INDIGENOUS THEATRE

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National Arts Centre Orchestra | L'Orchestre du Centre national des Arts

NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE
CENTRE NATIONAL DES ARTS
Canada is our stage. Le Canada en scène.

Teacher Study Guide

The Spirit Horse Returns

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Territorial Acknowledgement

Canada's National Arts Centre is located on the traditional, unceded, unsurrendered territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation. We are deeply grateful to the elders, artists and community members for their support through the exchange of protocol and knowledge. Their generosity gives meaning and context to everything we do here. We are committed to honouring their language and culture in our ongoing activities and collaborations.

Jodi Contin in a scene from The Spirit Horse Returns

"The time has come to tell the story of the Spirit Horse, and this is an awesome medium with which to share."

- Dan Thomas, Elder

The horses you'll meet in this show are real, and so is their breed. The Ojibwe Horses enjoyed a unique relationship with the Indigenous peoples with whom they lived closely as helpers and spirit animals. We are happy you will be joining us on this continuing learning journey!

With gratitude, we acknowledge that this study guide and "The Spirit Horse Returns" were produced on Treaty 1 territory located on the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis nation. Through the sharing of the gift of music, the Spirit Horse Returns creative team commits to being part of the ongoing process of reconciliation.

We encourage you to learn more by visiting the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada at http://www.trc.ca/

Other Acknowledgements

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Lessons created by Amanda Ciavarelli, Jewel Casselman, Liz Kristjanson, Ken MacDonald, & Jodi Contin.

Artwork by Rhonda Snow Copyright © 2020

Essays “A Horse of a Different Culture” and “Of Settlers and Horses – in the Canadian Governments’ Words” by Ken MacDonald Copyright © 2020 Ojibwe Horse Society. Used by permission. http://www.ojibwehorse.ca/

“Asemaa’kwe” Copyright © 2020 Jodi Contin. Used by permission.

Lesson introduction videos coordinated by Dawn Muir (Manitoba Orff Chapter) and recorded by Aidan Clarke (Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra). Special thanks to Carol Taves and Calvin Christian School for hosting the recording session, and to the MOC board and all the volunteers.

Production & resources coordinated by Brent Johnson, Associate Director, Education & Community (Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra).

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Manitoba Chapter Orff Chapitre du Manitoba

“Thank you to Natasha Harwood and the [National Arts Centre’s Arts Alive], and to Trevor Kirczenow from the Ojibwe Horse Society for their generous efforts and support of this project!

Special thanks to Jodi Contin for her teaching, songs, and for her powerful voice.

Miigwetch to Elders Alison Cox and Dan Thomas and to Ojibwe Horse Caretaker Janet Thomas.”
- Ken MacDonald
co-creator, The Spirit Horse Returns

About This Study Guide

As a support to your classroom work, we have created this guide to help introduce you to the program and content of the performance. In it you will find:

- ***Biographical information*** about the NAC Orchestra and the performers;
- ***Classroom activities*** for you to share with your students.

We hope this study guide is helpful in preparing you for your concert experience. The level of difficulty for the activities is broad, so please assess them according to the grade level you teach.

Download the Digital Study Guide's Audio files.
Check in the **Additional Resources** folder for Digital Posters and more.

Introductory Videos

A series of brief videos have been created in partnership with the Manitoba Orff Chapter to introduce many of the lessons in this guide. We encourage you to view these videos as part of your preparation process so that you can learn tips, tricks, and best practices to help you and your students make the most of these musical learning experiences.

Special thanks to Dawn Muir, all the lesson authors, and the MOC board and volunteers who shared their creative gifts and worked incredibly hard to make this possible.

About Canada's National Arts Centre

Officially opened on June 2, 1969, the National Arts Centre (NAC) was a key institution created by Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson as a Centennial project of the federal government. Built in the shape of a hexagon, the design became the architectural leitmotif for Canada's premier performing arts centre. The National Arts Centre was designated a national historic site of Canada in 2013.

Designed by Fred Lebensold (ARCOP Design) and brilliantly renewed by the renowned architectural firm Diamond Schmitt Architects, the NAC features iconic performance spaces, public areas for learning and engagement events, and a magnificent glass atrium with a glittering entrance on Elgin Street, embracing Confederation Square and some of the most iconic views of important landmarks in our nation's capital.

The NAC is Canada's bilingual, multi-disciplinary home for the performing arts. The NAC presents, creates, produces, and co-produces performing arts programming in various streams—the NAC Orchestra, Dance, English Theatre, French Theatre, Indigenous Theatre, and Popular Music and Variety—and nurtures the next generation of audiences and artists from across Canada.

Today, the NAC works with countless artists, both emerging and established, from across Canada and around the world, and collaborates with scores of other arts organizations across the country.

More about the history of Canada's National Arts Centre:
nac-cna.ca/en/about/history

About the National Arts Centre Orchestra

This vibrant orchestra has an acclaimed history of touring, recording, and commissioning Canadian works. **Canada's NAC Orchestra** under the direction of renowned conductor, cellist and pianist **Alexander Shelley**, draws accolades both abroad and at home in Ottawa, where the Orchestra gives over 100 performances each year.

Since its debut in 1969, the National Arts Centre (NAC) Orchestra has been praised for the passion and clarity of its performances, its visionary learning and engagement programs, and its prominent role in nurturing Canadian creativity. Under the leadership of Music Director Alexander Shelley, the NAC Orchestra reflects the fabric and values of Canada, reaching and representing the diverse communities we live in with daring programming, powerful storytelling, inspiring artistry, and innovative partnerships.

Alexander Shelley began his tenure as Music Director in 2015, following Pinchas Zukerman's 16 seasons at the helm. Principal Associate Conductor of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and former Chief Conductor of the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra (2009 - 2017), he has been in demand around the world, conducting the Rotterdam Philharmonic, DSO Berlin, Leipzig Gewandhaus, and Stockholm Philharmonic, among others, and maintains a regular relationship with the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie and the German National Youth Orchestra.

Each season, the NAC Orchestra features world-class artists such as the newly appointed Artist-in-Residence James Ehnes, Angela Hewitt, Joshua Bell, Xian Zhang, Gabriela Montero, Stewart Goodyear, Jan Lisiecki, and Principal Guest Conductor John Storgårds.

As one of the most accessible, inclusive, and collaborative orchestras in the world, the NAC Orchestra believes music is a universal language with the power to communicate the deepest of human emotions and connect people through shared experiences.

National Arts Centre Indigenous Theatre

Photo : Fred Cattroll

Indigenous Theatre at the National Arts Centre produces, presents, develops and offers training opportunities in First Nations, Métis and Inuit storytelling, performance, dance, theatre, music and other forms of artistic expression that honour culturally knowledges, languages, territories and experiences. We acknowledge that the NAC is located on the unceded territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation and that many of our staff live in and many of our activities take place on this territory. To honour our hosts for sharing their lands, water and stories with us, we commit to maintaining meaningful relationships with Anishinabe Algonquin communities with the support of the NAC Algonquin Advisory Committee and through direct interaction with community members, including through outreach programs and artistic and cultural collaborations.

We are dedicated to the inspirational and transformational power of the performing arts. We approach our work humbly as we attempt to represent the diversity and proudness of our communities, knowing and acknowledging these communities, their artists and their stories encompass a wide range of geographies, practices, traditions, generations and genders. With one foot in community and one foot on the stage; from coast to coast to coast; locally, nationally and internationally, we are committed to the development of the next generation of artists, to creating meaningful opportunities for established artists, and to creating opportunities for collaboration. We are accountable to our families, communities, relationships and homelands while claiming space to tell stories by Indigenous peoples and with Indigenous peoples who create artistic ways to best represent themselves.

The performing arts encourage ongoing dialogue and broad, public education, as well as create opportunities to retain, and in many cases revive our stories; stories that reflect our history, our laws, our connection to the land; stories that, through their telling, will build resiliency and promote understanding; stories that will heal. The Calls to Action from the TRC and the Calls for Justice in the MMIWG report emphasize the right to know the truth; to create opportunities to share this truth, and that the retention of Indigenous languages and cultures is of the upmost importance. Indigenous Theatre has these principles at the core of its mission and vision. We call to action Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences to witness and participate in the work being created in order to build new relationships of trust and possibilities; to promote healing, mutual understanding and respect. Our mission is to honour our storytellers and thereby aid in the retention, resurgence and resilience of the multiple and diverse Indigenous cultures of this land.

Our stories are medicine. Storytelling is transformational. Storytelling is about law, language, creation, protocol, histories and preserving futures. Storytelling highlights and supports cultural realities and experiences. Storytelling is actively choosing to re-write histories, to celebrate self and community. We lift up storytellers to activate and celebrate Indigenous arts, culture and experiences.

What is the NAC Orchestra made of?

The NAC Orchestra is made up of 50 musicians, playing together on a variety of musical instruments. They are divided into four different sections (**string**, **woodwind**, **brass,** and **percussion**) and they have one common goal: **making music together**. Orchestras are not always the same size. Smaller orchestras, 20 to 34 musicians, are called "chamber orchestras." Larger orchestras, 50 to 110 musicians, are called "symphony orchestras" or "philharmonic orchestras."

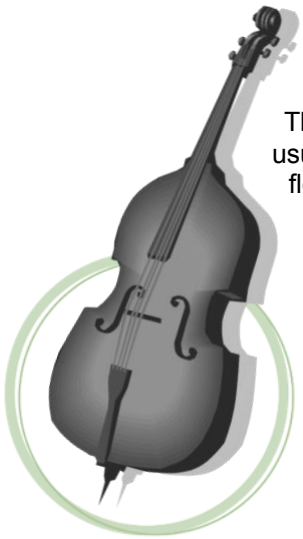
Strings

Four instruments make up the string family: violin, viola, cello and the double bass. All four instruments look similar and have four strings; however, they are different sizes and make higher and lower sounds depending on their size. Players make music on them either by drawing a bow across the strings or by plucking the strings with their fingers.

The VIOLIN is the smallest and highest sounding of the four string instruments. The violin is held under the musician's chin and there are more violins than any other instrument in the orchestra. Violins are divided into two sections: the firsts and the seconds.

The VIOLA is the next largest string instrument. Violas look like a violin except they are bigger and sound lower - comparable to an alto voice in a choir. Like the violins, violas are also held under the chin by the player.

The CELLO (or violoncello) is similar in shape to the violins and the violas, but much too large to be held under the chin! It is played upright while the musician sits on a chair, with the endpin out to the floor and the body of the cello between the knees.



The BASS (or double bass) is the largest string instrument. It has the deepest voice and is usually as big as the musicians themselves. The bass is played by balancing the endpin on the floor, similar to the cello, but bass players either sit on a stool or stand up to play.

Woodwinds

There are four main woodwind instruments: flute, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon. These instruments are hollow tubes (either wood or metal) pierced with holes. Musicians blow into one end of the tube and cover the holes with their fingers to produce different pitches. Some wind instruments use a reed to produce sound. A reed is made of thin wood which vibrates against the lips as a musician blows into the instrument to create a sound. Clarinets are single reed instruments, whereas oboes and bassoons are double-reed instruments. It means that the oboists and bassoonists use double-reeds against their lips to create a sound.

Most wind instruments are made from wood, like ebony, except for the flute, which is almost always made of silver or gold. Flutes create the highest notes, bassoons create the lowest.

One of the most ancient instruments is the FLUTE. The first flutes were made of wood or hollow reeds, but today they are usually made of silver. The flute has a bright silvery sound, which is made by blowing across a small hole on the mouthpiece. Its tiny counterpart, the PICCOLO, has a very high and often shrill sound. The flute and the piccolo are the only two instruments of the woodwinds that do not require reeds.

The OBOE is the first instrument you hear in the orchestra. Because of its pure and steady tone, the other instruments tune themselves to it. It is the highest sounding double reed instrument. A similar but slightly larger version of the oboe is called the ENGLISH HORN. It has a lower and mellower tone than the oboe.

The CLARINET is a single reed instrument. It has a warm tone and a large range, from low to high-pitched notes. The B flat clarinet is a transposing instrument, as the note played sounds one step lower than written. It also comes in several different sizes.

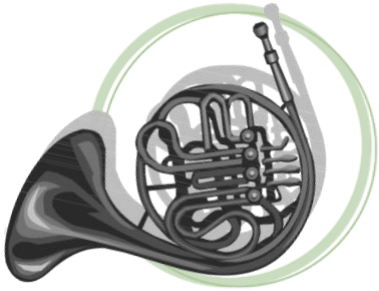
The BASSOON is the lowest sounding double reed instrument. It is made of a very long tube, which is folded in half to make it easier to hold and play.

Brass

Brass instruments get their name from the gold-colored metal they are often made of and are definitely the loudest in the orchestra; it explains why there are fewer brass players than string players. They are formed out of long tubes of metal, which are bent into different shapes. The length of the tube affects the sound with longer tubing generally producing lower notes.

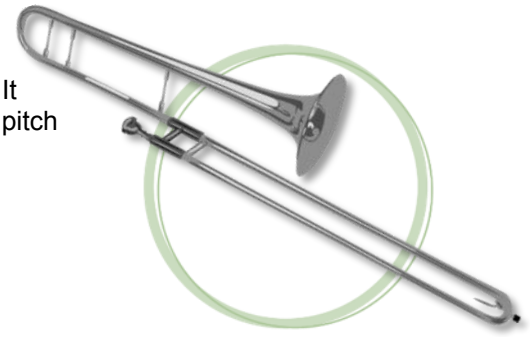
The other factor affecting the sound of the brass instruments is the size and shape of the mouthpiece. The position of the lips and mouth is called the embouchure. Lips held tightly together produce a high buzzing sound, which sounds through the instrument. The larger the mouthpiece, the looser the embouchure required and the lower the sound. Brass instruments have small mechanisms called valves that allow the sound to change, modifying the distance the air travels through the tube each time they are pressed or released by the player. However, the trombone has a slide that moves to change notes.

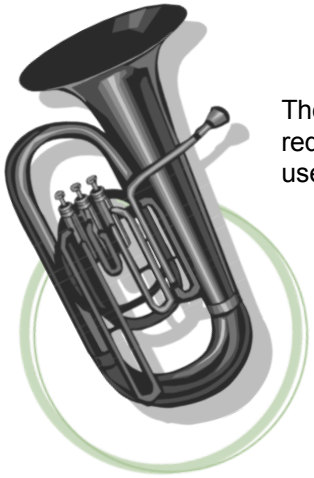
The TRUMPET is the smallest of the brass instruments, and it plays the highest, brightest sounding notes. It is a transposing instrument that sounds lower than the notes written on the page.



The FRENCH HORN has lots of twists and turns in its tubing and has a very warm tone quality. It has a large bell-like opening at the end into which the player inserts his or her hand to control the sound. The horn is a transposing valve instrument, which sounds lower than the notes written on the page.

The TROMBONE produces a much lower sound than the trumpet. It has a sliding section of tubing that enables the player to change the pitch by lengthening or shortening the tube.





The TUBA is the largest of the brass family. It has over six meters of tubing. A tuba player requires great breath control because the instrument is so large. Its low sound is often used to support the harmony of the whole orchestra.

Percussion

There are many interesting instruments in the percussion section. A percussion player must be very flexible as they may be required to play more than one instrument in the same piece.

Within this family, there are 3 types of instruments: metal, wood, and skin. These instruments are either "pitched" (they produce a specific note, like the xylophone) or "unpitched" (they produce a sound that has no specific note, like the snare drum). Percussion sounds are generally produced by hitting something with a stick or with the hands. Different pitches are produced on the timpani by changing the skin tension either by tightening or loosening screws fixed to the shell, or by using the pedal.

The SNARE DRUM is a very important rhythm instrument. It is usually played with sticks, though it can also be played with brushes. It has a relatively high tone.

The TIMPANI (or kettledrums) looks like giant copper bowls with lids on them. They are usually seen in groups of four. Each of the drums can be tuned to a different pitch with the biggest drum playing the lower notes and the smallest drum playing the highest.

The BASS DRUM is a much bigger drum that is played with a mallet with a large soft head. It has a deep low sound.

Special Instruments

There are some other special instruments that regularly appear in a symphony orchestra. Two of the most common are the Piano and Harp.

The HARP is a large, upright stringed instrument that has a soft, gentle tone. Its seven floor pedals adjust the pitch of the strings so that the instrument can be played in different keys. Harp players sit to play and can either strum or pluck the many strings on this instrument.

The Indigenous HAND DRUM, often referred to as the heartbeat of Mother Earth, is a sacred tool for spiritual connection, cultural expression, and community bonding. It symbolizes balance, equality, wholeness, and connection, and is used in various ceremonies and public events.

Map of the NAC Orchestra Sections

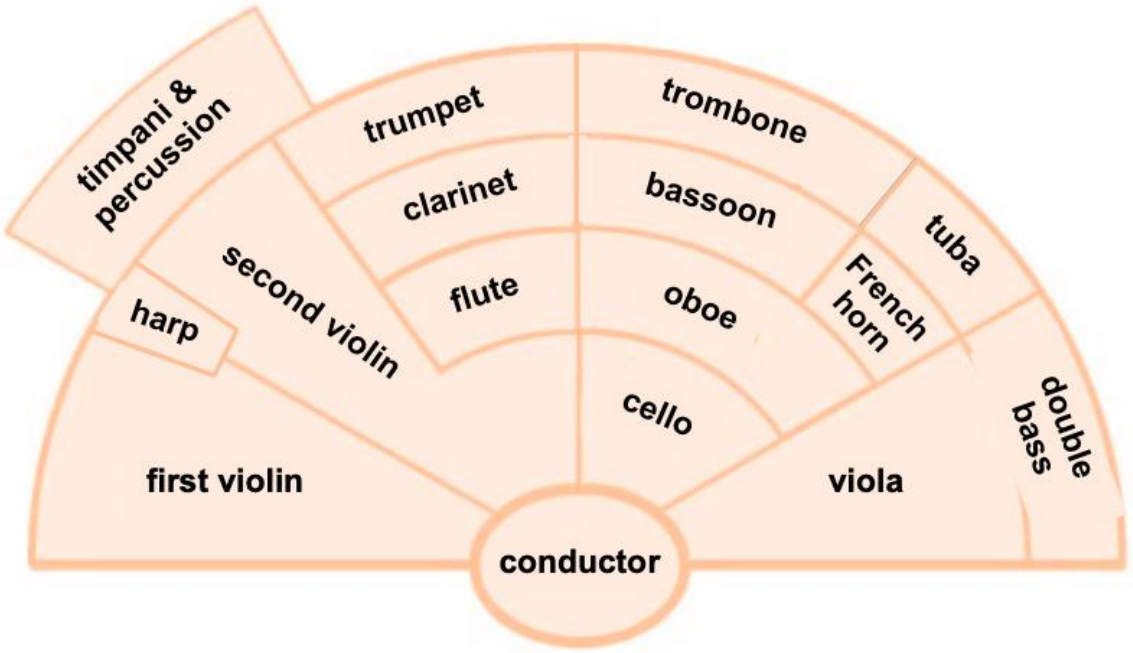


Photo by Curtis Perry

Creative Team & Artists

Rhonda Snow, Ken MacDonald, Jodi Contin Baker at the 2019 Gchi Dewin Indigenous Storytellers Festival, Parry Sound, Ontario

"The Spirit Horse Returns" is the work of many co-creators from different backgrounds. Some of us are Indigenous, some have settler roots that go back many generations, and one is a first-generation Canadian who comes from Hong Kong! We were all inspired by stories of the Ojibwe Horses and how Indigenous and non-Indigenous people have worked together to preserve and protect the breed.

We are also inspired by the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Their "Call to Action #63" calls for commitment to Aboriginal education issues. It encourages everyone to learn about Indigenous stories and Canadian history to develop intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.

As our co-creator Andrew Balfour says, "Reconciliation is a shared responsibility for everyone that's on Turtle Island now."

"The Spirit Horse Returns" and this guide are part of our responses. Thank you for making this show and guide part of your own.

Jodi Contin | Performer, Composer, Knowledge Keeper

Jodi Contin is a highly energetic Anishinaabe Kwe who hails from Wasauksing First Nation, which you'll visit in "The Spirit Horse Returns."

Empowering and lifting up others is one of the ways she holds space to encourage people to find their path to healing. Caregiving comes naturally to Jodi; she has worked in a variety of capacities in the social services industry from being employed as a Child Protection Worker and Family Support Worker and Prevention Services Supervisor. Currently Jodi is a Band Representative for Henvey Inlet First Nation.

Through those roles and her volunteer work, she has earned the trust of many. Jodi's Anishinabek roots and cultural ethical principles shine through in everything she does. Drumming and singing are activities close to her heart. Not only is Jodi a singer and drummer, she's a renowned drum-maker as well. Previously, she worked as Cultural Coordinator, for the Shawanaga First Nation Healing Centre, and brought together Knowledge Keepers, Elders and grassroots communities to help reclaim culture and identity, which also is one of the many pathways to healing.

As a mother to three sons, and Nookmis to Little Joe, family and community are incredibly important to her. Jodi is a respected member of her home community, regional Anishinabek communities along with the Town of Parry Sound. Recently, Jodi has been nominated for the Order of Parry Sound, in January 2021, and recently elected on to the Board of Directors for the Festival of The Sound and is in the productions "Sounding Thunder" and the "Spirit Horse Returns."

Her dedication to community does not go unnoticed. Local leadership has observed and commended the work she puts in towards community and cultural events. This Anishinaabe Kwe has a lot of stories to share about her own journey, many of which will also come with a great sense of humour.

Rhonda Snow | Visual artist, Ojibwe Horse breed expert

Métis artist Rhonda Snow is the recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award from Rare Breeds Canada for her tireless work preserving the Ojibwe Horse breed. Her vivid Woodlands style canvases captivate viewers and share the knowledge she has gained from the Elders about the “small horses of the big woods”. She has personally cared for over 60 Ojibwe Horses, playing an important role in the comeback of the breed from near extinction.

Rhonda is currently working intensively with breeders to help establish educational and equine assisted learning programs that feature the Ojibwe Horses. She is also actively researching the history of the breed, interviewing elders and knowledge keepers to collect stories of how Indigenous peoples related to horses both before and after contact with Europeans.

