

# TEACHER'S ACTIVITY AND RESOURCE GUIDE

## BUILDER BROTHERS **DREAM FACTORY**

Airing on  
**Treehouse**  
Episode available to  
stream [HERE](#)

### TEACHER TIP

The **Builder Brothers Dream Factory** series includes an Orange Shirt Day episode which is a great way to get students starting to talk and think about what **Orange Shirt Day** is all about. Media is a great tool for engaging and teaching students, especially if used in tandem with other activities in a classroom.

### FACT

Orange Shirt Day happens every year on **September 30th** in Canada.



Orange Shirt Society

# ORANGE SHIRT DAY

Meaningful activities for K-3 students

# GETTING STARTED: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

## Land Acknowledgement

The makers of this guide acknowledge the original caretakers of the land on which this resource was created. We are grateful to the Anishinaabe, including Mississaugas of the Credit, the Chippewa, the Huron Wendat, Haudenosaunee and all those who were on these lands before us. This resource guide is a way to take action to honour the land and its heritage, and the historical wrongdoings of Settler Canadians. We encourage you to take action by sharing these Resources with your students, and inspiring them to help amplify the voices and stories of Indigenous people.

### FACT

Orange Shirt Day has a more official name. **The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation** is the more formal name of this special day.

[Native-land.ca](http://Native-land.ca) and [whose.land/en/](http://whose.land/en/) are websites where students can learn whose traditional land they are on and also the treaties in place. Younger students can be led through this activity, which is helpful to get started on Land Acknowledgements.

Additional resources: [A Guide To Indigenous Land Acknowledgment.](#)

### TEACHER TIP

It's great to start each day with a **Land Acknowledgement** that is meaningful. Young children need an action mindset around colonization, and this can be started through daily or weekly Land Acknowledgements. It's important for the acknowledgements not to be recited or repeated as this can diminish their meanings.

## Important to Know

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) includes Calls to Actions (2015) that impact educator, including:

Call to Action #62 : Make age-appropriate curriculum on Indian residential schools, Treaties and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.

This resource has been created so that children can both learn about Indian residential schools as part of Canadian history and learn more about Indigenous culture.

It also has been created so they will be active participants in learning, in sharing what they have

learned, and in taking action against colonial ways of thinking as they continue to grow and learn.

### FACT

Research shows that while teachers may want to instruct about Indian residential schools and include Indigenous culture in their classrooms, they don't feel confident or are concerned they might make mistakes. We encourage you to be open about your own journey as you learn more about Canada's history.

To continue your own learning journey, **The Truth and Reconciliation Commission findings** are a great place to start. Or look up well known organizations like the **Orange Shirt Society.**

**Did you live near a Indian residential school?** Finding schools nearby can really bring the learning to life, especially for older students in Grades 2 and 3.

Reach out to Indigenous people in your community. Have a guest who has been to Indian residential school or relatives of survivors. Or look for online events -drumming circles, story sharing and more-that are available each year.

### TEACHER TIP

This resource gives a range of activities that are suited to **Grades K-3.** Adapt and modify as needed to meet the needs of your community of students.

# INTRODUCING MEL AND HER FRIENDS



Hi, I'm Mel I love to skateboard, make art and spend time with my best friends, Drew, Jonathan and Ayana. We love to work together to solve problems, build amazing things, and help our neighbours in our town of Steamport.

My family is Ininiwok (Cree) and I live with my Dad, Mikisew, and my Grandma, Kookum Nadie, who is passionate about sharing our family's heritage with our friends.



**DREW**

**JONATHAN**

**AYANA**

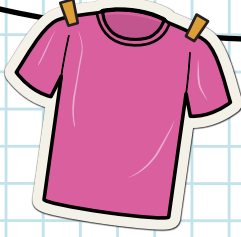


**MIKISEW**

**KOOKUM NADIE**



# WHY ORANGE SHIRTS?



## Why do we wear orange and not another coloured t-shirt?

We wear orange because of a little girl named Phyllis. When she went to her Indian residential school, they took away her special orange shirt that her Grandmother had bought her.



## An introduction to Phyllis to share with all students:

When she was six years old, Phyllis wore an orange shirt to her first day of Indian residential school. It was a gift from her grandmother and she loved it. When she arrived at school, it was taken from her.

