

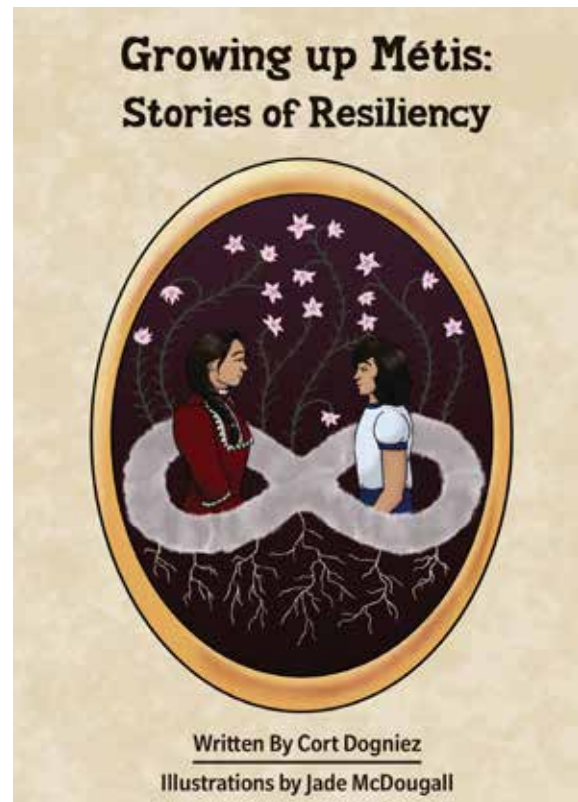
Growing up Métis: Stories of Resiliency

Author: Cort Dogniez
Illustrator: Jade McDougall

Overview of Story:

Growing up Métis: Stories of Resiliency is an installment of Cort Dogniez's historical fiction series that began with *Road to La Prairie Ronde*. In two separate, but connected fictional stories, Cort Dogniez delves into the lives of two of his foremothers, his great-grandmother, Josephine Gariepy and his grandmother, Clara Dumont, when they were young. While highlighting the dispossession and marginalization of his ancestors following the 1885 Resistance, the author weaves Métis culture through the two stories with a positive focus on nicknames, faith, storytelling, and a resilient spirit.

Josephine's story centers around her family's difficult decision to leave their friends and family in Batoche behind for a chance at a new life in Onion Lake. During this journey, the Garieps, Dumonts, and Delormes work together to find new homes. Josephine's story features the beginnings of her relationship with Frederick Dumont who readers met in *Road to La Prairie Ronde*. Clara's story begins with the arrival of a mysterious visitor, foreshadowing important events to come into her life. Like many other Métis families, Clara's family experiences hardship leading to the disposition of their land and the need to find a new home. Along the way, readers will be entertained as Clara encounters a Roogaroo, thunderstorms, strangers, and a misadventure with flour sacks with her siblings.



Themes in this book:

- Resiliency
- Moving
- Road allowance
- Storytelling/stories/Roogaroo
- Stars/constellations
- Kinship
- Familial relationships
- Métis customs and traditions

Curriculum Connections:

- Analyze how the Métis have shaped Saskatchewan.
- Correlate the impact of the land on lifestyles and settlement.
- Analyze strategies people have developed to meet environmental challenges.
- Analyze the relationship Métis have to the land.
- Assess the impact of the environment on the lives of people.
- Analyze ways the land affects human settlement and social organization and ways human habitation affects the land.



English Language Arts 4

CR4.1 Comprehend and respond to a variety of grade-level texts (including contemporary and traditional visual, oral, written, and multimedia texts) that address: identity (e.g., Expressing Myself)

Community (e.g., Building Community)

Social responsibility (e.g., Preserving a Habitat) and support response with evidence from text and from your own experiences.

Students can identify how the community collaborates. There are many examples in the book of the Métis community coming together.

Assignment suggestion:

Personal Connection:

Family Story Interview Task

Conduct an interview with a family member about a memorable story from their past, focusing on one of these themes: travel, connection to the land, relocation, or resilience. Ask the interviewee if they are comfortable with being recorded. You may record the interview using video or audio, and a personal cell phone is suitable for this purpose. After the interview, write the story in your own words as accurately as possible, ensuring to address the 5 Ws (Who, What, When, Where, Why) and answer the How question. Please use the 5 Ws and H Chart if you find it helpful.

