

Older Elementary Lesson: We All Count - A Book of Cree Numbers by Julie Flett

Lesson created by Maya Anderson, 2020 Werklund Graduate

After getting a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Calgary in 2005, Maya has worked as an arts educator with many different organizations and young artists-in-training for the past 15 years. In 2018, Maya decided to become official and work towards getting a Bachelor of Education at the Werklund School of Education, which she achieved in 2020. She loved her learning journey so much that she wanted to continue working towards a Masters of Education. Her focus is on supportive, inclusive learning design through an arts immersion lens. She is passionate about experiential learning, interdisciplinary education, and the incorporation of student voice and choice. Maya is also fortunate to be the Mom of two amazing human beings who are her guinea pigs for all of her learning designs.

Resources used and possible concerns

- Picture Book: We All Count - A Book of Cree Numbers by Julie Flett

Author/creator and/or literature background

- The picture book, We All Count, is written and illustrated by Julie Flett, a Cree/Metis author and illustrator. It was published in 2014 by Native Explore.
- From the back cover: Whether in the country or the city, creature or insect, plant or animal, a part of a big family or a small family, we all live together and we all take care of one another. We all count. (Flett, J., 2014).
- In this beautifully illustrated picture book, Julie Flett shows us pictures of Cree culture as well as counting using Plains Cree, Swampy Cree and English.
- It teaches numbers 1-10 in Cree with a pronunciation guide making Cree culture accessible to young readers.

UPE course connections

- **Educ 420 - Issues in Learning and Teaching.** In this lesson students will be going outside to find materials for their creations. Learning from nature, the land and our connection to nature is an important part of Indigenous cultures. In addition, sharing their thoughts and final creation in a circle as well as self-reflecting is a central part to Indigenous culture.
- **Educ 435 - Literacy, Language, and Culture.** This resource connects all three elements of this course by encouraging practice with literacy, language and Cree culture. It provides a way in which students can interact with literacy in an experiential manner by exploring numbers nature, categorizing elements based on numbers and creating an art piece to display their knowledge of numbers in Cree and English languages. Additionally, students explore literary devices such as symbolism, repetition, and point of view.
- **Educ 450 - Diversity in Learning.** This lesson highlights strategies on how to engage students with diverse needs in numerous ways. Learning activities include listening to stories, participating in group discussion, creating artwork and written statements, and taking part in kinesthetic activities such as group games based on the topic of the book. Additionally, learning is broken into manageable steps to ensure that students of all levels are able to find success in the learning task.
- **Educ 456 - Assessment.** This lesson plan provides multiple ways to assess students, particularly where there are gaps in learning which allows teachers to adjust lessons based on students prior knowledge

and grasp of concepts. Additionally, students are given the opportunity to show their knowledge in many ways, including verbally through discussion, visually through art creation, and through free writing. The lesson concludes with a self-reflection piece that is geared specifically for younger elementary students. This allows students to be part of the assessment process and engage in metacognition of the experience.

- **Educ 520 - Interdisciplinary Learning.** This resource connects literacy, social studies, science, fine art, and language learning in an interdisciplinary manner. Using the story as the basis for the lesson, learning outcomes from ELA, visual arts, science, and social studies are woven together throughout the lesson. Students explore Cree language and culture in an experiential manner by creating an art piece that showcases their knowledge in a unique manner.

K-12 connection

- Targeted age range: Grades 4-6 but could be used with younger students with assistance.
- Subjects: language arts, math, fine art, CTS.
- Math:
 - Represent and describe whole numbers to 10 000, pictorially and symbolically
- English Language Arts:
 - Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to explore thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences.
 - Respond to texts
 - Appreciate artistry of texts
 - Present and share
 - Respect others and strengthen the community
 - Work within a group
- Visual Art:
 - Decorate items personally created
 - Create an original composition, object or space based on supplied motivation
 - Use media and techniques, with an emphasis on exploration and direct methods
 - Create emphasis based on personal choices
 - Add finishing touches
- Social Studies:
 - Engage in active inquiry and critical and creative thinking
 - Engage in problem solving and conflict resolution with an awareness of the ethical consequences of decision making
 - Apply skills of metacognition, reflecting upon what they have learned and what they need to learn
 - Recognize and responsibly address injustices as they occur in their schools, communities, Canada and the world
 - Communicate ideas and information in an informed, organized and persuasive manner
- Information and Communication Technology:
 - Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of technology
 - Demonstrate a basic understanding of the operating skills required in a variety of technologies
 - Create a multimedia presentation, incorporating such features as visual images (clip art, video clips), sounds (live recordings, sound clips) and animated images, appropriate to a variety of audiences and purposes

Materials

- We All Count - A Book of Cree Numbers by Julie Flett

- White board
- White board markers
- Computer with internet connection hooked up to a SmartBoard or other projector
- Paper
- Pencils
- Markers
- Cardstock
- Scissors
- iPads or other devices to record the video

Rationale

Big idea: By learning another language and seeing things through the eyes of someone in another culture, we build empathy, compassion and inclusion in our community.

Purpose: This lesson provides an interdisciplinary and experiential learning activity that encompasses social studies, language arts, math, fine art and technology. Through engaging with the story and reflecting on the cultural as well as artistic elements of the book, students begin to see things from the eyes of Cree peoples. Students will also share their knowledge with others in the form of a story.

By learning Plains Cree, albeit basic parts of the language, and perhaps struggling with the words, students may develop empathy for people who do not get to speak their own language. Some students may be unaware that there are other languages spoken in Canada, so this provides a wonderful learning experience. By working in groups to create a video story of the numbers, students will make decisions by consensus as well as use storytelling to share knowledge, and in doing so will experience central components of Indigenous ways of knowing.

