

# Evergreen School

## Commitment to Truth and Reconciliation Captured in Classroom Artifacts

2024-2025



### Commitment to Truth and Reconciliation



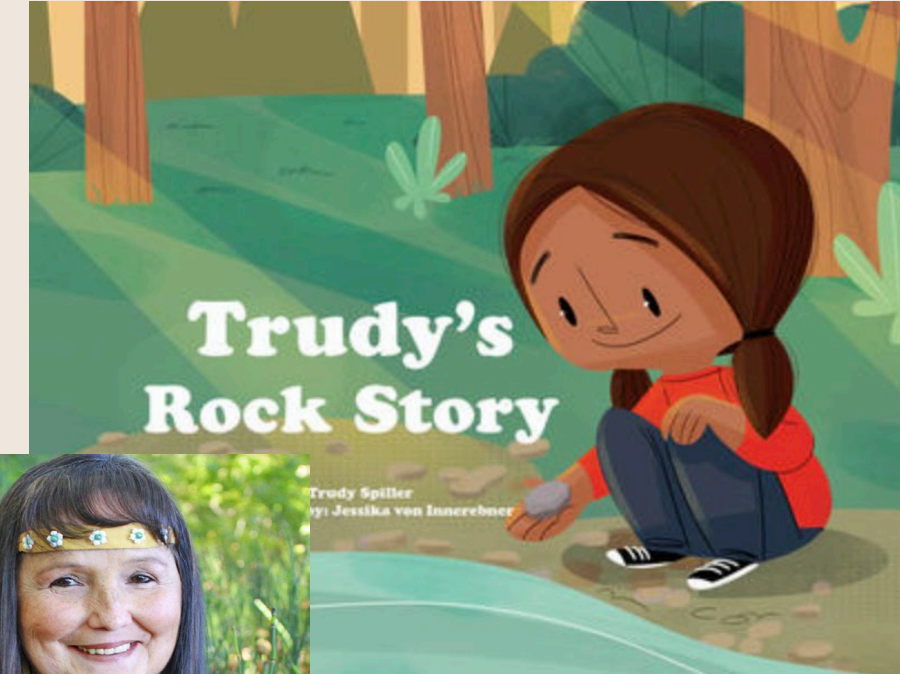




*Elder Shirley*

Through our whole school residency with Elder Shirley, Evergreen students learned from Elder Shirley that we come from the stars, walk our journey on Earth, and eventually return to the stars. Elder Shirley shared that this understanding, passed down to her through oral teachings from her cousin, Roger Prairie Chicken, emphasizes interconnectedness, oral tradition, respect for the natural world, and the passing of knowledge through generations. Students witnessed fancy shawl and hoop dancing, and even got to try hoop dancing themselves. Elder Shirley shared her cultural knowledge with students through movement, rhythm, and community celebration.





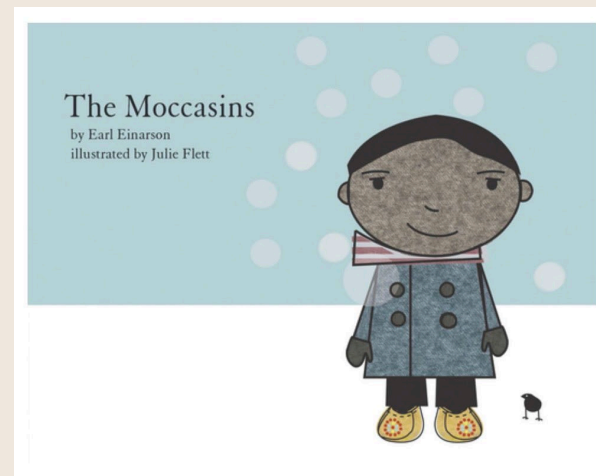
## Kindergarten – Mrs. Petersen

In Kindergarten we read *Trudy's Rock Story* by Trudy Spiller. This book has a gentle and meaningful approach to helping students explore empathy, self-regulation, and storytelling in a hands-on way. This book also helped to deepen students' connection to and understanding of the land we live and learn on.

Trudy's Rock Story follows a young girl from the Gitxsan Nation who, after a disagreement with her brother, remembers her grandmother's teaching and uses a rock to release her negative feelings. This simple act models a healthy, respectful way for children to express and let go of strong emotions. It offers a message that it's okay to feel big emotions, and that there are meaningful ways, rooted in both tradition and nature to process them.

Students chose a rock, decorated and made their own creation.



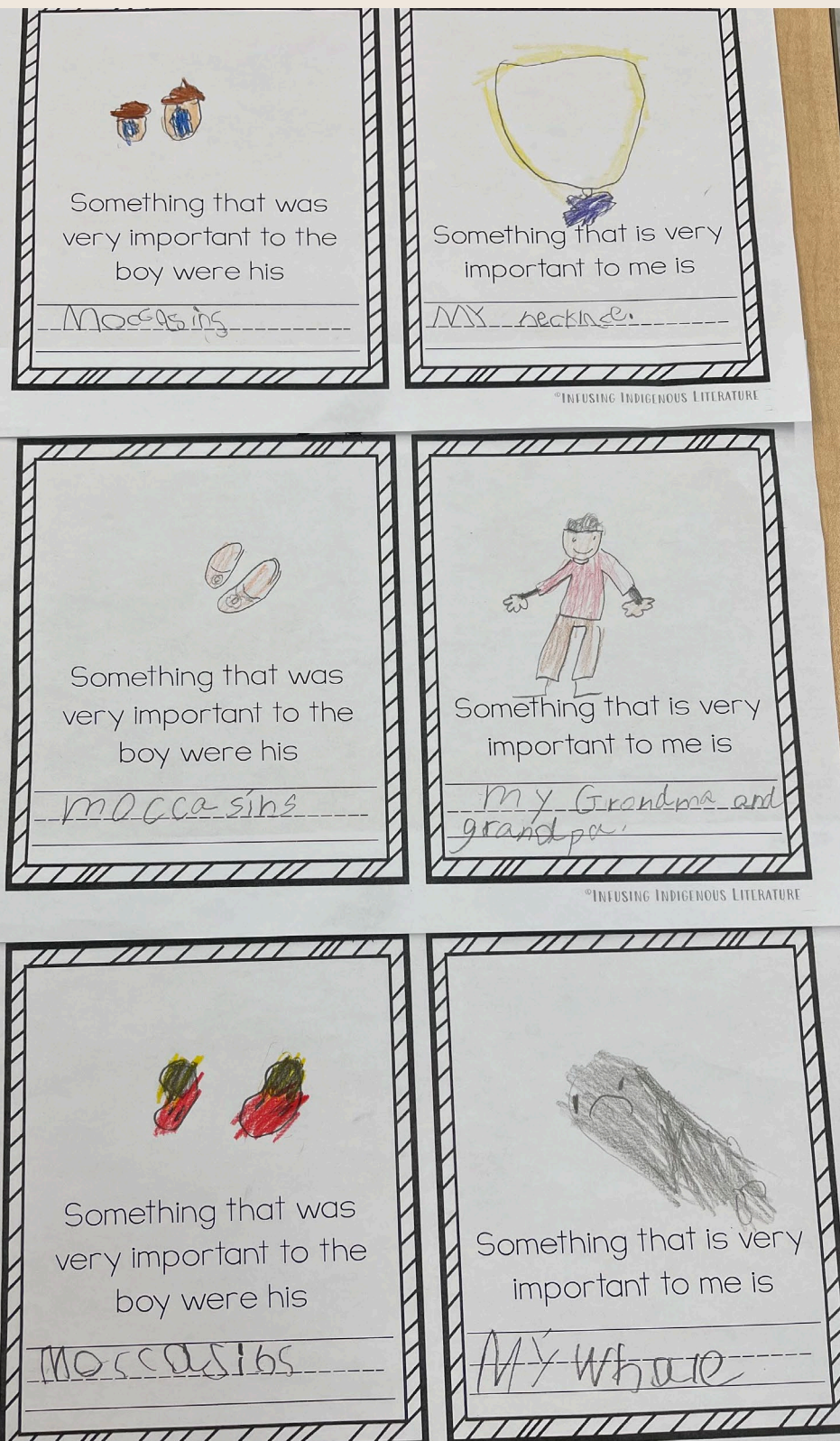
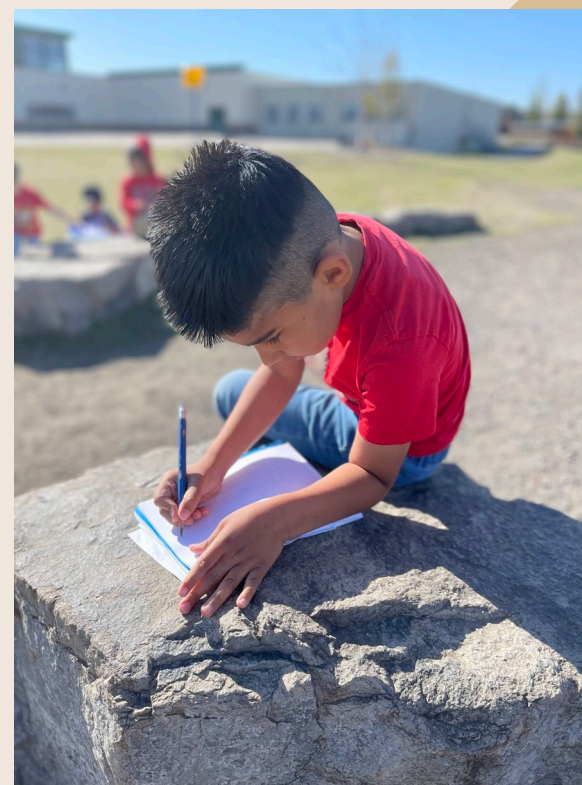


Earl Einarson  
Knowledge Keeper

## Kindergarten – Mrs. Craig

We read the story “The Moccasins” by Earl Einarson. Earl Einarson is a member of the Ktunaxa First Nation in British Columbia. This story led us to many great classroom discussions on interconnectedness, respect for nature and the passing down of traditions. These themes were woven into our learning throughout the year in various tasks and conversations such as remembering what we are thankful for, outdoor learning to explore the natural world, and reciprocity: how can we give back to the land and community that provides for us.

