



Overview – Gitxsan Worldview

The Gitxsan concept of non-linear time emerges from the worldview of the co-existence of the realms of the physical and supernatural worlds and our belief in reincarnation. In addition, Gitxsan stories, laws, songs, and language that shape the Gitxsan worldview come from the Breath of the Grandfathers. Since time immemorial the stories have been passed down. When the storyteller speaks, they are the vehicle for the voices of the Gitxsan ancestors. The listeners become a part of many storytellers' past, present, and future.

The key elements of Gitxsan storytelling that emerge from the voices of the Elders include the past and present definition and purpose of the story, the potential of storytelling, the power of storytelling, and the characteristics of Gitxsan stories. Within the Gitxsan community, storytelling is personal, interpretative, and uniquely cultural. Gitxsan storytelling is by design a co-creative process.

"If the oral stories of the Gitxsan can survive all the betrayal that the culture has endured, then the stories must have power."
~ Dr. Jane Smith (Xsiwis)

Wiigyat, the Gitxsan Trickster, felt that once he possessed the coveted ball of light the Gitxsan would respect him and bring him food and gifts. Wiigyat would never be hungry again.

Wiigyat. pronounced We-GET, meaning "big handsome man"

The Elders teach that balance comes from trusting one's intuition and one's reason. Hear with open ears. See with clear eyes and a good heart.

The Elders teach that a person is responsible for all the choices they make. Discuss the areas in the young lives where they can make positive choices for themselves

Local Context

This unit relies heavily on the stories of the Gitxsan peoples. Wherever possible, adapt the unit to invite guests and incorporate stories representing their local culture(s). Consult your district's Indigenous contact for assistance in this. (An up-to-date list of district Indigenous contacts can be found at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/apps/imcl/imclWeb/AB.do.)

About the Trickster

A Trickster is an anthropomorphic character who plays tricks or otherwise disobeys normal rules and conventional behaviour. The Trickster often has supernatural powers, and sometimes plays the role of transformer/creator, sometimes destroyer, and sometimes clown or magician. The Trickster archetype may be used by writers to teach lessons about the meaning of existence, introduce humour, act as a symbol, and provide social commentary. The most common Trickster characters in North American First Peoples stories are Raven, Coyote, and Rabbit, all of whom are known by many local names. Other examples of Trickster characters include Anansi the spider (in many African cultures) and the Fox (in many European cultures).

Key Big Ideas

	Grade 2	Grade 3
English Language Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stories and other texts connect us to ourselves, our families, and our communities. Through listening and speaking, we connect with others and share our world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stories and other texts help us learn about ourselves, our families, and our communities. Stories can be understood from different perspectives.
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canada is made up of many diverse regions and communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning about Indigenous peoples nurtures multicultural awareness and respect for diversity. Indigenous knowledge is passed down through oral history, traditions, and collective memory. Indigenous societies throughout the world value the well-being of the self, the land, spirits, and ancestors.
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of computational fluency in addition and subtraction with numbers to 100 requires understanding of place value. Objects and shapes have attributes that can be described, measured, and compared. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of computational fluency in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of whole numbers requires flexible decomposing and composing. Standard units are used to describe, measure, and compare attributes of objects' shapes.
Arts Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dance, drama, music, and visual arts are each unique languages for creating and communicating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stories and other texts help us learn about ourselves, our families, and our communities. Stories can be understood from different perspectives.
Physical and Health Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopting healthy personal practices and safety strategies protects ourselves and others. Our physical, emotional, and mental health are interconnected. 	

Key Curricular Competencies

	Grade 2	Grade 3
English Language Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use developmentally appropriate reading, listening, and viewing strategies to make meaning Plan and create a variety of communication forms for different purposes and audiences Explore oral storytelling processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use developmentally appropriate reading, listening, and viewing strategies to make meaning Plan and create a variety of communication forms for different purposes and audiences Explore and associate aspects of First Peoples oral traditions
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain why people, events, or places are significant to various individuals and groups Recognize causes and consequences of events, decisions, or developments Explain why people's beliefs, values, worldviews, experiences, and roles give them different perspectives on people, places, issues, or events 	

	Grade 2	Grade 3
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent mathematical ideas in concrete, pictorial, and symbolic forms • Incorporate First Peoples worldviews and perspectives to make connections to mathematical concepts 	
Arts Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express feelings, ideas, stories, observations, and experiences through creative works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express feelings, ideas, and experiences in creative ways
Physical and Health Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore strategies for making healthy eating choices • Explore and describe components of healthy living • Identify and describe characteristics of positive relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and describe strategies for making healthy eating choices in a variety of settings • Explore and describe strategies for pursuing personal healthy-living goals • Describe and apply strategies for developing and maintaining positive relationships

Learning Goals

- Appreciate the power of language in First Peoples’ stories as a way of sharing knowledge and values.
- Understand that language can be used to design and share information interpersonally, interculturally, and globally; language can strengthen their understanding of themselves and First Peoples’ knowledge and perspectives.
- Develop place-based knowledge of the natural world and experience the local area in which they live by accessing and building on existing understandings, including those of First Peoples.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will have a deeper understanding of First Peoples’ knowledge and teachings imbedded in their stories
- Students will have a deeper understanding of the importance of First Peoples’ traditional practices of sharing knowledge by passing down stories to other generations
- Students will communicate their ideas and understanding of First Peoples’ knowledge and teachings through experiencing, documenting, and creating work in a variety of ways
- Students will reason mathematically and explore the connections between mathematics and First Peoples’ knowledge and ways of knowing

Themes Addressed

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ▪ storytelling | ▪ traditional knowledge |
| ▪ Tricksters | ▪ identity |
| ▪ time and place | ▪ relationality & connectedness |
| ▪ sustainability & continuity | ▪ wisdom |
| ▪ well-being | ▪ relationship with spirit world |

Lesson Plans in this Unit

- The First Lesson: Respect
- Wiigyat’s First Lesson
- The Bones of the Story
- Wiigyat’s Travels
- Visualizing a Story of Wiigyat – The Gitxsan Trickster
- Design Activities
- Nutrition
- Drama Presentation
- The Power to Make Good Choices for Change
- The Importance of Skills
- The Moral of the Story
- Painting the Sunset
- Picture This
- Cartoon Corner
- Wanted Poster
- The Discarded Box
- Extended Reading and Writing Activities
- Transformation
- Staying Healthy and Safe
- Don’t Smoke!
- Button Blanket
- Reporting the Story
- Eulogy

Assessment

This unit covers a variety of activities to engage students in understanding the power of story. Rating Scale – Personal Writing (provided at the end of the unit) is available for summative assessment as the unit continues. Formative assessment can be completed in the form of “I can” statements.

