

Stories from the Seventh Fire: Summer Teachers Guide

Wawhitchsey, an Ojibway prophet from Georgina Island, Canada, foretold of the time of the Seventh Fire: "Seven prophets came to the Indian people long ago. These prophets left us with seven predictions and each of these was called a fire, seven fires in all. It is said that in the time of the Seventh Fire, a new people would emerge to seek out the old teachings and find a way to live in harmony with one another and with Mother Earth. We are now in the time of the Seventh Fire."

The *Stories from the Seventh Fire* television programs, *Legend of the Caribou* and *How Wesakechak Got His Name* are the achievement of a unique collaboration: original work from an internationally famous first nations artist, Norval Morrisseau, talented Western Canadian animators, ancient legends and nature stories, aboriginal actors and filmmakers who have produced these animated/live-action videos for a new generation of young and old alike.

The program reflects the Summer season, in a multi-award winning television Four Seasons series that features the unforgettable images of artist Norval Morrisseau; key voice actors Tantoo Cardinal (*Dances With Wolves, Legends of the Fall*), Gordon Tootoosis (*Big Bear, Don't Call Me Tonto*) and Johnny Waniandy (*Stories From The Seventh Fire*); work from Bardel Animation (2D) and Aurenaya Entertainment Inc. (3D); and wildlife footage from Karvonen Films. It was produced through Storytellers Productions Ltd. by western Canadian filmmakers Greg Coyes, Gerri Cook, and Ava Karvonen, in association with Tantoo Cardinal.

Background Information:

"It is believed that storytelling is both a gift from the Creator and an art that requires a great amount of skill and technique to hold the audience spellbound. The storytellers must possess a gift of memory, creativity, humor and drama. The role of the storyteller is also as a historian or keeper of knowledge who educates the audience about life, the past, and provides insights into minds and spirits to facilitate a better understanding of who we are."

Stan Cuthand, Cree Elder, Saskatchewan

"North American Aboriginal stories are based on an oral tradition. For at least ten thousand years, story telling was the way that the knowledge and the history of the people was passed on until the arrival of written language. Aboriginal people believe that some stories also had a season. The Wesakechak stories are best told in the winter months when the days are short, the nights long and the need for communal entertainment is greatest."

Maria Campbell, Gabriel's Crossing, Batoche, Saskatchewan; author of the international best-seller, *HalfBreed*

Each story can be told in different ways, depending on the storyteller's use of local elements familiar to each audience - a Plains Cree story might use bison and the

same story by the Ojibway might use moose. What remains true are the spiritual values and lessons the stories present.

"In all aspects of Learning regardless of what topic is being discussed – An Aboriginal Elder's perspective should be incorporated according to that region's beliefs, stories and myths. Through the appropriate protocol, an Elder should be approached and asked to tell the stories that are regionally specific and that relate to the topic that is being taught or discussed. This enables students, especially Aboriginal students, to relate to these stories because their local Elder(s) made reference to it. Certain morals and lessons will come out of each story depending on the region. From an Aboriginal perspective, the appropriate guest Elder can be recommended by the local school in conjunction with the curriculum development director and the community's cultural centre. The appropriate cultural protocol gift (tobacco, blanket, or sweetgrass perhaps) for that region should be followed when an Elder visits a school."

Darrell Gerrits, Osaw Maskwa, Alberta

The animal world, too, has its storytellers. In *Legend of the Caribou*, Mother Wolf tells a bedtime tale to teach her young cubs about the world outside the den, because the cubs are still too young to go hunting. This tale is about a place called the Barrens where large herds of deer-like animals called Caribou once covered the land. The cubs learn that even the smallest and most insignificant has an important role on Mother Earth.

"The boy had asked his caribou friends to come and get him. He was too strongly attached to them to stay human and he had decided to become a caribou."

George Blondin, *When The World Was New*, 1990.

