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| ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 10 | SAMPLE LESSON PLANCREE CODE TALKERS OF WWII: UNTOLD STORIES |
| This sample lesson plan supports Education for Reconciliation through the inclusion of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives; treaty education; and residential schools’ experiences, with learning outcomes identified in the current Alberta programs of study for high school English language arts. Each sample lesson plan includes content(s) or context(s) related to one or more of the following aspects of Education for Reconciliation:* diverse perspectives and ways of knowing of First Nations, Métis, or Inuit, including values, traditions, kinship, language, and ways of being;
* understandings of the spirit and intent of treaties; or
* residential schools’ experiences and resiliency.

Links and relevant information in Guiding Voices: A Curriculum Development Tool for Inclusion of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Perspectives Throughout Curriculum and Walking Together: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Perspectives in Curriculum are provided to support understandings of First Nations, Métis, or Inuit ways of knowing. Both online resources are accessed through LearnAlberta.ca. |
| Education for Reconciliation: Perspectives |
| **Program of Studies Outcomes****English Language Arts 10-1 and 10-2****General Outcome 2:** Students will listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent to comprehend literature and other texts in oral, print, visual and multimedia forms, and respond personally, critically and creatively. **2.1.2 Understand and interpret content** a. use a variety of strategies to comprehend literature and other texts **2.3.1 Connect self, text, culture and milieu** a. identify and consider personal, moral, ethical and cultural perspectives when studying literature and other texts; and reflect on and monitor how perspectives change as a result of interpretation and discussion b**.** respond personally and analytically to ideas developed in works of literature and other texts; and analyze the ways in which ideas are reflected in personal and cultural opinions, values, beliefs and perspectives (**ELA 10-1**) b. respond personally and analytically to ideas developed in literature and other texts (**ELA 10-2**)**English Language Arts 10-1** **General Outcome 2:****Students will listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent to comprehend literature and other texts in oral, print, visual and multimedia forms, and respond personally, critically and creatively.** **2.1.2 Understand and interpret content** a. use a variety of strategies to comprehend literature and other texts **2.3.1 Connect self, text, culture and milieu** a. identify and consider personal, moral, ethical and cultural perspectives when studying literature and other texts; and reflect on and monitor how perspectives change as a result of interpretation and discussion b**.** respond personally and analytically to ideas developed in works of literature and other texts; and analyze the ways in which ideas are reflected in personal and cultural opinions, values, beliefs and perspectives **English Language Arts 10-2****General Outcome 2:****Students will listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent to comprehend literature and other texts in oral, print, visual and multimedia forms, and respond personally, critically and creatively.** **2.1.2 Understand and interpret content** a. use a variety of strategies to comprehend literature and other texts **2.3.1 Connect self, text, culture and milieu** a. identify and consider personal, moral, ethical and cultural perspectives when studying literature and other texts; and reflect on and monitor how perspectives change as a result of interpretation and discussion b. respond personally and analytically to ideas developed in literature and other texts **Resources[[1]](#endnote-1)**Veterans Affairs Canada. *Canada Remembers: Indigenous Veterans.* 2005.**ISBN:** 978-0-660-07488-7. **Language:** English. Retrieved from <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/pdf/cr/pi-sheets/Aboriginal-pi-e.pdf>.**Summary:** This information package created by Veterans Affairs provides a succinct outline of the rationale and challenges faced by Indigenous men and women who made significant contributions to Canada’s military involvement in the First World War, the Second World War, and the Korean War, as well as other military interventions.Scott, Peter. *Cree Code Talkers*, Canadian Encyclopedia. 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/cree-code-talkers>**Summary:** This article outlines the challenges of Indigenous involvement in World War II, both before and after the war. It focuses on the recruitment and involvement of Cree code talkers who were instrumental in helping Canada and its allies to win the war. National Geographic. Cree Code Talker. 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzkEsMYxhFM>**Summary:** This short documentary by Alexandra Lazarowich and Cowboy Smithx highlights the role of Cree code talkers and describes the challenges of Indigenous involvement in WWII, both before and after. It focuses on the recruitment and involvement of Cree code talkers who were instrumental in helping to win the war. It features an interview with relatives of Charles “Checker” Tomkins, a Métis who played an integral role during the war as a Cree code talker.*Reading Strategy: Questioning the Author.* Retrieved from: <https://www.marshfieldschools.org/cms/lib/WI01919828/Centricity/Domain/82/Questioning%20the%20Author.pdf>From: L. Beck, M. G. McKeown, R. L. Hamilton, and L. Kucan, *Questioning the Author: An Approach for Enhancing Student Engagement with Text* (Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1997).**Summary:** The reading strategy of questioning the author is highlighted, encouraging students to be strategic and critical readers in order to comprehend and critique an author’s writing. **Purpose**In this lesson, students will gain an understanding of the sacrifices and unique achievements made by Indigenous veterans through their participation in Canada’s military during times of conflict. Students will analyze and compare two different stories to elicit a response and create meaning from the similarities and differences. By examining this juxtaposition, students will gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of historical events and ethical decisions.**Introduction**As a group, students will read the brief three-page synthesis created by Veterans Canada on the historical military service of the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit men and women who served in the Armed Forces for Canada ([*Canada Remembers: Indigenous Veterans*](http://www.veterans.gc.ca/pdf/cr/pi-sheets/Aboriginal-pi-e.pdf).) Have students review aspects of the synthesis by employing the reading strategy [Questioning the Author](https://www.marshfieldschools.org/cms/lib/WI01919828/Centricity/Domain/82/Questioning%20the%20Author.pdf). From this critical analysis, students will determine the tone and perspective of the stories articulated by Veterans Affairs. In contrast, this perspective will be compared to that of the untold story of a Canadian code talker from World War II named Charles Tomkins in the documentary titled [Cree Code Talker](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzkEsMYxhFM).**Activity/Experience**Prior to watching the documentary, provide students with background information using [*Cree Code Talkers* by Peter Scott](https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/cree-code-talkers). Review with students that code talkers were able to communicate secret or coded messages; they transmitted these messages over military telephone or radio using codes built upon the Cree language. Students will watch the 14-minute documentary film [Cree Code Talker](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzkEsMYxhFM) to the end and discuss the life of veteran Charles Tomkins and the role he played during the war as a Cree code talker in joint support of the American military efforts during WWII. Inform students that the Canadian Cree code talkers were never honoured by either the Canadian or United States governments. Following the documentary, discuss with students:* How can the documentary draw awareness to the contribution of Cree code talkers and serve as a powerful message to governments to recognize, formally, the code talkers’ contributions to the war effort?
* Compare the synthesis of *Indigenous Veterans* created by Veterans Affairs to that of the documentary Cree Code Talkers. Why are the two stories different?
* How can we best share the untold stories of Indigenous veterans, particularly the Cree code talkers?