Authentic Texts

The primary text for this unit is “Wiigyat – The Gitxsan Trickster,” which is provided at the end of this unit.

Additional texts:

- The Adventures of Txamsm Series:
 - *Txamsm and the Children* by Henry Tate, retold by Pauline Dudoward
 - *Txamsm Visits Chief Echo* by Henry Tate, retold by Biatrice Robinson
- *How the Fox Got His Crossed Legs* collected by Virginia Football
- Caring for Me series by Karen W. Olsen, Denise Lecoy, and Leanne Flett Kruger:
 - *Eat, Run, and Live Healthy*
 - *Healthy Choices, Healthy Lives*
 - *Looking After Me*



Suggested Instruction and Assessment Approach

The First Lesson: Respect

Model what respect looks like, sounds like, and feels like (e.g., take turns, listen without interrupting, ask for and provide help, smile, use people’s names, disagree politely, adapt tone of voice, avoid “name calling” and unkind criticism of others).

Discuss and provide examples of treating others as one would like to be treated. Then discuss what would happen if people did not treat each other with respect.

Explore the different types of feelings that are promoted when someone is treated respectfully and disrespectfully. Brainstorm structures in the classroom, school, and or community that promote treating others with respect. Include the concept of respecting the diverse cultural practices of class, school, and community members.

Optional Activity

Take or find pictures of people showing respect. Make a respect wall with the pictures and have students label the pictures with what characteristic of respect is being demonstrated.

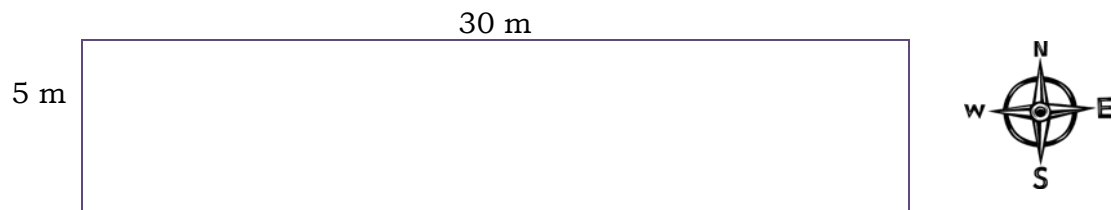
Wiigyat's First Lesson

Read “Wiigyat – The Gitxsan Trickster” Chapter 1 (Wiigyat Visits the Shining Village) and Chapter 2 (Raven’s Accident).

In the big house, newly-weds slept on a platform on the east side of the great house, away from the others and a great distance from the warm fire. The elderly and those with young children slept close to the fire in the cooking area. The unmarried girls slept on the southern platform and the young men on the northern platform.

If the long house was 30 meters long and 20 meters wide, what is the perimeter?

The young men slept on the northern platform. If the platform was 30 meters long and 5 meters wide, what is the perimeter?



Optional Activity

Take a picture of a longhouse or bighouse and place a transparent grid paper over top. Students count how many squares there are around the longhouse.

The Bones of the Story

To help your students grasp the structure of Gitxsan Storytelling and prepare them for writing their own, create a table for the “bones” of the story. Have students brainstorm their ideas, and record them on the board or chart paper. For example:

Possible titles:

- The Ball of Light
- Raven Steals the Ball of Light

Characters:

- Wiigyat
- Mother
- Chief
- Granny
- Gitxsan

Setting:

- Village
- Fish Camp

Problem:

- Wiigyat wants to possess the ball of light

Events:

- He watches the village
- He turns into a pine needle
- He swims into the chief's daughter's hand
- She swallows the pine needle
- Wiigyat is born
- He grows quickly
- He cries for the ball of light
- He plays nicely with the ball of light
- He flew away with the ball of light

Ending:

- His grandfather, the chief, is very angry

Optional Activity

Give students a premade list of story elements, like above, and have them highlight the ones they want to use for their own story.

Wiigyat's Travels

Wiigyat did not have a map for his travels, but he knew the cardinal directions. Have the students draw a map of the schoolyard for Wiigyat.

Background

Traditional place names provide information about First Peoples and their relationship with the land. Traditional knowledge is often embedded in place names. Paying attention to the name of places in traditional territories can lead to a wealth of information about local ecosystems, land use or plant and animal behaviour. Many First Nations communities have documented the traditional place names of their traditional territories and they may be available as a classroom resource. However, some place names may be considered private and to be used only by community members.

Mapping the School Yard

Begin by identifying the traditional territory the school is located on and the traditional place name for the school location and/or community location.

Draw a rough map of the schoolyard on the chalkboard before taking the students out doors to study the school grounds. Instruct the students to bring a pencil and a notebook outside to sketch a map.

Once outside show them which direction is north. If students are having trouble remembering the order of directions, teach them a mnemonic (e.g., **N**ever **E**at **S**our **W**atermelons).

Put a marker in the center of the field. Instruct the students to walk 25 steps to the north and return to center. Have students skip 25 steps to the south and back to the centre. Have students run 25 steps to the east and back to the centre. Have students walk backwards for 10 steps to the west and back to the centre.

Ask the students to point and show you from which direction the sun comes up and which direction it sets.

Instruct the students to draw a map of the school complete with landmarks they want to add, for instance the playground, flagpole, basketball court. Include the name(s) of the traditional territory the school is located in. Include any relevant place names. Display the maps in the hallway.

Optional Activity

Create a template for students to add in the details of their school landmarks.