At Indian residential school, kids were not allowed to speak their language or celebrate their culture and were often treated badly by the adults in charge of the schools. Many of the children who went to Indian residential schools became sick and died because the schools were poorly built and didn't get enough money from the Government of Canada to keep the kids healthy.

Now the orange shirt represents her experience and the experience of all the survivors of Indian residential schools and their families.

It's a day to honour the survivors of Indian residential schools, as well as the children who never went home.



Phyllis

### TEACHER TIP

For older children, you can have a discussion about the long term impacts of Indian residential schools. Between 1879 and 1996, the Government of Canada took **First Nations**, **Métis**, and **Inuit** kids away from their families and homes and put them in Indian residential schools to teach them English and attempt to erase their culture. The kids who survived Indian residential school returned home with a great **sadness** and **hurt** that has been passed on to current generations.

# WHAT COULD KIDS TAKE TO INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS?



What do you think kids were allowed to take with them when they went to Indian residential schools? Circle the items that you think children got to keep once they arrived at these schools:

## FACT

The last Indian residential school closed in 1996 in Canada. Children between the ages of 4-16 attended Indian residential school. It is estimated that **over 150,000** First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children attended Indian residential school.



## TEACHER TIP

This is a great way to visually show students what Indian residential schools were like in a way that they can relate to. Children were not allowed to have anything with them from their own culture, so this gets students thinking. You can also tell students that they also weren't allowed to sing traditional songs, play traditional games, or speak their Indigenous languages. It's important to share that this is **Canadian history**, not Indigenous history.

# ANIMALS AND THEIR MEANINGS



We often wear orange shirts with animals on them that have special meanings in Indigenous culture.



## TEACHER TIP








In Indigenous traditions, animals are sometimes used to communicate both the values and spiritual beliefs of their communities. Animals are important in creation stories, and family stories passed down generation to generation. Spirit animals are a spirit that can guide and protect a person.

For younger students: Use stuffed animals in the classroom or library. Discuss the meanings of different animals in Indigenous culture. You can make it fun by having students go on a scavenger hunt to find the animals. Put the students in groups to find their animal and come back to the group to talk about their animals.

With older students, you can go more in depth to the meaning behind each animal. These characters are part of the Seven teachings from Elders of traditional values and hope for the future.

Talking about these **character strengths** and **virtues** is a way of understanding **Indigenous values**.

[Click here](#) for an additional two week teaching plan!

<p><b>EAGLE</b></p>  <p><b>LOVE</b></p>	<p><b>BUFFALO/ PLAINS BISON</b></p>  <p><b>RESPECT</b></p>	<p><b>BEAR</b></p>  <p><b>COURAGE</b></p>	<p><b>SABE (SASQUATCH)</b></p> 
<p>An animal is a guide with sacred feathers for ceremonies and spiritual practices. This animal can fly highest and sees farthest. This animal shows love to all beings.</p> <p><b>Discussion Question:</b> How do you show love to others like your family? Your friends? The environment?</p>	<p>This animal is huge and powerful, and is full of respect for sharing every part of their being - furs for clothes, building homes, and tools for daily living.</p> <p><b>Discussion Question:</b> How do you show respect to yourself? Your pets?</p>	<p>This animal is courage and bravery. A mother always protects her cubs. Facing challenges or being scared is not easy, but being brave means learning how to overcome fears and try new things.</p> <p><b>Discussion Question:</b> Can you think of a time you had to be brave? How did you overcome your fears?</p>	
<p><b>WOLF</b></p>  <p><b>HUMILITY</b></p>	<p><b>TURTLE</b></p>  <p><b>TRUTH</b></p>	<p><b>BEAVER</b></p>  <p><b>WISDOM</b></p>	<p><b>HONESTY</b></p> <p>Uses their sharp teeth to cut trees to build dams (home) in rivers/lakes. Being wise means to This spirit animal is big and tall. It's big because its spirit is so big. It reminds us to be exactly who we are and not try to be someone else.</p> <p><b>Discussion Question:</b> What does being honest mean? What does it mean to be who you are and not someone else?</p>
<p>The wolf works in teams with other wolves and none of the wolves are more important than the others. Hunters bring food to a pack to share first then themselves and each pack and wolves has equally important role.</p> <p><b>Discussion Question:</b> Why is it important to treat everyone the same? What do you feel like when you are part of a group, working together?</p>	<p>The turtle moves slowly and reminds us to pay attention to everything around us.</p> <p><b>Discussion Question:</b> The Turtle knows about all the animals and their teachings. If you move slowly, do you notice more things around you?</p> <p>What does a turtle have that helps them carry everything on their backs?</p>	<p>The beaver uses their sharp teeth to cut trees to build dams (home) in rivers/lakes. Being wise means to learn and make decisions based on experience and knowledge like the Beavers do when they are building?</p> <p><b>Discussion Question:</b> What is something you know a lot about? Do you ever share what you learn with others? Friends? Younger siblings? How does that feel?</p>	

