (Indigenizing Education), pre-service teacher candidates completed written reflections about their experiences working and volunteering with Indigenous students during Land-based experiential activities and/or supporting the production of multimedia projects. With teacher-candidate permission, these reflections were collected and used as a data source. Pre-service teacher experiences were also elicited during individual open-ended interviews where they were asked to discuss their developing understanding of Indigenous students' strength-based identities, ways to engage these identities in the classroom, and the effectiveness of the study activities in allowing the pre-service teachers to develop a greater understanding for the sources of Indigenous students' cultural knowledge and resilience in the classroom (see Appendix G for prompting interview questions).

At the culmination of data collection, Adam (the classroom teacher) was invited to participate in an open-ended interview to elicit his perspectives on the effectiveness of having students create multimedia presentations using iPad technology. He was asked to consider the ability of these presentations to convey student experiences with Land-based learning. He was also invited to discuss the effectiveness of the student generated iMovies in providing a format for students to express their identity and resilience, and to consider how the use of these technologies affected, or did not affect, his relationship with these students (see Appendix H for battery of prompting questions).

In my research process, discovering themes and codes in the data was on going and emergent as I reviewed, transcribed, edited, and anonymized the many and varied sources of data collected. Through this process, I was able to gain insight into each of the participants'

perspectives while keeping the 5 Rs of Indigenous research (respect, responsibility, relevance, reciprocity and relationship) in mind. During this same time period, my lived experiences continued to influence how I saw the data, with new layers and levels of understanding emerging during the mental space and time that data processing provides. During the summer of 2014, data processing was a primary occupation for me during evenings; however, my days were spent working, living and reconnecting with the community of Sandy Lake First Nation. The messages I saw emerging in the data were echoed by my daily experiences as I built new relationships and strengthened old relationships with children, youth, and adults in the First Nation community.

At work, I spent time with children and youth creating short digital iMovies. This creative, multimodal literacy work allowed me to reconsider the joy and pride that digital storytelling instills in Indigenous young people as they revisited their own work and shared completed projects with each other and the greater community. Outside of work, in my personal life, the power of digital tools for connecting and building understanding was also highlighted. While sitting on the bleachers in the high school gym, waiting for a volleyball game to start, I began chatting with a few children sitting around me. I pulled my phone from my backpack and used it to share some photos of friends and family with the children. The reaction was immediate. The children drew closer to peer intently at the screen and asked me questions about the people and places they saw in the photos. Then several girls pulled out their phones or iPods in order to show me pictures of people and family members important in their lives. Later that evening, back in my living room, I transcribed an interview that mirrored the use of technology in Adam's classroom to ease conversations, interactions and build relationships. Seeing the similarities echo and reverberate between my research and lived experiences in a First Nation

community helped me further distill what had occurred at the heart of the iPad project and reveal more dimensions and complexities of the project's experience.

The process of preparing my data (interview transcripts, email correspondences, reflection forms and student generated iMovies) for entering into ATLAS.ti (a qualitative data analysis software program) occurred over several months and in multiple stages. During this time I began to see themes emerge out of long reflection and consideration—from both my own experiences as a teacher-researcher and of the participants' voices as they spoke through the data.

During the first stage, once the process of anonymization and transcription was completed, I organized, grouped and labeled transcripts into structured families of data according to the participant voice they represented (instructor, Indigenous student, teacher candidate or teacher-researcher). I then returned to literature from the fields of Aboriginal education, multimedia/multimodal representations, and strengths-based education to triangulate my emerging themes with the findings of others researchers. Reviewing the works of scholars such as Windschitl and Sahl (2002), Iseke (2009), Parent (2009), Wexler, Eglinon and Gurium (2014), Richards and Scott (2009), and German (2013), I found their studies all reverberated and supported the emerging themes that I had identified while preparing for coding. Through this dialogic process, I began the second stage of data analysis in ATLAS.ti with the following six themes:

1) Intrinsically Valuing Technology as a Teaching Tool
2) Reciprocation and Authentic Relationship
3) Collaboration
4) Student Self–Representation

5) Demonstration of Knowledge
6) Record of Strength

Using these six themes in my data analysis allowed me to bring together and synthesize the messages and emphases provided through each participant's voice, and reinforced my own observations and lived experiences as the teacher-researcher in the project. Each data item was reviewed carefully and multiple times, as I highlighted and tagged sections of text with one or more of my six codes.

In the final stage, I used ATLAS.ti to produce themed output sheets that organized my tagged quotes by code and participant group (instructor, Indigenous student, teacher candidate and teacher-researcher). These output sheets allowed me to process each participant group and identify where the groups' beliefs and opinions synthesized into one stronger message. Furthermore, these output sheets allowed me to identify when participant views diverged from the group, prompting me to consider why this may have occurred. Finally, with the use of my output sheets, I could compare and cross-reference how each group of participants spoke to my coding themes in a similar or different manner.

Working through the ATLAS.ti output sheets, I began to see and interpret these six thematic codes as frames of the iPad project experience or *bridges* connecting and interconnecting all of us in and through the digital narratives: the instructors, teacher candidates and myself as teacher-researcher with the Indigenous student participants. The bridges of data and themes were all pointing to the nurturing of relationships and revelations of the Indigenous students' own sources of strength, cultural identity and self-determined expression. Through this extensive process of data analysis stages with ATLAS.ti, the key role played by the creation of digital narratives with

the iPads was the decolonizing movement of the instructors and teacher candidates towards respectful indigenized relations through education.

Chapter 4: The Participants of the Relational Digital Narrative Project

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the project participants, their backgrounds, and roles in the research study. By taking the time to describe the unique stories of each of these individuals, the study will gain greater meaning because the results or outcomes of the project are rendered primarily through the participant voices. As expressed by Moses (2004) and connected to Roy Thomas' Nishnawbe circle of knowledge (see p. 1), if we are to make meaning from anyone's words, we must first have at least some understanding of *where they are from*.

Indigenous Students

After my first visit to the First Nations high school to meet the Indigenous student participants, I observed that the students appeared *reserved* (pun intended –as all participating students are from remote *reserve* communities). When I asked the students to share their names and home communities as a way of introduction, they were "hesitant even to share this little bit of information" (personal field notes, February 2014). Most of the first few lessons were spent trying to engage these students in dialogue but often receiving just one-word answers. It was only after eight weeks of spending regular consistent time with these students (often twice a week when I would accompany them on their dogsledding excursions in addition to in-class iPad sessions) that I was able to build enough of a relationship and I came to know the youth as more than a group of shy, quiet or challenging-to-engage students.

Tara, Jimmy, Dave, Lois and Evan are strong, resilient Indigenous youth. All five students—besides Dave—had moved to Thunder Bay, leaving their home communities to pursue their education, and work towards earning a high school diploma. All the students left behind parents, siblings, grandparents, nieces, nephews, hockey and broomball teams, family camps and

best friends to live in a foreign urban center hundreds of kilometers and expensive flights away from their homes. At a very young age, these students were faced with the harsh reality that they would have no choice but to leave their homes to try to gain an education and graduate from high school in order to pursue increased opportunities for their (and their family's) futures. The ability to successfully transition from First Nation home communities to predominantly non-Indigenous urban centers shows an immense amount of determination and resiliency on the part of these four students. Dave was the only student living in Thunder Bay with his immediate family. He demonstrated his strength by seamlessly balancing his academics and extra curricular sport involvement with helping to care for his younger siblings.

These five young people ranged in ages between 16 and 21 years and were at different stages in their completion of high school credits. Tara graduated in the spring of 2014 with plans to attend college in the fall, while the rest of the students knew they would be returning to high school to earn more credits towards their diplomas. During the course of this project, I saw immense growth in these students, demonstrating their capacity as learners and leaders. At the beginning of the project, none of the participating students had been on a dogsled, nor had they worked with iPads in an academic setting. By the end of my time in the classroom, these students were proficient with both of these tasks and my interactions (or relations) with them included inside jokes, laughter, and talks about their plans for the future. In this study, the voices of these Indigenous students help us to better understand the ways in which digital narratives might (or might not) work for Indigenous youth in future courses, assignments, or school settings. The five students of this study speak through their iMovies and share who they are, while demonstrating their ability to grasp and apply relevant curriculum expectations to their lives with meaning.

Students first created short iMovies on the topic of "Where I am From". These projects were aimed at developing the skills that would be needed in the culminating digital narrative project, such as completing a storyboard (see Appendix I), inserting images into iMovie, creating audio recordings, and arranging and editing items in the iMovie timeline. Furthermore, these short iMovies used photovoice methods of eliciting points of view about students' personal identities and home communities. Students were encouraged to use social media and community websites to collect images that could help them explain Land, people, community, and activities that were important in their lives.

Students then worked on developing components of their final iMovie project on the topic of dogsledding. For example, two lessons were devoted to using the application *Explain Everything* as a tool for describing and animating the roles on a dogsled team that the students had outlined using a graphic organizer (see Appendix J). When it came time for students to complete their finished iMovie, I provided them with a storyboard to help with organization and planning of ideas (see Appendix K). Clear success criteria (see Appendix L) assisted students in including all the necessary components for assessment. In their culminating projects, students were encouraged to use images, footage, text, and audio recordings to demonstrate their understanding of important course concepts such as teamwork, leadership and skills in specific movement activities (dogsledding). Students were prompted to use their multimedia projects to discuss their strength-based identity and cultural resilience, and to consider and explore how Land-based school learning connected to cultural knowledge from their home First Nations communities.

Classroom Teacher—Adam

I first met Adam the semester prior to commencing this project, spending time with him and his class as they completed a pilot version of the dogsledding unit that would later be used as part of my research study. My first impressions of Adam as a warm hearted, enthusiastic, and skilled teacher were continually reaffirmed as I spent more time with him in the classroom and at the dog yard. When the temperature during the dogsledding program plummeted during an Arctic Vortex, Adam went to the extra efforts of contacting the principal to request extra school funding so that he could take the students shopping for warm winter clothing in order for them to comfortably and more fully participate at the dog yard. Adam always warmly welcomed students to his class, often sharing jokes and freshly brewed coffee.

In interviews during and after the study, Adam spoke to me about being more than a teacher to these students. He understood the role of teacher at this unique school as the following: "Most of the students don't have their parents in town so, as teachers, I like to tell people [that] we're part-time social workers, part-time teachers." Adam shared his teaching journey with me, of how he had started teaching in a remote First Nations community and then how he relocated to Thunder Bay to first work as a recreation coordinator at the First Nations high school and then eventually become a full classroom teacher. When he was first given a teaching position, Adam petitioned for the school to offer physical education classes, which it was lacking, because he knew the real connections between an active body and mental health. Adam is also an advocate for the double-course scheduling system at the school where students spend an entire afternoon or morning working on one course in a concentrated manner, completing the course in half the time or scheduling a course in a half semester. By moving on to a second course halfway through the semester, this scheduling helps students who find it

impossible to remain in Thunder Bay for an entire semester, to go home with one full credit on their transcript, rather than two partially completed credits that do not help them move forwards towards graduation or retaining them in school.

Adam spoke passionately about trying to understand his students and their lives in a culturally responsive way. He stated that for him personally it was important to

> Focus on a holistic model of health similar to the First Nations medicine wheel where your physical, your mental, your emotional, your social health or spiritual health are all connected . . . So it's important to have empathy, [to] try to understand what the students are going through.

In every way Adam strives to act as an advocate and ally for his Indigenous students. The perspective he brings to this project is that of an experienced non-Indigenous teacher who works to build respectful and long-lasting relationships with Indigenous students, co-workers, peoples and community. As a teacher-researcher, I valued my work in this project as an opportunity to collaborate with Adam. I would draft lesson plans and share them with Adam via email in order to receive input and feedback before implementing the finalized lesson plans (see Appendix M) in his class.

Dogsledding Instructor - Peter

When I first arrived at the professional musher's dog yard, a welcoming chorus from the dogs and a hearty handshake from Peter the dogsledding instructor, all greeted me. Peter runs his dogsledding business out of his rural home and property, and on more than one occasion, his daughter would be found playing around the dogs, or his wife would offer baked goods and hot chocolate to the students and visitors. Peter's love for his dogs and passion for dogsledding

shone through all the interactions I had with him. Also evident was his deep-seated desire to use dogsledding as the means or process for building relationships, leadership skills, teamwork and self-capacity. Peter's approach to instruction and pedagogy is reflective of his background as an educated teacher with a Bachelor of Education and outdoor recreation degrees.

In an effort to run a successful business, however, Peter has had to set aside some of these educational passions in order to cater to the needs of clients who are often only one-time visitors. He explained that, "The idea was for me, with my business, was always to form two way relationships [between the dogs and the clients] . . . But being in business, you have to react to the market." Peter approached this high school project with renewed energy and sense of meaningful teaching because he was finally able to approach dogsledding instruction in the manner he had long intended to do.

Prior to this project, Peter had done contracts in many First Nations communities, often running programs during the March Break period. But he had never before run a multi-visit program with Indigenous clients, though he very much wanted to. Peter valued his past experiences working with First Nations communities because it offered him the sustained time to speak with community members:

> We've had a lot of really good conversations, you know, back and forth with folks about it [dogsledding]. I mean people remember dogs being used in their communities. But the thing is the people who remember are not young anymore.

Over the course of the 6-week dogsledding unit, Peter developed a strong relationship with the Indigenous high school students, often expressing concern for their well-being with gestures such as welcoming them to complete volunteer hours with him, inviting the group of students

back to the dog yard after the unit was completed, and offering his own personal winter clothing for students to wear so they would be warm on longer dogsled rides.

In this study, Peter was involved as the instructor for the dogsledding sessions. This meant that he participated on the days when the iPads were used to capture footage and video of the students participating in the actual dogsledding, but Peter was not involved in the teaching, processing or editing instruction of the students' iMovies. I visited Peter at his home to interview him about the iMovie videos after they were completed by the students. This was the first time that Peter had viewed these digital narratives of the youth and it was Peter's perspective that offered me insight on the intrinsic value of the narratives themselves, separated from the process of teaching and creating them. For Peter, the main role of these digital narratives was to help him better understand what the students had learned while dogsledding and working with him and his dogs.

The Teacher Candidates

Prior to the beginning of the research project, I had already developed relationships with the four teacher candidate participants in this study—Amy, Stacy, Lesley and Ben. In their fifth year of a concurrent education program, all four students had elected to take ED4000, a specialized Honours course examining issues of indigenizing perspectives and practice in education. As a graduate assistant (GA) for this course, I had worked with these teacher candidates for four months previous to the commencement of the study and had come to know them as learners and future teachers. These four pre-service teachers elected to take part in this study as partial fulfillment of informal placement or volunteer teaching hours required by the ED4000 course.

Amy and Stacy came to the study with limited experience working with Indigenous students. Amy grew up in the Thunder Bay area while Stacy had relocated to Thunder Bay to pursue post-secondary education. Stacy stated that growing up in her southern Ontario town, she had had limited experience with Indigenous peoples. Amy and Stacy's participation in the study was limited to the classroom sessions where we worked with the iPads. Prior to beginning this project, neither teacher candidate had much knowledge of or experience with the iMovie application or teaching with iPads. During the first class session, Stacy and Amy interacted rather tentatively with the Indigenous students; however, as the sessions progressed, their ever-increasing ease in the classroom became apparent. Amy's and Stacy's perspectives in this study provide better understandings of how new teachers can come to know Indigenous students through the process of creating digital narratives.

Lesley and Ben brought a different perspective to this study. Both of these teacher candidates come from a background of outdoor education, having grown up attending summer camps and being enrolled in a unique teachable course, Outdoor Ecological and Experiential Education (OE3). Ben participated in classes held at the dog yard and had limited opportunities to work in the First Nation high school with the iPads. Ben is included in this study because he worked with the students and the iPads on the two occasions when the iPads were used to film and photograph students while working with the dogs at Peter's property and dog yard. Like Peter, Ben was able to provide insight into how the completed narratives themselves, rather than the process of teaching and creating the digital narratives, can help beginning teachers view and understand Indigenous students' strengths and identities.

Lesley brought a slightly different perspective to the study because not only did she attend the first in-class iPad session, but she was already very invested in this dogsledding unit

because she had started the program as a student teacher in a pilot dogsledding unit during the Fall semester with Adam as her Associate teacher. Consequently, Lesley had implemented a similar project with a different group of Indigenous students who completed PowerPoint presentations as their culminating task instead of iMovies. Lesley could therefore observe and compare the use of iPads as a teaching tool and representational medium for students' learning. Furthermore, Lesley entered this project already quite comfortable working with Indigenous students at the First Nations high school and at the dog yard because she already knew Peter and his dogsledding operation as well as the First Nation school setting, routines and even some of the participating students prior to the start of the iPad-iMovie project.

Due to their role assisting with the implementation of iMovie lessons in the classroom, I frequently communicated with Amy, Stacy and Lesley via e-mail. Prior to each week's iPad in-class session I would send the finalized lesson plan to these pre-service teachers, allowing them the opportunity to review the lesson and ask clarifying questions. Due to scheduling conflicts, I was unable to attend one in-class iPad lesson, and on this occasion Amy and Stacy were given the additional responsibility of facilitating and leading the classroom activities in my absence.

Chapter 5: Digital Narratives as Bridges for Indigenizing Education

In this chapter, I will explore each of the six themes or *bridges* used to make sense of the data. I am referring to the themes as *bridges* because each topic revealed understanding central to the main purpose of this study; building relationship and understanding between Indigenous students and non-Indigenous teachers through first-person multimodal representations. Each of these bridges provides insights into how and why digital technologies can be implemented in the classroom to work towards the goal of decolonizing education, traversing the divide between predominantly Eurocentric mainstream education and Indigenous students. I have also used these themes/bridges as codes in ATLAS.ti (a qualitative data analysis software program) to help me organize the data and uncover the challenges that emerged during the process of implementing this digital narrative project. It is my goal in this thesis to share a realistic portrayal of what transpired for the benefit of other educators who might consider engaging in similar projects. This portrayal shows elements of my personal decolonizing journey, which I see as a critically important element of the findings to share with other Settler-educators.

