

TEACHABLE BOOKS

Indigenous Voices: Impact of Residential Schools

By Monica Berra

GRADE LEVEL: Middle (7-10)

THEME: Indigenous Voices

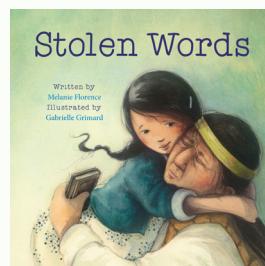
SUB-THEMES: Residential Schools

LEARNING FOCUS

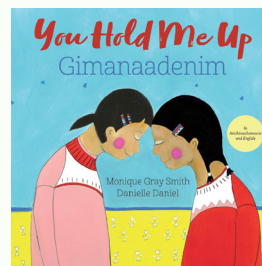
“Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story” ([First Peoples Principles of Learning](#)). Stories tell us about human nature, motivation and experience, and often reflect a personal journey or strengthen a sense of identity. They may also be considered the embodiment of collective wisdom.

FEATURED BOOKS

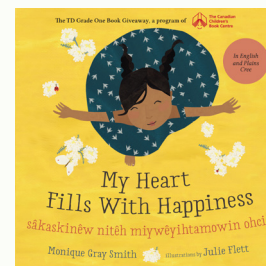
Note: the choice of books in this lesson allow for differentiation of reading level



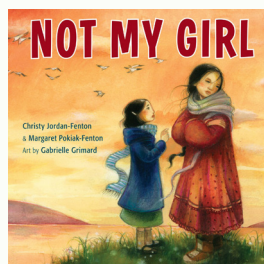
Stolen Words by Melanie Florence, illustrated by Gabrielle Grimard (Second Story Press, 2017)



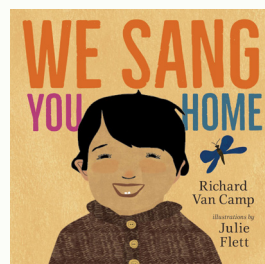
You Hold Me Up by Monique Gray Smith, illustrated by Danielle Daniel (Orca Book Publishers, 2017)



My Heart Fills With Happiness by Monique Gray Smith, illustrated by Juliet Flett, translated by Mary Cardinal Collins (Orca Book Publishers, 2021)



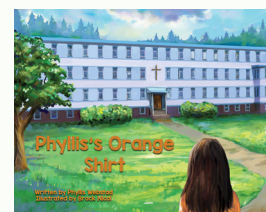
Not My Girl by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton, illustrated by Gabrielle Grimard (Annick Press, 2014)



We Sang You Home by Richard Van Camp, illustrated by Julie Flett, translated by Mary Cardinal Collins (Orca Book Publishers, 2018)



The Orange Shirt Story by Phyllis Webstad, illustrated by Brock Nicol (Medicine Wheel Education, 2018)



Phyllis's Orange Shirt by Phyllis Webstad, illustrated by Brock Nicol (Medicine Wheel Education, 2019)

LEARNING EXPERIENCE

MINDS ON PROVOCATION

Post the following: “The residential school system established for Canada’s Indigenous population in the nineteenth century is one of the darkest, most troubling chapters in our nation’s history.” Justice Murray Sinclair, The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume 1.

As a whole class work out a definition of “**value**”:

Noun

1. The principles that help you decide what is right and wrong and how to act in various situations
2. A person’s principles or standards of behaviour, one’s judgement of what is important in life

Verb

1. To consider or rate highly
2. To rate in usefulness, importance or general worth

Discuss the concept of values. As a class have the students come up with personal and common values that represent their families, school, heritage, community, team and Canada.

