

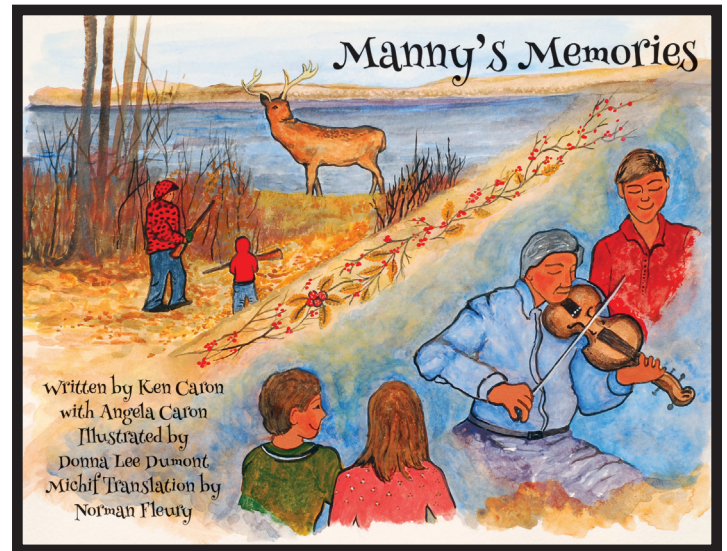
Bringing Métis Children's Literature to Life—Manny's Memories

Authors: Ken Caron with Angela Caron

Illustrator: Donna Lee Dumont

Translator: Norman Fleury

Overview of Story: *Manny's Memories*, by author Ken Caron and his daughter Angela Caron, introduces us to the Métis community of Round Prairie, Saskatchewan through the eyes of a young boy growing up in the 1940s. Manny shares his boyhood memories of the once vibrant community not too far from Saskatoon's city limits. Though rural life at the time called for hard work, self-sufficiency, and generosity, there was always time to have fun. Artist Donna Lee Dumont's visual expression of *Manny's Memories* helps us see the world as Manny remembers it. Norman Fleury's accompanying Michif translation and narration returns to the language which Manny so often heard as a boy. *Manny's Memories* leaves us with a rare and satisfying glimpse of life not so long ago.



Themes in this book:

- Prairie Métis communities
- Transportation
- Livelihoods
- Rural to urban
- Rivers/water (flood/ice jams, etc.)
- Pastimes and celebrations
- Family life
- Storytelling
- Food

Possible Curriculum connections:

Language Arts

- Comprehend and respond

Science

- Erosion
- Habitats and communities
- Weather
- Diversity of living things

Social Studies

- Relationships
- Resources
- Interdependence of nations
- Cultural diversity

Math

- Addition and subtraction of whole numbers
- Comparing numbers



Before Reading:

Ask the students if they know where Round Prairie is and where the communities mentioned in the story are: Dundurn, Hanley, Saskatoon, and the Whitecap Dakota First Nation.

Predict what it might look like in that part of the country. Predict why the Métis and First Nations people liked that part of the country (close to waterways, prairie, grassland for grazing, and wooded bluffs for firewood and protection from the elements and enemies).

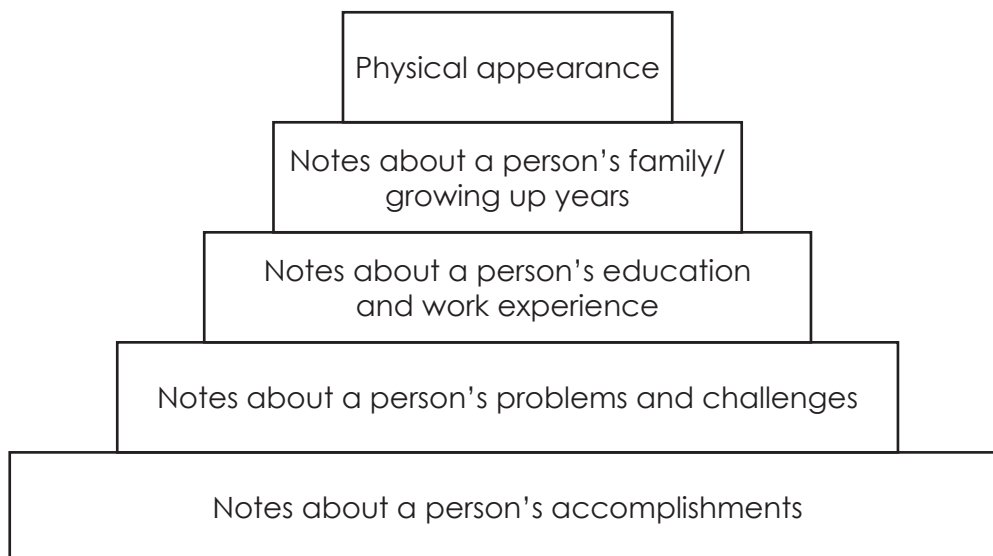
Have the students look at the cover of the book. There are several illustrations that would give them an idea of the book's setting and characters.

Show the map at the back of the book. Calculate the kilometres between Round Prairie and the communities mentioned in the story: Dundurn, Hanley, Saskatoon, and the Whitecap Dakota First Nation. This will give the students a sense of how long it would take to go from one place to another (by car, by foot, by horseback – on Google Maps or another map website) in days gone by. Compare it to transportation of today. This will help the students to comprehend while reading the book.

During Reading: Importance of Water: Stop from time to time and reflect on the role water played in the livelihoods of the characters. Why was the river important to early peoples? Why was it a good idea to have a community close to the river? What foods came from the river?

If reading aloud to the class/students, Create a Person Pyramid by stopping after each two page spread and filling in the details.

PERSON PYRAMID



After Reading: This book is about family. Conduct an interview with a family member. Construct questions as a class beforehand or use the following: (Be aware of the students in your class who may find this uncomfortable because of their family relationships – foster care, death of a parent, etc.)

1. Ask about the name and birth information. Ask for the names of parents, brothers, and sisters.
2. Ask what their childhood was like.
3. Ask about their schools and what they did for fun.
4. Ask about when their children were born, and how they reared them.
5. Ask them how the world is different today.
6. Ask them about friends they have had.
7. Ask about the different kinds of work family members participated in.

Have the students compile this information and present it to the class. Have the students bring in a piece of memorabilia from their family and tell a story about the item. Create a heritage corner in the classroom and have the students place items there for inspiration in writing or for discussions.

When creating genealogies, first model Manny's genealogy to show relationships in families.

Why do you think the publisher used real photos and painted illustrations?