Bridge 1: Valuing Technology as a Teaching Tool

In this bridge I explored instances when the instructors and teacher candidates reflected on the value of using technology as a tool for teaching; however, these comments did not directly reflect the value of using technology with Indigenous students. This technology-focused theme is important in the study because it is useful as a way to “hook” or market digital tools to practicing teachers so that they will try a new approach and continue their own professional learning. This is consistent with the work of Windschitl and Sahl (2002) who found that beliefs about student

motivation and engagement with technology, as well as the relevance of technology to students' lives were tightly tied with teacher motivation to use technology in the classroom.

Initially, it seemed that the teacher-participants viewed technology as important for *all* students; however, with the progression of the study, they began to see specific values in implementing digital narrative pedagogy with Indigenous youth. In this themed data section, I focus on the voices of the teacher candidates and instructors involved in the study to understand how technologies can establish a new connection or relational movement that can bridge classroom teachers with their Indigenous students.

The teacher candidates discussed how they enjoyed the use of iPads in this project because it gave them an opportunity to implement a specific technology in a classroom setting; they all believed this experience would benefit them in their future teaching. For example, Stacy said, "I enjoyed personally doing [the iMovies] because I don't know that much about technology and it's always nice to learn because that's the way of the future."

In addition, the teacher candidates expressed a belief that it is important to implement newer digital technologies (such as iPads) to equip students for their economic futures and remain connected with our modern, technology-driven society. Amy articulated this when she stated:

> The technology aspect keeps [the students] connected to the modern world, which as we know, is very important to young people. . . . If I'm a teacher and I'm not using any of it [digital technologies] then I feel really disconnected to what's happening outside the classroom. I think it's really important that students learn these technologies because it is going to be a skill in the future.

In addition to these general statements about the value of using technologies in any classroom, the teacher candidates did come to see iPads as valuable in this specific teaching context of Indigenous education. They found these technologies greatly increased the enjoyment and engagement of the First Nation students. The student engagement through the use of iPads was observable in both the in-classroom and outside-classroom learning experiences. For example, when reflecting on the quality of time spent by the students at the dog yard, Ben observed:

> To have technology there [outside in the dog yard] gets those kids [First Nation students] even more engaged. And they were working here [at the dog yard] for three weeks. I can say that they were at a peak engagement at points during that dogsledding experience, and I think the iPads really just helped them out with that [peak engagement].

On a similar note, Amy recalled an occasion in the classroom "… when the bell rang at the end of class, the students weren't ready to put away their iPads, which is a really cool feeling. They wanted to continue working with us, which was great." In both of these reflections, Amy and Ben see iPad technologies as captivating the Indigenous students and enhancing their enjoyment in the classroom and project learning experiences.

Adam, the classroom teacher, also viewed this project as an opportunity to learn more about teaching with technologies:

> I was really interested in what Alex had to offer with the iMovies. I took the AQ course, The Integration of Technology and Computers, last summer, so it's something that I'm interested in. I think, you know computers, iPads, whatever [technology] it is, we're a step behind the students… And it was fun. I kind of took it [the iMovie] as a personal challenge. I was trying to tie in all the elements that you were explaining to us, and really

sample the software, to see what it was all about.

Adam also shared an interest in continuing to implement iPad-based instruction in his classroom and reflected that participating in this research study helped him to better understand the possibilities of integrating digital technologies into his teaching.

Returning to and reflecting on the project field notes, my observations of increased student engagement and enjoyment with the iPads stand out. The Indigenous youth often reluctantly worked away at paper and pencil storyboards or brainstorming sheets, but once the iPads were brought out, many of the students shifted to work more attentively and efficiently on the same curriculum. This was not, however, the case with all the Indigenous students. For example, when one student, Evan, was asked if he enjoyed creating iMovies in the classroom, he stated, "I didn't really like the iPads." When prompted to explain what he did not like about the project, he elaborated, "I wasn't interested in the topic of dogsledding." Later on, Evan offered the comment that he might have enjoyed the project more if it had been on a different topic. During the project's culminating days, when asking the class if they liked working with the iPads, Evan stated in a written reflection, "No, because I like to write." However, it needs to be stated that the class was quite small in numbers, N=5 registered students (as is often the case for later grades at the First Nations high school). So it seems that for a very small number of students (1student out of 5), creating iMovies may not be a preferred method of demonstrating their learning and understanding. The vast majority of the students (4/5) not only demonstrated increased engagement but also stated clearly that they found creating iMovies to be an enjoyable classroom task. In the classroom sharing circle as the culmination of the project, students reflected on the use of the iPads for their assignments and many reported enjoying the process of creating an iMovie more than other assignment formats or the conventional curriculum

representations given to them. One student, Tara, stated that she, “enjoyed working with the iPads and making a movie.” When asked if she thought she might use the skills she had gained working with the applications in her academic or personal life, Tara stated that yes, “I would use it even if it wasn’t for school.” Dave and Jimmy both stated that they enjoyed working with the iPads, with Dave specifying that he enjoyed learning a new technological skill.

My main intention with the study was to closely examine how digital narratives enhance Indigenous student voice and build relationships in the (mainstream) classroom. It is critically important for teachers to remember that increased engagement and relevancy are valuable for Indigenous students to experience success in school by completing digital narratives. I want to highlight that for the non-Indigenous teacher candidates and classroom teacher, gaining experience integrating digital technologies in a classroom in order to stay relevant with teaching trends and new curricular emphases was pivotal in agreeing to participate in the study. The desires of these teachers to stay in touch with current educational trends are well founded, as digital technologies have been shown to be robust educational tools that enhance critical thinking (Jonassen, 2005). Though these two groups—Indigenous students and non-Indigenous teachers—may have had different needs or expectations with these digital tools, my main finding is that technologies such as iPads and iMovies can move two disparate groups closer to collaboration and intercultural bridge building in the classroom.

Bridge 2: Student Self-Representation

In the theme of student self-representation, I explore how digital narratives allow Indigenous student participants to be in control of their own self-representations, an essential goal in an education system that frequently misrepresents and stereotypes Indigenous peoples

(Iseke, 2009). I identified this as an important theme/bridge based on the work of Parent (2009) who demonstrated that Indigenous youth desire to be better understood by their teachers. While Wexler et al. (2014) found that viewing digital narratives in which Indigenous youth have been able to self-represent allows non-Indigenous researchers to better understand these youth's lives and perspectives. This reverberated in my data; valuing of self-determination in curriculum was reflected in the students' own words and in their digital narratives. Encouragingly, the teacher candidates and instructors also viewed the digital narratives as strong instances of self-representation by the Indigenous students. As each distinct group of participants—Indigenous students, non-Indigenous teacher-candidates and instructor—offered unique and important perspectives on this theme, I have organized the selection of data to reflect these groups' "points of viewing"(Goldman, 1996). In a final section I address the issue of challenges posed by the teaching of digital narratives for students' control of their self-representations.

Indigenous Students. By examining the digital narratives created by the Indigenous youth, I was able to comprehend how digital technologies allowed students to control their own self-representations. For example, some students, such as Dave, chose to use audio recordings as voice-overs to share the majority of information in their movies, while others, such as Jimmy, chose to primarily use written text. Some of the Indigenous students incorporated many personal images of themselves, not only dogsledding, but also doing other activities. Tara was an excellent example of this choice of visual representations. In both of her projects, the "Where I am From" iMovie and culminating dogsledding assignment, she shared many images of her family members, such as her mother (Figure 2), niece, and nephew. She also shared images of her high school friends and broomball team.

Figure 2: Tara was quite excited to share images of herself, taken with friends, family, and the activities they enjoy doing together.

Other students primarily used general images of dogsledding, and in some cases, stock images saved off the Internet to represent activities they enjoy doing; these visual representations were not personalized. Jimmy was an excellent example of this approach. When watching his iMovie, the viewer is able to hear Jimmy's voice describe important things, such as his family, baseball, and hockey; however, in his first iMovie, on the topic of "Where I am from", Jimmy chose not to share any personal images so he used only clipart style images saved from the Internet (See Figure 3).

Figure 3: Jimmy chose to use clipart images to represent his family and his favorite activities.

In his final iMovie on the topic dogsledding, Jimmy did choose to include a video of himself working with his dog (Figure 4). Perhaps this was a reflection of Jimmy's growing comfort with the technology, the project, the teacher candidates, me as an instructor or perhaps it simply indicates that he felt more comfortable incorporating images of shared collective experiences that we had all participated in and witnessed as part of the class project. It is impossible, however to ascertain, based on the collected data, exactly what Jimmy's intentions were behind including this footage.

Figure 4: A still showing Jimmy working with his dog.

In analyzing these examples, my main finding is that the digital narratives provided students with a great deal of control over how much personal information they chose to share in this setting. It is important to remember that the act of keeping information private is as much an assertion of one's control over self-representation as is the choice to share personalized information. This is especially true for Indigenous peoples who have been historically misrepresented by the dominant culture (Dion, 2000, 2009). Opportunities for Indigenous peoples to take control of their own representations have been identified as essential for decolonization. Findlay, (2000) argues that we must work against "the growing industry of speaking for the Indigene, explaining Aboriginal people to themselves, to governments, to the general public" (p. x).

During the end-of-project sharing circle, students articulated an understanding that the features and flexibility of iMovie enhanced their ability to represent their perspectives more

accurately in their final projects. When asked if there was an aspect of her movie that she was particularly proud of, Tara responded, “That I had enough courage to talk on there.” Although gaining the courage to record her voice was difficult for Tara, she recognized that in the end, it enhanced her project, adding clarity and strength of personalization to her narrative. Dave reflected,

> I liked the iPads because it’s better than the alternative . . . just writing a bunch. Making videos is just, it’s a lot better for people who are watching or reading it. It’s just easier to get a point across I guess. I liked it.

In this statement, Dave shows that he found digital technologies an easier and more accessible medium to convey his knowledge and perspective as a digital narrative rather than more conventional classroom methods such as a written paper or exam. Tara felt similarly and preferred iMovies to written assignments because “. . . you can get a visual thought of what they are trying to show you, instead of just writing.”

At the completion of the unit, the class watched all the digital narratives together. Students were then able to identify ways in which they and their classmates made choices in how they represented their learnings and understandings from the dogsledding experiences. Reflecting on his classmates’ projects, Evan stated that the production of the digital narratives were different because “Jimmy’s had music and text, his [Dave’s] was quiet and he [Dave] was using his voice.” Evan further identified that although his classmates chose different methods for representing what they had learned about dogsledding, they had all been successful in effectively communicating with the audience. Jimmy commented that Tara’s video stood out because of the attention to detail she showed, adding title pages and cartoon-type images to her text pages. These comments reflect a more meta-cognitive understanding of the technology. Using iMovie

allowed each student to develop a project that uniquely represented their own point of viewing. In other words, the Indigenous students understood that they were able to control their representations through the finished iMovie project and that the medium was flexible and multimodal enough to accurately reflect their unique voices, cultural perspectives and lived experiences.

Teacher Candidates. Analyzing the responses or points of viewing of the teacher-candidate participants helped me understand that the Indigenous student's control over their own representation was also evident to non-Indigenous educator-viewers of the completed digital narratives. When asked to reflect on the students' completed iMovies, the teacher candidates expressed a strong sense of now understanding the unique personalities of the students. For example, Lesley stated, "I really noticed how much the students' personalities stood out. Each video was very different and I think held a lot of the author's flare." Amy also felt the projects reflected the personalities of the students, elaborating that the flexibility of the iMovie program really encouraged and promoted students to represent themselves in a way that was true to their lived experiences and perspectives:

> I also found that this project gave me a chance to get to know the quieter students. Ones who aren't necessarily speaking up and answering questions . . . the iPad project gave them a chance to have a voice and it gave them a chance to succeed. It also brought out creativity in the students. Not too many people can be creative with an essay or written project . . . This project allowed them to use pictures, sound effects, different transitions, methods to make their project more creative and unique. Looking at the videos, you could see each of their personalities reflected in their work, where looking at an essay, it's a

> little more difficult to bring out that personality and creativity.

Amy and Stacy believe the nature of the iMovie program allows students, especially shy or quiet Indigenous students, to control their own self-representations. They also realized that as future teachers, these digital narrative representations can help them better understand their Indigenous students.

Instructors. The classroom teacher (Adam) and dogsledding instructor (Peter) both shared insights into how the digital narratives allowed students to maintain control over their own self-representation. Adam reflected that the nature of this assignment encouraged students to consider how they perceive others and how they themselves want to be perceived. He stated,

> Just the kids reflecting on who they are as a person, what some of their general characteristics are: what their strengths and weakness are . . . That reflection, seeing other people and then thinking about themselves, I think taught them a bit about their identity and who they were and what was important to them. What their values were.

Adam understood that the type of narrative students were asked to create influenced the likelihood that their iMovie would strongly reflect their identity.

Peter identified how iMovies allow students to control their self-representations because they have the ability to easily review the narratives before sharing them with others. Peter described: "They're showing a project without having to sit down and have a face to face conversation. . . They get that filter a little bit. . . and they get the space to reflect on it too." He went on to explain that by viewing the students' iMovies, he was then able to gain a stronger sense of the students' individual voices then he had during his hands-on experiences working with the students in the dog yard. Peter reflected, "it's like, oh wow, ok, so here they are in this

video…in the one minute or two minute video that they made, I heard them speak more than they did for the six weeks [of the dogsledding program].” From Peter's perspective, the iMovies served a crucial function in illuminating the perspectives and personalities of the Indigenous students.

Similar to the teacher candidates, it is evident that the instructors involved in this study found digital narratives to be an effective way of enabling students to be in control of their own self-representation and that these representations allowed settler-Canadian educators to better understand Indigenous students as unique individuals.

Challenges Posed by the use of Digital Narratives as a Tool for Self-Representation.

In some instances the degree of control that the students maintained over their self-representation actually posed challenges within the classroom setting. One of these challenges was that some students did not complete the assigned project. For example, Stacy (pre-service teacher) described and discussed an iMovie class where I was not present. For this one session, she and the other student teacher, Amy, were responsible for facilitating the iPad instructions. And it was during this one session that Evan (the Indigenous student who stated that he did not like iMovies) actually deleted his iMovie project. The teacher candidates found it very challenging to work past this difficult impasse. Stacy shared with dismay the account of Evan's iMovie deletion:

> When me and Amy were over there [in the First Nation high school] by ourselves, the one student did not want to do anything that day. So we constantly were like, 'Don't you want to do anything?' and then he deleted his work for some reason. And then we were like, 'Why did you delete your work?' He [said], 'I didn't like it' . . . He wouldn't really

> talk so it was difficult.

This was an event that Amy also wanted to discuss at length which clearly demonstrates the significant impression that the incident had on both teacher candidates. They seemed very uncertain why Evan (the student) had chosen to delete his project. In an interview with Adam, the classroom teacher, he shed some light on the issue, explaining that many students at the First Nations high school have a similar tendency or lack of self-esteem when it comes to school curriculum and projects.

> Rather than saying [to themselves] 'I'm going to work on this and if I hit a problem, I'll stop and I'll ask for help' . . . a lot will just [say], 'no, I'm not going to do this unless I'm going to do it right.'

Taking this factor into consideration, it becomes clear that there are many possible reasons why Evan may have chosen to delete his iMovie project. It may have been that he was unhappy or self-conscious about the quality of his work. The deletion of the project could have been an act of defiance or resistance to the outside demand for performance. I posit, however, that it should be interpreted as an act of asserting control over his self-representation. Upon reviewing his work that day in class, Evan may have decided that the partially completed iMovie was an inadequate record of his perspective and abilities, so he asserted his right to regain control and to prevent others from viewing his work. It is also quite possible than none of these rationales accurately represent why Evan chose to delete his project because he never directly explained this action to the classroom teacher or teacher candidates when prompted.

Even for those Indigenous students in class who *did* complete their iMovies, many found it extremely challenging to add their voices as audio in the project. In fact, most students did not record audio clips of their voices until the very last work period, which occurred after school

hours during a tutoring session, after I tried multiple times to convince them of the efficiency and ease of adding this multimodal element. Only a few students (N=2) succeeded in recording enough monologue to add to their iMovies when they were given a private space outside the classroom to conduct their recordings of their own voices, with no one else present in the room. In my autoethnographic journal I noted:

> I think it [recording their own voices] really speaks to the needs of students to come to terms with the technology, find a space where they are comfortable, and know support is nearby in order to take risks. Although recording your voice may seem like a small thing, I think for many of these Indigenous students, there is an aspect of risk-taking involved. There is a worry that you will sound stupid or funny or appear "othered" in a way that is culturally uncomfortable. Maybe there is a difference between asserting your individual voice versus adding your voice to the collective or group that really stymied these students. (Field notes, March 2014)

Retrospectively, I can rationalize that the students needed a private space to record their voices to ensure that they were able to review their audio clips and confirm that they were representing themselves in a controlled manner before including these personal voice clips in their movies. The students' reticence to include their voice recordings in their iMovies was an instructional challenge encountered as a direct result of the students self-determining their own representations. When classroom teachers provide opportunities for Indigenous students to be fully in control of their own representations. They must be willing to be fully flexible in terms of the curricular structures of classroom instructional time and space, choice of topics and tools, along with the student choice of the format of the completed work. In larger (mainstream) class settings, this could pose a significant organizational challenge as the space/room opportunities

for Indigenous students to work privately and independently to gain the comfort and confidence to record their voices could be difficult to find in a regular high school. Furthermore, colonial-Eurocentric approaches to teaching and curriculum tend to limit student individuality, with students expected to meet the same learning goals along the same developmental schedule, thereby limiting individual choice and flexibility.