Ken Macdonald | Co-creator

Acclaimed as a "French horn master" by the Toronto Star, Ken MacDonald has performed in every province with a variety of Canada's top ensembles. He is currently Associate Principal horn with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, having played principal horn with the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, Symphony Nova Scotia, and the Vancouver Opera Orchestra. He has also performed as a guest artist with the Vancouver Symphony, the Canadian Opera Company, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, Orchestra London, the Victoria Symphony, and the Regina Symphony, to name but a few.

As a chamber musician, Ken has enjoyed longstanding associations with the Festival of the Sound in Parry Sound, Ontario, and with the national touring chamber ensemble Octagon. Solo appearances include the Winnipeg Symphony, the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, and national CBC broadcasts of newly commissioned works.

Ken is a National Arts Centre teaching artist and, in co-operation with the Winnipeg Symphony, has travelled to several of Manitoba's northern communities for educational workshops with composer and conductor Andrew Balfour. In 2017 he became a board member of the Ojibwe Horse Society. He also teaches at the University of Manitoba. He lives just outside Winnipeg with his husband, two children, four Ojibwe Horses, six goats, and a variable number of chickens and turkeys.

Naomi Woo | Conductor

Conductor Naomi Woo, named by CBC in 2019 as a "Top 30 Classical Musicians under 30", is the Assistant Conductor of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and the first-ever Music Director of Sistema Winnipeg. Born in Newfoundland and raised in North Vancouver, Naomi conducts across Canada and is noted for her work as a socially engaged artist and educator, with appearances at the National Arts Centre Orchestra, Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra, Regina Symphony Orchestra, and the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra. An advocate for opera and new music, Naomi recently led the Canadian premiere of Du Yun's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Angel's Bone* (re: Naissance Opera) and the world premiere of Ellis Ludwig-Leone's *The Night Falls* (Ballet Collective, American Opera Projects). She holds degrees from Yale, Université de Montréal, and Cambridge.

Kevin Lau | Composer

Composer Kevin Lau's music has been performed by groups such as the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, National Arts Centre Orchestra, Manitoba Chamber Orchestra, Against the Grain Theatre, and the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra. He is the composer of two ballets, Le Petit Prince and Dark Angels, both choreographed by Guillaume Côté (National Ballet of Canada). His music is featured on several commercially released albums, including the JUNO nominated "Spin Cycle."

Andrew Balfour | Composer

Of Cree descent, composer Andrew Balfour is an innovative composer/conductor/singer/sound designer with a large body of choral, instrumental, electroacoustic and orchestral works. His new Indigenous Opera, Mishabooz's Realm was recently premiered in Montreal and Halliburton, Ontario, commissioned by L'Atelier Lyrique de Opéra de Montréal and Highlands Opera Workshop.

Andrew Balfour has also been commissioned by the Winnipeg, Regina and Toronto Symphony Orchestras, Ensemble Caprice, Groundswell, the Winnipeg Jazz Orchestra, the Winnipeg Singers, and the Kingston Chamber Choir, among many others. His works have been performed and/or broadcast locally, nationally, and internationally.

Andrew is also the founder and Artistic Director of the innovative, 14-member vocal group Dead of Winter (formerly Camerata Nova), now in its 22nd year of offering a concert series in Winnipeg. With Dead of Winter, Andrew specializes in creating "concept concerts", many with indigenous subjects. These innovative offerings explore a theme through an eclectic array of music, including new works, arrangements and innovative inter-genre and interdisciplinary collaborations.

Elders

We are grateful to be receiving guidance from many Elders and Knowledge Keepers as this project continues.

Alison Cox/Stoneypoint – Bear Clan | Elder

Alison Cox/Stoneypoint - Bear Clan is a matriarch from the Three Fires confederacy of Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nations in Ontario, Robinson Huron Treaty area. They currently live in Winnipeg.

They have created public awareness, education workshops/trainings and have facilitated professional program opportunities to help organizations increase workplace reconciliation objectives that highlight Indigenous content and practices, partnerships and cultural understandings. They are recognized as a Spiritual Elder: and work in an Elder capacity for the Pembina Trails School Division, Kanikanichihk Inc., Kairos Canada Inc., and the Manitoba Conservatory of Music and arts. Alison is a published Traditional song and Drum Musician, a Creative Performance Artist and produces story picture works. They are also the founder of Red Robe Women Drum Society, which has released music that supports Indigenous social justice issues. Alison's works and passions keep the traditional practices and teachings of the Elders in the foreground.

Dan Thomas | Elder

Dan Thomas is a traditional Elder from Treaty 1 territory. You will find his comments in these Lesson Plans. Dan Thomas descends from grandparents from Sagkeeng Anishinaabe Nation and Traverse Bay Métis community. Dan spent numerous years as a teacher for elementary and secondary schools and Elder instructor for the University of Winnipeg's Faculty of Education in their Masters in Development Practice: Indigenous Development, Indigenous Governance program.

Dan is a resident Elder for Seven Oaks School Division and Aboriginal Student Services Centre (ASSC) at the University of Winnipeg. He is also a spiritual leader in the Indigenous community. He is fifth degree Midewiwin through Ponemah Midewiwin lodge at Red Lake Minnesota. Dan conducts Ojibwe sundance lodge, teaching lodge, and sweat lodge ceremonies. He is a Husband, a Father, a Grandfather and a Great Grandfather.

Concert Roster

Narrator: Jodi Contin

Artist: Rhonda Snow

Conductor: Naomi Woo

Script: Jodi Contin,
Ken MacDonald, and Rhonda Snow

Music: Kevin Lau

Original songs: Jodi Contin

Music and consultation:
Andrew Balfour

Original art and visual direction: Ronda Snow

Consulting Elders and Knowledge Keepers: Dan Thomas, Alison Cox, Anita Chechock, Stan Cuthand, Doug Cuthand, Norman Jordan, Skuya Fasthorse, Wabishki-anaang.

Stage Manager: Tobi Hunt McCoy

NACOtron musical score and script assistant: Todd Snelgrove

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First Violins
Yosuke Kawasaki (concertmaster)
Jessica Linnebach (associate concertmaster)
Noémi Racine Gaudreault (assistant concertmaster)
Jeremy Mastrangelo
Marjolaine Lambert
Emily Westell
Manuela Milani
Zhengdong Liang

Second violins
Emily Kruspe
Frédéric Moisan
Carissa Klopoushak
Leah Roseman
Winston Webber
Mark Friedman
Karoly Sziladi
Edvard Skerjanc

Violas
Jethro Marks (principal)
David Marks (associate principal)
David Goldblatt (assistant principal)
David Thies-Thompson
Tovin Allers
Paul Casey

Cellos
Rachel Mercer (principal)
**Julia MacLaine (assistant principal)
Leah Wyber
Marc-André Riberdy
Timothy McCoy

Double basses
Max Cardilli (assistant principal)
Vincent Gendron
Marjolaine Fournier

Flutes
Joanna G'froerer (principal)
Stephanie Morin

Oboes
Charles Hamann (principal)
Anna Petersen

English Horn
Anna Petersen

Clarinets
Kimball Sykes (principal)
Sean Rice

Bassoons
Darren Hicks (principal)
Vincent Parizeau

Horns
Julie Fauteux (associate principal)
Lawrence Vine
Lauren Anker
Louis-Pierre Bergeron

Trumpets
**Karen Donnelly (principal)
*Stéphane Beaulac (guest principal)
Steven van Gulik
*Andrew MacDougall

Trombones
*Steve Dyer (guest principal)
Colin Traquair

Bass Trombone
Zachary Bond

Tuba
Chris Lee (principal)

Timpani
*Simón Gómez (guest principal)

Percussion
Jonathan Wade

Harp
*Angela Schwarzkopf

Principal Librarian
Nancy Elbeck

Assistant Librarian
Corey Rempel

Personnel Manager
Meiko Lydall

Orchestra Personnel Coordinator Laurie Shannon

*Additional musicians

**On Leave

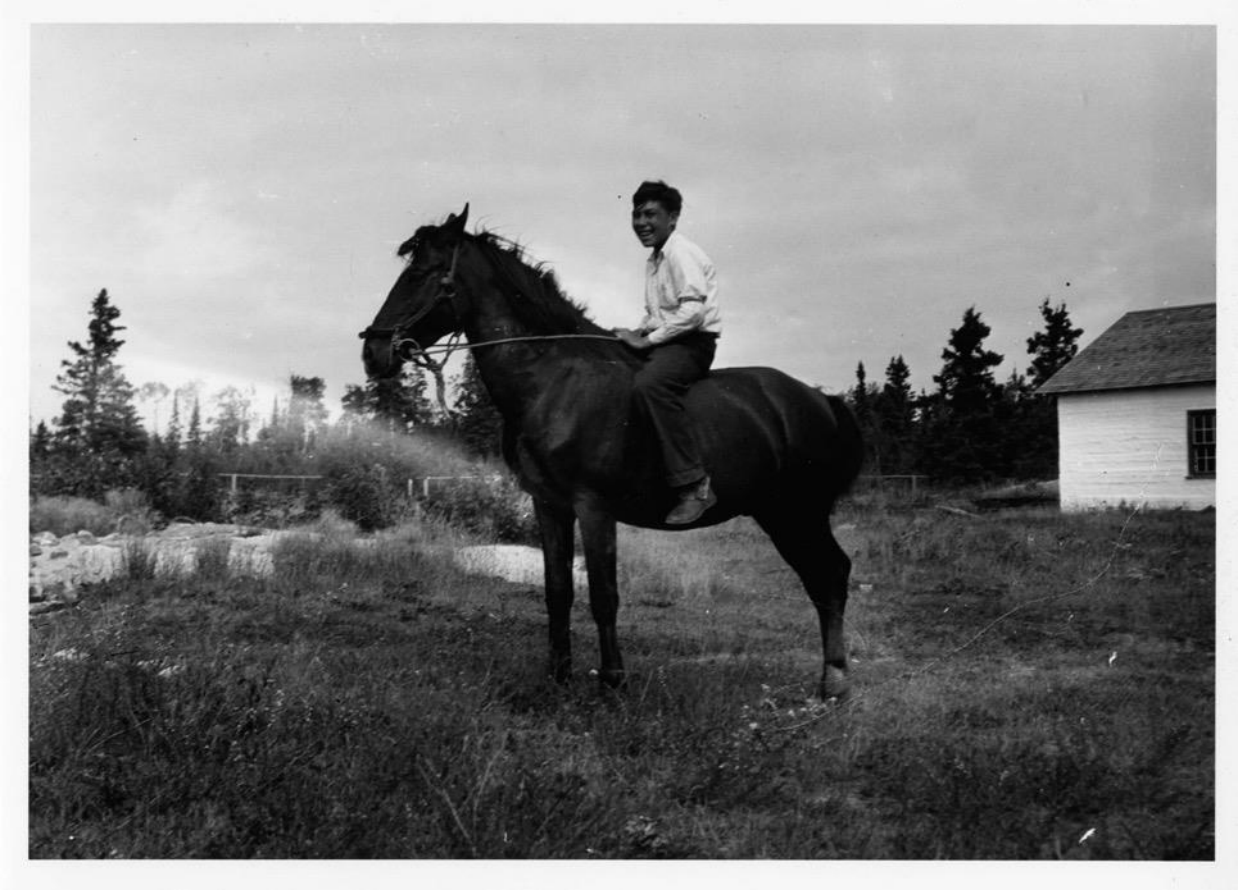
Trauma-Informed Practice

The themes of this presentation are promising, and the native horses we meet in The Spirit Horse Returns are strong and resilient. However, we do share stories of death and loss. These horses were once fully integrated into the lives of Indigenous and Métis people as helpers and spirit animals, and the death and loss they experienced runs parallel with that of the humans around them. Some audience members may find that strong emotions are triggered.

The Spirit Horse has been developed with the input of Elders and knowledge keepers who are experienced in dealing with youth trauma and abuse. We believe the arts, music, and theatre are a safe space to begin to learn about some of the difficult issues of truth and reconciliation. Together with you, we can help equip young audiences with the skills they need to process the emotions that might arise.

During the show, we will let audiences know they should identify and talk to someone they trust if they are experiencing difficult emotions. It is okay to put in earbuds and listen to something else, or for audience members to close their eyes and plug their ears.

We also invite you and our young audience members to interact with us. Please reach out and share what you and your students are feeling, or if you are creating art or writing in response. We hope you find the performance exhilarating and inspiring.



John Berens, son of Chief William Berens in Berens River, MB

The Spirit Horse Returns: The Story

In The Spirit Horse Returns, an Indigenous friend of one of the musicians in the orchestra to care for an Ojibwe Horse on their family farm. Not knowing anything about this Indigenous-developed breed, they and the audience go on a journey of discovery.

An Indigenous knowledge keeper takes us back through time to meet these mysterious "small horses of the deep woods" who were helpers and spirit guides to First Nations and Métis people. Exploring the diversity of Indigenous cultures, we visit the magnificent Horse Nations of the prairies, and jig with a joyous Métis kitchen party. The arrival of settlers also brings challenges and changes as the small "Indian Ponies" are pushed aside during colonization and used for such purposes as the Gold Rush and Pony Express.

But just when it seems they will be lost forever, the last few horses are rescued! Through the daring efforts of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people working together, the horses are given new life and new hope. We're gifted a beautiful new song to carry with us as caretakers of the Spirit Horses. Finally, we are introduced to an inspiring prophecy that shows each child that they have a place in bringing about a better world where people of all Nations care for each other and for the land we share.

Musical Glossary

Beat/Tempo/Rhythm
Is there a strong pulse (like walking), or little sense of a beat, (like floating)? Is there a steady beat or no beat? Is the speed (tempo): *allegro* (quickly and in a lively way), *vivace (*briskly, quickly, brightly), *moderato* (at a moderate speed), *andante* (somewhat slowly at a walking pace), *adagio* (slowly and gracefully), *largo* (slowly) or *accelerando/ritardando* (changing speed, i.e., accelerating/slowing down)? Are there long/short, even/uneven notes or repeated rhythm patterns (*ostinato*, i.e., Ravel's Bolero)?

Meter/Time Signature
2/4, 3/4, 4/4 (duple), 3/8, 6/8, 9/8, 12/8 (triple) are most common. Find the grouping of beats in 2s, 3s 4s. Try conducting in 2 (down/up) or 3 (triangle) to feel duple or triple time.

Melody
Is the tune memorable? Is it in a minor or major tonality? Does the tune leap from high to low (disjunct) or do notes move in close steps (conjunct)? Is the movement ascending/upward or descending/downward? Are notes repeated (*melodic ostinato)* or played in a flat/wavy/jagged contour? Does the music sound consonant/dissonant? Articulation: Is the playing smooth (*legato)* or detached playing, like hot potato (*staccato*)?

Harmony and Texture
Is more than one pitch sounding at the same time (example do + mi + sol, or the "C chord")? One person singing alone creates unison, not harmony! Is there more than one melody together (polyphonic), one melody with accompaniment (homophonic), or one melody alone (monophonic)? Are the combined sounds modern, jazzy, more traditional? Are there few or many resting places or silence?

Dynamics and Mood
Are there loud and soft sections? The most common music terms and symbols are:
pianissimo (*pp*) – very soft
piano (*p*) – soft
mezzo piano/mezzo forte (*mp, mf*) – moderately soft/moderately loud
forte (*f*) – loud
fortissimo (*ff*) – very loud
crescendo/decrescendo (cresc./decresc.) – gradual increase/decrease in loudness
How dramatic is the music? What is its mood: lively, happy, frantic, sad, joyful, carefree, relaxed, gentle, agitated, angry …?

Timbre and Tone Colour
Can you identify what is making the music? Voice (male/female, adult/child), instruments of the orchestra (woodwinds, brass, strings, percussion), electronic instruments, body percussion or found percussion (keys, rulers, etc.), nature sounds (birds singing, wind in trees, etc.), non-pitched percussion (woodblocks, triangles, etc.), pitched percussion (barred instruments, i.e., xylophone).

Concert Preparation

Let's Get Ready!

Your class is coming to the National Arts Centre to see and hear the NAC Orchestra! Here are some suggestions of what to do before, during, and after the performance. Whether it is your first symphony concert or you are a seasoned audience member, there is always something new to learn and experience!

Before | Read

Read the biographies and program notes of this guide.

- Were there any composers you had never heard of before?
- Did you learn anything new or interesting about one of the pieces, composers, instruments or NAC Orchestra musicians?

During | Look and Listen

Look around the orchestra and the hall.

- Have you been to Southam Hall before?
- Are there any instruments you haven't seen before?
- Do you notice anything interesting about the orchestra?

Listen to the orchestra and conductor.

- Is it different listening to the live orchestra versus a recording?
- Think about how the different pieces make you feel.
- Is there a particular instrument or part of the piece that you like listening to the most?
- What instruments are used to create different sound effects?

After | Discuss and Reflect

Discuss and reflect with your students using the *post-Concert* resource located on page 109 of this Study Guide!

Review | Guidelines and Reminders

Review these guidelines and reminders with your students:

- Please arrive **45 minutes** prior to the performance.
- No food or drink allowed inside Southam Hall.
- No flash photography, recordings, or texting.
- Please visit the bathroom before the concert. Audience members walking in and out during the concert can be distracting.
- We encourage you to applaud and show appreciation. The orchestra relies on your energy to perform!
- If you are unsure when the piece of music is over, look to the conductor and performers. The conductor will turn and face the audience once the piece of music is over.
- Please don't talk, save your thoughts to share after the concert.
- Teachers and/or supervisors always remain with students.

Have fun and enjoy your experience!

Classroom Activities

Dreams and Doodles

Art Lesson

Lesson Plan by Ken MacDonald

Learning Goals

Students will be introduced to the Woodlands style of painting as represented by the art of Rhonda Snow.

They will then create art of their own using either a coloring sheet or line drawing techniques.

Listening to Elder Dan Thomas…

"Students should learn what 'appropriation' is and how cultural appropriation hurts Indigenous cultures. Non-Indigenous people have appropriated many aspects of Indigenous cultures including the woodland style of painting. Students should know that while they might study and learn this style of painting, they should leave the sale of art in this style to authentic Indigenous artists."

For more information about appropriation, visit this article from the Canadian Encyclopedia:

- https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/cultural-appropriation-of-indigenous-peoples-in-canada

Context

Rhonda begins her paintings with a frame outline she calls a "doodle". Once the frame is complete, she strengthens the lines as she wishes, finally adding color to the negative spaces.

For many First Nations artists, paying attention to dreams is an important part of the creative process. Rhonda says, "I usually plan my painting at night before I sleep. My paintings often come out of a dream vision. I will often imagine the scene with my eyes closed."

Rhonda favors a traditional Indigenous style termed "Woodlands" and finds her inspiration in stories she has collected from Elders and Knowledge Keepers. She explains, "The Ojibwe Horses weren't kept by Indigenous people the same way most horses are kept today. For much of the year they were like wildlife, free to do as they wished in the forests and prairie. But they lived close to people and willingly helped them with their work in the winter months, like hauling logs and trapping." They also participated in many traditional ceremonies and were revered as spirit animals.

Rhonda says the process of visualizing a painting is not much different from when she was barrel racing with her horses: "Before each race, I would first imagine my horse running the barrels."

Materials And Resources

- Younger Grades: Coloring Printouts
- Older Grades: A square of blank paper (any color) and pencils, pencil crayons, pens, or markers

Lesson

Procedure (younger grades)

- Show the sequence of Rhonda's paintings and invite discussion. What colors do you see? What colors do you like? Do they look like real horses' colors? Have you ever had a dream about an animal? Was it a real animal?
- Introduce the word, "doodle". www.kidcandoodle.com gives additional resources.
- Page 31 is a printable coloring sheet featuring a horse and rider in a winter forest. What do you think is happening in this scene? Color the picture.
- Page 32 is a printable multi-use sheet. There is lots of space for students to write their own story featuring horses in either in words or in pictures. Do students have a horse story to tell in images? Is the story real or imagined?
- Let students choose which of these printable sheets they would prefer to work with.

Procedure (older grades)

- Discuss the Woodlands style of art, explaining it is one of three major styles of contemporary Indigenous art.
    - Resource: http://www.native-art-in-canada.com/woodlandart.html
- Show the sequence of Rhonda's paintings, discuss the artists' statement, and note the doodling method she describes.
- Research: look up the history, definition, and benefits of "doodling".
    - Resource: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doodle
    - Resource: https://goodparentingbrighterchildren.com/doodle-art/
- Discuss – do Rhonda's paintings fit the definition of doodling that you researched? Why or why not?
- Discuss – Do you doodle? Do you find it relaxing? When do you doodle? Do you prefer shapes, cartoons, or realistic figures?
- Introduce the Zentangle method.
- Have students try the Zentangle method for themselves using the materials.
- Put on different kinds of music. Did it change what you were doodling? How?
- Encourage students to either represent figures from their own dreams as Rhonda does, or create non-representational artwork, using the Zentangle method.

Modified Activity

Working with horses can be beneficial and enjoyed by people of all abilities, as discussed in this article. Sharing this understanding with all students can be enlightening and empowering as it acknowledges ableism. If you have students who are not able to complete the main activities, invite them to depict a story about a horse or their impressions of Rhonda's art in a suitable alternate way such as free-form movement or interaction.

The Zentangle Method (more at zentangle.com)

Watch this video demonstration of Zentangle for kids:

Zentangles are a way to teach doodling which is similar to the Woodland style but which does not appropriate an Indigenous artform. Starting with a basic method and structure, it can give permission for students to explore their creativity without judgement or expectation.

Start with a blank piece of square paper. Place a light pencil dot in each corner, about a pen's width from the edges. Now it's no longer a blank piece of paper.

Border

Connect those dots with a light pencil line, straight or curvy, to create a square. This is your border.

String

Inside the border, draw a light pencil line or lines to make what we call a "string." The string separates your tile into sections, in which you draw your tangles. A string can be any shape. It may be a curvy line that touches the edge of the border now and then, or series of straight lines that go from one side of the border to the next.

Tangle

A tangle is a predefined sequence of simple strokes that make up a pattern. Draw your tangles in pen inside (usually) the pencil strings and borders. Tangle is both noun and verb. Just as you dance a dance, you tangle your tangles. Draw your tangles with deliberate strokes. Don't worry about what it's going to look like. Just focus on each stroke of the pen as you make it. Trust that you'll know what to do next when the time to do it comes. There is no up or down to Zentangle art so feel free to rotate your tile in any direction that is most comfortable for your hand as you draw.

Shade

Add shades of gray with a graphite pencil to bring contrast and dimension to your tile. The black and white two-dimensional tangles transform through shading and appear three-dimensional. You can use a tortillion (a paper blending stump) to soften and blend the graphite.