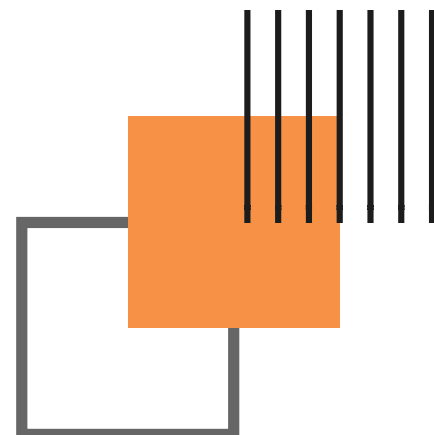
In groups of three or four:

- Encourage students to share how and when they have participated in Orange Shirt Day. Those who have not participated will learn from their peers about this annual event that began in 2013. Connect this conversation back to Justice Murray Sinclair’s quote to put this lesson in a national context.
- On chart paper have students list everything they know about residential schools. This list is open to all prior knowledge. Allow time for reflection and discussion while circulating and asking probing questions. Some students may have opinions like “unfair” and “mean” and these can be added but ask them probing questions to support underlying values to these feelings.
- Analyze and evaluate the list and identify three values. This will take consensus of the group. Students may edit the list at any time. Circle the three values. Students may identify fewer than three values but not more for this lesson. The values may not be clearly articulated at this time but encourage them to find three. Clarity will be developed in the lesson. Have the groups share their three values with the class.

READ, PLAN, AND PRACTICE

Begin by providing the following statement to learners:

Through story, authors are building awareness and understanding of residential schools and the long-term consequences for individuals and Canadian culture. As an older student you are mature, and have developed critical thinking skills that allow you to read and reflect and understand that there were values in Canadian



culture during the time of residential schools that do not reflect school today. Your group has identified three values, possibly all about the policies of the Canadian government, or the values of the children and families who went to residential school.

Begin to read “The Orange Shirt Story.” As the story is being read, ask students to look for the three values their group identified. As you read, stop and share your thinking as you identify the values the students listed. This may be the first of two lessons.

Inform students that in groups they are going to read a selection of books that a younger student may read (choose from any of the featured texts). Look for one or all three of the values your group identified. The value won’t jump off the page—you will have to read each page carefully and discuss how the illustrations supported the story. Place a sticky note on the page that identifies one of your three values. Notice that the author has thought about values.

MAKE, TINKER, AND MODIFY

Discussion provocations for groups after they have read a book for younger students from the listed texts:

- If you were to read this story to a younger student what would you like them to know before reading?
- The story may not mention residential schools but it is about the children who attended. Can you identify the values the author has woven into this story? As the reader can you add further values that are relevant?
- Would you be comfortable reading this story to a younger student?
- Would you recommend this book to a K-3 teacher and what would you want them to know about the values being discussed in the story?

Writing Activity:

- Recognizing Collective Values (post a class list)
- Send a letter to [The Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair](#) expressing your understanding that your class values learning about residential schools.
- Send a letter to one of the authors asking questions, describing your feelings, and expressing gratitude for sharing.
- Create a poster for any of the books identifying values as the focus.

REFLECT AND CONNECT

Continue to discuss values as the year progresses. What we value we become so it is important to identify what we value.



ADDITIONAL CANADIAN BOOKS AND BOOK LISTS TO SUPPORT THIS SUB-THEME

- [K - 3 Indigenous Literature for Classroom Use](#) (Empowering the Spirit)
- [10 Beautiful Indigenous Children's Books To Add To Your Library](#) (CBC Parents)

ADAPTATIONS FOR THIS LESSON

More learning goals for this lesson:

- Recognizing personal values and identifying personal strengths and abilities
- Valuing diversity and building relationships
- Well-being
- Analyzing and critiquing
- Evaluating and reflecting

MORE RESOURCES

- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's [Call to Action 62.i](#): "Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential school, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students."
- Focused Educational Resources: [BC K-12 Evaluated Resource Collection](#)
- [Orange Shirt Day](#) organization
- [Teacher's guide](#) for "Stolen Words" by Melanie Florence
- [First Peoples Principles of Learning](#)