LEGEND OF THE CARIBOU - A Wolf Tale

Story Synopsis:

Mother Wolf tells her cubs a bed-time story before joining the hunt. She tells them about a land to the North where there are no trees. It's called the Barrens by some and Tundra by others. It's home to many creatures, including humans. On the barrens live a relative of the Deer clan, called Reindeer or Caribou. Mother Wolf describes how special they are, including how they live in large herds that help protect them from enemies.

But long ago, the Caribou herds became so large that some of the other creatures were afraid that there would be nothing left for them to drink or eat. Because the herd always stayed in one place, soon other creatures began to suffer, so they appealed to the Creator for help.

The wolf cubs assume that the Creator sent Grizzly Bears or Eagles to scare the Caribou away, but Mother Wolf tells them that instead it was something small and almost invisible to buzz and bite at the herds. Swarms of mosquitoes and flies tormented the Caribou and they began to move to get away from the insects until cold weather finally stopped the insects' attacks.

This is how the longest migration of any land animal in the world began. Mother Wolf explains what migration is and how other creatures also migrate, including birds,

whales, butterflies, bats and buffalo.

Overall Themes:

- It isn't size that counts. There are those who move among us, almost unnoticed. They may be small but they are as important as the biggest or the proudest.
- We should understand the importance of migration which helps the environment sustain itself.
- Even though flies and mosquitoes are irritating, they are necessary to the world in many ways.

Language Arts:

- Students will research various stories, legends, and myths based on oral tradition about similar themes from different cultures around the world, where animals are the storytellers.
- Students will make connections between themes, characters and events in literature and their own experiences or between other literature and cultures.
- Students will compare the role and type of storytellers found in different cultures.
- Students will use a variety of resources including various websites to research recent facts on current issues affecting the environment of species that live in the Barrens.

Visual Arts:

- Students will explore the impact and effect of art images adapted into different mediums as a storytelling device, i.e. book illustrations, animation storyboards, television reenactments, written descriptions, website designs, logos, symbols, etc.
- Students will create images inspired by the wildlife depicted in this story.
- Students will look at visual representations and their symbolic meaning to people throughout the ages and from different cultures using some of the main wildlife presented in this story, i.e. reindeer/caribou, wolves, bear, buffalo, insects, lemming, etc.
- Students will research prehistoric drawings, paintings and artifacts that depict prehistoric and historic North American creatures that migrated, including mammoths, giant deer, prehistoric and historic bison, monarch butterfly, etc. and create their own impressions using various art techniques.

Environmental Studies:

- Students will understand and describe the interrelation of nature within a habitat such as the Barrens.
- Students will study impacts such as overgrazing and population growth cycles in these habitats.
- Students will research the reasons behind migration and the real origins of such migrations as those undertaken by the Porcupine Caribou herd.
- Students will discuss the short and long term impacts of man-made intrusions such as oil exploration on traditional Caribou migration patterns.
- Students will learn the definition and importance of the Barrens and how many

species depend on them.

- Students will follow the life cycle of the caribou over a full year, spring – calving season, summer, fall, and winter, and study adaptations the caribou have evolved to deal with each season.
- Students will explore the role of insects, including mosquitoes and flies, in relationship with other creatures in the Barrens, especially the Caribou.

Music:

- Students will study the relationship of different instruments and sounds to represent the personalities of various animals and insects, as demonstrated in this piece and others (i.e. Peter and the Wolf).
- Students will experiment with music to tell stories and create different emotional moods.
- Students will learn about Aboriginal music from different cultures (didgeridoo, drums, chants, etc.), and the importance of music and song in ceremonies and for entertainment, in both traditional and modern use.
- Students will recognize how contemporary music like hip hop, rock, etc. can also be used to tell a story.

Potential Activities

The concept of telling a story has to be heard from an Elder(s) in the First Nations communities to fully appreciate the teachings, lessons and moral of the stories. It is a true art and the videos and the Elders should be incorporated into a curriculum, especially when dealing with First Nations material.