Here is a tutorial on how to make a tortillion.

Initial and Sign

This is art you created. You should sign it. Put your initials on the front (many people create a unique monogram or chop for this step). On the back, place your name, date, comments and observations.

Appreciate

Hold your tile at arm's length. Turn it this way and that. Appreciate what you just created.

Does your Zentangle remind you of Rhonda's paintings? What is similar and what is different?

Extension

Dream Doodles

Invite your students to fill their Zentangle borders with representative figures. Is there a story you would like to share through drawing? Have you had a strong dream image that you would like to draw? The space is yours to explore.

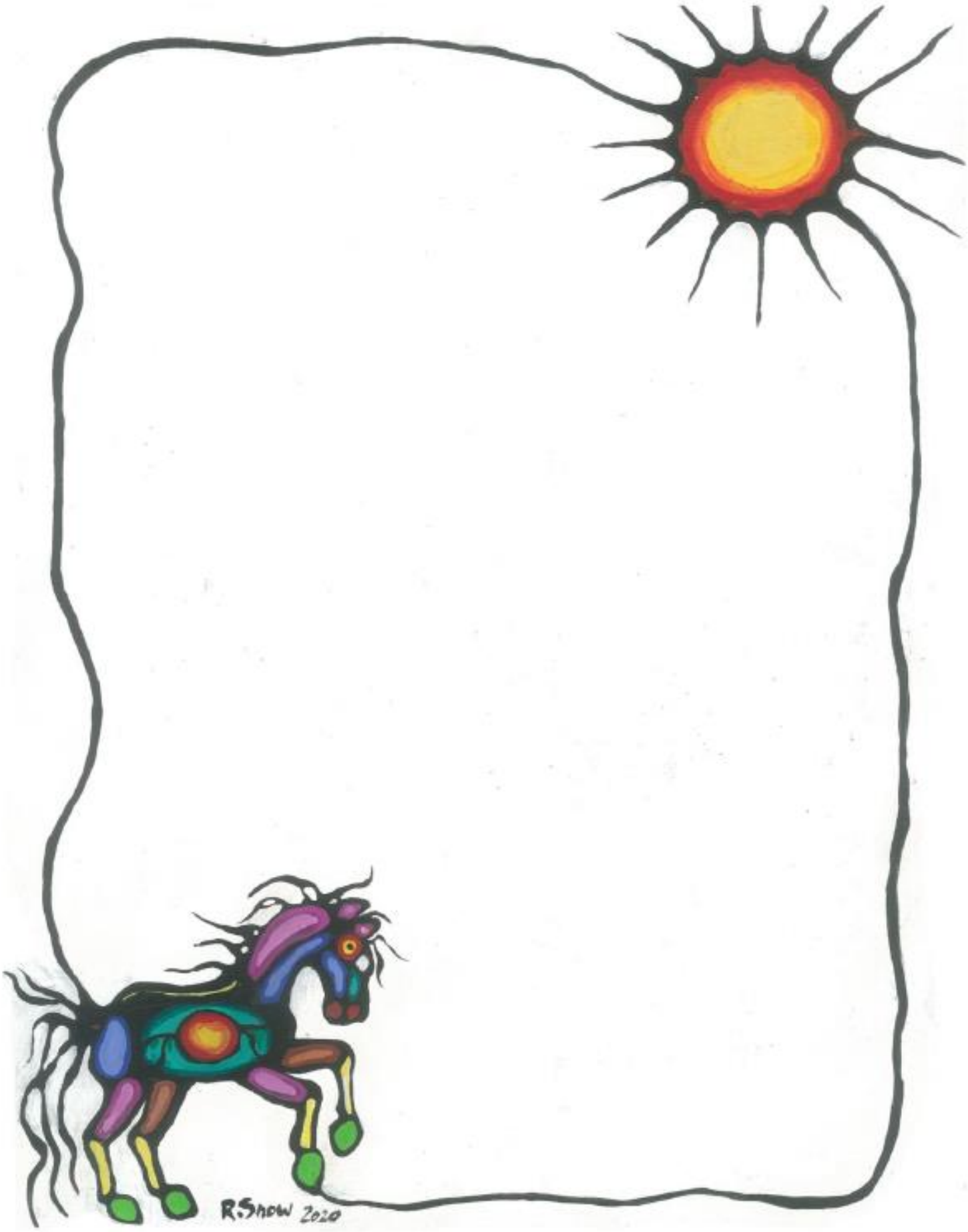
Sometimes Rhonda paints one of the many Ojibwe Horses she has cared for. This painting is called “Tatonka”, which means “buffalo” in the Dakota language. Can you see the buffalo hidden in the horse?

- Where are these horses? (In the water)
- What other animals do you see? (Beavers, loon, fish)

Rhonda says…

"This painting is called 'The Beaver Dam.' It's from a story told by the Elders. A small herd of little native ponies fell through a beaver dam and drowned. Their Spirits can still be heard whinnying and running."


Rhonda Snow 2020


R.Snow 2020

“Asemaa’kwe Song”: Honoring a Horse

Music

Lesson Plan by Ken MacDonald

Learning Goals

Students will be introduced to the role of the honor song in Indigenous culture and learn a song written by Jodi Contin for an Ojibwe Horse.

About Jodi Contin

Jodi Contin is an Ojibwe Band Member of Wasauksing First Nation where she resides with her family. She has been a part of the Grand Medicine Society and a devoted Sun dancer for more than 10 years. She also leads sweat lodges and is clan mother of the lodge.

Context

Jodi Contin says, “This song honors a very special horse you will meet in ‘The Spirit Horse Returns’ who is named Asemaa’kwe. The song says this is an Anishinaabe Horse, an Ojibwe Spirit Horse, and her name means ‘Tobacco Woman’. We thank Creator for this beautiful gift, and we say that’s a good working horse”.

Sharing songs is an essential part of Indigenous social life and spiritual practice. While some songs are private and are only sung within a ceremony or are gifted to individuals, “Song for Asemaa’kwe” is an “honor song”, which are often sung at public gatherings such as pow-wows. Honor songs hold a special place in the community to respect individuals, groups, and communities.

The proper protocol for learning songs is to understand its origins, meanings, and purpose. When singing “Song for Asemaa’kwe” for others, you can share that this is an honor song by Jodi Contin from Wasauksing First Nation and share the story behind the song with them, too. You will be part of a chain that carries this oral history. Miigwetch for adding your own voice to our shared journey of reconciliation!

“Song for Asemaa’kwe” has a recurring refrain consisting of vocables, which are non-textual syllables used as lyrics, which are repeated four times. The number four is important in Indigenous spirituality and can represent the four directions, the four sacred medicines, the four sacred animals, and more. Jodi says, “The four beats at the beginning honor creation and spirit”.

And if you listen to the recording, what does the “whoop” at the end mean? Jodi explains, “The whoop is referred to as a ‘buffalo call’ at the end of a song. It’s like a celebration So our ancestors know we’re happy to be able to sing that song for them, kind of like shouting ‘bravo!’”

Materials And Resources

- Hand drums or clapping
- Singing
- Other instruments as desired

Listening to Elder Dan Thomas…

Dan notes that spoken and written Ojibwe differs by community.

"The writer of the Indigenous language writes as it is spoken by Potawatomi speakers.

This is how Anishinaa bemowin is spoken from Manitoulin Island and further east in Ontario."

Procedure

- Play the song for students. A written version in the key of F is included on pages 35 and 36. You can also listen to Jodi performing it for us in the key of B.
- Discuss and follow the protocol for learning and sharing Indigenous honor songs.
- Learn the vocable patterns and discuss how the vocable section recurs four times and the basis in custom for this structure.
- Discuss the Ojibwe words and their meanings. Mention Elder Dan Thomas's observation. If appropriate and available, consult a local Indigenous language specialist. Jodi has shared this song for you to learn, but how might these words sound different where you live?
- Learn and perform the song.

About the Lyrics

The lyrics consist of a mixture of words and vocables, which are syllables that convey the spirit of the subject.

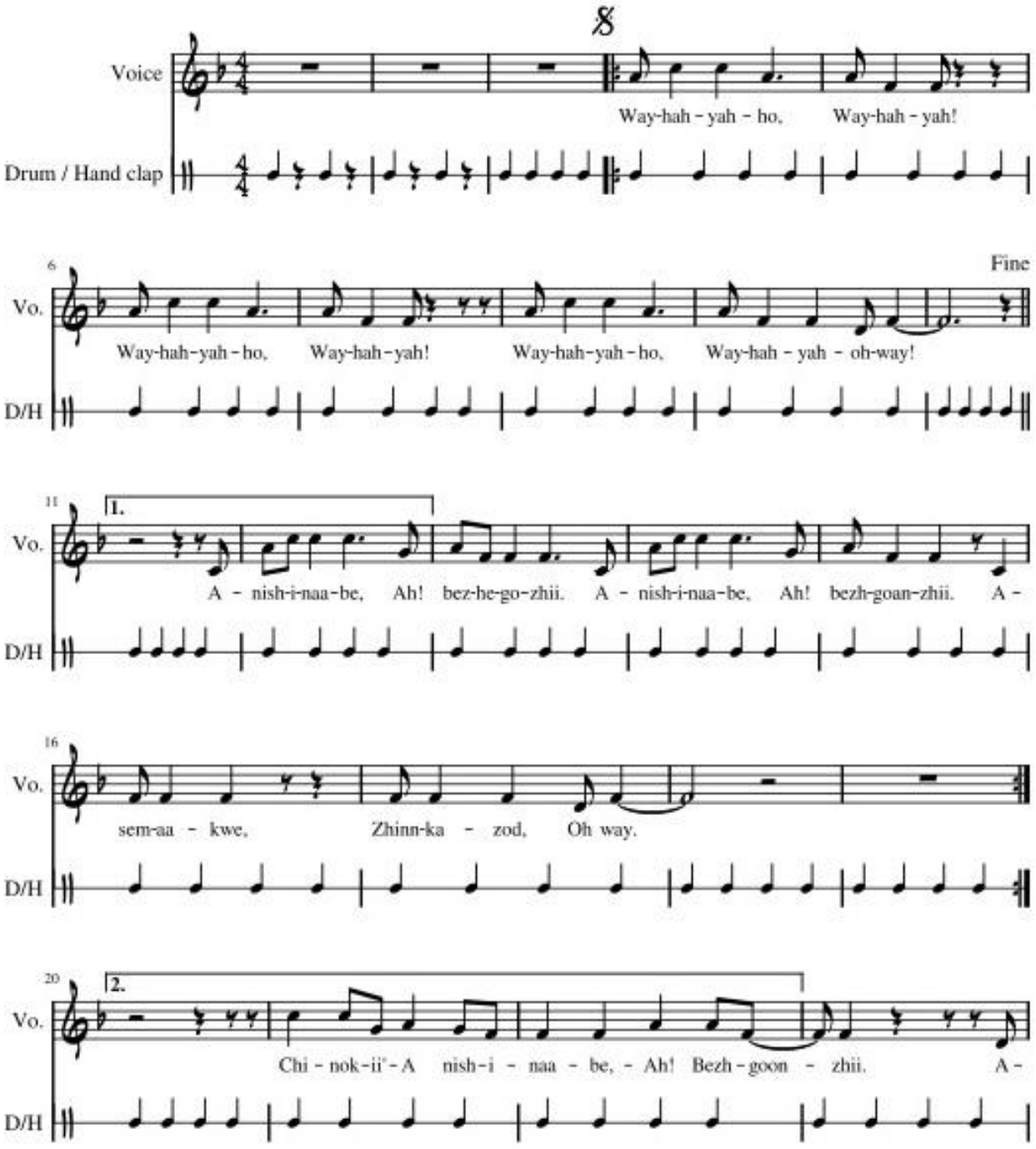
Note: vocables should not be referred to as "nonsense" syllables.

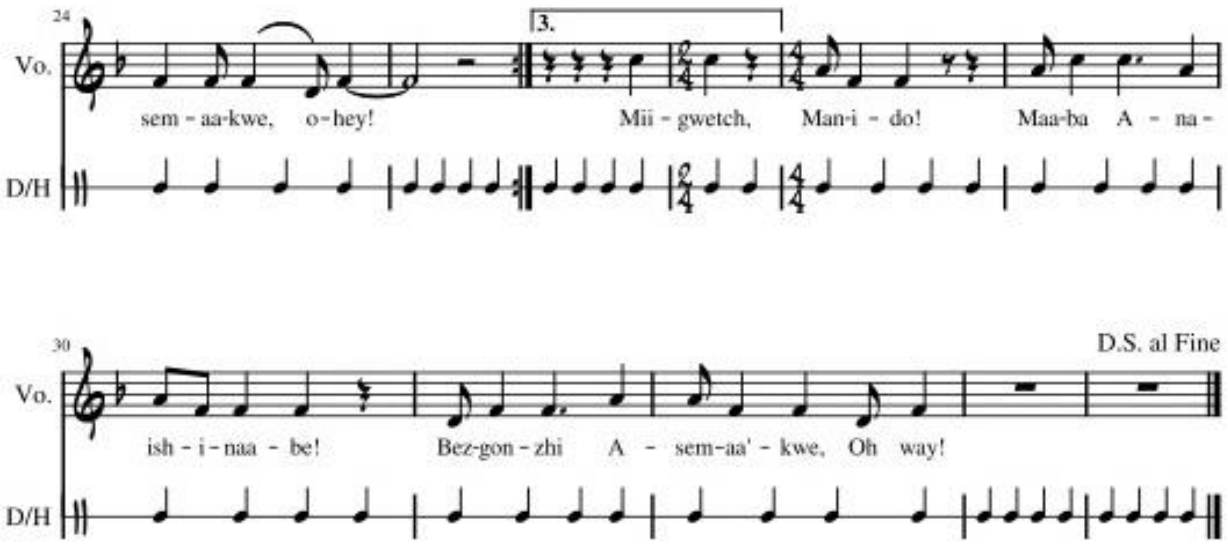
Asemaa *(ah-SAME-ah)* is the Ojibwe word for tobacco, used ceremonially and considered the first medicine plant given by Creator. **Ikwe** *(IK-way)* means woman. Taken together, **Asemaa'kwe** *(ah-SAME-ah-kway)* means "Medicine Woman". An Anishinaabe friend, Janet Thomas, gave her that name because her uniform coat color looks very much like the ceremonial plant.

Asemaa'kwe

(ah-SEM-ah kway)

Jodi Contin
(SOCAN)





Translations

Way ha yah ho, Way hah yah! Way ha yah ho, Way hah yah! Way ha yah ho, Way hah yah, oh way!	*vocables*
Anishinaabe bezhgoonzii Asemaa'kwe zhinnkaazod	*Ojibwe Horse* *Tobacco Woman is her name*
Chi-nokiid Anishinaabe bezhgoonzii	*Big working Ojibwe Horse*
Miigwetch Manido Maaba Anishinaabe bezhgoonzii	*Thank you, Creator* *For this Ojibwe Horse*
Asemaa'kwe	*Tobacco Woman*

Song for the Caretakers

Music

Lesson Plan by Jodi Contin and Ken MacDonald

Learning Goals

Students will be introduced to the importance of music in Indigenous culture and will learn Anishinaabe lyrics and cultural concepts through an original song written by Jodi Contin.

Listen to Jodi perform "Song for the Caretakers" online at https://youtu.be/UNKYIQvKi8U

Context

> *"In the Anishnaabe culture, a lot of music is public, like what we've been listening to today. It can be shared with anyone. But there is another kind of music that's only part of our ceremonies. It's private and it has to be gifted to the listener. I would like to gift you all a song now. Anyone can choose to protect the Spirit Horses and the land. This is a song for the Caretakers."*
>
> -**The Spirit Horse Returns**-

With this deep cultural sharing, the Indigenous narrator in "The Spirit Horse Returns" encourages us to look inwards and take a personal part in the journey of the Ojibwe Horses. However, it's important to understand that "Song for the Caretakers is not, itself, a private ceremonial song. Please emphasize that Jodi wrote it for everyone to learn, sing, share, and enjoy.

Jodi says, "This is a contemporary song that introduces Anishinaabe words and vocables as a way to learn the language and connect with the culture."

"When I was writing this song I was thinking about the horses and the healing they can bring. The bezghozhi walk parallel with Anishinaabe – when you look at their journey, it's like the journey we have taken too. Like the horses, we almost lost ourselves and the essence of ourselves. The horses have helped a lot of people who have lost their culture connect with who they are."

"So being a caretaker is not just about sheltering and feeding the horses, it's knowing they re-connect us to Spirit, to whatever and whoever you need to reconnect with."

Of the lyrics, Jodi says, "I share two concepts in this song – one is 'Migwech zhamada dho' which is gratitude for Creator. The other is 'Zshk gay'o bezghozhi,' which means 'medicine horse'. This is about the healing the horse brings. When you think of all you go through in life, there are things that help you through those struggles. For us, it's the trees outside, the water, the horses – it's a 360-degree world view where we see and acknowledge Spirit everywhere. That's why you can instantly connect with horses. They have that gift of healing, that medicine of life and giving healing to people in a way they can't heal for themselves. It's blood memory for us."

Materials And Resources

- Hand drums or clapping
- Singing
- Other instruments as desired

Listening to Elder Dan Thomas…

Dan notes that spoken and written Ojibwe differs by community.

“The writer of the Indigenous language writes as it is spoken by Potawatomi speakers. This is how Anishinaabemowin is spoken from Manitoulin Island and further east in Ontario.”

Procedure

1. Play the song for students. A written version is included on the following pages.
2. Share and discuss the context Jodi has provided.
3. Discuss the Ojibwe words and their meanings. Mention Elder Dan Thomas’s observation. If appropriate and available, consult a local Indigenous language specialist. Jodi has shared this song for you to learn, but how might these words sound different where you live?
4. Learn and perform the song.

Listen to Jodi perform “Song for the Caretakers” online at https://youtu.be/UNKYIQvKi8U

Rhonda Snow's artwork tells the stories shared by Elders about the horses now known as the Ojibwe Horses, which were widely used by many First Nations across Turtle Island.

An Ojibwe Horse Caretaker, Rhonda is a knowledge keeper who has received many stories and teachings about "The Spirit Horses", as she prefers to call them. "They never belonged to any one Nation, they were helpers to all, and are wildlife and just as much a part of this land as the forests and air."

Rhonda says…

"Everyone used to say that the Indian horses that were here were small and worthless. But I started to ask people about the stories, which go against the history books. These small horses of the deep woods were perfectly suited to the work the people would do – hunting and trapping. They lived close to the people, they worked willingly for them, and they ran free other times.

"The Elders say the horses were always here. They never attack the European views, they are always respectful, but they say the horses were always here, in the oral stories that are told.

"If everyone is talking about truth and reconciliation, why aren't people listening respectfully to the elders? Resilience is not submitting, it's able to push through the resistance. So, this painting is about me resisting the academic and scientific pressure to listen only to settlers' history books.

"In this painting, the Elder in the corner with sweetgrass braids is the voice of all the Elders telling us the stories. The horse is here on Turtle Island, which is what Indigenous people call North America, and the moons on the turtle's back represent the full moons through the year.

"There is a story from not long ago of a girl who became lost as she was going to visit a neighboring village. She was carried by her horse through a blinding snowstorm. Like her, maybe we follow the traditional stories and find our way."

This painting shows the children being taken from their parent to the Residential School and the religious authority demanding the horses of the village be destroyed.

Rhonda says…

"Religious authorities did not want the children seeing the wild native ponies breeding. The Indian Agents called them worthless, mangy, and too small to be profitable. The health officials said they were dirtying the waters. So, they ordered them to be destroyed and wanted to be rid of the worthless Native ponies."

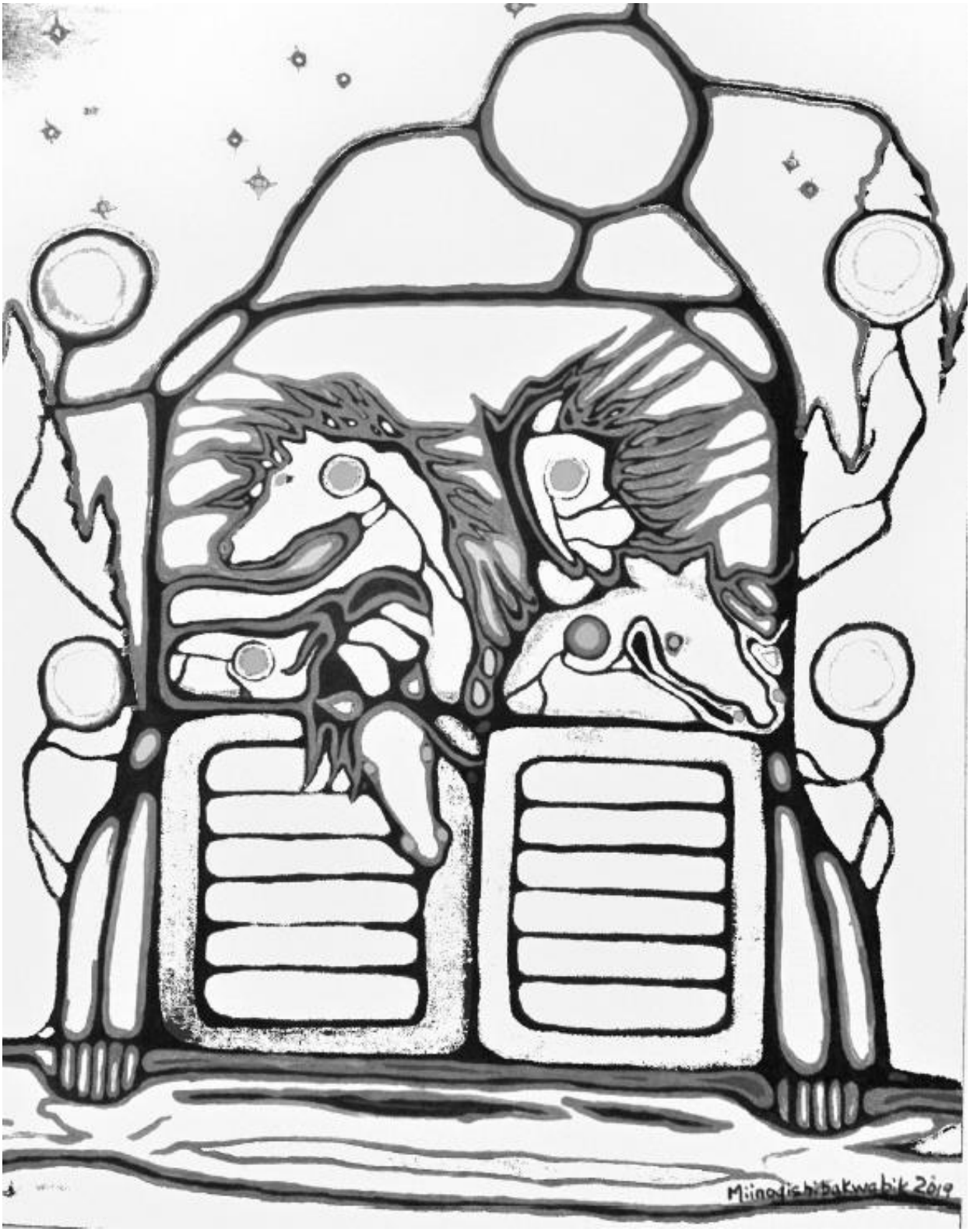
This painting shows the last four mares of the Ojibwe Horse breed, who were rescued in 1977 at Lac La Croix First Nation. The government had plans to shoot these horses who were wandering free through the village. Instead, they were trailered by a group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who worked together to bring them to safety in the United States. From there, the breed was gradually brought back and returned to Caretakers in both the US and Canada.