In the book, you learn about Métis traditions and customs. It is customary in the Métis culture to offer a gift for an exchange of knowledge. Traditional gifts can be tea, bannock, and handmade items. Students can offer handmade cards to their interviewee. (Tobacco can be offered, however students may not have access to tobacco, nor have the teachings to understand the significance of tobacco in Indigenous culture.)



Tips to prepare to interview someone

1. Prepare your materials, pen, paper, and phone (if you are using it). Make sure the person you are interviewing is comfortable and that they have something to drink.
2. Offer a gift and or a thank you card.
3. If you want to record, a cell phone works well. Ask permission to record the person you are interviewing.
4. Have your questions written down so that you can stay with the topic.
5. Phrase questions carefully and be clear in your speech.
6. Listening carefully. Ask politely for more details when necessary.
7. Take notes during the interview.
8. Be mindful of the time limit that you have set for your interviewee and stay within that timeframe.
9. Thank the person for the interview and the information.

*Take good notes as you speak with your interviewee. You can use the chart below to take notes or take notes in a notebook. This will help contribute to a successful interview. When taking notes, listen and write down key words. The interviewer must take care not to change the meaning of what the person said. After the interview, a good idea is to review your notes while the information is fresh in your mind.



5 Ws and H Chart

Name:

Date:

Topic:

Who?	
What?	



5 Ws and H Chart

Name:

Date:

Topic:

<p>Where?</p>	
<p>When?</p>	



5 Ws and H Chart

Name:

Date:

Topic:

Why?	
How?	



CC4.3 Speak to present and express a range of ideas and information in formal and informal speaking situations.

(a) Identify the plants and animals which can be found in the communities (e.g., house, village, farm, reserve, and city) in which the students live.

(b) Discuss stories that demonstrate the interdependence of land, water, animals, plants, and the sky in traditional worldviews.

(c) Conduct a simulation or role play to demonstrate the interdependence of plants and animals in a habitat or community.

Assignment suggestion:

Partner Storytelling and Presenting to the Class

Pair up with a partner assigned by the teacher.

Take turns sharing a personal story related to one of the themes:

Identity: A time when you felt proud of who you are (e.g., sharing a family tradition or overcoming shyness about something unique).

Community: A time when you worked with others to build a group (e.g., a school project, family event, or neighbourhood activity).

Social Responsibility: A time you helped take care of something important (e.g., recycling, helping a friend, or preserving a tradition).

Ask your partner questions so you understand their story before presenting their story to the class.