Earl Einarson is a prominent indigenous knowledge keeper, particularly in the context of learning and education. As a Sixties Swoop survivor, Einarson shares his personal experiences, along with stories from his grandparents and parents as residential school survivors. His work contributes to understanding the impacts of historical injustices through storytelling and education. His focus is on creating inclusive and culturally relevant learning environments.

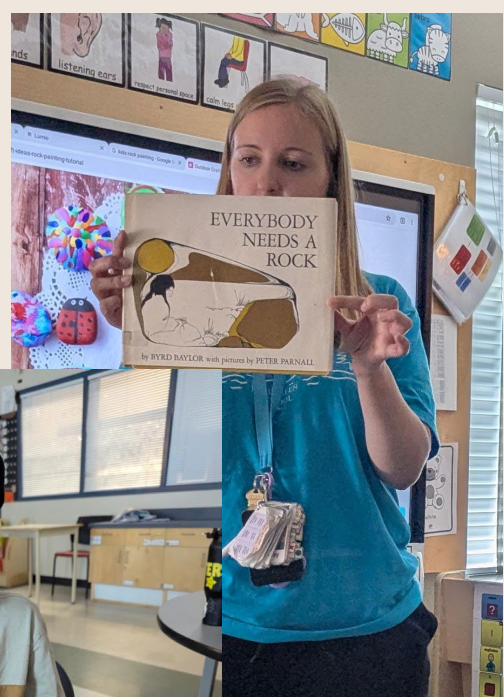






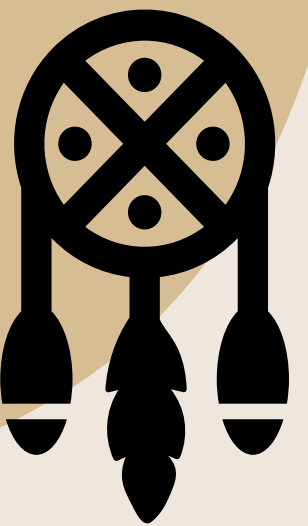


# EES



## EES – Mrs. Best

In EES, we read the book *Everybody Needs a Rock* by Indigenous author Byrd Baylor. This book is all about how people can feel connected to the land through natural objects (in this case, rocks). Students then got to choose their own rock following the ten rules for choosing a rock and personalize it by decorating it with paint markers.





## Music – Ms. Souza

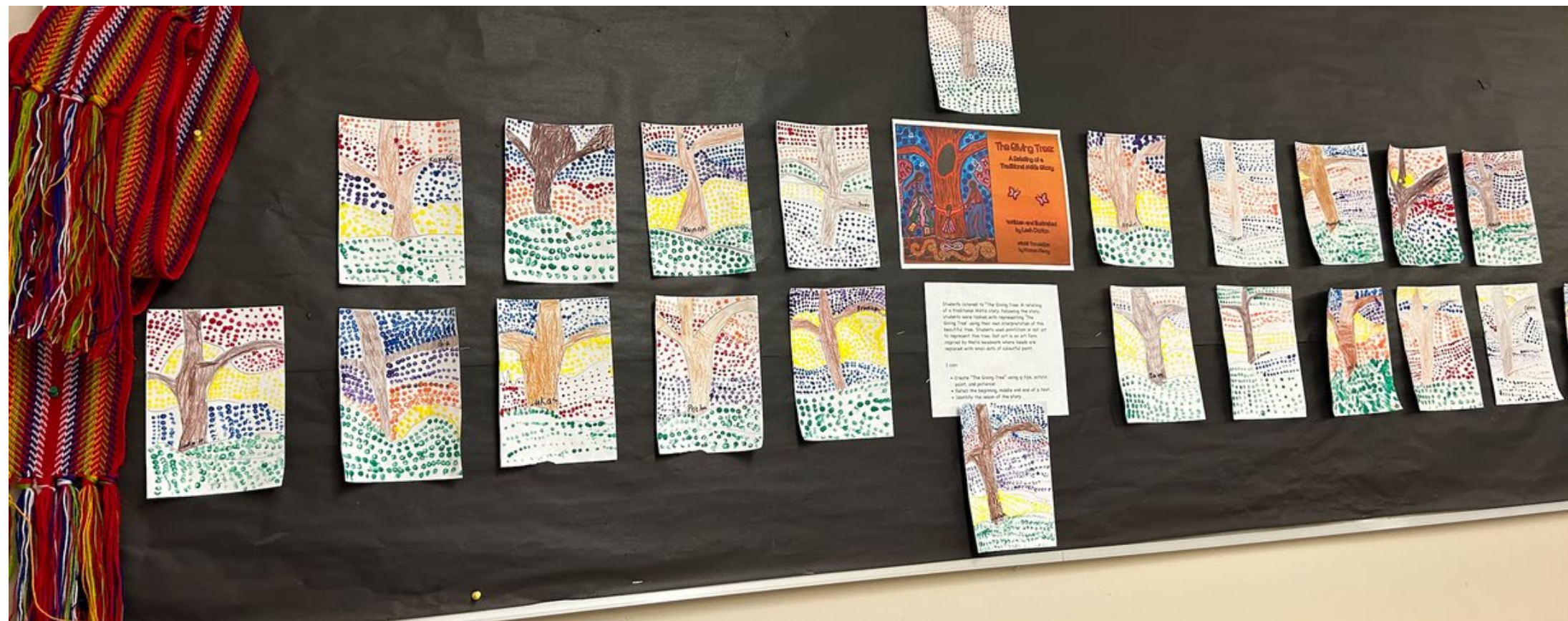
In music we explored drumming, which holds deep spiritual and cultural significance in Indigenous ways of knowing.

Students learn that the drum is not just an instrument—it is the heartbeat of Mother Earth, a living symbol of connection, ceremony, and respect. We begin by introducing the drum in a circle, emphasizing listening, stillness, and gratitude. Students learn to echo simple rhythms, feel the steady beat together, and understand that drumming is often used to bring people into harmony—not just musically, but emotionally and spiritually.

We talk about how the drum calls people together, celebrates life events, and carries teachings across generations.







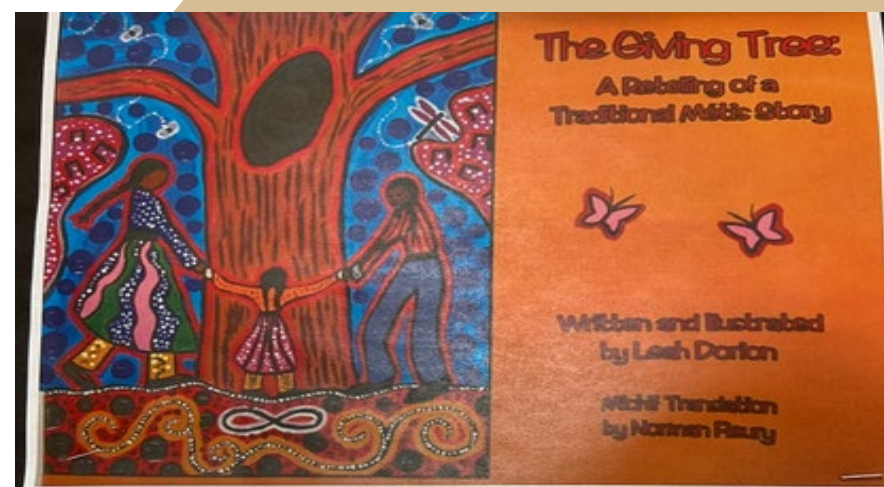
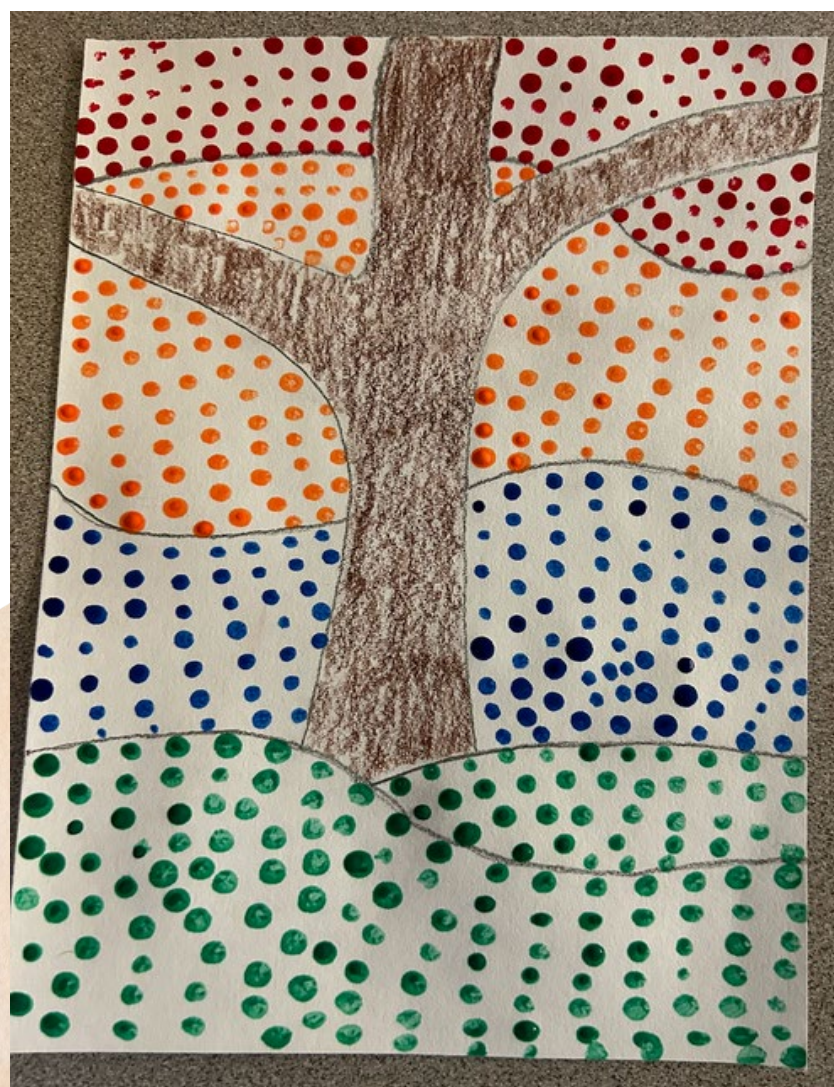
**Elder Norman Fleury**



