

# LITTLE BEAR'S VISION QUEST

FIRST NATIONS PUBLICATION

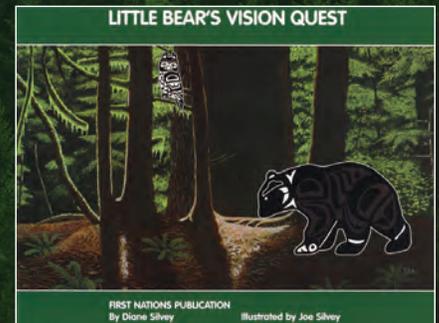
By Diane Silvey | Illustrated by Joe Silvey

## ABORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING

### **Learning is connected to land, culture, and spirit**

*We – the two-legged, four-legged, finned and feathered, plants and rocks are all related. We must always practice reciprocity through acts of giving and receiving.*

Little Bear becomes disconnected, forgetting important teachings of humility and respect, clearly demonstrated by how he is engaging with his friends. He becomes arrogant and treats others with disrespect.



### **Learning honours our Ancestors, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Descendants**

*It respects and embraces ceremony, protocol, and teachings that are connected to the sacred medicines including tobacco, cedar, sage, and sweetgrass. Important teachings emerge through stories.*

Little Bear has forgotten the importance of honouring others and has become too self-indulgent. During his time away, he is reminded of the important cultural and ceremonial teachings from his wise Elders. He recalls what he has been taught about the sacred medicines.

### **Learning involves developing relationships, respecting distinct cultures, and honouring the perspectives of others in our communities**

*The deepest learning takes place through lived experience. It requires exploring our identities, learning from our mistakes, and having gratitude for our gifts.*

Grandfather ensures that Little Bear has time away, needed to self-reflect. He doesn't interfere with the process of self-discovery that Little Bear must experience in order to change his behavior. Little Bear must do much exploring of self (honesty) in order to identify his mistakes and become self-reliant.

### **Learning is a journey that takes courage, patience and humility**

*It is about striving to become a better human being and living with balance in body, mind, heart and spirit.*

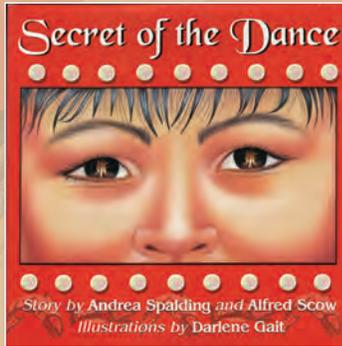
Grandfather and the others from the community have patience and love for Little Bear's journey so that he is able to self-reflect in order to understand the changes that he needed to make. Little Bear becomes much more balanced.

# Secret of the Dance

by Andrea Spalding and Alfred Scow

www.orcabook.com

## ABORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING



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Wat'l'kina watched packages wrapped in blankets get packed on the boat in the middle of the night. His family defied the government. They were hosting a potlatch and dancing in a secret inlet that was sacred to his people. The families shared dances and stories with one another.

### **Learning honours our Ancestors, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Descendents**

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The Elders and parents are dancing and sharing stories to remember those that passed on. They hide the masks and regalia from the Indian Agents. They travel far in a secret inlet to meet other families and have a feast. They dance and drum telling stories.

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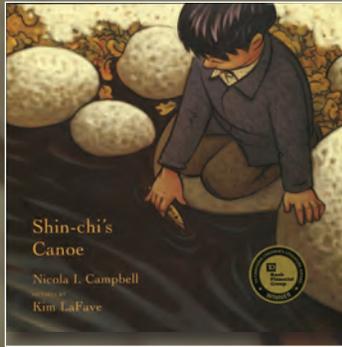
Grandmother ensures that the children are told stories about their clan. She lets him sneak into the feast and witness the celebration of stories, dancing and drumming. The celebration is all happening in secret from the Indian Agent.