# MATCH THE SILHOUETTE TO THE STICKER!



## FACT

Many Indigenous people call North America "**Turtle Island.**" In many Indigenous origin stories, the turtle is said to support the world on its back. The turtle is an important animal.



## FACT

Kookum Nadie wears the **Sabe** shirt. She thinks **honesty** is important to tell the true story of what happened to Indigenous children at Indian residential schools.



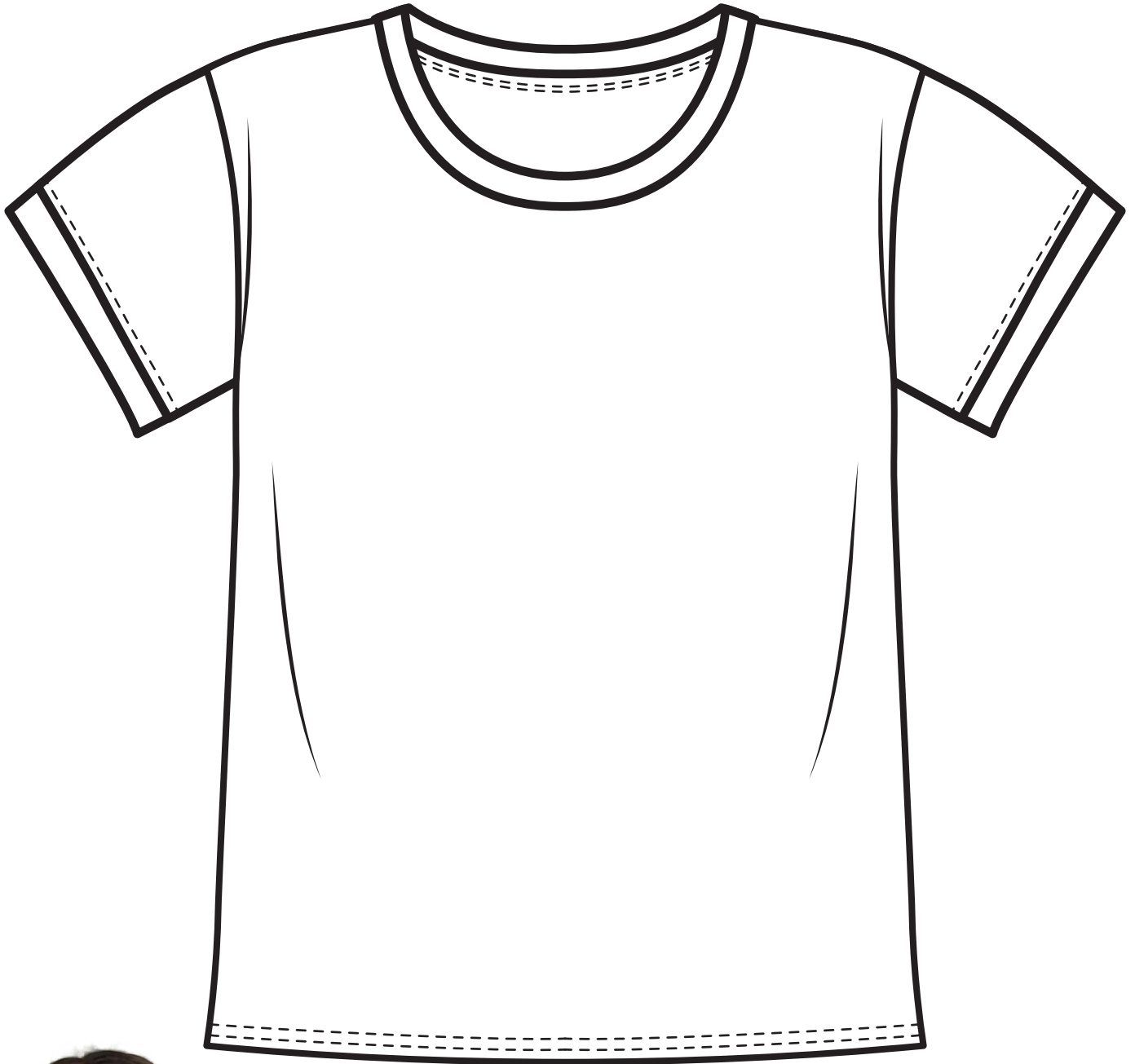
Students can draw animals on their own shirts or draw an animal or person that they connected with after this exercise (ex. a picture of their own pet after learning about respect, or a picture of friends that they love)