## The Giving Tree

**Grade 1 - Mrs. Byciuk**

Students listened to a retelling of a Traditional Metis Story, 'The Giving Tree.' Following the story, students were tasked with representing 'The Giving Tree' using their own interpretation of this beautiful tree. Students used pointillism or dot art to represent this tree. Dot art is an art form inspired by Métis beadwork where beads are replaced with small dots of colourful paint. Elder Stan is a Michif storyteller originally from Manitoba. He has contributed to this story by ensuring that the language spoken was translated accurately in this retelling. Students enjoyed listening to this story being retold Michif, which is a language spoken by Métis People in Canada.

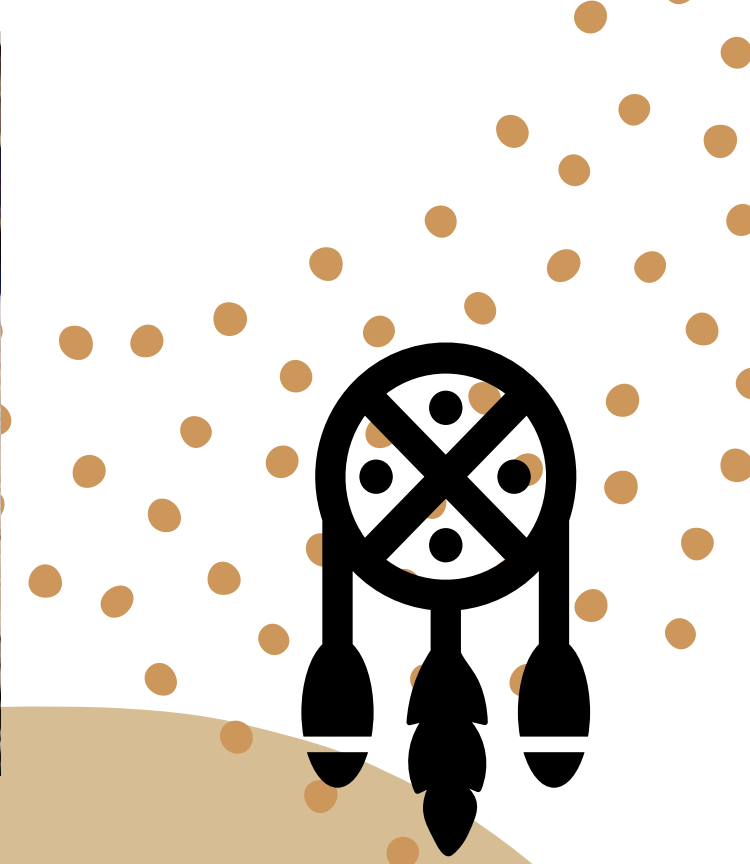
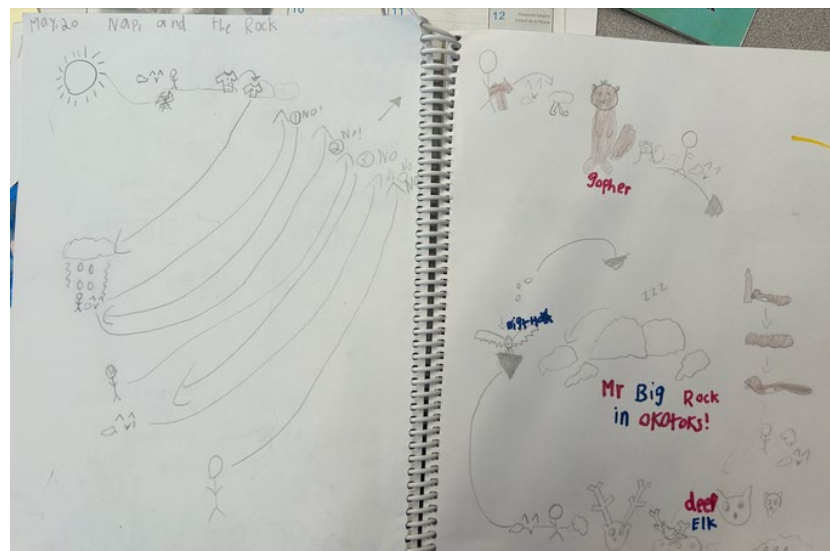


Students listened to "The Giving Tree: A retelling of a traditional Métis story. Following the story, students were tasked with representing 'The Giving Tree' using their own interpretation of this beautiful tree. Students used pointillism or dot art to represent this tree. Dot art is an art form inspired by Metis beadwork where beads are replaced with small dots of colourful paint.

I can:

- Create "The Giving Tree" using q-tips, acrylic paint, and patience!
- Retell the beginning, middle and end of a text.
- Identify the lesson of the story.





**Elder Stanley Knowlton**

**Grade 1 - Mrs. Gullion**

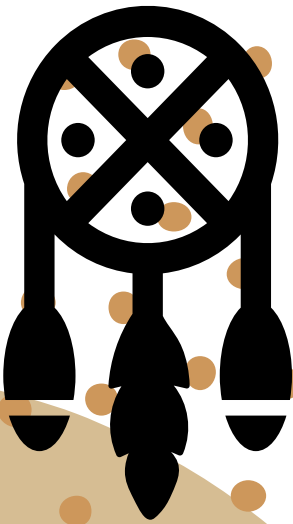
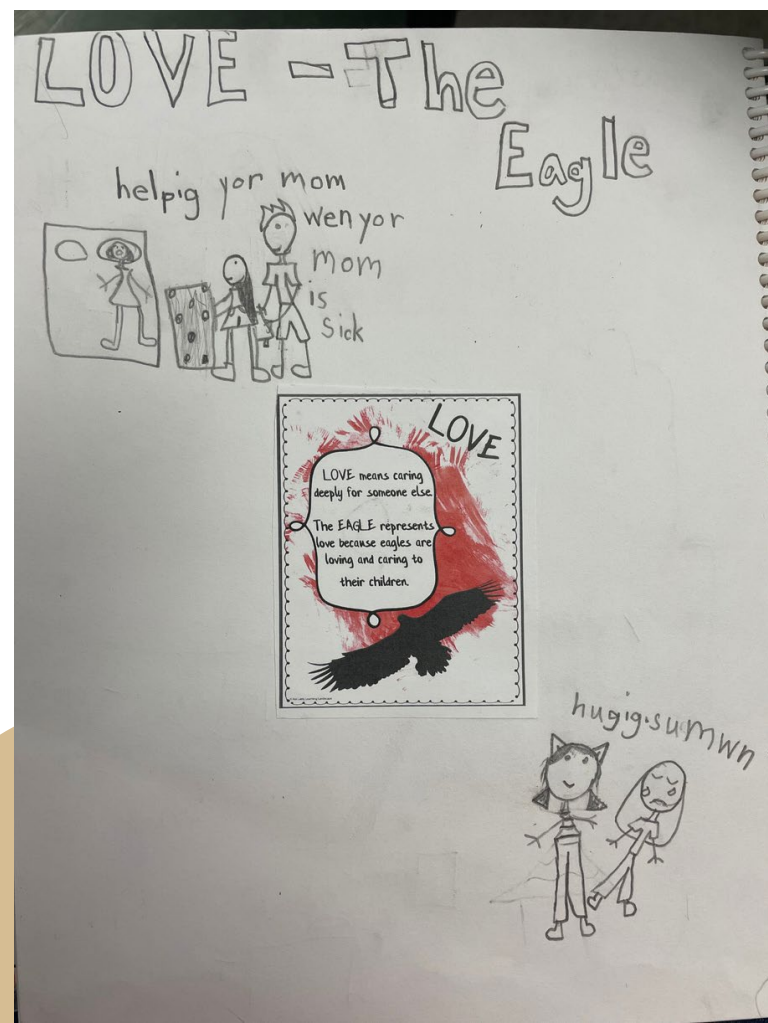
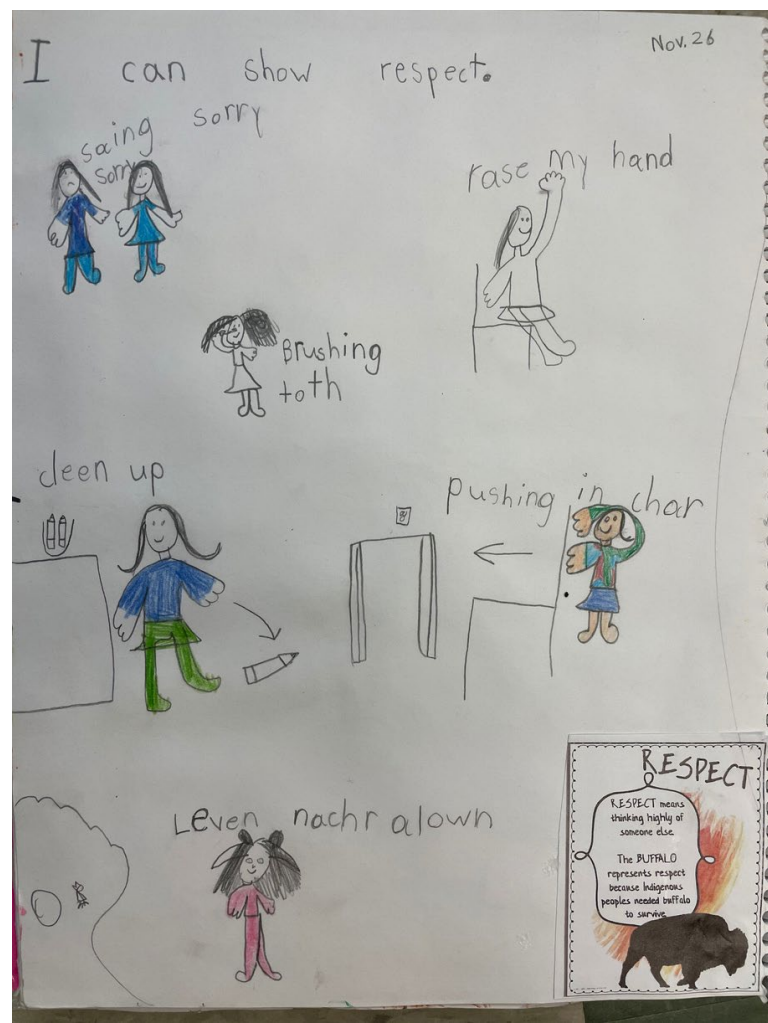
## **Napi and The Rock Legend**