"In an oral culture, the technology of survival consists of an intimate knowledge of one's environment and respect for all beings, of all "accepting" and "understanding" each other. This is achieved by "becoming the other". The teaching of this way of thinking was and still is communicated in the form of a story. Hence, a good storyteller is a person who has the gift of being able wholly to involve herself into her words, to incarnate herself in flesh and blood in her subject matter."

Jovette Marchessault

- Ask the students to choose one of the other animals shown in the story to retell the events from that point of view, for example, a newborn Caribou calf. How would the point of view of another animal differ from the wolves' version of the story?
- Have the students tell a new version of the story to an audience, taking on a specific role such as a mosquito, a caribou mother, a bear, or a lemming living on the Barrens and present the story from that point of view, in as exciting and/or humorous a way as possible. The intent is to try and have the audience share all the main emotions and lessons through the art of the storyteller - pain, fear, laughter, anger, irritation, inspiration, etc. - without the storyteller becoming too preachy.
- The mother wolf shares her story with her young in much the same manner as the First Nations people have passed on their stories in the past. Ask the students to suggest reasons why listening was an especially important skill for people in the

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traditional First Nations societies. In discussing their responses, explain the concept of oral tradition.

- Have the students create a poem or short narrative in the voice of the Caribou. The poem should include elements of *Legend of the Caribou* as well as descriptions of their appearance, habitat, and behavior. Ask the students to orally present their Caribou tributes.
- Have the students act out how they see an animal or insect and how they would position their bodies to tell the story as that creature. Making costumes and/or masks would also help to assist the imagination and creativity of the students for how they interpret the animal or insect.
- Share other First Nations legends with the students. Use local Elders wherever possible to ensure the legends, morals, and storytelling remains distinct and true to the region. Introduce myths and stories from other cultures in an effort to illustrate the themes that are common among these stories. Examples from other cultures include *Aesop's Fables*, *Hans Christian Anderson's Fairy Tales*, *Grimm's Fairy Tales*, etc.) Modern stories from movies, comics, novels can also be discussed that use animals as the storytellers.
<http://www.ozemail.com.au/~reed/global/howthe.html>
- Have the students research other First Nations legends that contain Reindeer or Caribou as key characters. What are the characteristics of the Reindeer or Caribou in the legends? What do the legends tell us about how First Nations people viewed them as a symbol in their stories? Explore the Caribou in other cultures and how it is viewed from the point of view of different cultures, especially by Laplanders.
- With the class, create a story chart with headings that describe common themes found in this story (i.e.: small can be powerful, respecting talents, problem solving, spiritual/moral lessons, conservation messages, etc.). Assign the students to summarize at least three legends according to these identified themes.
[http://dl1.yukoncollege.yk.ca/anth220mayo/discuss/msgReader\\$23?mode%C9](http://dl1.yukoncollege.yk.ca/anth220mayo/discuss/msgReader$23?mode%C9) and http://www.indianlegend.com/california/california_002.htm and http://www.artistwd.com/joyzine/australia/dreaming/fly_spirit.htm
- Have the students then create their own legend based on the themes. Define the difference between a legend or myth and the scientific explanation. Explore the myth that lemmings commit suicide every few years.
<http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/lemming>. Include other animals/birds/insects that are regionally specific for these will have special meaning and compare them with other cultures and societies.
<http://www.kpbsd.k12.ak.us/mtn.view/CfK/legends/OriginalAlaskaLegends%C9> is a good example of what other students have come up with.
- Why was the Caribou chosen as a symbol on the Canadian quarter? What animals or birds are found on money in other cultures? (i.e.: Platypus on the twenty cent piece in Australia, Bald Eagle on American quarters, etc.)
http://www.moneymuseum.com/standard_english/raeume/geld_machen/a%C9 and <http://www.joelscoins.com/zoo.htm> and http://www.mint.ca/en/about_the_mint/circulation+coins/index_circ.htm. for some fun examples.