Today there are about 200 Ojibwe Horses. The Ojibwe Horse Society works with many caretakers and breeders to maintain and encourage the return of these horses to their traditional territories.

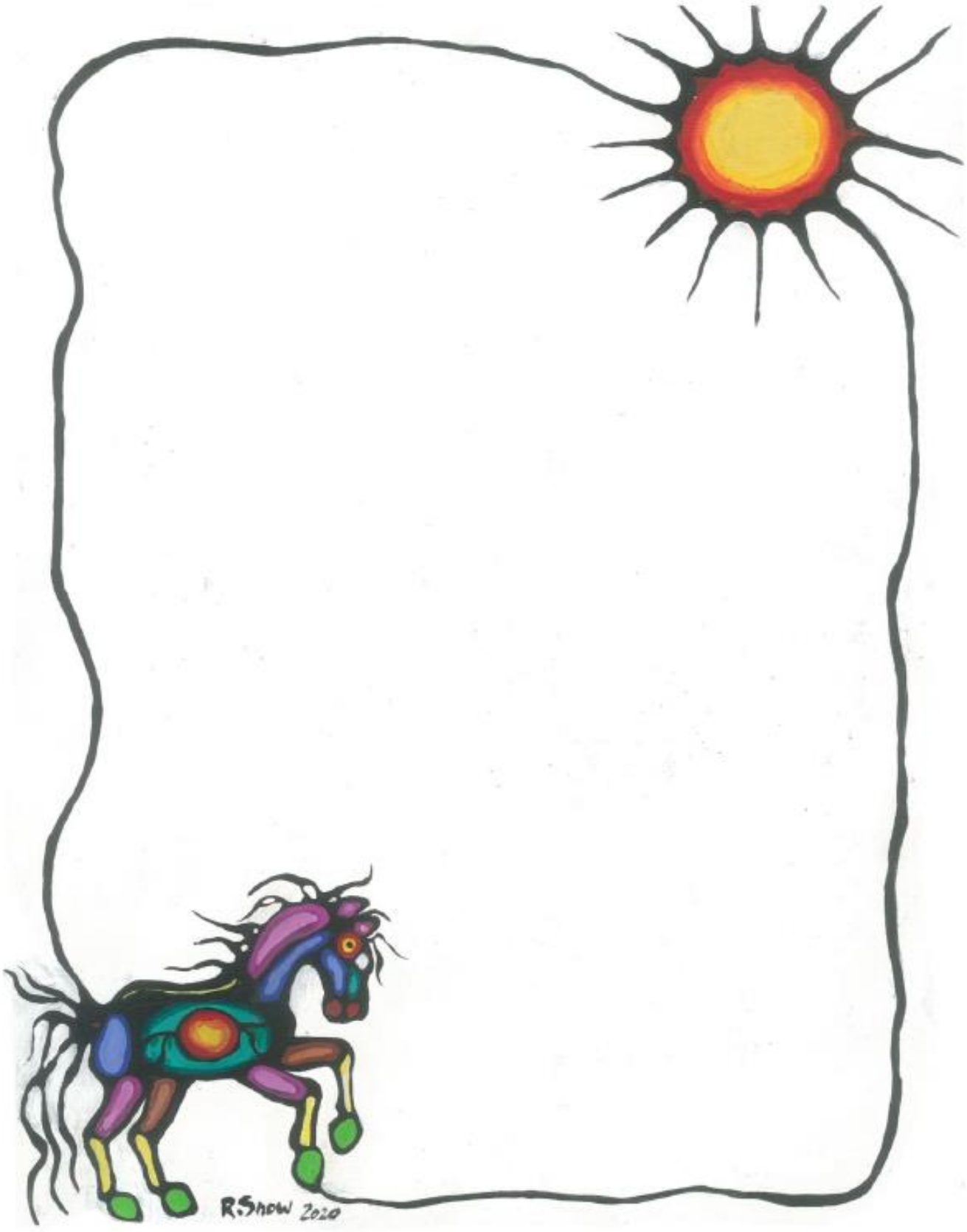
Rhonda Snow. Right: Trevor Kirczenow, Board Member with the Ojibwe Horse Society.

In 2019, Ojibwe Horses visited Parry Sound, Ontario for the first time in about fifty years. A group of Ojibwe Horse caretakers brought some to visit. People recall that horses were once numerous in the area.

The community proudly led them on a “Spirit Walk” – an opportunity for people, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to walk once more with these horses on their ancestral lands. It was an electrifying experience for all involved, as the horses naturally walked in time with the hand drums and singing that accompanied them.


Miinoqishibakwabik 2019

We invite you to do own drawing and writing about the show! Please share with us: hello@ojibwehorse.ca



Orff-Based Lesson Plans

The lessons in this guide offer engaging activities for students to explore the story, Indigenous culture, and to learn about the pieces in the production through listening, moving, playing, analyzing, exploring, and creating. We hope that you enjoy sharing these lessons with your students!

You will also see comments and suggestions from the two wonderful elders that have been advising throughout this project. We are grateful for their wisdom and insight.

If you have any questions about the lessons in this study guide, feel free to contact us directly.

Musically Yours,

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The Music of "The Spirit Horse Returns"

Repertoire

1 Arrivals
2 Across Turtle Island
3 Introducing the Orchestra
4 Travel Song
5 Stories and Knowledge
6 Song for Asemaa'kwe
7 Travel Song
8 Ancient Voices
9 Song for Ajijaak
10 Horses of the People
11 The Plains Horses
12 The Métis Cart
13 The Pony Express
14 Fences, Borders, Reserves
15 The Useless Ponies
16 The Winter Rescue
17 Dead Horse Gulch
18 Lament
19 Tony the Stallion
20 Heist Across the Ice
21 Song for the Caretakers
22 Seasons Change
23 Song for Geegwanens
24 The Seventh Fire

Across Turtle Island

Kevin Lau (Canada, b. 1982)

Lesson Plan by Amanda Ciavarelli

Audio:
MSD01

The story of Turtle Island has different variations, however, for many Indigenous peoples, it is the story of how the continent of North America was created. While the story varies among different communities, the turtle is said to hold the world on its back and is a symbol of life.

In The Spirit Horse Returns, students will hear *Across Turtle Island* at the beginning of the concert as part of the Treaty Land Acknowledgment.

FOCUS

1. Mood
2. Movement
3. Theme

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- identify the mood
- identify the theme
- use movement to represent elements of the land

MATERIALS

- Scarves, ribbon wands, large sheets of fabric, or other movement props
- Image or word sheet to help describe the mood of the music
- Recording of Across Turtle Island

TEACHING PROCESS

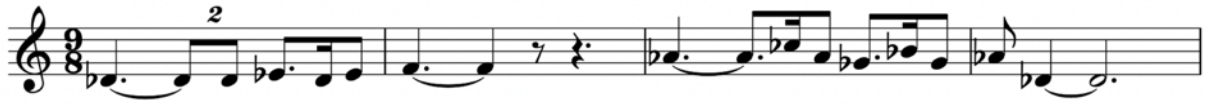
Step-by-step lesson plan:

Introducing the Piece

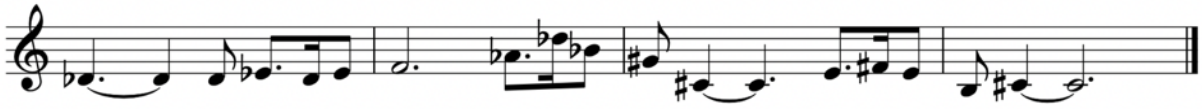
- Distribute or display a page of contrasting images (see the final page of this lesson for an example).
- Play the piece from the beginning, asking students to identify the images that best match the mood of the music.
- After listening to the piece and identifying matching images, discuss the students' choices. How do the images correspond with what they heard in the music?
- Create a list of words that describe movement qualities that best match the music. These could include slow, light, smooth, graceful, etc.
- Distribute movement props and ask students to move to the music. This can be done individually or, students can work in partners to mirror each other or pass a movement prop back and forth.

Identifying the Main Theme

- Explain that often pieces begin with an introduction that is heard before the main theme of the music. The theme is the main melody of the piece.
- Play or sing the theme for students:



- Play the piece from the beginning, asking students to raise their hand to indicate when they think the theme begins (0:24). Initially, students may find this challenging to do, and you may have to listen to the piece a few times and discuss how the introduction builds to the main theme which is first played by the strings, oboe, and French horn.
- Once students are familiar with the theme, ask how many times it is played. They will likely identify that it is played twice. Ask if it is the same each time it is heard. They should identify that while it begins the same, it ends differently the second time that it is heard.



Making a Connection to Turtle Island

- Explain that many Indigenous peoples call the land on which we live Turtle Island. Different Indigenous communities have different variations on the story of Turtle Island, however, in many, the earth was created on the back of a turtle. (Please see the Additional Resources section at the end of this lesson for more information.)
- Ask students to think about the land on which they live. What are some of the important elements that make up the land? These can be things like water, earth, grass, rocks, trees, wind, rain, sunlight, etc.

Moving to the Music

Listening to Jodi Contin…

"The Turtle is very sacred to our people and way of life. It has 13 spaces on its back which represent the 13 moons. The 28 smaller spaces on its outer shell represent the 28 days of the month. This was how our calendar functioned at one time in our history."

- Ask students to choose one of the elements of the land to represent using movement. If appropriate, you may use movement props at this point. For example, large pieces of blue fabric could represent water, yellow ribbons could represent sunlight, etc.
- Play the music beginning at the theme (0:24) giving students a chance to explore movement possibilities. Identify those that are successful in representing the music based on the element that they are choosing the represent as well as the movement qualities that were explored during the "Introducing the Piece" section of this lesson.
- Decide how to organize the movement. For example, will everyone move at the same time, or will students create a layered entry where different students start at different points in the piece.
- Decide how the movement will end.
- Put it all together with the music.

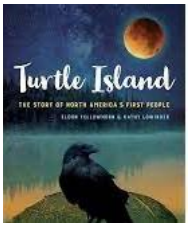
Listening Questions

- What are some words that describe the mood of the music?
- What instrument performs the melody in this piece?

Additional Resources

Turtle Island

- Turtle Island- The Canadian Encyclopedia: https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/turtle-island
- Turtle Island- Where's That? - CBC Kids: https://www.cbc.ca/kidscbc2/the-feed/turtle-island-wheres-that
- Turtle Island: The Story of North America's First People by Eldon Yellowhorn & Kathy Lowinger



Territorial Acknowledgement

"All Canadian students should be aware they live on land that is either unceded by First Nations or that is covered by a treaty between colonial governments, and later the Government of Canada, with First Nations. The intention of the treaties was to share the land and its resources.

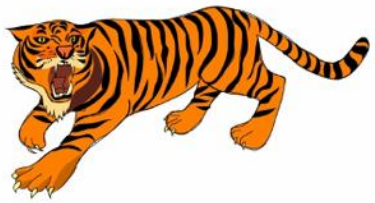
"It's appropriate to begin each of these lessons with the land or territory acknowledgement that is specific to your geographic area. Your school or Division should have one in place already."

Source: Finding the Ojibway Horse Study Guide, Music Alive Program

- Native Land Digital Teacher Guide: https://native-land.ca/wp/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/teacher_guide_2019_final.pdf
- Native Land Digital Website: https://native-land.ca/
- Native Land Territory Acknowledgement: https://native-land.ca/resources/territory-acknowledgement/
- Access Treaty Kits in your school from Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba: http://www.trcm.ca/treaty-education-initiative/about-tei/

Across Turtle Island

Circle the pictures that match the music:



Manitou Lake

Kevin Lau (Canada, b. 1982)

Lesson Plan by Liz Kristjanson

Audio:
MSD02

Manitou Lake is said to be a sacred place. There is a legend about the lake that Elders have known about for many years. Some people believe Spirit Horses live in the lake. This music is about Manitou Lake.

Focus

- Programmatic music
- Movement
- Legend

Objectives

Students will:

- learn about programmatic music and create a picture book to tell the story of Manitou Lake
- explore movement that fits with the sound and story of the music (lake, horses, etc.)
- learn what a legend is and consider a legend about Manitou Lake.

Materials Needed

- Recording of the Manitou Lake
- Paper and drawing materials to create a book
- Optional: pictures of lakes, perhaps even of Manitou Lake, Saskatchewan
- Optional: scarves, hobby horses, etc. for movement

Teaching Process

Step-by-step lesson plan:

From the script as this music begins:

“Settlers brought their own horses, but our elders teach us our horses were already here. We are coming up to a sacred lake that’s said to be the home of the horses. Deep in the lake is where the spirit horses live.”

Introduction

Read the above excerpt from the concert script, explaining that this is part of the story we will hear at the concert just before Manitou Lake is performed. Listen to the recording. Then have [some, or all of] the following discussion.

In “The Spirit Horse Returns”, water plays an important role because to many Indigenous cultures, horses have a close spiritual connection to water. In the Cree language, “Manitou” means “Great Spirit”.

There is a real Manitou Lake in Saskatchewan, and it is said to be a sacred place.
What is the meaning of “sacred”? – *connected with God or Creator*

Programmatic Music Lesson

The students will be introduced to programmatic music and then create a picture book to tell the story.

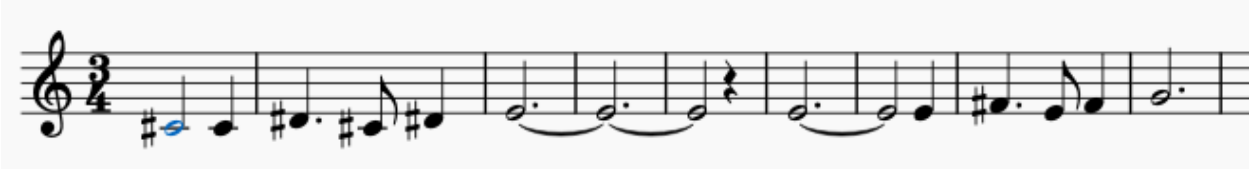
Music is composed for many reasons. Sometimes it is just interesting or beautiful sounds, sometimes it is for a special purpose (church music, dance music, holiday music, movie music, etc.) and sometimes it is written to tell a story. We call music that tells a specific story "Programmatic music".

If you have studied other programmatic music with the children, perhaps *Pictures at an Exhibition, Peter and the Wolf*, etc., this could be a time to refer to those pieces.

This piece of music tells the story of the spirit horses that live in Manitou Lake.

Discovering the story

- Play the recording of Manitou Lake. As you go through the questions and discussion be prepared to play various sections of the music for the students to reflect on.
- What picture do you see in your mind as you listen to the first section of this piece? (0:00 – 0:35) Hopefully, especially if you have given them the title, the children will see a calm, somewhat mysterious lake.
- Notice that the composer has used high notes in the harp, clarinet, and the strings, immediately contrasted with low brass and low strings at the start of the piece. Does that give a feeling of a calm lake or a rough one? *Calm*
- What is the effect of the short oboe and flute solos? (0:35 – 0:50) *Sounds like wildlife, birds around the lake.*
- What feeling does the bassoon solo give? (0:50 – 1:10) More mysterious, descending – perhaps going underwater to where the spirit horses are.
- What is the effect of the very large crescendo in the brass? Do you hear how dissonant it is? (1:10-1:22) *A big change is happening, going underwater to a different community of the spirit horses.*
- The next section is described as "Dreamy, Shimmering". How has the picture changed? (1:23 – 1:55) *It sounds much more positive, bright, happy, and active.*
- 5/4 section – happy, dance feel – As you listen to this music what do you imagine the horses are doing? Are they happy? How are they moving? (1:55 – 2:20)
- Note the horn theme at 2:20 in the recording. This theme is repeated later in the concert in the *Winter Rescue*.



  Why would the composer use this theme here? *To represent the horses and link them to the horses that live on land. This theme runs throughout the whole concert.*
- What happens at the end of the music? (2:34 – 2:43) Perhaps we leave the lake and the spirit horses behind.

Making the picture book

For each part of the piece (as suggested outline above) draw an illustration, for example, the calm lake surrounded by trees, the wildlife and birds living around the lake, diving down into the deep water, the spirit community that lives in the lake, the activity of the spirit horses, and finally leaving the lake behind as your journey continues.

This could be a larger project where each child makes their own book with several pages/pictures. It could be a class book(s) where the work of several children goes together to make one (or a few) books. Once the books have been created listen to the music while you look at the picture books. Access to a document camera could be helpful!

Movement Lesson

Listening to Jodi Contin…

"Water is very sacred and healing, mentally, physically and spiritually. It is our connection to our mother Earth and allows us to sustain life each and every day. All water is special and sacred no matter where it runs, it has a very important purpose everyone should be more aware of."

Warm-up

- Brainstorm words to describe how water in a lake moves *(still, rippling, flowing, waves, crashing, etc.).* Perhaps provide some pictures of lakes for young children, in fact there are photos of Manitou Lake, Saskatchewan available online.
- Play the recording. In Manitou Lake does the water sound calm or rough? What makes it sound calm? What would make it sound rough? Use your body to show different states of water: calm, rough, swirling, waterfalling, etc. The teacher could improvise with a variety of NPP instruments (suspended cymbal, finger cymbals, gong, etc.) to inspire lake-like movement.
- Next, discuss how horses move (gallop, trot, etc.) and invite the children to move like the horses. Then ask how the movement would change if the horses were living under water. Would they move as horses do on land or would their movements be different under water? What about the fact that these are spirits? How does that change their movement? *(e.g., Perhaps spirits don't have the same limitations of being tied to the earth by gravity, etc.)* Explore some spirit horse movements, watching for successful examples to share with others. Use the recording of Manitou Lake or NPP to accompany and inspire the students' movement exploration.

Movement piece

- Divide class into two groups, the lake and the spirit horses. Provide scarves or other props for each group, e.g., Lake group: scarves in watery colors (blues, greens) or blue plastic bags worn as tunics, spirit horses: brown, black, silver scarves or some other prop. It could be fun to use "pool noodle ponies" or other hobby horse props.
- Create a movement piece, accompanied by the recording, with the two groups (horses and lakes) responding to the music. Perhaps consider the placement of the horses in relation to the lake. Are the lake students surrounding the horses to suggest the horses are "in the lake"? What is the final picture/pose when the piece comes to an end?

Story

Listening to Jodi Contin…

"Everything carries energy, water can carry vibrations, and creates ripples across the lake from the smaller drop of water. It has a spirit, medicine, and healing properties that carry our life vessels through our Earth walk."

After the children have done the programmatic music lesson and/or the movement lesson, and are quite familiar with the music, you can introduce this legend.

Indigenous writer and filmmaker Doug Cuthand from Little Pine First Nation met with the "Spirit Horse Returns" team and permitted us to share these words from his father, Stan Cuthand. Stan's grandfather spoke about his own grandfather, Misatimwas, whose name translates as "Sailing Horse". Here is what he said:

"Misatim" is horse. "Mwas" is sailing, that's how it was translated. It could be the clouds shaped like a horse crossing the prairie, you know. If you lie on the prairie, you can see all kinds of things. Depends on what you want to see.

"At Manitou Lake they used to say that horses used to be feeding along the lake. And then they would stampede and disappear into the lake. So, they thought in Manitou Lake, there were horses.

"Many people have seen that, so that's when these two men Paspaches and Misatimwas went to Manitou Lake in the late 1870's to have a vision quest. They slept on the shore of Manitou Lake for four nights, fasting and praying. The reason for the vision quests at that time was because they wanted spiritual power to heal the sick; spiritual healing or else to dream of a medicine; the spirit to give them medicine to cure new diseases. That is the reason. They used to have vision quests reaching out to the spirit world for knowledge, to guide them in their daily life or to empower them. Some did have visions, some didn't.

"My grandfather woke up in the morning. Paspaches had disappeared and Misatimwas saw his tracks went into the water. And then one night he reappeared, and he told him what he saw. He said there were Spirits down there. They lived like Indians. They have tipis under the water, and he says they have a lot of horses. So that was the story. So, he became a medicine man. Paspaches, he had the spiritual power.

"So that is why Sailing Horse went there. He didn't say whether he had an experience. Usually they don't, but he also became a medicine man. And he always had horses."

Stories like this are important spiritual practices and cultural teachings; they are not myths. Indigenous peoples often went on vision quests to seek knowledge and healing. Sometimes it was like a rite of passage. What do you think of this story? Do you know any other stories like this?

Song for Ajijak

Kevin Lau (Canada, b. 1982)

Lesson Plan by Jewel Casselman

Audio:
MSD03

A new Ojibwe horse has been gifted to the farm. This new Ojibwe horses name is Ajijak which in Ojibwe means crane. Ajijak will be joining Asemaa'kwe who is already living on the farm.