## FACT

**The Seven Sacred Teachings** are teachings that many Indigenous Peoples have learned from Elders in their community. **Elders** are people who play very important roles in Indigenous communities. They are knowledge keepers who help ensure culture continuity.



# MAKE YOUR OWN ORANGE SHIRT



Wearing an orange shirt helps people remember the kids who went to Indian residential schools. Draw a picture on an orange t-shirt or print this one and draw on it.



# ORANGE SHIRT DAY MAZE

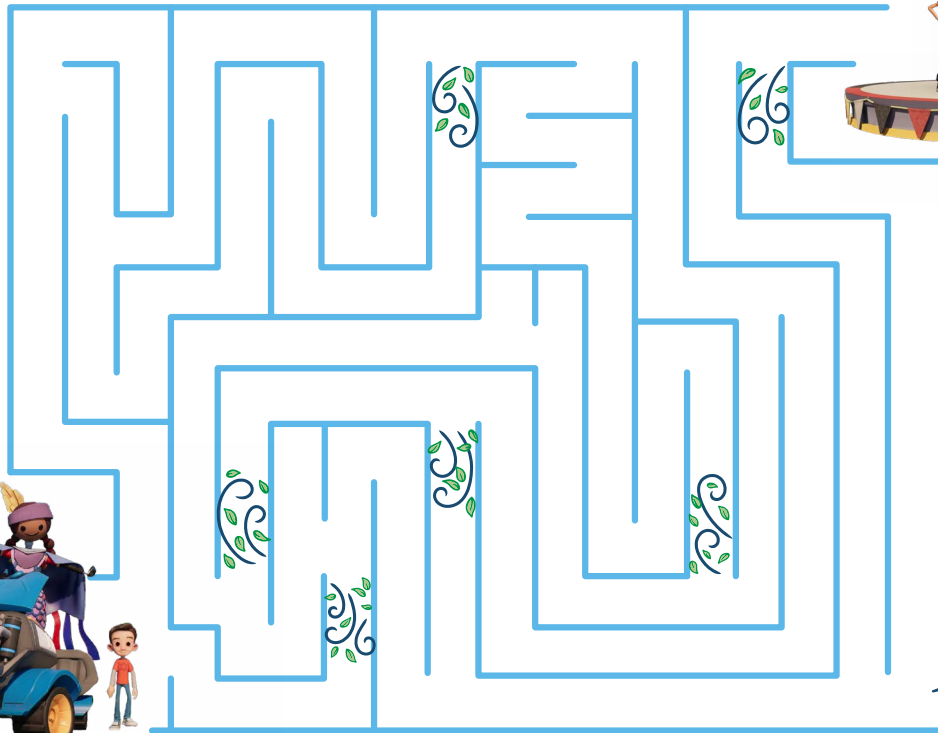


I made a giant Shawl Doll statue for my Kookum Nadie at the Dream Factory. All of my friends helped me make it. Now, I just need Drew and Jonathan to bring it to the Orange Shirt Day Festivities. I can't wait to show it to Kookum Nadie.