- Have the students discuss the use of animal symbols to represent countries, provinces, states, cities and team sports (for example). Have the students design an advertisement or poster communicating the symbolism and power of the Mosquito/Caribou.
- Have the students view *Legend of the Caribou* a second time, noting the variety of living things that depend on the Barrens. Ask the students to choose one of these that is not the Caribou to research in more depth reporting on their habitat, food, care of young, and enemies. Their research report should include an illustration of their life cycle.
- Divide the class into small groups, preferably into round-table discussions which is a more traditional First Nations environment, and have each group choose a natural resource that is part of a larger habitat like the Barrens (eg: water, soil, minerals, grass & flowering plants, birds, animals, insects, etc.). Assign the group to research how interrelated each chosen natural resource is to the rest of the habitat. How would the habitat change with the absence of the chosen resource? Have the students demonstrate their findings using an illustrated web showing the ecosystem found in the Barrens. Discuss the impact of destruction of that habitat on those inhabitants/resources. What impact do humans have on the Barrens today?
- Choose an essential resource such as water and debate or discuss questions such as the following in small groups or together as a class:
 - How should the resources be accessed?
 - What should the resource be used for?
 - Who should decide when a resource should be used?
 - Who should decide how much of the resource should be used?
 - How can the future of a resource be protected?
- Have the students research the Caribou in more detail and their life cycle.
http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/hww-fap/hww-fap.cfm?ID_species=55&lang=e
- Have the students research the issue of threatened caribou herds. What work has already been done to protect their habitat? What still needs to be done? Why is it important to save the wild Caribou herds?
<http://www.raysweb.net/specialplaces/pages/caribou.html> and
<http://www.cariboucommons.com/>
- Invite a First Nations musician to speak and perform for the class. Have the students prepare questions about what this person's role is in his or her community and how that compares to the role of the musician in traditional society. Provide an opportunity for the students to participate in music-making with the guest musician. Look at traditional music and also modern First Nations musicians and how they are using traditional instruments in a contemporary way.
- Demonstrate the steps taken to animate a story and characters. Invite an animator to the class to discuss the different kinds of animation techniques. This story used 3D, Flash animation and live-action wildlife footage. Students can storyboard the story or one of their own. One of the voice actors could be invited to talk to the students to explain about his/her involvement and the opportunities it can offer as a type of creative work. (to contact any of the actors and animation companies used for the Wolf-Tales and Wesakechak stories, call Reel Girls Media at 780-
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- 488-0440)
- Research the effort needed to film wildlife. Invite a wildlife filmmaker or wildlife cameraperson to the class to discuss the behind-the-scenes work done to create the kinds of wildlife images like those edited into the Mother Wolf story.
(<http://www.karvonensfilms.com/>)
 - Divide the students into different animal and bird groups. These become their totems. Have them make masks, pictures, rules of behavior, music and sounds based on their totems. www.kuruna.com/en/school/goentot.htm Have them research the use of totems by North American First Nations people and other cultures. www.ravenseyeyesdesign.com/archives/kinshipconference/hoof_fin.htm Discuss why First Nations people often modeled their behavior after animals and the environment. www.nhc.rtp.nc.us:8080/tserve/eighteen/ekeyinfo/natrel.htm, www.educ.sfu.ca/gentch/pbl/curriculum.html
 - Do animal and bird totems still exist today?
<http://www.nald.ca/CLR/chikiken/titleiii.htm>

Additional Resources

Aesop's Fables

Additional Wolf Tales in the *Stories From the Seventh Fire Series*, including the multiple award winning, *Legend of the Spirit Bear*, *Legend of the Giant Beaver*, and *Legend of the First Thanksgiving*. In addition there is a behind-the-scenes, twenty-minute educational documentary, *The Art of Storytelling*, also available through:

Reel Girls Media, 9860A-33rd Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T6N 1C6, 780-488-0440