Elder Stanley Knowlton is a member of the Blackfoot First Nation who was born in Pincher Creek and grew up on a reserve where, in the 1960s, people still lived much as they had before contact with Europeans. They hunted, fished, and made use of local plants. Elder Stanley Knowlton shares many Blackfoot Legends. The Okotoks Erratic is the largest rock in the Foothills Erratic Train. We listened to Elder Stanley Knowlton share “The Blackfoot Legend of Napi and the Rock.’ It tells us how the erratic broke in two. He is passing down this legend as he was taught it by his elders and old chiefs when he was a young boy on the Piikani Reserve in Alberta. Napi is the supernatural trickster of the Blackfoot.

Students listened to Elder Stan Knowlton and made comparisons presented by Treaty 4 and the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra. After listening to the retelling, students created story robes, joined each other in groups and practiced the tradition of oral storytelling to retell this legend. Once polished, students took a walk to a nearby park and used loose parts in a chosen sit spot, where they could retell this beautiful story in a nature setting.





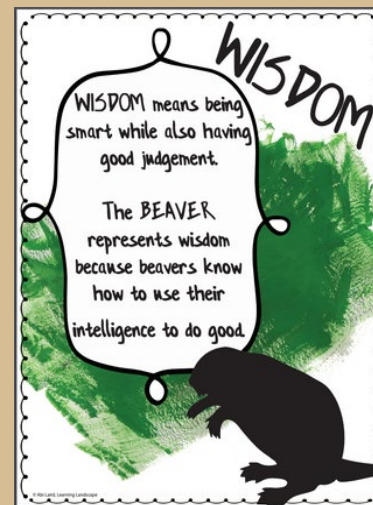


**Elder Hazel**

## Grandfather Teachings

### Grade 1 - Mrs. Webber

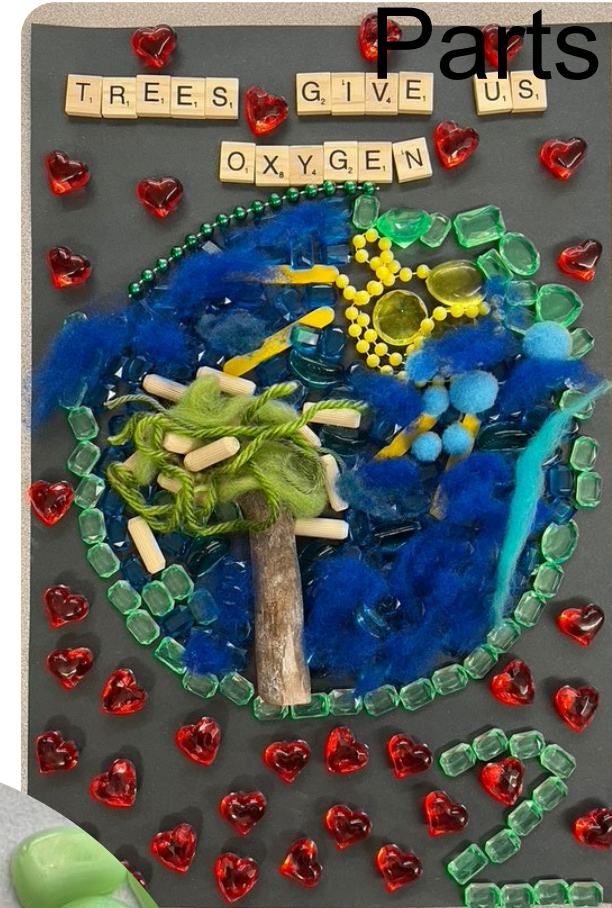
This year, our Grade One students have had the opportunity to learn from Elder Hazel's videos about the 7 Grandfather Teachings — important values that guide kindness, respect, courage, honesty, humility, wisdom, and love. Through reading connected stories and engaging in meaningful class conversations, students have explored how these teachings relate to their own lives. They are learning to apply these values in their daily interactions, both at school and at home, helping to build a caring and respectful community. Students represented their understandings in their creative journal.



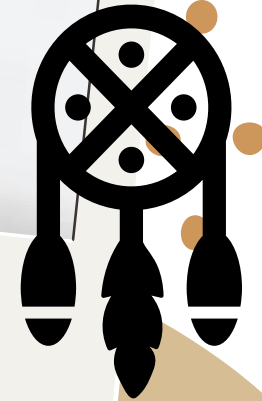


# Be A Good Ancestor Reflection Using Loose

## Parts



Author - Leona Prince



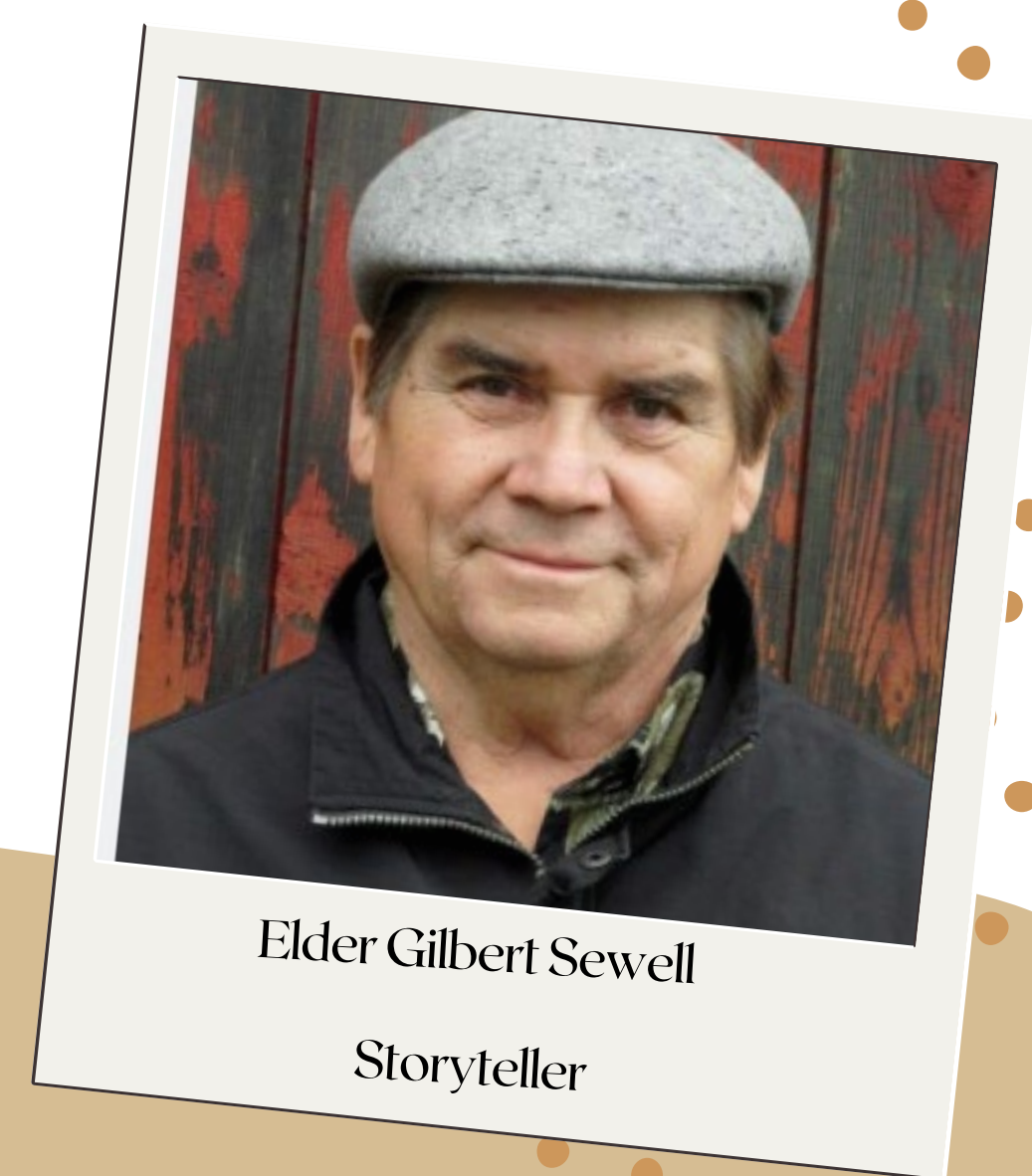
## Grade 2 - Mrs. Osadec

As part of our learning about environmental stewardship and our role in caring for the Earth, we explored the beautiful and thought-provoking book 'Be a Good Ancestor' by Indigenous authors Leona Prince and Gabrielle Prince. Rooted in Indigenous knowledge and teachings, the book invites readers to reflect on the impact of their choices and how they relate to the world around them. It encouraged students to consider the many ways we can protect and honour the planet for future generations. Building on these meaningful insights, students expressed their understanding through the creative use of loose parts. This hands-on activity allowed them to represent their personal connections and responsibilities to the Earth, using natural and recycled materials to bring their reflections to life.

