

Elementary Lessons for Jenneli's Dance  
Teacher's Guide, Lessons, and Assessment Ideas  
Created by: Kaitlin Walker, 2018 Werklund Graduate

### About Me

In order to understand where my content stems from, and where my inspiration comes from in this teaching guide, I feel it is important to introduce myself. You will find me speaking in first person a lot throughout this work, so this is who "I" am. My name is Kaitlin and I am going into my third year of teaching elementary students in Alberta. I graduated from the University of Calgary in 2018, and almost immediately, working with Indigenous learners and educators fell into my lap. I received an email from the principal on a Metis Settlement in Northern AB when she saw my profile on Education Canada, wondering if I might be interested in a position. I made the choice as a new graduate to accept this opportunity to go directly into a probationary contract without any knowledge of where geographically I was headed, but with a heart ready to take on the challenge. After a year, I felt called back home, and with a heavy heart made the choice to leave. The relationships I made, as well as the learning and growth I made working with this community is something I am forever grateful for.

This year, thanks to the little bit of experience I did have, I had the wonderful opportunity to work with Indigenous students once again for the 2019-2020 school year. I taught Kindergarten, which is truly where I feel most called. One of the things I find so compelling about Indigenous education is the sense of community, and the way Indigenous communities lean into their village (for lack of a better word). No problem or celebration belongs to just one person. The school is the centre of any community, and is the common place that everyone shares, and the place families go for support of all kinds.

I hope you enjoy my teaching guide for the book *Jenelli's Dance*. I fully acknowledge that all of the information in this guide is not perfect, as I am learning and changing every day in my career, as educators should. I invite you to question, change, edit, and use anything you find in this document.

**Resources:** Jenneli's Dance

Author: Elizabeth Denny

“Elizabeth Denny is a Métis writer who grew up in the small town of St. Laurent in the Interlake Region of Manitoba. She has been writing for several years within many genres. Her poetry and short stories have been published in various journals, and she has written scripts for the APTN children's series Wapos Bay and Tipi Tales. Jenneli's Dance is her first children's book. Elizabeth lives in Winnipeg, Manitoba.” (Strong Nations Publishing Inc., 2020)

Publisher: Theytus Books (Theytus Books, 2020)

“Theytus Books is a leading North American publisher of Indigenous voices. Located in Syilx territory on the Penticton Indian Reserve in British Columbia, Theytus Books is proudly First Nations-owned and operated in partnership with the En'owkin Centre. As the oldest Indigenous publishing house in Canada, Theytus Books is recognized and respected internationally for its contributions to Aboriginal literature. Since its inception in 1980, Theytus Books has been a leading proponent for Indigenous authors, illustrators and artists. It ensures that their voice and vision are expressed with the highest level of cultural authenticity and integrity. In Salish, “theytus” means “preserving for the sake of handing down.” For founder Randy Fred, the name “Theytus” symbolizes the goal of documenting Indigenous cultures and world views through books. Theytus Books gratefully acknowledges the support of the Government of Canada (through the Department of Heritage Canada Book Fund and the Canada Council for the Arts/le Conseil des Arts du Canada) and the Government of British Columbia (through the British Columbia Arts Council).”

Alberta Education Connections

**General Outcomes**

Math (Alberta Education, 2016)

- Develop number sense.

ELA (Alberta Education, 2000)

- Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts.

### Social Studies (Alberta Education, 2005)

- The Land: Places and People
- Exploring the unique and dynamic relationship that humans have with the land, places and environments affects decisions that students make and their understanding of perspectives, issues, citizenship and identity. Students will examine the impact of physical geography on the social, political, environmental and economic organization of societies. This examination also affects students' understanding of perspectives and issues as they consider how connections to the land influence their sense of place.

### Physical Education (Alberta Education, 2000)

1. The four **general outcomes** upon which the Kindergarten to Grade 12 physical education program is based state that *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

### Kindergarten Specific Outcomes

#### Math (Alberta Education, 2016)

##### Specific Outcome 1

Demonstrate an understanding of repeating patterns (two or three elements) by:

- identifying
- reproducing
- extending
- creating

patterns using manipulatives, sounds and actions.

