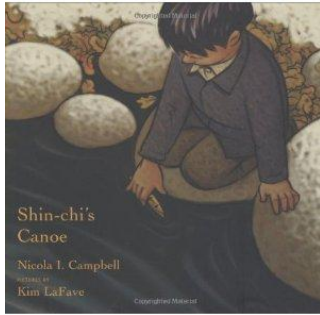


Shin-chi's Canoe by Nicola Campbell, illustrated by Kim LaFave



ISBN: 978-0-88899-857-6 (2008)

Grade Levels: 3 to 7

Synopsis:

A haunting and beautifully-written story of two First Nations children's experience at residential school.

Pre-reading activities:

a) Anticipation questions:

- Have you ever been sent to stay at the home of a relative whom you did not know very well? How would you feel about being sent to a boarding school?
- How about going to summer camp on your own?
- What about visiting one or the other of your parents if they no longer live together?
- Is there a difference between going to stay with people you know versus people you don't know?

b) Illustration activity:

- Tell a partner about a time you stayed with someone else overnight. Who was it? How did you feel?

Post-reading activities:

a) Understanding the story

- What was a residential school?
- Why did the residential schools not allow the children to use their own language?
- How do you think the two children felt at the school?

b) Transforming your thinking

- Does everyone need to always fit in and assimilate to the norms or beliefs of the majority? Explain your thinking around this issue.
- Would you still go to school to learn to read even though it meant a loss in your identity?

c) Deepening your thinking:

- What can you do about rules that you do not feel are fair in your school? At home? Who can you talk to about this?
- How can you be a change-maker when you see or experience unfair rules?

Another related story for Intermediate:

Fatty Legs by Christy Jordan-Fenton and Margaret Pokiak-Fenton

ISBN: 978-1-55451-246-1 (2010)

Grade Level: Intermediate

Synopsis: When Margaret Pokiak was young, she really wants to go to school to learn to read. Her father tries to dissuade her as he warns her: as water wears rock smooth, her spirit will be worn down and made small.