We shared our learning with the school community during our Earth Day celebration!







## Grade 2 - Mrs. Hordyk

Elder Gilbert Sewell, a respected Mi'kmaq Knowledge Keeper, captivated students with his powerful oral storytelling. His rich tales of tradition, nature, and identity inspired young learners to retell his stories using loose parts. Through this hands-on, imaginative process, students deepened their understanding of Indigenous perspectives, honored oral traditions, and expressed their interpretations in meaningful, creative ways.





A story we watched in class. Elder Hazel- How the Cayote got its Howl



## Grade 3 – Mrs. Friesen

Anchored with the book "Storyteller Skye", we did a series of lessons on Oral Storytelling in Grade 3. We watched storytelling videos from "Elder Hazel", who creates storytelling videos about Indigenous stories for the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. Then, with the support of Donna from Play Perspective, we created our own oral stories about animals using loose parts. The stories were

recorded to share with our classmates.







## Grade 3 – Mrs. Decottignies

We have been working on the Indigenous tradition of oral storytelling. To hear examples, we listened to the Ojibway animal legends retold in the story "Storyteller Ella". We then chose an animal native to Canada and decided upon a legend that we could make related to that animal. We practiced our stories with Ms. Donna and loose parts. When we were ready, we retold our stories, and they will be shared with our classmates.





# Oral storytelling

## How Pandas Got Opposable Thumbs



## Grade 3 – Mrs. McLarty

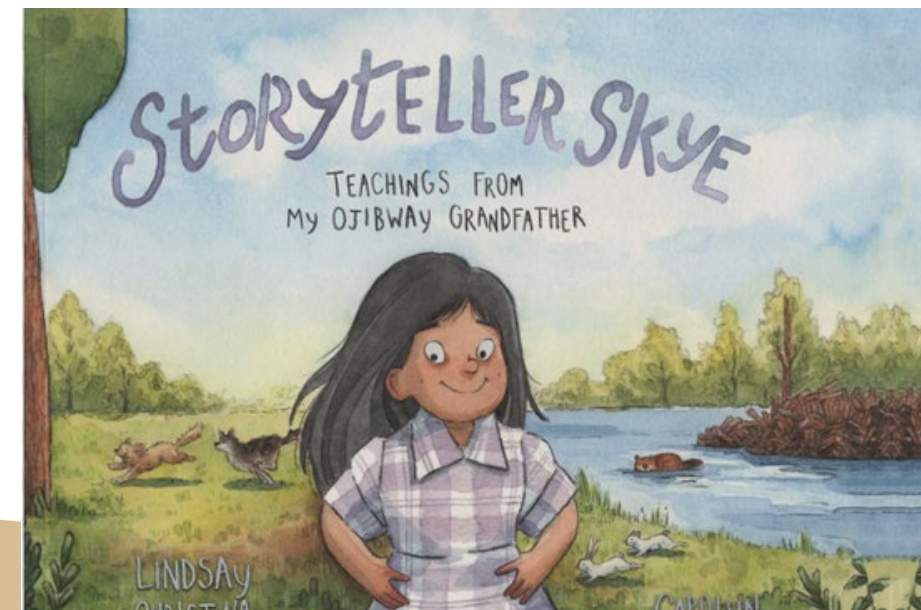
This year we were learning about oral storytelling. We began the year listening to Shirley Hill share her stories which inspired the students. We also learned from Courtney Defriend how her stories come from her relationship to the land. During our Loose Parts Residency with Donna Gimbel, we used the book, Storyteller Skye, as mentor texts to help us tell our own oral stories to explain how an animal got a specific trait. Some examples were: how the beaver got its teeth and why bees have a stinger.







Mr. Mike Ormsby  
Artist and Storyteller



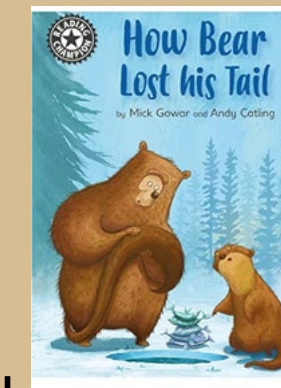
## Grade 3 – Mrs. Leonard

Grade 3 students have been studying connections between stories, the land, the environment and landscapes through an Indigenous lens. Students listened to many Indigenous Legends that reflect local, traditional storytelling practices.

We focused on “Storyteller Skye”: written by Lindsey Christian King, along with legends told by Anishnaabe artist and storyteller Mike Ormsby .

Students listened to many Indigenous legends that reflect local, traditional, storytelling practices. Students then created their own legends, based on a local, familiar animal. These stories, then were represented in our “loose parts”

residency, with Play Perspectives. Students practiced telling their stories to others.







**Tatanka  
Tatanka**



**Buffalo Hunt**



**Run and  
Scream**



## **P.E. - Mrs. Paterson**

In gym we took part in different indigenous based games that improved our relationship and communication with each other, physical stamina, mental strategy and emotional side of play.



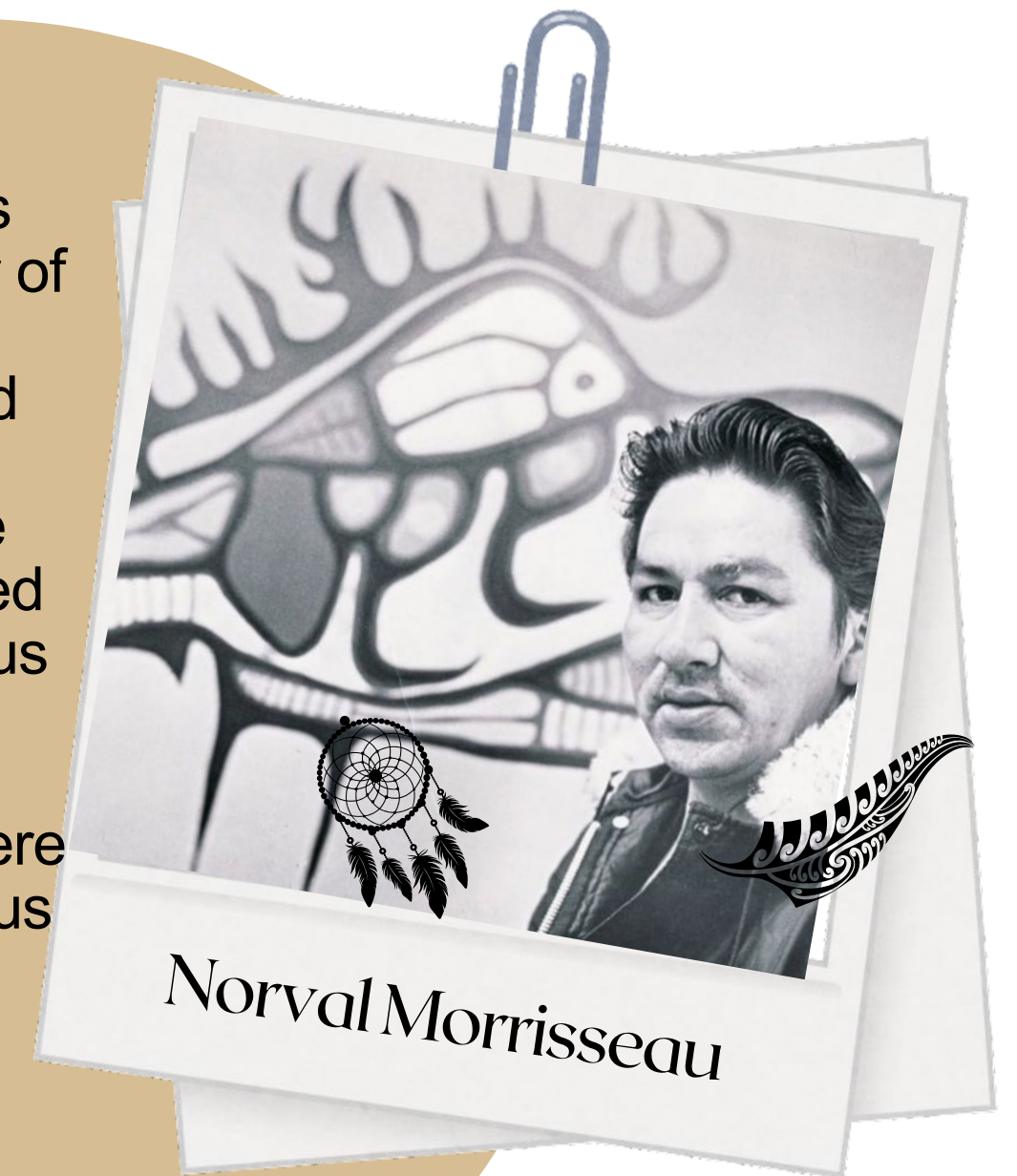


## Grade 4 - Ms. Keir

Norval Morrisseau, also known as Copper Thunderbird, was a Canadian indigenous artist. He was from the Anishinaabe First Nation. Many people see him as the founder of modern Indigenous art in Canada.