Presentation to the Class

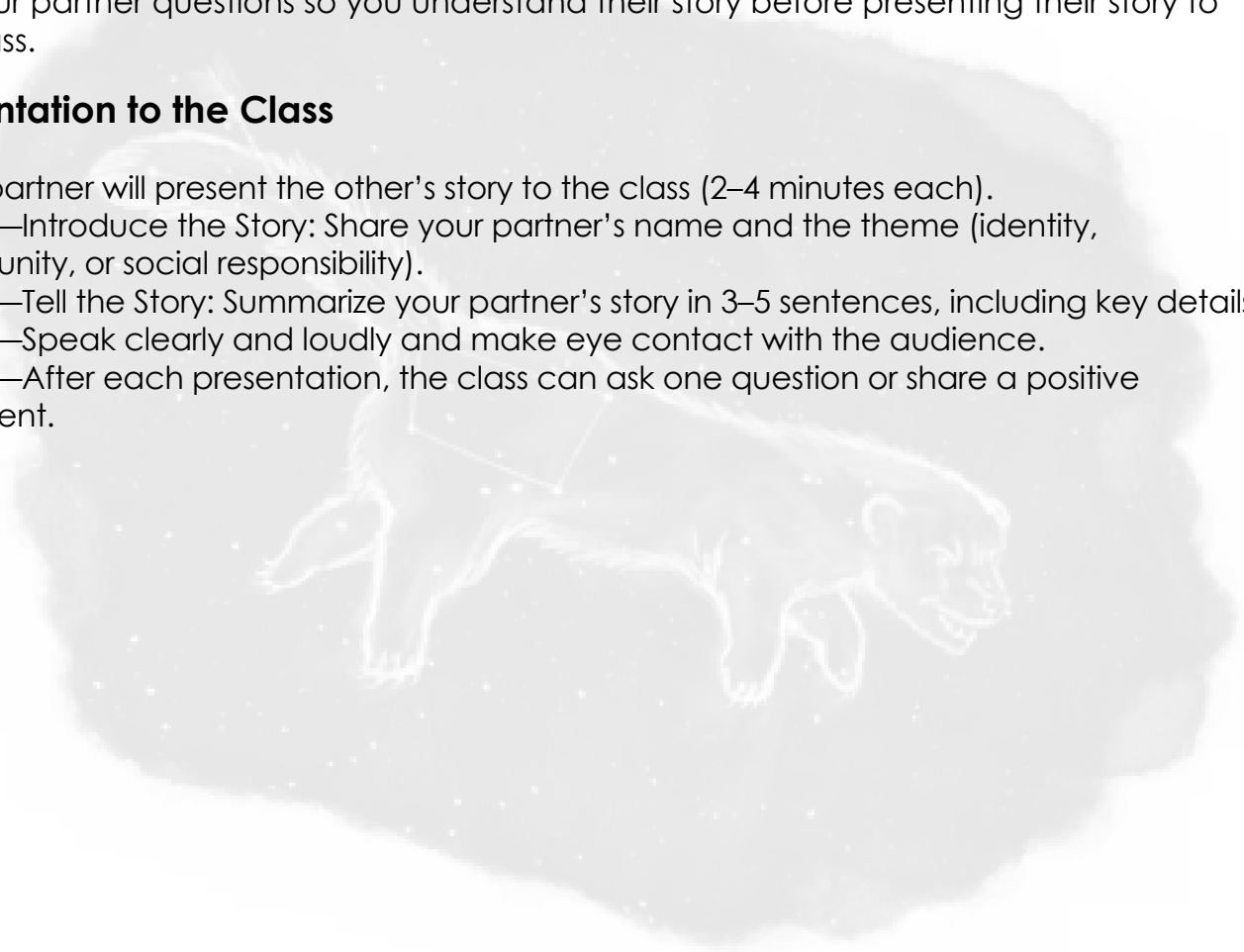
Each partner will present the other's story to the class (2–4 minutes each).

Step 1—Introduce the Story: Share your partner's name and the theme (identity, community, or social responsibility).

Step 2—Tell the Story: Summarize your partner's story in 3–5 sentences, including key details.

Step 3—Speak clearly and loudly and make eye contact with the audience.

Step 4—After each presentation, the class can ask one question or share a positive comment.



CC4.4 Use a writing process to produce descriptive, narrative, and expository compositions that focus on a central idea, have a logical order, explain point of view, and give reasons or evidence.

(d) Write clear, coherent sentences and paragraphs that develop a central idea.

(e) Create compositions with an introductory paragraph that establishes a central idea in key sentence(s), supporting paragraphs with simple facts, details, and explanations, and a concluding paragraph that summarizes the points.

(f) Write descriptions and narratives (3–5 paragraphs) that relate observations and recollections of an event or experience and use sensory details.

(j) Communicate and demonstrate understanding by creating original texts (e.g., poems, plays, letters, journal entries) and by writing responses to texts, supporting judgements through references to both the text and prior knowledge.