Focus

- Tempo
- Instruments
- Motif
- Movement

Objectives

Students will

- identify instruments playing
- recognize the motifs repeated throughout
- identify the tempo of the music
- move according to the tempo

Materials

- Recording of Song for Ajijak
- Ribbons, scarves for movement

Teaching Process

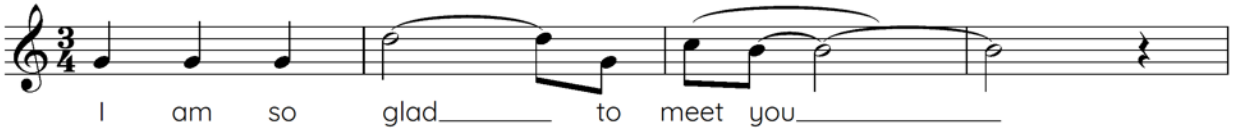
Step-by-step lesson plan:

At this part in the performance, a new horse is being delivered to the farm. His Ojibwe name is Ajijak, which means the bird species crane. Ajijak will be joining Asemaa'kwe on the farm.

Listening Activity

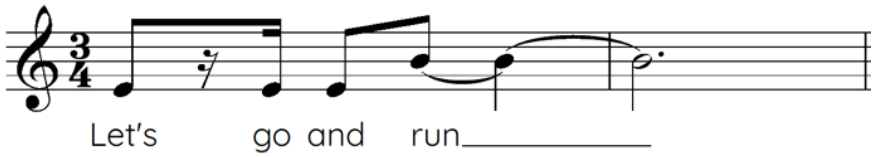
- Play the recording and ask the students to be listening for the tempo of the music. Is the music quick? Is the music slow? Quick.
- Using their hand(s), ask the students to demonstrate the tempo of the music. Ask the students to try and follow the melodic line of the music. Does the melody stay close to one note? Does the melody go up and down in pitch?
- Ask the students what they think is happening in this music. Some answers might be running, chasing, flying, swimming, etc.
- Play the recording again and ask the students to listen for instruments or families of instruments heard in the music. The students will be able to identify instruments from the string family, brass family, woodwind family, and possibly percussion.
- There are two short motifs that occur during this piece of music. Words have been added to help with the rhythm of the motif and to remind the students that this is where the second horse is introduced to the first horse on the farm. Referring to the information above, at this point in the performance Asemaa'kwe is going to be meeting a new horse called Ajijak. Ajijak is his Ojibwe name, and it means crane. Ajijak is a stallion, and he is going to be living on the farm with Asemaa'kwe. Asemaa'kwe has been by herself, and she is excited to have another horse to run around with her on the farm. Teach the "Ajijak" motif to the students.

Ajijak Motif



- Play the music from 0:00 – 0:30 and ask the students to raise their hand each time they hear the motif. It is played three times first by the woodwinds, then by the trumpets, and followed by the horns. The students might notice that the third time the motif changes slightly as the composer has added some extra notes. Why do you think the composer did this?
- A second short motif is similar to the first motif but shorter. The music is moving up a fifth, the same as the first motif but has an accented rhythm and fewer beats. Teach the students the words and melody for the "run" motif.

Run Motif



- Play the recording from 1:50 – the end. Have the students raise their hand each time hear this short motif. How many times do they hear it played? It is played four times in this section of the music.

Movement Activity

Listening to Jodi Contin

"The first sound you heard was the beating of your mother's heart. The hand drum represents that very thing, the beating of our mother, the Earth's, heart. The beating of the drum reconnects those seeking connection in struggling times, and also in times of celebration and life."

- Using a temple block play a steady even beat in ¾. Ask the students to move around the room to this steady beat. After the students are comfortable with moving to this tempo, play a very quick rapid rhythm of sixteenth notes. Ask the students to move to this rhythm. There will be a distinctive difference between the relaxed movement of the steady beat and quick active movements of the sixteenth note rhythms.
- Listen to the recording and ask the students if the music sounds smooth and steady or quick and fast. They will notice that there are some parts when music is quick and fast and there are parts when the music is smooth and even.
- Distribute ribbon wands and scarves to the students. Ask the students to move with the ribbons and scarves. Which one would work best for the quick/fast music, and which would work best for the smooth/steady music? Do they both work equally well for quick/fast and smooth/steady? Let the students decide which one will be used for which parts of the music.
- Referring to the motifs above, is there a way to incorporate the ribbons and scarves to show these motifs or other distinctive motifs or instrumental parts in the music.
- Play the recording and have the students demonstrate their understanding of the piece of music with quick/fast, smooth/steady, and motifs.

Listening Questions

- What is the tempo of the music?
- What is a motif?
- Which instruments are playing? Which family to they belong to?

Extensions

- Horses are beautiful and majestic animals. They are highly intelligent, strong, and free spirited. They love to run and play just like children do. Some of your students may not have ever had the opportunity to ride a horse or see a horse up close. Find some books on horses that show the beauty of these animals.
- Compare different breeds of horses. Small ponies, quarter back, racehorses, thoroughbreds, Clydesdale, or Percheron to name just a few.
- The following is a YouTube link to a beautiful 2'30" video of horses running on a beach. Much of the video is in slow motion so you can see the strength of the horse, how the muscles move as they run, and that at points when they run all four legs are off the ground at the same time. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTzmh7H4DGQ
- This second video is about the wild horses of Sable Island that were taken by a photographer. He speaks eloquently about the horses and where they live. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbjEe5_gDhw

The Horses of the People

Kevin Lau (Canada, b. 1982)

Lesson Plan by Amanda Ciavarelli

Audio:
MSD04

Ojibwe horses were a part of this land before the arrival of the first settlers. They are much smaller than European horses but are very strong and the perfect size to do work like haul logs, work trap lines, pull sleds, and help relocate camps. Historically, Ojibwe horses did not belong to any one person or nation; they belonged to the land. They were not tied up or fenced and lived alongside the buffalo, free to roam.

Focus

- Movement
- Rhythm
- Form

Objectives

Students will:

- Move to the music.
- Identify the three eighth dotted quarter rhythm pattern heard in the music.
- Identify the form of the piece.

Materials

- Recording of The Horses of the People
- Movement Word list
- Images of Rhonda Snow's paintings and Ojibwe horses
- Optional: Scarves, ribbon wands, large sheets of fabric, or other movement props

Teaching Process

*The melody heard in this piece is also heard in *Song of Geegwanens*

Step-by-step lesson plan:

Introducing the Piece

- Play the piece from the beginning asking students to think of the following movement words. After listening, choose the words that best match the music. If this is tricky, you can try demonstrating the movement while the music is playing so that students can see if the movement matches the music.

Frozen	Graceful	Gentle	Explosive	Crashing	Graceful
Flowing	Tremble	Light	Heavy	Slow	Fast
Wiggle	Shiver	Sway	Still	Bouncy	Smooth

- Ask students to move to the music, trying out the movement words they chose. This can be done with or without props, although movement scarves work nicely with legato quality of the music.
- Explain to students that the piece is called The Horses of the People. Read the description found at the beginning of this lesson:

Ojibwe horses were a part of this land before the arrival of the first settlers. They are much smaller than European horses but are very strong and the perfect size to do work like haul logs, work trap lines, pull sleds, and help relocate camps. Historically, Ojibwe horses did not belong to any one person or nation; they belonged to the land. They were not tied up or fenced and lived alongside the buffalo, free to roam.

- Play the piece again, this time while showing students these images of Ojibwe horses and Rhonda Snow's paintings of Ojibwe horses:





- Discuss how the music captures the beauty of the Ojibwe horses and the beauty of Rhonda's paintings.
- Thinking of the movement words, and the Ojibwe horses, ask students to move to the music again, using their movement to capture everything that has been discussed. Note that it is not necessary for the students to move as if they are horses, but instead, to capture the mood of the music in their movement.

Identifying the Form

- Play the music from the beginning, asking students to raise their hand when they hear the harp playing the ascending passage at 0:27. It might be challenging for students to identify, and you may need to help them.
- Listen again, asking students if the music heard before the harp and after the harp is the same or different (different).
- Label the form as follows:

A Bridge (Harp) B

Identifying the Rhythm Pattern in the B Section

- Practice saying and clapping the following rhythm pattern:

- Once students are familiar with the rhythm, listen to the music again, asking students to raise their hand each time this rhythm is heard in the music. Ask them to count how many times it is heard (8). It can be heard at these times, played by these instruments.
    1. 0:32- Violin*
    2. 0:36- Violin*
    3. 0:43- Cello
    4. 0:52- Violin and Flute
    5. 1:02- French Horn
    6. 1:12- Violin*
    7. 1:16- Violin*
    8. 1:18- French Horn

*Each time the rhythm appears, there are 4 measures until it is heard again **except** for the starred occurrences, which are much shorter.

- Create movement to go along with this section. Here are a few suggestions:

Partners:	Partner A moves for 1 and 2, 4, 6 and Partner B moves for 3, 5, and 7, both move for 8.
Partners with Mirroring:	Each time the pattern is heard, the partners switch the leader.
Groups of 4:	Person A moves on 1 and 2, Person B moves on 3, Person C moves on 4, Person D moves on 5, all choose movement to do together for 6, 7, and 8
Whole Class in 4 Groups:	Same format as groups of 4, except that the class is divided into 4 large groups and each group has a turn to move on either 1 and 2, 3, 4, or 5, before the whole class moves together at the end of the piece.

Final Performance:

- Now that movement has been established for the B section, listen to the A section, and think of how students could move in this section. Their movement should represent the music and story as well as prepare the movement for the B section. Try out different ideas with the music to see which is the best fit.
- Move to the whole piece.

Listening Questions

- Name some of the instruments you heard. Which instrument plays during the bridge?
- What is the tempo of the music?

Extensions

- Once students are familiar with both this piece as well as *The Useless Ponies*, do a comparison of both pieces. Discuss how one each piece captures a different perspective of the Ojibwe horses, thinking about how the music expresses these two very different perspectives.
- Ask students to think about which colors and shapes best represent the music. Use these colors and shapes to draw while listening to the music.
- Play *Song for Geegwanens*. Ask students if they recognize the melody. Ask students how to compare the mood of both pieces and talk about how the pieces are different even though they use the same melody.

Additional Resources

- Learn more about the harp: Harps: How Does a Harp Make a Sound: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWDa6XrVyos

The Métis Cart

Kevin Lau (Canada, b. 1982)

Lesson Plan by Amanda Ciavarelli

Audio:
MSD05

> *"The Métis nation and culture began when early European fur traders and First Nations created families together. There are stories of Métis using their small horses for logging and for pulling sleds as their communities moved from season to season. Then later on, they started to use the Red River carts with their big wheels. But wherever the Métis traveled, there was music and dancing."*
>
> *- Alison Cox, Elder*

The Métis Cart is a medley of two songs. The first is *Ants, Mosquitoes, and Snowball Fricassé*. It is a French Métis song that is traditionally sung to children by elders. The second is the *Wigwam Polka* by Andy DeJarlis. The piece is high energy and joyful, capturing the spirit of Métis music and dance.

Focus

- Melody
- Form
- Movement
- Major and minor

Objectives

Students will:

- identify the melodies of Ants, Mosquitoes & Snowball Fricassé and the Wigwam Polka in The Métis Cart
- identify the form
- move to the music
- identify major and minor melodies

Materials

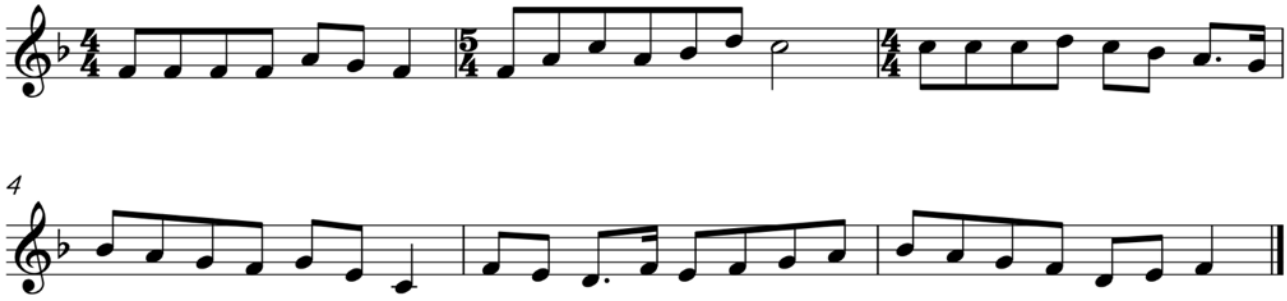
- Recording of Ants, Mosquitoes & Snowball Fricassé
- Recording of *Wigwam Polka* by Andy Dejarlis
- Listening Map found at the end of this lesson

Teaching Process

Step-by-step lesson plan:

Identifying the Melody of Ants, Mosquitoes & Snowball Fricassé

- Play or sing the following melody for students:



- Play the recording from the beginning, asking students to raise their hand when they hear the melody. Ask students which instrument is playing the melody (violin).
- Play the recording from the beginning to 1:16. Ask students to raise their hand each time they hear the melody. After listening, ask students how many times the melody is heard (5).
- Listen a second time and discuss how the melody is different each time it is heard. Here is an example of what students might hear:

0:05 - Melody played by the violin
0:21 - Melody played by the violin, melody is an octave higher, rhythm is a bit different/quicker
0:38 - Melody is played by the violin with a quick rhythm and by the brass (trombone and horn) and woodwinds (clarinet and flute)
0:51 - Melody is not played by the violin, instead it is played by the brass and the woodwinds, cymbals are added
1:06 - Part of the melody is played by the violin but sounds different (minor) and starts to transform into something new partway through

- Explain that this melody is that of a traditional French Métis song called *Ants, Mosquitoes & Snowball Fricassé.* It is a song that is sung by elders to children. Here are the lyrics of the song. A recording of it sung by Alvina Davis can be heard here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ycIE3QdixH0

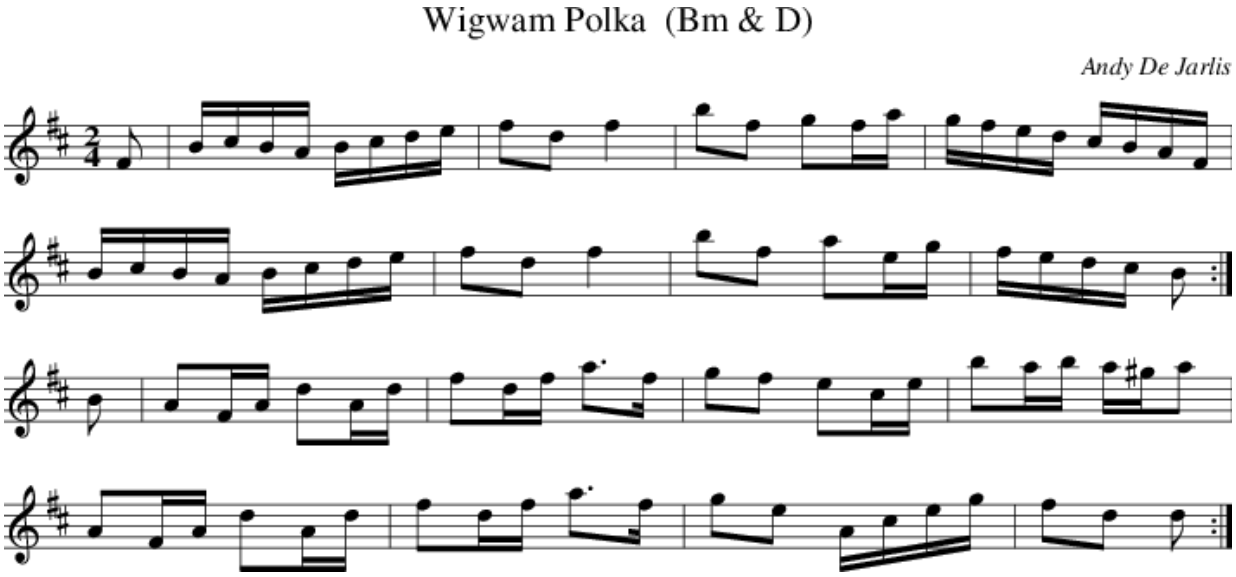
(Il y) a le 25 de mai sur la glace un gros bélier qui fricassait des oignons avec des plattes de neige dans l'oreille d'un pigeon dessus le dos d'un lièvre. Un carrosse bien agrée, quatre crapauds bien attelés, un wawaron poudré, frisé, assis dans ce carrosse. Une fourmi, assise à côté. Je crois qu'ils vont aux noces. Il avait pour son caller un gros ton qui jabotait. Il avait pour son cocher un maringouin d'automne qui sacrait comme un charretier. Grand' cour qu'il faisait-il l'homme.	On the twenty-fifth of May a big buck sheep was making fricassé from onions with snowballs on the ice in the ear of a pigeon on the back of a jackrabbit. In a fancy coach pulled by four well-harnessed toads, sat a bullfrog, powdered, and hair curled. An ant was seated by his side. I think they were going to a wedding party. His caller was a large mumbling horsefly and his coachman a large fall mosquito who was swearing like a cart driver. This buck sheep was acting like a big shot going courting.

Une sauterelle mal avisée s'en va pour les voir danser. Elle est tombée du haut en bas et s'est cassé la cervelle. Elle est morte. Depuis ce temps-là, je laisse la nouvelle.	A grasshopper poorly advised on her way to see them dance, fell and broke her skull. She died. Since then I've been spreading the word.

Identifying the Melody of *Wigwam Polka*

- Play the recording beginning at 0:51. Ask students to raise their hand when they hear a new melody (1:26)
- Explain to students that this is a second melody from a piece called the *Wigwam Polka* by Métis fiddler Andy Dejarlis.
- Play the recording from 1:26, asking students to raise their hand when they hear the music change at 1:41. Ask students to describe how the music is different. They may describe the melody as brighter, happier, or with a different rhythm. Tell students that this is the B section of the *Wigwam Polka*.
- Listen again from 1:26 to discover the form of the *Wigwam Polka* in the piece. Label it as A B A with a short Coda.

Here is the melody of the *Wigwam Polka* if you wish to sing or play it for students:



Identifying the Form

- Once students are familiar with both melodies, listen to the entire piece to discover the form. Label the form in a way that makes sense to students. It may look something like this:

Intro	A	A	A	A	A*	Bridge		B	C	B	Coda
	(Ants, Mosquitoes & Snowball Fricassé)								(Wigwam Polka)		

- Once the form is established, students can listen again, this time following the form chart you created with them.
- There is a listening map at the end of this lesson that students can follow along with.

Moving to the Music

- Students can work to create their own movement for the piece, or you can try out the movement below. Once learned, it can be performed in a circle formation.

0:00 Introduction	Students stand still in a circle formation
0:05 A Section	Pat – clap – snap – clap (4 beats) Pat – pat – pat – clap – clap (5 beats) Eight steps towards the center of the circle (8 beats) Eight steps back to starting spot (8 beats) Stand still during percussion break (4 beats)
0:21 A Section	Pat – clap – snap – clap (4 beats) Pat – pat – pat – clap – clap (5 beats) Eight steps towards the center of the circle (8 beats) Eight steps back to starting spot (8 beats) Stand still during percussion break (4 beats)
0:38 A Section	Pat – clap – snap – clap (4 beats) Pat – pat – pat – clap – clap (5 beats) Eight steps towards the center of the circle (8 beats) Eight steps back to starting spot (8 beats) *NO PERCUSSION BREAK THIS TIME
0:51 A Section	Pat – clap – snap – clap (4 beats) Pat – pat – pat – clap – clap (5 beats) Eight steps towards the center of the circle (8 beats) Eight steps back to starting spot (8 beats) *NO PERCUSSION BREAK THIS TIME
1:06 A*	Pat – clap – snap – clap (4 beats) Pat – pat – pat – clap – clap (5 beats) March on the spot (12 beats)
1:16 Bridge	Turn to a partner, still in circle formation (16 beats)
1:26 B Section	Right foot taps in front across left (2 beats) Left foot taps in front across right (2 beats) Partners change spots (4 beats) *Perform four times
1:41 C Section	Right foot forward slide – tap – tap (4 beats) Left foot forward slide – tap – tap (4 beats) Right foot forward slide – tap – tap (4 beats) Go past your partner to a new partner (4 beats) *Perform twice
1:57 B Section	Right foot taps in front across left (2 beats) Left foot taps in front across right (2 beats) Partners change spots (4 beats) *Repeat three more times
2:13 Coda	Create your own ending

*Here is a short demonstration of the steps in the B and C section: https://youtu.be/vttYOBx8mpA

Listening for Major and Minor

The B and C sections of the music move from minor to major to minor. This is a great opportunity to practice hearing and identifying major and minor melodies. How you explain the concept of major and minor to students will depend on how much prior knowledge they have. Choose what works best for you.

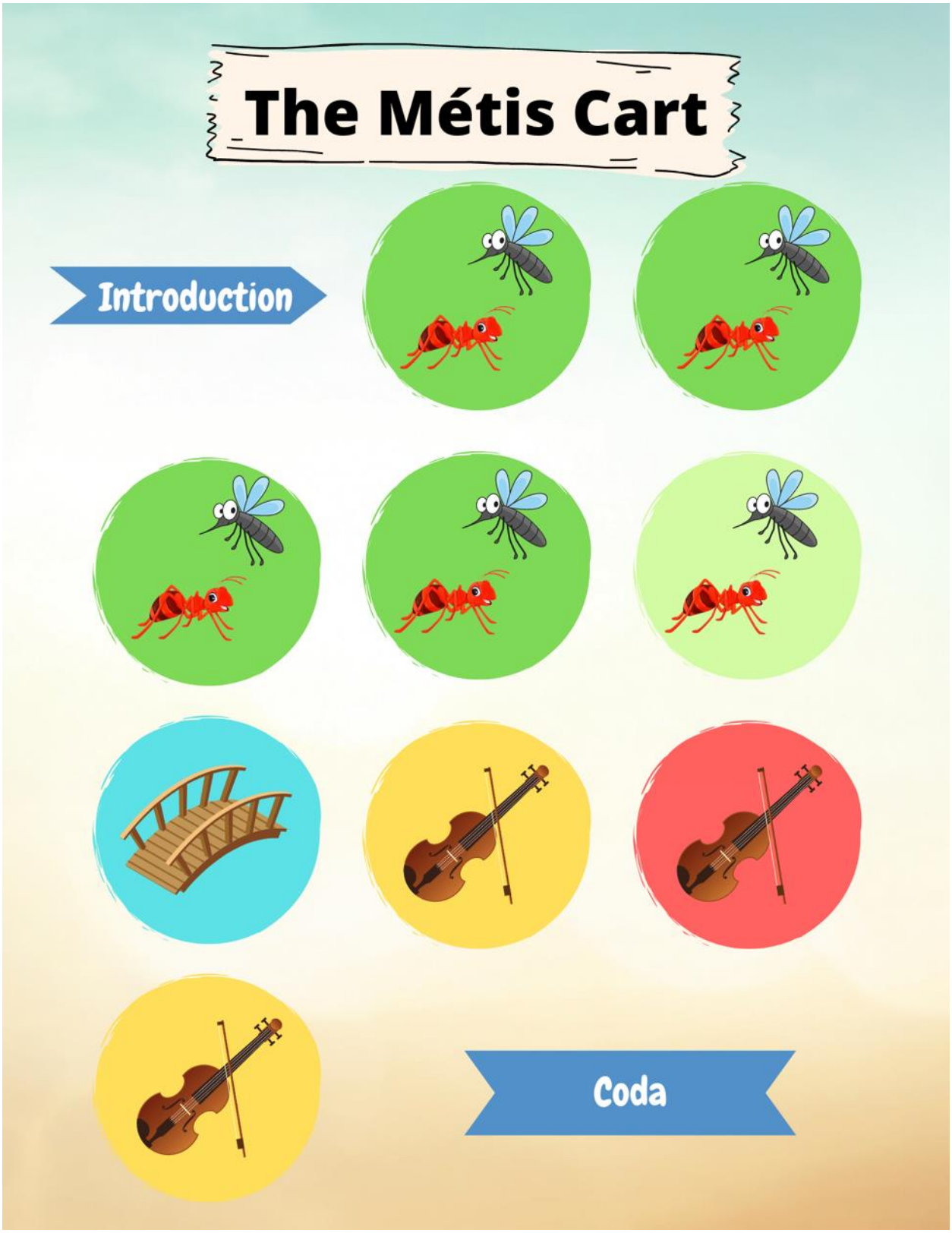
- Listen to the piece from 1:26 to the end. Ask students what they notice about the sound of each section. They might use language like dark and bright, or happy and sad.
- Explain that melodies can have different sound qualities based on the set of notes that are used to create them. The set of notes is called a scale.
- Play some examples of major and minor melodies on the piano or use recordings. Ask students to identify if the melody they hear is major or minor.
- Go back to the form of the piece and identify if each section is major or minor.

