



# Assessing and Validating Resources— Aboriginal Heritage

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Resources that are culturally authentic, historically accurate and respectful of the diversity of the identities and experiences of First Nations, Métis and Inuit will encourage recognition of Aboriginal peoples and affirm their contributions to Canadian history as documented in the holdings of Library and Archives Canada.

The assessment tool for validating appropriate content introduces critical thinking and analysis when locating and using both primary and secondary sources.<sup>1</sup> The following checklist assists the researcher to consider how resources present Aboriginal documentary heritage, in text and imagery.

1. Resource Production Process
  - a. Is there evidence that First Nations, Métis or Inuit, as knowledge keepers, were involved in the creation and development of the resource?
  - b. Who owns the content or image? Why was it created and when?
2. Language and Imagery
  - a. Are the terms “squaw,” “half-breed,” “massacre” and “victory” used with careful consideration and in an appropriate context?
  - b. Is the term “prehistory” or “pre-contact” used to imply that history began with European historical documentation?
  - c. Does the image portray a stereotype such as the drunken or lazy Indian?
  - d. Does the image blend traditional clothing or regalia from a variety of nations, or misrepresent the nations within the context or period?
3. Indigenous Knowledge and World Views
  - a. Are the oral traditions in the historical account, such as stories and songs, considered to be as credible and important as the written records?
  - b. Are the diverse cultures, traditions, languages, world views and the political, social and economic realities of First Nations, Métis and Inuit represented?
  - c. Are the knowledge systems and world views portrayed or written from an ethnocentric perspective?
4. Historical and Contemporary Portrayals of First Nations, Métis and Inuit



- a. Does the resource portray negative outcomes for Aboriginal people and positive outcomes for non-Aboriginal people?
  - b. Does the resource portray the lands of the Americas, before the Europeans arrived, as territories that Indigenous people treated with care and respect?
  - c. Does the resource represent the diversity of First Nations, Métis and Inuit experiences?
  - d. Are there biases or value judgements placed on socio-political traditions and institutions or on achievements in the descriptions or interpretations?
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<sup>i</sup> Adapted from the *Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education* as represented by the Ministers of Education for Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Saskatchewan. *WNCP Common Tool for Assessing and Validating Teaching and Learning Resources for Cultural Appropriateness and Historical Accuracy of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Content*, 2011.