## Help the Builder Brothers get to the stage!

There is a **huge windstorm** coming! Can you help Drew and Jonathan find the fastest way to bring it to the stage before it gets completely blown over?



### FACT

Grandmas have all sorts of names, depending on what language you speak. **"Kookum"** is one way of saying 'grandmother' in the Cree language. Do you know how to say Grandma in any other language?

### TEACHER TIP

This is a great activity to do after watching the special **Orange Shirt Day** episode of the **Builder Brothers Dream Factory**. It's also great and fun to reinforce some Indigenous cultural elements like the importance of cultural dances and music.

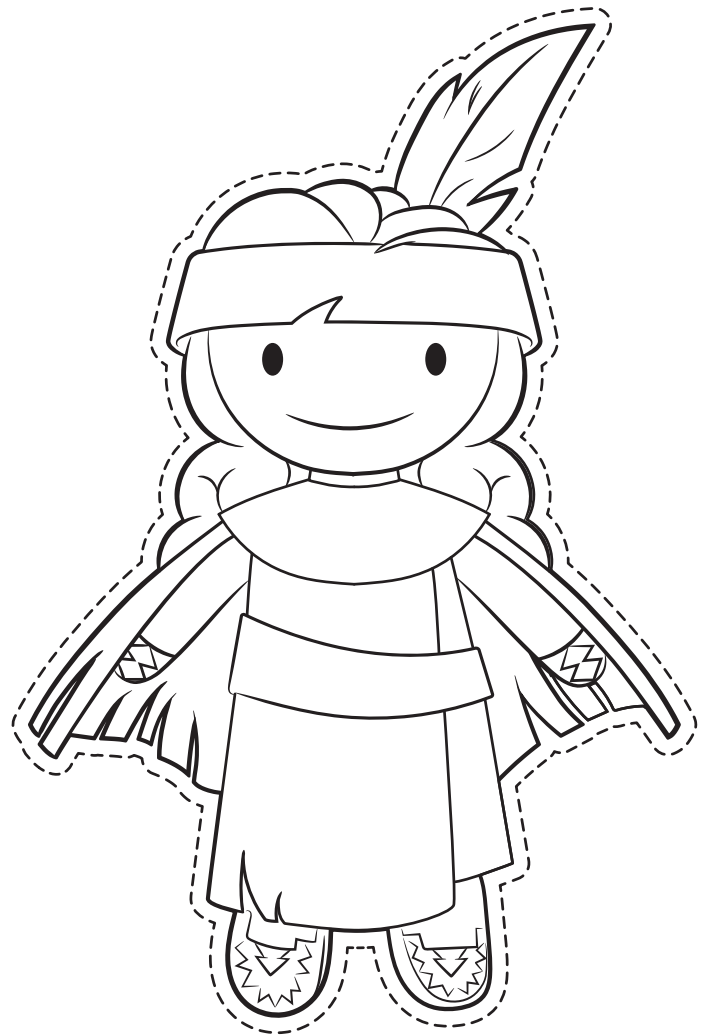
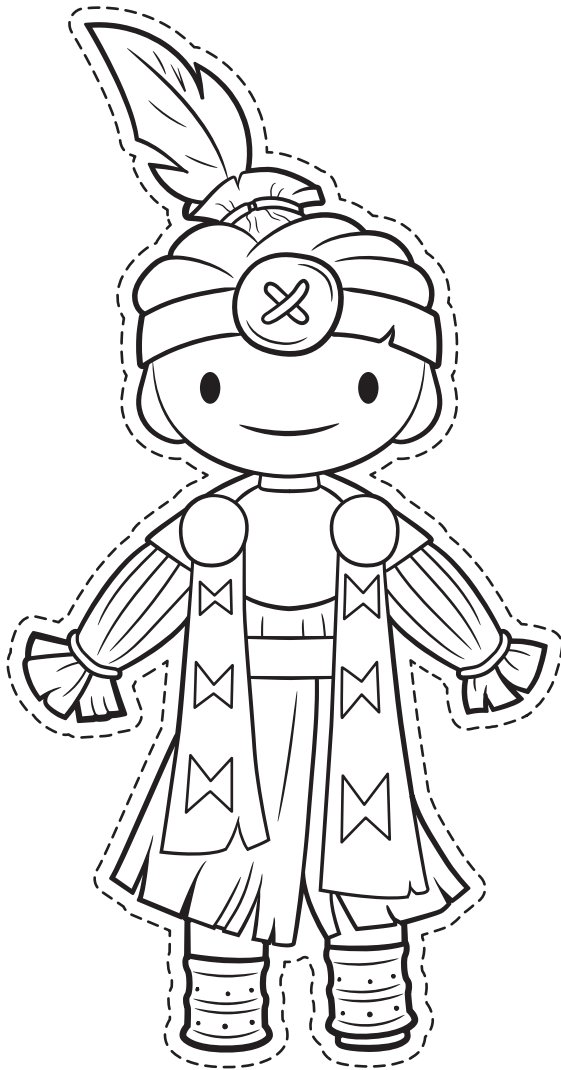
# MAKE YOUR OWN SHAWL DOLL OR GRASS DANCER