Listening Questions:

- What makes the music sound exciting? (tonality, tempo, instrumentation, dynamics, etc.)
- What instrument plays the melody most of the time?

Extension Activities:

- Learn more about the tradition of Métis music and dance: http://youtube.com/watch?v=qhgEch-TMVA
- Learn about the history of the Métis fiddle: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRDGJgkjeaw
- Listen to the original version of the Wigwam Polka by Andy Dejarlis: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_9vGOjL8aF4
- Learn more about Major and Minor: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JocfrK3F5Hw
- Play a Major or Minor Quiz Game: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KojQMhLP2pk


The Métis Cart
Introduction
Coda

The Pony Express

Kevin Lau (Canada, b. 1982)

Lesson Plan by Liz Kristjanson

Audio:
MSD06

Indigenous people and the Spirit Horses lived together in harmony for many, many years. When the settlers came things began to change, and not always in good ways. Life for the horses was one of the things that changed.

Focus

- Movement
- Composition
- Creating and reading a graphic score

Objectives

Student will:

- use movement and the music to tell a story
- explore how composers use various elements to evoke a particular emotion or mood in their music, and will create their own composition using the elements they have discovered
- will draw a graphic score for The Pony Express and/or for their own composition

Materials

- Recording of The Pony Express
- Attributes page, printed one for each student or projected on screen (the one provided here or one of your own)
- Barred instruments, including F# and Bb bars, NNP percussion
- Long roll of paper or individual sheets
- Colored markers

Teaching Process

Step By Step Lesson Plan:

From the script as this music begins:

These horses were used by all Nations. There are stories of Métis sleds which were dragged by horses. Then, later on, they pulled the Red River carts with their big wheels.

There were thousands upon thousands of Indian horses. But everything changed when the settlers arrived. At first, the settlers needed the ponies they found here. They used them to clear the land for agriculture, and they set up travel routes like the Pony Express, which was an early mail service.

Introduction

The instructions at the top of the score for The Pony Express say to perform the piece “Ominously”.

- What does this mean? “giving the impression that something bad or unpleasant is going to happen”
- Listen to the music. How does the composer make it sound “ominous”? Slow, repeated notes, chromatic movement, accents, straight mute trumpets, harp sliding up and down the scale, ascending horn crescendo, wonky horns, ponticello strings, minor tonality
- Consider listening to the piece again and pointing out the elements the students have discovered so that they are all aware of them.
- Why does the composer want this part of the story to have an “ominous” sound? *The script tells us the European settlers are coming and bringing change.*
- The ostinato (repeated notes) sounds like work. Do you think the horses are having fun? Are they galloping and jumping? What do you think they are doing? *Working hard*
- How does this music compare to the music we heard earlier before the European settlers came to the land? *Earlier music was freer, broader, joyful, etc.*

Movement Lesson

Listening to Jodi Contin…

“I was brought up in a world where you only take what you need, and the earth will take care of you take to much, and there will be none left for our grandchildren.”

Listen to the music. Project the attributes page on a screen or provide a copy for each student. As the children listen to the music a second or third time, invite them to identify attributes that fit this music. The goal of this part of the lesson, especially for younger students, is to help them to identify “appropriate” movements or sounds, for use in the movement and composition lessons. This activity could be done in a class days before as preparation for other parts of the lessons.

Attributes Page

Movement Lesson continued…

After listening to the music and discussing **only points 1, 2 and 3 above**, create a movement story to accompany the music. Begin with allowing the children time to explore their movement to the various motifs in the piece, the creeping sounds, the brass crescendos, the violin melodies, etc. It isn't necessary to "act out" this particular story, in fact, it is suggested that you not read the script section that is printed at the start of this lesson until after doing this activity so as not to "predetermine" the children's story. Instead allow the children to make up their own story.

Consider making one person (or group) the dangerous ones who are bringing a bad experience to another person or group. How does the dangerous one move *(quickly, slowly, large presence, small presence, etc.)*. How does the other person/group react to the situation *(run, hide, stand their ground?).* Discuss the story as a class after the performance. After completing the movement story, go back to read the script excerpt and points 4 to 6 in the introduction part of this lesson.

Composition Project

After discussing what the composer did to make the music sound ominous, experiment with classroom instruments to compose your own "ominous" piece.

- Explore chromatic movement using barred instruments with the semi-tones that are available (E-F, B-C, F-F#-G, A-B♭-B♯). Experiment with these sounds. Suggest keeping the consecutive notes close together without too many large jumps. Note: You can talk about the semi-tones vs. whole tones as much or as little as is appropriate for your students.
- Include NPP instruments, using them to make ominous sounds (flexatone could be effective and possibly evoke similar feelings as the "wonky" horn lines at 1:15 in the recording).
- Consider a range of dynamics. Dynamic variation and accents are used effectively in The Pony Express.
- Other elements to consider: repeated ostinato of limited range (one to three different notes), slower tempo, instruments with a low range, contrast with glissandi on glockenspiel or perhaps slide whistle? (similar to the sliding strings), texture (how will you build the piece – solos, layers? Etc.)
- You may wish to depict two characters (human, animal or ??). What could you use in your composition to do this? *Two different instrument choices, different ranges, textures, etc.*
- Decide on a form for the composition.

Graphic Score

Consider drawing a simple graphic score for The Pony Express. Preface the activity with inviting the students to imagine what the sounds they hear would look like; colors, shapes, relative sizes, etc... Place a long roll of paper on the floor with several students sitting along the length of the paper. Using colored markers, each student draws part of the score as they hear it. Alternatively, each student may create their own graphic score on a sheet of paper using different colors and shapes. After creating the score, listen to the piece again, reading the score.

Extensions

- If you do the composition activity (above), consider drawing a graphic score for your composition.
- Musical effects:
  Musicians use a variety of tools and techniques to change the sound of their instruments. The Pony Express uses several of these which could be explored. Perhaps you can demonstrate some of the techniques or you might be lucky enough to have a staff colleague who can, broadening the students' perceptions of their teachers and life-long music making!

  Strings
  - **arco** – the notes are played by drawing the bow across the strings
  - **pizzicato or Pizz**. – you pluck the strings with your index finger on the left hand
  - **ponticello** – the bow plays very close to, or even on top of the bridge, creating a glassy sound

  Flute: slap tongue – Tongue pizzicato, sometimes also called slap tonguing, is a percussive effect, created as the tongue is pulled away from the lips or palate. The motion is often likened to the action of 'spitting rice'.

  Trumpet: straight mute – cone shaped with an opening at the small end. It is placed in the bell of the trumpet and is typically held in place by three pieces of cork.

Fences, Borders, Reserves

Kevin Lau (Canada, b. 1982)

Lesson Plan by Jewel Casselman

Audio:
MSD07

> *"As the land was cleared, the way of life for Indigenous people and their horses became a struggle. European settlers wanted really big farm horses from places like Ireland and Scotland. They saw the Indigenous horses as useless, and the Indigenous people got in their way in their desire for land. They wanted to recreate the European countryside with fences and borders."*

– Spirit Horse Returns script

Focus

- Tempo/Beat
- Dynamics
- Mood
- Form
- Movement

Objectives

Students will:

- describe the tempo of the piece of the music
- maintain a steady beat
- describe the mood of the music
- discover the form of the music
- work together in a movement activity to build a fence

Materials

- Recording of "Fences, Borders, and Reserves"
- Handheld wooden percussion instruments – wood blocks, wooden spoons, Lummi sticks, rhythm sticks
- Pool noodles, meter sticks
- Dark or black material

Teaching Process

Step By Step Lesson Plan

Listening activity for tempo/beat:

- Play the recording of "Fences, Borders, and Reserves".
- Ask the students to play the beat on the knees while listening to the song. Switch where the students are playing the beat to keep the activity interesting.
- Ask the students if the beat changed or was it steady. The tempo stayed the same throughout the piece until the very end where there is a small ritardando. Some students might have felt that the beat changed as the meter of the song changes from 4/4, to 5/8 to ¾ and is switching between these meters throughout the piece.
- Using small handheld instruments have the students quietly keep the steady beat while listening to the recording.

Listening activity for form:

- Listen carefully for the sound of the anvil maintaining a steady beat.
- Play the recording from 0:28 – 0:57. Ask the students if this music is the same or different than A. They should answer different and so label this section as B.
- Play the recording from 0:57 – 1:15. Ask the students if this music sounds like A or B or something totally different. The students might say that parts of the song sound familiar as they can hear the anvil playing the steady beat again. The melody is the same as in section A but there are some differences. You can label this as A or A^1.
- Play the recording from 1:15 – 1:38. Ask the students if this music sounds like A or B or something totally different. They students should answer totally different. Label this section as C.
- Play the recording from 1:38 – 1:55. Ask the students if this music sounds like A, B, or C or something totally different. This part sounds very different as it is only low strings that are playing. They will answer totally different. Label this as the coda.
- The final form of the piece of music is A B A C Coda

Listening activity for dynamics and mood:

- Play the recording and ask the students to listen for the dynamics of the piece. Is the music quiet? Is the music loud? Do the dynamics change throughout the piece? Do the dynamics stay the same? Are there any crescendos? There are several dynamic changes in the piece of music. The dynamics change when certain instruments start to play. There are some large contrasts in dynamics.
- Play the recording again and have the students keep their hands close together when the music is quiet and move their hands apart when the music gets louder.
- Play the recording again and ask the students what they think the mood of the piece of music is. Is it happy, sad, exciting, scary, etc. Play each section (A B C) of the music and have the students figure out the mood for each section. How does the mood change for each of the sections? How is the mood very different in the coda? How did the composer let the listener know that each of these sections has a different meaning? Some students will say that the music is happy as the tempo is quick. Some might find it to be scary as the dynamics change and get quite loud. Some might find it exciting. Students will interpret the music differently which means that they are really listening to the music.

Movement activity:

Listening to Elder Alison Cox…

"Consider inviting an Indigenous drummer to your classroom to assist with exploring the movement activities with your students, and so that they may share teachings and protocol around the drum at the same time."

At this point of the performance, this piece is introduced as follows:

> *"As the land was cleared, the way of life for Indigenous people and their horses became a struggle. European settlers wanted big farm horses from places like Ireland and Scotland. They saw the Indigenous horses as useless, and the Indigenous people got in their way in their desire for land. They wanted to recreate the European countryside with fences and borders."*

- Movement warm-up activity. Have the student stand in a scattered pattern around the room. Using their bodies ask the students to show different shapes such as soft, sharp, angular, strong, weak etc. Ask the students to move with the different types of shapes. Play the recording and have the students move around the room.
- Referring to the previous activity about form, ask the students work in three groups representing sections A B and C. Listen to the recording and have the students decide how they will move for the section they are representing. Ask the students how they want the coda to be represented. All students will perform the coda. Play the recording and have the students move during their own section, freeze when it is not their section, and everyone move during the coda.
- Have a discussion with your students about what fences are used for. What was the purpose of having a fence on your property? (To keep things out, safety, protection etc.) Why did the European settlers want the fences built? (To make large farms, recreate the countryside they had come from, to separate the Indigenous horses and people). There is a lot of discussion even among our youngest students about truth and reconciliation, residential schools, and the hardships for many young Indigenous children and their families. This is an ongoing struggle amongst Indigenous people, and this is an opportunity to discuss this topic with your students. They will have some interesting insights.
- Ask the students what material you can build a fence out of? (Wood, metal, stones) When these fences were built, they would more than likely have been made from wood. Ask the students how they could use their bodies to represent the building materials.
- Listen to the recording from 0:00 – 0:28 listening for the sound of the anvil. What does this sound like? (Hammering of nails in the wooden fence) Ask the students what this would look like? Would this be a strong or soft movement?
- Distribute some handheld percussion instruments (wood blocks, Lummi sticks, wooden spoons, rhythm sticks, and muted triangle). Using the instruments, have the students demonstrate a hammering motion. Consider having this A section be represented by the hammering and building of the fence.
- Listen to the B sections (0:57 – 1:15) and C section (1:15 – 1:38). After listening to each section ask the students to think of ideas of what is happening in each of these sections. They might think about moving material into place, cutting the wood to put into place. Would this be a strong or soft movement? People are discussing how to build the fence, arguments (some of the music is very dramatic). How would they show this with their bodies? People on either side of the fence talking/arguing etc. How would they show this with their bodies?
- Distribute a variety of items that the students might use to create the fences. These could include pool noodles, meter sticks, drumsticks, mallets, etc. Ask the students how they would demonstrate their ideas for the B and C section.
- Now that the students have decided how each of the sections will be represented the students can create the A B A C form of the music before adding in the coda. Play the recording while the students practice this form and movement.
- The coda is very dramatic and serious. Ask the students what they think is happening during the coda. Some ideas might be to have the fence stands very stoic and strong, have the builders leave, maybe placing something over the fence such as a dark piece of material to represent the sadness that the Indigenous people felt.
- Perform the entire form **A B A C Coda** with the recording.

Listening Questions

- What is the tempo of the music?
- What is the mood of the music?
- How does the composer change the mood?
- What instruments do you hear?
- Why do you think the European settlers wanted to build the fences? How do you think this made the Indigenous people feel?

The Useless Ponies

Kevin Lau (Canada, b. 1982)

Lesson Plan by Amanda Ciavarelli

Audio:
MSD08

This piece expresses how the Ojibwe horses were treated by settlers. Listen to the sadness of the theme that is played by different instruments of the orchestra.

Focus

- Instrumentation
- Theme
- Rhythm
- Meter
- Mood

Objectives

Students will:

- identify how the music makes them feel.
- recognize the theme and identify which instrument is playing it.
- identify the meter and decode the rhythm of the theme.

Materials

- Recording of The Useless Ponies
- Emoji pictures (provided at end of lesson)
- Instrument pictures (provided at end of lesson)

Teaching Process

STEP BY STEP LESSON PLAN

Introducing the Piece:

- Display the Emoji pictures at the end of this lesson. Ask students to think about how they feel as they listen to the music. Ask students to choose an emoji that best matches how the music makes them feel. Discuss what they hear in the music that makes them feel that way
- Read this excerpt from the script to the students:

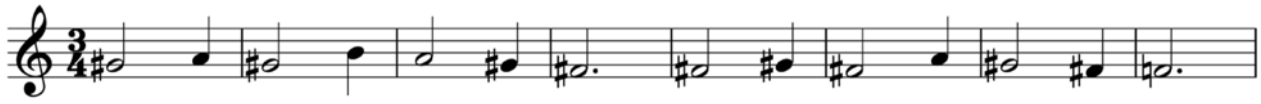
  > The colonial governments sent Indian Agents to run the Indian Nations. They hated the little Indian Ponies, they said they were useless for farming, and they didn't want the Indians to send them out to graze on good land that was now claimed by settlers. Soon it seemed the land was just too small for even these small horses.

- Ask students how the horses might be feeling. They may choose to connect with one of the emoji images.

Identifying the Theme and the Instruments

- The theme of the piece is played by different instruments. It is first heard played by the oboe, then clarinet, and later by the violin. In between the first and second time the theme is played, the flute plays a very energetic solo with fast moving passages and trills.

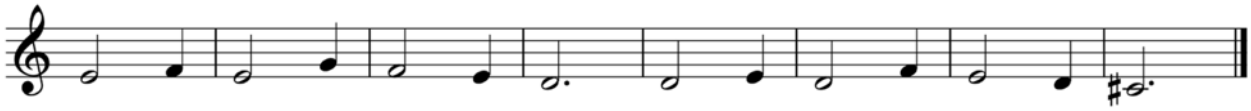
Theme:



Flute Solo

Theme:

Violin

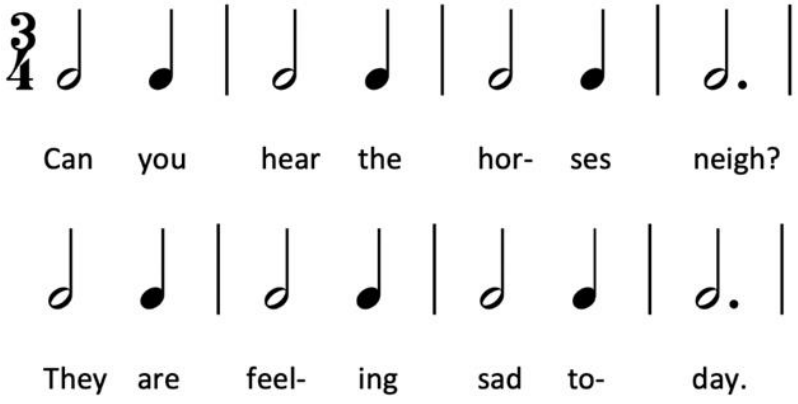


- Play or sing the theme for the students (If you choose to sing it, you may want to use the text that is in the next part of this lesson.).
- Play the recording from the beginning, asking students to raise their hands when they hear the theme. (It is played at the very beginning of the piece, and again at 0:34)
- Ask students to name some of the instruments they heard.
- Display or hand out copies of the instrument images at the end of this lesson. Ask students to point to which instrument is playing while they listen. They should identify the instruments in the following order:

Oboe **Clarinet** **Flute** **Violin**

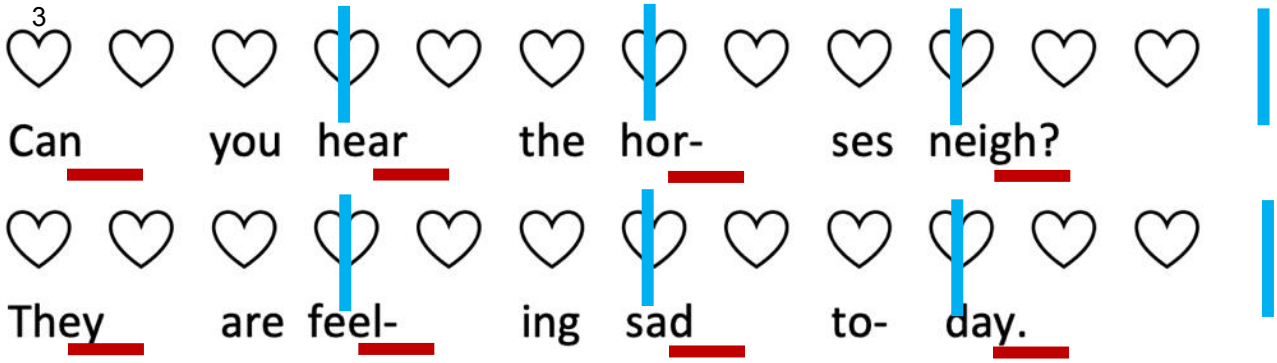
Identifying the Meter and Rhythm

- The following text can be spoken or sung to the melody:



- Teach the text, either spoken or sung to students.
- Pat the beat while speaking or singing (be sure to use the macro beat, or, the long pulse of the meter)
- Clap the rhythm while speaking or singing.
- Show students the following visual:

- Sing/speak again while patting the macro beat. Underline the words on which students pat. Then draw a bar line **before** each of the words that were identified as being on the strong beat. Ask students how many hearts are in each group or measure (3). Explain that the piece is in triple meter. Label the meter in a way that makes sense for students, depending on how familiar they are with meter. See the example of 3 over a heart below.



- Finally, decode the rhythm, reviewing that a half note is sustained for 2 hearts or beats and that a dotted half note is sustained for 3.

