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| ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS | GRADE 9 | LESSON PLAN |
| This sample lesson plan supports Education for Reconciliation through the inclusion of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives; treaty education; and residential schools’ experiences, with learning outcomes identified in the current Alberta Programs of Study for Grades 1 to 9 in English Language Arts. Each sample lesson plan includes content(s) or context(s) related to one or more of the following aspects of Education for Reconciliation:* diverse perspectives and ways of knowing of First Nations, Métis, or Inuit, including values, traditions, kinship, language, and ways of being;
* understandings of the spirit and intent of treaties; or
* residential schools’ experiences and resiliency.

Links and relevant information in Guiding Voices: A Curriculum Development Tool for Inclusion of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Perspectives Throughout Curriculum and Walking Together: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Perspectives in Curriculum are provided to support understandings of First Nations, Métis, or Inuit ways of knowing. Both online resources are accessed through LearnAlberta.ca. |
| Education for Reconciliation: Residential Schools; Perspective |
| **Program of Studies Outcomes****2.2 Respond to Texts** *Experience various texts* * experience oral, print and other media texts from a variety of cultural traditions and genres, such as essays, broadcast advertisements, novels, poetry, documentaries, films, electronic magazines and realistic fiction
* identify and discuss how timeless themes are developed in a variety of oral, print and other media text
* consider historical context when developing own points of view or interpretations of oral, print and other media texts
* consider peers’ interpretations of oral, print and other media texts, referring to the texts for supporting or contradicting evidence

*Construct meaning from texts* * analyze how the choices and motives of characters portrayed in oral, print and other media texts provide insight into those of self and others
* relate the themes, emotions and experiences portrayed in oral, print and other media texts to issues of personal interest or significance

**5.1 Respect Others and Strengthen Community** *Celebrate accomplishments and events* * explore and experiment with various ways in which language arts are used across cultures, age groups and genders to honour and celebrate people and events

*Use language to show respect** create or use oral, print and other media texts in ways that are respectful of people, opinions, communities and cultures

**5.2 Work within a Group***Cooperate with others** contribute to group efforts to reach consensus or conclusions, by engaging in dialogue to understand the ideas and viewpoints of others

**Resources[[1]](#endnote-1)**Downie, Gord aand Jeff Lemire. *Secret Path*. Simon and Shuster, Inc., 2016.**ISBN:** 978-1-5011-5594-9 (e-book 978-1-5011-5596-3)*Secret Path*. CBC animation ([secretpath.ca/#Film](http://secretpath.ca/#Film))**Summary**: The *Secret Path* is a graphic novel and animation, set to poetry and song, about reflections on Chanie Wenjack’s life and his escape from residential school.Monkman, L. “What does reconciliation mean to you?” CBC News, October 19, 2016. Retrieved from  <http://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/what-does-reconciliation-mean-mb-1.3803617>**Summary**: Six young people in Manitoba from diverse backgrounds share their thoughts on what reconciliation means to them. **Purpose**Students will explore the themes of connectedness to family, a deep sense of belonging, kinship, and strength of community. The importance of sharing stories and experiences is a part of collective consciousness as Canadians and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. The act of remembrance and respecting our ancestors strengthens community ties and identity. Conversations about experiences related to residential schools helps students shift from thinking to action to reconciliation. Students demonstrate their understanding of reconciliation and how they can play a role in advancing reconciliation.**Introduction**This lesson provides an opportunity for students to experience a story that honours the life of a 12-year-old Anishinaabe student Chanie Wenjack. Students will read, watch, and/or listen to the story *Secret Path,* which describes reflections on Chanie’s life, his escape from a residential school, and his attempted return home to his family—a long distance of 1000 km. Tragically, Chanie did not survive his journey, but he is remembered and honoured in this story of hope, determination, and love for family.Prior to beginning the activity, prepare students for conversations regarding the resiliency of individuals and of collectives to endure despite tragedies and challenges. It is recommended that you show students the animation video or download the Secret Path album, as the poems are recorded as songs by singer Gord Downie, the author of the poems.**Activity/Experience**Working as groups or individually, students will read the graphic novel in its entirety, with brief pauses between the ten poems. You may choose to watch the animation before or after reading the graphic novel to provide students with an additional opportunity to experience the story. During a second reading (listening to the poems/songs) or when viewing of the animation, students will find evidence in the visuals and poems/songs in the forms of* symbols/symbolism
* figures of speech
* tone and mood