Visualizing a Story of Wiigyat – The Gitxsan Trickster

Materials and Resources

- Wiigyat – The Gitxsan Trickster (provided at the end of this unit)
- a quiet indoor or outdoor space

Procedure

Explain to students that visualizing is the process of forming pictures in the mind to imagine what the story looks like as they listen. Visualizing can be a relaxing and enjoyable form of brain exercise that strengthens our comprehension of the learning material. The pictures that students form in their minds are unique to them. Students use their prior knowledge and experiences to make connections while visualizing, which enriches their learning experiences.

Have students position themselves in a comfortable space not too close to others. They can put their heads down on their desk, sit cross legged, or lay on the carpet or grass. Ask them to take a few deep breaths and close their eyes. Encourage them to keep their eyes closed as much as possible through the exercise and “turn on the movie screen in their minds.”

Read chapters 1, 2, and 3 of “Wiigyat – The Gitksan Trickster” aloud to the class in a slightly slower voice than usual. Pause after each paragraph and ask students to notice what they see, hear, smell, and feel in their imaginations. Ask the students to notice as many details as they can about what they imagine it is like to be in the story. Also, highlight words or phrases in the story that you think are descriptive and will enhance their visions.

After the story is finished students can be given the opportunity to talk about their visualizing experiences. This can be done as class discussion or by having students partner talk with a peer about their experiences.

Give each student a blank piece of paper and ask them to draw and/or write what they visualized. Some students will draw several smaller images and others might create one large image. The story can be read again aloud to the students as they work on their drawings and writing.

After the students have completed their images they can share what they visualized with the class.

The image of Raven Stealing the Sun (provided at the end of this unit) can be displayed in the classroom during this lesson, or distributed to students.

Design Activities

Building on the ideas from the Wiigyat stories, students can work in groups on any of the following design activities:

- Bring in the school or town logo to show the students what a logo is. Have students design a logo for Wiigyat’s village. The logo should be simple, yet inviting, and can incorporate images such as a pole, house, sun, canoe, fisherman, hiker, or camper.
- Bring in a tri-fold brochure to have on hand for the students to see (e.g., from your town, for a special event). Challenge students to create a brochure to entice visitors to come to Wiigyat’s village. The brochure should convey a direct message, and should be visually attractive. After reading your brochure your potential visitors should know where you are located and be eager to visit. The three panels of the brochure could include
 - 1st panel: Picture of the village, showing the bighouse, the pole, and river. Include Wiigyat’s Village logo. The headline and picture should be very attractive.
 - 2nd Panel: Describe the activities to attract visitors such as, canoeing, fishing, hiking. Draw a small icon with a caption to show each activity. Maybe the world’s largest fish was caught here.
 - 3rd Panel: Draw a map to show where the village is located. Include the name, address, phone number and email address of a contact person.
- Bring in examples of postcards from the local area. Challenge students to create a postcard that could be sent from Wiigyat’s Village.

Optional Activities

As mathematics extension, set up “Wiigyat’s Gift Store.” Using manipulatives have students work on problems such as

- If the postcards sold for \$1.00 each, how many could you buy if you had \$5.00?
- If you had a \$5 bill and you bought 2 cards, how much money would you get back in change?
- If a stamp was 50 cents, how many stamps could you buy if you had \$1.50?

Nutrition

Read *Eat, Run, and Live Healthy*, from the Caring for Me series.

Instruct the students on the importance of good nutrition. Help your students understand the basic daily food requirements.

Use the student handout, Wiigyat’s Plate, to test students’ knowledge of foods and food groups.

Optional Activity

Plan a healthy meal using the *Healthy Food Guidelines for First Nations Communities* from the First Nations Health Authority –

www.fnha.ca/documents/healthy_food_guidelines_for_first_nations_communities.pdf.

Drama Presentation

Preparation

This activity uses the drama “Wiigyat and the Nutrition Spirits” provided at the end of this unit. Preview the text to determine if the level is appropriate for your students. An alternate methodology would be to bring in older students to perform the drama for your class. Depending on their background knowledge, students may or may not know about residential schools (referred to in the reading). They may need age-appropriate information about the issue.

Procedure

Everything that Wiigyat did was motivated by his desire to get free food. He was often very creative.

Select six students for the two narrators, Wiigyat, and three nutrition spirits. Divide the remainder of the class into fishermen, grannies, and hunters.

Supply the required props, some you can have the students make, such as

- green nutrition robes
- platters of food
- fishing nets, rods, and platters
- an empty box of chips
- platter of bannock piled with icing)
- kerchiefs and aprons for the Grannies

- a book and pencil for Wiigyat
- a platter of deep fried garlic grouse wings and sweet and sour moose ribs
- red jackets and spears for the hunters

Allow time for students to prepare the drama. You may wish to invite other classes for the presentation.

The Power to Make Good Choices for Change

Read *Healthy Choices, Healthy Lives* from the Caring for Me series.

Discuss making changes with your students. For example, if they do not already engage in regular physical activity, they can start small, starting by walking or biking to school. Stress how important it is to make good choices in life.

Remind the students about the negative behaviour they have learned about Wiigyat, then write a different story about Wiigyat. Then ask them to write a few sentences that show Wiigyat if he made proper choices for himself. Assign positive attribute words for them to use in their writing to show how he changed his character, such as

- respect
- positive
- honesty/honest

Example: One sunny day a stranger came to the banks of the Skeena River. He had an honest face, and he smiled a lot. He spoke gently to the children and showed them respect. He told the children that his name was Wiigyat. The children followed him up to the village. The children thought he had a good attitude because he took the time to play with them.

The Importance of Skills

Review the skills of Wiigyat with the students. He knew the ways of the animals. He knew the Gitxsan stories. He could transform into raven. He had good manners.

Create a worksheet for the students and brainstorm the skills of Wiigyat. Have the students illustrate one of Wiigyat's skills and one of theirs. Display on a bulletin board.

Wiigyat had many skills list three skills that you consider important in Wiigyat's life.

List three skills that you have learned that you consider very important. Who taught you these skills?

