

Bringing Métis Children's Literature to Life—Fiddle Dancer

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Overview of Story: While spending time with his grandfather, Nolin discovers his Métis heritage and the importance that Elders have as role models. He conquers a child's apprehension at learning new things and forms a special bond with his Moushoom. Nolin can't wait to show off his new skill to his Mom. This is book one in a series of three.

Themes in book:

- Mentorship from grandparent/ways of learning
- Family/love/kinship/
- Learning new things/doubt/confidence
- Dance/jigging/music
- Food
- Clothing/sash
- Life cycle (birth to Elder)

Possible Curriculum connections:

Language Arts

- Listen, comprehend, and respond
- Speak clearly and audibly
- Metaphor (Bones)
- Compose and create: procedural writing

Arts Education

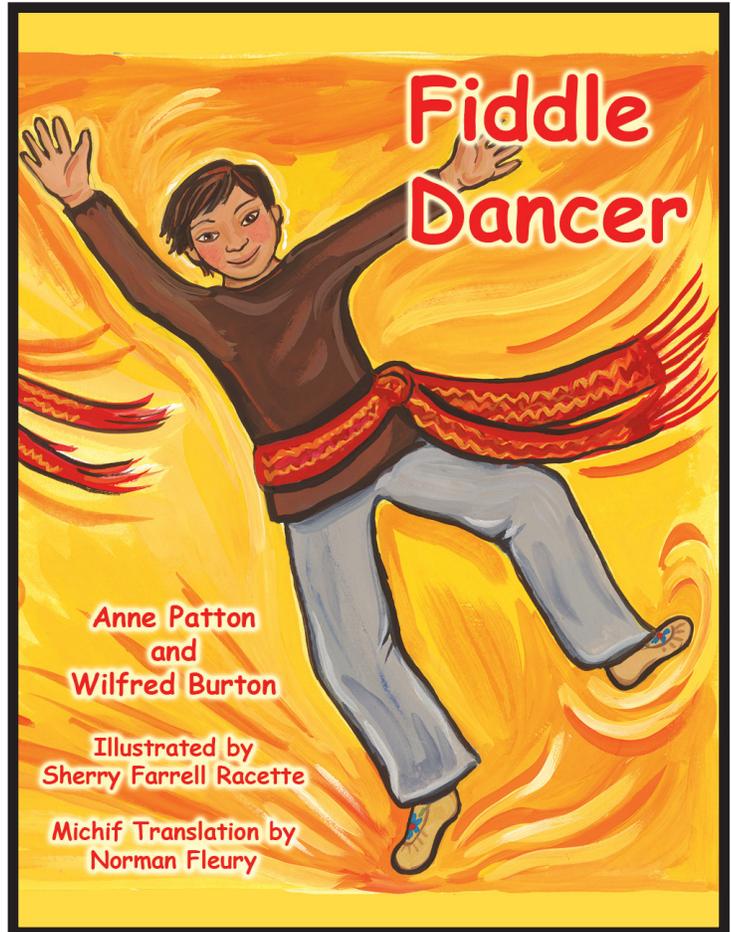
- Elements of dance
- Arts expressions
- Cultural traditions in music

Social Studies

- Contributions of the Métis
- Family
- Culture and traditions
- Cultural diversity and patterns similarities and difference

