

FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT GROWTH CHART LITERACY PROMPTS, GRADES K-8



ABOUT THE GROWTH CHART

The *Growth Chart* was created to provide ETFO members with a list of resources to support their instructional practice and learning about Aboriginal peoples in Canada. The bibliography, organized by grade division, includes a variety of texts to introduce diverse worldviews, perspectives and presence of First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) experiences, histories, knowledge and philosophies. Most of these books can also be applied to a variety of grades, subjects and themes. There are many new and older books that are excellent learning tools and can be accessed through libraries or can be purchased from various book vendors. Members are encouraged to explore these resources and other FNMI books that are available both online and in print.

ABOUT THE LITERACY PROMPT SHEETS

The purpose of the literacy prompt sheets is to encourage members to use the FNMI texts listed in the *Growth Chart* and to support their instructional practice. The seven questions incorporate oral language, writing, reading, critical literacy and multimedia that encourage students to dig deeper in their thinking and expression. The four Enrichment Activities provide members with additional questions and activities that students can partake in to further develop their knowledge and understanding and to promote dialogue. Specific curriculum connections were intentionally excluded from each prompt sheet as the texts could easily be applied to various subjects and/or grade divisions. Members are encouraged to add to or modify this resource to better suit the needs of their students.

CURRICULUM



GRADE K GRANDMOTHER PTARMIGAN

By *Qaunaq Mikkigak and Joanne Schwartz*
Inhabit Media, 2013

BOOK SUMMARY

Set in Arctic Canada, a baby ptarmigan (bird) will not go to sleep. Grandmother ptarmigan tells baby a scary bedtime story. This story is inspired by a traditional Inuit story that explains why baby ptarmigans fly so young and the cry of the female ptarmigan.

LITERACY PROMPTS

- Look at the cover. Where do you think the story takes place? How do you know this?
- Grandmother mentions a small Arctic rodent (a lemming). What other animals might live in the Arctic?
- How does baby ptarmigan feel when Grandma tells him the story? How do you know this? What words in the story told you he was feeling that way?
- Why did he fly away? Give an example of ways you calm down when you are frightened or scared.
- Why did Grandma tell him a scary story?
- What made you squirm in this story or what things make you squirm?
- In what ways is your bedtime routine the same as or different from the little bird in the story?

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

- Explore what foods ptarmigans eat in the Arctic.
- Share a bedtime story you are told by someone close to you.
- Create a puppet of the birds and retell the story.
- Find out what types of shelters are used by humans and animals of the Arctic. Draw them and include the name of the shelter.



GRADE 2 MISSUK'S SNOW GEESSE

By *Anne Renaud*
Simply Read Books, 2008

BOOK SUMMARY

This story is about a young girl named Missuk who lives in the Arctic and dreams of being a carver like her father. This story highlights perseverance, discovering new talents and believing in one's self.

LITERACY PROMPTS

- The setting of this story is "the Land of the Northern Lights." Where do you think this is?
- What kinds of animals might you find in the Arctic?

- Missuk's mother used seal skin and caribou bone as a needle to make mittens. What other ways do Missuk's parents use seal and caribou in their daily lives?
- Why does Missuk's father need to hunt?
- Why do you think Missuk had a bad dream about her father?
- In the story it says, "the smell of spring." Describe what spring smells and sounds like? Do the same for the other seasons.
- How do you know Missuk admired her dad? Who do you look up to as a role model?

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

- Introduce vocabulary. Include pictures and names of each of these items that are mentioned in the book. Ask students to describe what each is for (before reading the text). Provide a description of each.
- Draw a scene from the book and write in your own words what the scene is about.
- Research soap stone carvings/carvers and discuss what the carving is about and why they think the artist chose that.
- Find an image of an Inuit soap stone carving that you admire and share why you chose it.



GRADE 6 SHANNEN AND THE DREAM FOR A SCHOOL

By *Janet Wilson*
Second Story Press, 2011

BOOK SUMMARY

This book is a true story of Shannen Koostachin from Attawapiskat First Nation (a small community in Northern Ontario). It includes non-fiction elements that capture Shannen's story and her classmates' passionate

journey towards equitable education through the fight for a real school in their community.

LITERACY PROMPTS

- How are elements of fiction and nonfiction intermingled in this book? How do they help add to your understanding of Shannen's life?
- How does the condition of the school impact how the students feel about themselves?
- What do you think Shannen's mother means when she says, "Keep walking in your moccasins?" How do these words impact Shannen?
- How might the lack of a school in Shannen's community be related to the events listed in the timeline at the back of this book?
- Community is very important to Shannen. By the end of the story, how has Shannen's sense of community grown and changed?
- In order to accomplish Shannen's dream, how do Charlie and the children help each other?
- An audience member at a speech says, "Canadians must replace passivity with action. Our citizens can't be indifferent to injustice." How does Shannen's life demonstrate this?

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

- To learn more about Shannen's dream watch online videos, such as the National Film Board documentary, "Hi Ho Mistahey," nfb.ca/film/hi-ho_mistahey_en/.
- Research Attawapiskat today. Write a letter to the local, provincial or federal government highlighting the problems and what you would like to see done.
- Think about your own community and how you might be able to make a change in it for the better. What would you like to do and how could you go about it?
- Explore other examples of powerful young people who have made or are making a difference in the world. Create a slideshow highlighting this person.



GRADE 8 LOOKS LIKE DAYLIGHT: VOICES OF INDIGENOUS KIDS

By Deborah Ellis
Groundwood Books, 2013

BOOK SUMMARY

This book is a collection of interviews conducted with Indigenous North American youth who share their stories, interests, life experiences and describe how being Native has affected their identity and outlook on the world.

LITERACY PROMPTS

- How does the organizational structure of the text help you create meaning? Is there anything that you would change?
- On the book flap the outlook of the Indigenous youth is described as "...how being Native has affected who they are and how they see the world." What is the lens through which you view the world and how has your heritage shaped your experiences?
- In the author's note, Deborah Ellis identifies that it's important to recognize whose voice is not present or represented. Why is it important to include all viewpoints when presenting information? As a critical reader/listener, whose point of view is missing and what might this point of view contribute?
 - Examine the cover and describe how the image and title reflect the narratives of the Indigenous youth in the book.

- What issue(s) presented in this book connect current issues and events with the past?
- How does the title of the book connect to the underlying theme(s) of these stories?
- Which youth had the most impact on you and why?

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

- Choose one of the issues faced by Indigenous people in the book. Develop inquiry questions, research the issue and create/present a public service announcement.
- Use a media form to represent how Indigenous people are using formal and informal education to reclaim their culture and heritage.
- Create a *Heritage Minute* clip or a radio broadcast that conveys the current realities and the historical relationship between Canada and the First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.
- Choose an interview and write a monologue that is inspired by the key messages in the interview.