ADF&G Wildlife Notebook Series

<http://www.state.ak.us/local/akpages/FISH.GAME/notebook/noteshome.h%20C9>

Animal Myths & Legends From Around the World

<http://www.planetozkids.com/oban/legends.htm>

BC Ministry of Education, Aboriginal Education Initiative

<http://www.est.gov.bc.ca/abed/welcome.html>: site provides information on BC First Nations Studies as well as a First Nations Library Database

Caribou: Ghost of the North, a 25 minute video. From the tiny Peary caribou in the High Arctic to the secretive woodland caribou of the boreal forest, the different races carry out their centuries-old traditions

Nomads of Yukon, a 52 minute video. Follow 150,000 barren ground caribou on the longest migration of any land animal, through one of the wildest places on earth,

Canada's Yukon Territory. Both Videos available through

<http://www.karvonensfilms.com/>

How the Robin got its Red Breast - Legends of the Sechelt People, Harbour Publishing, Box 219, 4434 Rondevue Road, Madeira Park, BC V0N 2H0: retelling of the legend of how the robin got its red breast

Learning by Doing - Northwest Coast Native Indian Art, by Karin Clark and Jim Gilbert, 1993: elements of Northwest Coast First Nations art analyzed by form, line, color, and characteristics

Little Bear's Vision Quest, by Diane Slivey, 1995: a modern First Nations legend that teaches the importance of respect for others

Native American Spirituality <http://www.religioustolerance.org/nataspir.htm>

Native American Cultural Curriculum Materials

<http://www.kstrom.net/isk/books/cultcurr.html>

Rediscovery: Ancient Pathways-New Directions, Western Canada Wilderness Committee, 20 Water Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 1A4: exploration of First Nations traditions and their relevance to contemporary society including personal, cultural and environmental awareness

Shared Learnings - Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10, 1998 First Nations Education Initiative, British Columbia Ministry of Education, 5th Floor, 620 Superior St., Box 9887 Stn. Prov. Govt., Victoria, BC V8W 9T6: comprehensive document with curriculum links, learning activities, resource data base and lesson plans for First Nations themes throughout the K-10 curriculum

School Net: <http://schoolnet2.carelon.ca/english/ext/aboriginal/index2.html>: site sponsored by Assembly of First Nations in conjunction with Federal Government of Canada - with numerous lesson plans for teachers

WildFiles.TV <http://www.wildfiles.tv/> is a Canadian virtual clubhouse for kids to explore the world of wild animals. It's fun, educational and free.

HOW WESAKECHAK GOT HIS NAME - A Cree Wesakechak Tale

There are many, many different stories about Wesakechak and he has many different names. In the language of the Cree, he is known as Wesakechak, the Blackfoot people call him Napi and the Ojibway call him Nanabush. Throughout North America, many tribes tell legends of this being. His name is different, but the lessons are the same.

Story Synopsis:

Wesakechak disliked his name. He wanted a name that was more important and impressive. He complained to the Creator who agreed to hold a naming ceremony for all the creatures, including Wesakechak, who wanted new names. In those days, Wesakechak had special powers. He could talk to all the other creatures and he could change his shape. In this way he was able to live with Apikosis, (Mouse) who took care of him like a wife. Apikosis did not want Wesakechak to get a better name because she was afraid that he would think he was too important to stay with her.

The Creator picked the morning after midsummer, the longest day of the year, for the naming ceremony. Wesakechak was determined to be the first there so he tried to stay awake all night, but he fell asleep and Apikosis deliberately didn't wake him up. When Wesakechak finally got to the naming ceremony he discovered all the good names like Wolf, Bear and Eagle were already taken. The only name that was left was Wesakechak because no one else had wanted it.

The Creator told Wesakechak that it isn't the name that is important but what he does, and that instead of a new name, there was a new job for him. The Creator was introducing new creatures, called The First People. It would be Wesakechak's job to teach them so they could survive. This made Wesakechak feel much better so he forgot about his name and began to plan how he would teach the first human beings on Turtle Island.

