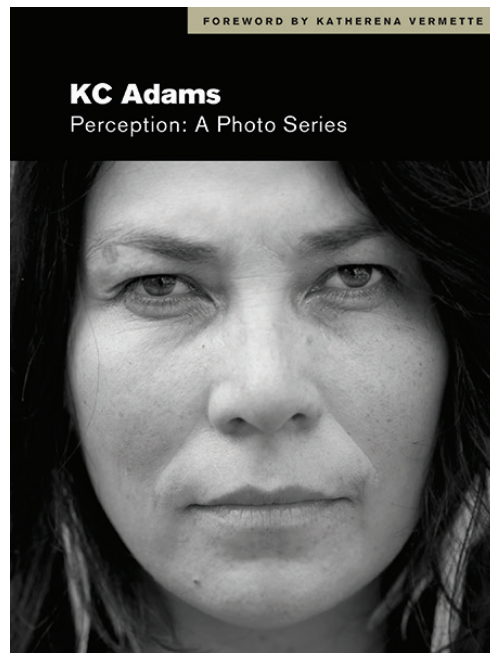



TEACHER GUIDE  
FOR  
**K.C. ADAMS'**  
Perception: A Photo Series



**By Reuben Boulette**

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# INTRODUCTION

KC Adams's Perception series features pairs of photographs which confront common stereotypes about First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people. They first appeared on social media in 2014, then on billboards, in storefronts, in bus shelters, and projected on downtown buildings in Winnipeg. Selected photos have now been gathered together in the book *Perception: A Photo Series*. This teacher guide can be used in conjunction with the book, which also features a preface by the author on how the series came about. A foreword by Katherena Vermette talks about participating in the series, and an essay by academic Cathy Mattes looks at the value of using art for social engagement.

As more and more school divisions in Canada adopt anti-racism policies, Adams's series, and the story of how it came about, provide an entry point for a discussion about racism and other forms of prejudice in today's world. The five lessons in this guide, by educator Reuben Boulette, will give teachers the tools they need to explore these realities with their students, with a final project that students can relate to their own experiences.

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# LESSON ONE: What Is Prejudice?

## LESSON DESCRIPTION

For this lesson, the learners will be activating their perspectives of prejudice in our society. Students will participate in a sharing circle and be encouraged to share their own experiences while beginning to think about how prejudice affects everybody. The questions presented to them in the sharing circle will activate their thinking on the subject of prejudice and set the tone for the rest of the unit.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Since time immemorial, the Indigenous peoples of Canada have been using sharing circles to meet, communicate, govern, and listen to each other. The purpose of the sharing circle is to allow everyone an equal opportunity to participate in and listen to important conversations. Among the peoples of Treaty 1 Territory, sharing circles traditionally start with a facilitator and work their way around the circle in a clockwise direction. The strength of a sharing circle comes from the lesson of the shape itself; participants of the circle need to come from different places in order for the circle to hold. If we were to all have the same perspective of the world, the circle would then resemble a wall. Some of the strongest traditional lodgings of the Indigenous peoples in any region of North America have circular shapes as their base.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

Main Question:

- What is prejudice?

Further Questions:

- Why do people prejudge others?
- When and where have you witnessed prejudice?
- Where do you see this happening in our society?
- Are there some people in our society that are judged more unfairly than others? Why do you think that is?

## LESSON

*Lesson Time: 45–60 minutes*

Have the students sit in a circle in area that will allow for all to sit comfortably and be able to hear each other. If there is no space available, have the students try to sit as close as possible while facing each other without having to see one another's backs. As the teacher, you will be the facilitator of the full discussion and have the ability to speak up when required to move the conversation along. This responsibility is to encourage the learners to speak, ask for clarification, and to pose further questions for the students. The main rules of a sharing circle are: to let others finish their thoughts, to ask permission

to speak if it is not your turn, to listen to others speak, and to respect each other. Some facilitators use talking devices that are passed from speaker to speaker that give visual cues to who is to be speaking at the moment. Talking sticks or speaking stones can be used for this purpose, but any handheld object can be used.

Once the students are in the circle, explain your role as the facilitator and the rules of the sharing circle. Then using your talking object and passing it to the left, have the students quickly introduce themselves to the circle and get ready to ask the student the main question: What is prejudice? Pass along the talking object and have each student share his or her perspectives on the question. If the students are struggling for an answer, or feel as though they cannot offer more to the main question, use the secondary questions to stimulate more conversation. At the end of the discussion, have students thank each other and work on the exit slip.