Morrisseau was called the "Picasso of the North." He created art that showed the old stories of his people. His art also explored the differences between Indigenous and European ways of life. He often painted about his spiritual journey. His paintings are easily recognizable due to their thick black outlines and bright, bold colours. He started the Woodlands School of Canadian Art. He was also a key member of the "Indigenous Group of Seven."

The students studied the artwork of Morrisseau and completed a research project where they learned about artistic style and his influence, as he continues to inspire indigenous artists, helping to preserve cultural knowledge and express identity through art. Students chose one of Morrisseau's paintings and, using his painting style of bold colours and thick black outline, created their interpretation.







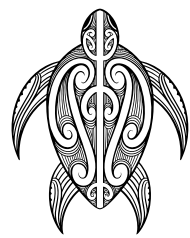
## Grade 4 – Mr. McLaren

Jason Carter is a world-renowned artist and sculptor whose work can be seen all over the world. We learned that art was an excellent outlet for Jason to express himself in a world that has become so cynical. He takes the approach of viewing the world through the lens of humour and optimism and as such we tried to follow in his footsteps. Much of his art is inspired from the stories he was told by elders growing up as a child.



Jason Carter





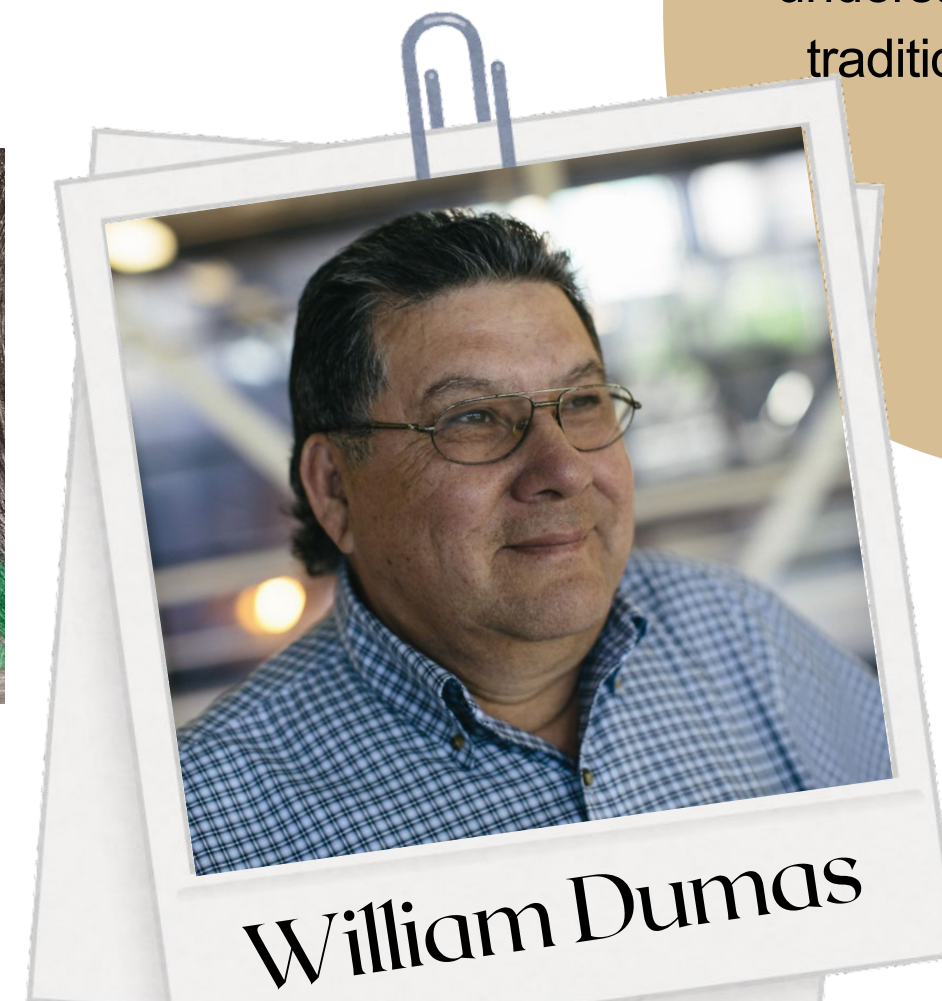
## Grade 4 - Mr. Lang

This year, our students delved into Indigenous art and culture by learning about an Indigenous artist, Norval Morrisseau. They researched his life and legacy before recreating one of his famous pieces. Additionally, each student selected an Indigenous artist, conducted research into their life, contributions, and artistic journey, and created an infographic on Canva. They then created their own art pieces inspired by their chosen artist's style.

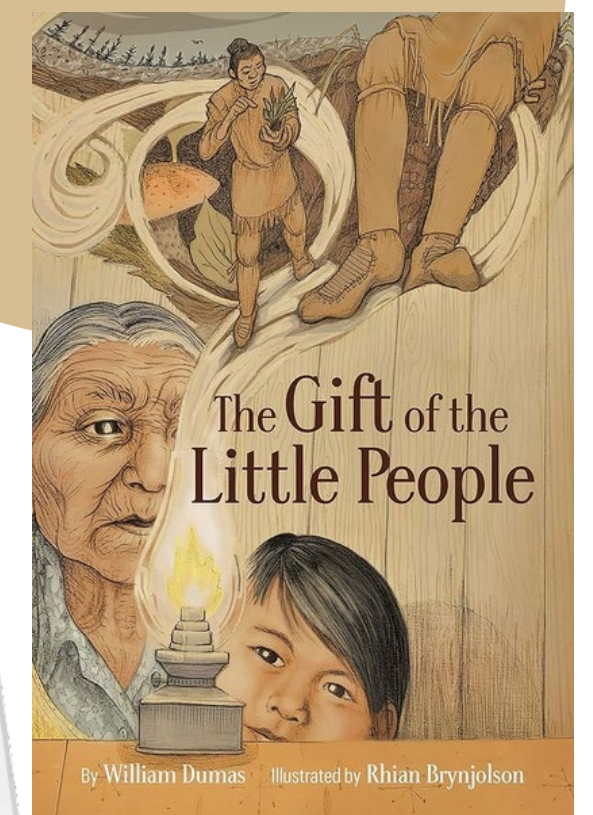


Norval Morrisseau

For our final novel study of the year, we read *The Borrowers* and explored how various cultures around the world feature stories of little people. We briefly discussed Icelandic elves, then introduced *The Gift of the Little People* by William Dumas, a Northern Manitoba Elder I had the privilege of working with. We compared and contrasted his story with *The Borrowers*, deepening our understanding of storytelling traditions across cultures.



William Dumas

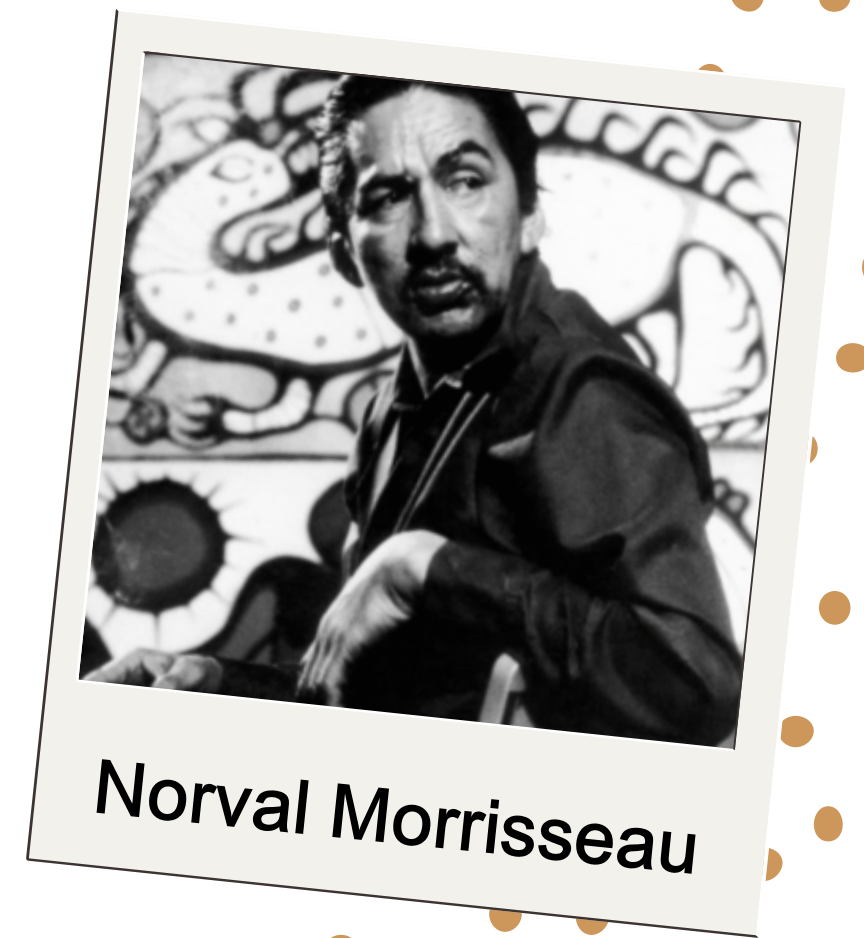
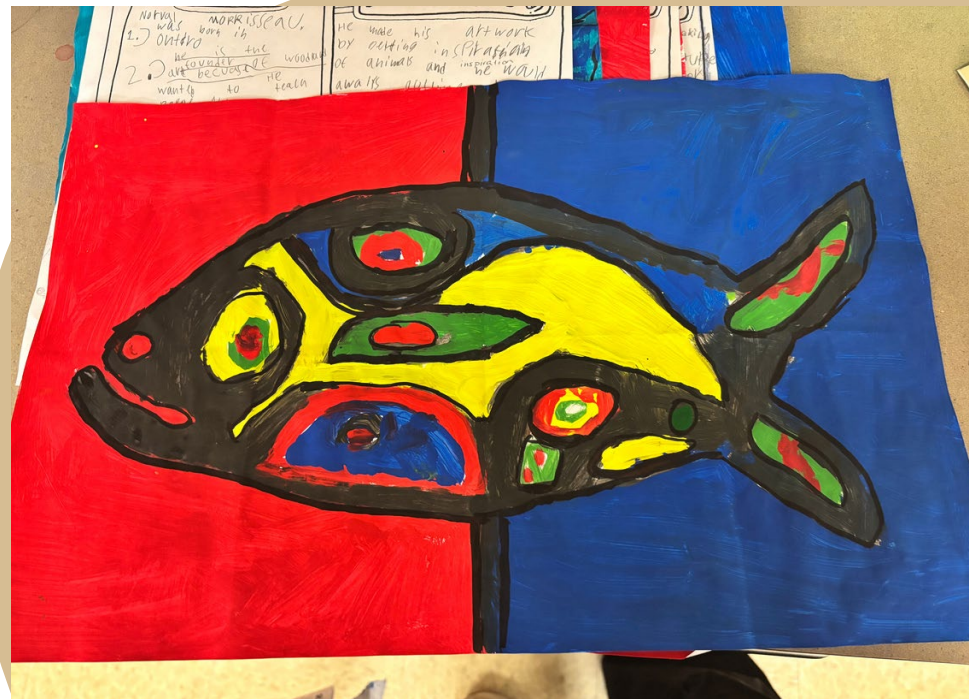