Cree Words for this the story:

Wesakechak – (Wi/sa/ke/cahk – A special being created by the Great Spirit

Keche Manito – (Kici Man'toh) - The Great Spirit

Kiwetin – (Ki/we/tin) - North Wind

Tanisi – Tan'si – Hello

Mikisiw – (Mi/ki/siw) – Eagle

Apikosis – (A/pi/ko/sis) – Mouse

Ashtam – (Ash/tam) – Come

Mahikan – (Ma/hi/kan) – Gray Wolf

Muskwa – (Musk/wa) - Bear

Cree Pronunciations:

There are many Cree Dialects. This is just one of them. A Cree language consultant worked with the bilingual Cree/English language actors for each of the stories in this production. The video program is available in English, Cree, and in English with French subtitles.

Animation Style:

The look of the characters and landscapes were inspired by artwork of Ojibway artist, Norval Morrisseau who was commissioned by Storytellers Productions Inc. to interpret

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each Wesakechak legend using a different season as background. His resulting work was used as the inspiration for the animators who then recreated Norval's unique style and vivid colours as computer-generated Flash animation. Norval's initial response to the completed animated series was, "I've been talking to these characters for a long time, and now everyone can talk with them!" For more on Norval and his work,

<http://www.coghlanart.com/norval.htm> and

http://www.kstrom.net/isk/art/morriss/morr_bio.html

Overall Themes:

- Names are important but it is what you accomplish that is more important.
- It's not good to make fun of another's name or character.
- You should appreciate what others do for you and not take them for granted.
- To be a teacher of others is a big responsibility.

Language Arts:

- Students will learn the importance of storytelling in Aboriginal cultures.
- Students will identify and practice effective storytelling techniques.
- Students will learn about oral tradition as a form of storytelling around the world.
- Students will explore the importance of good listening skills, through telling stories to their peers, using only the tools available to early oral storytellers.
- Students will make connections between themes, characters and events in literature and their own experiences and those found in other literature.

Visual Arts:

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the roles of artists and visual arts in reflecting and sustaining beliefs and traditions in modern society. Norval Morrisseau as a case study.
- Students will create visual images in response to distinct art styles from a variety of cultures, artists and periods.

Environmental Studies:

- Students will research and discuss the summer season and its importance in the life cycle of Boreal Forest and related plants, animals, birds, etc.
- Students will explore special survival talents in such animals as Moose, Bear, Wolf, Eagle, and Mice.
- Students will personalize and internalize what it means to show respect and conservation in one's environment.

Social Studies:

- Students will research the various theories related to the arrival of prehistoric humans to North America.
- Students will learn about how First Nations people lived in North America prior to the arrival of Europeans, and how they live today.
- Students will demonstrate understanding of the ways early First Nations people interacted with their environment.
- Students will explore the power and symbolism of names in First Nations cultures and other cultures.
- Students will respect the role of a teacher and learn how there are many kinds of

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teachers throughout one's lifetime.

Drama:

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of how storytelling techniques reflects a culture's beliefs and attitudes.
- Students will practice the skills of storytelling to portray a theme and story.