Listening Questions

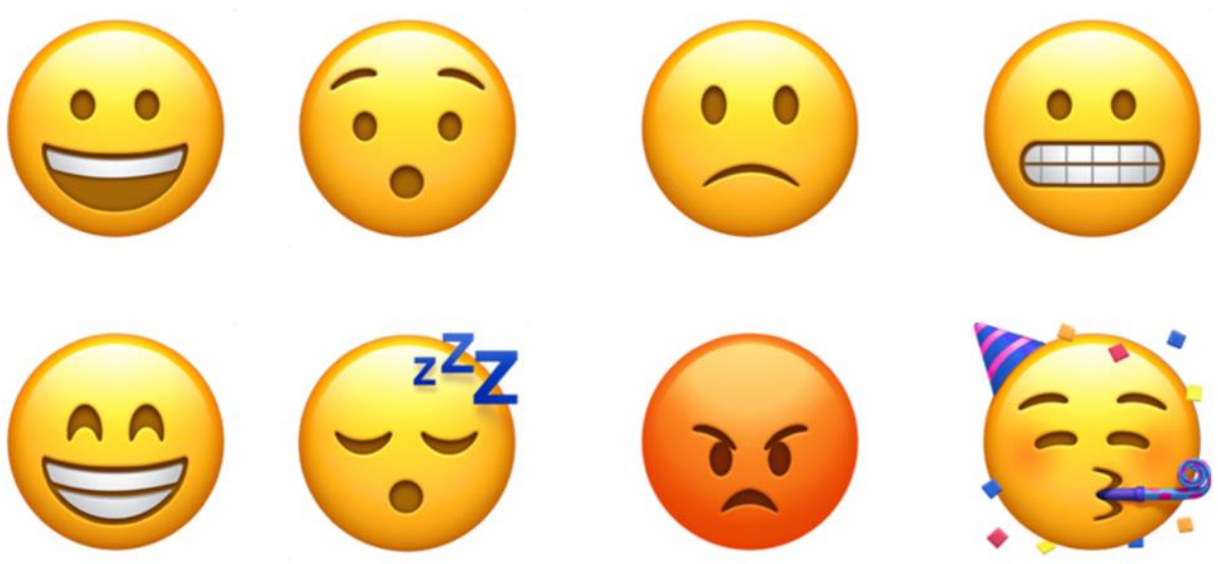
- What makes the music sound sad? (tonality, tempo, instrumentation, dynamics, etc.)
- What is it called when the flute plays two notes very, very quickly? (trill)

Extensions

- Once students are familiar with both this piece as well as *The Horses of the People*, do a compare and contrast of both pieces. Discuss how one each piece captures a different perspective of the Ojibwe horses, thinking about how the music expresses these two very different perspectives.
- Ask students to think about which colors and shapes best represent the music. Use these colors and shapes to draw while listening to the music.
- Once students have notated the rhythm of the theme, use the rhythm pattern to compose a melody for the horses. This can be done at the barred instruments working in a la pentatonic (minor).

Emojis

Circle the emoji that best matches how the music makes you feel.



Instruments
Point to the instrument that you hear.

Flute

Violin

Clarinet

Oboe

The Winter Rescue

Kevin Lau (Canada, b. 1982)

Lesson Plan by Liz Kristjanson

Audio:
MSD09

This music paints a picture of the legend of a young girl who was going to visit relatives on horseback. Part way through the journey a snowstorm comes up. The girl trusts in her horse, who takes her to safety.

Focus

- Triple meter feel
- Instrumentation
- Movement
- Indigenous painting style

Objectives

Students will:

- experience triple meter feel, including through movement.
- define “orchestration” and explore how instrument choices affect one’s experience of the music.
- explore one style of Indigenous painting and create their own art inspired by this style.

Materials

- Balloons
- Orff instrumentarium
- Recording of music
- Rhonda Snow’s images
- Paper for drawing
- Oil pastels or other drawing medium
- Optional books with Indigenous illustrations

Teaching Process

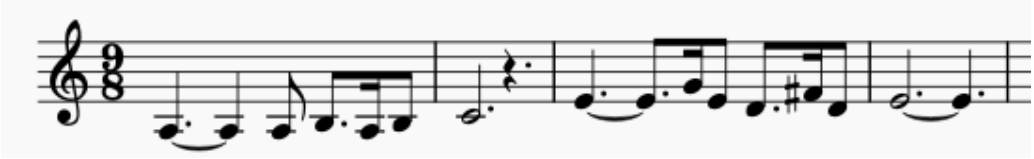
Step By Step Lesson Plan

From the script of the Spirit Horse Returns:

> *Long ago, when there were no roads, just trails through the woods, a young girl got a little tiny Native pony because she wanted to go visit her relatives and they were quite a few miles away through the bush. It was in the wintertime and suddenly it started to snow. It turned into a blizzard very quickly and she started to freeze. She let go of the reins, put her hands under the horse’s mane until she could feel her hands were warming. She held onto her pony as he started to trot. It was a long way and with her eyes closed she could feel the little pony moving fast. Then it stopped right in front of a little home. The pony saved the girl from freezing.*

Introduction

- Movement Warm-up – Students move to triple meter in drum, played by teacher. Try different types of locomotor movement, including gallop with dotted rhythm (consider keeping the tempo fairly slow, close to that of the piece).
- Play the recording, without explanation at this point.
- Legend and reflection – Read the excerpt of the script that tells the story represented by this music (above). Notice the story says the girl "let go of the reins". How did she arrive at her relatives' home if she wasn't holding the reins? *The pony knew the way and took care of her.* How did the pony keep the girl warm? *She put her hands in his mane.* Do you remember a time when you were caught in a snowstorm? How did you get home safely? *Mom or dad drove safely, you were kept warm and cozy, someone held your hand to guide you home, etc.* How did you feel about the person that helped you and how do think this girl feels about her pony? *Gratitude, love, respect*
- Play the recording again. Do you hear a journey in the music? Triple meter motifs give a sense of motion; lots of different instruments "passing" motifs back and forth suggesting movement; broad, open sounds with crescendo suggest wide vista.
- Balloon activity – to help establish the feel of the rippling motifs being passed around, consider having children stand in several small circles with a balloon for each circle. As the opening section plays, the children volley the balloon around the circle to the beat of the music.
- Learn the melody by singing/humming (bar 389/0:33) It starts with bassoon, viola, and cello and then moves to flute, clarinet and horn). The melody is written here at the pitch of the score. It is important to transpose it to a more suitable range for your students to sing, perhaps starting on D.



Note the dotted rhythm. What might that rhythm suggest? *(horse galloping/trotting)* Sing the melody and move to the music like a horse.

Orchestration Activity

Can you hear the snow *(glockenspiel)* and then the storm developing? Do you hear the wind swirling? How is that represented in the music? *Low brass, crescendo, harp glissando, ascending lines, etc.*

- Define "orchestration" (How the instruments are used in a composition.) Discuss how the choice of instruments affects how we experience the music. Suppose tuba had been used instead of glockenspiel or oboe had been used instead of trumpets for the crescendos. Would the music have sounded the same?
- Teach a simple melody to your students (e.g., Hot Cross Buns). Play the melody on several different instruments (e.g., Alto xylophone, bass metallophone, glockenspiel, keyboard, recorder, etc.) Ask the students to reflect on how the melody sounds on each different instrument.

The reflection could be done in a variety of ways, depending on the age of the students. Young children can decide how they will move to the music (e.g., Like butterflies or birds for higher sounds, like elephants for lower sounds). Older students can play the melodies, perhaps in response to a cue from the teacher (e.g., "If you're playing a high range instrument, play the melody now.", "If you have a low range instrument, play the melody this time."), with a follow up conversation about the effect of the range of the melody to the experience of the music.

Movement activity

Listening to Jodi Contin…

"I loved hearing the stories from my mother of my grandparents' owning horses. If my Mishomis was not home by a certain time my Nookmis would send the horses to bring him home, and they did every time."

After discussing the above and listening to the music numerous times, consider isolating several motifs and allowing a small group of students to choose the motif/melody they will represent through movement. Consider the swirling sixteenth note patterns at the beginning, the icy glockenspiel sixteenths, the sweeping melody, etc. Perform the movements with the recording, each group responding to their parts of the music. Consider using props unique to each group.

For younger children the activity could be simplified to just have two children be the pony and girl, and the others be elements of the storm swirling around the travelers as the music plays. I would suggest not using a hobby horse for this activity to emphasize the amazing characteristics/wisdom of the pony rather than the focus naturally falling on the human.

Art Activity

- As you listen to the music what colors do you see? *Blues, greys* Do you think it is dark or light outside? *Dark*
- Show the students Rhonda Snow's paintings from the study guide. Point out characteristics of her work – intense, bright colors, outlines of subjects with interior patterns or pictures, painting that looks like beading patterns, etc. Consider showing other examples as well. (e.g., Leah Dorion, "The Giving Tree: A Retelling of a Traditional Métis Story", Published by Gabriel Dumont Institute, ISBN-13 978-0920915905)

- Draw a picture, inspired by Rhonda Snow's paintings and the music. Consider using oil pastels or acrylic paint to create the intense colors. Discuss ways to show the swirling wind and snow through your drawings.
- Remember to play the music several times while the students are drawing to help them make connections to the music.

In addition to the activity above, the coloring page that follows, created by Rhonda Snow, might be a good option for your younger students. A discussion about the elements of the paintings (intensity of color, color choice, etc.) would still be appropriate.


Rhonda Snow 2020

Song for Geegwanens

Kevin Lau (Canada, b. 1982)

Lesson Plan by Jewel Casselman

Audio:
MSD10

Song for Geegwanens is about the first Ojibwe horse to be born in Manitoba in living memory. Geegwanens is her Ojibwe name and means Little Comet. Geegwanens was born on a beautiful spring morning. A comet had flown by Earth, and this is where her name comes from.

Focus

- 6/8 time signature
- Lyrical music
- Melodic line
- Movement
- Art

Objectives

Students will:

- feel the 6/8 time signature
- listen and experience a lyrical style of music
- hear, sing, and play a phrase of the melodic line
- explore the music through movement
- explore the music through art

Materials

- Recording of Song for Geegwanens
- Ribbons, scarves, material
- Black construction paper and art supplies

Teaching Process

Step By Step Lesson Plan:

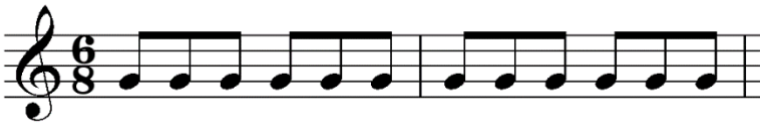
Please note that the main theme of this music is also heard in *The Horses of the People*.

Song for Geegwanens is a beautiful piece of music that has a gentle lullaby feel. The melody is singable and lyrical. At this point in the performance, it is announced that a new foal has been born on the farm.

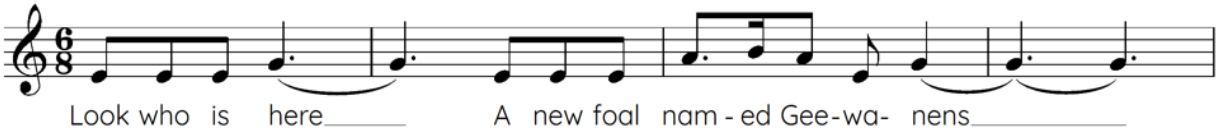
“And then one beautiful spring morning – a new arrival. Born on the night a comet flew by the Earth, she was named Geegwanens – her name in Ojibwe means Little Comet. She’s the first Ojibwe Horse to be born in Manitoba in living memory”

Listening Activity:

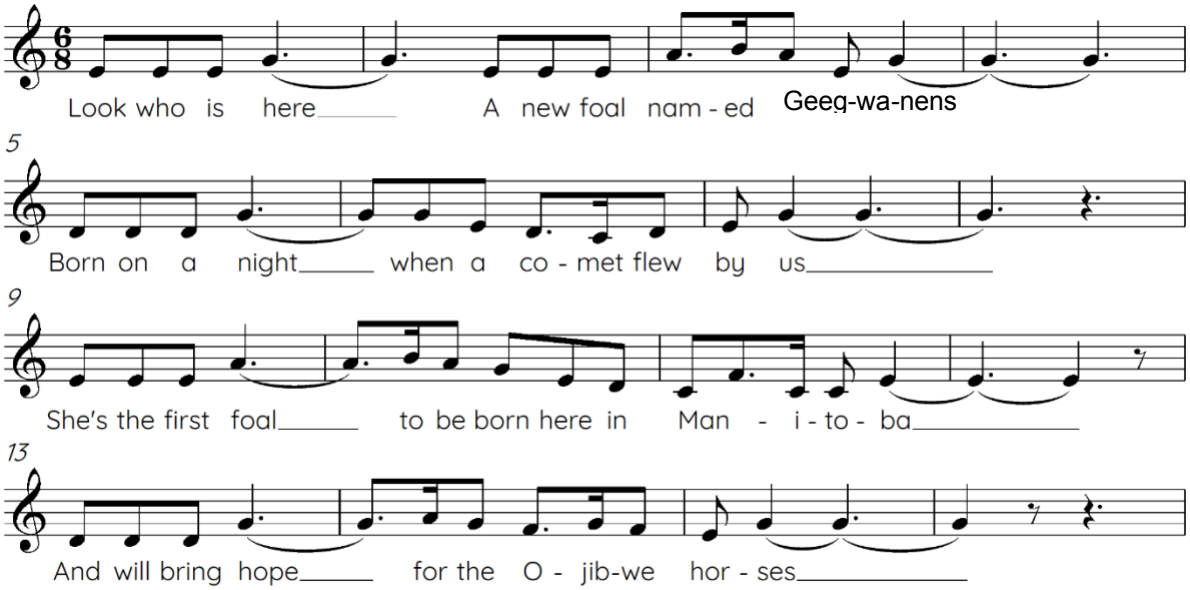
- Play the recording and ask the students to listen for the feel and mood of the music. Is it loud and scary? Parts in the middle are louder but not scary. Is it gentle and peaceful? Yes. Is it fast, slow, or medium? Slow to medium. Is it light or dark? Light. Tell the students that this music could be described as lyrical. It is light, singable, memorable, smooth, and moving. Tell the students that this song is representing the birth of a new foal on the farm.
- Play the recording again and ask the students to move their bodies gently swaying back and forth to feel of the 6/8 time signature. Tell the students that the piece is written in 6/8 time – two sets of three eight notes combine to make up each measure. It has a feeling of being in two.



- The melody line at the beginning of the piece of music is beautiful. Play the recording from 0:00 – 0:47. Ask the students to listen to the melody that is played by the flutes. Explain to the students that the melody of the music is the part that stands out from the rest of the music. It is often singable and memorable.
- Teach the first phrase of this melody to the students. Play the first phrase of the melody line for the students. Teach the students the melody so they can sing the phrase. Once they are comfortable with singing the phrase, transfer the melody to the instruments. The tied dotted quarter notes will not sound for long on the xylophones, but they will last on the metallophones.



- The first phrase of the melody has been provided above. The entire melody line is below. Words are added to tell the story of the birth of this new foal. The original melody below is written one octave higher than the melody below. The melody was transposed to make it more accessible for young students. The melody is changed slightly in measure 7, 8, 15, & 16 where the G has been transposed above middle C, and in measure 11 the F is above middle C, again this is to make is singable for young voices. The melody is tricky to sing. It is not required for the students to know the melody and words.



Movement Activity:

Listening to Jodi Contin…

"The most beautiful moment of a new time, new generation creating the change our ancestors dreamed. Geegwanens brought me so much hope for our people and the Spirit Horses."

- Play the recording and ask the students to sway their bodies while they move through the space. They should have the feeling of moving in two. This piece is written in 6/8 time with a feel of two.
- Distribute ribbons, scarves, and large pieces of flowing material to the students. Play the recording a second time and see how they can incorporate the materials into the music. Is there a place where ribbons would work best? Scarves? Large pieces of flowing material? Remind the students what the theme of this song is – the birth of the first Ojibwe horse in Manitoba and that Geegwanens means Little Comet.
- Ask the students for suggestions on a format for the movement performance. How will the performance begin? What will be the main features of the movement? How will they indicate the change in the middle with the brass? How will they end the movement performance?
- After the students have decided on the way they would like the movement to work, ask the students to practice the form.
- Perform the movement piece to the music.

Art Activity:

- Listen to the recording and ask students how they might be able to represent this music in an art form. They might suggest smooth flowing lines.
- Explain to the students that the name Geegwanens means Little Comet. A comet is a formation of ice, rock, and dust that can be observed moving through the sky and solar system usually at night.
- For this art activity the students are going to create a night sky with a comet(s) moving through it.
- Distribute black construction paper and oil or dry pastels to the students. Ask the students to make different sized circles on the papers with their choice of colors. They could use one color or different colors. Do not have too many circles on the paper.
- The students will fill in the circles with colors. The inside color could be different than the outside color.
- Have the students take their finger and drag their finger through the circle and onto the blank black paper around the circle. This will leave a trail like a shooting star.
- Alternatively, the students could use black construction paper and white or light-colored paint. The paint could be placed into circle shapes or splattered onto the black paper off a paint brush.

Listening Questions

- What is the mood of the music?
- What instruments are playing?
- Why did the composer use the instruments he did?
- What is 6/8-time signature mean?
- Where have you heard this melody before?

Extensions

- Have the students find some pictures or videos of newborn foals. Explain to the students that a foal will learn to walk within 30 minutes of being born. Whether the foal is born on a farm, in the wild, or is part of the breed of horses such as a zebra they all learn to walk and can run with the herd of horses with 30 minutes to one hour. Ask the students why they think a foal needs to learn to walk and run so quickly?

Foal Image credit to:

- https://images.squarespace-cdn.com/content/v1/5357442be4b0240356d4d2e7/1464120478116-EVOO96KIKUPKE1VGZMD6/IMG_0805.JPG?format=750w

Foal image credit to:

- https://www.goodblogscdn.com/sites/www.ofhorse.com/post_images/cropped/1414.jpg?v=1419935496

- The students can look up information about comets. Find images of comets and show the students. Ask the students if they have ever seen a comet in the night sky?
- There is very good information about space at https://solarsystem.nasa.gov/From this site you can find information on comets.
- This is a good website for students to find information on space. It is geared towards kids. https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/search/kids/

Comet image credit to:

- https://solarsystem.nasa.gov/system/resources/detail_files/518_CoMétisON1200w.jpg

Comet image credit to:

- https://solarsystem.nasa.gov/system/resources/detail_files/2527_208A3495_1280.jpg

The Next Generation of Caretakers: A Conversation with Em Loerzel

Truth & Reconciliation

Em is a descendant of White Earth Nation and is currently living outside of Minneapolis teaching social work to university undergraduate students as an assistant professor. She spoke with Ken MacDonald about her relationship with Ojibwe Horses.

Em with Mino

Ken MacDonald: So I suppose the first question is, who are all the horses at your farm?

Em Loerzel We have a total of seven Ojibwe horses here at the farm which we call The Humble Horse. We have Tiny - that's his barn nickname. He is one month old. He was our first Ojibwe boy baby to be born with us, which is exciting! We have our two two-year old's, Waabaanakwad and Ode'imini Giizis. Then we have our 3-year-old stud colt. His name is Mino Bimaadiziwin, but we call him Mino here, and he will be hopefully a dad to two babies this summer. We'll see if that works out. And then we have a 4-year-old. Her name is Dimii but we call her Mamá. She's friendly and loves cookies. Then we have her sister Noojimo, but we call her Jimmy or Jimbo and she is probably about 5 or 6. We also have a 7-year-old gelding named Baswewe. Right now, he's off the farm. He's currently being fostered by some really amazing people at Fond du Lac Reservation up in Minnesota. We also have a Spanish outcross mustang, Ogitchidaa Kwe. We call her Gitchi, or I call her "Itchy Gitchi" because she is still shedding off all her baby fluff, so she likes to rub against stuff.

We're also fostering Misajidamoo from Grey Raven Ranch in Ontario, who we call Miss Moo, or I'll call her Mooert or Mombert. She is maybe pregnant. We're going to see what happens in a couple of weeks. And so that's our little herd here at The Humble Horse.

Ken MacDonald: Nice! It sounds like you've been doing this for a long time.

Em Loerzel: I wish! No, we've only had this herd for 14 months. I grew up loving horses but where we lived, horses were only for rich people - which we were not. For the longest time wanted to be an equine vet, but I became a social worker. I started horseback riding when I got diagnosed with a chronic illness, and my research said that would be good for rehabilitation. When I started to get my strength back and my life back, I was so thankful for those horses for sharing their strength and medicine with me that I started volunteering for a horse welfare organization out in Minnesota.

I have an uncle who told me, "We were horse people", and that he remembers horses and ponies in the woods where he grew up. One of his dreams was to see Ojibwe Horses back in Wisconsin. I went to my husband, who's always been very supportive of my crazy ideas, mostly because he knows I can pull them off when I really want to, and I said, let's just get one horse. It was what we could afford. That was Mino. And you know he's still very precious to me. He's the first one to greet me at the gate and the for the last one to say good night to me after hay. We do have that special bond. But that one turned to six - and a half, because we have a pregnant mare on board.

Mino, Strawberry, and Grey Cloud

We were living in a rented townhouse when all this was going down. We bought a farm for the horses. This is our first home and first farm ever. That's how much we love these guys. We bought a 130-year-old farmstead on nine acres just for the horses.

Ken MacDonald: So how did you get your farm?

Em Loerzel: We got it through a government program just to help people who didn't make a lot of money who lived out in the country. Since we have the horses here, we got agricultural support for rural development. But we build all the shelters ourselves. We do all the fencing ourselves. We do everything ourselves. We can't hire out. We've gotten small grants before, but we're very much donation based. We don't get paid for what we do. It's all volunteer.

Ken MacDonald: That's so great - you had a dream, you looked around and found programs and people that could support it happening.

Em Loerzel: Yeah. And we have some research collaboratives set up with local universities. We have one with University of Wisconsin-River Falls and their equine reproduction program for preservation of our horses. We're also starting a collaboration with University of Wisconsin-Madison. We are going to be gathering and documenting stories from elders about our ponies, and then we're going to be creating it into an educational curriculum for both allies and Indigenous communities.

Ken MacDonald: That's amazing. You mentioned your uncle who remembers the horses. Rhonda, who did the art in our show, has talked to a lot of people, mostly in Ontario and Québec, who recall the horses when they were younger, and how they were taken from the villages.

Em Loerzel: He was on the Menominee Indian Reservation which is in Wisconsin. Here in the US things are a little different but I think the stories coincide. I mean, we have very similar policies. I have living relatives that went to residential boarding school, but we also had something called the Indian Relocation Act. Then in the 1940s and 1950s people were incentivized to go to urban spaces so the US government could chip away at reservation land. So, I think the ponies disappearing coincided with forced removal and urbanization of native people. Something I always tell people is the story of Ojibwe Ponies parallels the story of Ojibwe people. I think, as we were forcefully removed, our horses were too. And mechanization didn't help either.

Ken MacDonald: So now you are living with these horses, how is that, and how do they seem compared to other horses?

Em Loerzel: Oh, my God! They drive me nuts! We have this one area we use to store alfalfa hay which is rich stuff, too rich for them. We just lightly supplement their regular grass hay with that in the winter. I cannot tell you how, on a weekly basis, they have figured out a way to nudge their way in through the sliding door into it. We switched to using locking carabiners. Tiny figured out that he could open it with his lips.

