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DecoloniZine: Building Community through Arts-based Projects

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A 'zine' is a written and/or visual piece designed to explore topics of personal interest by nonprofessional (student) writers and artists. The "do-it-yourself," creative nature of zines has made these projects virtually accessible for anyone to create and consume. Within educational contexts, this medium encourages learners to engage with their world(s) collectively, critically, and creatively in the pursuit of producing and sharing knowledge.

Within a Canadian context, the term 'Indigenous' collectively refers to the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples of Turtle Island/North America and is a preferred term in international usage (University of British Columbia, n.d.). Through an Indigenous lens, this presentation will explore the ways in which classrooms can build community through arts-based activities and consider how zine-making is an act of decolonization in process. By exploring the capacity of zines within the classroom, we can better understand the role of arts-based activities in supporting the voices of traditionally marginalized and Othered youth, supporting the idea of utilizing zines as a tool in making identities ("selfing"). Furthermore, we pose the concept decoloniZine: zines created by and for Indigenous people. This is achieved through disrupting colonial forms of knowledge sharing, strengthening communities of creators and consumers, and making room for Indigenous creators to reclaim space in media.