Assignment Suggestion:

Josephine's Story: Diary—Activity

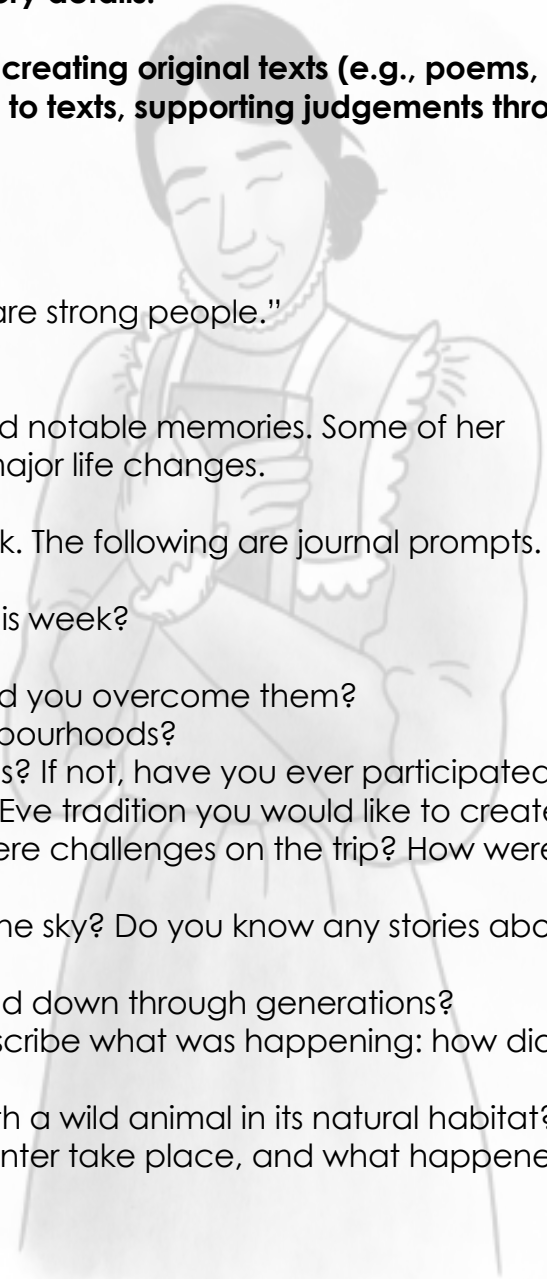
"Kohkom says tough times make strong people. We are strong people."

(Dogniez, 2024, Pg. 16)

Josephine kept a diary to record important events and notable memories. Some of her memories were simple life lessons, while others were major life changes.

Keep a diary for six days as you read/listen to the book. The following are journal prompts.

1. What life lessons (minor or major) have you learnt this week?
2. How have you displayed resiliency in your life?
3. What physical challenges have you faced? How did you overcome them?
4. Have you ever had to move houses, schools, neighbourhoods?
5. Does your family have any New Year's Eve traditions? If not, have you ever participated in a New Year's Eve celebration? Is there a New Year's Eve tradition you would like to create?
6. Write about the time when you took a trip. Were there challenges on the trip? How were they overcome?
7. Are there constellations that you can recognize in the sky? Do you know any stories about the sky or the land?
8. Does your family have stories that have been passed down through generations?
9. Write about your experience in a thunderstorm. Describe what was happening: how did you feel, what did the sky look like?
10. Have you ever experienced a close encounter with a wild animal in its natural habitat? If so, what type of animal was it, where did the encounter take place, and what happened during the interaction?



Science-Life Science: Habitats and Communities

HC4.1 Investigate the interdependence of plants and animals, including humans, within habitats and communities.

(b) Discuss stories that demonstrate the interdependence of land, water, animals, plants, and the sky in traditional worldviews.

(d) Discuss stories that demonstrate the interdependence of land, water, animals, plants, and the sky in traditional worldviews.

(k) Predict how the removal of a specific plant or animal population may affect a community in the short- and long-term.

Sample Inquiry Questions to Explore Habitats and Communities

1. What happened to the plains bison?
2. Why was hunting important to the Métis?
3. How were the Métis interdependent on the land, plants, and animals?
4. What might happen to a community if one animal or plant species disappears?
5. How do human activities, like building roads, affect the animals and plants in a habitat near our community?
6. How can we protect endangered animals in Saskatchewan's habitats?

Suggested links

Henry Youpe Hind, "The 1858 Buffalo Hunt in the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Territory." The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture.
<https://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/13872>.

Buffalo Era in the Cypress Hills. Consul Museum.
<https://consulmuseum.ca/buffalo-era-in-the-cypress-hills>.

