



# EVERY CHILD MATTERS

## ORANGE SHIRT DAY SEPTEMBER 30

In recognition of the harm the residential school system did to children's sense of self-esteem and wellbeing, and as an affirmation of our commitment to ensure that everyone around us matters.



## Shi-Shi-etko by Nicola I. Campbell & Kim LaFave

Submitted by Bobbie-Jo Leclair, Indigenous Programming Support Teacher, Winnipeg School Division

### Before Activities:

- Teacher create a bag of memories.
- Introduce the author's notes at the beginning of the book. The introduction gives students background knowledge on Residential Schools. Talk about laws.
- 4 Quadrants (Pictures / Senses / Words / Feelings)
- Use coloured plates from book on overhead to: Predict, Question, Access Background Knowledge, and Connect.

### During Activities:

- Picture walk emphasizing the feelings that the images in the book provoke. These images enhance the sense of loss and sadness that the story's ending conveys. The beauty in Shi-shi-etko's surroundings is starkly contrasted to the time children spent at Residential School.
- At the end of the story Shi-shi-etko does not take the bag of memories with her, instead she buries them at the roots of a fir tree.
- 4 Quadrants (Pictures / Senses / Words / Feelings)
- Reciprocal Questioning - in partners create questions of the text; next partner narrow down to powerful questions; next partner really important questions; each partnership poses questions to class.

### Reciprocal Questioning

In partners create questions of the text; next partner narrow down to powerful questions, next partner really important questions; each partnership poses questions to class.

### After Activities:

- Student create a personal bag of memories. Share with the class
- Students write a letter to Shi-shi-etko to tell her how they feel about the way she spend her four days before leaving home and how she may have felt the day she left home.
- Students order the events four days before Shi-shi-etko left home, naming persons she spent the day with, the places they went and some sights and sounds she experienced. Refer to the 5 senses and relate them to the things in nature that were important to Shi-shi-etko (nature walks, study & collection of plant species, animal tracks).
- Discuss: moving to a new place or school and leaving a safe or familiar place (A/B partner talk)
- Discuss: being away from your family; and feelings around this (A/B partner talk)
- List 3 things you would miss from home, if you had to live away. What would you take?
- How would your family feel every night when you are not sitting at the table and getting ready for bed, and could not hear your laughter? (A/B partner talk)

### Indigenous Connections:

- Science & Ethnobotany – Traditional / Medicinal uses of plants in your region
- Cultural Practice/Traditions – Talking Circle
- Significance of sacred herbs such as tobacco, sage, cedar, sweet grass, lavender. Burning them is traditional as it transforms from physical form (of this world) into smoke (spirit world form).
- Indigenous relationship with the land.
- Clans-many Nations are divided into clans or families that are connected to particular animals (ex. Eagle clan, Killer Whale clan, Wolf clan, Raven clan)
- Feast – “give away” was the legal system and oral history of certain nations; A naming ceremony is one reason to hold a Feast.

### Themes:

Memories, Resilience, Courage

### References/Resources:

No Time to Say Goodbye, Sylvia Olsen; My Name is Seepeeetza, Shirley Sterling; Federal Gov't Apology (June 11, 2008), Secret of the Dance, Andrea Spalding & Alfred Scow Local First Nations bands, elders, Aboriginal staff



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## Shi-Shi-etko Comprehension Strategies

Submitted by Bobbie-Jo Leclair, Indigenous Programming Support Teacher, Winnipeg School Division

### Shi-Shi-etko by Nicola I Campbell

The ultimate goal in comprehension instruction is for students to be able to read a text and decide while reading, which strategy they need to use, in order to fully comprehend the text. It is also possible to go back and forth between strategies, Shi-shi-etko is an excellent model text. Several comprehension strategies can be taught when reading this picture book allowing for the students to make a purposeful connection between the Indigenous content and learning the strategies. If the students already know the strategies listed here, then having students keeping track of their metacognitive thinking while reading the book could be a great lesson. The focus of these strategies is on questioning or leading students to ask important questions about and doing some inquiry work around Residential Schools.

#### Anchor chart (On a chart paper)

Strategy Used:	Check mark for each time used
I had a <i>question</i>	
I visualized	
I made connections	
I inferred	

#### Second anchor chart

Before reading:	During reading:	After reading:
What I think know about residential schools:	New learning:	Misconceptions I had about residential schools:
Questions I still have:		



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### Questioning

Before, during and after reading to clarify meaning, focus on the text, monitor their understanding – was my question answered? Does it matter if it wasn't answered? Do I still have more questions?

#### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

(Have students record questions on chart paper)

**Before Reading:** Who is the little girl? What is she doing? Is she looking for something? What does Shi-shi-etko mean?

#### During Reading:

Why does she bury her special things? Why are they taken away in a cattle car?? Who takes them away??? Go back to the students questions to see if they have been answered and whether the answers changed their thinking

#### End of Reading:

At the end of the book the teacher should lead students to begin an inquiry– using questions such as: Why did this happen? Who allowed this to happen? Does this still happen? What happened to the families when the children were taken from them? Does anybody have the right to take children away? All of these questions lead to further investigation.

#### MAKING CONNECTIONS

(also known as using background knowledge or schema)

Good readers access their background knowledge before, during and after reading. They use their knowledge about their own world to make text-to-self, text-to-text and text-to-world connections. Good readers are able to decide whether these connections help them to understand the text better. In Shi-shi-etko there are many connections that children make such as their relationship with their mother, family gatherings or counting down the days to an event. Some children make the deep personal connection to stories their own families have told about being sent away to a residential school. When discussing the possible connections this text has to their own lives, it is important to ask students how these connection help them as a reader.

### Visualizing

(Making a movie in your mind. Asking yourself what would I: see, taste, feel, smell, hear)

Good readers use their connections to help them visualize. If they are reading about fishing and they have gone fishing, it is much easier to visualize what fishing is like. Visualizing helps readers interpret the author's message and also to remember what they read after they have finished, Visualizing is on-going somewhat like a movie the Images in the reader's mind change as more information is read.

Nicola Campbell uses such descriptive language in her book that it is easy to picture the story as it is told. Phrase such as "...watched the sunlight dance butterfly steps across her mother's face..." Even very young children are able to think about those words and how the sunlight is moving...

Tall grass swaying is easy to act out – younger students love to stand and sway and imagine they are grass thus visualizing that phrase. Senior students usually notice "determined mosquitoes" and make connections to being annoyed by a mosquito that won't go away, visualizing how Shi-shi-etko must be feeling.

Other powerful phrases include:

- "rhythmic sound of Yayah's cane"
- "...footsteps pitter pattered" for sound
- "Sky changing navy to brilliant blue" for sight
- "water exhausted sleep"
- "that squirmed between her toes" for feeling ..."
- "the path was dark and smelled alive with rain"
- "...wood smoke and scents of barbecuing sock eyed salmon" for smell

It is essential for students to visualize this story in order to properly understand the loss this little girl is about to experience. All the sights and sounds and comforts of nature and her culture are woven through this story.