Bridge 3: Demonstration of Knowledge

In this section of the data analysis, I explore how effective the student generated iMovies were in allowing students to demonstrate their ability to meet curriculum expectations and allow the teachers richer means or access to more accurately assess learning outcomes achieved by the Indigenous youth participants in Grade 12 Recreation (PPL 30) and Grade 12 Fitness and Leadership (PLF 4C). Determining the ability of digital narratives to successfully capture student knowledge and learning is important because standard methods of assessment have proved inadequate in capturing Indigenous students' strengths (Canadian Council on Learning, 2009; Richards & Scott, 2009). I first examine the student-generated iMovies themselves and then demonstrate their strengths in successfully completing standardized course expectations. I then turn to the voices of the teacher-candidates and instructors in order to determine if it were the digital narratives that allowed the Indigenous students to demonstrate course skills and knowledge acquisition in a manner that was more accessible or observable by the project educators.

Student iMovies as Knowledge Artifacts. When I reviewed the iMovies generated by the Indigenous students and compared them to the Ministry of Ontario's curricular expectations

for the two courses, it was evident that these digital projects were effective in assisting the students to communicate their understandings of the course content. For example, Tara was able to integrate images and text to explain the roles of a dogsledding team, which meets the PLF 4C expectation: "analyse how the roles played by various members of a group contribute to group effectiveness." For example, in Figure 5, Tara has clearly identified the most important characteristics required to be a successful musher.

Figure 5: This still from Tara's iMovie identifies five important characteristics of an effective musher.

In his digital narrative, Jimmy demonstrated successful completion of an expectation of PLF 4C, "apply communication stills and strategies that help develop positive relationships", by using his iMovie to explain how he built a strong relationship with the dog that he was assigned at the dog yard (See Figure 6).

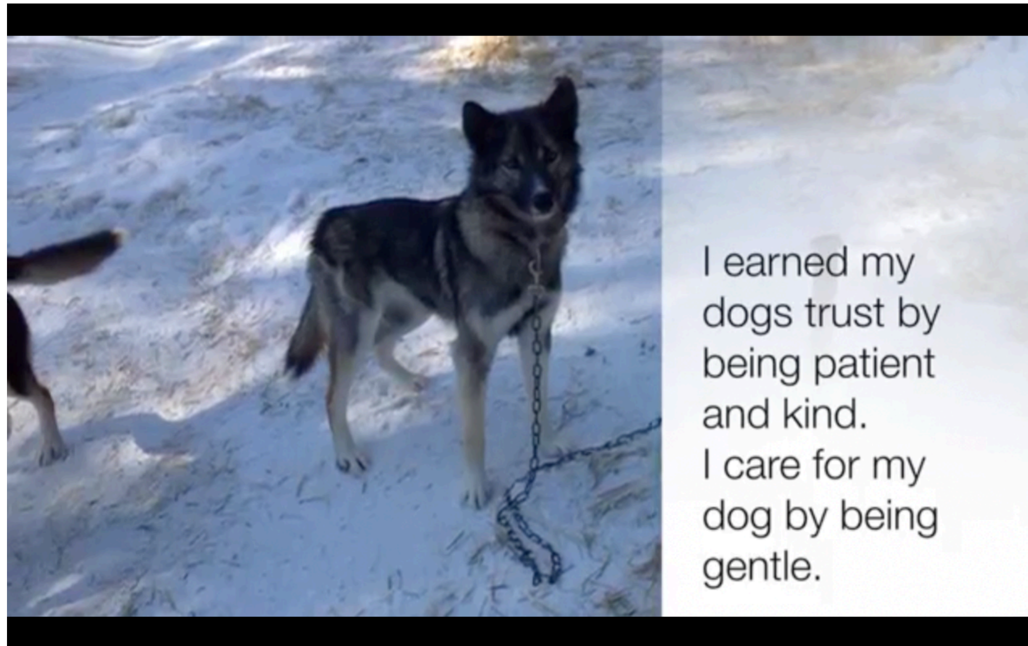

Figure 6: A still from Jimmy's iMovie in which he explains how he was able to nurture a positive relationship with his assigned dog.

Another example of how these movies were able to communicate the students' successful completion of curricular expectations is for the PPL 30 expectations "demonstrate movement skills in a variety of physical activities" and "demonstrate personal improvement in their performance of a variety of physical activities". In their final projects, every student included video clips of themselves successfully completing movement skills required for dogsledding. Since none of the students had any experience with dogsledding prior to this unit, these clips in which the students are independently and confidently demonstrating dogsledding skills show a huge amount of personal improvement.

Teacher Candidates. All of the teacher candidates interviewed expressed a belief that the iMovies were excellent devices when it came to helping them understand what the students

had accomplished during the unit on dogsledding. In an email to me, Lesley enthusiastically stated, “Seeing the work the students put into the projects and key points they learned from the experiences made me, as someone who was involved in facilitating the experiences, feel that the program was a great success!” Ben, who was involved in this project at the dog yard, but not in the classroom technology component, stated:

> When we were teaching the whole time at the dog yard, no one was walking around with a notepad and a pen and paper and stuff so I didn’t know what was being retained [by the students] . . . I knew what was being talked about and what was being taught but I didn’t know what was actually going home with the students . . . Seeing those videos, the things that we were trying to teach, you could clearly see were part of that video . . . I think it [the iMovie] has captured everything we were trying to do.

This statement clearly illustrates the power of digital narratives for revealing student learning and knowledge.

In addition to these benefits, the teacher candidates were also able to identify struggles they encountered as the Indigenous students worked towards developing their iMovies. In particular, the teacher candidates found it difficult to engage students throughout the planning phase of their projects. During several lessons, paper graphic organizers were used to encourage students to plan the pictures, text and audio they would include in their finalized projects with pencil-on-paper handouts (see Appendices I, J and K). Consistently, it proved difficult to motivate students to complete this planning phase. As reflected in Amy’s words, “During the lesson, Alex recognized the students losing interest in the [hardcopy graphic] organizers so she decided to switch to the iPads, which I believe was a good judgment call to keep them engaged.” In some instance, this meant that we as teachers had to find other ways of supporting students to

ensure that their final projects would communicate the curriculum content that the classroom teacher would be assessing. For example, one strategy employed was to give the students a success criteria checklist. This support was crucial to ensuring that the Indigenous youth were successful in demonstrating curriculum outcomes in their iMovies. Despite these challenges during the initial phase, all of the teacher candidates seemed to be better enabled to understand what the Indigenous students learned during the dogsledding unit by viewing the Indigenous students' finished iMovies.

Instructors. In his interview, Peter discussed at length his uncertainties about how much the students were learning and retaining during their visits to the dog yard. Peter felt that he never received a lot of feedback in person from the students. He contrasts this in-person feedback to the information the students communicated through their iMovies by stating,

> You know, like if there's one thing if you were going to say. . . its that they're . . . [students from the First Nations high school] not terribly expressive face to face. It was really interesting to see some of the things that they really were able to express in the movies.

After watching the videos, Peter became very excited and animated. He saw these digital artifacts as not only a record of the students achievements, but also as reassurance for himself that he had been teaching in a manner that the students had been able to access and understand. In my autoethnographic journal, I commented on Peter's response;

> Peter was visibly excited to watch the videos. As they played on my computer, he leaned forward on the table, fully engaged in what he saw. His demeanor and the emotion in his voice showed the truth in his words as he spoke about what the movies meant to him,

> how they showed him he was being successful in engaging these students in a meaningful experience. (Field notes, April 2014)

Through his tone of voice and body language as well as his words, it was easy to see that the Indigenous students had communicated a degree of learning and depth of understanding that had surpassed Peter's expectations and had previously remained unknown. Peter explained:

> You know when they say well, I learnt this and I learned how to be patient . . . and they say these things actually made sense to me and I apply them elsewhere . . . Maybe some of them didn't buy in early, but then all of the sudden at the end you see that they followed through on their projects with the videos, and are in the video demonstrating skills and saying that they had a really good time. That's kind of cool.

Both Peter and Adam commented on how the students' iMovies acted as a record of the dogsledding skills the students gained during the unit. Peter believed the videos could act as a record of personal improvement; "I think too, for them to see it [the iMovie] after and to watch themselves in that role . . . just to watch the videos of them performing the skills it's kind of neat."

On a similar note, Adam suggested that students' digital narratives could become a vehicle enabling students to share their achievement with others. During one of our session at the dog yard Peter took an iPad out with him on the dogsled. He was able to capture videos of the students driving the dogsled, from the perspective as a passenger in the sled. The video he made is quite beautiful, showing the dogs running out in front, the crisp snow on the sides of the trail, and the trees racing by. After watching the finished student projects Adam commented that sharing their iMovies with others,

> will allow our students to kind of share with other people. They all kind of tied in the

> finished projects a bit of that video [from the perspective of being on the dogsled], so their peers and other people can see, you know, this is what I was doing this is the perspective that I was in. You know staring at these dogs running out in front of me and we were out in the bush in the middle of nowhere . . . [and] I was in charge.

After reviewing this data it is undeniable that the students' digital narratives proved very effective for assisting the instructors in understanding what the students had learned during the dogsledding unit. In addition, the unique format of an iMovie allows students to easily share this piece of work with other important people in their lives, such as peers and family members. In a traditional essay format it is unlikely that students would choose to share what they had created with others. In contrast, students in this project were very excited to receive copies of their final iMovies as they wished to share them with others.

Bridge 4: Record of Personal Strengths

It is evident that digital narratives can be used as a successful knowledge artifact for assessing Indigenous students' attainment of curricular expectations. Building on last section's focus on how iMovies can record a student's skills and understanding in a particular instructional area, I will now explore their ability to act as a record of the students' innate personal strengths. This theme was created to assess the effectiveness of these iMovies in achieving a strength-based instructional approach (Cox, 2008; German, 2013). I examine digital narratives to see if students used these iMovies as a format for expressing their personal strengths. Data collected from the teacher candidates and instructors is explored to establish the effectiveness of iMovies, and the process of making them, in helping settler-Canadians understanding Indigenous students unique strength-based identities.

Students' use of Digital Narratives to Express their Strength-Based Identities. Adam, the classroom teacher, believed it was important for students to create finished projects that really highlighted their abilities. Prior to beginning the iPad project I noted in my autoethnographic journal that in a meeting with Adam, he had emphasized, "wanting to focus on the strengths of the students and draw out these character traits in our upcoming assignments" (field notes, January 2014). As a result, in their final projects students were prompted to consider the personal characteristics that assisted them in being successful during the dogsledding unit. At they outset it was therefore hoped that the completed iMovies would act as record, in their own words, of the students' strengths.

For example, in his iMovie Dave explained how some of his positive attributes helped him to succeed during the dogsledding unit, as well as outside of the classroom (See Figure 7).

Figure 7: In this still taken from Dave's iMovie he describes some of the positive character traits he shared with the dog he was paired with.

In a similar fashion Tara spent a significant amount of time using her iMovie to describe personal strengths that allowed he to excel during the dogsledding unit. She recognized that these personal characteristics are helpful in her everyday life. (See Figure 8 and Figure 9)

Figure 8: In this still, Tara discusses her kind and patient nature, and identifies how this helps her succeed at the dog yard and personal life.

Skills needed to drive a dogsled

1. Confidence
2. Patience
3. Determination
4. Good communication
5. Need to be loud

Figure 9: In this still, Tara describes some additional personal attributes that helped her to succeed in the dogsledding unit.

These messages of strength are communicated in such as way that they are accessible to the students' peers. For example, after viewing each other's finished iMovies, Evan stated, " Dave can be pretty confident. I thought he was always quiet."

Finally, the finished iMovie itself became a piece of evidence of demonstrating skills gained by the students. For example, in reflecting on the experience, one student stated, "I feel good about my iMovie because it was something I never did before, but in the end I liked it." On many levels, the student-generated narratives serve as a record of student strengths; their personal characteristics, the skills gained during the dogsledding unit and finally their proficiency in working with a new technology.

Although in general these digital narratives serve as records of students' strengths there were some instances where students felt unsure about the quality of their iMovies; this was expressed as a reluctance to share widely with others. One student, Jimmy, expressed concern

when the school principal and other staff visited Adam's classroom to view the digital narratives. When the principal asked to see Jimmy's movie Jimmy stated, " I don't talk on mine, how come you want to see mine?" It seems that Jimmy was concerned that his work was not of the same quality as his classmates. Furthermore, all of the students who completed iMovies were very adamant that they did not want their videos to be shared with other students as examples of good work. Jimmy stated "you can do anything with [the iMovie], just not [show it to] other students." From my observations, as well as discussions with Adam, it appears that some of this hesitancy may be a result of the students' lack of confidence in their classroom performance.

In other instances when students were in small peer groups and could maintain greater say and control, the opportunity to share their finished narratives appeared to be a point of pride for students. For example, in one of my research journal entries written during afterschool tutoring:

> Tara stayed for a full hour and finished her movie. After coming back to the room, she proudly asked the other students who were working if they wanted to see it [her iMovie] . . . We set the iPad up on the table and myself, Tara and the three other students [not in Adam's class] present watched the film. We laughed and made enthusiastic and positive comments as the movie played. At the end Tara said that the movie had been a lot of work, but that it had been fun to make. (Field notes, March 2014)

This moment demonstrates the pride Tara felt in her work and how eager she was to share it with others when she could be present and fully in control of the viewing situation.

Teacher Candidates. When teacher candidates reflected on watching the Indigenous students' videos they often discussed how these narratives revealed or highlighted the students'

strengths. For example Lesley stated “Watching Dave's video in particular I really noticed how good his speaking skills are.” While Amy discussed how the digital narratives provided insight into strength-based aspects of the student’s personality. She felt that these understandings could assist a teacher to draw on the students’ strengths in the classroom. Amy felt that when watching the iMovies, **“**you’re learning more about their [the students’] skills and their strengths and things that are important to them which you can use in future lessons. It really gave you a chance to learn more about that student.” At the same time, Amy recognized that the format of the digital narratives drew on the students’ natural proficiency with the technology. The Indigenous youth involved in this study are of an age and generation where they have grown up with technologies. Digital media has been integrated into their lives on a daily basis through computers, gaming devices and iPods. Amy highlighted how the students’ quick adaptation to the iMovie software benefited them:

> They [the students] can kind of still get across the same information and, without having, I don’t know, that frustration element where they’re like ‘I don’t know how to write this I’m not going to do it.’ It was just a different, unique way to get the same information across.

Ben viewed the completed iMovies as being some of the best pieces of work he had seen during his time as a student teacher at the First Nations high school:

> Looking at the product that was given to me [the students iMovies], it’s impressive… Those videos were some of the best products of work I’ve seen since I’ve been at the school . . . I’ve marked assignments, and although they succeed at all kinds of assignments…the videos, all of them, were spectacular. I mean they were really great things to look at.

Amy reflected on the entire process of creating and viewing the digital narratives as prompting the students to reflect on, express, and share their own strengths in a safe environment. She also explained that viewing the digital narratives completed by their peers assisted students to recognize the strengths of their classmates. She explained,

> I thought it was a meaningful experience for me and the students . . . I just think it's important that the students know who they are and that they get to share it with each other. That it's a safe space that they can share it and they're not going to be judged for certain things, cause I think that's a fear that all students go through… a chance for them to be proud of where they come from, proud of who they are and let other students kind of respect that . . . If they are lost in the classroom then they're not connected with what they are leaning, they don't care.

Through viewing the digital narratives these non-Indigenous pre-service teachers came to better understand the strengths of the Indigenous students, viewing these projects as a means for encouraging students to see strength in themselves and their peers.

Instructors. In our discussions, Adam explained how conventional student presentations are often challenging for students at the First Nations high school. He went on to say that the iMovies could serve as evidence to combat this anxiety:

> Doing a presentation in front of ten people that are sitting here staring at you, a lot of our students will just refuse . . . But if it's just them talking to one person with the iPad recording it and then we can show it to others later it's going to build that confidence. It's going to show them if I can do that in front of a screen why can't I do that in front of a group of people as well?

Adam identified the technology itself as drawing on the strengths of the Indigenous youth. Similar to the teacher candidates, he found that students adapted to working on the iPad software faster then he himself did, and that this was something they could see as a personal asset; stating "I'm on my phone and my laptop countless hours a day, but still, when you were teaching us stuff with the iPad I was the slowest one in the class . . . And the students were laughing at me!"

After examining the evidence, it appears that the Indigenous students, teacher candidates, and instructors all viewed the students' digital narratives as being a means to record and communicate students' personal strengths.

Bridge 5: A Collaborative Process

In this section I explore how the technology encouraged or facilitated the participants (Indigenous students, teacher candidates and instructors) interacting and working together to achieve a goal with the digital tools. In my observations of the classroom dynamics during the iPad and dogsledding sessions, the collaboration that occurred between the instructors, teacher candidates, and Indigenous youth--although not an intentional goal of this project--consistently stood out as being an important aspect of the creative process. For example, after an afternoon spent filming at the dog yard I wrote in my research journal

> They needed each other's help equally; the high school students needed the university students to film them and vice-versa. Once again, I overlooked how important this aspect of the interaction is . . . It was amazing how having the iPad for filming created a situation where the high school and university students were almost forced to collaborate, only it didn't seem forced at all . . . they were all excited about using the technology. No one seemed to feel on the spot or awkward. Everything about the situation was positive…

> we ended up with 4 non-Indigenous BEd students filming 4 First Nations high school students, but it was not contrived or stressful in anyway. Everything about the experience was positive. (Field notes, February 2014)

This general sense of collaboration and camaraderie was not confined to the experiences in the dog yard, I also observed it occurring during the in-class iPad sessions as well. After a period at the First Nations high school I wrote,

> Adam, Amy, and Stacy all worked on creating their own iMovie projects. Students, teachers, and pre-service teachers collaborated as they learned new functions in Explain Everything (some of which I too was also unaware of). There was a lot of sharing, and again, the lines between learner, teacher and researcher were blurred. (Field notes, February 2014)

These observations echo findings in the literature stressing the importance of creating opportunities for non-Indigenous educators to work alongside Indigenous peoples as a means for fostering relationality and responsive practice (Goulet, 2001; Luke, 2011). In this remaining portion of the data section, I explore the voices of the teacher candidates and instructors to determine if the collaborative processes involved in this project were important to them as well. The voices of the Indigenous youth are absent from this section, as methods used to collect data from the youth focused on the digital narratives themselves, rather than the process of creating the iMovies. This is a limitation of this study's data and also reflects the unanticipated findings emphasizing the importance of the creative process involved in producing digital narratives.