**NOTE:** Among the Indigenous peoples of Manitoba (the Anishinaabe, the Ininew, the Anishininew, the Metis, the Dakota/Lakota/Nakota, the Dene, and the Inuit), most use a clockwise movement through sharing circles.

## ASSESSMENT SUGGESTION

Create an exit slip with any or all of the following questions. Student can have time at the end class or answer these questions as homework and before the next lesson.

- What did I learn about during our discussion on prejudice?
- How well do I feel I did talking in the sharing circle?
- What can I do better for our next discussion and/or sharing circle?
- What further questions do I have about our topic on prejudice?

# LESSON TWO: Does Society Judge Teenagers Negatively?

## LESSON DESCRIPTION

For this lesson, the students will be answering the question, ‘Does society judge teenagers negatively?’ The learners will sit in small groups of four or five, and discuss how and where they have witnessed teenagers being judged in a negative light. The goal will for the students to record their answers and share them with the rest of the class.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

Main Question:

- Does society view teenagers negatively?

Further Questions:

- Where have you witnessed teenagers being underestimated?
- What are some of the negative judgments teenagers face?
- Where do you see this happening in our society?
- Why do you think this is?

## LESSON

*Lesson Time: 45–60 minutes*

Have the students sit in small groups of 3 to 6 and pose the main question to them, *Does society view teenagers negatively?* Provide chart papers and markers to each group. Then have them talk about it in their groups. Give them 5 to 10 minutes to activate their understanding of the question; then ask them to stop. Have them begin record some of their ideas on the chart paper. Give them the rest of the lesson questions to help them think further about their responses. While the students are recording their answers, circulate and prompt further thinking among the group by encouraging to articulate their voices and ideas on the paper. When the student can no longer record any more responses, have them display their chart paper on the whiteboard or around the room. Choose a group to go first and have them read and explain some of their answers to the class. Have each group share their thoughts/ideas and debrief with the class as a whole using more guided questions to further the larger discussion.

## ASSESSMENT SUGGESTION

Have the students give their group a numeric grade based on how they think they worked together (e.g. a mark out of 10). Have them explain what they did well as a group, what they could do better for next time, and why they gave themselves this mark. Have them write their answers and mark on the back of the chart paper.

# LESSON THREE: Media Analysis of Contemporary Prejudice

## LESSON DESCRIPTION

For this lesson, students will be reading and examining articles about prejudice directly from recent headlines in North America.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Where do we see prejudice happening in today's world?
- Are there places where we would expect to see prejudice occurring in our society?
- What place would we least expect prejudice to occur?

## LESSON

*Lesson Time: 45–80 minutes*

Hand out printed copies of the articles to students sitting in small groups and have them read them while looking for interesting passages, important facts, or noteworthy ideas. Once the learners are finished reading it to each other and discussing the article, have them individually fill out the reproducible media analysis handout on the next page. Based on the length of most high school classes, there will likely be enough time to work on two articles. If there is still time at the end of class, debrief a few of the articles that the teacher feels were the more controversial ones.

### Links to potential articles for lesson:<sup>1</sup>

- <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/may/04/native-american-students-colorado-state-college-tour-police>
- <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/starbucks-manager-called-cops-minutes-black-men-arrive-article-1.3942931>
- <https://www.cnn.com/2018/05/09/us/yale-student-napping-black-trnd/index.html>
- <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/saskatchewan-indigenous-1.4420013>
- [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2018/05/01/a-black-former-white-house-staffer-was-moving-into-a-new-apartment-someone-reported-a-burglary/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.10263104d3eb](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2018/05/01/a-black-former-white-house-staffer-was-moving-into-a-new-apartment-someone-reported-a-burglary/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.10263104d3eb)

## ASSESSMENT SUGGESTION

See handout on next page.

<sup>1</sup> Since the date of publication for this teacher's guide, new examples of contemporary prejudice may have been featured in various media. They can be added to, or can replace, articles featured in the list above.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Article Analysis

What is the name of the article? When was the article published? Where was this article published?	
What is the main issue presented within this article?	List 5 facts and/or important points about this article.
What is your opinion of the events that take place in the article?	What further questions do you have about this article?
Why is it important to understand this topic? How do the attitudes shown in this article affect us all ?	