The Moral of the Story

Discuss the word "moral" with the students. What stories have they read or heard that have morals?

Read *Txamsm and the Children* from the Adventures of Txamsm Series. What is the moral of this story?

Read *Txamsm Visits Chief Echo* from the Adventures of Txamsm Series. What is the moral of this story?

Generate a class list of morals. Have students each select one moral and create a decorated card or poster to illustrate the moral. Examples could include:

- Work hard for what you want.
- Be kind to others.
- See the good in others.
- Give compliments.
- Have good manners.
- Respect the rules.

Painting the Sunset

Materials and Resources

- paper
- paint
- brushes
- newspapers or drop cloths
- old shirts for students to cover their clothes

Procedure

Explain to the students that the Gitxsan believe that the colour of sunset is the Sun taking her children to bed. Wiigyat has the sun in the sky, so it has to set each evening.

Brainstorm with the students their thoughts about what the sun would say to them at sunset. (e.g., It's time to go to bed children. Another day is over, were you kind? Sweet dreams.)

Instruct students to paint a picture of a sunset behind the mountain. Have them write the messages that painting would say if they could speak.

Picture This

Provide students with sheets of paper with the caption typed at the bottom.

Brainstorm each caption with them by drawing pictures on the board. For example:

- Wiigyat began his journey to the village of the chief who owned the ball of light.
- Wiigyat was blinded by the brightness of the surrounding area.
- Wiigyat turned into a pine needle and he drifted towards the young girl.
- Wiigyat was born after a few short weeks.
- Wiigyat would cry as he pointed to the bent box that contained the ball of light.
- Wiigyat wished himself into raven and flew away with the ball of light.

Have them draw a picture to go with each caption. Cut out the pages to make a book. Then make a title page for your book. Then present the finished booklet to a younger class.

Cartoon Corner

Provide the students with sheets of paper with possible cartoon captions inspired by the Wiigyat stories. For example:

- “Help,” cried Wiigyat. “I’m stuck in this mud hole.”
- “You look funny stuck in that mud hole,” said the wolf.
- “You need a bath,” laughed the snake.
- “You should watch where you are going,” advised the moose.
- “I’ll get you all later,” vowed Wiigyat to himself.

Brainstorm ideas and draw them on the board for some students to copy. Have the students draw pictures that go along with this funny story. Then cut out the strips and staple together and make a little comic book for others to read.

Wanted Poster

Remind the students of the Trickster’s crime of stealing the ball of light. Have the students make a “Wanted Poster” of Wiigyat.

Discuss details to include on the poster. For example:

- Where was Wiigyat last seen?
- Who is offering a reward
- What is the reward?

Brainstorm ideas for visuals. They could have Raven flying away with the ball in his mouth or a man looking at the sun in the sky. He is wanted for stealing the ball of light.

The Discarded Box

After Wiigyat flew off with the ball of light, the box was empty.

To help struggling students add the following words on a wall word bank. When the students are familiar, write the words with a picture on index cards put them in a decorated ball of light box. Students can take turns reaching in for a card and reading it to the class.

After Wiigyat lost the ball of light, the empty box needed to be put to good use. Have the students decorate a box with pictures of raven, the sun, the moon and the stars. With the struggling students, make up a game where students go to the box and take out a word and read it to the class. The students can try to make a sentence with their word.

Sample words for word bank:

- | | | |
|------------|------------|-----------|
| ▪ basket | ▪ gift | ▪ raven |
| ▪ beak | ▪ grow | ▪ return |
| ▪ blanket | ▪ light | ▪ scoop |
| ▪ bright | ▪ moon | ▪ sky |
| ▪ chief | ▪ pine | ▪ stars |
| ▪ darkness | ▪ plan | ▪ sun |
| ▪ fell | ▪ play | ▪ tantrum |
| ▪ fly | ▪ pleading | ▪ water |

Optional Activities

Have students pick three words from the box, and then use the words in a three-line poem (e.g., basket, moon, stars – The moon shone / the basket full / stars twinkling).

Write a cooperative class story or poem using one word each and taking turns adding a line.

Extended Reading and Writing Activities

Dialogue

Have students work in groups to create a dialogue inspired by “Wiigyat Visits the Shining Village.”

Brainstorm what Wiigyat’s mother and her father the chief would say as the mother defends her son and the chief does not want to share his ball of light.

Each group can assign a writer and a presenter. Each group can present their script to the class.

Write a dialogue between the doting mother and her father the chief.

Mother: “Let him play with the ball of light.”

Chief: “No way.”

Mother: “I am sad when he cries.”

Chief: “He might break it.”

Song Writing

Have the students write a song about the sun. Suggest familiar tunes from classroom repertoire, folk songs, etc.

Example:

(Tune: New Moon on the Rise)

The sun walks in the sky

The sun dances in the sky

The sun swings in the sky

fog can't even put it out
rain can't chase it away
it's not afraid of thunder
Wiigyat has given us the sun.

Divide the class into two groups and have them stand in groups at opposite ends of the room. Have one group sing while the second group echoes each line sung. When the students are familiar with the song, provide drums so the children can beat out the rhythm. A paper plate and pencil can be used for a drum and drumstick if drums are not available.

Use a small ball and have everyone move along with the actions in the song. The spatial concepts, shapes and body awareness are here as everyone moves. For example:

The sun walks in the sky – throw the ball in the air as you walk forward
The sun dances in the sky – throw the ball from one hand to the other as you boogie backwards
The sun swings in the sky – bounce the ball as you sway
The fog can't put it out – hide the ball behind your back
Rain can't chase it – roll the ball on the floor in front of you and chase after it
It is not afraid of thunder – throw the ball up and miss it and act frightened
Wiigyat has given us by the sun – stand tall and put your arms up over your head, place the ball in your cupped hands.

Poetry Forms

Review or instruct the rules for different poetry forms (e.g., cinquain, rhyming couplet, limerick, title poetry). Have students write poems inspired by the Wiigyat stories.