Math

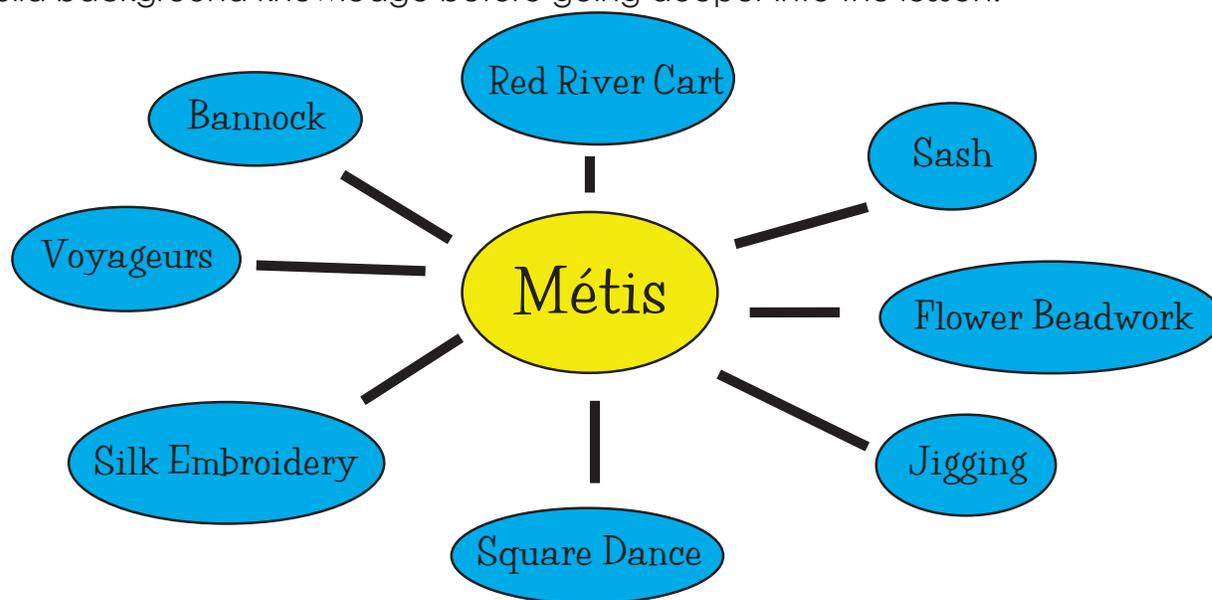
- Patterning
- Passing of time



Before Reading: Show the cover of the book and *predict* what the story will be about. Select three or four additional pages for prediction, introducing language such as: Moushoom, Koohkoom, jig, etc. This will assist in the comprehension of the story as you read it aloud. Set the purpose for reading this story by asking—Who are the Métis?

During Reading: Mind Maps/Webs Lesson

While reading the story to the students, have them create mind maps on pieces of paper (webs). Each time they hear something they think is part of Métis culture, they record it on their mind map. In this way, they are listening and *determining the importance* of information being read to them. When completed, share individual mind maps with the larger group. Have students add “new” ideas to their maps. This will give students a good idea of Métis-specific cultural items/practices. This is a good activity to introduce the culture or do comparisons to other cultures. Often, we ask students to do a KWL (know, want to know, learned) or brainstorm when they don’t have any background knowledge. In this activity, they build background knowledge before going deeper into the lesson.



After Reading: First Nations OR Métis Lesson?

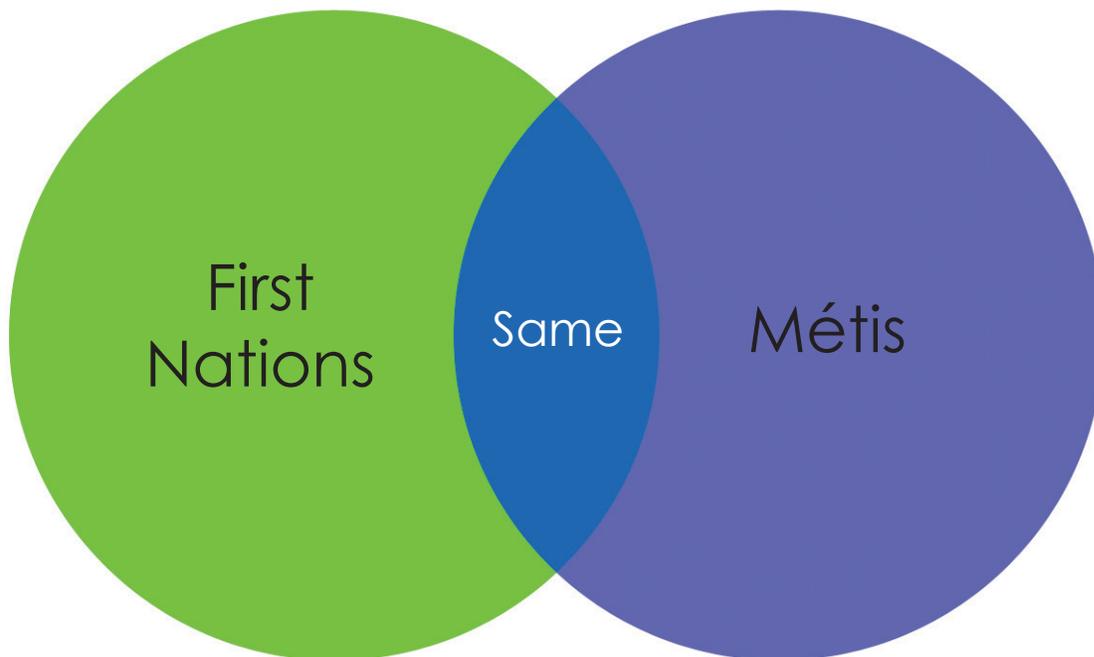
This concept lesson will showcase the *similarities and differences* between the two groups. After reading, bring out a bag of items (or cards with photo pictures) depicting First Nations and Métis culture. Sample photos can be photocopied from the end of this PDF.

