# Bringing Métis Children's Literature to Life—Better That Way

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**Overview of Story:** Better That Way captures, in poetry, the essence of growing up, our wonders and special experiences with our family, and those around us.

#### Themes in this book:

- Poetry
- Growing up
- Our wonders/making memories/things we love
- Sacred act of love
- Family
- Things aren't always what they seem to be



Language Arts

- View, comprehend, and respond
- Poetry: free verse
- Simile/metaphor

#### Science

Constellation

### Social Studies

- Historical contexts: residential schools
- Families
- Cultures and traditions
- European influence
- Canadian identity

Health/Physical Education

• Positive and negative acts that affect our lives (healthy mind and body)

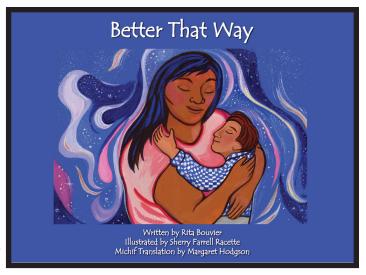
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Ask the students what some of their favourite memories or experiences are with their mother/father/guardian. What creates memories?

**Before Reading**: Look at the cover of the book. Discuss the image and what it may evoke.

**During Reading**: Read page by page and discuss each one as something that you might not do every day, but when you do it, it becomes a special memory.

- 1. Licking salt/friends with cows: How do you make friends with animals?
- 2. Swimming/clothes on: What activities do you do that make you feel great?
- 3 & 4. Frosted window/father returning/scoop up in the air: What makes you happy when one of your parents come home after being away?
- 5. Hide/adults: Where do you go to get away in a quiet space?
- 6. Rooftop/moon: What do you like to look at in the sky?
- 7, 8, and 9: What kind and generous things do you do to help our environment?





- 10. Steal peanut butter: Tell a story about residential school and not being fed well so sometimes kids would sneak down and steal food. Talk about why they wouldn't just ask for a snack.
- 11. Mother's love/immensity: How does your caregiver show you love?
- 12. Believe what you say/say nothing: Discuss the meaning of this statement

## After Reading:

Sensory Alert Lesson: Go through the book one more time, but this time have the students discuss the senses being used on each page. Record some of the vocabulary they may share.

Choose your favourite page or image that you connect to and create your own three-to-four line free verse poem. (Free verse has no set conventions for punctuation or structure.
 They need not rhyme or have a distinctive rhythm. The lines don't need to conform to any pattern. Words choice is important, and should evoke strong images, mood, and emotion.
 Put all the poems together in a booklet for future independent reading.