John R. Foster with Zach Parrott, "Buffalo Hunt." The Canadian Encyclopedia.
<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/buffalo-hunt>.



Before Reading:

Read this story over a period of six days (one chapter per day). Look at the title and make predictions as to what the book will be about. Discuss the meaning and definition of resiliency. After the first chapter, predict what will happen next. Continue the prediction activity for the remainder of the chapters.

Activity before beginning the book: In the four corners of the classroom post the following Métis symbols:

Métis flag

Red River cart

Sash

Trappers' tent

Post a piece of paper underneath the symbols and have the students move around the room and write everything they know on the paper about the symbol. This is a brainstorming activity meant to assess prior knowledge. Discuss as a class the historical significance of each item as well as the contemporary significance to the Métis people.

During Reading:

How do Josephine and Clara show resilience? What other characters in the book demonstrate resilience? How have they been able to demonstrate resiliency in their lives? Is it possible to build resiliency if we don't face our challenges? What examples do we find in the natural world that demonstrate resiliency?

After Reading:

Engage students in suggested assignments and activities.



Helpful Links

1. **Historical Image: Trappers' Tent, with Stove Pipe. At Grand Rapids (03).** The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture.

<https://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/03575>.

2. **Trappers Tent CBC News Article.** Brad Bellegarde, "Métis educator sets up tent in classroom to share his grandparents' experience with students. CBC News, January 9, 2018.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/metis-tent-saskatoon-catholic-school-1.4479816>.

3. **Information about History and Culture of the Métis.** Gabriel Dumont Institute with Canadian Geographic, *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada: The Métis*.

<https://indigenouspeoplesatlasofcanada.ca/section/metis>.

4. **Karon Shmon and Tate McDougall, "Métis Governance in Saskatchewan—A Grade 4 Teacher's Guide.** The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture.

<https://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/149724>.

5. **Métis Sash.** Karon Shmon and David Morin, How to Fingerweave. The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture.

<https://www.metismuseum.ca/fingerweaving/index.php>.

6. *The Métis Alphabet Colouring Book*

The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture.

<https://www.metismuseum.ca/browse/index.php?id=13161>

7. *Cree Star Stories—Wilfred Buck*

Tipiskawi Kisik: Night Sky Star Stories by Wilfred Buck.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZzyV4YKH6k>.

8. *Michif Languages*

There are three Michif languages spoken in Saskatchewan: Southern Michif, Michif-French, and Northern Michif. **Southern Michif** is composed of Plains Cree verbs and French (with some English) nouns. It is written phonetically and doesn't have a standardized orthography (writing system). Southern Michif is spoken in all three Prairie provinces, Montana, and North Dakota by a few hundred people. **Michif-French** is a distinct form of French and is spoken in parts of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Northern Michif is spoken in northwest Saskatchewan. According to linguists, **Northern Michif** is a Woods Cree dialect with some French (noun) word borrowings.

Gabriel Dumont Institute with Canadian Geographic, "Languages," *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada: The Métis*.

<https://indigenouspeoplesatlasofcanada.ca/article/languages>.



Books to Complement:

<https://gdins.org/shop-gdi/>

Roogaroo Mickey

Author: Wilfred Burton

Illustrator: Leah Marie Dorion

Michif Translator: Norman Fleury

Grade Level: Primary

<https://gdins.org/product/roogaroo-mickey>

Road Allowance Kitten

Author: Wilfred Burton

Illustrator: Christina Johns

Michif Translator: Norman Fleury

<https://gdins.org/product/road-allowance-kitten>

The Flower Beadwork People

Author/Illustrator: Sherry Farrell Racette

Michif Translator: Norman Fleury

Grade Level: All Ages

<https://gdins.org/product/the-flower-beadwork-people>

Images to include

Red River Cart (01), Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, R-B6282. The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture.

<https://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/04984>.

Métis Flag. Gabel Dumont Institute.

<https://gdins.org/me/uploads/2014/07/Desktop-Flag-2024-no-base-1-scaled.jpg>.

Métis Sash (07). The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture.

<https://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/03183>.

Trappers Tent/ Prospectors Tent. Tent (02). The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture.

<https://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/00690>.