# LESSON FOUR: Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes

## LESSON DESCRIPTION

The class will examine Jane Elliott's historic Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes exercise. In 1968, following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., Iowa teacher Jane Elliot devised a classroom exercise for understanding prejudice. Students will be given guiding questions about the mini-documentary and have a class discussion about tenets of the documentary. For further information about Jane Elliott's Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes exercise see: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/lesson-of-a-lifetime-72754306/experiment>.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Does how someone is treated influence how they act?
- What happens when someone only sees and believes in the negative stereotypes about different ethnic groups?
- Can people hold unconscious negative views about people's ethnic backgrounds?
- Do some people in our society receive preferential treatment over others?

## LESSON

*Lesson Time: 45–60 minutes*

Open the lesson by posing the question to the class, "Does how someone is treated influence how they act?" Have the students think/pair/share with each other and have them share some of their answers with the class. Once you finish with the discussion, watch the documentary "How Racist are You?" about Jane Elliot's Classic Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes.

### Link to documentary

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nqv9k3jbtYU>

## ASSESSMENT SUGGESTION

Have the students write a journal response about what they felt was important about today's lesson. Ask the students to explain how they felt watching the people's reactions and how the Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes experiment is relevant to today's world.

# LESSON FIVE: KC Adams' Perception: A Photo Series

## LESSON DESCRIPTION

This is a two-part lesson based on analysing and discussing the ideas behind KC Adams' Perceptions photo series.

**NOTE:** This lesson will have language and words that are racist in nature, specifically against the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. Please have a conversation with the learners about the language and phrasing used before you begin this lesson.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- Why do stereotypes about Indigenous people still persist in Canada?
- Do you believe that prejudgement of someone based on their race can lead to discrimination against that person?
- Is there something we can do as individuals to stop prejudice from happening in our society?

## LESSON

*Lesson Time: 60–90 minutes*

### Part One

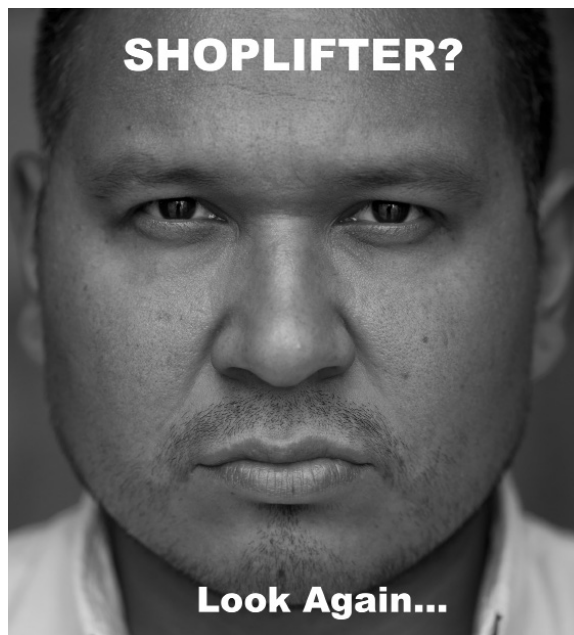
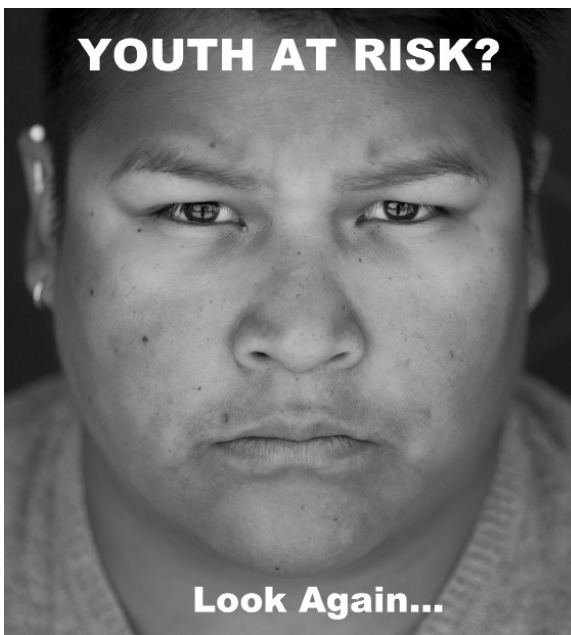
To introduce the student to KC Adams and the Perception series, read KC's biography and play the video link below:

KC Adams is a Winnipeg-based artist who graduated from Concordia University with a B.F.A in studio arts. She has had several solo exhibitions, group exhibitions and was included in the PHOTOQUAI: Biennale des images du monde in Paris, France. She has participated in residencies at the Banff Centre, the Confederation Art Centre in Charlottetown, the National Museum of the American Indian, and the Parramatta Arts Gallery in Australia. Adams has received several grants and awards from Winnipeg Arts Council, Manitoba Arts Council, and Canada Council for the Arts. Her work is in many permanent collections nationally and internationally. Twenty pieces from the Cyborg Hybrid series are in the permanent collection of the National Art Gallery in Ottawa and from her installation Birch Bark Ltd, four trees are in the collection of the Canadian Consulate of Australia, NSW. Recently, she was the set designer for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's *Going Home Star: Truth and Reconciliation*. She completed a public art sculpture for the United Way of Winnipeg called *Community*. She has an ongoing public art campaign called Perception that was on display all over Winnipeg, MB, and Lethbridge, AB. She recently won the Winnipeg Arts Council's *Making A Mark* Award and Aboriginal Circle of Educator's *Trailblazing* Award. She is an instructor in Visual and Aboriginal Art at Brandon University.

**Perception series video interview (by the Urban Shaman Gallery):**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N1LIZPs8Spw>

When you have introduced the class to KC Adams and her work, choose a few of the selected images from the book *Perception: A Photo Series* to show the class. Display the image labelled “Look Again” (the first of the pair; see examples below). Read the captions on that photo to the class. Discuss the words and phrases presented to the viewer and discuss how it would feel to be subject to this type prejudice and racism. Use some of the ideas and question present in previous lessons to stimulate the class discussion. Once you have finished looking at the first side of the chosen work, look at the second side that reveals the person’s nation and identity. Discuss how the two sides differ, and how the roles people play in their lives helps define their identity. Once you have examined several works from the Perception series, debrief with the class.



## Part Two

Look at the selected photos below. The difference here is that the photos attached are the second smiling photo of each person, but without the captions. Have the student examine these photos, in groups or as a class, and predict the positive aspects of each person's identity. Debrief after each photo and see how close their predictions were with the captions in each (see next page). Debrief as a class after the activity.





**JENNA (ANISHINAABE)**

Sister, auntie, two-spirited, activist, educator, author, drummer, singer, survivor and megaphone girl at rallies.



**ROBERT LAVALLEE (OJI-CREE)**

Son, uncle, grandson, Christian, entrepreneur, consultant, advisor, civil servant, administrator and part of a generation of young Indigenous warriors.



**JENNIFER NO RUNNER  
(KAINAI BLACKFOOT)**

Mother, Grandma, Great-Grandma, Traditional Dancer, horsewoman who loves humour.

## ASSESSMENT SUGGESTION

Write a one-page letter to KC Adams that details some of the things the student have learned about through her Perception series, as well as any other thoughts and further questions they may have about the series.

These can be forwarded to KC Adams at Portage & Main Press, at the street or email address on the second page of this book.



## SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT SUGGESTION: PERCEPTION SOCIAL MEDIA STUDENT CAMPAIGN

For this final unit assessment, students are encouraged to start their own media campaign based on KC Adams' Perceptions series using the hashtag *#perception*. Students are encouraged to create pictures similar to the photos found in the Perception series by using their devices and apps to edit and caption their own photos. The school/teacher may have to provide digital cameras for to that do not have devices. Student are to use their own personal experiences or find a someone who has experienced prejudice, discrimination, and/or racism in our society. Once students create their own Perception photos, they can add them to a class set of pictures and display them together in a digital photo essay (using Google Slides or PowerPoint), or use a video editor to stitch them together into a small movie. Students are encouraged to share the finished video on their various social media platforms.

**NOTE:** A certain sensitivity is required when learners are approaching people and asking them about their experience with prejudice, discrimination, and racism. Prejudice can go beyond skin colour and ethnicity, as many people experience discrimination based on religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, and so forth. Please have a conversation with your students about the sensitive nature of this final project.

### Suggested Apps

- Pic Collage (iOS, Android, Windows)
- iMovie (iOS)
- Video Show (iOS, Android)
- VidTrim (Android)
- Google Docs: Slides



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