

Upper Elementary - Experiential Learning Plan for Fatty Legs
 Created by Elizabeth Howard, 2019 Werklund Graduate

<p>Resources used and possible concerns</p>	<p>Fatty legs by Christy Jordan-Fenton & Margaret Pokiak-Fenton</p> <p><i>Concerns:</i> The material is a first hand account of a child's experience with residential schools; some families with residential schools as part of their legacy, may wish to speak to their children about family experiences prior to being brought as content in a classroom. Communication and engagement with families is beneficial in ensuring a holistic support of exposure to education of children in recognizing the historical and current impacts of residential schooling within families and communities. The residential school in the biography was run by the Catholic Church; awareness and consideration for individual or school related connections to faith may be important in building an openness to working with this first-hand account. The material may be triggering for some students, families, and teachers, and an inclusive safe space for honest conversations and dialog would be grounding and supportive for the work to occur.</p>
<p>Author/creator and/or literature background</p>	<p>Biography</p> <p><i>Authors:</i> Margaret Pokiak- Fenton worked together with her daughter in-law Christy Jordan-Fenton to capture Margaret's lived experiences as an Inuvialuit child in a Catholic Residential school in the Northwest Territories</p> <p>Notoriety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awarded numerous literary prizes including the Nautilus Award - Silver 2011, as well as joint wins (Annick Press, 2020).
<p>UPE course connections (not exhaustive)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDUC 101 - Students are asked to consider their own personal journey, and reflect these on the wider human condition. Fatty legs can be used as an example of a literary style with a similar effect, the biography. As students are parallely asked to critically understand literature through personal reflection, this is juvenile literature is an excellent way to explore this intent. • EDUC 311 - In exploring language and literacy in a classroom - students are asked to consider different genres of literacy, as a method of coming to an understanding of how this exposure impacts children's conceptual development of perspective. Fatty Legs is an excellent example of a biography which can be used to showcase the power of the genre to build empathy in children and adolescents to individuals or groups' lived

	<p>experiences. Students have the opportunity to compare and contrast different genres of literature and for example comparing historical events presented through first hand narratives, or biographies, such as Fatty Legs, to a historical fiction, or another genre with the same subject matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDUC 435 - Students are asked to confront 'reading' as a deeper exploration of language, literacy, and culture - through exploring the concept that all teachers are teachers of reading. Fatty Legs could be used to explore the layered nuances of literary elements presented in the biography. There is an opportunity to explore comparative literature through the metaphor of Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll - a theme, which is presented in Margaret's experience throughout her narrative; as well as the opportunity to explore the juxtaposed figures of the Raven and the Swan.
K-12 connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target age range: Grades 4-7 • Related curriculum outcomes: Social Studies, Language Arts, Art, and Physical Education <p>Social Studies</p> <p><u>Grade 4</u> (Alberta Education, 2006) - 4.2: 4.2 The Stories, Histories and Peoples of Alberta - Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the role of stories, history and culture in strengthening communities and contributing to identity and a sense of belonging. (While the story takes place in the N.W.T.; the experience and legacy of residential schools is shared with many Albertans)</p> <p><u>Grade 5</u> (Alberta Education, 2007) - 5.2: Histories and Stories of Ways of Life in Canada - Students will demonstrate an understanding of the people and the stories of Canada and their ways of life over time, and appreciate the diversity of Canada's heritage.</p> <p><u>Grade 6</u> (Alberta Education, 2007) - 6.1 Citizens Participating in Decision Making - Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the dynamic relationship between governments and citizens as they engage in the democratic process.</p> <p>6.1.1 recognize how individuals and governments interact and bring about change within their local and national communities. (consider the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission).</p> <p><u>Grade 7</u> (Alberta Education, 2006) - 7.2 Following Confederation: Canadian Expansions - Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how the</p>

