

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES  
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**“Land Speaking” and Other Works**  
**by Jeannette Armstrong**

Created by  
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## FURTHER RESEARCH AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

### *Self-Positioning Questions and Exercises*

1. Consider your own “positionality,” as Armstrong often does in her writing. Where do you come from and how does that shape your identity? What are your family’s “roots” and “routes”?
2. **What do you know of the Indigenous territories of the place where you live? Look at [www.native-land.ca](http://www.native-land.ca) and find out on whose lands you live. Also find out on whose lands you were born and grew up. Did you know this information already? If so, how did you find out, and from whom? Is this information well known within your family or community?**
3. If you were to write a poem that encapsulated your positionality, what might that look like?

### *Discussion Questions*

1. In [“Indigenous Economics,”](#)\* a speech Armstrong gave as part of the 2014 conference, “Techno-Utopianism and the Fate of the Earth,” she describes Indigenous knowledge in terms of “economic interaction[s].” In this sense, to have Indigenous knowledge is to “have deep knowledge about the limits and the requirements of all the different living things in the place you use. It is understanding that we as humans can partake in that place like every other living thing, but we have to know those limits. Indigenous economics is about

- knowledge, in how we view nature” (IntlForum). How is this idea about Indigenous knowledge embodied in her works?
2. Consider Armstrong’s description of the land as the source of Indigenous knowledge and identity in light of the fact that many Indigenous peoples do not have access to their traditional homelands. How do Indigenous knowledges and identities persist? What does it mean to be Indigenous and displaced and how might this affect how we see other diasporic identities?
  3. [In her TedxOkanagan talk](#),\*\* Armstrong describes Indigenization as a process that “occurs over a long period of time in a specific place, where people and organisms adapt and become interrelated.” For Armstrong the way to “Indigenize” is to participate “in relationships that help regenerate the land and systems of that place” (Indigenization). How does her definition of Indigenization include non-local communities? What is your understanding of the relationship between environmental activism and Indigenization?

\* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ib9BVGDW6sw>

\*\* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLOfXsFlb18>

### **Guided Discussion: The Portrayal of AIM in *Slash***

1. Encourage students to conduct research on the American Indian Movement (AIM) to give some context for its portrayal in *Slash*. Discuss their findings, encouraging the students to consider the perspective of each source. Consider comparing the short video [Storied 1968: American Indian Movement](#)\* from the Minnesota History Center with the clip [“What was the American Indian Movement?”](#)\*\* from PBS’s *American Experience* (Season 21, Episode 9). What can we learn from such different portrayals of the same movement?
2. With this context in mind, discuss the portrayal of the American Indian Movement (AIM) in *Slash*. To what extent is it seen as effective in advocating for social justice within the main characters’ community, or for Indigenous peoples in Canada more generally?
3. In her 1988 book *I Am Woman*, Lee Maracle’s writes that “sexism, racism’s younger brother, was inherent in the character of the American Indian Movement” (137). How does Armstrong portray the gender dynamics within AIM?

\* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LLh3gw0kVhQ>

\*\* <https://www.pbs.org/video/american-experience-what-was-american-indian-movement/>