



Kwaht-Yaht is Born, 1989. Art Thompson, Nuu-chah-nulth. Serigraph on paper. Gift from the Collection of George and Christiane Smyth, UVic Legacy Art Galleries

THANK THE CREATOR

TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR SCHOOL PROGRAM

Spring 2017



University
of Victoria

Legacy Art Galleries

DEAR TEACHER

This guide provides activities to facilitate classroom discussion before your Gallery visit. Engaging with these activities will reinforce ideas presented in the tour and build continuity between the Gallery and classroom experience. Start the activities a week before your visit to prepare students to experience the two exhibitions they will encounter at the Gallery.

EXHIBITIONS

Origin Stories April 8 – Sept 16, 2017

As Canada celebrates 150 years since Confederation, the Legacy Art Galleries respectfully acknowledges a much longer history by presenting First Nations narratives that move beyond limited settler versions of history. Through prints and carvings chosen by guest curator, Jackson McDermott (Dene/Cree) from the Fort Nelson First Nation, the exhibition explores centuries-old stories that continue to live in the people, communities, nations and lands of this place.

There's Blood in the Rocks April 8 – Sept 16, 2017

'Indigenous blood is in the very land itself.' Marianne Nicolson

Kwakwaka'wakw artist Marianne Nicolson uses pictographic imagery and song in a quiet but powerful video installation that tells the often silenced history of the 1862 small pox epidemic in Victoria which utterly devastated thousands of West Coast First Nations people. Nicolson acknowledges the loss of her ancestors while affirming continued Indigenous presence in the land and the strength, endurance and resurgence of First Nations peoples over time.



There's Blood in the Rocks Video Installation Still, 2016. Marianne Nicolson.

The University of Victoria Legacy Art Galleries wishes to recognize and acknowledge the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples on whose traditional territories we live, learn and work.

ACTIVITY 1

MEANINGFUL LISTENING EXERCISE

35-40 min

Learning Standards

Developing an understanding of the history and culture of Canada's First Nations.
(Aboriginal Education)

Discussion 5-10 min

Ask students to give examples of why listening is important. Explain to students why listening skills are essential to First Nations teaching and are the first step to committing something to memory for learning language, protocol, and surroundings. Silence is of particular value and purpose in First Nations cultures in order to show respect, discipline, and strengthen the body and mind, while also providing an opportunity for personal reflection.

Process 10 min

- After discussing the importance of listening, tell students they are going outdoors for a listening exercise.
- Take students to an isolated area (preferably outdoors) and have them imagine themselves in a situation where listening really matters. Give an example such as being lost in the woods. Tell them to listen for as many details as possible like the sound of changing weather, the approach of an enemy, the sound of an animal.
- Students should be in a comfortable position and free their hands of any objects. They may close their eyes or concentrate on one spot but they must not move or make eye contact with each other. Tell them it will only be 5 minutes but this will seem like a long time. This is an exercise of patience and listening.
- **Observe 5 minutes of absolute silence** (or as long as class can handle).
- After five minutes, ask students to share their immediate impressions of the experience. What sounds did they hear? Did they learn anything about the surrounding area from listening intently? What were they thinking about?

Conclusion 20 min

Either outdoors or back in the classroom, ask students to write a journal entry on why listening is important.

ACTIVITY 2

FIRST NATIONS STORYTELLING AND LISTENING

40 min

Learning Standards

Using inquiry processes and skills to ask questions; gather, interpret, and analyze ideas; and communicate findings and decisions. Make ethical judgments about events, decisions, or actions that consider the conditions of a particular time and place. (Social Studies)

Discussion 10 min

Explain to students how First Nations cultures are rooted in their oral tradition. Oral tradition is a culture's collection of spoken words such as stories and songs that have been handed down for generations. Creation stories help to explain where parts of the world began and help to promote an understanding of the purpose and place of things in the world. Storytellers have the responsibility to make their story memorable, while listeners have the responsibility to pay attention and commit the story to memory. How is oral tradition part of your family and culture at home?

Process 10 min

- Prepare students to listen to a story, followed by a discussion about it. The lights can be turned off during the story to help students focus on listening. **Read aloud the "First Fisherman" story** or have students read the story aloud.
- First, ask students to recall details from the story. What animal was Kah-Kah-Wid? Who came first, Kah-Kah-Wid or the human? What was the first thing the humans did? What was the second thing? Why was the human crying? How did the whale help the human?
- Second, ask students to think about the story from different perspectives and their own experience. How would you feel as the human? How would you help someone in that situation? What would you do differently or the same as the whale? What lessons did the story teach? (Survival, helping others, self-reliance, learning from nature)

Conclusion 20 min

Do a think-pair-share exercise. Have students get into pairs to tell their partner about a personal story. Each partner has to try and remember as many details about the other classmate's story to re-tell it to the class. Pick 3-4 pairs to share their partners' stories. Afterward, discuss the storytelling process with students. What did they do to try to remember their partner's story?

