

# Elementary Lesson: Wild Berries - 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: Wild Berries by Julie Flett

## Author/creator and/or literature background

- The picture book, Wild Berries was written and illustrated by Julie Flett, a Cree-Métis author and illustrator. It was published in 2013 by Simply Read Books.
- From the publisher: Spend the day picking wild blueberries with Clarence and his grandmother. Meet ant, spider, and fox in a beautiful woodland landscape, the ancestral home of author and illustrator Julie Flett. This book is written in both English and Cree, in particular the n-dialect, also known as Swampy Cree from the Cumberland House area (Simply Read Books, 2013).
- In this beautifully illustrated picture book, Julie Flett takes us on a journey with Clarence and his grandmother to pick wild berries in the woods.
- It teaches the value of spending time with family as well as the value of working together in harmony with animals. We also learn some Cree words throughout the story.

## 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 personal connections to the story and creating an art piece to display their personal reflection on the main idea of the story. Students also explore literary devices such as point of view, imagery, and flashbacks.
- **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 K-2 but could be used with older students with the addition of a written artist statement for the piece that students create.
- Subjects: language arts, fine art, science, social studies
- English Language Arts:
  - 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:
  - Demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building
  - Demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy
  - Appreciate how Aboriginal and Francophone peoples have influenced the development of the student's community
  - Appreciate how cultural and linguistic exchanges connect one community to another

## Materials

- Wild Berries by Julie Flett
- White paper
- Construction paper
- Scrap paper
- Scissors
- Markers
- Pencil Crayons
- Crayons
- Glue
- Printout of Self-Reflection forms

## Rationale

### Big idea:

Family shapes who we are and who we become. It is through experiences with our family members that we learn important cultural practices.

### Purpose:

Throughout this lesson, students will have the opportunity to explore how experiences with their family members shape how they view the world. Students will reflect on their experiences with family members and what they learned from these experiences by creating

a collage representing their experience.

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.

**Lesson/Activities**

	<b>Details</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
<b>Engage</b>	<p>Welcome students to class/lesson/activity and invite students to sit in a circle. Using a talking stick (or stuffy), encourage students to respond to prompt “What is one thing you like to do with your family?” 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.</p>	<p>Formative Assessment: Anecdotal evidence about students' comfort in sharing their ideas with others.</p>
<b>Explain</b>	<p>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 Cree, James Bay/Eastern Cree (CBC/Radio-Canada, 2019). For more information on Cree visit <a href="https://originalvoices.ca/language/cree/">https://originalvoices.ca/language/cree/</a>.</p> <p>Explain that today we will read about Cree culture and go on an adventure to pick wild berries with the characters in the book, Clarence and his grandmother. Read the book and stop to talk about the illustrations, the culture and the animals as you read the book. Stop at each Cree word and invite students to repeat the word.</p>	<p>Formative assessment: Anecdotal evidence of students prior knowledge of Cree culture.</p>
<b>Explore</b>	<p>After reading the story, invite students to share their favourite page and scene in the book.</p> <p>Invite students to stand up so that we can play a memory game. Ask students to think about a good that they like to share with their family. Start by saying I’m going on a picnic with my family and I am going to take strawberries. The next person in the circle says I am going on a picnic with my family and I’m going to take strawberries and waffles. Each person in the circle tries to remember what was said before and adds an item to the picnic. The entire</p>	<p>Formative Assessment: Anecdotal evidence of following instructions and understanding the process of making a totem pole.</p>