### **Learning is a journey that takes courage, patience and humility**

*It is about striving to become a better human being and living with balance in body, mind, heart and spirit.*

Grandmother and the others from the community have patience and love for the potlatch and the dancing. They travel many miles by a slow fishboat to the secret inlet to have a feast. They hide to wear their regalia and dance. They have a feast to mourn and celebrate the death of a Chief. They must keep it a secret from the authorities.

# ABORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING



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Shin-chi is given a small dugout canoe to keep hidden while he attends residential school. He keeps it close to remind him of home, family, and culture. The cedar smell of his canoe reminds him of his father and home.

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Shin-chi remembers fishing at home with his father, pulling in the nets, and wind-drying salmon. He knows he will go home when the sockeye come up the river.

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*The deepest learning takes place through lived experience. It requires exploring our identities, learning from our mistakes, and having gratitude for our gifts.*

Shin-chi knows he must go to residential school because it is the law. He attends the school but never forgets the joys of fishing and the river as he sneaks down to watch for the return of the salmon. He feels the wind in his face and the breeze of the water to remind him of home and his family. He meets other boys at his school and together they steal food to survive.

**Learning is a journey that takes courage, patience, and humility**

*It is about striving to become a better human being and living with balance in body, mind, heart and spirit.*

Shin-chi and Shi-shi etko stay at residential school and patiently wait for spring to come so they can go home and see their family. They must steal food to curb their hunger and survive. Their spirit and memory keep them focused on returning home to see Yayah and their parents.

## Shin-chi's Canoe

Nicola I. Campbell

PICTURES BY

Kim LaFave



# Lessons from Mother Earth

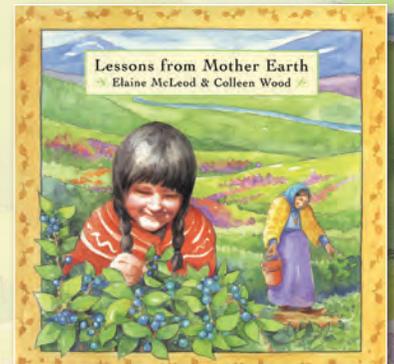
✧ Elaine McLeod & Colleen Wood ✧

## ABORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING

### **Learning is connected to land, culture, and spirit**

*We – the two-legged, four-legged, finned and feathered, plants and rocks are all related. We must always practice reciprocity through acts of giving and receiving.*

Tess learns about Mother Earth from her Grandma. She is brought out on the land and taught how to take care of the plants and how they will take care of you for generations if treated well.



### **Learning honours our Ancestors, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Descendants**

*It respects and embraces ceremony, protocol, and teachings that are connected to the sacred medicines including tobacco, cedar, sage, and sweetgrass.*

*Important teachings emerge through stories.*

During her time with Grandma, she is reminded of the important cultural and spiritual rules with harvesting food from the land. She recalls been taught about the sacred medicines. Grandma tells stories about the land and how to care for it and only use what you need to have food for many years.

### **Learning involves developing relationships, respecting distinct cultures, and honouring the perspectives of others in our communities**

*The deepest learning takes place through lived experience. It requires exploring our identities, learning from our mistakes, and having gratitude for our gifts.*

Grandmother teaches to respect the environment and only pick or harvest what you can use, so plants will grow again next year. They walk through the land behind her house and experience the plants growing in nature.

### **Learning is a journey that takes courage, patience and humility**

*It is about striving to become a better human being and living with balance in body, mind, heart and spirit.*

Grandmother and the others from the community have patience and love for the land. Tess is able to self-reflect and understand the protocols and rules of nature. She knows there is a balance in nature that she must keep.

# A MAN CALLED RAVEN

STORY BY RICHARD VAN CAMP

PICTURES BY GEORGE LITTLECHILD

## ABORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING



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Chris and Toby are trying to hurt a Raven and corner it. They do not respect the bird and want to harm it. They do not have respect for animals.

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The boys are caught being mean to the Raven and brought home by a stranger. He teaches the boys about respect for animals and to never harm the earth. When the man leaves, he transforms into a Raven.