THE FIRST FISHERMAN

ART THOMPSON (DITIDAHT, NUU-CHAH-NULTH)

'Kah-Kah-Wid' (killer whale) was placed in this world before the humans were here. When the humans came to this earth they had no way of knowing about all of the creatures that were placed here before them.

One of the first things to be done was to find a home in order to get out of the elements. Second was to find food in order to survive but his knowledge of this world was non-existent. Feeling sorry that he could not catch food to eat he went by the ocean and wept.

'Why do you cry, land creature?' a voice came from the ocean.

'I am hungry and I do not know of any food,' was his reply to seemingly no one, because he could not see who was talking to him.

'Look in the ocean, see the small sea-creatures; they are good to eat.'

He looked and saw salmon. Lots of them, but they were fast and slippery. 'I cannot eat what I can't catch.'

Finally Kah-Kah-Wid jumped from the water saying 'You see how easy it is,' holding a salmon in his mouth. 'Lazy land-creature,' Kah-Kah-Wid was disgusted. 'Lazy land creature needs easy way to catch salmon. Build a wall of stones in the water here, for this is where salmon gather before going up the river to spawn.'

He built a wall of stones and when the tide went out there were lots of salmon caught behind the wall. Land creature always did have food from then on thanks to Kah-Kah-Wid, the First Fisherman.

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ACTIVITY 3

ORAL AND VISUAL STORYTELLING

40-45 min

Learning Standards

Creating artistic works collaboratively and as an individual using imagination. Reflect on creative processes and make connections to other experiences. Interpret and communicate ideas using symbolism to express meaning through the arts. (Arts Education)

Discussion 5-10 min

Students will learn about how First Nations cultures on the Northwest Coast use visual art to remind them of their oral stories. Ask students why art is important? How are oral stories and art similar or different? What are positives and negatives to both?

Process 15 min

- Prepare students for a storytelling. The lights can be turned off during the story to help students focus on listening. Read aloud or have students **read aloud the “Box of Light” story**
- First, ask students to recall details from the story. What did the chief keep in his house? What did Raven transform himself into and why?
- Second, ask students to think about the story from a different perspective or from their own experiences. Would you do what Raven did, why? How do you think the Chief felt? How do you think Raven felt after his actions?
- **Show students the two artworks (Image 1 and Image 2)** and tell them they both depict the same story that was read aloud. Do a visual comparison by asking students: What does each picture depict? How are both artworks similar? How is each artwork different? Which one do you think shows the story better and why?

Conclusion 20 min

Ask students to think about the storytelling process and the visual art-making process. If you could not write a story down, what would you draw it to remember it? Have students draw or paint their own depiction of the “Box of Light” story. After they are done, ask several students to share their artwork and to explain what they chose to depict and why.

THE BOX OF LIGHT

RANDE COOK (KWAKWAKA'WAKW)

In the beginning of time when the world was dark, there was a chief who held the sun, moon and stars in a box in his house.

The Raven, being a Trickster, decided to bring light to the world. He transformed himself into a boy in order to get close to the box.

When the chief left the house the boy transformed back into the Raven, opened the box and released the moon and stars. After the Raven released the moon and stars he released the sun and left through the smoke hole.

They say that the Raven was originally white until he left through the smoke hole in the chief's house and was blackened.

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IMAGE 1

Box of Light, 2002. Rande Cook, Kwakwaka'wakw. Serigraph on Paper. Gift from the Collection of George and Christiane Smyth, UVic Legacy Art Galleries



IMAGE 2

Raven Stealing the Light, 2015. Luke Marston, Coast Salish. Red cedar and paint.
On loan from the Salish Weave Collection.

RESOURCES

Links to First Nations Educational Resources on Oral Traditions and Storytelling

[Overview of Oral Traditions and Storytelling](http://firstnationspedagogy.ca/storytelling.html)

<http://firstnationspedagogy.ca/storytelling.html>

[A Comprehensive List of Indigenous Stories](http://www.fnesc.ca/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/PUBLICATION-61502-updated-FNESC-Authentic-Resources-Guide-October-2016.pdf)

<http://www.fnesc.ca/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/PUBLICATION-61502-updated-FNESC-Authentic-Resources-Guide-October-2016.pdf>

[Introduction to Oral Tradition and the Importance of Listening p.14-15](http://www.fnesc.ca/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/PUB-LFP-K-3-In-our-Own-Words-for-Web.pdf)

<http://www.fnesc.ca/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/PUB-LFP-K-3-In-our-Own-Words-for-Web.pdf>

[Library and Archives Canada – Our Voices, Our Stories](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/stories/index-e.html?PHPSESSID=pgrmvi0lnftvkkc000b09v3tg4)

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/stories/index-e.html?PHPSESSID=pgrmvi0lnftvkkc000b09v3tg4>