Students will also identify the following themes: * kinship bonds
* sense of belonging
* strength and determination

After students have an opportunity to discuss their findings and present evidence, they can share and discuss *Secret Path* together as a class.**Conclusion**Students can be divided into four groups to form deeper understandings of Chanie’s journey in the story and to build a visual timeline of “Chanie’s Dream”—that is, to be reconnected with his home and his family. The timeline will highlight key words and images that bring Chanie full circle back to his family.First, students can be divided into four groups to investigate the stages of “Chanie’s Dream”:[[2]](#endnote-2)* early: life with his family and escape from residential school; related poems are “The Stranger” and “Swing Set”
* middle: walking alone on the way home; related poems are “Seven Matches” and “I will not be Struck”
* middle: dreams of getting home; related poems are “Son” and “Secret Path”
* end: resolved and still determined; related poems are “Haunt Them, Haunt Them, Haunt Them,” “The Only Place to Be,” and “Here, Here and Here”

Then students will analyze the visuals and words in the novel to find evidence of the feelings that Chanie would have experienced at the various stages of his journey. Students will provide evidence of these feelings in the following areas: * visuals (emphasis, use of colour, perspective)
* music (tempo, genre, volume, use of voice)
* word choice (repetition of words, layout of poem, words that convey emotion)

In each of the groups, students will record and use their findings to contribute to the creation of a class visual timeline of “Chanie’s Dream”. The timeline will be made up of descriptive words to describe his feelings/emotions in each of the stages of his journey using words, passages, and visuals from the graphic novel or other sources. The entire class will join together to complete “Chanie’s Dream.” Students can share their thoughts and ideas to build upon the hopes and desires of Chanie to add to the visual timeline, giving students an opportunity to explore reconciliation and how reconciliation can be achieved.**Extension**As an extension activity, students may read the article “Whatdoes reconciliation mean to you?”posted on CBC News in October 2016 and found online at <http://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/what-does-reconciliation-mean-mb-1.3803617>. Students can do a comparative analysis of the various stories and perspectives on the meaning of reconciliation described by the individuals featured in the article. Students will share ideas with the class about reconciliation and discuss the actions they will take personally. **Assessment for Student Learning**Consider multiple ways students can demonstrate their understanding of connectedness to family, a deep sense of belonging, kinship, and strength of community. **Keywords:** connectedness; determination**Themes:** residential schools; resiliency; identity; kinship; belonging; reconciliation **Teacher Background**[[3]](#endnote-3)**Walking Together: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Perspectives in Curriculum (Alberta Education)*** Kinship – Respecting Wisdom ([www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/#/kinship/respecting\_wisdom](http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/#/kinship/respecting_wisdom))

([www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/](http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/))* Healing Historical Trauma – Respecting Wisdom – Jerry Wood ([www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/#/healing\_historical\_trauma/respecting\_wisdom/jerry\_wood\_](http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/#/healing_historical_trauma/respecting_wisdom/jerry_wood_))
* Well-being – Respecting Wisdom – Rita Marten ([www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/#/well\_being/respecting\_wisdom/rita\_marten\_mikisew\_cree\_first\_nation](http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/#/well_being/respecting_wisdom/rita_marten_mikisew_cree_))

**Guiding Voices: A Curriculum Development Tool for Inclusion of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Perspectives Throughout the Curriculum (Alberta Education)*** Ancestors, Time and Place ([www.learnalberta.ca/content/fnmigv/index.html](http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/fnmigv/index.html))

**Articles on Chanie Wenjack** * HeritageMinutes: Chanie Wenjack (Historica Minute) ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=v\_tcCpKtoU0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v_tcCpKtoU0))
* The lonely death of Chanie Wenjack (Maclean’s)

([www.macleans.ca/society/the-lonely-death-of-chanie-wenjack/](http://www.macleans.ca/society/the-lonely-death-of-chanie-wenjack/)) |

1. Some resources may not be authorized but are provided to identify potentially useful ideas for teaching and learning. The responsibility to evaluate these resources rests with the user. The selected resource(s) provides a perspective specific to an individual, group, or nation; they are not intended to represent the perspectives of all First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. **Note:** One of the poems contains one word of profanity. Teachers should exercise their professional judgment. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. All website addresses listed were confirmed as accurate at the time of publication but are subject to change. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)