**Learning involves developing relationships, respecting distinct cultures, and honouring the perspectives of others in our communities**

*The deepest learning takes place through lived experience. It requires exploring our identities, learning from our mistakes, and having gratitude for our gifts.*

The stranger ensures that the boys understand the importance of treating animals and nature with respect and kindness. The boys learn through story from the stranger the importance of animals in their culture.

**Learning is a journey that takes courage, patience and humility**

*It is about striving to become a better human being and living with balance in body, mind, heart and spirit.*

The Stranger and the boy's parents show patience and love for the boys understanding of the importance of nature and treating all beings with respect and kindness. The boys learn to live with balance in everything around them.

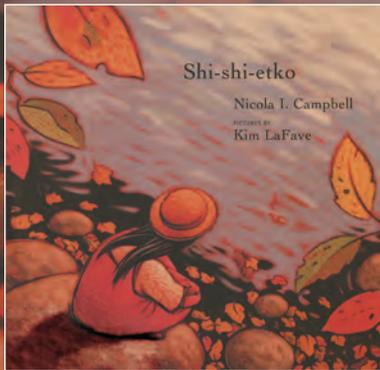
# Shi-shi-etko

Nicola I. Campbell

PICTURES BY

Kim LaFave

## ABORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING



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Shi-shi-etko listens intently to her Yayah about the plants and their use. She reflects on the many teachings from her Elders.

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Shi-shi-etko listens to her father singing the paddle song, one of the songs that her grandfather used to sing to her.

**Learning involves developing relationships, respecting distinct cultures, and honouring the perspectives of others in our communities**

*The deepest learning takes place through lived experience. It requires exploring our identities, learning from our mistakes, and having gratitude for our gifts.*

Shi-shi-etko has learned that she must always give thanks by offering traditional medicines.

**Learning is a journey that takes courage, patience, and humility**

*It is about striving to become a better human being and living with balance in body, mind, heart and spirit.*

Shi-shi-etko is leaving for residential school but has listened carefully to the requests from her family to never forget who she is and where she has come from.

# The Sockeye Mother

By Hetxw'ms Gyetxw (Brett David Huson)  
Illustrated by Natasha Donovan

## ABORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING

### Learning is connected to land, culture, and spirit

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In the front fly leaf, the author tells us that this story, “explores how the animals, water, soil and seasons are all intertwined.” As we learn about the life cycle of the sockeye salmon, we learn about the Gitxsan culture and way of life which is so dependant and closely interwoven with the life cycle of the sockeye. The Gitxsan receive the gift of the salmon and give thanks in return through ceremony and gifts.

### Learning honours our Ancestors, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Descendants

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As the salmon fry leave home in early spring, it is the time of Wihlaxs (the Black Bear's Walking Moon). When the smolts leave the lake and start down the Xsa (Skeena River), it signals Lasa 'ya'a (the Spring Salmon's Returning Moon). When the spring salmon return, ceremonies are held, thanks are given, and prayers are made that the salmon will always come back and nourish the people, animals and land. In August, it is Lasa lik'l'nxsw (the Grizzly Bear's Moon). The Gitxsan and the grizzly bears fish enough sockeye fish to last them through the winter. The earth is fed by the remains of sockeye cast off by humans and bears, as well as the idying mother sockeye.

### Learning involves developing relationships, respecting distinct cultures, and honouring the perspectives of others in our communities

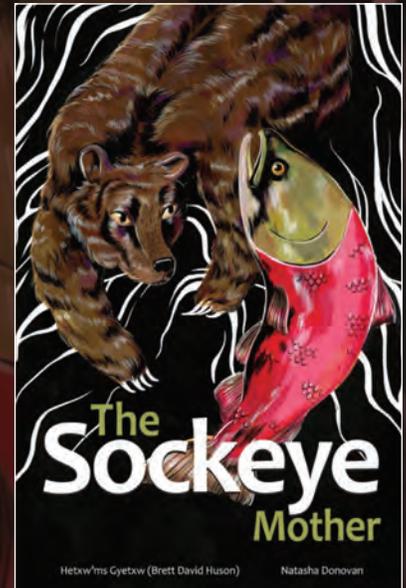
*The deepest learning takes place through lived experience. It requires exploring our identities, learning from our mistakes, and having gratitude for our gifts.*

The relationship between The Gitxsan and the sockeye salmon is paramount. It has shaped their cultural beliefs and way of life for thousands of years. In fact, they believe their very existence depends on their connection to the salmon and their land. The Gitxsan understand they must care for the sockeye, honour them and give thanks through ceremony and protocol.