	<p>political, demographic, economic and social changes that have occurred since Confederation have presented challenges and opportunities for individuals and communities.</p> <p>7.2.2 recognize the positive and negative consequences of political decisions (PADM)</p> <p>Language Arts</p> <p><u>Grade 4 - 7</u> (Alberta Education, 2000)</p> <p>General Outcome 2 - Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts</p> <p>General Outcome 3 - Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to manage ideas and information.</p> <p>General Outcome 5 - Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to respect, support and collaborate with others.</p> <p>Art</p> <p><u>Grade 4-6</u> (Alberta Education, 1985) COMPOSITION - Component 7- EMPHASIS: Students will create emphasis by the treatment of forms and qualities. & Component 8 UNITY: Students will create unity by interrelating the parts of a composition.</p> <p><u>Grade 7</u> (Alberta Education, 1984) Drawing - Record - record single images and simple units & Composition</p> <p>Physical Education</p> <p><u>Grades 4-7</u> (Alberta Education, 2000)</p> <p>General Outcome A Students will acquire skills through a variety of developmentally appropriate movement activities; dance, games, types of gymnastics, individual activities and activities in an alternative environment; e.g., aquatics and outdoor pursuits. - Basic skills overlap.</p>
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatty Legs book • Blue Quill University - syllabics chart with sounds • Cardstock or higher quality paper • Large paper for art piece (2' x 3') • Tracing paper • Computer with internet • Pencil • Eraser • Scissors • Coloured paper • Felt pens or acrylic paint
Rationale	<p>Big idea: The legacy of residential schools has had a powerful impact on Canadian society and with the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission – it is evident that for education for</p>

	<p>reconciliation to occur difficult truths must be brought to light. In honoring a student’s right to age appropriate material - exposure to the experiences of children of residential schools can be challenging. By presenting an experiential learning plan for the biography of Fatty Legs in projects connected to a holistic approach to education – inspired, and connected to the Medicine Wheel teachings, allows educators, and students to be challenged to engage in learning in a ‘new’ way and authentically honor the knowledge base of Indigenous tradition and wisdom as a necessary path for all to move forward.</p> <p>Purpose: While teachers may wish to use the linearity of the as a guide for sequential chapter: analysis, discussion, recall and synthesis – the four projects presented are based in the process of the individual student exploring their connectivity to their: Intellectual, Spiritual, Emotional and Physical experiences. The “[k]nowledge must be sought through the stream of the inner space in unison with all instruments of knowing and conditions that make individuals receptive to knowing” (Ermine, 1995, p. 108).</p>
Lesson/activities	<p>Activities have been sequenced as part of the experiential novel study of Fatty Legs. It is the teacher’s preferences as to how to approach each chapter for class discussion and reflections. The novel is well suited to a class novel study, or as a read aloud.</p> <p>Prior to starting the novel a teacher-led talking circle could be beneficial for establishing the groups prior knowledge and set the tone for students to share their current understanding of residential schools in a safe and respectful way.</p> <p>The four experiential learning activities fit well with the following chapters and provide the opportunity for synthesizing learning to move through the story in a personal and experiential way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical – Chapter 2 <p>Olemaun and her family arrive in Aklavik from Sachs Harbour on the Banks Island in the Beaufort Sea following. Upon arriving in Aklavik – families have arrived to participate in athletic games including the Inuvialuit and the Dene Nation.</p>

Invite your class to participate in their own athletic games inspired by northern or local traditional games; other cultural games important to students are welcome to be included.

Invite small groups to research a game that they can teach the class. Alternatively, pre-select a series of games that small groups can research and present to their peers; or, set up a circuit and present the games for students to participate in. Ideally, having a local knowledge keeper involved in learning the games.

Suggested resources include:

- Inuit Games Circuit – from Wolf Creek Public Schools and Alberta Health Services (n.d.): <https://www.wolfcreek.ab.ca/download/116163>

Reflection questions: What different skills did each of the games help participants develop? Why would these skills be important to the lifestyle in the north?

- **Intellectual** – Chapter 1 & 5

Olemaun's family lived in the far north of Canada and were based the winter prior to Olemaun going to Aklavik at Sachs Harbor on Banks Island in the Beaufort Sea. When Olemaun convinces her father to let her attend the outsider's school so she could learn to read - they must journey by schooner to reach the town of Aklavik.

Introduce students to the environment, ecology, topography and geography of Canada's arctic. Watch a short video on the arctic such as (Jess F, 2016):

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPT_-eKvFf8

Indigenous ways of living are interconnected with the environment. Have students work in small groups and create a brief multimedia presentation, either digital or tactile on an arctic animal: appearance, behavior, range,

threats, cultural stories, and how they were traditionally incorporated into the Inuit or Indigenous way of life in the North. Animals to consider might include: beluga whales, narwhal, polar bear, arctic fox, walrus, barren-ground caribou.

Discuss Olemaun's family's lifestyle and the lifestyle of the Inuit. Review Olemaun's scrapbook and the footnotes throughout the book for key terms and facts.

Reflection: What skills did Olemaun and her family need to be successful in living in the arctic? What resources did the Inuit utilize to be successful in their environment? What experience might Olemaun have missed when she was at school?

- **Spiritual** - Chapter 3 & 7

A consequence of Residential schools was the children's loss of language. Indigenous languages are interconnected with spirituality within Indigenous cultures, Makosis et al. (2010, p. 44) "it is all there, everything is in the language, all the knowledge about who we are, how we relate."