There are many ways to make a Shawl Doll or a Grass Dancer. Indigenous people traditionally used items they found in nature. You can use anything! Recycled materials, things you find, or use these pictures.

## FACT

Indigenous children were not allowed to dance their **traditional dances** at Indian residential schools.



## TEACHER TIP

If you don't have access to other materials, have your students **colour** these dolls and tape or glue them on to a pencil or chopstick.

Invite an Indigenous dancer or Elder to explain the traditions of a Shawl Doll or Grass Dancer.

## "EVERY CHILD MATTERS" SAFE SPACE BANNER OR POSTER

"Every child matters" is a slogan used on Orange Shirt Day. It was created to honour the innocent lives lost in Indian residential schools, but also serves as a reminder that all children are important. It's critical to create safe spaces for all students and make everyone feel included and valued.

Put your poster or banner in your room and keep it up for the school year! It will remind everyone to be kind to each other as well as helping us remember the children who went to Indian residential schools and those who did not make it home.



### FACT

Orange Shirt Day is in **September** because it's the time of year in which children were taken to Indian residential schools.

# COLOURING WITH NATURE



The Builder Brothers helped me find items to re-use to make the statue for my Kookum Nadie. There are many ways to re-use things. Indigenous people traditionally used colours from nature to make their art. See if you can find items in nature that could help you make colours for your own drawings.

## TEACHER TIP

**Nature** is extremely important and respected in Indigenous cultures. It would be great to do this activity outside with your students.

Match the colours with the item from nature:

RED

BROWN

YELLOW

GREEN



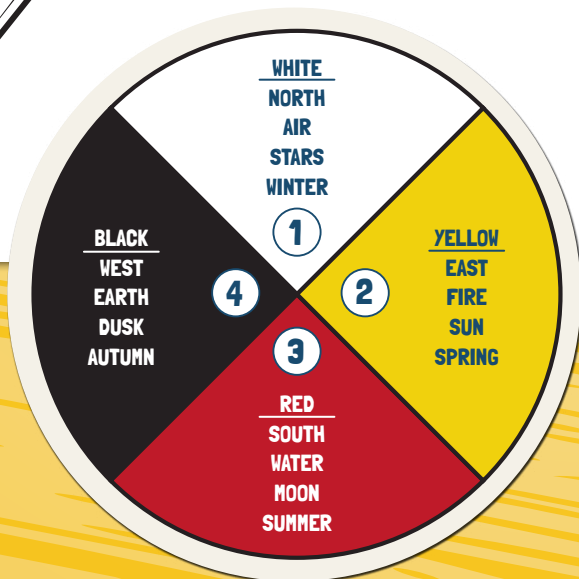
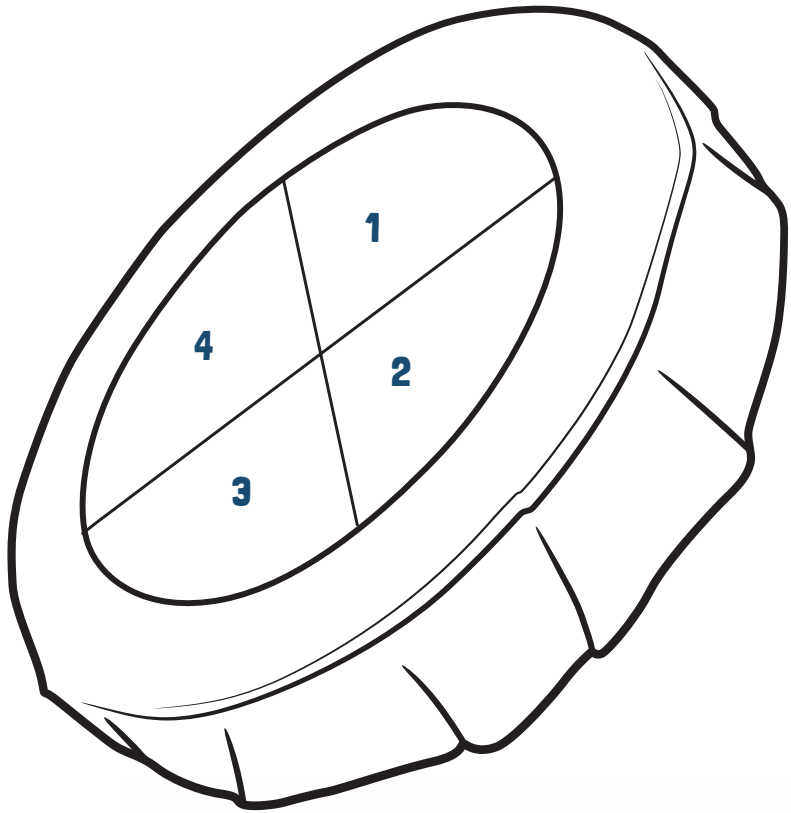
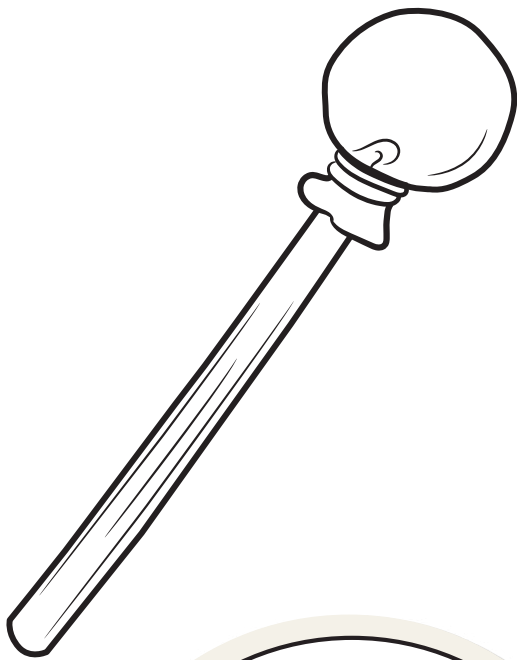
Draw pictures of things you think you could find in nature to make colours:

# MIKISEW'S MUSIC: COLOUR BY NUMBER



I love listening to my dad drum Cree music. My whole family is Cree. Music is an amazing way to express how you feel and share your culture. Do you have special music from your culture that you like to play or listen to?

The **colours** of the drum come from a **traditional medicine wheel** and represent many things for Indigenous culture, like directions, elements, times the year, and times of the day. Showing how everything is connected.



# MIKISEW'S MUSIC: MAKE A HAND DRUM!

## MATERIALS:

BALLOON

SCISSORS

CLEAN CONTAINER

UNCOOKED RICE

FUNNEL

DOWEL/STICK

RUBBER BAND



### TEACHER TIP

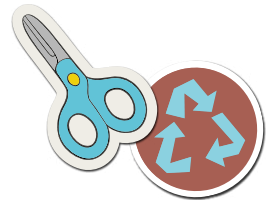
**Time to get crafty!** You can either make one or two of these ahead of class and use them for music moments, or if you have access to supplies, have your students each make and decorate their own.

### TEACHER TIP

If you can, invite an **Indigenous drummer** or Elder in to share some traditional songs.

## INSTRUCTIONS:

### Making the Drum!



**STEP 1:** Cut off the neck of the balloon.

**STEP 2:** Take a clean container and stretch the balloon over the top using one of the rubber bands to secure it. (Tricky, would need extra hands to help!)

