Understanding Indigenous Methodologies

Teaching Guide

This teaching guide provides instructions for educators on how to navigate this digital teaching module and how to administer the activities. This document should be read before the activities are used for teaching. Though this project is meant for upper divisional undergraduate students who are beginning to learn about research methodology, it is uncommon for many students at this level to have experienced instruction on Indigenous methodologies. This guide will help educators understand the content of the module website if they are also unfamiliar with Indigenous methodologies and will layout the progression of steps necessary to successfully complete the activities.

**THE WEBSITE**

**Introduction.** Educators should read the introduction page carefully. This page explains:

* The purpose of the project and its function as a teaching module
* Various portions of the website
* The focus on the activities
* The learning outcomes for students

Educators should refer to the *Teaching Resources* page to find additional information on the content of the website and supplemental material. This can be useful for the educators own edification. As this page contains the learning outcomes, educators should be prepared to keep track of these and use them to evaluate student work after completion of the activities.

**Teaching resources.** This page is primarily for the educator, but does contain information that students will need to properly execute the activities, as well as resources they may find useful to inform their study of the material.

**Thinking like a historian.** This page provides an introduction to historical thinking and its key elements. As the purpose of this teaching module is ultimately to encourage historical thinking, students will need to be equipped to practice these elements during the activities. This section should be covered adequately and with additional instruction should the educator find it necessary.

**Overview of Indigenous methodologies.** This page contains a bulk of information, but synopsizes the definition of “methodology” and provides a practical outline of an Indigenous methodological framework that students can use for the purposes of the activities. The information can appear dense at first glance and it could prove challenging for students unaccustomed to research methodology. This section should be covered thoroughly with instruction from the educator. Students should also be encouraged to read and refer to this page on their own, but the initial exploration would best be administered with the educator assisting with a close reading of the content and review of the video(s).

This section will be key as it lays the foundation for students to understand the process they will use to complete the activities and connects their research to the ethics that should govern their approach and responses. PLEASE REFER TO THE “STEPS FOR THE ACTIVITIES” SECTION BEFORE HAVING STUDENTS NAVIGATE TO THIS PAGE.

**Module Introduction:** This page provides an introduction to the structure and nature of the module activities.

* **Module A:** This page provides the primary source material and associated activities for students to practice historical thinking and following ethical research procedures.
* **Module B:** This page provides the instruction and activities for students to begin implementing an Indigenous methodological approach to their historical analysis of the primary sources.

**About the project.** This page contains more information about the project, its creation, and its creator.

**STEPS FOR THE ACTIVITIES**

The activities themselves are not complicated. However, due to the potential complexity of the information for students, it is advisable for educators to follow the outlined steps in this section so students can experience the activities as they were meant to be and meet the established learning outcomes. Educators are free to break from this outline if they feel their students are capable enough to handle the material out of sequence. The activities do not have to be completed all together. Educators may choose to conduct fewer activities than what is outlined in the following steps.

**Organization:** This can be an intense module of study. If the educator is confident they can cover the material in one class sitting, they may do so. But if it proves to be too lengthy or complicated to do so in one sitting, it can be extended to two class periods.

**In-person class:** Students can complete these activities individually or in small groups. Because there is a lot of background information they will learn to do the activities, conducting this as a small groups exercise could be beneficial.

**Online:** If this material is being covered via an online platform, follow the steps in a similar way, but adapt for individual work and instruct students to be diligent with their studies of the complex areas.

**Step 1.)** Cover the introduction section with the students so they are familiar with the purpose of the teaching module.

**Step 2.)** Cover the *Thinking like a Historian* page of the module. As noted previously, this page is necessary to equip students with the practices of a historian in order to do the activities. Focus on the listed elements and how they are applied to historical research. Students will be applying these elements to the primary sources.

**Step 3.)** Using the “Indigenous Ethics Material” located on the *Teaching Resources* page, provide instruction about how to conduct ethical research and why it is important. The resources here will center on Indigenous ethics, but these easily translate into the ethical training all researchers should receive. Specifically cover the historical wrongs that have occurred due to inappropriate research practices and how these harm communities.

**Step 4.)** Students can now navigate to the *Module Activities* page. This section is divided into two pages. Students should only be navigated page 1 at this point. Students will be presented with the first activity: the research consent form. This will be an electronic form (accompanied with a PDF physical form so it can be recreated). After having reviewed the ethics material, students should understand why the value and applicability of this activity. The form itself should be turned into the educator.

**Note:** If the activity is being conducted individually, each student should complete the form, though it could be done as a class exercise with the educator leading the whole class to complete it.

If the activity is being conducted with small groups, one form per group will suffice.

The educator should review the consent forms to make sure they conform to ethical practices of transparency of research, privacy of data, and respectful inquiry. The educator then approves or denies the request (if denied, students should review their request to see why it was rejected).

**Step 5.)** After completing the consent form, students can move to the next section of the *Module Activities* page. They will review some additional material about Indigenous oral sources and then be introduced to the primary sources. These are recorded audio files that orally transmit the knowledge. Have the students review each source. They can do this either individually, in small groups, or as a class exercise.

**Step 6.)** After listening to the sources, students should access the electronic worksheets. If the educator desires, these can be printed out for in-class use. Students should complete Part A that reflects their experience with the research consent form. Then students should complete Part B that instructs them to apply the elements of historical thinking to the sources.

**Note:** Students only need to complete a worksheet for ONE source. However, they should reflect on both of them.

**Step 7.)** Students should write a reflection on the coverage of the sources, their engagement with historical thinking, and how they felt about the consent activity. Students should then engage in peer review of their worksheets and reflections to assess others conclusions and how they engaged in historical thinking.

**Note:** If in small groups, they can work within their group. If working individually, they can be assigned a partner or choose someone to work with. At least two people should be paired together.

Between the Part B worksheet and this reflection, the educator should be observant for remarks about contradictions between the sources.

**Step 8.)** Once students have completed the worksheets for the stories, you can then instruct them on the *Overview of Indigenous Methodologies* page. As noted previously, this is likely to be the most complicated material, so the educator should pay extra attention to this area.

**Step 9.)** After thoroughly covering step 8, students should proceed to *Module B*. This page will provide instruction on how to apply Indigenous methodological practices to the material. It covers the contradictions of Indigenous sources and how an Indigenous scholar would view the material and engage with it. Students will again review BOTH of the Indigenous primary sources.

**Step 10.)** Finally, students will complete the worksheet Part C for ONE SOURCE that gives them question prompts to answer so they may reflect on their research attempts from an Indigenous lens. These prompts are meant to make the students do extra digging to answer the questions, impressing upon them the different type of rigor an Indigenous scholar exerts to conduct culturally appropriate research. Afterward, students should complete a final reflection drawing upon the similarities and differences they made between worksheets Part B and Part C.