Example – title poetry:

W wanders
I in the forest
I interesting life
G goes looking for his people
Y yells a lot
A abandoned by his people
T tells a good story

Example – rhyming couplets:

Wiigyat loves being free
He sits under a tree
He looks at the sky
And eats his pie.

Example – cinquain:

Wiigyat
Tall, handsome
Walks, tricks, eats
All alone and sad
Trickster

Example – limerick:

Wiigyat fell out of the boat
He could not swim or float
Couldn't see the dock
As he sank like a rock
And he lost his lovely new coat

Vocabulary Building

Provide students with a printout of the Wiigyat stories, and have them highlight any unfamiliar words. Working in groups, have them look up and record the definitions for each word. Examples:

- semi-darkness
- possessed
- spirit world
- supernatural
- disposing
- reputation
- prestige

Transformation

Remind the students that Wiigyat had the ability to transform into raven. With each event Wiigyat would transform the lives of those around him.

Read *How the Fox Got His Crossed Legs* for an additional example of transformation.

Brainstorm with the students a major event that might have occurred in their lives, such as starting at a new school, a new baby in the house, a family member moving away, or getting a puppy.

Have students select one major event from their lives and create a short journal entry to answer the following questions:

- What was the change in your life?
- What happened after the change?
- How did you feel about the change?

Volunteers can read their charts to the class.

Continue by reminding students that Wiigyat's timeline extends over many centuries, and the Wiigyat stories live on.

Have students continue their significant events list by creating a timeline of milestones in their lives.

Staying Healthy and Safe

Wiigyat was very healthy. He walked every day and he ate healthy foods like fish and berries.

Brainstorm and discuss the people who keep us healthy. For example:

- parents and caregivers
- Elders, knowledge-keepers, and other community members
- PE teachers and coaches
- doctors and nurses
- dentists
- gardeners
- fishermen and hunter
- school cafeteria staff

Wiigyat's family abandoned him because of he could not stop eating and he was stealing and lying. Wiigyat had to fend for himself; there was no one to keep him safe.

Continue by talking about those people who keep us safe. For example:

- parents and caregivers
- Elders, knowledge-keepers, and community members
- teachers
- janitors
- fire fighters
- police

Have student select three people who help them stay healthy and safe, draw a picture of each, and explain what healthy practices they promote.

Wiigyat practiced 3 out of 4 of the healthy habits. He didn't brush his teeth.

Brainstorm all the good habits that contribute to good health with the students. For example:

- eating healthy foods
- getting 9 hours sleep
- jogging everyday
- brushing my teeth 2 times a day
- eating an apple every day
- humming a little tune every day
- biking every day in the summer

Have students select four good habits they currently practice. The students can fold their paper in half then half again and draw one of their selections in each square. Display the worksheets on the bulletin board.

Don't Smoke!

The children loved playing with Wiigyat because he was so adventurous and creative. Wiigyat would play with the children if they had food, so the children would find food for so Wiigyat would play with them.

One day Wiigyat wanted to teach them a new activity. He called it the 'To make smoke' game. Wiigyat took the children to a patch of dried cow's parsnip. Wiigyat cut the skinny stalks that were not hollowed out and cut them into 6 cm lengths and gave them to the children. Wiigyat took a burning piece of wood and lit up the cow's parsnip. Wiigyat showed them how to puff on the stalk and blow out smoke. The children enjoyed the "To make smoke" game. Wiigyat showed them how to shape his lips so they could make circles. The children knew if Wiigyat was the teacher, their parents would not approve.

Discuss the harmful effects of smoking. Brainstorm refusal statement students can use if someone tries to get them to smoke. For example:

- No thank you
- I'm not allowed
- I will get grounded
- My parents won't let me
- No thanks, I'm allergic
- I don't want to smell like smoke
- No thank you, it isn't good for me

Have students create cartoons of themselves using one or more of the refusal statements.

Button Blanket

Materials and Resources

- online images, museum images, and/or books depicting button blankets (such as *Robes of Power* by Doreen Jensen and Polly Sargent or the Museum of Anthropology's online collection at <http://collection-online.moa.ubc.ca>)
- modelling clay
- pencils, markers, or crayons
- paper

Preparation

Consult with your district Indigenous contact for support in finding out whether the local First Nation(s) make and use button blankets. If an Indigenous artist or knowledge-keeper is available, that person could help students understand how designs for button blankets are created and their cultural relevancy.

Background

Button blankets are ceremonial robes that developed after European contact. Prior to European contact, comparable blankets were made from other materials such as mountain goat wool cedar bark, animal skins and/or fur. Following European

contact and the introduction of manufactured cloth to the west coast in the 1700s, these items began being made from wool blankets.

Button blankets are worn for ceremonies such as feasts, naming ceremonies, memorials, pole raisings, and weddings. They are also given as gifts. Button blankets were originally made from wool blankets or dark blue duffel blankets. They used abalone or dentalium shells for the buttons and red flannel for the design and borders.

The blankets constitute traditional regalia for coastal First Peoples: Gitxsan, Haida, Haisla, Heiltsuk, Kwakwaka'wakw, Nisga'a, Nuu-chah-nulth, Tagish, Tahltan, and Tlingit Nations.

Every nation has its own protocols in place for the making, use, and storage of the robes. The robes are a visual reminder of family and clan history, providing a clear statement of identity and of the power and prestige that go along with being member of a clan. For the individual wearer, they denote specific community rights and privileges that are affirmed through feasting and are acknowledged by the guests who witness the clan rights to the history and territory perpetuated through time.

Procedure

Read Chapter 3 (Wiigyat's Death). During the reading, help students understand the significance of button blankets and share the history of how they have come to be in First Peoples contexts.

Explain to students that button blankets are sacred and significant in Gitxsan culture. Button blankets are for ceremonial purposes rather than for sleeping. They are traditionally made of wool with shell buttons. Their designs represent the heritage and identity of the family members who wear them. Gitxsan button blankets often have a deliberate mistake on them as an invitation for the next generation to mend it and therefore keep the blanket alive.