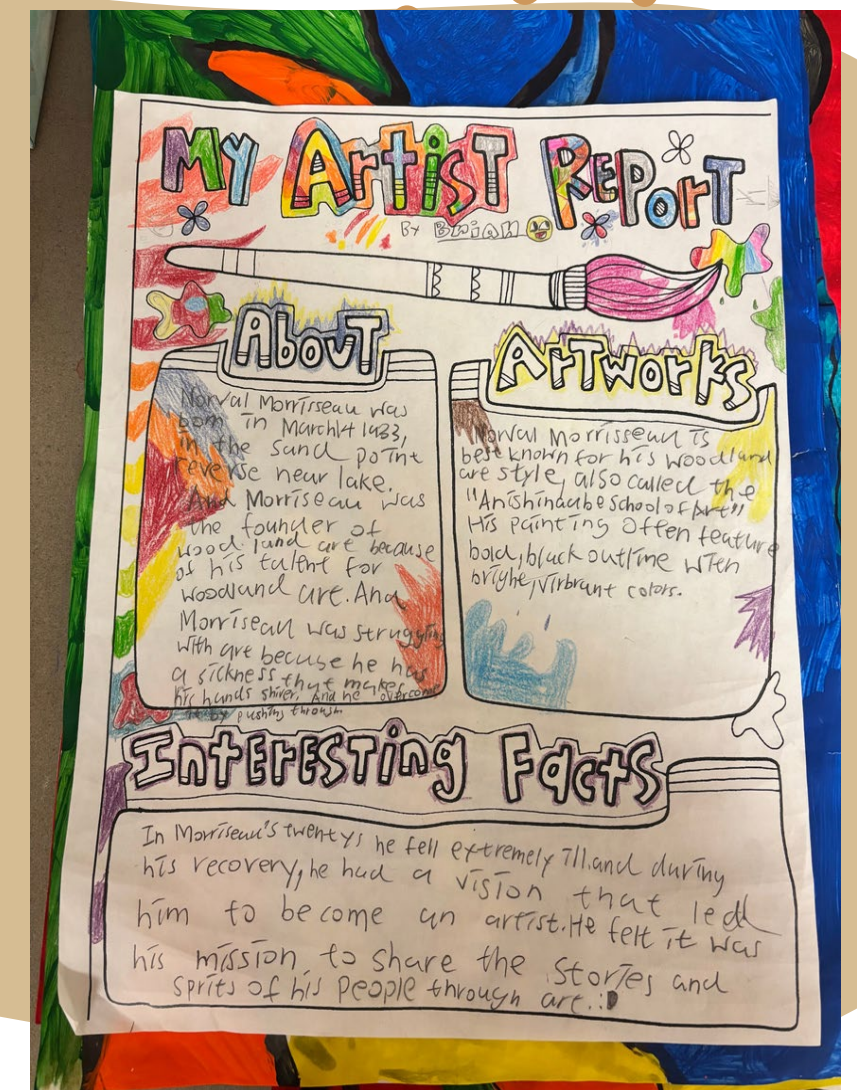
# Grade 4 – Ms. Stog

For art, students learned and researched about the artist Norval Morrisseau. Morrisseau was also known as the “Picasso of the North”. He was an Indigenous painter interested in portraying his culture and heritage through traditional stories, spiritual themes, and political tensions that affected the life and culture of Indigenous people. He felt that it was his missions to share stories of Indigenous people through his art.

Students researched about his life, his artwork, and interesting facts about him. After doing this “artist report”, students used gridding after picking a painting they enjoyed. This method allows students to accurately copy the painting, breaking it down into manageable sections for precise reproduction.



Norval Morrisseau







## Grade 5 - Ms. Byrne

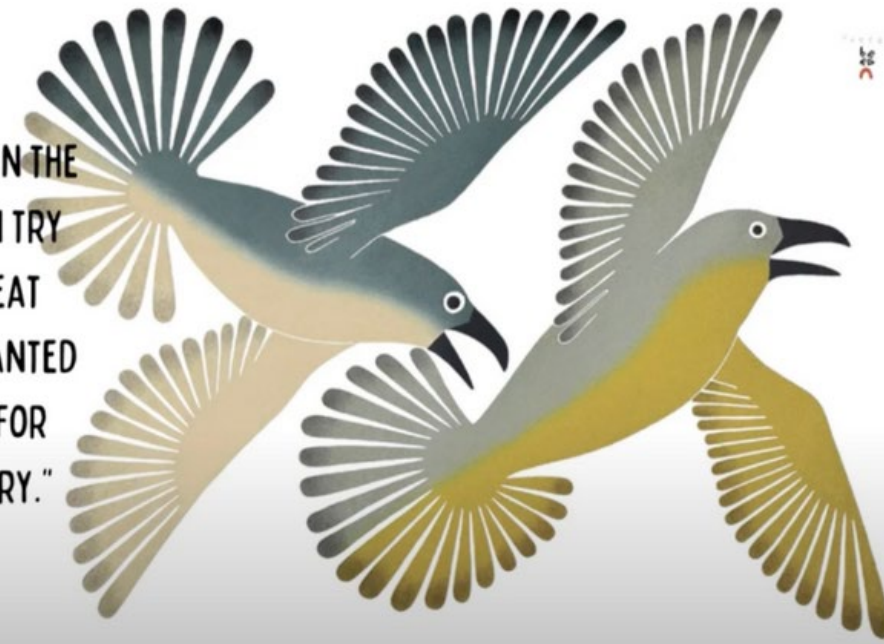
As a part of our social studies this year, we learned about Indigenous Leaders who impacted Canadian history and identity. During our field trip to the Military Museum, we completed 2 programs focused on Indigenous warriors and how their unique ways of knowing contributed to our national identity during conflicts. We particularly focused on the story of Tecumseh, who was involved in the War of 1812. Tecumseh was a Shawnee leader, who believed that unity was our strength. He used clever strategies to win battles without ever firing a shot! His story inspired us to investigate Indigenous ways of resolving conflicts and how we could adopt some of those practices to deal with disagreements within our classroom.





## KENOJUAK SAID:

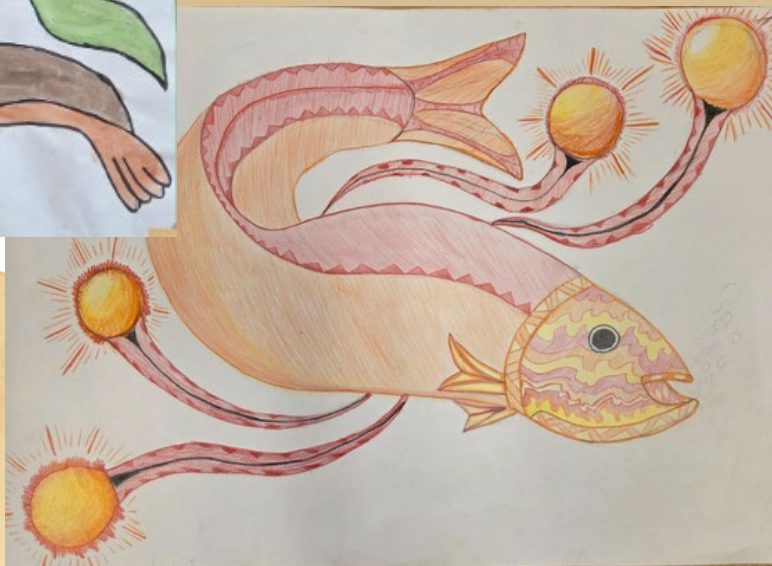
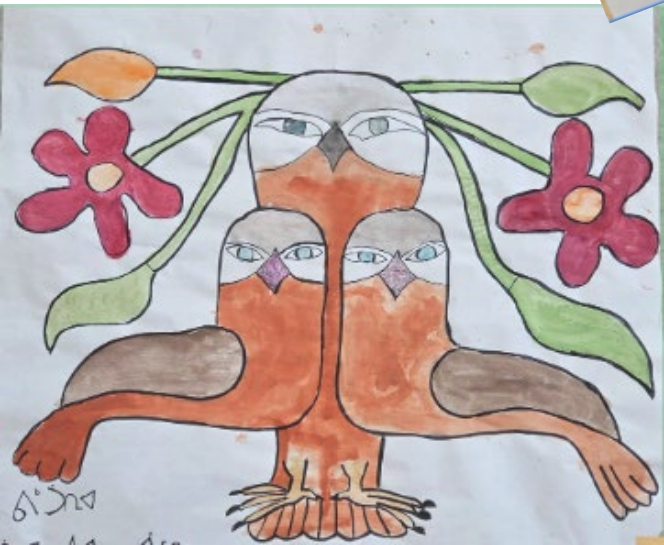
"I TRY TO PRESENT MY IDEAS IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE WAY. I TRY TO SHOW AN ANIMAL'S GREAT STRENGTH. I USED THE ENCHANTED FEATHERS ON THE RAVEN, FOR EXAMPLE, TO SHOW ITS GLORY."