Teacher Candidates. In reflecting on their experience working with Indigenous youth in this project, the teacher candidates identified the opportunity to collaborate with these students as

enhancing their ability to engage with youth in an authentic and meaningful way. Amy explained; "It was easy to engage with them because we were both working on a common goal . . . Like if I didn't know what to talk about, I could talk about what they were doing on that iPad." Ben reflected on his experience working with the Indigenous students and the iPads in the dog yard. His statements reflect an understanding that using the iPads in collaboration with these students fostered engagement and authenticity in this experience and disrupted the normative power structure typically found in a teaching environment:

> He [the Indigenous student] was teaching me things on the iPad, right? I didn't know how to do some of the things on the iPad. So immediately he was actually given a chance to step up and be the leader over myself, which was awesome.

During her in-classroom experiences, Amy also found that collaborating with Indigenous students challenged the power structures of a typical classroom, helping her to feel more connected with the youth she was working alongside.

> We could work together. Tara for example, who knew the inside and out of the program, she was able to teach me things. . . I wasn't a teacher peering over them and making sure everything was getting done…I was both the teacher and the student in that sense . . . Like it's more of a community. We're all working together on the same kind of project and sharing with each other, more of a connectedness rather than me just being disconnected and watching . . . By having an iPad to work on as well brought me onto their level. It showed that I wasn't better than the students and that we could work on them together . . . I was working WITH them, not just giving them work to do. I became part of the project.

In words such as these, the teacher candidates gave powerful testament to the ways in which the

iPad project disrupted power hierarchies in the classroom.

Instructors. Adam commented on how having the iPads at the dog yard facilitated relational interactions between the teacher candidates and the First Nations youth. He stated that by focusing the joint attention of the Indigenous youth and non-Indigenous pre-service teachers on the task of creating videos and images a more authentic and relaxed interaction naturally evolved. Adam articulated,

> They [the Indigenous youth and teacher candidates] weren't necessarily looking at each other. We were more looking at the technology and seeing each other through that lens… It was nice bridge between two groups of people that maybe didn't know each other that well. To be able to come together and [say] ok, we're working on the iPads we're looking at this technology rather than looking at each other and asking each other questions that we're not too comfortable [answering].

Reflecting on the in-class sessions, Adam identified how having all participants, including himself and the teacher candidates, work on digital narratives created a more comfortable learning environment for the youth. This collaborative atmosphere encouraged discussion among participants:

> If you have somebody, you know a teacher or a student teacher you've never met before looking over your shoulder and watching every move you might not feel that comfort to just kind of experiment and try new things. But when everyone was doing their own [iMovie] and we could all kind of share, I think the students were a lot more comfortable They ended up coming up with some new ideas and some new things that everybody else hadn't seen.

Similar to the observations of the teacher candidates, Adam, the classroom teacher, found collaboration in the classroom and at the dog yard to be a key component in fostering a safe and supportive working environment for the Indigenous students.

Bridge 6: Reciprocation and Authentic Relationship

In this final data section I examine the relationships that were fostered and deepened during the iPad project, paying special attention to the role of reciprocation, or the mutual give-and-take between settler educators and Indigenous students. The inclusion of this theme was initiated by a key moment in my teacher-researcher experience. Early on in the iPad project I witnessed a touching moment when Adam, the classroom, teacher shared his iMovie on the topic of “Where are you from?” with the students in his class. In my research journal I wrote:

> Before we left, Adam showed the students what he had created so far on the iPad. The students were very excited to see his pictures. They laughed at the pictures of Adam as a little boy and commented on how much he looked like his dad. At this point in the class the mood was very comfortable and easy. The experience seemed very positive for everyone . . . Watching this interaction really made me think about how I need to consider the student-teacher relationship as being bidirectional. All along I have been considering what students can teach /share with their teachers in order to create stronger understanding of the Indigenous students by the teacher. What I have not considered up until now is why should these students share? Why should they invest personal and emotional resources into building this relationship if they are getting nothing in return? If we are going to ask students to share their identity with us, should we not do the same for them? (Field notes, January 2014)

Reviewing my research journal entries prompted me to wonder if these opportunities to reciprocate the sharing of personal information in order to build relationships had also stood out for the instructors and teacher candidates

Teacher Candidates. Reflecting on the time spent in the classroom at the First Nations high school, teacher candidates highlighted the importance of building authentic relationships with the Indigenous youth. Initially these non-Indigenous teacher candidates reported struggling with this task. Both Stacy and Amy identified challenges when first learning to relate and build relationship with the students. Amy reflected:

> I enjoyed working with them [the Indigenous students]. I feel like my biggest challenge was I didn't, at first, know how to interact with them. I think I went in there expecting them [the Indigenous students] to be really guarded, therefore I was maybe a little guarded, and I didn't really know how to break that barrier down.

Amy then went onto explain how she was able to move past this difficulty:

> The challenges in the iPad project seemed to lie in me, rather than in the students: I needed to overcome being shy. I needed to overcome stereotypes. As much as I'd love to say I'm a person free of stereotypes, I'm not, nobody is. This setting was something I was not used to and I think the biggest challenge was overcoming my own fears, concerns and biases. Things came easy in the project once I accepted my challenges and personal flaws. I was able to relate more to the students . . . I really enjoyed listening to their stories and hearing about their families and hobbies.

The teacher candidates discovered it was important for them to learn about the youth, but also for the youth to learn about who they, the teacher candidates were. They explained that the iPads

helped to facilitate the mutual sharing of life stories by allowing participants to show images of people and places important to them. Lesley reflected on watching the students view Adam's "Where I am from" iMovie:

> And I think that's how it should be. They [the students] actually see you as a real person. Like Adam got pictures of his family up, he's showing them what he looked like when he was a kid. You know what I mean? . . . Just seeing that their teachers [are] able to take the risk to show them what their home life is like, which I think is really good for these kids too because they're not from here, they all come from different places. It's a big thing to share that with everyone.

Amy shared a similar perspective on sharing her own personal life histories with the Indigenous youth:

> It gave them [the students] a chance to know who I was and I wasn't just some stranger coming into their class anymore. They could kind of learn a little bit about me. It goes both ways. I learned more about them and I become more comfortable with them, but vice-versa, they need to become more comfortable with me.

Similar to my personal experience as a teacher-researcher in this project, the teacher candidates were intently concerned with developing authentic relationships with the Indigenous student participants, articulating that the use of technology facilitated this process.

Instructors. When I interviewed Adam, he stressed the value of the emerging relationships between teacher candidates and Indigenous students. As an experienced teacher, he understood how vital, especially for Indigenous students, authentic and positive relationships between teacher and student can be. Adam also recognized that in mainstream education, teacher

candidates are often not well prepared to meet the needs of Indigenous students, especially Indigenous youth who have recently transitioned to urban centers from remote communities. Adam understood this project as being a meaningful way for teacher candidates to build relationships with, and begin to understand how they can support, Indigenous students in their future teaching. In his own words Adam stated,

> The fact of the matter is whether you are teaching here at the First Nations high school or you're teaching at a public school or a Catholic school there are more and more Aboriginal kids in the class every year. And a lot [of the Aboriginal students] are directly removed from an isolated First Nation Reserve in Northern Ontario where they may not be at grade level…And in my experience, from what I've seen, a lot [of Aboriginal students] kind of get swept under the carpet, get forgotten about. It's not because the teacher is racist or anything, it's just they don't know how to bridge that gap. They don't understand the students, they don't understand their needs as much as the students that they're more familiar with. So exposing the teacher candidates to Aboriginal learners I think helps prepare them for a wider array of learners that they are going to see in their future career.

Adam did not address his own relationship with the students in his class during the interview. This is not entirely surprising because prior to the beginning of this project, Adam had nurtured relationships with his students. Despite this already established trust and relationality, Adam still saw iMovies and the process of creating them as valuable tools for fostering new or deepening existing relationships between Indigenous youth and non-Indigenous teachers.

Chapter 6: Deconstructing the Colonial Logics of Education to Move Towards a New Shared Horizon

As I collected, transcribed and coded the study's data, I found myself constantly thinking back to Donald's (2012) theories of frontier logics with the fort's palisade metaphor dividing settler-Canadians from Indigenous peoples, and considering how this historical legacy continues through a colonial logic in mainstream curriculum (Donald, Glanfield, Sterenberg, 2013). In this metaphoric model of the fort, Donald argues that in order to proceed with real decolonization, settler-Canadians must move away from a frontier logic that divides and denigrates FNMI peoples and their knowledge systems into binary categories and a worldview that positions Indigenous people as *others* on their own homelands. As Donald states, "The overriding assumption at work in this logic is that Aboriginal peoples and Canadians inhabit separate realities. The intention is to deny relationality" (p. 91).

Donald (2012) uses the colonial fort to symbolize the historic and contemporary ways in which Indigenous peoples have been marginalized and excluded from mainstream settler-Canadian society. This marginalization is distilled and reflected in exclusions at the school and curricular levels, as discussed by Dion (2000) and Godlewska et al. (2010). To work against these colonial exclusions, Donald urges educators and academics to take up a paradigm of *ethical relationality*, celebrating and exploring differences and relationships in order to allow all treaty peoples[6] to walk forward with a shared future. As Donald himself states, "we need to find ways of dismantling the fort, which will naturally shift the horizon of those on the outside and inside of the model." (p. 93)

[6] The term "treaty people" refers to all Canadians: Indigenous and non-Indigenous (including new immigrants). This term recognizes that all citizens of this country are implicated in and impacted by treaty agreements (Epp, 2008).

As I visited, revisited, organized and rendered my data into representations of the project, I began to see Donald's (2012) fort model being reflected in my theorizing of the iMovie teaching processes. The non-Indigenous participants, including the classroom teacher, the teacher candidates, the dogsledding instructor, and myself the teacher-researcher, were all located inside the metaphorical fort walls. Our ways of knowing and our Eurocentric knowledge systems have all been privileged over centuries. We have benefited from, and often unknowingly perpetuated, normative standards of settler education and Eurocentric society in which we have been marinated (Battiste, 2005) when we implement exclusionary curriculum and reinforce stereotyped understandings of curriculum through common settler myths of Indigenous peoples. In contrast, the Indigenous student participants were all symbolically located outside the walls of the fort. The mainstream (Ministry certified) education system does not recognize FNMI ways of knowing as distinct sources of strength important to Indigenous learners and all of Canadian society. As so eloquently illustrated in the Canadian Council for Learning's First Nations, Inuit and Metis lifelong learning models (see Appendix A), sources of strength for FNMI peoples include community, cultural values, Land, family, language, protocols, Elders and traditions (Canadian Council on Learning, 2009). Yet, meeting the curriculum and the course expectations as dictated by the Ministry of Education (outside and segregated from FNMI communities and self-determination) were among the driving goals that the non-Indigenous participants—the classroom teacher, the pre-service teacher candidates, the dogsledding instructor and myself—all brought to this project. In the current system, educators believe that they are failing their students if they do not support them in reaching the Ministry's prescribed and pre-established goals.

Instead of working towards a classroom and curricular system where indigenized ways of knowing (CCL, 2009) can be recognized, acknowledged, honoured and embraced, the

mainstream education system exerts neo-colonial pull and pressure that “outsiders must be either incorporated–-brought inside to become like the insiders–-or excluded in order for progress and development to take place in the necessary ways” (Donald, 2012 p. 101). Typically in education, we use measures such as standardized testing, benchmarks and exemplars to help us determine how far away from the “norm” our students are located. Consistently, these Euro-western driven measures tell us that Indigenous students are working at a significant deficit (Canadian Council on Learning, 2009; Richards & Scott, 2009). In response, educators and administrators look for strategies and programs that will *squeeze* Indigenous students between the walls of the colonial fort so that they can be assumed, integrated or assimilated into mainstream education and made to look more like their ‘more successful’ settler-Canadian peers. When this approach is taken, those in the mainstream can remain comfortable and secure within their centered location of privilege and their cognitive horizons can rest at a well-established and pleasant distance.

In contrast, my study is founded on decolonizing theories of Indigenous education that state that we need strategies to encourage (non-Indigenous) teachers to shift *their* horizons and create spaces for Indigenous students to be who they are—their self-determined cultural identities—to first view and then recognize Indigenous students’ inherent strengths. This decolonization process means eroding the walls of the fort and pushing outwards the cognitive horizons of settler-Canadian teachers. In other words, in this project I was seeking to embrace a theoretical process or rendering of education that Gadamer (1975) explains as the following:

> The horizon of the present is being continually formed, in that we have continually to test all our prejudices. An important part of this testing is the encounter with the past and the understanding of the tradition from which we come. Hence the horizon of the present cannot be formed without the past. (p. 273)

I have come to understand that what is needed in Canadian education is a dialogue that is not shouted over the barriers of history and marginalization. We need a discussion where both voices--settler and Indigenous--speak with equal strength, clarity, and acceptance. When this conversation is realized, we as Canadians can recognize our differences but also come to know each other through a shared past and a current shared humanity. As Tupper and Cappello (2008) explain, what we need are un/usual narratives that can "work to fill in the blanks left by dominant narratives, nuancing those privileged stories, raising questions about the claims to veracity and the tacit consent of an impartial approach to knowledge" (p. 570).

I began to see the digital narratives used in my project as a type of un/usual narrative, or bridge along which dialogue is facilitated and encouraged to be a fuller exchange of knowledge and cultural identities. By creating spaces for Indigenous youth to share their viewpoints through their own captivating and engaging narratives, their Indigenous cultural perspectives were framed or amplified in a way that made them more accessible for teachers within mainstream education. The white settler educators of this study were able to better understand the perspectives and strengths of the Indigenous students by viewing their digital iMovie narratives. Through this process, the cognitive horizons of settler educators were pushed outwards, away from the colonial fort walls towards recognizing the rich cultural knowledge and resiliency possessed by the Indigenous students.

These digital bridges allowed the participants in my study to explore what Ermine (2007) refers to as ethical space,

> . . . produced by contrasting perspectives of the world, [and] entertains the notion of a meeting place, or initial thinking about a neutral zone between entities or cultures. The

> space offers a venue to step out of our allegiances, to detach from the cages of our mental worlds and assume a position where human-to-human dialogue can occur. (p. 202)

By considering Ermine's concept of ethical space, I was prompted to reexamine the data, asking myself, "How did these narratives, these un/usual stories and the process of creating them, allow non-Indigenous educators and Indigenous youth to transcend the walls of the colonial fort, shift teacher horizons and engage in ethical space?" Through contemplating this question, I developed a model (Figure 10) to visually represent the process I observed in my role as teacher-researcher and then saw reflected back to me through the words and digital narratives of the study's participants.

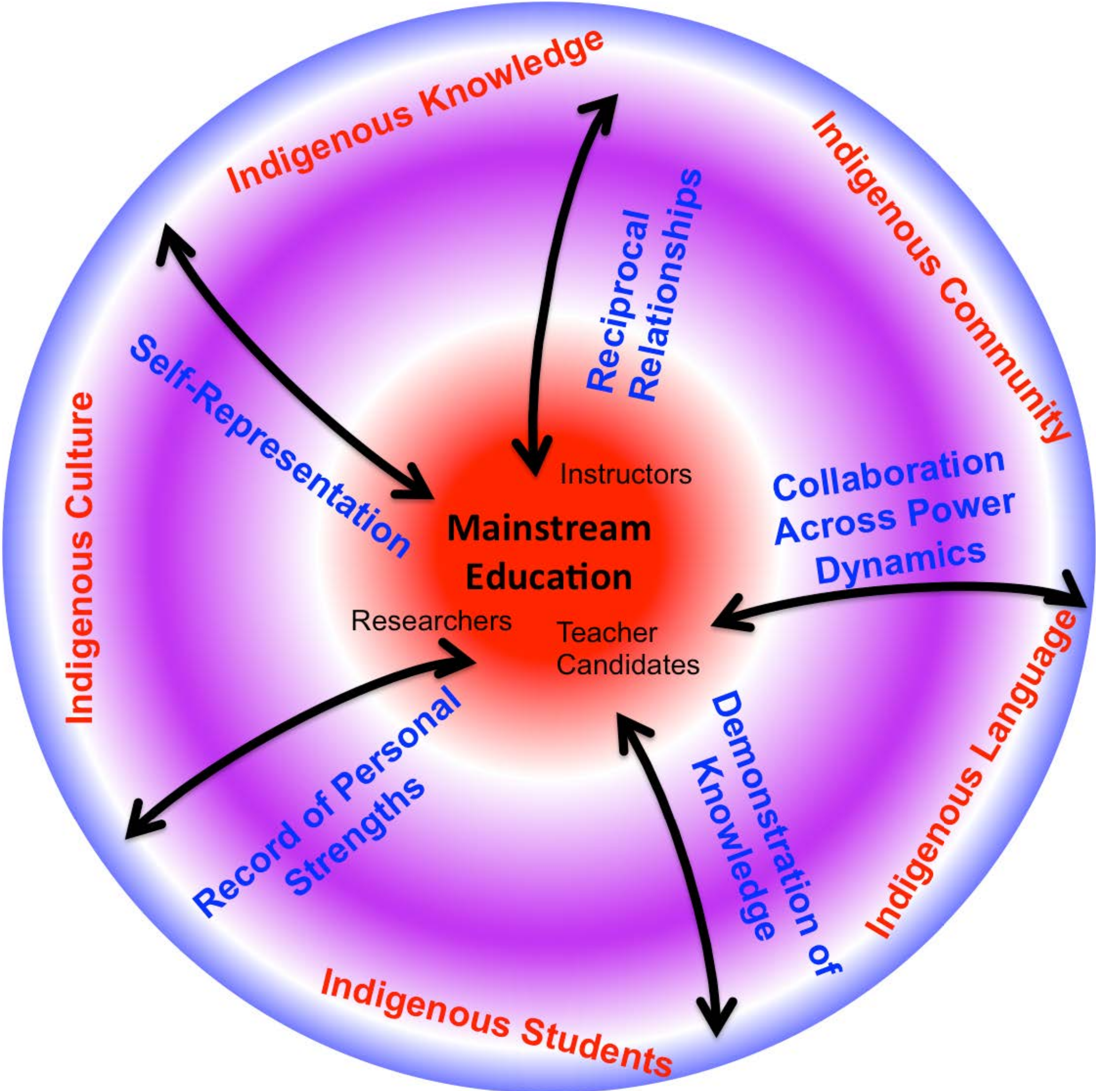

Figure 10: The visual model I developed to illustrate how digital narratives were used in this project to breakdown colonial fort logics in education.