If available, invite a guest from the local First Peoples community to show a completed button blanket, and to talk about how blankets are made and their cultural significance. Alternatively, ask students if they or any of their family members have their own button blanket. If so, invite the student and/or their family member to share information about their button blanket with the class. Refer to *What protocols should I follow when inviting First Peoples guest speakers into the classroom?* on page 18.

Display images of button blankets for students to look at. Ensure the button blanket designs have several easily recognizable shapes in them (circle, square, rectangle, oval, etc.). Tell students that they are going to make connections between button blankets and math. As a class discuss and compare the attributes of the shapes and three-dimensional objects. Invite students to identify any familiar shapes depicted in the button blanket designs and go over their characteristics or attributes. Highlight how the shapes are used to create a larger visual image. Discuss any symbols used in the designs and whether any animals or humans are depicted.

Choose one of the shapes found in a button blanket and ask students to imagine what it would look like if it were a three-dimensional object. Demonstrate how to transform a two-dimensional shape into a three-dimensional object using modelling clay and go over the characteristics or attributes of the three-dimensional object. Choose another two-dimensional shape and distribute clay to the students. As a class, transform that shape into a three-dimensional object. Explain its characteristics or attributes. Then have students select one or more two-dimensional shapes to transform on their own.

Next, review how Gitksan button blanket designs are reminders of the wearer's identity and family. Ask students to imagine what two-dimensional shapes, symbols, and designs they would use in a drawing to represent themselves and their family. As a class brainstorm a variety of two-dimensional shapes, symbols, and designs students can include in their drawing. Have students use pencils, crayons, or markers to create a visual representation of themselves and their family on a piece of paper. Ensure students include several two-dimensional shapes. Students can write 2-3 sentences about their drawings and/or verbally describe it to you or a partner. Once completed students can show and share their drawings with the class or do a gallery walk.

Optional Activity

Invite students to take one or more of the two-dimensional shapes in their drawing and transform them into three-dimensional objects using modelling clay.

Reporting the Story

Read the story of Wiigyat's Death (Chapter 3) to the class. Have the students working in pairs and using the questions you have composed, assign a reporting paper to the students. The students can interview each other and write the last interview conducted with Wiigyat and the two mountain lions.

Brainstorm with the students what some of the answers might be. The students present their reports to the class.

Sample questions:

- Do you consider it an honour to be chosen by Wiigyat?
- Do you like being a mountain lion?
- If you could be another animal, what would that be?
- Wiigyat, were you surprised to learn that you had a brother?
- Wiigyat, what was the highlight of your life?
- Wiigyat, do you have any regrets?
- What would you change?
- Wiigyat, what do you want to say to the children of the future?

Possible answers:

- I consider it an honour to be chosen to guard Wiigyat forever.
- I love being a mountain lion but I would love to be like the eagle and fly so high.
- I was shocked and thrilled to learn that I had a brother. I cried when I heard because I really wanted to be with my family.

- The highlight was when the sun flew into the sky and there was light for everyone.
- I regret the bad things I have done. I would learn all the skills my parents tried to teach me.
- To the children of the future listen to your teachers, your parents, and your Elders.

Eulogy

Have the students write a eulogy for Wiigyat. Include his creations, his skills, his hobbies, his talents, his strengths, the purpose of his life and what he left behind. With a eulogy, the Gitxsan never dwell on the negative. Wrap up Wiigyat's life in a powerful closing sentence. You might want to read the eulogy of a well-known personality to the students, such as Terry Fox, and then assign the eulogy writing.

Examples:

Wiigyat was born at the dawn of time. His Grandfather gave him everything he wanted.

Wiigyat took the ball of light from his Grandfather and then he dropped it and created the sun, the moon and the stars. Wiigyat was a great storyteller and he could sing and dance.

He was very charming and very handsome. He left many stories behind for the Gitxsan, so they could learn from his mistakes.

The history of the Gitxsan was more colourful because Wiigyat walked on this good earth.

He created the sun, moon and stars.

He was able to transform.

He was a great storyteller.

He was a singer and dancer.

He was very charming.

He was very handsome.

The stories that he left behind are lessons for everyone.

The history of the Gitxsan was more colourful because Wiigyat walked on this good earth.

Wiigyat – The Gitxsan Trickster

Introduction: Origin of a Gitxsan Trickster

The story tells that a baby boy was found by a fisherman near a pile of driftwood on the shores of the Skeena River. The fisherman took the baby back to their village. The chief and his wife did not have any children, so they adopted him. The chief's wife named the baby Wiigyat. It was soon discovered that Wiigyat could not or would not eat, but he continued to grow. The chief and his wife were very concerned because the Gitxsan were always whispering about their strange child. The chief offered a reward to anyone who could entice the child to eat. All attempts were unsuccessful.

Then one day a tall dark stranger with skinny, scabby legs arrived by canoe to Wiigyat's adopted village. The stranger would pull scabs off his skinny legs and place them in Wiigyat's mouth when he thought no one was looking. The children ran to their parents to tell of the stranger's actions but no one would believe them.

It was then that Wiigyat started to eat. The mysterious stranger, who was really a raven, refused any gifts for his kindness. The chief and his wife were very pleased that their problem was solved and their child was now eating.

It was soon discovered that Wiigyat's ravenous appetite could not be satisfied. He ate all the food in his parent's home. He went and stole food from the other smokehouses and food caches. The chief gave away all his belongings as retribution for Wiigyat's stealing. Wiigyat's eating was out of control.

In the early morning the chief assembled all his people very quietly. It was time to leave the village and Wiigyat. Wiigyat awoke as the canoes were leaving. Wiigyat shouted for his parents to come back for him. The canoes disappeared into the morning mist. Wiigyat was all alone. Wiigyat thought that they did not hear him. So he planned to set off on a journey to find them. A journey that involved stealing, lying, cheating, bullying, greed and poverty.