#### ELA (Alberta Education, 2000)

##### 2.1 Use Strategies and Cues

- Use comprehension strategies- recall events and characters in familiar stories read aloud by others

Social Studies (Alberta Education, 2005)

- General Outcome K.2- I Belong
  - Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the characteristics and interests that unite members of communities and groups.

Physical Education (Alberta Education, 2000)

- **Application of Basic Skills in Dance**
  - *Students will:*
  - **AK-8** experience movement to respond to a variety of stimuli; e.g., music
  - **AK-9** experience body awareness when performing dance activities

UPE Considerations- The following courses will find my plan for Jenneli's Dance especially beneficial:

**Education 435- Literacy, Language and Culture**

When teaching EDUC 435, there are various applications for my book study on *Jenneli's Dance*, especially in an elementary specialized version of the course. As I recall in this course, we examined various themes throughout the topic of literacy engagement to evaluate how we might engage our own students in literature. The students then have the chance to examine this in a real classroom setting during Field Experience I. For example, my group examined the use of popular culture in getting students interested in reading.

My book study can provide your students with a new concept for engagement in literacy, and that is having the opportunity to make personal connections to literacy. *Jenneli's Dance* is about a young girl who experiences many emotions over the course of the book, including embarrassment, shame, bullying, pride, courage, and more. She also experiences developing a love of the culture she was born into. Students will engage more with a book they can personally connect to, and *Jenneli's Dance* provides many opportunities for such. Being that this book was written by an Indigenous woman, and its content is about Indigenous traditions and teachings, it has the opportunity to bring rich discussion for your students around indigenizing literacy, linguistic diversity, and language development.

### **Education 456- Assessment**

This study can directly apply to your course content for Assessment (EDUC 456) in any specialization, but especially elementary and early childhood levels. In my given rubrics, I assess my students understanding and fulfillment of the following outcomes from Alberta Education throughout the course of the study:

#### *General Outcome 2 (K)*

*Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts.*

#### *2.1 Use Strategies and Cues*

*recall events and characters in familiar stories read aloud by others*

While you will notice that my book study covers various outcomes, you will also notice that I have chosen to only assess one of them formally. These are the outcomes that I know can be concretely assessed using the material I have provided my students. When teaching the course on assessment, you will likely have your students evaluate the quality of various assessments found online, as well as create their own. My book study for *Jenneli's Dance* can provide several talking points for your pre-service teachers as they explore assessment themselves, while at the same time utilizing a resource that has Indigenous ways of teaching and learning incorporated into its material.

My book study and rubrics give your students the opportunity to assess what they feel the usefulness and quality of my assessments are, what they would change, and what they think they could use.

### **Education 450- Diversity in Learning & Education 445- Individual Learning: Theories and Applications**

This book study could be used in the teaching of either of these two courses for similar purposes. Diversity in Learning and Individual Learning are about teaching your pre-service teachers to apply the lenses of multiple learning styles into their planning and assessment. This can be done through interdisciplinary planning, as well as the inclusion of many learning styles (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, etc.). Using my book study for *Jenneli's Dance* is an excellent talking point for inclusion of Indigenous ways of teaching and learning into your diverse planning. You will notice that throughout this unit, I use both western and traditional ways of learning throughout. Traditional ways of learning are something that I feel are often neglected for our students, when yet so

many of them require their learning to be structured this way. For example, while there are traditional classroom learning experiences in this book study, there are also opportunities to learn a traditional Indigenous recipe, and participate in Metis jigging.

While fully acknowledging that my planning is not perfect, some talking points you might cover in your classes might be:

- How diverse is this book study really?
- How could I make it more diverse?
- Are my assessments covering a wide range of learning styles?

**Learning Intention:** What will students understand and/or be able to do?

Western Knowledge

- Math: patterns, measurement
- ELA: retelling a story

Traditional Knowledge

- Cooking- making a traditional Indigenous food
- Dance- jigging
- Courage/pride- students will understand the concept of courage from an Indigenous point of view

**Hook/Launch/Question-** What question/problem will generate thinking around the learning intention?

I recommend this short study, or any of its activities be completed in November if possible, as Metis Week is traditionally celebrated the week surrounding November 16. In my classroom last year, we celebrated all of November as “Metis Month”.