Compared to my regular Thoroughbred riding horse, who I love and he's so easy going and so sweet, I think these ponies have more of an intuitive understanding of people. I don't have to break it down as much for them as I do with to my Thoroughbred. They're very smart but they're very mischievous. They are also very loving, they're very forgiving, and they're very resilient.

Ken MacDonald: The Elders talk about how those horses just lived closely around the villages, and we see pictures like the one from Minnesota in our show, where the horse is just at liberty in the woods while the women are doing their weaving. If they needed help, they would just go over and get a horse to do it for them. That just seems very different from what I ever had in my mind about how you would live and interact with a horse. How much of that How much of that culture do you think we will have to reimagine, reinvent, reawaken? In your research do you feel like there's going to be people around that still recall living with horses that way?

Women weaving while a horse grazes in the woods, c. 1930. Photo: Minneapolis Museum

Em Loerzel: I like to say the knowledge is sleeping. I've heard that from my Elders that it's sleeping, and we're waking it up. And I like that. Yeah, it's all in the bones for us. It's memory. We call it blood memory, you know. Like, you might be crummy with languages but you're learning the language of your ancestors, and then it just clicks for some reason. Right? That's an example of blood memory. I do think, to a certain extent we are going to have to decolonize the way that we look at horses because of the society that we're in right now. It's very much like, “What can you do with this horse to justify its existence?” Right? What can the horse do for you?

But besides being built on the backs of unwilling people, Canada and the US was also built on the backs of our horses. Both settler horses and Indigenous horses. So, for hundreds of years, right like it's been, what can these horses do for us? But with Anishinaabe people, I would say, our traditional relationship with these horses is built on consent. And it's built on collaboration and a partnership. You're in partnership with these horses because you're all you're in partnership with your relatives.
I think there is more attention being paid to more consensual and positive ways to train horses and interact with horses. Obviously like the reality is they are thousand-pound animals who could take you out in a heartbeat. You must be smart about things, but when you on start to understand your own horses, you just know. You can read them pretty good. How cool is it to communicate with a relative from a different species that has transcended beyond words that has evolved beyond words! How cool is that we can have that with our horses. I think that's such a neat superpower.

Em says hello to Echo as Nojimoo and Dimii enjoy hay with a feeding net that helps mimic natural grazing by slowing their intake

Ken MacDonald:
That’s a wonderful final word, but is there anything else you’d like to mention?

I think I’d maybe emphasize that these horses wouldn't be here without collaboration.

Points for Conversation

1. Do you think there is any significance of the names given to the horses at the farm? You can use the Ojibwe People's Dictionary for words you don't recognize.
2. The horses have given names and "barn names." Do you have more than one name for people or pets? Why would you have extra names and how do they make you feel?
3. How do you think Em Loerzel's background and experiences influence her work with horses?
4. What challenges did Em Loerzel face in starting a farm for the horses, and how did she overcome them? What are some challenges you think she still faces?
5. What is the significance of the research collaborations Em has set up with local universities?
6. How might the story of Ojibwe Horses parallel the story of Ojibwe people?
7. What is the traditional relationship between Anishinaabe people and horses, and how does it differ from other cultures' relationships with horses?
8. How does the concept of blood memory relate to the reawakening of traditional relationships with horses?
9. What do you think Em means when she talks about decolonizing the way we look at horses and their role in society?
10. What role does collaboration play in the preservation and continuation of Ojibwe horses?

A Horse of a Different Culture

Truth & Reconciliation

Lesson Plan by Ken MacDonald

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada called for governments and educators to integrate Indigenous knowledge, teaching methods, and resources, and to build student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect. Bringing this workshop to your students can be one of many responses to that call.

Source: http://www.trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf (Page 7, points 63-64)

This concert will specifically talk about the rescue of the Ojibwe Horse breed. For older students, investigating the history of the breed and what brought them to near-extinction will be enriching.

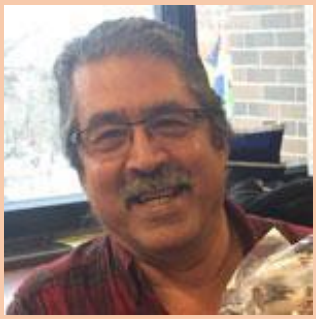
Land or Territory Acknowledgement

Begin your lesson with your area's land acknowledgement. There is more information about this in the Introduction on Page 3.

Enduring Understandings

Anishinaabe people traditionally lived closely with horses, and this way of life became threatened and nearly extinguished by Canadian settlers. The Ojibwe Horse breed was nearly exterminated. They are now being brought back by a dedicated group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people working together.

The history of the horse in North America is told very differently by European-trained historians and by Indigenous elders who follow the oral history. Reconciliation means honestly looking at the past and creating bridges between all Canadians and our First Nations. All Canadians have a part to play in reconciliation.



Listening to Elder Dan Thomas…

"I think the subject is one that can spark inquiries by students. It's also important to teach students that we often 'believe' what we are told by teachers, clergy, politicians, and even older family as we look up to them. However, a scientific outlook would have us question those 'beliefs' and examine all the evidence."

Procedure

- Read the two articles on the pages that follow, discuss their content and themes, as appropriate with your students.
- Discuss:
    - Does history as you've been taught differ from what the Elders teach? What have you learned about Indigenous culture?
    - What does reconciliation mean to you?
- Look at Rhonda's artwork and her artists' statements.
    - Are her paintings history or art?
    - Can you think of any other artworks that convey history?
    - How are they different from history books used in schools?
    - Do they tell a different history from what you have learned?

Activity

What does reconciliation mean to you?

- **Younger grades:** color the sheet on Page 31, which shows the rescue of the final four Ojibwe Horses. Talk about how you feel. What do you imagine the horses are feeling?

Older grades: use the frame painting by Rhonda on Page 32 to express your own ideas. What does Truth and Reconciliation mean to you? Use the methods introduced in the art lesson plan if you wish. Do you prefer to use words or images? Which tells history more accurately or completely?

A Horse of a Different Culture: Conflicting Histories about Horses in North America

Truth & Reconciliation

by Ken MacDonald

Elders recall that the boreal forests of Canada once teemed with small horses that ran free like deer. These horses lived closely with the Anishinaabe people and helped in the winter months with tasks like checking trap lines, hauling logs, and transportation. In the spring, they were turned loose until the seasons turned chilly again.

Though horses continue to figure prominently in Indigenous ceremonies as spirit animals and helpers, very few still live freely in the wild. The last few horses to do so lived at Lac La Croix First Nation in northwestern Ontario. For that reason, the breed is often referred to as the "Lac La Croix Indian Pony" as well as the Ojibwe Horse.[1] Today, there are approximately 200 of the breed. They are considered Canada's only Indigenous-developed horse breed. Indigenous and non-Indigenous Caretakers (a term preferred to "owners", to reflect a sense they are not anyone's property) work together to care for their needs, both on and off First Nation reservations.

The origin of the breed remains a mystery. Paleontologists and historians generally assume that horses developed over 50 million years in North America but went extinct on this continent at the end of the last Ice Age about 10 000 years ago. They believe horses were re-introduced by the Spanish and arrived back in Canada between 1730 and 1750.[2]

This dominant Western history is challenged by several intriguing points. Elders share stories of horses they say pre-date European contact. Recent scientific evidence suggests that horses of European descent had been well integrated into Indigenous cultures across western North America long before Europeans themselves arrived in those regions.[3] There are Indigenous petroglyphs, pictograms, and figurines that Elders say are indications that horses were present in North America before European contact.[4]

Why are these histories so different? Perhaps it is because for many years, the removal of Indigenous people from their traditional lands and the destruction of their resources (including the horses) was justified

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[1] https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/lac-la-croix-Indigenous-pony
[2] https://albertashistoricplaces.com/2013/12/04/hooves-in-history-how-the-horse-changed-the-west/
[3] Taylor, W. T., et al. (2023). Early dispersal of domestic horses into the Great Plains and Northern Rockies. *Science*, *379*(6639), 1316–1323.

[4] Collin, Yvettee Running Horse, The Relationship Between the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas and the Horse: Deconstructing a Eurocentric Myth. University of Alaska Press, 2017.

by pretending the land was empty for the taking before European arrival. Generations of Canadian children were taught that John Cabot discovered Canada in 1497 – as though there was not a flourishing population here before that time.

Elders generally choose not to challenge the European narrative directly. They simply continue to share the oral histories and practice ceremonies that have been handed down through the generations – and which include horses.

Elder Dan Thomas notes, “There are reports of horses in full use by Indigenous people in different areas of North America within two to ten years after they were supposedly introduced in Mexico. But how did they multiply and be fully entrenched in various cultures over millions of square miles in such a short time? Or were they always here?”[5]

As Ojibwe Horse caretaker Rhonda Snow says, “It’s not up to those who were colonized and harmed to make it right. Everyone must acknowledge the truth.” As far as the true history of horses goes, reconciliation requires that more research should occur. Perhaps someone will unlock this mystery soon.

2020

[5] Personal correspondence with Elder Dan Thomas, September 28, 2020.

Of Settlers and Horses – In the Government's Words

Truth & Reconciliation

by Ken MacDonald

Some of the last ponies to live freely. c. 1970s, Lac La Croix, Ontario. Photo: Ojibwe Horse Society Archives.

In 1830, the Canadian government placed Indian Agents in charge of First Nations, a system that remained in place until 1969. The Annual Reports of these agents show how important horses were to First Nations. One commented that in Fort MacLeod, Alberta, "Every workman upon this reservation keeps his own horse".[6]

First Nations used their horses to hunt and trap and haul logs in the winter, and in the springtime turned the horses out onto the open land to graze. The Indian Agents kept careful records. They noted that First Nations across Canada had many more horses than any other kind of agricultural animal, including cattle and pigs.[7] The Métis used them on their traditional routes prior to the introduction of the wheel, and continued to use them once the Red River carts revolutionized their way of travel in 1801.

These horses were frequently called "Indian Ponies" because they were smaller than the common European horse breeds. They were unusually friendly and sturdy. Now, the ancestors of these Indian Ponies are often known as the Lac La Croix Ojibwe Horses or Ojibwe Horses.

Turtle Island, as North America is known by Indigenous people, had no Canadian-US border as we know it today. But the scramble to settle North America was a fight for control of territory by the two new countries. Treaties 1 and 2 between Canada and Indigenous nations, the Dominion Land Act of 1872, and the Indian Removal Act in the US were all set up to encourage the fastest-possible settlement. Land used for untold generations by First Nations was parceled off and given away for free to immigrants recruited from many European countries.[8] The government created national horse-mounted police to clear First Nations from this land, by force when necessary.[9]

The Canadian landscape became transformed as the government brought wave after wave of new settlers. As there was more competition for the available land, there was less room for an Indigenous way of life that allowed Ojibwe Horses to graze freely on the land.

In 1885, Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. MacDonald, said these massive changes were fair to Indigenous people: "We have done all we could, by the supply of cattle, agricultural implements, and

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[6] Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1881, page 36.
[7] Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1886 page 394.
[8] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dominion_Lands_Act
[9] "The RCMP was created to control Indigenous people." Global News, June 15, 2019.

instruction, to change them from a nomadic to an agricultural life. We have had very considerable success."[10]

However, Indian Agents at the same time reported that Indigenous peoples' "horses are systematically driven away from the open country by the White settlers who have taken leases of pastoral land in their neighborhood."[11]

MacDonald's claim of "fairness" can be contrasted to the views of military leadership. One American Colonel said, "Kill every buffalo you can! Every buffalo dead is an Indian gone."[12] Another remarked, "The destruction of the big game in the West is simply a natural consequence of the advance of civilization."[13]

A team of Clydesdale work horses.

Traditionally, First Nations did farm as well as hunt big game, but as they were forced onto smaller parcels of land, farming became more important. Their small horses were perfectly suited for their traditional work of hunting, trapping, and hauling, but Indian Agents felt that "the horses are generally too light for farm work".[14] Being small in stature, they were looked down upon by settlers, who said, "The diminutive Indian pony is of very small commercial value in this country."[15] One Indian Agent explained in his report, "I am trying to induce several of the Indians to buy young steers, which they can purchase cheap; in a year or so they would be strong enough to do considerable work. I consider that oxen are preferable and more beneficial than horses on a new farm, the most important reason being that they are much easier and cheaper kept, as they will remain in tolerably good condition all winter on straw only, whilst horses require hay and oats."[16]

Government agents preferred these Indigenous horses to be crossed with larger European draft horses. They commented approvingly, "They are improving greatly their breed of horses".[17] The Ojibwe Horses were deemed worthless and when found near reserves, they were often simply shot by Indian Agents.
One Indian Agent was happy to see the horses pushed away. "I am very much afraid great difficulty will be experienced in keeping their horses out of the crops. Already the prairie round the camp is eaten bare by them. I feel sure that there are as many horses as Indians; the country round about is swarming with them. As they are of no earthly use but for their owners to ride upon, it is one satisfaction to know that most of them will starve to death next winter. I tried to induce them to trade them away for cooking stoves."[18]
The Canadian government welcomed people to take horses off the land, depriving Indigenous people of a resource that had kept them self-sufficient. Many were taken for use on the Gold Rush trails, which were so dangerous that one section was known as "The Dead Horse Pass",[19] or were simply killed off. Within less than a hundred years, the once-numerous Ojibwe Horses were nearly all gone.

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[10] https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/10-quotes-john-a.-macdonald-made-about-first-nations
[11] Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1885, page 60.
[12] 'Kill Every Buffalo You Can! Every Buffalo Dead Is an Indian Gone'. The Atlantic, May 13, 2016.
[13] Cody, William, "Famous Hunting Parties of the Plains". Cosmopolitan Magazine, June 1894.
[14] Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1886. Page 32.
[15] Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1886. Page 205.
[16] Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1886. Page 52.
[17] Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1886. Page 68.
[18] Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, 1881, page 31.
[19] "History of the White Pass Trail". https://www.nps.gov/klgo/learn/historyculture/white-pass-history.htm

Any animal who could possibly carry a pack – including ponies, horses, dogs, goats, cattle, camels, and more - were used on the Gold Rush Trails. Photo: Eric Hegg, circa 1897, University of Washington.

Fields and Forests: The Role of the Land in "The Spirit Horse Returns"

Truth & Reconciliation

by Ken MacDonald

> *"Because you've never ploughed it, your field is filled with native plants, and some are very important to Indigenous people."*
>
> – The Spirit Horse Returns

Set against the backdrop of a wild field and forest, "The Spirit Horse Returns" features two narrators with contrasting perspectives about the land. One is Indigenous, with a deep connection to the native plants that have sustained their community for generations. The other comes from a family that first came to North America from Europe to farm in the early 1600s, and who have a very different relationship to the land. As the show unfolds, their differing views on the field and forest become a major theme. But what is it about this land that makes it so important to both narrators? And how will their relationship with it, and with each other, evolve over time?

A frosty fall morning

We are introduced to a horse named Asemaa'kwe, whose name means "Tobacco Medicine Woman". Asemaa (ah-SAME-ah) is an Ojibwe word meaning "sacred tobacco", which is traditionally considered the most important of the four sacred medicines. The others are sage, cedar, and sweetgrass. These plants are revered by Indigenous people for their healing properties and play a central role in traditional ceremonies. Our play is set in the very center of North America, in a plant community called "Aspen/Oak Parkland".[20] Since it is a transitional area between boreal forests and open prairie grasslands which contains elements of both, this area contains elements that represent a large proportion of the North American landscape.

A "biome" is a region of the world that has a similar climate and geography, animals, and plants.

The Ojibwe Horses that are featured in "The Spirit Horse Returns" are critically endangered, and their traditional boreal forest range is under threat. This vast forest wraps around the north of our planet, stretching from just below the Arctic Circle in Canada and Alaska, down to Idaho, Washington, Montana, and Minnesota. It accounts for 30% of the world's forest and forms the world's largest single biome. But increased industrial development such as logging, mining, oil, and gas are leading to the rapid

[20] Province of Manitoba. (n.d.). Birds Hill Provincial Park.

breakup of the forest.[21] As the boreal forest contains a third of the carbon stored on Earth's land, its rapid change could have major impacts on climate change.[22] Though Ojibwe Horses are only known to have been associated with a small area of the worldwide boreal forest, perhaps interest in them and their habitat can help bring awareness to the fight led by Indigenous people to preserve this biome.[23]

The Ojibwe Horses were also known to have been involved with the great Red River Settlements of the 1800s as the Métis people brought these "Indian Pones" (as settlers called these horses) to the edge of the great midwestern plains in what is now North Dakota and Manitoba. The Métis culture developed from a mixture of First Nations, Inuit, English, French, and Scottish heritage. They declared themselves a "New Nation". Their communities remain vibrant to this day, and reminders of their early settlements can be found in city and street names from Kansas City and Wisconsin to Manitoba and into Alaska.[24] In "The Spirit Horse Returns," we join in a kitchen party where their fiddling and songs handed down from the age of the fur traders are still enjoyed.

With settlements also came colonization which transformed the prairies. Farmers came in by the millions from Europe to "clear the land" for agriculture. They claimed the land was empty and theirs to take.[25] Removing the vast Midwestern grasslands and its herds of buffalo and other native grazing animals brought major challenges, however. For example, settlers did not understand how the tall grasses such as Big Bluestem, the dominant prairie grass, grew extremely long roots that bound the soil and trapped moisture. When a drought came in the 1930s, the now-unanchored soil of a vast area of North America catastrophically blew away in what was called the "Dust Bowl". Today, tall grass prairie only accounts for half a percent of the Midwest of North America.[26]

Trevor Kirczenow is the breed registrar for the Ojibwe Horse Society and makes a small onscreen appearance in "The Spirit Horse Returns". Here, he has located the one Big Bluestem plant that still grows in a ditch next to thousands of acres of canola, one of the world's most important oilseeds.

Modern agriculture is extremely important to our economy, but intensive farming of monocrops and habitat loss have led to an 86% decline in biodiversity which ultimately threatens our ability to sustain human populations.[27] Many farmers are now working with scientists to promote agricultural practices that ensure clean water, healthy land, and a stable climate.[28]

In "The Spirit Horse Returns", we see a small patch of land where prairie meets forest. Areas like this play a crucial role in safeguarding vanishing biodiversity. It provides vital habitat for the Ojibwe Horses, whose

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[21] Robbins, Jim • October 12, 2015. "The Rapid and Startling Decline of the World's Vast Boreal Forests." *Yale Environment 360*, 12 Oct. 2015, Accessed 16 July 2023.
[22] "NASA to Study Arctic Climate Change Ecosystem Impacts." *NASA*, 31 Aug. 2015.
[23] Fighting Climate Change, Indigenous People Protect Canadian Forests - The New York Times (nytimes.com). Jim Robbins, October 12, 2015. Accessed July 16, 2023.
[24] Barkwell, Lawrence *et al.* "The Heritage and Legacy of the Métis People." Métis Museum, 2006.
[25] Crosby, Most Rev. Douglas *et al*. "The 'Doctrine of Discovery' and Terra Nullius: A Catholic Response." Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2016.
[26] "Tallgrass Prairie." *Wikipedia*, accessed 17 Apr. 2023.
[27] Our Global Food System is the primary driver of Biodiversity loss. *United Nations Environment Programme,* accessed 17 Apr. 2023.
[28] *North America Agriculture*. The Nature Conservancy.

diet is naturally suited to the native plant life. As these grazing animals are reintroduced, they help balance and restore this vibrant and ancient ecosystem.

One of the narrators in “The Spirit Horse Returns” has a traditional Indigenous worldview, while the other has been brought up with a perspective that was common until recently, which saw colonization only as a journey of progress.

Co-creator Ken MacDonald explains that “At the start of the show, the settler character is confident and proud of their culture. When they become aware of the harms of the past and what it means to people today, they become shaken and unsure. But they continue the dialogue with openness and respect. In ‘The Spirit Horse Returns’ we see how the last of the Ojibwe Horses were saved when Indigenous and non-Indigenous people worked together, and how people from many nations are helping to restore the breed. Our aim was to model a truth and reconciliation process.”

Co-creator Jodi Contin says, “The Ojibwe Horses were nearly pushed to extinction. Their journey parallels the one our Anishinaabe have been on, too, which makes the story of the Ojibwe Horses so emotional and powerful. But we are all still here.”

Points for Discussion

1. What were the consequences of how settlers cleared the land for agriculture and the impact this had on the prairies? How did they affect the ecosystem and its inhabitants? Does this article and the sources it cites present an accurate and balanced view of agriculture and colonization?

2. Why is biodiversity important? What can be done to maintain it?

3. Ask students to reflect on the information in the article about how increased industrial development is leading to the rapid breakup of the boreal forest. How is development important to us personally? What are the consequences? How does it affect the forest and its inhabitants?

4. Discuss the quotes from the show’s co-creators about their aim to model a truth and reconciliation process. What is truth and reconciliation? Why is it important? How does it relate to the themes of the show?

5. Ask students to reflect on how the Ojibwe Horses were nearly pushed to extinction, and how their journey parallels that of the Anishinaabe people. Why is this story so powerful? What can we learn from it?

Post-Concert Reflection

Name: _____ Room: _____Grade: _____

The Spirit Horse Returns
Post-Concert Reflection

Song	**Did I Enjoy it?**			
Across Turtle Island	☺	😐	☹	? *
Manitou Lake	☺	😐	☹	?
Song for Crane	☺	😐	☹	?
Horses of the People	☺	😐	☹	?
The Métis Cart	☺	😐	☹	?
The Pony Express	☺	😐	☹	?
Fences, Borders, Reserves	☺	😐	☹	?
The Useless Ponies	☺	😐	☹	?
The Winter Rescue	☺	😐	☹	?
Song for Geegwanens	☺	😐	☹	?

** ? = I don't remember*

What was your favorite piece of ***music***? _____

Why was it your favorite piece of music? _____

What was your favorite thing to ***watch on stage***? _____

Did any part of the story make you feel ***sad***? _____

Did any part of the story make you feel ***happy***? _____

What piece of music should the NAC Orchestra play next year?

If you were describing this experience to other kids that had never seen the NAC Orchestra, what would you tell them?

Is there anything you would like to tell the NAC orchestra?

“The journey of the Spirit horse is a remarkable learning path experience: we can open our hearts to a majestic story that will bring us pride, wonder and healing. All audiences and learners alike will now have an opportunity keep that Spirit alive. We say that once you have heard a teaching then it has a potential to be shared with others. In this Story of the little ponies there are many lessons we can learn. We thank all the people who have made this possible. Meegwetch.”

- Elder Alison Cox