### Making the Mallet!



**STEP 1:** Cut off the tip of the second balloon. Like the first one, but do not cut as much.

**STEP 2:** Use a funnel to pour rice inside of the balloon.

**STEP 3:** Take a dowel and poke it into balloon stuffing.

**STEP 4:** Once it's poked all the way in wrap the other rubber band around the balloon securing it to the dowel and saving the rice from spilling.

**STEP 5:** To decorate the container and dowel if you want to!



To view the full video at:

[BACKYARD BEATS - The Indigenous Hand Drum](#)

## FACT

**Indigenous music** is a way to include stories and teachings that get passed on to the next generation. Did you know that there are lots of traditional songs that sing about caring for the Earth? The drum sounds like a heartbeat. In Indigenous culture, that heartbeat is from **Mother Earth!**

# READING LIST



If you want to learn more about Indian residential school and Orange Shirt Day here are some books you can read!

- **Phyllis's Orange Shirt** (by Phyllis Webstad). Orange Shirt Day was inspired by Phyllis's story so this is a good one to start with! (Recommended for K-1)

- **Shi-shi-etko** (by Nicole Campbell). It tells the story of a young girl getting ready to go to residential school and realizing all the things from home she is going to miss. (Recommended for Grades 1-3)
- **Shin-chi's Canoe** (by Nicole Campbell). This story is about Shi-Shi in her second year of residential school when her brother joins her. I like the canoe that Shin-chi's dad made for him. He's a builder too! (Recommended for Grades 1-3)
- **Not My Girl** (by Christy Jordan-Fenton, Margaret Pokiak-Fenton and Gabrielle Grimard). The story of a girl returning to her community and is great for thinking about the long term impacts of residential schools. (Recommended for Grades 1-3)
- **Amik Loves School: A story of Wisdom** (by Katherina Vermette). An Anishinaabe child shows his grandfather how his school celebrates the culture that residential schools tried to erase. (Recommended for K-1)
- **Stolen Words** (by Melanie Florence and Gabrielle Grimard). It tells the story of a girl who helps her grandfather reclaim words he was not allowed to use at residential schools. (Recommended for Grades 1-3)

## TEACHER TIP

There are so many books that will help get discussions started in your classroom.

One option is to start with a recognizable story about the first day of school for them such as **First Day Jitters**, **Mae's First Day of School**, **The Kissing Hand** or **The Pigeon HAS to go to School**. Have your students talk about what feelings they have when they go to their first day of school each year, especially if it is a new school. That will help children have a context for understanding how hard it was for Indigenous children as you read the book(s) about their Indian residential school experiences. Print and post this list for your students or create a mini library in your room leading up to Orange Shirt Day.

- **Kookum's Red Shoes** (by Peter Evyindson). The story of a grandmother remembering her time at a residential school. (Recommended for Grades 2-3)
- **When We Were Alone** (by David A. Robertson). This is a story about a girl learning all about residential schools from her grandmother. (Recommended for Grades 2-3)
- **Every Child Matters** (by Phyllis Webstad). Every Child Matters honours the history and resiliency of Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island and moves us all forward on a path towards truth and reconciliation. (Recommended for K-3)

### Other books you discovered:

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# SPECIAL THANKS

## Special Thanks to those who worked on the Orange Shirt Day episode:

**Phyllis Webstad**, Orange Shirt Society, Founder

**Shannon Henderson**, Orange Shirt Society, President

**Paula MacDonald**, OneFish TwoFish, Educational Consultant

**Kim Wilson**, OneFish TwoFish, Educational Consultant

**Ray Coco Stevenson**, Music Consultant

**Jesse Gouchey**, Design Consultant

## And to our featured cast members

**Meadow Kingfisher** (Mel)

**Adam Beach** (Mikisew)

**Michelle Thrush** (Kookum Nadie)

## Additional information can be found on these and other sites

[orangeshirtday.org](http://orangeshirtday.org)



[Native-land.ca](http://Native-land.ca) and [whose.land/en/](http://whose.land/en/)

[A Guide To Indigenous Land Acknowledgment](#)

[National Student Memorial Registry](#)

[BACKYARD BEATS - The Indigenous Hand Drum](#)

[The-Seven-Sacred-Grandfather-Teachings\\_Teachers-Guide](#)