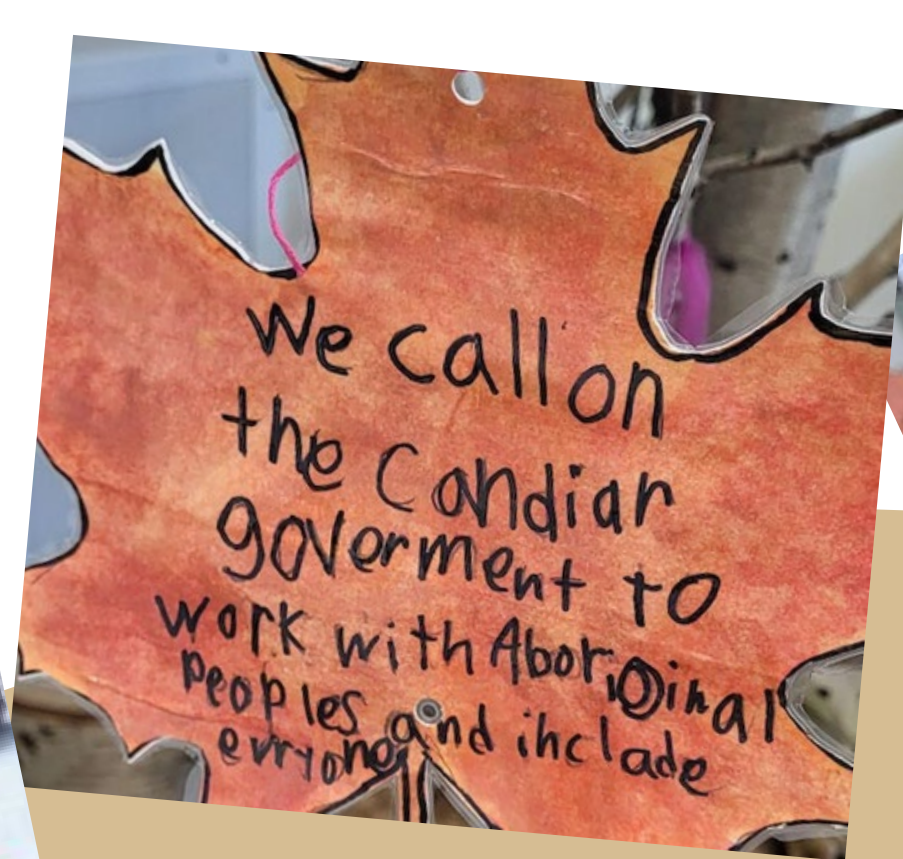
Kenojuak Ashevak

## Grade 5 – Ms. Roworth

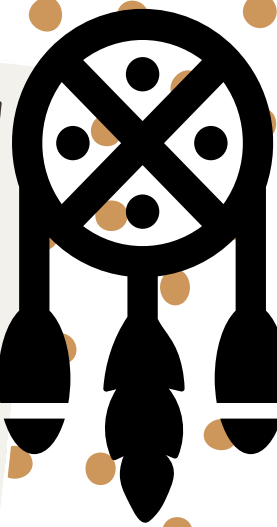
As part of our study of Canada's north and it's contribution to Canadian Identity, we studied the artwork of Kenojuak Ashevak. Kenojuak was a renowned Inuit artist known for her bold use of color and symmetrical designs, often inspired by northern wildlife and Inuit culture. Students explored how her heritage influenced her art, especially her deep connection to nature and traditional stories. Students examined Ashevak's use of shapes, lines, and symbolism, then created their own pieces inspired by her style. Through this, they gained a deeper appreciation for Inuit art and expressed their understanding by incorporating animals and patterns meaningful to them.







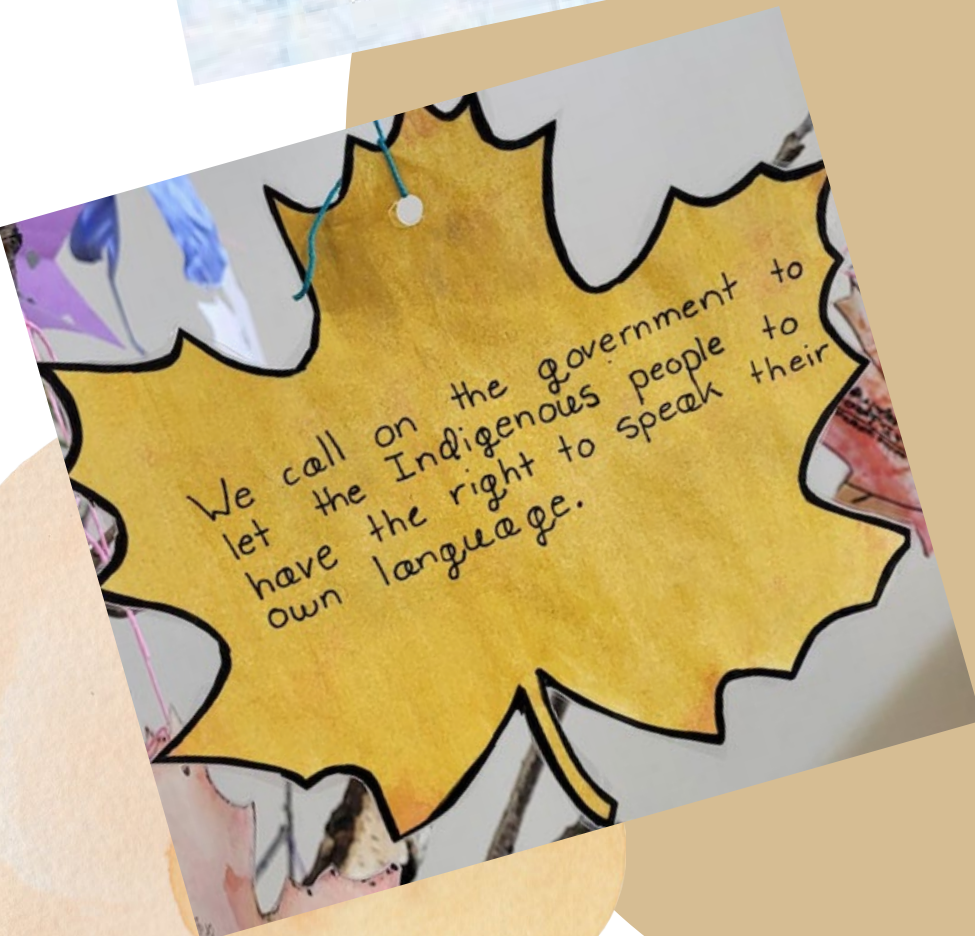
Margaret Pokiak



## Grade 5 - Ms. Yu

Students began the year with the mentor text, ***Fatty Legs*** to understand the impact of residential schools and how Olemaun (Margaret Pokiak) reclaimed her voice as a survivor. Her story helped us honor the experiences of children forced to assimilate. Inspired by her courage, we reflected on our personal role in **ReconciliACTION**.

We reviewed the **TRC's Calls to Action** with empathy, and students created their own calls to the government and Canadian citizens to take meaningful steps toward **reconciliACTION** and to ensure justice, equity, and respect for Indigenous Peoples.







Shane Cunningham

## Grade 5 - Mr. Chameroy

Shane Cunningham, a Métis Knowledge Keeper, taught us about the significance of circles in Indigenous cultures. The base of a tipi is circular, symbolizing unity and connection, and he described tipis as resembling the long ribbon skirts of our mothers and grandmothers who nurture, protect, and encircle us with their love. He also shared that round dances are a form of celebration and a way to honour loved ones, with participants moving in a clockwise direction. The medicine wheel, another symbol, can represent the four stages of life or the aspects of a person needed to maintain balance. Each Thursday, our class gathered outside to form a circle, greet the sun, and share something we were thankful for always moving in a clockwise direction. The circle helped us connect, reflect, and share what matters most. We also used circles for various art projects and vocabulary lessons!

C5

### CIRCLES ALL AROUND

Focus Morpheme	
Root	<i>circ</i>
Pronunciation	The root <i>circ</i> is pronounced /sɪrk/. In a word, the second <i>c</i> is pronounced at the beginning of the next syllable, as in <i>circle</i> : /sɪr-kəl/.

Etymology of <i>circ</i>	
Origin	Latin
Meaning	circle; ring
Example: circular	Look at the word <i>circular</i> . The root <i>circ</i> comes from the Latin <i>circulus</i> , meaning "circle" or "ring." By adding the suffix <i>-ular</i> , which means "relating to," we create the word <i>circular</i> , meaning "relating to a circle or ring."

**Vocabulary**

- circle
- circles
- circular
- semicircle

- semicircular
- circumference
- encircle
- circulate

**Activating Prior Knowledge**

- The photo above shows a First Nations hoop dancer. How do you think First Nations dancers use hoops in their hoop dances?
- Share what you know about any dances that are traditional in your culture.