In my model, mainstream education is located within the fort walls (represented by the red area). In this central area the teacher candidates, the instructors and myself are firmly located as settler-Canadians. The Indigenous students can be found marginalized to the outskirts of the model by colonial education practices replicated over many years (shown in blue). The space between the center and the margins represents Ermine's (2007) ethical space and is shown in

purple. Five bridges are depicted traversing the ethical space and connecting mainstream education and the Indigenous students on the outskirts. Each of these bridges signifies one of the pathways that developed during the creation and viewing of the youths' digital narratives, which include; collaboration, reciprocal relationship, self-representation, demonstration of knowledge, and record of strengths.

Through further discussion and examination of this model, I will answer my research questions: **How can non-Indigenous teachers use multimedia expression to shift their horizons in order to better understand and support the resilient identities and academic potential of Indigenous youth**? **And, what can these youth teach these educators about Indigenous identity and self-determination in school and Canadian society?**

How Can Non-Indigenous Teachers use Multimedia Expressions to Shift Their Horizons?

The perspectives of the teacher candidates involved in this study prove most powerful in understanding how digital narratives can alter the horizons of settler-educators, allowing them to better understand and support the unique identities and potential of Indigenous students. In this study, the altering of horizons was influenced by several of the bridges or pathways in my model. It is best exemplified by the experiences of the teacher candidates Stacy and Amy. Prior to the commencement of this study these pre-service teachers had the least amount of experience working with Indigenous youth and communities. In their reflections, both pre-service teachers commented on their insecurities leading into the study. They had been unsure about how to act around the Indigenous youth. Much of this apprehension was based on stereotyped information they had heard about working with First Nations students. For example, Amy had expected the students to be reserved and shy. During the six-week project, these teacher candidates remarked

on how important it was to collaborate with the high school students, that having a common goal to work on (the production of iMovies) allowed some of the tension to be removed from the situation. In this relaxed environment, the teacher candidates and Indigenous youth were then able to use the iPads as a tool for sharing life histories. Relationships founded in mutual understanding and based on reciprocation could then be nurtured between the participants as they created and shared alongside each other.

The importance of these two pathways, reciprocal relationships and collaboration across power dynamics, cannot be underestimated. Root (2010), Costello (2011), and Goulet (2001) all found that strong relationships between educators, Indigenous students and community was one of the most important factors in determining the extent to which teachers would decolonize their practice. In addition, Luke et al. (2011) found in a large-scale study done in Australia that "teachers with higher self-reported levels of knowledge about and engagement with Indigenous communities and cultures are more likely to report that they are teaching Indigenous topics and knowledge in the classroom" (p. 15).

It is logical that these shifts in practice are representative of concurrent shifts in settler-teacher horizons. Developing meaningful relationships with students, family, and community provides insights that can allow teachers to create their own counter stories or un/usual narratives, similar to the processes described by Tupper and Cappello (2008), Strong-Wilson (2007) and Dion (2007). It therefore seems that relationships, such as those developed between Stacy, Amy and the Indigenous student participants, can become the foundation for responsive educational practice in the classroom.

In particular, the digital narratives produced by Indigenous youth provided an especially powerful type of un/usual narrative as they enhanced the non-Indigenous educators' abilities to

understand both the academic and personal strengths of these students. In the model, the bridges labeled "record of personal strengths" and "demonstration of knowledge" represent these pathways. The teacher candidates, instructors, and myself, the teacher-researcher, all reflected on the ability of the students' iMovies to bring to our attention the extent of student learning that had occurred during the dogsledding unit. For many participants, such as Peter the dogsledding instructor, the degree of learning engaged in by the students was unknown until viewing the final iMovie products. In addition to bringing to light this academic potential, these narratives allowed windows into the interests and values of the students; knowledge that I, as a teacher-researcher, applied to support these students in the classroom. In addition, working along side these youth highlighted their ability to adapt to and use twenty-first century technology, emphasizing that while Indigenous youth may draw strength from community and tradition, they can also flourish when digital-based approaches are used in the classroom.

Along my own journey of decolonization I have found that opportunities to learn directly from Indigenous peoples about their life's un/usual narratives has created the largest shifts in my personal horizon. This has happened in many ways; a young Oji-Cree girl sharing with me her knowledge of fishing, a Kookum (Grandmother) describing the ways in which she supports her granddaughters' needs, or simply hearing a funny story at a friend's kitchen table over a warm cup of coffee. I realize that the opportunities to hear these spontaneous narratives have only come after years of building authentic and meaningful relationship within Indigenous community. At the very beginning of this research journey I asked, "how can I help shift the horizons of other non-Indigenous teachers who have not had the same opportunities to engage in diverse and rich lived experiences with Indigenous community?" For most settler-Canadian teachers these opportunities will never naturally unfold. Creating space where teachers can

collaborate to reciprocate the sharing of life histories and deeply listen to the strengths and insights of students is essential. These acts can help educators to recognize the resilient identities and unique sources of strength Indigenous students bring to the classroom so we can move forward in nourishing the learning spirit of Indigenous students (Battiste, 2013).

What can Youth Teach Educators about Indigenous Identity and Self-Determination?

The work of Parent (2011) and Hare and Pidgeon (2011) demonstrate that many Indigenous youth recognize that their communities and culture represent unique aspects of their identity, and that these are often not acknowledged within the education system. The youth in both these studies were seeking to be heard by educators, but left feeling like their attempts had failed. In my model, the bridge of self-representation reveals the successes in using digital narratives as a tool for Indigenous youth to frame and bring forward their perspectives in the classroom. While the digital narratives in this project were focused on a specialized dogsledding unit, similar processes could be applied with other curriculum content to achieve similar decolonizing goals.

For most students in this study, digital narratives were viewed as being a means to enhance their self-expression. Both Tara and Dave commented on how the multi-modal nature of iMovies made it easier for them to communicate their message to a viewer. This is consistent with the findings of Wexler et al. (2014) who found that digital storytelling with Aboriginal youth in Alaska enabled viewers to better understand the perspectives and experiences of Alaskan young people.

Furthermore, although at times it proved challenging to the academic aims of the project, digital narratives created opportunities for youth to be selective about what aspects of their

perspective and life-history they were willing to share. For some, the iMovies became tools to show personal images of friends, family members, and favorite pastimes. Other students reserved the right to keep these details private from the viewer. This degree of self-determination is something that is difficult to achieve in other, more traditional paper and pencil based assessment strategies. Implementing digital narratives as an instructional tool requires educators to let go of some degree of control within the classroom. Teachers must become open to the flexibility offered by these tools. This is reflected in the work of Couros et al. (2013) who found in their study, which used iMovies as a means for teaching treaty education, that the researchers had to widen their understanding of they types of stories students might choose to share. Couros et al. state:

> The research team has also witnessed (and recorded) students telling meaningful stories that evolve from their lived experiences (pertaining to powwows, visitations with elders, cultural practices and white privilege) and collectively has become more comfortable with students telling the stories they want to tell . . . we enter into stories on our terms and choose what resonates with us. (p. 553)

It seems that if educators are to allow Indigenous students to self-determine their own representation in school then we must be willing to accept that the diversity of culture, community, family, language and lived experience possessed by these students will be reflected in the diversity of narratives that they produce and elect to share.

Through these digital narratives the Indigenous youth were able to teach us, the settler educators, that they were strong, multidimensional individuals. They demonstrated that they drew strength from their communities and families, and excelled when given twenty-first century technology. They taught us, the educators, that they were in control of their perspectives and

personal histories. That in education, it is important to make space and facilitate ways for these young people to share aspects of their unique identities with us, but that ultimately, they must be allowed to self-determine when, how and to what extent they are willing to share.

Finally, my personal observations allowed me to realize that this sharing cannot happen in one direction. It must occur bi-directionally, from student to teacher, but also from teacher to student. We cannot be passive consumers of Indigenous student identity while remaining at a safe distance of professional anonymity. It is vital that settler educators communicate to their students who they are, where they come from, and that they are invested in the success of the students.

Proceeding with Hope: Many Small Scale Shifts can lead to Systemic Change

It can be easy to become wrapped up in the small world of academic research, to narrow the world until it fits into the pages of a master's thesis, yet to do so is to become blind and that can be dangerous. It is dangerous because an academic treatment can sometimes simplify the lives of participants, attempt to reduce complex issues, and pose solutions that do not reflect the multidimensional nature of the lived experiences of the study participants. Looking through my research journal, I came across the following excerpt (personal field notes, February 2014):

> As I write this, I reflect back on the experience at the Healthy Minds sharing circle where Tara talked about having water bottles thrown at her as she walked down the sidewalk in the city and Evan described having insults hurled at him from passing cars. These young First Nations students have learned to deal with these types of situations. In an attempt to normalize the racism, they laugh it off and avoid confrontation. These are the lessons Indigenous youth are taught by the curriculum of life. This is then reinforced by a school

> curriculum that ignores Indigenous perspectives, voices, and contributions to Canadian society. In contrast, I really feel as though the time we have spent in the classroom during this project has nurtured a spirit of togetherness and collaboration.

This passage served to remind me of the realities of daily life for most Indigenous students in mainstream Canadian society. The challenges and barriers that Indigenous youth face in urban centers due to their distinct cultures and racialized appearance are very real. The need for educational approaches that center the experiences of Indigenous students and highlight their cultural strengths as important and validated are essential as we look to reimagine a Canada that is just and inclusive for all, especially FNMI First Peoples.

In light of this, I realize that the insights that I can offer in this research are limited in scope and impact. The six educators involved in the study are among the very few in Canadian schools who already have a strong understanding, invested commitment and relationship with Indigenous community and culture. The pre-service teachers had self-selected to be in the specialized ED4000 Honours course designed to focus on Indigenous perspectives and practices in education (and at the time of this study, they had already completed more than half of the course). Another small impact was the number of Indigenous student participants of 6 students. The nature of the project, a culminating task on dogsledding, was quite specific, unique and expensive for ongoing inclusion and sustainability as curriculum. There is certainly a need and justification to explore the effectiveness of digital narratives with less experienced teachers and with alternative courses and assignment designs; however, this study does not represent a significant step in changing conditions for Indigenous students in most mainstream educational settings. It represents one of many possible ways to initiate small-scale shifts in decolonizing

education, including teacher education, and a small attempt to chip away at the walls of mainstream education's colonial fort logics and expand all of our horizons.

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Appendix A

Canadian Council on Learning's FNMI Lifelong Learning Models

Figure 9: **Métis Holistic Lifelong Learning Model**

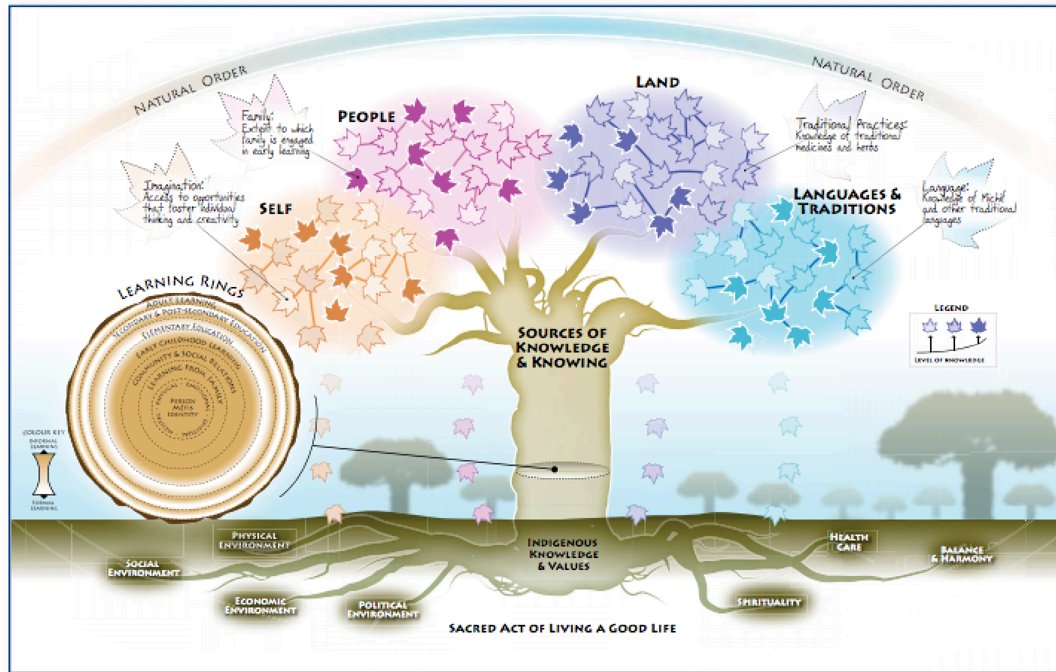


Figure 8: **Inuit Holistic Lifelong Learning Model**

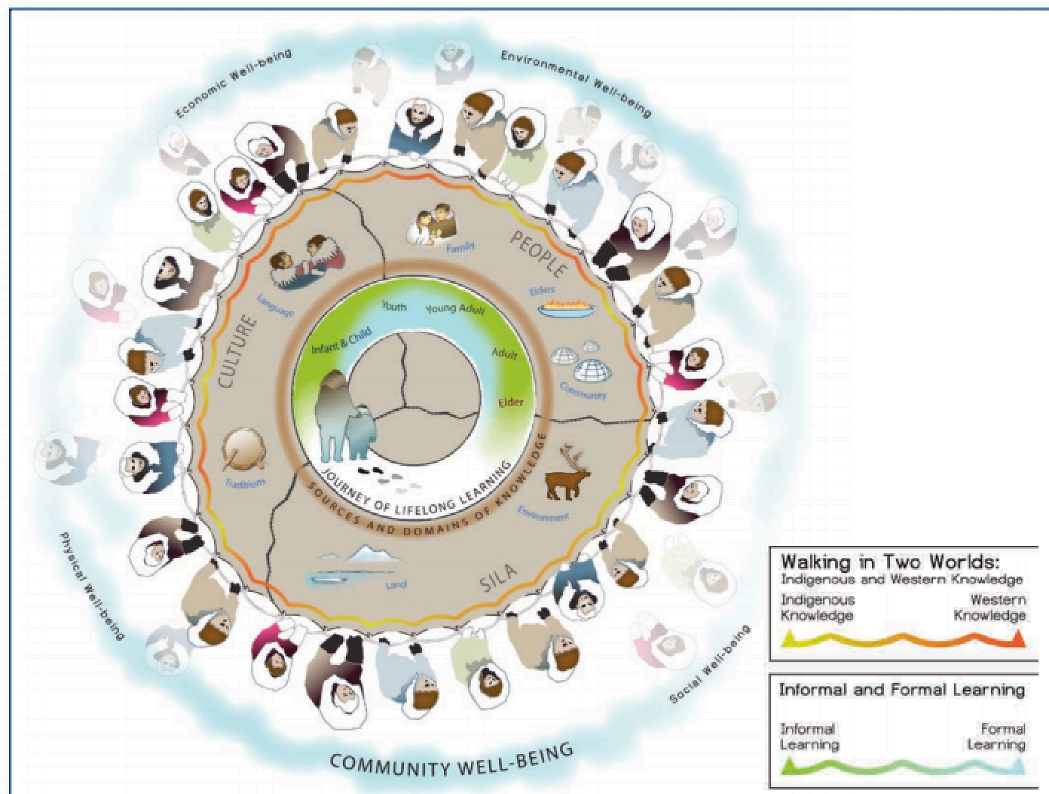
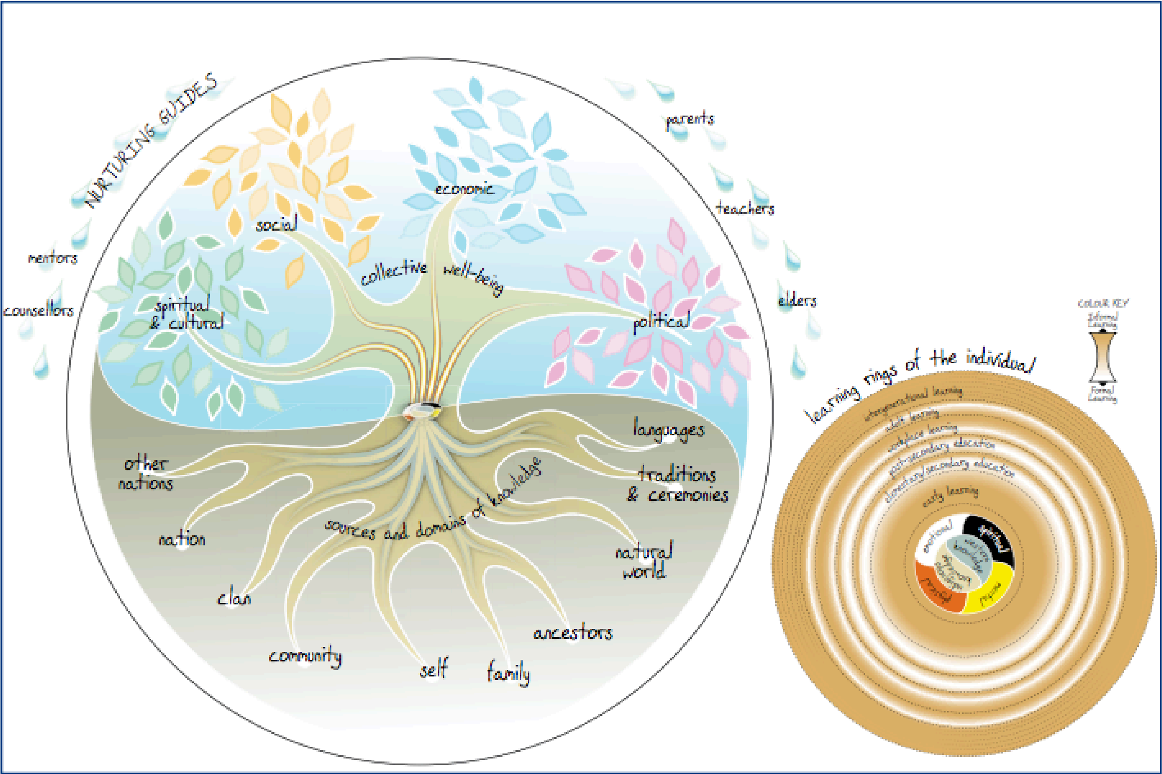