Potential Activities

- After viewing *How Wesakechak Got His Name*, have the class participate in a retelling. If possible, have the students sit in a circle. Divide the students into groups and give each group a section of the story to present orally. Have them dramatically act out each of the roles of the characters that interact with Wesakechak, throughout the story. Record the results. After the students are done, replay the original video, and compare and contrast the original with the retelling.
 - Have they followed the original sequence?
 - Has anything important in the story been missed?
 - Do the morals and values still remain in the story?
 - How is their story different from the original?
- After reviewing the story have the students complete the following questions:
 - What time of the year is it when our story begins?
 - What kinds of names did Wesakechak give to the animals? (Flat-Tail for Beaver, Pointy-Nose for Coyote, Stubby Tail for Bear, Swamp Donkey for Moose)
 - Do you think the animals like those names? Why? How did they respond to Wesakechak when he called them by these names?
 - What did the Creator agree to do?
 - What does Wesakechak do to try and get a name he wants? (tries to stay awake all night)
 - Why doesn't Apikosis help him get up early?
 - What were some of the names Wesakechak wanted to call himself? (Eagle, Bear, Grey Wolf).
 - What happens when Wesakechak doesn't get a new name? How does Wesakechak intend to teach the First People? Do you think he will make a good teacher? (People learned from Wesakechak by avoiding the mistakes he made)
 - What do you think about the importance of names? What happens when people make fun of others' names? Why do they do this?
- Role-play a situation where the students are Wesakechak. What names would they give to familiar animals. Why?
- Go around the class, switch the students' names with the person sitting next to them. Use name tags. Ask them: How does having a new name feel? Does it change who you are inside? Would any of them prefer to have a different name than the one they have? Why? Why not?
<http://www.greencis.net/shart/names.html>.
- Explore where familiar names come from. Learn how these are influenced by
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- different cultural origins and languages. Look at the names in Cree for animals like Bear, Wolf, Eagle and Moose. Talk to a Cree Elder about what those names mean in the Cree language. Look at names in other First Nations languages and cultures. <http://www.behindthename.com/> and <http://www.americanpentimento.com/nation.htm>.
- Have the students retell this story from a different point of view, such as Mouse. Ask them to illustrate their story and practice it for oral presentation. Include humour and drama.
 - Discuss with the students the character archetype of 'Teacher' that Wesakechak becomes in the story. Ask them to research other literature that contains similar elements or characters who are teachers.
 - Have the students compare and contrast Wesakechak with other characters they have researched, and report similarities and differences.
 - Research the works and life of Norval Morrisseau who is known as the Picasso of Canada and as the Father of the Woodland Art style. He is also a hereditary Shaman.
 - Have the students use the scenes in the story to describe the art of Norval Morrisseau in their own words. Morrisseau's work is known for its black outlined, brightly colored shapes and forms that bring to life the First Nations themes, symbols and spirituality. www.kinderart.com/multic/norval.shtml.
 - Assign the students to use Norval Morrisseau's style to create masks of the characters from *How Wesakechak Got His Name*.
 - Assign the students to use Norval Morrisseau's style to create their own painting that represents their interpretation of First Nations themes, stories and symbols.
 - Ask the students to research a Canadian First Nations artist of their choice describing both the artist's life history and work. Have them present their findings to the class through a visual and oral presentation.
 - What is a Shaman and how does it relate to some First Nations people's spiritual beliefs?
 - Assign the students to create thank you notes inspired by the art of Norval Morrisseau used by the animators of *How Wesakechak Got His Name* and send these to Norval.
 - Have the students animate this story or their own using drawings/art similar or inspired by a different artist. Invite an animator to the class to explain the process of computer animation compared to the cell animation style (such as was used by Disney in *Snow White*.) Invite an animation company representative to talk about the different kinds of animation that appeared in this story and how it's done.
 - Assign the students to research the longest day of the year. Why does this happen? Have them explore how we have four basic seasons in Canada, why that is, and look at how seasons are expressed elsewhere in the world. <http://liftoff.msfc.nasa.gov/News/2000/News-Summer.asp>.
 - Have the students research examples of the environmental impact of summer weather on the environment. Both national and local examples should be presented. Included in the research should also be examples of how society has

positively responded to environmental threats found during the summer season, such as drought, forest fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, etc. Have the students present their findings to the class. In debriefing the activity, ask the students to reflect upon how they can personally take a more active role in showing respect for their environment.