### Learning is a journey that takes courage, patience and humility

*It is about striving to become a better human being and living with balance in body, mind, heart and spirit.*

The author states, “the land defines who we are”. Without the sockeye salmon, their way of live would rapidly fall out of balance due to lack of food for humans and animals, lack of replenishment for the land, and loss of livelihood for their people. The Gitxsan will need courage and patience as they attempt to continue to live in balance with their environment.



# A River Lost

by Lynn Bragg  
Illustrated by  
V. "Smoker" Marchand

## ABORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING

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The Columbia River was a "lifeline" to the Arrow Lakes band. They lived along its shores and fished at the base of the Falls. The River and the salmon were sacred. The people shared resources and took care of each other. The In-Tee-Tee-Huh (salmon) was highly valued and used as the primary food source and for trading, along with roots and berries, in exchange for buffalo meat and hides from the Plains tribes, and shells from the Coastal tribes. Salmon were traded for food, flour, guns and tobacco from the settlers. With deer and buffalo hides, they made blankets, bedding, clothing and ropes.

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The salmon run was celebrated each year with feasts of salmon, crayfish, huckleberries and camas roots. When the dam flooded their land and stopped the salmon coming, the traditional way of life was destroyed. Today, only a few remaining elders of the Arrow Lakes Band can remember their ancient culture; a culture that lived in balance and harmony with the River, land and inhabitants. Soon, there will be nobody left to remember this rich and vibrant way of life. Stories passed on by the elders will be the only way for future generations to understand their history; as Toopa is passing this information onto the author of this story.

### **Learning involves developing relationships, respecting distinct cultures, and honouring the perspectives of others in our communities**

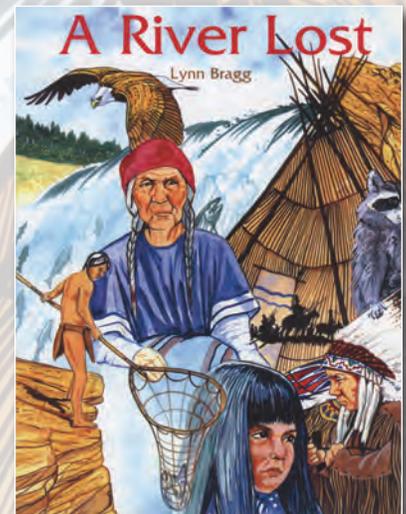
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In the summer, tribes from many places came to the Falls to fish, trade and visit with relatives and friends. It was an important meeting and trading place. The salmon chief treated everyone with respect, especially the elders, women and children. He makes sure the salmon are shared equally and those in need are taken care of.

### **Learning is a journey that takes courage, patience and humility**

*It is about striving to become a better human being and living with balance in body, mind, heart and spirit.*

Children learned by doing and everybody shared in the work. All had jobs to do from gathering firewood to setting up shelters, cooking, drying the salmon and fishing. Fishing could be very dangerous and took a great deal of courage and skill.



# ABORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING

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Lawrence's family lives in harmony with the land. Clothing is made from moosehide and other skins. They hunt and fish for food comes from hunting, fishing and gathering berries and other plants. Prayers and gifts are given in return. After Grandma shoots the giant grizzly with one shot, a testament to her remarkable marksmanship, both she and Lawrence give thanks to the bear for giving up its spirit and not killing them. Grandpa says, "This land has always given us what we need to live," as he passes on responsibility for caring for the land to the children.