Figure 7: **First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model**



Appendix B

Principal Information Letter and Consent Form

(For the Principal of the First Nations High School)
Arts-Based Expressions of Identity as a Tool for Resilient Education
Research Study
An invitation to participate

Dear Principal,

Ms. Alex Bissell (LU graduate student) and her supervisor Dr. Lisa Korteweg (LU faculty) would like to invite you and your school, First Nations High School, to participate in our research study entitled "Arts-based expression of identity as a tool for resilient education: Building understanding between non-Indigenous teachers and Indigenous students". The purpose of this study is to contribute to the provision of quality education to Indigenous students by assisting students in portraying their perspectives, experiences and strengths through the use of iPad technology. In particular, the study aims to provide new pathways for Indigenous students' strengths and for strong relationships of respect and understanding between non-Indigenous teachers and Indigenous students.

You are invited to participate

The participating First Nations High School class will engage in a six-week unit, which will include weekly land-based activities (dog-sledding) and the creation of multimedia (imovie) projects using iPads. Participating students and teachers will be invited to share their experiences with the researchers. There are no anticipated risks for teachers and students who participate in this study. Anticipated direct benefits include the curriculum planning of an iPad integration project with land-based (dog-sledding) activities and the provision of volunteers to help with the delivery of this curriculum and projects.

The researchers would like to respectfully request to consult with you when students are under the age of sixteen and wish to participate in this study. As you hold the role of "locus parentis" for these students, it is necessary that your consent be sought in order to ensure student participation (minors) is authorized by a guardian and with consent.

All comments by participants will remain confidential and will only be transcribed or disseminated in anonymous form. Data from this study will be securely stored for five years at Lakehead University.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Alex Bissell at aebissel@lakeheadu.ca or Dr. Korteweg at 343-8174 or by email at lisa.korteweg@lakeheadu.ca. The researchers will contact you after the completion of their study to share their results with you and your school. This research has been approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of this study and would like to speak to someone outside the research team, please contact the Research Ethics Board at 807-343-8283.

(For the Principal)

Arts-Based Expressions of Identity as a Tool for Resilient Education
Research Study

Consent Form for the Principal of First Nations High School

My signature on this sheet indicates that I agree to allow Ms. Alex Bissell (graduate student) and her supervisor, Dr. Lisa Korteweg, both of Lakehead University, access and participation in a classroom as a research site for their study entitled "Arts-based expression of identity as a tool for resilient education: Building understanding between non-Indigenous teachers and Indigenous students."
It also indicates that I understand the following:

- I have read and understood the information letter for the study.
- I agree to the access to the First Nations High School as a research site.
- I agree to act as "locus parentis" and give parental consent for any students who are sixteen years of age or younger and who wish to participate in this study.
- I understand the potential risks and/or benefits of the study.
- I understand that I may request that the research study stop collecting data at the First Nations High School at any time.
- The data provided by students and teachers will be securely stored at Lakehead University for five years.
- I understand I can request a copy of the research findings from Ms. Alex Bissell at aebissel@lakeheadu.ca or Dr. Lisa Korteweg at lisa.korteweg@lakeheadu.ca.
- Students and teachers participating in this study remain anonymous or only identified by a pseudonym in publications, reports or research dissemination.
- I understand that all comments made by teachers and students during the research sessions are confidential and will only be presented and transcribed in anonymous form.

Name (print) Position/Title

School School Board

Signature ___________________________________ Date ___________________________________

Thank you for participating in this study.

Appendix C

Information and Consent Form for Teacher Participants

Arts-Based Expressions of Identity as a Tool for Resilient Education
Research Study
An invitation to participate

About the Study

Ms. Alex Bissell (graduate student LU) and her supervisor Dr. Lisa Korteweg (LU), are conducting a study entitled "Arts-based expression of identity as a tool for resilient education: Building understanding between non-Indigenous teachers and Indigenous students". The purpose of this research is to contribute to the provision of quality education to urban Indigenous students by assisting in the development and implementation of experiential land-based learning opportunities, and to aid students in portraying their perspectives and experiences through the use of iPad technology. The research is voluntary, participatory and action-oriented. It aims to provide knowledge about the strengths and challenges associated with culturally responsive urban Indigenous education and provides new pathways for developing strong relationships of respect and understanding between non-Indigenous teachers and Indigenous students. Relevant data will be collected, coded, analyzed and summarized for research dissemination. Representations of the research will include articles, academic presentations, workshops and graduate student theses.

You are invited to participate

You are a critical source of information for this study with valuable insights on the value of using experiential learning and multimedia student representations with Indigenous students. Your participation is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate in any part of the study until anonymization and analysis of the data. Further, you may decline to answer any questions during the study. There are no foreseeable risks, harms or inconveniences. And there are no direct benefits, other than any professional development that may occur through sharing of information about Indigenous education strategies and the arrangement of volunteers to assist in class activities. A summary of the research results may be obtained by contacting Ms. Alex Bissell or Dr. Lisa Korteweg. Contact information is provided below.

Your participation in the study will consist of informal meetings and email correspondence to plan and arrange the land-based learning activities and student multimedia projects. For six weeks, you and your students will engage in land-based activities during one afternoon/week and work on creating multimedia projects using iPads during another afternoon/week. There will be one interview session at the conclusion of the project to inquire as to your assessment of the effectiveness of the project and gain your feedback.

All comments by participants are confidential and will only be transcribed or disseminated in anonymous form. Data from this study will be securely stored for five years at Lakehead University.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Alex Bissell at aebissel@lakeheadu.ca or Dr. Korteweg at 343-8174 or by email at lisa.korteweg@lakeheadu.ca . This research has been approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of this study and would like to speak to someone outside the research team, please contact the Research Ethics Board at

807-343-8283.

(For teacher participants)

Arts-Based Expressions of Identity as a Tool for Resilient Education
Research Study

Consent Form for Teacher Participants

My signature on this sheet indicates that I agree to participate in a study by graduate student Ms. Alex Bissell and supervisor Dr. Lisa Korteweg (LU) of Lakehead University, entitled "Arts-based expression of identity as a tool for resilient education: Building understanding between non-Indigenous teachers and Indigenous students." It also indicates that I understand the following:

- I have read and understood the information letter for the study.
- I agree to participate.
- I understand the potential risks and/or benefits of the study, and what those are.
- I understand that I am a volunteer and can withdraw from the study at any time, up until the anonymization and analysis of the data.
- The data I provide will be securely stored at Lakehead University for five years.
- I understand I can request a copy of the research findings from Ms. Alex Bissell at aebissel@lakeheadu.ca or Dr. Lisa Korteweg at lisa.korteweg@lakeheadu.ca.
- I will remain anonymous or only identified by a pseudonym in publications, reports or research dissemination.
- I understand that all my comments in research sessions are confidential and will only be presented and transcribed in anonymous form.

Participant (please print) ______________________ Position/Title ______________________

School: First Nations High School

School Board: First Nations Education Council

Signature ______________________ Date ______________________

Thank you for participating in this study.

Appendix D

Information Letter and Consent Form for Pre-Service Teacher Participants

Arts-Based Expressions of Identity as a Tool for Resilient Education
Research Study
An invitation to participate

About the Study

Ms. Alex Bissell (graduate student LU) and her supervisor Dr. Lisa Korteweg (LU), are conducting a study entitled “Arts-based expression of identity as a tool for resilient education: Building understanding between non-Indigenous teachers and Indigenous students”. The purpose of this research is to contribute to the provision of quality education to urban Indigenous students by assisting in the development and implementation of experiential land-based learning opportunities, and to aid students in portraying their perspectives and experiences through the use of iPad technology. The research is voluntary, participatory and action-oriented. It aims to provide knowledge about the strengths and challenges associated with culturally responsive urban Indigenous education and provide new pathways for developing strong relationships of respect and understanding between non-Indigenous teachers and Indigenous students. Relevant data will be collected, coded, analyzed and summarized for research dissemination. Representations of the research will include articles, academic presentations, workshops and graduate student theses.

You are invited to participate

You are a critical source of information for this study. Your participation is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate in any part of the study until anonymization and analysis of the data. Further, you may decline to answer any questions during the study. There are no foreseeable risks, harms or inconveniences. And there are no direct benefits, other than additional professional development that may occur through sharing of information about Indigenous education strategies and the opportunity to complete informal placement hours required for the course, ED4000 (Indigenized Education). A summary of the research results may be obtained by contacting Ms. Alex Bissell or Dr. Lisa Korteweg. Contact information is provided below.

Your participation in the study will consist of 1) working with Indigenous high school students by assisting with the delivery of land-based learning activities and/or the creation of multimedia projects; 2) allowing the researchers to access your ED4000 informal placement reflections and reports; 3) participating in one interview session of 20-60 (max.) minutes. **Your participation in the study will not be revealed to the instructor-researcher, Dr. Lisa Korteweg. It will, however, be necessary for graduate assistant and researcher, Ms. Alex Bissell, to have knowledge of participant identities in order to conduct the research (e.g., interviews). Ms. Bissell will collect your consent forms and your identity will not be revealed to Dr. Korteweg (course instructor) until after final grades for ED4000 have been submitted.** Once you have given consent to participate in this study, Ms. Alex Bissell will not assess any ED4000 course work you submit in her role as a graduate assistant. All comments by participants are confidential and will only be transcribed or disseminated in anonymous form. Data from this study will be securely stored for five years at Lakehead University.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Alex Bissell at aebissel@lakeheadu.ca or Dr. Korteweg at 343-8174 or by email at

lisa.korteweg@lakeheadu.ca . This research has been approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of this study and would like to speak to someone outside the research team, please contact the Research Ethics Board at 807-343-8283.

(For pre-service teacher participants)

Arts-Based Expressions of Identity as a Tool for Resilient Education Research Study

Consent Form for Pre-Service Teacher Participants

My signature on this sheet indicates that I agree to participate in a study by graduate student Ms. Alex Bissell and supervisor Dr. Lisa Korteweg (LU) of Lakehead University, entitled "Arts-based expression of identity as a tool for resilient education: Building understanding between non-Indigenous teachers and Indigenous students." It also indicates that I understand the following:

- I have read and understood the information letter for the study.
- I agree to participate.
- I understand the potential risks and/or benefits of the study, and what those are.
- I understand that I am a volunteer and can withdraw from the study at any time, up until the anonymization and analysis of the data.
- The data I provide will be securely stored at Lakehead University for five years.
- I understand I can request a copy of the research findings from Ms. Alex Bissell at aebissel@lakeheadu.ca or Dr. Lisa Korteweg at lisa.korteweg@lakeheadu.ca.
- I will remain anonymous or only identified by a pseudonym in publications, reports or research dissemination.
- I understand that all my comments in research sessions are confidential and will only be presented and transcribed in anonymous form.

Participant's Name (please print) ______________________

Email Contact (most regular-after April 2014) ______________________

Phone Contact (most regular-after April 2014) ______________________

Student Number ______________________

Signature ______________________

Date ______________________

Thank you for participating in this study.

Appendix E

Information and Consent From for Indigenous Student Participants

An invitation to participate for Indigenous high school students – Script

An oral script is being used as a culturally responsive procedure in accordance with TCPS2 Article 3.12, and as outlined in the research ethics application. Copies of the script—as written hardcopies of the information-- will be left with the classroom teacher and available to students at any time upon request.

Arts-Based Expressions of Identity as a Tool for Resilient Education Research Study

About the Study

Ms. Alex Bissell (graduate student, LU) and Dr. Lisa Korteweg (LU) are conducting a study called "Arts-based expression of identity as a tool for resilient education: Building understanding between non-Indigenous teachers and Indigenous students". We want to find ways of helping teachers create fun and interesting ways for Indigenous students to learn. We are especially interested in finding ways to include outdoor and hands-on learning activities in school learning. We also want to know if having Indigenous students use iPads to make short videos about themselves and their classroom activities can help teachers understand student's special strengths and identities. When we are finished our study we plan to share the results with researchers at Lakehead University, other universities in Canada, teachers, principals, and school boards. By sharing this information we will help other teachers find new ways of teaching that consider the strengths and identities of Indigenous students.

You are invited to participate

We invite you to participate in our research study. It is your choice to decide if you want to participate or not. If you choose to participate, you will not be asked to do any "extra" work, but you will be giving us permission to include some of your experiences and your classroom work in our study. This information will help us to create presentations, write articles, and papers. You are a very important source of information for our study. You have a unique perspective as an Indigenous student and we would like to learn from you about activities that you think work or don't work.

If you tell us that you want to participate in this study you are able to change your mind later and we will not use any of the information we have collected from you. If you do want to participate but decide you do not want to answer some of the questions that we ask you, that is your choice and there will be no consequences. We do not think that participating in this study will put you at risk of harm of inconvenience. If you would like to see a summary of the research results you can contact us, Ms. Alex Bissell or Dr. Lisa Korteweg. Your teacher will have our contact information.

If you choose to participate in this study you will 1) allow us to see and use a short video you create about your experience dog-sledding or doing other outdoor activities 2) allow us to record

and use your contributions to sharing circles that take place during class time 3) share your experiences participating in outdoor learning activities, such as dog- sledding.

All of your comments will remain confidential. We will not use your name in any of the presentations we give or reports we write. In any notes we take you will not be called by your name. The data we collect from this study will be kept in a locked cabinet in a locked office at Lakehead University for five years, and then it will be destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please do not hesitate to us. Here is our contact information; Ms. Alex Bissell by email at aebissel@lakeheadu.ca, Dr. Korteweg at 343-8174 or by email at lisa.korteweg@lakeheadu.ca . This research has been approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of this study and would like to speak to someone outside the research team, please contact the Research Ethics Board at 807-343-8283.

Oral Script to be used when asking for the informed consent of Indigenous Students.
Oral consent is being used as a culturally responsive procedure in accordance with TCPS2 Article 3.12, and as outlined in the research ethics application.

Arts-Based Expressions of Identity as a Tool for Resilient Education Research Study

We (Ms. Alex Bissell and Dr. Lisa Korteweg) would now like to find out if you would be willing to participate in our study. Before you answer, we would like to review some of the most important information about the study. After each point we will provide give you a chance to ask questions.

- The purpose of the study is to help teachers find ways of teaching that are fun and interesting for Indigenous students and allow Indigenous students to express their ideas and opinions.
- There are no risks or benefits to participating in this study.
- Participating in this study is voluntary. Students are allowed to stop participating any time they chose. Students do not have to answer the questions they are asked by researchers if they do not want to.
- The information collected in this study will be stored securely, in a locked room and cabinet, at Lakehead University for 5 years.
- Students can ask for a copy of research findings by contacting Ms. Alex Bissell at aebissel@lakeheadu.ca or Dr. Lisa Korteweg at lisa.korteweg@lakeheadu.ca.
- The names of students who participate in this student will be kept confidential (a secret). Real names will not be used in publications, reports or presentations.
- Student's photos (face) may be visible and voice may be audible when the results of this study are presented in public.
- Students will co-own any videos or exhibit(s) with the researchers. The researchers will be allowed to display the exhibit for research purposes unless a student tells them they don't want to be a part of the study anymore. The researchers will contact students if they plan public viewings of student exhibits that are large-scale (e.g., TV, film festival) or risky for confidentiality.
- Any comments the students make during the research sessions will be confidential and will only be presented and transcribed in anonymous form (without the students name attached to them).
- If I have questions about the research study I can ask Ms. Alex Bissell by contacting her at aebissel@lakeheadu.ca or I can ask Dr. Lisa Korteweg by contacting her at lisa.korteweg@lakeheadu.ca.

Do you have any other questions about the research study? We will now like to ask you a few questions.

1. Would you like to participate in Ms. Alex Bissell and Dr. Lisa Korteweg's study called "Art-based Expressions of Identity as a Tool for Resilient Education."?
2. Do you understand why Ms. Bissell and Dr. Kortweg are conducting this study and what the participants will be ask to do?
3. Do you understand that you can choose not to answer questions or to stop participating in the study at any time?
4. Do you understand that you can ask your teacher for a letter containing the information about this study that Ms. Alex Bissell and Dr. Lisa Korteweg shared with your class?

