

Assessing Indigenous Resources - Making good choices for what to bring into the classroom - Are the materials authentic and relevant?

Whose voice is the text sharing?
Is the text from a Indigenous point of view?
Is the text from an outsider viewpoint e.g. sociological or anthropologic point of view?

Was it written by an Indigenous person?
Published by an FNIM organization?
Done in collaboration with FNIM organizations or people?

Is the resource based on local First Nations, Métis or Inuit histories, cultures, values ? and/or
Does it reflect the students who it is being used with?

Does the text attempt to generalize about Indigenous peoples, cultures, etc. or convince the reader that there is a Pan-Aboriginal set of values, or traditions? Is it specific enough? - E.g. It gives the origins of the teaching, cultural practice etc.

Who was it written for? Who is its audience?
Does the author make any assumptions about the prior knowledge of the target audience?

Does the text promote diversity or is it stereotypical?
e.g. portraying “natives” as savages, noble, all spiritual, or naive (e.g. Pochahantas)
e.g. Indigenous people all look one way

When was it published and where was it published? Do these factors impact on how the material comes across?
Can we deconstruct the society in which it comes from?
e.g. a book written by a priest in the 1680’s about Mi’gmaq people may read very differently than one written by a Mi’gmaq scholar in the 21st century.

Does the text demonstrate an understanding that cultural practices are not dead? Does it use past tense to imply that cultural practices no longer exist?
E.g. First Nations people had pipe ceremonies.
E.g. Métis people used to hunt and fish

After considering these factors is the resource, in your view, authentic or do you have some concerns about its use in the classroom context? Could you use the resource but have your students deconstruct it using critical thinking tasks?