According to the City of Edmonton (2020):

“Each year, on November 16, Métis people across Canada pay tribute to the Right Honourable Louis Riel by holding a commemorative ceremony on the date of his execution. This ceremony symbolizes the commitment Métis people share in striving for and promoting the visions of Louis Riel and is one of the most important dates on the Métis calendar.

In addition to recognizing Louis Riel Day on November 16, the Metis Nation of Alberta (MNA) has declared the week surrounding November 16 as “Métis Week.” The week is devoted to commemorating the sacrifices of the Métis who continue to strive toward rights and recognition as a distinct nation.”

Hook your students by talking about Metis week/month, and presenting some of the exciting activities you will complete including cooking, art, and dance.”

### **Metis Sash Patterns- Math**

Materials required:

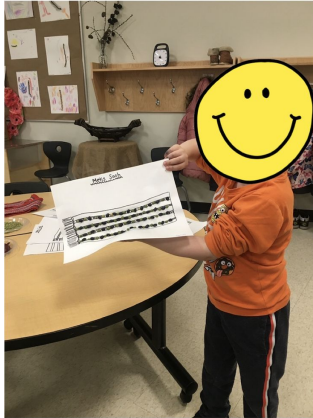
- Various types of dried beans (lentils, black beans, green beans, kidney beans, etc.),
- Colour pictures of Metis sashes for the table (find on Google)
- Metis sash colouring page print out (**See Appendix**)
- Glue

In Kindergarten, we focus a lot of our math time on patterning. Specifically, “demonstrat[ing] an understanding of repeating patterns (two or three elements) by identifying, reproducing, extending, and creating patterns using manipulatives, sounds and actions.” (Alberta Education, 2016)

Before presenting students this activity/task, I scaffolded with other lessons and activities in relation to patterning. I used this task as one of my various provocations for the Kindergarten students arriving in the morning, however, it may easily be translated into a centre activity.

1. Discuss the Metis sash with your students: What does it look like? What colours are in it? Do you see any patterns? What does the sash mean to the Metis people?
  - Before you teach this part of the lesson, visit the following website, and sort through the information from the Manitoba Metis Federation Inc: [http://www.mmf.mb.ca/the\\_sash.php](http://www.mmf.mb.ca/the_sash.php)
2. Complete an example as a class of how you could make a pattern on your sash colouring page.
3. Set up centre for students with pictures of sashes, a real Metis sash (if you have access to one), beans, glue, and an example. Allow students to explore this centre in a play-based manner.

## EXAMPLE



### **Making Bannock- Math**

Materials required:

- Flour
- Baking Soda
- Baking Powder
- Milk
- Oil
- Jam (Optional)
- Butter (Optional)
- Bowls
- Mixing spoons
- Measuring spoons
- Baking sheet
- Parchment paper
- Oven

If you have the resources and access to an oven, making bannock is a good way for students to practice cooperation, teamwork, reading, and math! You may choose to organize the way duties are split during this lesson based on the dynamics of your classroom.



For younger students, I recommend sitting in a circle and going around for equal distribution of duties (measuring, mixing, etc.).

This recipe comes from Food Network Canada (2020), described as “A Tofino, B.C., mother passes along this simple bannock recipe shared with her by an elder of the Nuu-chah-nulth culture she cherishes.”

Find all instructions at: <https://www.foodnetwork.ca/recipe/traditional-bannock/16288/>

### **Jigging- Physical Education**

Materials required:

- Smartboard, laptop, or device that can be used to play a video

This easy physical education activity could serve as a warm-up, or brain break for your students. Follow along with one or more of the following videos:

“How to Literally Tear Up The Floor Dancing the Red River Jig” (CBC)- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gKRVtub3ng>

“Intermediate Jig- Instructional Video” (Wabano Health Centre)- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xg2s9oKPSCo>

After your students know some basic steps, play them some fiddle music, and allow them to have fun with it! For example:

“Metis Rhythms” (Parks Canada) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhgEch-TMVA>

1. “Metis Fiddle Music Playlist” <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLG-h3ul6bd4HyX2FZdGkXtpO0K5WFnZu0>

### **Story Retelling- English Language Arts**

Materials Required:

- Jenneli’s Dance (Book)
- Pictures for retell (See Appendix)
- Graphic Organizer (See Appendix)

- Colouring supplies

In Kindergarten, one of our important focuses in English Language Arts is “recall[ing] events and characters in familiar stories read aloud by others” (Alberta Education, 2000). One of the ways this book can be used, therefore, is to teach and assess student retell ability. The following is how I choose to scaffold a retell lesson, drawn largely from the article *Retelling: An Evidence-Based Literacy Strategy* by Understood For All Inc. (2020). I recommend splitting this into several lessons.