This research has been approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of this study and would like to speak to someone outside the research team, please contact the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board at 807-343-8283.

Informed Consent to Share Multimedia Projects

Arts-Based Expressions of Identity as a Tool for Resilient Education Research Study

I agree to allow my project to be used as an example of good work for other Indigenous Students at First Nations High School. I understand that because of the visual/audio content of my multimedia project that it may be impossible to keep my identity hidden from people who view it. I understand that my project will only be shown to other students who will be working on completing similar projects.

Contact: If you have any questions or desire further information about this study, you may contact Ms. Alex Bissell at aebissel@lakeheadu.ca or Dr. Lisa Korteweg (LU) by phone at 807-343-8174 or by email at lisa.korteweg@lakeheadu.ca. This research has been approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of this study and would like to speak to someone outside the research team, please contact the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board at 807-343-8283.

____ _________________________________

Signature of Student Date

At this time Miss Alex Bissell and Dr. Korteweg are not planning to share your multimedia project outside of a research context or through a large media stream (such as television). If, at some point in the future, they wish to share your project with others they will need to ask for your permission.

If you agree to allow Miss Alex Bissell and Dr. Korteweg to contact you at later date to ask for you permission to share your work, please provide an email address they may use to contact you. It is your choice to share your email address with the researchers, you do not have to do so if you do not wish to.

Email Address: ____

Appendix F

Indigenous Student Written Questionnaire

1. Would you like to us iPads in other classes? Why or why not?

2. Do iPad apps (Explain Everything) or iMovie help you show your learning/personality to others in a way that pencil and paper activities can't?

3. Please reflect on the iPad project. What were some highlights? What were come challenging moments?

4. Is there something Alex could have done that would have made this project easier?

5. How do you feel about your finished iMovie? Are you happy with the final product? Why or why not?

6. Are you planning to share your iMovie with anyone? Please explain why or why not. If you plan to share it, who will you show it to?

Appendix G

Guiding Questions for Pre-Service Teacher Interviews

1. How would you describe your experiences of working with the DFC students through this iPad project?

2. Has participating in this study helped you to gain insight into working with Indigenous students? What was challenging? What came easy? What did you enjoy?

3. How do you think working with iPads affected your communication/interaction or engagement with the Indigenous DFC students (or vice versa--how did it effect/impact the students towards you? Did using the iPads help you learn about the identities of these students? What insights into their strengths, personalities, and interests did you gain?

4. What do you think was the result of being given the opportunity to work on your own iMovie projects alongside the students (do you think this facilitated the sharing of knowledge and building or relationships in the classroom?).

5. Please share how participating in this study has, or has not, helped you to better define your identity as a future teacher (especially as a teacher of Indigenous students).

6. Describe a specific moment that occurred during the project that was important in developing your skills as a teacher, building a relationship with student participants, or illuminating your identity as a future teacher.

7. In the future, when you are teaching, would you consider including learning opportunities similar to this project (arts-based multimedia projects) as part of your instruction? Why or why not?

8. Did you have any experiences in this project that you are frustrated by or confused by or stumped by? What work/change/transformation do you think remains in Indigenous education?

Appendix H

Guiding Questions for In-Service Teacher Interviews

1. Briefly outline your teaching history (years working at DFC, prior work experience)

2. How do you describe your self (identity) as a teacher?

    a. As a result of this project do you now identify as an outdoor educator?

3. Why was it important for you to participate in this project?
    a. What were you hoping to get out of it for you and your students?
    b. Why was it important to participate in the Fort William day?

4. How can we draw on Indigenous student identity and cultural knowledge to inform teaching practices?

5. Throughout the course of this study (land-based experiential activities and generation of multimedia projects) did you gain new knowledge or insight about your students? Please elaborate.

    a. Did participation in the land-based activities help you gain insight into student's strengths, personalities and sources of resilience?

    b. Did using the iPads help you learn about the identities of these students? What insights into their strengths, personalities, and interests did you gain?

    c. Can you think of a specific time to illustrate your thoughts?

6. Has participating in this study had any effect on the relationship you have with the students in this course? If "yes", please describe the nature of this change.

    a. What role did land-based activities have in this change?

    b. How do you think working with iPads affected your communication/interaction or engagement your students (or vice versa--how did it effect/impact the students towards you?

    c. What affect (if any) do you think creating and sharing your own iMovies had on the learning environment?

7. How were relationships between the DFC students and with the LU students fostered or developed during the course of the project?
    a. Please consider the role of land-based activities.
    b. What role do you think iPads had in these developments?

8. Do you think you gained any new knowledge or skills that will assist you in implementing effective teaching strategies in the future? Please elaborate.

    a. Would you consider integrating other land-based activities into your future teaching? Why?

    b. Would you consider using iPads technology in the classroom again? Why and how? How comfortable do you feel with this technology?

9. What does reconciliation mean to you as a teacher at DFC?
    a. What do you think it means to your students?
    b. Please describe any connections you feel exist between participation in the land-based activities and reconciliation.

10. How do land-based activities and/or dogsledding effect how you perceive and/or talk about the land? How does participation in land based activities and/or dogsledding effect how students perceive and talk about the land, amongst themselves and with you?

11. What do you think was the most effective/helpful aspect of this project? What did you find challenging or frustrating?

12. If you could add or change aspects of this project or curriculum, how would you alter it and why?

Appendix I

Where I Am From Storyboard

Name:________________________
Date: ________________________

Storyboard: Where I am From iMovie

Goal

The purpose of this project is to create a short movie that could be used to introduce you to a new person. At DFC, the teachers and students come from many different communities. Understanding where we are from can help us build respectful relationships with our peers and teachers.

Skills: Creating a storyboard, saving pictures off the internet, arranging pictures into an iMovie, creating voice recordings to accompany the pictures, developing a complete iMovie.

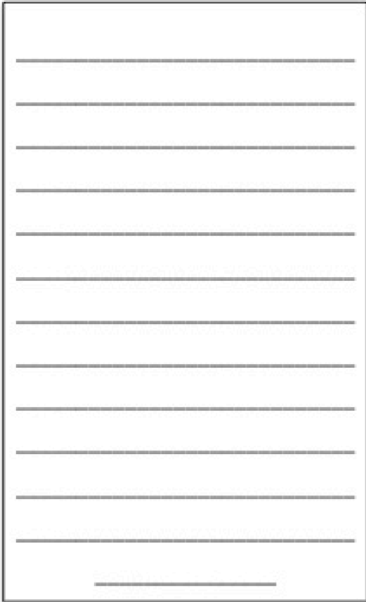
Instructions

Your iMovie will have 6 sections. The first section must introduce you, your personality and your strengths. The last section should give a brief conclusion to the iMovie. Your middle sections will talk about the following four topics. You may choose what order to put them in.

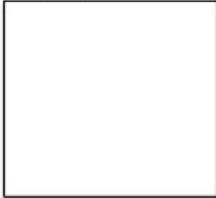
a) Family
b) Other Important People (such as friends or leaders)
c) Land and/or Community
d) Important Activities (arts, sports, fishing, summer job)

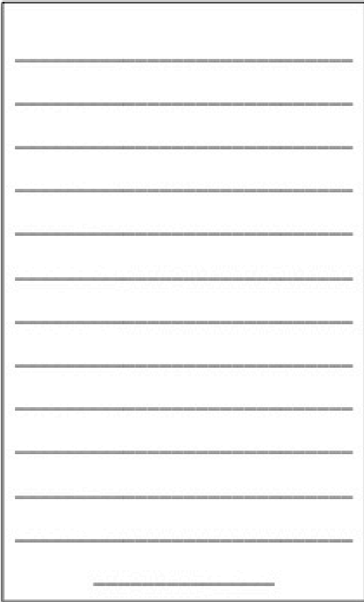
1. Fill in the labels on the storyboard with the section headings in the order you would like them to appear in your iMovie.
2. Write a brief description of what you will say for each section of your iMoive. You can write exactly what you will say in full sentences, or you many choose to write in point form. You will be able to use this part of your storyboard like a script when you create your recordings.
3. In the empty boxes write a brief description, or draw a quick sketch, of type of picture you would like to use for your iMovie. This part of the storyboard will help guide you as you search for images on the internet.

1. Introducing Me

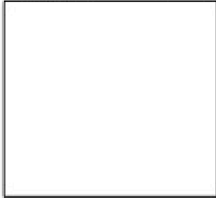


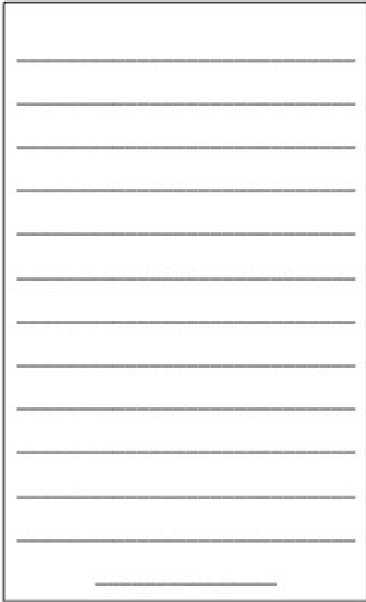
2. ____________________

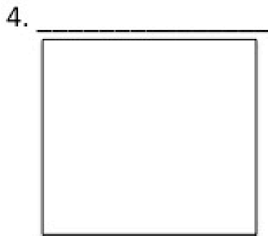


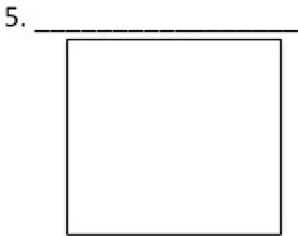


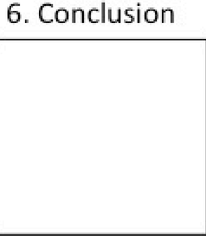
3. ____________________

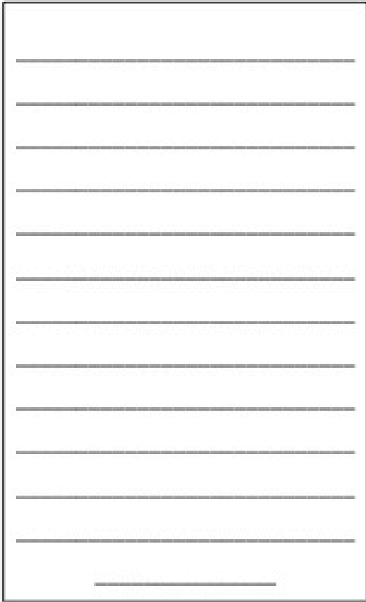


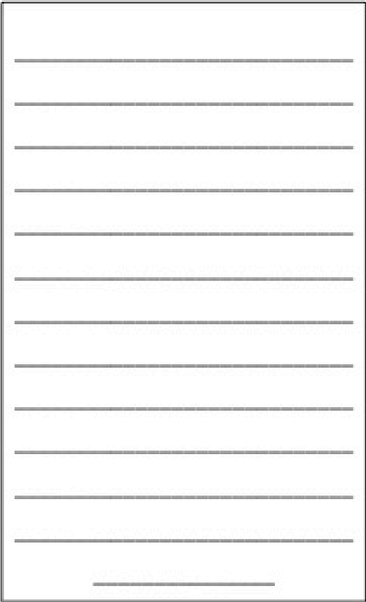



4. ________________


5. ________________


6. Conclusion

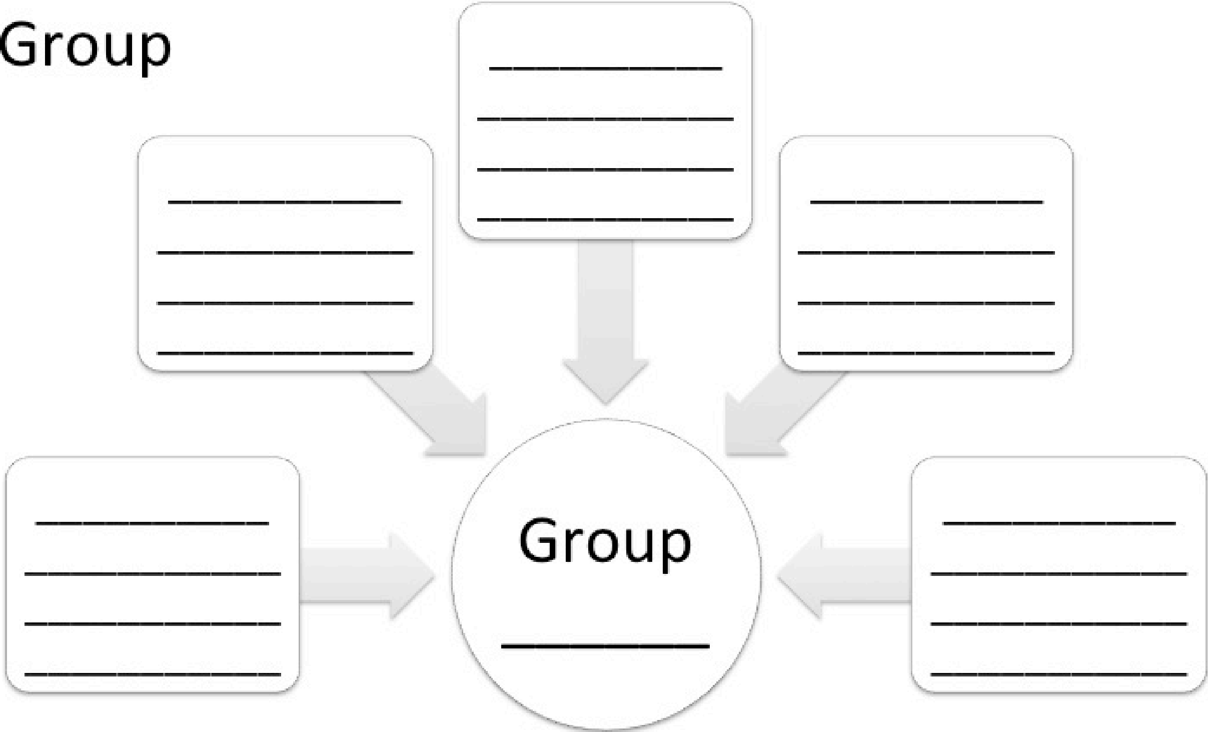


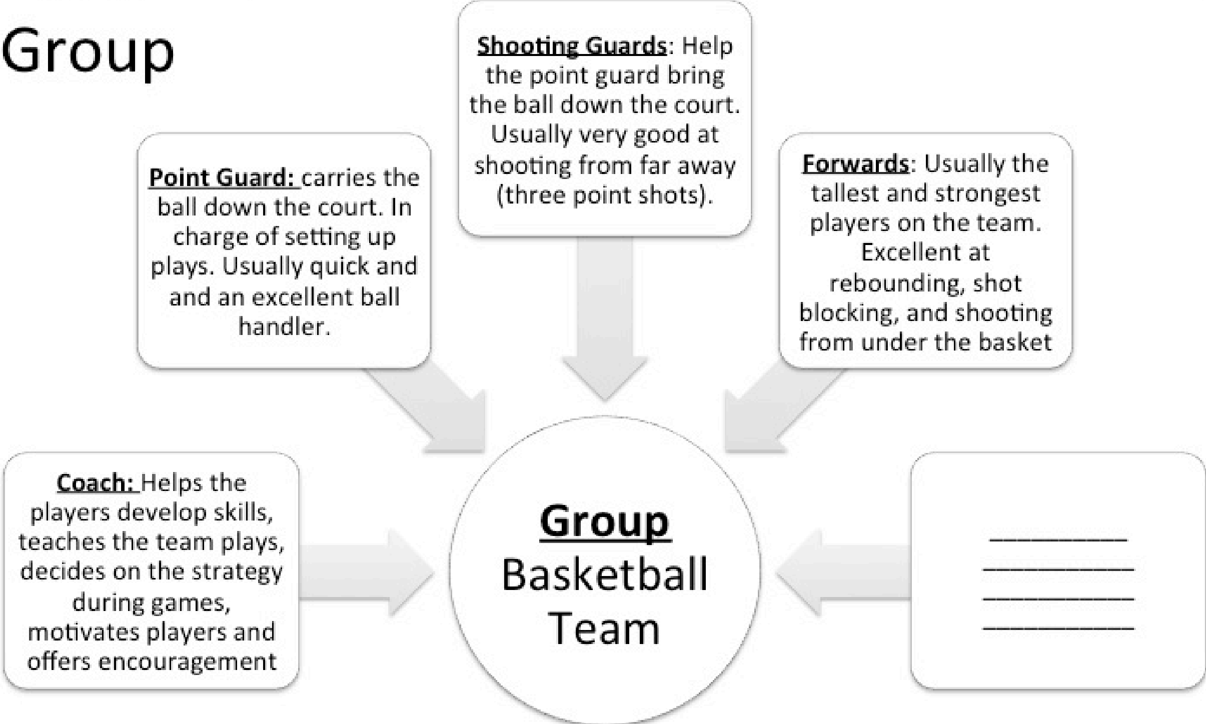


Appendix J

Roles on a Dogsled Team Graphic Organizer

Roles on a Dogsled Team


Roles in a Group
My Role in this Group :
Group


Roles in a Group
My Role in this Group: I played forward. I was good at this position because I am tall, good at boxing out, and able to communicate with the point guards and shooting guards. I felt good about helping my teammates on defense, getting rebounds, and working with my team to play our best.
Shooting Guards: Help the point guard bring the ball down the court. Usually very good at shooting from far away (three point shots).
Point Guard: carries the ball down the court. In charge of setting up plays. Usually quick and and an excellent ball handler.
Forwards: Usually the tallest and strongest players on the team. Excellent at rebounding, shot blocking, and shooting from under the basket
Coach: Helps the players develop skills, teaches the team plays, decides on the strategy during games, motivates players and offers encouragement
Group
Basketball Team

Appendix K

Storyboard for final iMovie

Page 1

My Dogsledding iMovie Storyboard

Name: _______________

Introducing Me

My name is: _______________

I am from: _______________

I am good at: _______________

____

____

I am (personal characteristics):

____

____

Introducing You Dog

Describe Your Dog:

____

____

____

How are you similar/different?