Characteristics of Wiigyat Stories

Much of the popularity of the Wiigyat stories is that they are amusing. The stories combine mischief with creativity. Another reason is that the listeners can relate to the Trickster or to the one that is being deceived. In addition, who among us does not enjoy eating? The Wiigyat stories teach lessons about the ineffective risks of being inexperienced in the ways of the world. It is important to be disciplined and learn the skills so one can be independent. Within the layers of the lessons, Wiigyat stories stresses the values of co-operation, the wisdom of looking at problems from different perspectives and emphasizes the importance of accepting the lessons life deals you, because that is life.



Chapter 1: Wiigyat Visits the Shining Village

Wiigyat's father, the chief, gathered the people together. It was time to leave the village and Wiigyat. His eating was out of control and the resources were at running low. In the early morning while Wiigyat slept, after a night of stealing and eating, the canoes

silently slipped away. Wiigyat's mother had left some food for Wiigyat. He quickly gobbled it up and looked around for more. There was nothing left in the village.

One evening when he still had a home, Wiigyat had been outside the smokehouse waiting for the women to leave so he could fill his stomach. Wiigyat remembered the storyteller among them talking about a chief, in a northern village, who would not share the ball of light he owned. It was a time when the Gitksan Territories were still in semi-darkness. Wiigyat knew if he possessed the ball of light it would change his life for the better.

Wiigyat began his journey through the vast wilderness to the village of the chief who owned the ball of light. Along the way he ate berries and drank lots of water to fool his grumbling stomach. One day he came to a steep canyon. Discouraged and not knowing how to get across; he sat down and wishing that he could fly. He felt a strange sensation as his body transformed into a raven. It dawned on Wiigyat that he had supernatural power. It was a great discovery. Raven flew to the other of the canyon and wished himself back to human form.

After several days Wiigyat came to the outskirts of a village. Wiigyat was blinded by the brightness of the surrounding area. He remained in the wooded area and spied on the activities of the people. Throughout the day a group of young girls would come to the river to fetch water and have a drink. The girls would scoop up the water with their hands and drink and then fill their water baskets and return to the village.

Wiigyat decided that he would wish himself into a pine needle and he drifted towards the daughter of the chief who owned the ball of light. The young girl scooped water into her hand and she noticed the pine needle, instead of disposing of it she just blew it to one side. She drank the water and the pine needle slipped down her throat. On the same day, the young girl was pregnant. The people were amazed with the short duration of the girl's pregnancy. Wiigyat was born after a few short weeks and he started to grow at an amazing rate.

The new mother loved her strange son who ate everything she prepared for him. Before long Wiigyat was walking and the first word he uttered was Ye'e (Grandfather). "Ye'e, Ye'e," Wiigyat would cry as he pointed to the bent box that contained the ball of light. Wiigyat threw tantrums and cried for the ball of light, but the chief who owned the ball of light did not trust anyone with his prized possession.

Wiigyat's mother and grandmother pleaded with the chief to let the child play with the ball of light. After all, what harm could a little boy do to the precious ball of light? Finally, fed up with the crying and tantrums, and secretly pleased that the first word his grandson spoke was Ye'e, the chief reluctantly gave in to the pleadings of his wife and daughter. Wiigyat brushed away his large tears and started playing very nicely with the ball. Wiigyat politely thanked his Ye'e, the chief and went to play with the other children. He had suddenly started speaking in full sentences. The beaming mother was so proud of her son. "Look at him," the grandmother, scolded the chief, "he is so charming and smart and you wouldn't let him play with the ball of light."

Each day Wiigyat would ask for the ball of light and he would return it. One day when Wiigyat was bouncing the ball down the path that led to the river the chief did not pay any attention, after all his favorite grandson would bring it back.

Wiigyat wished himself into raven and flew away with the ball of light. Wiigyat's grandfather, the chief, was screaming, "I knew it was you Wiigyat, who doesn't know you?" Of course, he did not know it was Wiigyat, but he wanted others to think he did. The village was blanketed in darkness as raven flew away.

Chapter 2: Raven's Accident

Wiigyat flew towards the Kisgegas River where he knew the Gitxsan would be busy with their salmon harvest. Wiigyat saw people below, there was not much light, except for the shiny ball in his mouth. Wiigyat did not realize that he was in 'the land in between'. This was where spirits that denied their deaths worked preparing their salmon. The spirits went about doing the same tasks they did while they were still alive. They were doomed to repeat these tasks until they surrendered to their deaths. These were the living dead, who refused to enter into the spirit world. They liked the semi-darkness in which they existed. They were not ready to go to the light.

Not realizing this, Wiigyat opened his mouth to ask if they would like to use his ball of light the ball, it fell and broke. The ball shattered into a million pieces. The larger pieces became the sun and moon and the smaller pieces filled the sky with stars. Wiigyat took a few pieces and placed them in his robe. Raven accidentally gave the gift of light to the Gitxsan. He shrugged his shoulders and wandered on devising yet another plan to ease his great hunger.

Chapter 3: Wiigyat's Death

Wiigyat was very tired. He walked towards the West; this was to be his final journey. He was told that he had a brother living there in a western village amongst the Tsimshian. After Wiigyat was reunited with his brother, he felt that he had a sense of family and identity. His search was over. Wiigyat climbed the mountain and found a cave. He took two young mountain lions into the cave and sat one on either side. Wiigyat was a supernatural being. He willed that they be turned into stone. And there they sit to this very day.

Raven Stealing the Sun

As Raven (Wiigyat) releases the sun from the box, he exemplifies the eternal curiosity of the human mind. The world of knowledge is the world of light.