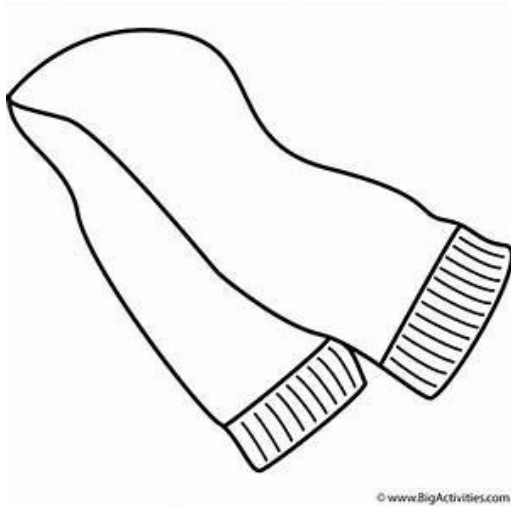
1. **Read *Jenneli’s Dance*.** You might choose to simplify the story, especially for Kindergarten students.
2. **Model the retelling routine.**
  - Read the story two times. After finishing the first time, summarize the story briefly for your students, asking them for help doing so.
  - Read the story again. When you finish the second time, do another activity to retell the story (for example, arranging a set of pictures).
  - Check that students understand the activity they will be completing on their own.
  - Display a list on chart paper as a visual reminder of the steps in the routine.
3. **Have students complete one of the following activities**, borrowed from Understood For All Inc (2020):
  - **Five-finger retelling:** “Have students hold up one hand. Explain that each finger represents a part of the retelling: who (characters/key figures), what (conflict/key events), where (setting), when (setting), and why (resolution/motives). Ask students to orally retell the five W’s of text—pointing to each finger as they go. For visual support, create an anchor chart that shows a hand with each finger labeled. Display the chart so students can refer to it as they retell.”
  - **Picture/props retell:** “Gather some materials, like printed pictures from the text, puppets, or other related props. Lay the materials in front of students and ask them to retell the text using the materials. (This type of retelling is best for individuals or small groups so all students can actively engage.)”  
*See Appendix for a printout of a picture retell for this activity.*
  - **Sequence retell:** “Give students the retelling graphic organizer. Have them point to the sequence word in each rectangle (first, then, next, and last) as they orally retell the story. Or, students can draw pictures or write in the boxes for their retell. If students write, prompt them to use 10 words or fewer for each box.”  
*See Appendix for a printable graphic organizer(s) for this activity.*

**Assessment-** How will I track student learning?

- ❖ Anecdotal note taking on individual lessons
- ❖ Assessment rubric for retelling (see Appendix for rubric)

## APPENDIX

Sash Printout- Retrieve full version from <https://www.bigactivities.com/coloring/clothing/scarves/scarf.php>



Retell Rubric

<p>Outcome:</p> <p>General Outcome 2 (K)</p> <p>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>2.1 Use Strategies and Cues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recall events and characters in familiar stories read aloud by others</li> </ul>				
Proficiency levels & descriptors to assess learning outcome	<p>1- Needs Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unable to give important details</li> <li>Can tell parts of the story, not in order</li> </ul>	<p>2 - Basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes important details</li> <li>Describes important events</li> <li>Can retell the story in order</li> </ul>	<p>3 - Good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes important details and events</li> <li>Uses vocabulary and details beyond what is given in the story</li> </ul>	<p>4 - Excellent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes important and events</li> <li>Uses vocabulary and details beyond what is given in the story</li> <li>Makes connections to prior learning</li> </ul>

Name:

*I can retell the story Jenneli's Dance using "First, Next, Then, Last"*

First

Next

Then

Last

Pictures for Visual Retell (Print, cutout, and laminate)





## References

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