____

____

____

Building Relationships

I earned my dogs trust by:

____

____

I care for my dog by:

____

____

We work well together because:

____

I will be able to use apply what I have learned about relationships when…

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

Positions on a Dogsled Team

Another Example of a time when I have worked as part of a team/group

Page 2 | My Dogsledding iMovie Storyboard | Name: ________________

Being a Leader Skills Needed to Drive a Dogsled	How it feels to be a leader when dogsledding	I can apply the leadership skills I have gained when….
________________	________________	________________

Reflecting on Your Experience My Favorite Memories are…	What I enjoyed most about dogsledding is…. ________________ Other people should try dogsledding because….	Anything else you want to add! • Important lessons • How you will apply what you learned in your life • "Thank You"s
________________	________________	________________

Appendix L

Success Criteria for Final iMovie

Components to a Completed iMovie

Before you had in your iMovie, watch it one last time, going through the checklist to make sure you have added all the important components.

In my iMovie I have…

1. **Introduced myself** ☐
    a. Where are you from, what activities do you enjoy doing, what are some of your strengths?

2. **Introduced my dog** ☐
    a. What is their name, positions and character traits
    b. Why did you choose this dog?
    c. How are you similar or different?

3. **Explained how I built a relationship with my dog** ☐
    a. How have you earned their trust?
    b. How do you care for your dog?
    c. Why do you and your dog work well together?
    d. What has working with your dog taught you about other relationships?
    e. Give an example of a time when you will be able to apply this knowledge

4. **Explained the roles on a dogsled team** ☐
    a. Positions on a dogsled team.
    b. Connected this knowledge to working in a different group/team.

5. **Described my role as a leader** ☐

   a. What skills do you need to drive a dogsled?
   b. What is like to be in charge of driving the sled?
   c. How did you make sure that your passengers enjoy their ride and stay safe?
   d. Gave an example of another situation where you act as a leader. How is it similar or different than being a leader with the dogsled?

6. **Reflected on my dogsledding experience** ☐
   a. What are some favorite memories?
   b. What did you enjoy most about dogsledding?
   c. Why should, or shouldn't other people try dogsledding?
   d. Any other information you think is important

7. **Created an iMove that is interesting to watch** ☐
   a. You included pictures
   b. You included videos
   c. You used titles and subtitles
   d. Used a theme and added some sound effects, music, and/or audio recordings

8. **I have a finished storyboard to hand in with my iMove** ☐

Appendix M

Lesson Plans

iPad Integration Project

Date: Monday Feb 3rd, 2014 **Prepared By: Alex Bissell**	**Course:** Healthy Active Living Education, Grade 11, Open, PPL3O	**Instructors/Facilitators:** Classroom Teacher Alex Bissell (MEd, LU) BEd Students (ED 400)
Lesson Title: Where are you From?		
Overall Expectations **LSV.03** · Demonstrate the social skills required to work effectively in groups and develop positive relationships with their peers. **HLV.03** · Describe the influence of mental health on overall well-being.		
Specific Expectations: **HL3.02 –** Demonstrate the skills that enhance personal mental health (e.g., coping strategies for stress management); **LS3.04 –** Explain their contribution to the maintenance of positive peer relationships. **LS3.01 –** Explain aspects of the process of group dynamics (e.g., organizational culture, stages of group development, characteristics of the group, function of the group);		
Other Learning Goals: Work towards a safe and respectful learning environment Build skills for producing iMovies. This will include: - Use a storyboard to plan an iMovie - Save images from the internet into the camera roll - Create a new iMovie project - Download images and arrange in the iMovie timeline - Record audio clips with iMovie, insert and arrange the audio clips in the timeline - Edit and produce a finished iMovie project		
Background - The medicine wheel is not traditional to Nishnawbe Aski culture, the Circle of Life used in this lesson comes from the works of Roy Thomas, who was a local Anishinaabe artist. - Some of the students in this class may have never used an iPad before. There is a cart at the school, but according to the teacher it is not often used. Many of these students are coming from small communities in NAN and there school's may not have had many resources - Ensure students understand that when they are talking about family they do not have to just speak about parents and siblings, encourage them to talk about		

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">whomever is most important in their live (Kookum, Moshum, aunties, cousins)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Materials:
- Food
- iPads
- Wireless internet connection
- Student handout (storyboard and instructions)
- iPad sign out sheet</td><td>Student Groupings:
- To be determined
- Students will be organized in pairs. Each pair will work with an IPPE student to provide support and guidance.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Activity:
1. Share food with students in order to develop community and show appreciation for being welcomed into the classroom.
2. Introduce myself (using a Where I am From iMovie that I have created to mirror the project students will be working on in this lesson). I will also provide a brief summary of some of my teaching experience and what I am doing now (working towards a MEd)
3. Each of the IPPE pre-service teachers will provide a brief introduction focusing on where they are from.
4. Go over oral consent information and protocol. I will explain to students that I am hoping to use the iPad integration project as part of my research. It is the student's individual choice if they wish to participate and I will ask them personally when each iMovie project has been completed if they are willing to allow me to use their work in my research. Students who choose to participate will not be asked to do any extra work. Students can choose to withdraw at any time with no consequences.
5. Introduce the iMovie project "Where I am From". I will hand out storyboard instructions and worksheets.
6. Students will organized themselves into pairs and a pre-service teacher will work with each pair to provide support as students work for the rest of the period. Pre-service teachers can fill various roles, provide support during brainstorming, act as scribes etc.
7. As students finish their storyboards iPads will be assigned and I will explain that each week we will be using the iPads to develop iMovies. Students will be assigned the same iPad each week so their work will remain confidential unless they choose to share it with the class.
8. I will instruct students on how to save images off of the Internet onto the camera roll.
9. Allow some time for students to save a few pictures (corresponding to their storyboard). I will then demonstrate how to start a new iMovie project and arrange the saved images into the iMovie timeline.
10. Allow time for students to experiment with arranging images in iMovie.
11. Instruct students on how to create audio recordings in iMovie and edit pictures to correspond with the length of the voiceovers.
12. If time allows, students will be able to play with the theme, background music, and title functions in iMove.
13. Interested students will have an opportunity to share their iMovies with the class.
14. As students are finishing their projects I will ask for oral consent to use their iMovies in my research.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Assessment:
No formal assessment for this lesson.
Students should be able to produce an iMovie by the end of the lesson. Ability to meet this expectation will be informally monitored (by pre-service teachers) and noted by the instructor in order to provide needed support/increased challenge for next week's lesson.</td></tr>
</table>

Reflection:
There were some technical difficulties connecting to the internet. This slowed the pace of the lesson and students did not fully complete their iMovies. Students also had a lot of difficulty filling out their storyboards, more support is needed to help them come up with descriptors of the various sections of their iMoves.

Next lesson students will continue to work on this iMovie project. I will include some activities/examples that might help them complete their storyboard planning.

iPad Integration Project

Date: Tuesday Feb 18th, 2014 **Prepared By: Alex Bissell**	**Course:** Healthy Active Living Education, Grade 11, Open, PPL3O	**Instructors/Facilitators:**

Lesson Title: Where are you From? (lesson 2)

Overall Expectations:
LSV.03 · Demonstrate the social skills required to work effectively in groups and develop positive relationships with their peers.
HLV.03 · Describe the influence of mental health on overall well-being.

Specific Expectations:
HL3.02 – Demonstrate the skills that enhance personal mental health (e.g., coping strategies for stress management);
LS3.04 – Explain their contribution to the maintenance of positive peer relationships.
LS3.01 – Explain aspects of the process of group dynamics (e.g., organizational culture, stages of group development, characteristics of the group, function of the group);

Other Learning Goals:
Work towards a safe and respectful learning environment
Build skills for producing iMovies. This will include:
- Use a storyboard to plan an iMovie
- Save images from the internet into the camera roll
- Create a new iMovie project
- Download images and arrange in the iMovie timeline
- Record audio clips with iMovie, insert and arrange the audio clips in the timeline
- Adding titles to images in iMovie
- Edit and produce a finished iMovie project
- Become familiar with Explain Everything for iPad

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Materials:
- iPads
- Wireless internet connection
- Student handout (storyboard and instructions)
- SMARTboard</td><td>Student Groupings:
- Students will work independently</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Activity:
15. Allow 10-15 minutes for students to look at the photos and videos taken while dogsledding last Wednesday. Encourage the students to share their footage/pictures with you. You can use this as an opportunity for the students to teach you about what they have learned while dog sledding.
16. Use the SMART board to watch the National Congress of American Indians YouTube video “Proud to Be”. (If you search National Congress of American Indians Proud to Be it should come up, or here is the link http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mR-tbOxlhvE) Introduce the video by explaining that it was created by a group from the USA as a statement in support of changing the name of the Washington Redskins (NFL football team). Have students pay attention to the descriptors used in the video.
17. Have a brief discussion about the video. What did students think? Talk about the fact that the video focused mainly on positive words and images, but that it included some words and images that talk about challenges and struggles too. You could also have a brief discussion about whether or not the students think the Redskins should change their name.
18. Review the iMovie project we started last week “Where I am From”. Drew and Samson might be in class. They were not there when we started last week, so if they are there, please explain the project and ensure they get a storyboard (I put extra in the iPad case).
19. Acknowledge that sometimes it can be difficult to come up with the words to describe our communities and ourselves. To help with this you a going to do some brainstorming together. Make sure that students have their storyboards, and let them know that if they want to add any information as you go they can, or they can wait until afterwards.
20. On the SMARTboard (or on the chalkboard if that is easier) brainstorm descriptors/information that could be used in each of the sections of the iMove – Introduction, community/Land, family, activities, and other important people. For each section you can include factual information such as number of siblings, language spoken in my community as well as adjectives such as funny, small, loving, athletic, adventurous. Remind students that the purpose of the iMovie is to introduce you to someone who does not know you.
21. I suggest you start by brainstorming ways the students can describe themselves (for their introduction). At dog sledding, students were paired up with a dog based on their personality. You can encourage students to think about some of the activities</td></tr>
</table>

they did at the dog yard during this process.

22. Establish the goal for this lesson as being to finish the student's iMovies. Acknowledge that student may not be comfortable recording their voice. Set the expectation that students need to create at least one voice recording so that they practice using this feature, but that students may also add information to their movie using text titles.
23. In iMovie, show students how to include titles on their pictures. To do this, double-click on an image in the iMovie timeline. In the bottom right hand side of the screen the word "title" will appear (it is quite small). When you touch it, you will be given the options "opening", "middle" and "closing", these just determine where on the picture the words appear. Students may choose whichever one the want.
24. Allow students to work on their iMovies at their own pace.
25. If students complete their iMovie, show them how to change the theme, add background music and sound effects. This can be accomplished by choosing the wheel in the bottom right-hand side of the screen to select the theme and turn theme music on. To change the theme music, select "audio" from the top right-hand side of the screen and then select theme music.
26. Provide an opportunity for students to share their finished iMovies if they would like. To view the iMovie in full screen select the arrow in the top left-hand side of the screen, this will take you to the opening page. There you can select the "play button" (a triangle inside a square) to view them movie in full screen. When they have finished the viewing, more edits can be made by selecting the icon that looks like a square with a pencil in it.
27.

Assessment:
Formative assessment (based on observations): Students should be able to produce an iMovie by the end of the lesson. Ability to meet this expectation will be informally monitored and noted by the instructor in order to provide needed support/increased challenge for next week's lesson.

Reflection:

iPad Integration Project

<table>
<tr><td>Date: Monday Feb 24th
Prepared By: Alex Bissell</td><td>Course:
Healthy Active Living Education, Grade 11, Open, PPL3O</td><td colspan="2">Instructors/Facilitators:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Lesson Title: Pulling Together</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Overall Expectations:
LSV. 03 – Demonstrate the social skills required to work effectively in groups and develop positive relationships with peers</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Specific Expectations:
LS3.01 – Explain aspects of the process of group dynamics (e.g. organizational culture, stages of group development, characteristic of the group, function of the group)
LS3.04 – Explain their contribution to the maintenance of positive peer relationships</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Other Learning Goals:
Work towards a safe and respectful learning environment
Build skills for producing iMovies. This will include:
- Develop skills using Explain Everything to add text and other features (ex. Arrows, drawings) to images.
- Lean how to record a animation in Explain Everything and add it to a iMovie project</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Materials:
- iPads
- Wireless internet connection
- Student handout (graphic organizers for positions on a dogsled team and working as a group)
- SMARTboard</td><td colspan="2">Student Groupings:
- Students will work independently</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Activity:
- Introduce the lesson by explaining that we will be talking about working as a group. On dog sledding team, there are many different roles, ask the students to help come up with a list of roles in a dog sledding time. Record these by typing them on the SMARTboard.
- The roles that the class should come up with are: Lead (front dog), Swing (second dog), Team (middle dogs), Wheel (back dogs), Musher.
- Prompt students to come up with descriptions of the responsibilities for each role, and have students provide some characteristics common for the people/dogs that fill those roles. Add this information to the SMARTboard.
- Discuss why all of the roles are equally important.
- Provide students with the dog sled team graphic organizer and have them add</td></tr>
</table>

information to it.
- As a class, come up with a few examples of times when students have had to work as part of a group (job, student's council, sports team, class assignment, as a family, when hunting)
- For a few of these examples (one or two) have students come up with some of the different roles that needed to be filled. Discuss why each role is important and list characteristics that made someone good at that role
- Have student fill out the graphic organizer on the back. They should write the group in the middle of the mind map and then use the outside bubbles to fill in the information about roles in that group. As a class go over the example I have created for a basketball team. Ensure students understand that they do not have to use a sports team as the group, but they may if they wish. Have students complete their mind map's.
- Distribute iPads and have students open up Explain Everything. In order to get student familiar with the program, have them upload any image from their camera roll and go over the following elements; adding text, drawing, adding arrows, changing the colours, recording.
- Have students choose an image of a dog team from the internet and then use this to explain the roles in the dog sled time.
- Using the Explain Everything tools, students will label each position on the dogsled team. They may then choose if they want to add text to explain each position, or if they want to use audio in iMovie to accomplish this.
- Students will choose a second image that will be annotated/audio used to explain their role in a group other than a dogsledding team (as based on their graphic organizer)
- For this group students should; name the roles in the group and explain the responsibilities/characteristics of each, identity the role in the group they occupied and why they filled that role (what made them good at it)
- If there is remaining time, students can share the work they have created.

Assessment:
Formative Assessment: Students are abele to
- And annotations to an image in Explain Everything
- Add image/video from Explain Everything to an iMovie project
- Communicate their knowledge of the roles in a dog sledding team
- Transfer their knowledge about dog sledding to another teamwork situation and communicate this effectively

Reflection:

iPad Integration Project

<table>
<tr><td>Date:
Prepared By: Alex Bissell</td><td>Course:
Recreation and Fitness Leadership, Grade 12 (PLF4C)</td><td>Instructors/Facilitators:</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Lesson Title: Putting it all together: Creating a final iMovie</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Overall Expectations:
Analyse a variety of leadership styles
Demonstrate an understanding of the group development process
Demonstrate teamwork skills that achieve positive results
Demonstrate an ability to promote the benefits of lifelong participation in recreational and leisure activities.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Specific Expectations:
Analyse their own preferred styles of leadership
Apply communication skills and strategies that help develop positive relationships
Analyse how the roles played by various members of a group contribute to group effectiveness
Demonstrate the ability to take responsibility for carrying out tasks assigned by the group
Explain the personal, social, economic and environmental benefits of recreations and leisure
Identify various promotional strategies used to market recreation as an essential service</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Other Learning Goals:
- Students will work towards completing their finalized iMove. This will include incorporating elements such as; images, video, narration, theme, music, sound effects and titles, annotations.
- As a group, we will reflect on the dogsledding unit, and celebrate what students accomplished in this unit.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Materials:
- iPads
- Wireless internet connection
- Final iMovie Storyboard
- Final iMovie Checklist
- Final iMovie Rubric
- SmartBoard</td><td>Student Groupings:
- Students will work independently</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Activity:
- Begin by explaining that we will be working on completing our final iMoives. As a group, reflect on the experience of dogsledding, considering what was learned. (A</td></tr>
</table>

teacher will take notes on the board for students to refer to later). Have students consider the following questions and brainstorm their ideas;
  - How did you build a relationship with your dog?
  - Other situations where you could use these relationship skills
  - Skills needed to drive a dogsled
  - Another situations where you can apply leadership skills
  - Favourite memories from dogsledding
  - Why should someone else go dogsledding?
- Hand out the final iMovie storyboard. Go over the components of the storyboard, and inform students that there is some flexibility in the order this information appears, this is a suggestion. Highlight the parts of the iMovie that have already planned for: Introducing me, Roles on a dogsled team
- Inform students that it is up to them to choose how to communicate their information. They can use voice narration, video, text titles in iMove, Explain Everything (voice, text, or a combination). They also may already have videos that explain some of the information (for example introducing their dog, or explaining how to drive a dogsled). If they already have a video for these sections, they can include this in the iMovie to meet that expectation.
- They should be working towards a video that is entertaining and interesting. If someone who has never been dogsledding before watches the video, it should make him or her want to go!
- Students will some planning on their storyboard. Direct students to the notes we created on the whiteboard and have them fill in their storyboard.
- Allow students work on their iMovies circulating as needed for support.

Assessment:
- At the end of this project students completed iMovies will be formally assessed using the assessment rubric.

Reflection: