


## OLYMPIADS SCHOOL/GRADE 9 ENGLISH/HANDOUT 11

Read a news article about an incident at a Canadian university and respond to the questions in the right column.

<p><b>'Cowboys-and-Indians' cheerleaders photo sparks Regina furor</b></p> <p><b>University of Regina president issues apology, says participants will take sensitivity training</b>  <a href="#">CBC News</a> Posted: Mar 16, 2014 1:22 PM CT Last Updated: Mar 17, 2014 9:15 AM CT</p> <p>A screen shot of a photo previously posted on the @UofRCheer instagram account, which is tied to the University of Regina's Cheerleading team. The photo was reportedly removed this weekend. (CBC/Instagram)</p> <p>The University of Regina is responding after a photo depicting some members of the school's cheerleading team posing in stereotypical "cowboys and Indians" costumes sparked outrage over the web.</p> <p>Some of the women in the Instagram picture are wearing plaid shirts and cowboy hats, while others have feathers, headbands and braids in their hair and dresses that are made to look like they're made from animal skin.</p> <p>University of Regina President Vianne Timmons issued a written release Sunday acknowledging that the team was part of a social event Friday evening that included "culturally inappropriate themes and costumes."</p> <p>Her statement went on to say that the team's coach has apologized.</p> <p>"Further steps will require that the team's coaches and team members discuss this matter as a group with the university's Executive Lead on Indigenization and take cultural sensitivity training," Timmons's statement said. "Once these discussions have taken place, the university will determine whether further disciplinary actions are required."</p> <p>Kinesiology Dean Harold Riemer also expressed his apologies on behalf of the university Sunday afternoon.</p>	<p>What does "furor" mean? Of which province is Regina the capital?</p> <p>Why are these costumes stereotypical? Where do these hurtful stereotypes come from?</p> <p>What do you think the cultural sensitivity training would involve?</p>
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<p>"I have told them actually that it was wrong," said Riemer. "The university's code of conduct for students, faculty and staff is that we treat everyone, regardless of their status, or minority group ... with respect, and we behave in a responsible manner so that everyone who lives and works on this campus feels comfortable and welcome.</p> <p>That's the university policy.</p> <p>"If you're a student here, you're a staff member here, you're a faculty member here, when you compete with University of Regina's name on your jersey, that's your obligation," he continued.</p> <p>Riemer explained that the picture was taken during a practice session and not during competition, but he added that the circumstances doesn't excuse the team's actions.</p> <p>He said the team along with its coaches will be meeting with the university's leader in indigenization this coming week to discuss what happened and the issues surrounding their actions, after which the university will continue to review the incident and determine whether further action needs to be taken.</p> <p>"We will work to make sure that this sort of thing doesn't happen in the future and that people learn from this experience," he said. "We are an institute of higher education, and our goal is to always have people different when they leave. That they've changed, that they've learned and matured, and that's our goal here too."</p> <p><b>Professor responds to tweet</b></p> <p>Andrea Sterzuk is an associate professor at the faculty of education and one of the people who participated in the heated debate on Twitter after the picture was reposted.</p>	<p>The cheerleading team mostly likely did not have malicious intentions, but why would their actions inadvertently create an unsafe environment for other students at the university?</p> <p>Why were the team's actions inexcusable?</p>
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 <p>The screen capture shows the photo had 44 'likes' on Instagram before it was removed. (Twitter)</p>	
<p>"I was disturbed by the image, and I thought that the team, like all of us who live in Saskatchewan, likely need formal education on the topic," Sterzuk told CBC News, "because treating First Nations and Métis women as a costume objectifies them, and that behaviour, I think, contributes to their dehumanization, which is a larger problem that I think all Canadians need to be concerned about."</p> <p>Sterzuk said she sees this campus incident as a snapshot of a broader problem, and it should be used as a learning opportunity.</p> <p>"I think sometimes apologies are hollow, and they don't lead to change," she said. "... It's an ongoing process, educating ourselves on these issues, and so I think it's not enough to take the tweet down. I think it's important to learn why the tweet and the behaviour and the picture shouldn't have happened in the first place, understand why someone in the group didn't speak up."</p> <p><b>Some students shocked</b></p> <p>Ryan Deschamps, a doctorate student at the university, saw the picture on Twitter and said he feels very disappointed that something like this would happen.</p> <p>"I thought we were kind of past this issue," said Deschamps. "I think it was something that we've seen in the news that's obviously</p>	<p>What does "objectify" mean? Can you think of instances in your life when you or your background was objectified (perhaps even dehumanized)?</p>

insensitive to certain people and I don't understand how that actually happened."

Deschamps said he was also not impressed by the critical comments posted in response to the picture.

"It's not really productive just to criticize people when obviously, I personally think, there's some kind of misunderstanding here. Somebody must have dropped the ball and was insensitive here, and I think there's a lot more proactive measures that I understand are already being taken by the university that would be more effective."

Richard Siple, who studies computer science at the university, said he was shocked to see the cheer team post such a photo.

"I'm shocked that students still think with that mindset," Siple said. "I mean, students are viewed as progressive and that's almost racist."

**What does the short film critique? What assumptions underlie the male character's questions?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWynJkN5HbQ>

The assumptions that underlie the male character's questions:

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**ACTIVITY**

Given what you have just read and thought about, consider the level of cultural sensitivity in the following two book covers of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. If you were an Editor in Chief working in a Canadian publishing company, what thoughts would you have if an employee proposes these two images as covers for a new edition? Write a brief, professional, and polite e-mail response to this employee.

