

Lesson Plan: When We Were Alone by David A. Robertson
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Resources used and possible concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>When We Were Alone</i> by David A. Robertson illustrated by Julie Flett ● http://www.darobertson.ca/biography/ ● https://www.julieflett.com/
Author/creator and/or literature background	<p>David A. Robertson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Member of the Norway House Cree Nation ● Writes his texts that reflect “Indigenous cultures, histories, and communities while illuminating contemporary issues” (David Alexander Robertson, 2020.) <p>Julie Flett</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “Cree-Metis author, illustrator, and artist” (Julie Flett, n.d.) <p>Literature Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discusses the Indigenous community’s experiences at residential school that stripped away their culture and identity through an emotional lens that the audience could empathize with (CBC, 2017).
UPE course connections (not exhaustive)	<p>EDUC 460: Specialization I</p> <p>EDUC 535: Specialization II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teaching elementary students about the events and impacts of residential schools is a challenging task as educators must ensure the learning material is age appropriate, but also present the information authentically to prevent misrepresentation of these events in Canada’s history. Thus, by using a combination of Literature and Art, this approach helps provide ways to teach difficult concepts in a meaningful manner that is easier to comprehend for younger learners. Using resources such as picture books help present the events of residential schools to elementary students in a manner that is easy to understand through its combination of narratives and text, whereas art can help express thoughts and ideas without words. <p>EDUC 450: Diversity in Learning</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As educators, it is essential to be aware of the diversity within our communities and our classroom, to accurately represent different communities and groups meaningfully into the classroom, and educate students to be more aware from historical and current perspectives to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against communities. The representation of Indigenous communities and their histories are not stressed enough in classrooms. Therefore, the incorporation of this lesson will help build student's knowledge in this area.
K-12 connection	<p>Grade 4</p> <p>Related Curricular Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language Arts (reading, analyzing and responding to a text) Social Studies (can be an extension when teaching British settlement in Canada) Fine Arts (using illustrations and art to convey meaning and a story)
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>When We Were Alone</i> by David A. Robertson Paint Paint brushes Cardstock paper Anchor charts Markers Lined paper Pencils
Rationale	<p>Big idea: This multidisciplinary lesson plan allows for students to acquire a foundational understanding of the repercussions of residential schools within Indigenous communities through exercising empathy through art and literature. Through this approach, learners will be informed and aware of the repercussions of residential schools emotionally responding to its impact upon the Indigenous community and its' part within Canada's history.</p> <p>Purpose: To encourage an age-appropriate understanding of what were residential schools, the impacts of residential schools among the Indigenous community, and how we can work towards reconciliation through meaningful discussion, research, and learning together.</p> <p>This lesson plan aligns with outcomes associated with the Language Arts, Art and Social Studies</p>

	<p>curriculum for Grade 4. The text reflects upon memories of a grandmother’s experience in a residential school. Through reflecting upon difficult, and lighter memories, this encourages younger audiences to understand, empathize, and emotionally respond to this part of Canada’s history and the Indigenous community’s experience.</p>
<p>Lesson/activities</p>	<p>Introduction Teacher will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask students what they know about residential schools ● Introduce students to the author and illustrator to continue the discussion point <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who is David A. Robertson? Who is Julie Flett ○ What Indigenous group is David A. Robertson and Julie Flett part of? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Where are those Indigenous groups located on the Canadian map? ○ What are David A. Robertson’s books about? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Why does he write these books? <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage in discussion <p>Mini Lesson #1 (First Read Aloud) Teacher will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Perform a read aloud using Robertson’s <i>When We Were Alone</i> ● Have a group discussion with the students discussion their feelings towards the book <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How did you feel when the story was being read? ○ Did you notice a change in your feelings when I was reading the book? (Compare between the memories of the residential school: a sad memory V.S. when we were alone: happy memories) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Did you notice the change in colours and details in the pictures between the memories? (Memories of the residential school used darker, cool toned colours V.S. memories “when we were alone” had brighter colours) ○ Why do you think it is important to talk about this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk about how the last residential school was closed in 1996 (recent event) ■ Apology to residential school survivors from Canada was not until 2008

Students will:

- Listen during the read aloud
- Reflect upon how they feel as the story is being read
- Engage in discussion

Mini Lesson #2 (Painting Techniques)

Teacher will:

- Explain how art can convey emotion (through painting techniques and colours)
- Show a painting to solidify understanding about the connection between art and emotions
 - Example: A dark red and black painting with jagged lines and harsh paint strokes can demonstrate anger and frustration V.S. Pastel colours with light paint strokes and soft lines can convey calmness
 - Note for teachers: Google “angry paintings” and “happy paintings”, this will give students a general idea of what to look for
- Introduce students to the concept of free painting
- Resource for teachers:
<http://henfamily.com/free-painting-with-toddlers/#:~:text=What%20is%20free%20painting%3F,or%20craft%20paper%20works%20well.>
 - Doesn't need to convey an image
 - Main focus on brush strokes and paint colours

Students will:

- Listen during lesson
- Participate through discussion

Main Activity (Free Painting and Read Aloud Activity)

Teacher will:

- Explain the activity:
 - The teacher will be reading *When We Were Alone* again while the students free paint according to how they feel while the text is read aloud
 - Students will receive two sheets of cardstock paper and have access to a multitude of paint colours
 - On one piece of paper, students will begin to free paint about how they feel when

	<p>the text reflects upon memories of the residential school (“when I was your age”)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ On the other other, students will free paint about how they feel when the text reflects upon a happier memory (“when we were alone”) ■ Students will be asked to paint between the two pages as the text is being read out loud <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Paint in response to each page ● Students are encouraged to slowly build their cardstock paper with paint as the teacher reads through the book ● The paper should be filled with paint by the time the book is finished <p>Wrap Up/Conclusion</p> <p>Teacher will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have students share what they painted on their cardstock and why they chose the colours and painting techniques for their art piece ● Have students do a short write up about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The author/illustrator ○ What they learned about residential schools ○ The book ○ Their art piece <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participate in group discussion ● Complete the write up
References	<p>CBC. (2017). When we were alone. Retrieved from https://www.cbc.ca/books/when-we-were-alone-1.4119444</p> <p>David Alexander Robertson. (2020.). Biography. Retrieved from http://www.darobertson.ca/biography/</p> <p>Julie Flett. (n.d.). About. Retrieved from https://www.julieflett.com/contact</p>