- Have the class research and discuss who were the First People in North America and how did they get here. Have them explore the early immigration waves of early First Nations people. Compare scientific theories with Creation of the World myths taught by different First Nations cultures.
- Divide the students into groups of four or five persons. Ask the students to design a traditional First Nations camp (accurate to the region, for example, a traditional Cree or Blackfoot camp) before the Europeans arrived in Canada. What were the clothes like? The food, the methods of transportation, weapons? Housing? What did people and children do for entertainment?
- Invite an Elder storyteller to the class to tell stories that represents his or her First Nations heritage. Ask the students to be prepared to respectfully ask questions about the Elder's family/tribal history and how he or she received these stories. (Contact the nearest Friendship Center for a recommendation.)
- Discuss how First Nations people preserved their stories by passing them on for possibly thousands of years. Humour is an important part of all Wesakechak stories. Why?
- Have the students talk about what makes a good storyteller, and ask them to demonstrate effective storytelling techniques. Invite a younger class and pair older students with the younger ones. Have the older students perform their stories for the younger ones. In debriefing the activity, have the students talk about their experiences and self-evaluate their storytelling techniques. Did they hold their younger audience's attention? Did the audience follow the story and understand the important underlying messages?
- In debriefing the activity ask the students to discuss if the younger students showed respect for the storyteller and the story's beliefs and lessons. Ask them to evaluate their experience and discuss how they would change their presentation if they had to do it again.

Additional Resources

Aboriginal Innovations in Arts, Science and Technology Handbook

http://www.schoolnet.ca/aboriginal/handbook/science_chewing-gum.html.

Aboriginal Studies, Government of Canada, Resources for all provinces, Grades K-6

<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/E/Resources.asp>.

Additional Cree Wesakechak legends in the *Stories From the Seventh Fire Series*, including the multiple award winning, *Why The Rabbit Turns White*, *The First Spring Flood* and *Wesakechak and the Medicine*. In addition, there is a behind-the-scenes twenty-minute educational documentary, *The Art of Storytelling*, also available:

Reel Girls Media, 9860A-33rd Avenue, Edmonton, Alta, T6N 1C6 780-488-0440

Alberta Aboriginal Studies

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bysubject/aborstyd/default.asp

Bardel Animation Animators for the opening sequence and Legend

Stories from the Seventh Fire: Summer

<http://www.bardelentertainment.com/>

BC Ministry of Education, Aboriginal Education Initiative:

<http://www.est.gov.bc.ca/abed/welcome.html>: site provides information on BC First Nations Studies as well as an First Nations Library Database

First Nations Art Projects and Activities, First Nations Education Division, School District #61, 923 Topaz Ave, Box 700, Victoria, BC V8T 2R1: introduction to the basic art forms of the Pacific Northwest

First Nations and Inuit Contributions and Inventions Colouring Book, (English and French), published under the authority of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, QS-6126-000-BB-A1, Catalogue No. R21-194/1998 ISBN 0-662-63472-1, Indian and Northern Affairs. <http://www.inac.gc.ca/>

First Nations University of Canada, [http://www.sifc.edu/indian studies/ISRC/research.htm](http://www.sifc.edu/indian_studies/ISRC/research.htm).

Kinderart Lesson for Grades 3+ and 7+, Norval Morrisseau.

<http://www.kinderart.com/multic/norval.shtml>

Learning by Doing - Northwest Coast Native Indian Art, by Karin Clark and Jim Gilbert, 1993: elements of Northwest Coast First Nations art analyzed by form, line, color, and characteristics

Looking at Indian Art of the North West Coast, Douglas & McIntyre, 1615 Venables St., Vancouver BC V5L 2H1: components, features, and themes of North West First Nations art

Norval Morrisseau, a biography: http://www.kstrom.net/isk/art/morriss/morr_bio.html,

For samples of his work: <http://www.kinsmanrobinson.com/html/morrisseau.html>

Shared Learnings - Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10, 1998, Aboriginal Education Initiative, British Columbia Ministry of Education, 5th Floor, 620 Superior St., Box 9887 Stn. Prov. Govt., Victoria, BC V8W 9T6: comprehensive document with curriculum links, learning activities, resource data base and lesson plans for First Nations themes throughout the K-10 curriculum

School Net: <http://schoolnet2.carelton.ca/english/ext/aboriginal/index2.html>: site sponsored by Assembly of First Nations in conjunction with Federal Government of Canada - with lesson plans for teachers.

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