Lesson/Activities

	Details	Assessment
Engage	Welcome students to class/lesson/activity and invite students to sit in a circle. Using a talking stick, encourage students to respond to prompt “Why is learning another language important?” Students will pass the talking stick around the circle. The person with the talking stick is the only one who is allowed to speak. Students may pass the stick on without responding if they are not ready or would prefer to remain silent. If time permits, go around the circle one more time and allow those students who passed to speak if they are ready.	Formative Assessment: Anecdotal evidence about students' knowledge and experience with taking care of other people.
Explain	To provide context for the story, explain to students that there are many Indigenous communities around Canada, and many in Alberta. Many Indigenous communities speak a dialect of Cree, such as Swampy Cree or Plains Cree, like in the book we are about to read. It is the most widely spoken Indigenous language in Canada, being spoken in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and the NWT. 96,575 people speak Cree. There are many dialects including Plains Cree, Woods Cree, Swampy Cree, Moose	Formative assessment: Anecdotal evidence of students prior knowledge of Cree language and Indigenous culture.

	<p>Cree, James Bay/Eastern Cree (CBC/Radio-Canada, 2019). For more information on Cree visit https://originalvoices.ca/language/cree/.</p> <p>Explain that today we will read about Cree culture and learn number names in Cree. Read the book and stop to talk about the illustrations, the culture and the numbers as you read the book. Stop at each number and invite students to repeat the number.</p>	
Explore	<p>After reading the story, invite students to share their favourite page and scene in the book.</p> <p>Explain that we are going to create a digital story/video about the numbers in Cree.</p> <p>Show an example of a video with Cree numbers: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=02PHMfA3RfM&t=54s</p> <p>Invite students to think about ideas on how the video was made, what the creators did to make the video, and what steps the creators took to make the video. Ask students to share their ideas with a partner.</p> <p>After think, pair, share session, ask pairs of students to share their ideas with the class, by writing their ideas on the whiteboard (or chart paper if the whiteboard is unavailable).</p> <p>At the end of the brainstorming session, recap the ideas and make a step by step procedure for students to follow based on their ideas.</p> <p>Sample steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write script for video section 2. Create props for video section 3. Film video 4. Edit video 5. Add music to video 6. Screen video to peers, parents and younger students 7. Reflect on experience 	<p>Formative Assessment: Anecdotal evidence of contributing to the brainstorming session and sharing ideas</p>
Elaborate	<p>Split students into groups of 2-4, depending on the number of students in the class. Make sure that there are enough groups to make scenes for numbers 0-10.</p> <p>Each student group will work on a number scene for the final video. Allow student groups to randomly pick a number out of a hat.</p> <p>Give students time to work in their groups on their group scenes. Students should follow the steps that they created</p>	<p>Formative assessment: Understanding of task and process. Teacher will circulate among students and assist where necessary. Ask probing questions to allow students to think deeper about the project.</p>

	<p>as a class (see above). Explain to students that in their scene they need to include a visual of their number in Cree and in English as well as a symbol to represent their number. Example: Group three includes the number 3, the words three and nisto, and three canoes.</p> <p>Circulate among groups to assist where necessary and check on progress. Ask probing questions to allow students to think deeper about the project.</p> <p>NOTE: This will take multiple sessions. Remind students what tasks they should accomplish by the end of each session. The tasks to complete will depend on how students progress each session.</p> <p>Here is the sample outline of tasks: Session 1: Brainstorm ideas in group, using consensus to decide. Begin writing the script. Session 2: Finish writing script, start creating props Session 3: Finish making props, start filming video sections Session 4: Finish filming, edit video sections, add music Session 5: Share video with class, peers, younger students, and parents</p>	
Evaluate	<p>After the video screening, once the audience has left the classroom, invite the students back to the circle. Pass the talking stick around the circle and encourage students to reflect on their experience with the project. Prompt students to share what they liked best, what worked well, what they learned and what they would do differently next time. As before, only the student with the stick is allowed to talk, and if students wish to pass they may do so.</p> <p>Invite students to fill in their self-reflection form (see below). Go through the categories to make sure that students understand the criteria.</p>	<p>Summative assessment: Assess completion of their video based on criteria below. Students will fill in the self-reflection form.</p>
Total Time	<p>Approx. 120 mins (Could be split into multiple sessions: Session 1: Read story, respond to story in sharing circle, brainstorm creation steps Session 2: Recap numbers, split into groups, select number, begin working on writing script for video section Session 3: Recap numbers, finish writing scripts, create props for video Session 4: Film video sections, edit video sections, add music to video Session 5: Video screening, self-reflect</p>	
Supporting sources		
<p>CBC/Radio-Canada. (2019). Cree. Retrieved from https://originalvoices.ca/language/cree/ Flett, J. (n.d.). About. Retrieved from https://www.julieflett.com/contact Matthews, C. (2017, December 8). <i>Cree language lessons - numbers 0-10</i>. [Video file]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=02PHMfA3RFM&t=54s</p>		

Cree Number Video Rubric - Self Reflection Form

Choose which level you think you are at for each part of the project using the three categories below. Circle your choice.

My Name Is:

	I am an expert	I'm almost there	I'm still learning
I included all the requirements in my video section (Cree number, English number, visual representation of the number)	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊
I worked well with my group members by actively listening to ideas, being respectful and considerate of ideas, and sharing my ideas.	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊
My props are carefully made. Cutting, glueing, and colouring are neat.	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊
My video section is unique, inventive and I used my own ideas.	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊
My video was well-rehearsed with smooth delivery that held the audience's attention.	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊
I know what I would do differently next time to make the project even better.	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