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Grandma gives thanks to mother earth by placing some tobacco in the ground where she has just dug up a root. A huge feast is held when they return from summer camp to celebrate Lawrence's bravery when he and his kokum encountered the grizzly bear. Uncle Louis and Auntie Rose tell stories around the campfire. Grandpa names Lawrence "Oskiniko" to acknowledge he is no longer a boy, but Young Man.

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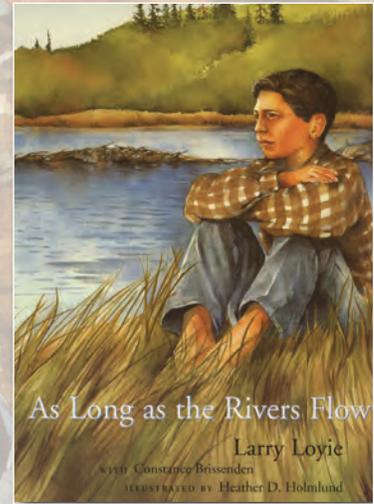
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Lawrence's close relationships with his family are based on respect, listening to the wisdom of his elders and following in their ways. Lawrence has learned how to fish, hunt and gather from the land, as well as reciprocate with thanks and gifts. His experiences with valued family members, relatives and friends, are teaching him to live in harmony and freedom on the land.

## **Learning is a journey that takes courage, patience and humility**

***It is about striving to become a better human being and living with balance in body, mind, heart and spirit.***

Lawrence, at 10, is "already wise in the ways of their people." He has learned to care for animals, his family members and the land. Lawrence has learned to work hard, have courage and help with providing for the family. He wants to be a hunter so he can "bring home lots of food to feed everybody for lots of days."



# As Long as the Rivers Flow

Larry Loyie

WITH Constance Brissenden

ILLUSTRATED BY Heather D. Holmlund

# ABORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING

by Caitlin Dale Nicholson  
with Leona Morin-Neilson

## **Learning is connected to land, culture, and spirit**

*We – the two-legged, four-legged, finned and feathered, plants and rocks are all related.*

*We must always practice reciprocity through acts of giving and receiving.*

As Nohkom and her grandson spend time on the land walking, praying, picking berries, listening, tending plants and eating, they practice reciprocity.

As Nohkom gives her knowledge and love to the boy, the boy gives his help and love to his Nohkom. As they receive from the land (e.g., the rosehips they pick) they give back to the land (e.g., give thanks and tend plants).

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Nohkom gives gifts to the earth when she prays and scatters something on the ground, perhaps tobacco, cedar, sage or sweetgrass. Giving thanks and giving back to the land, especially when you take something from it, is a common tradition or protocol of many Indigenous cultures. Nohkom is passing this knowledge on to the boy through story and example.

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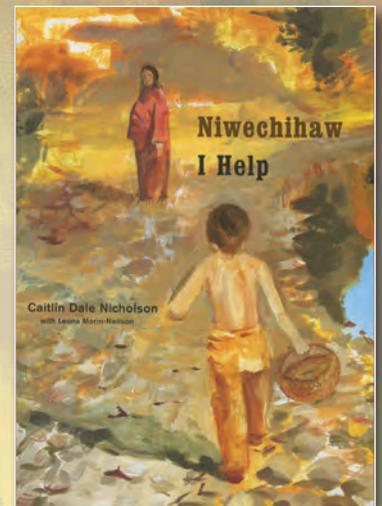
The young boy's close relationship with his grandmother encourages him to want to help her and be like her. As he talks with her and copies her actions, he is experiencing his culture and learning how to live on the land with respect, gratitude and honour.