Métis	First Nations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● sash ● Métis flag ● flower beadwork moccasins* ● spoons ● fiddle ● John Arcand CD ● Jiguer (jigger) puppet ● sewing bag ● buffalo (bison)* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● geometric beaded belt ● Treaty flag ● geometric design beaded moccasins ● flower beadwork moccasins* ● drum ● Pow wow CD ● Pipe bag ● buffalo (bison)* ● First Nation’s doll



* items shared by both cultures. The buffalo or bison were instrumental in both cultures and the flower beadwork moccasins were shared by Métis, Cree, and Anishinaabe. (You could also do this comparison activity with French Canadians.)

1. Let the students know you have many items in the bag from both cultures. Some are uniquely Métis and some are uniquely First Nations, and perhaps some are common to both. As the items are pulled, sort them into the First Nations or Métis piles.
2. Have a student, one at a time, (without looking) pull out and place the item either on Métis pile or First Nations pile. Have them tell the group why they've chosen the item for that side. For an added twist and engagement, have the student pull the item, show the group, then turn around. When turned around the remainder of the students agree (thumb up) or disagree (thumb down) with their choice.
3. After all the items have been sorted, discuss the similarities and differences between the two groups. Use the book *Fiddle Dancer* to confirm the guesses.
4. Use a graphic organizer (Venn Diagram*) to **summarize** the results of the discussion.



*A Venn diagram is a diagram that shows all possible logical relations between a finite collection of sets (aggregation of things).



Additional Post-reading Activities/Lessons for Fiddle Dancer:

Birth to Elder Lesson:

After reading *Fiddle Dancer* have the students, as a large group, **synthesize** Moushoom's life on a time line. Highlight specific pre birth to Elder pages: Prebirth – page 14, newborn – page 18, Toddler – page 24, Youth – page 27, Adult – page 10, Elder – page 8. Discuss the life-cycle. After creating Moushoom's life on a timeline, have students do their own memory story with several pages starting from:

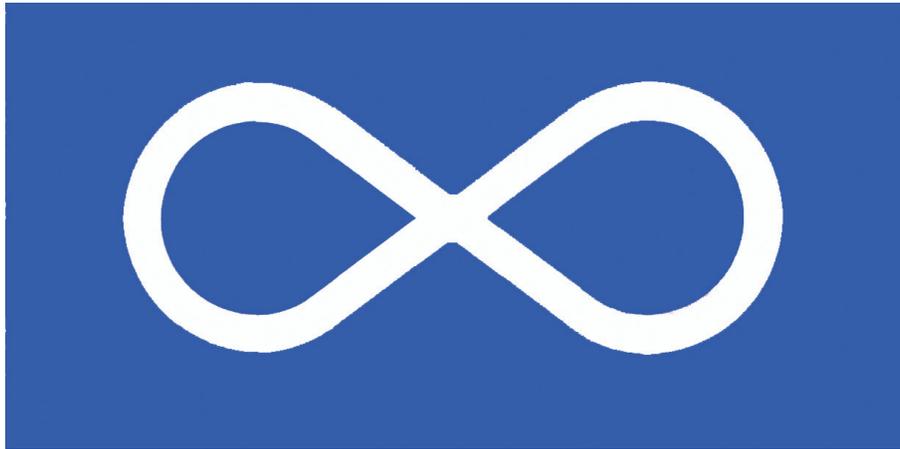
- pre-birth or birth to toddler (send home for parents to tell if students can't remember)
- create a current page (youth)
- create a future page (adult to Elder) in a hopes and dreams page.

Jumbled Directions Lesson: Take the directions for the bannock recipe or the tourtière recipe at the back of the book, copy them, cut them apart and jumble them up. Put each sentence on a separate piece of paper. Give the strips to the students to read through and place in sequence. This will help with **procedural writing**, where you start with a goal (E.g.: making bannock), list your materials and requirements (ingredients), write out the method (how you mix it together) and finish the **sequence** with evaluation or completed item. For an interactive bannock baking activity, visit: http://www.museevirtuel-virtualmuseum.ca/sgc-cms/expositions-exhibitions/batoche/html/resources/games_bannock.php.

Jigging: Refer to the Dance unit in *Bringing Métis Literature to Life* for a logical post-reading activity for *Fiddle Dancer*.











Metis Fiddle Tunes



Pow Wow Music