Olemaun's and other Indigenous children's struggle to adapt to the framework of expectations included the school's requirement to speak exclusively in a foreign tongue, English. The psychological and developmental consequences of doing so were effective in depleting the language base of fluent speakers of Indigenous languages. The deeper meaning of language and its power within Indigenous communities according to, for example: Cree traditional knowledge is that, "our language is medicine. One Elder shared how the syllabics were gifted to a Cree man and he shared this gift with his people, and then shared them with a missionary. We learned that these syllabics are used as medicine, in healing ceremonies, and are in sacred bundles" (Makosis, 2010, p. 44).

Syllabics is commonly attributed to the work of James Evans; however, this is not accepted in some Indigenous communities.

Watch a short video of a song by Elder Jerry Saddleback sung by Wayne Jackson (ayamihcikêtân waskway, 2020); and Cree Literacy Network (2020).

<https://creeliteracy.org/syllabic-song-wayne-jackson/> or

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbszPmAXWuc>

HYPERLINK

["https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbszPmAXWuc&feature=emb_title"](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbszPmAXWuc&feature=emb_title) & **HYPERLINK**

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Provide students with a copy of the Cree syllabics as presented by the Blue Quills University (2015). The Cree Syllabics was adapted by another missionary to the Inuktitut language in the mid 1800s.

<http://www.bluequills.ca/elders-2/syllabics-chart-with-sounds/>

Provide each student with a piece of card stock folded in $\frac{1}{3}$ cut horizontally. Using the Cree syllabics chart to translate their names; using the phonetic pronunciations of their name.

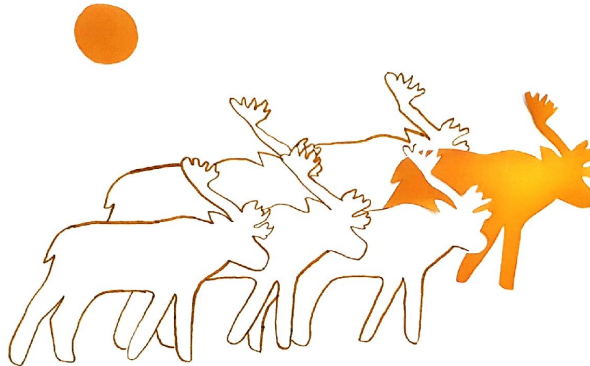
Have the students copy out their names using the spirit markers/syllabics. Make a display in the classroom.

Reflection: What difficulties did Margaret experience at school? Why is your name important - what connection does it have to your family. Why do names hold power?

- **Emotional** – Chapter 6

Students have the opportunity to create an artistic expression in the style of the famous Inuit printmakers of Nunavet, such as Kenojauk Ashevak or Germaine Arnoktauyok. The use of stenciling is an introductory way of exploring printmaking.

- Have students spend some time exploring Inuit print making through an internet search. As an art reflection, they can share with their class what art piece they most liked or connected to, and why. Discuss the medium used and the use of colour and line. This visual review will provide them with a basic foundation in the aesthetic of these artists.



- Have students create a silhouette of an arctic animal or a figure. Copy the silhouette onto tracing paper. Provide references for the students to use; and, the option of using a template.
- Using a pencil and a large sheet of paper, copy the figure repeatedly in pencil. After tracing in pencil go over in coloured pen/felt.

Optional: Choose a bold colour of paper or fill in one of the figures to have one stand out among the rest. Cut out a silhouette in that colour; and place in the scene. Decorate or fill in the scene as desired.

Reflection: Margaret was treated unfairly, and bullied by her teacher and in turn her peers, with the Raven forcing her to wear the red stockings. How should Margaret have been treated by her peers and her teacher? What does it mean to be different or to stand out?

Synthesis - Final Reflection

After experiencing the four different learning experiences in conjunction with the novel study. A final written activity - reflecting on the personal learning and growth experienced through the exploration of Fatty Legs could be completed.

Students can be asked to reflect on what they learnt through each of the different learning activities. This may take the form of a paragraph for each experience or a report. A final question can be posed regarding how learning Margaret's story helped them better understand the experiences of Indigenous children who attended residential schools - specifically highlighting how their knowledge and attitudes has potentially expanded or shifted from the beginning of the project. The final learning expression could take the form of a poster with accompanying pictures; or a formal written report.

A final teacher-led talking circle would be beneficial for students to share with their peers how Margaret's story helped them understand the experiences of Indigenous children who attended residential school and how this process of learning has impacted them individually.

Supporting Sources (APA):

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