**Conclusion**Have students write and share a personal response regarding the juxtaposition of the two perspectives presented in the documentary (Cree Code Talkers) and the information sheet (Veterans Canada) on Indigenous contributions to the war effort (stories). Compelling true stories, such as those of Charles Tomkins, support Canada’s contributions to the war efforts. Discuss possibilities for having this untold story recognized. Students will pursue one of the possibilities such as petitioning the government for recognition in the form of a commemoration. Students should describe, in detail, what the possible commemoration would include (e.g., statue, memorial site, day of honour, language recognition event). **Extension*** Draw awareness of the contributions of the code talkers by sharing personal responses at a school assembly, at another school, or at the Royal Canadian Legion on Aboriginal Veterans’ Day held November 8.
* Have students write a personal response describing the irony of the importance of Indigenous language being instrumental in achieving victory in the war overseas to that of policies at home in Canada that attacked Indigenous languages. Discuss and share personal responses with the class.

**Assessment for Student Learning**Consider multiple ways students can demonstrate their understandings of the untold and unrecognized contributions many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit soldiers made during their time in Canada’s military and some of the challenges they endured during and after their time of enlistment.**Keywords:** worldview; relationship; veterans; code talkers; World War II; Cree**Themes:** contending national loyalties; military participation; contributions**Teacher Background**[[2]](#endnote-2)**Walking Together: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Perspectives in Curriculum**Culture and Language: Exploring Connections: Documents: *Language and Worldview* Excerpt from *Aboriginal Perspectives*, Nelson Education Ltd., Toronto, ON, 2004, pp. 81–84.[www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/culture\_and\_language/documents/language\_and\_worldview.pdf](http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/culture_and_language/documents/language_and_worldview.pdf)([www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/](http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/))**Summary:** To supplement the story about the Cree code talkers, this excerpt provides facts about the various Indigenous language groups across Canada and the critical connection existing between language and culture. |

1. Some resources may not be authorized but are provided to identify potentially useful ideas for teaching and learning. The responsibility to evaluate these resources rests with the user. The selected resource(s) provide a perspective specific to an individual, group, or nation; they are not intended to represent the perspectives of all First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. All website addresses listed were confirmed as accurate at the time of publication but are subject to change. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)