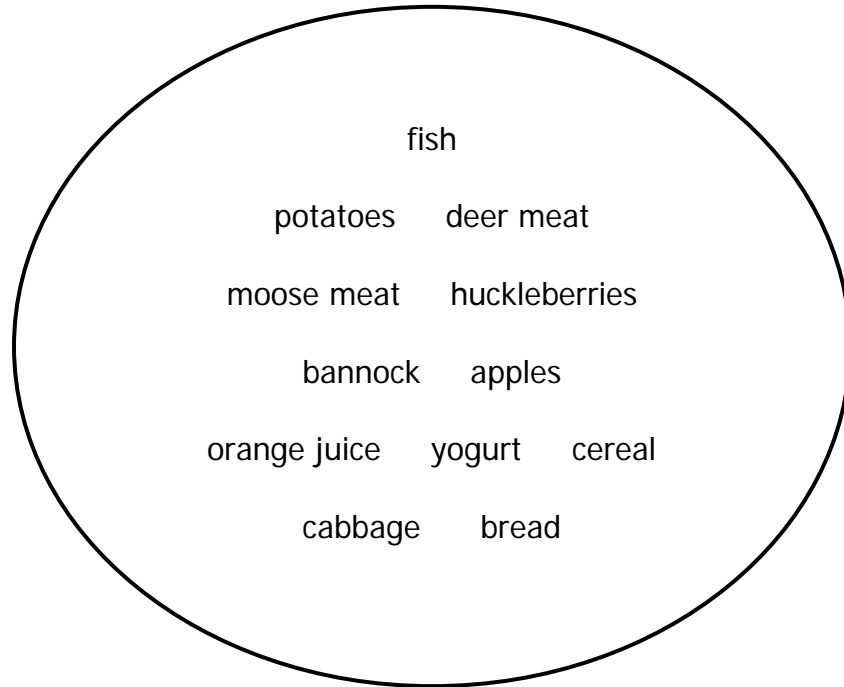


“Raven Stealing the Sun” artwork copyright © 1978 Ken N. Mowatt. (Mas lik'i'nsxw). Used with permission.

Wiigyat's Plate

Wiigyat always took more food than anyone. He also finished everything on his plate!

Take the foods from Wiigyat's plate and list them in the proper food groups.



Protein foods	Grain foods	Fruits and vegetables

The fishermen pull down a “yes.”

1st Narrator Well the fishermen are in, much to the disapproval of the Nutrition Spirits. Next up are the Gitxsan Grannies. I just know they will stick to traditional Gitxsan foods. They are so wise.

*(Enter Grannies with platter of bannock piled with icing)
(Grannies are wearing kerchiefs and aprons)*

Goodness Sakes, they have plastered their bannock with icing and sprinkled it with huge flakes of chocolate and slivers of hazelnuts.

*(Wiigyat sniffs at the bannock, has a taste and writes in cook book)
(Grannies high-five each other)
(Spirits put their noses in the air and do a blocking hand)*

2nd Narrator Oh dear, the Grannies are so happy they don’t even care that they have offended the Nutrition Spirits. Oh, here come the hunters. They have their entry of deep fried garlic grouse wings and sweet and sour moose ribs. Yummy, that looks good!

*(Wiigyat is nodding, eating then he licks each finger and writes in his book)
(The Spirits are shaking their fingers in a scolding way at the hunters)
(The hunters pat each other on the back)
(The hunters are wearing red jackets carrying spears and platters)*

1st Narrator Wow, all the recipes made it into Wiigyat’s cookbook. I’d like to try those recipes myself. They are all very creative. Wiigyat is going to eat all that food himself and he’s going to make a lot of money with that cookbook. Look, the Nutrition Spirits are leaving.

(Nutrition Spirits leave crying)

2nd Narrator Look, the Gitxsan are following the Nutrition Spirits. I think they are afraid because they have offended them. I hear the Nutrition Spirits are easily offended. Mark my words; there is going to thunder and lightning tonight.

1st Narrator Goodness, Wiigyat learned a lot of bad habits at Residential School; I thought he was learning math and reading. He has upset the Nutrition spirits and he even corrupted the Gitxsan Grannies. I never thought I would see the day.

2nd Narrator Please, pleaseeee, try not to be like Wiigyat. He is so bad.

And to all of you, who could see the Nutrition Spirits, keep eating right, and exercise every day. Get 10 hours of sleep every night. We need to cheer up our Nutrition Spirits so they return to us. After all, where would we be without them?

Sabax. pronounced
sah-BA, meaning “the end”

Sabax

Rating Scale – Personal Writing

1-Emerging	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Extending
Meaning			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Topic may be hard to determine ▪ Often very short. Lacks details and descriptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some connections to experiences, offers some ideas and opinions ▪ Details often irrelevant or repetitious 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Makes connections to personal experiences ▪ A series of loosely related ideas and opinions ▪ Some relevant examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offers opinions and observations ▪ Sense of purpose; ideas are related to a central theme ▪ Relevant details, with examples ▪ Comes from thoughts, feelings, opinions, memories, and reflections
Style			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Language is often unclear; may make errors in word choices ▪ Relies on short, simple sentence that have been provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses simple, basic language ▪ Often repetitive ▪ Relies on short, simple sentences or one or more long, rambling sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conversational language; may include some description ▪ Some variety in sentence length; often short and abrupt; some long and run-on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Simple descriptive language with some variety ▪ Beginning to show some control of sentence structure; some variety in length and pattern
Form			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Topic is unclear and sequence is illogical ▪ Omits connecting words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Often has no beginning and may ramble without clear sequence or connections seldom uses connecting words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opening sentence may signal the topic ▪ Ideas are loosely connected, often by time (e.g., same day) ▪ Repeats a few simple connecting words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title or opening sentence signals the topic ▪ Sequenced and connected ▪ Beginning to use a variety of connecting words
Conventions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Errors make the writing difficult to read. ▪ Not written in sentences. ▪ May omit letters and sounds. ▪ Often omits or uses punctuation and capital letters inconsistently. ▪ Frequent errors in pronouns and verbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Frequent errors may interfere with meaning in places. ▪ Some complete sentences. ▪ Frequent spelling errors (but all sounds are represented). ▪ Inconsistent use of capitals and punctuation. ▪ Some errors in pronouns and verbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Several errors, but these do not interfere with the meaning. ▪ Most sentences are complete. ▪ Most common words are spelled correctly. ▪ Occasional errors in end punctuation; uses capital letters correctly. ▪ Most pronouns and verb forms are correct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most pronouns and verb forms are correct ▪ May include errors (particularly in more complex language); these do not affect meaning ▪ Written in complete sentences ▪ Most spelling is correct ▪ Uses capital letters and end punctuation ▪ Uses correct pronouns and verb forms