	<p>class can call out the items to help the person who is trying to remember what came before them.</p> <p>After the game, invite students to sit down in a circle. Show the students an example of the family memory collage. Explain that we will spend time creating collages about a memory that we have with our family. Ask students what they know about collage. Explain to them that collage is the art of making a picture from scrap pieces of paper and other scrap materials. Show students the illustrations in the book and suggest that they use the images as inspiration.</p> <p>Explain the process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sketch your idea. It should be something that you enjoy doing with your family.</li> <li>2. Cut shapes using the paper scraps and glue these to your paper.</li> <li>3. Add details with markers, crayons, pencil crayons etc.</li> <li>4. Write a short artist statement about your collage (see sample below).</li> <li>5. Tidy up your supplies.</li> <li>6. Share your creation and fill in your self-reflection form. Show students the self-reflection form so they know what they are working towards.</li> </ol>	
<b>Elaborate</b>	<p>Have students gather their supplies. Play music and invite students to create the most beautiful collages that they can make.</p> <p>Encourage students to write their statements. For students who have challenges with writing, provide students with a graphic organizer for their statements.</p>	<p>Formative assessment: Understanding of task and process. The Teacher will circulate among students and assist where necessary.</p>
<b>Evaluate</b>	<p>At the end of the creation time, invite the students back to the circle. Pass the talking stick around the circle and encourage students to share their creations with one another and reflect on their experience with the activity. 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 totem pole based on criteria below. Students will fill in the self-reflection form.</p>
<b>Total Time</b>	Approx. 60 mins	
<b>Supporting sources</b>		

CBC/Radio-Canada. (2019). Cree. Retrieved from <https://originalvoices.ca/language/cree/>  
 Flett, J. (n.d.). About. Retrieved from <https://www.julieflett.com/contact>  
 Simply Read Books. (2013). Wild berries. Retrieved from [https://www.simplyreadbooks.com/book.php?book\\_id=108&image\\_num=4&page=summary](https://www.simplyreadbooks.com/book.php?book_id=108&image_num=4&page=summary)

### Collage Rubric - Self Reflection Form

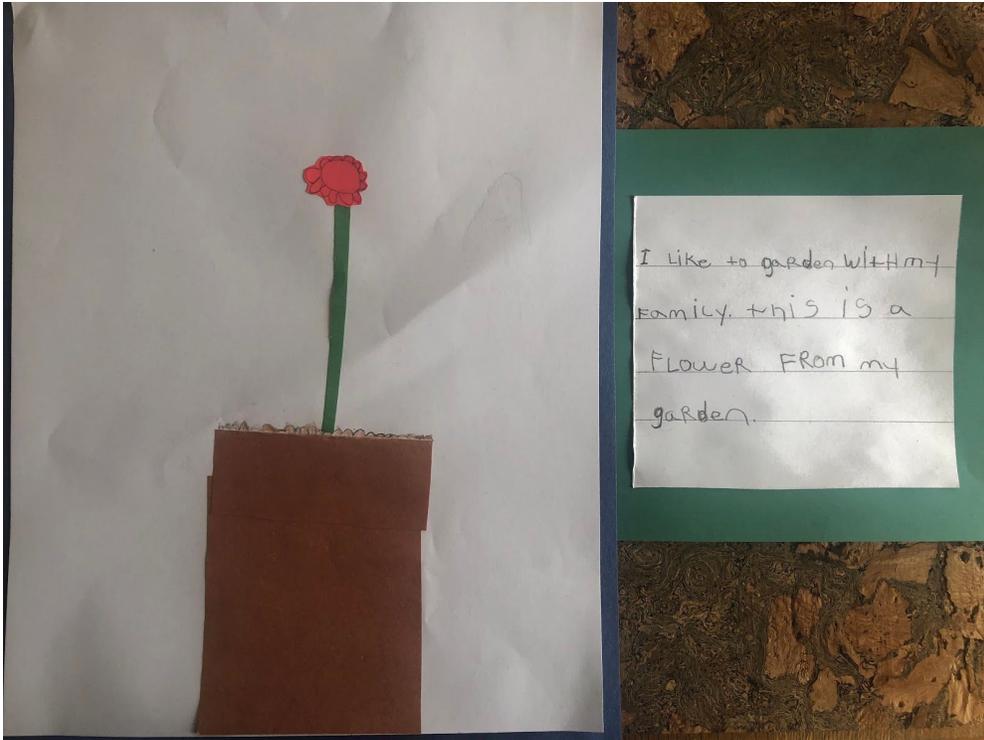
Choose which level you think you are at for each part of the project using the three categories below. Circle your choice.

My Name Is:

	I am an expert	I'm almost there	I'm still learning
I included a story of me and a family member in my collage.	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊
My art is carefully made. Cutting, glueing, and colouring are neat.	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊
My art is unique and I used my own ideas.	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊
I wrote a statement about my collage, telling the story of my family memory.	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊

### Samples





I like to garden with my  
family. this is a  
flower from my  
garden.