## **Learning is a journey that takes courage, patience and humility**

*It is about striving to become a better human being and living with balance in body, mind, heart and spirit.*

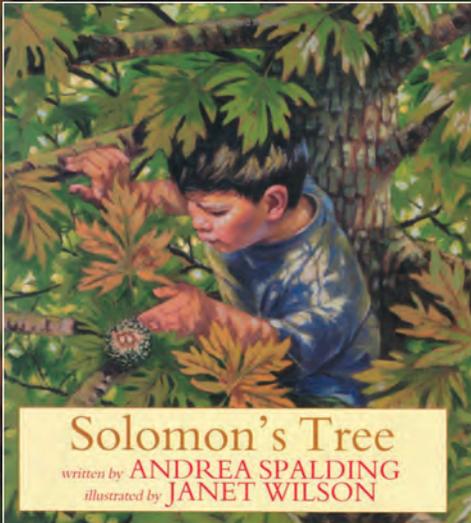
Nohkom teaches the boy with kindness and patience, allowing him to learn in a natural and authentic way. She doesn't tell him what to do or correct his behaviour; however, she has managed to fully engage his body, mind, heart and spirit in their afternoon walk through the forest.

# Niwechihaw I Help



Note: There is another similar book by this author entitled, nipehom: I W

# ABORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING



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Solomon and the old maple tree are friends who speak to each other. They share experiences and secrets. The boy is very upset when his friend blows down in a storm, particularly because he did not get to say good-bye. Solomon's relatives help him find a way to reconnect with his tree.

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Solomon's father takes him to Uncle, who asks Solomon if he would like to "see the spirit" of his tree. Uncle gets his drum and teaches Solomon how to dance and sing songs to invite their ancestors to guide Uncle's fingers when he is carving. Uncle and Solomon honour and thank their ancestors. Uncle uses Solomon's stories about his tree to carve the mask.

## **Learning involves developing relationships, respecting distinct cultures, and honouring the perspectives of others in our communities**

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As Uncle carves the mask, he asks Solomon to tell him about his tree. Solomon tells Uncle what he saw in the tree, like the hummingbird nest and "the antics of the baby birds." He also describes the smells and sounds of his friend. Uncle uses these descriptions to create and decorate the mask.

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*It is about striving to become a better human being and living with balance in body, mind, heart and spirit.*

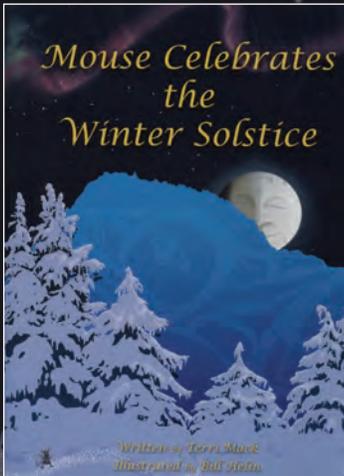
Solomon learns about his culture, as well as patience and carving skills, while helping carve, dry, paint and oil the mask. He is rewarded when he whispers to the finished mask, "Hello, tree" and his spirit friend whispers back, "Hello, Solomon."

# Solomon's Tree

written by **ANDREA SPALDING**  
illustrated by **JANET WILSON**

# Mouse Celebrates the Winter Solstice

## ABORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING



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We are connected to the land, animals and the circle of life “from Elder to child” by wise little Mouse who initially stands alone in a winter forest. Mouse tells us we are all “one nation.” We find strength in our love and caring for each other.

### **Learning honours our Ancestors, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Descendants**

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Winter Solstice is a time to celebrate the coming of winter with family and friends. Mouse explains our “Elders’ stories” teach us how to be strong, live well and do what is “right.”

### **Learning involves developing relationships, respecting distinct cultures, and honouring the perspectives of others in our communities**

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As Mouse calls out for all to gather, be grateful and “proud to share gifts”, his little voice carries across the lands. Soon, a multitude of different creatures come into the clearing to join in the celebration. Animals that might normally not get along, respect and honour each other as they gather. Even the weather and land (via beautiful illustrations) seem to celebrate as the winter moon smiles down on them from above.

### **Learning is a journey that takes courage, patience and humility**

*It is about striving to become a better human being and living with balance in body, mind, heart and spirit.*

Mouse tell us that the Elders stories teach us of our history, how to be strong and how to know what is the “right” thing to do.

*Written by Terri Mack  
Illustrated by Bill Helin*