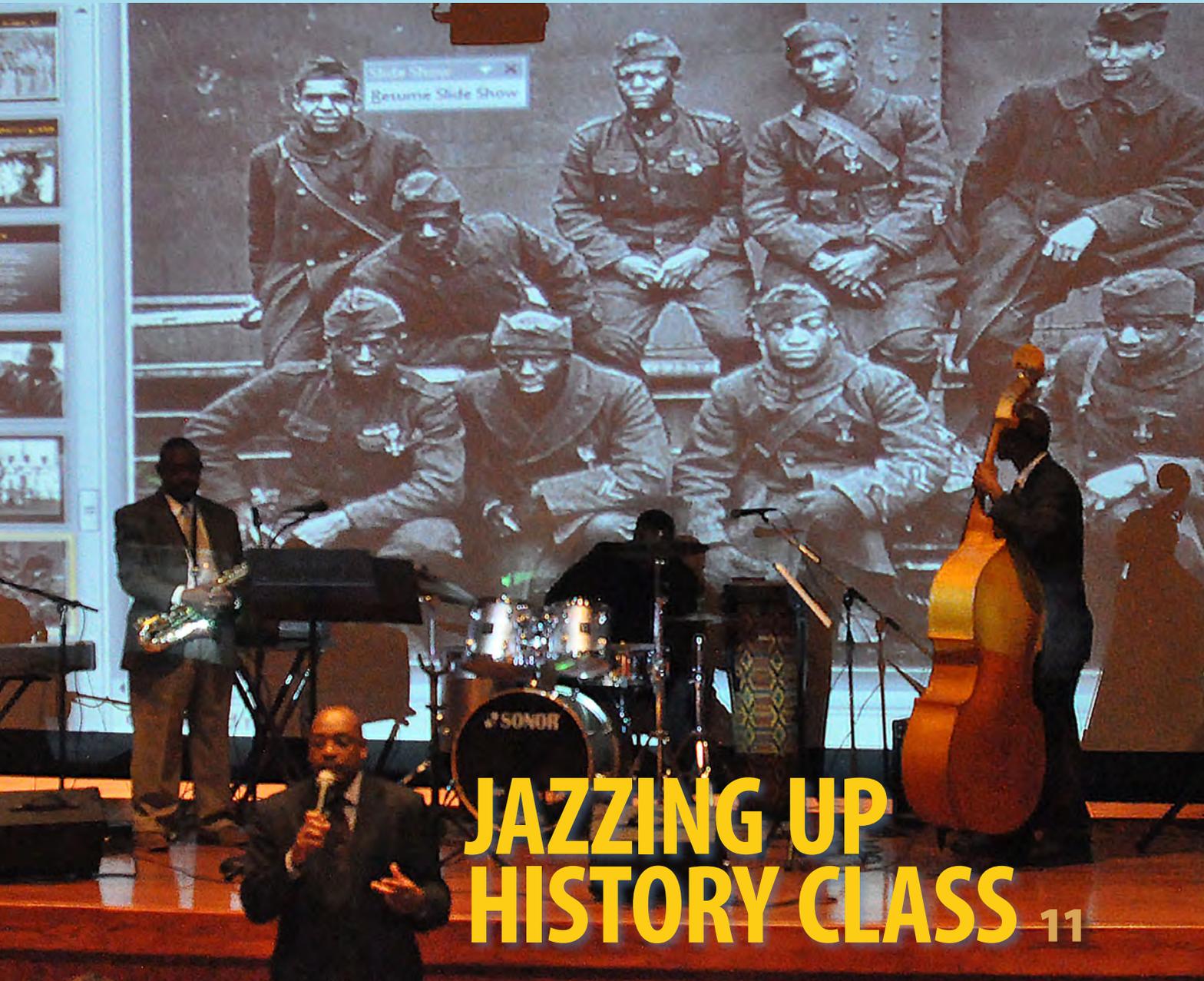


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## JAZZING UP HISTORY CLASS 11

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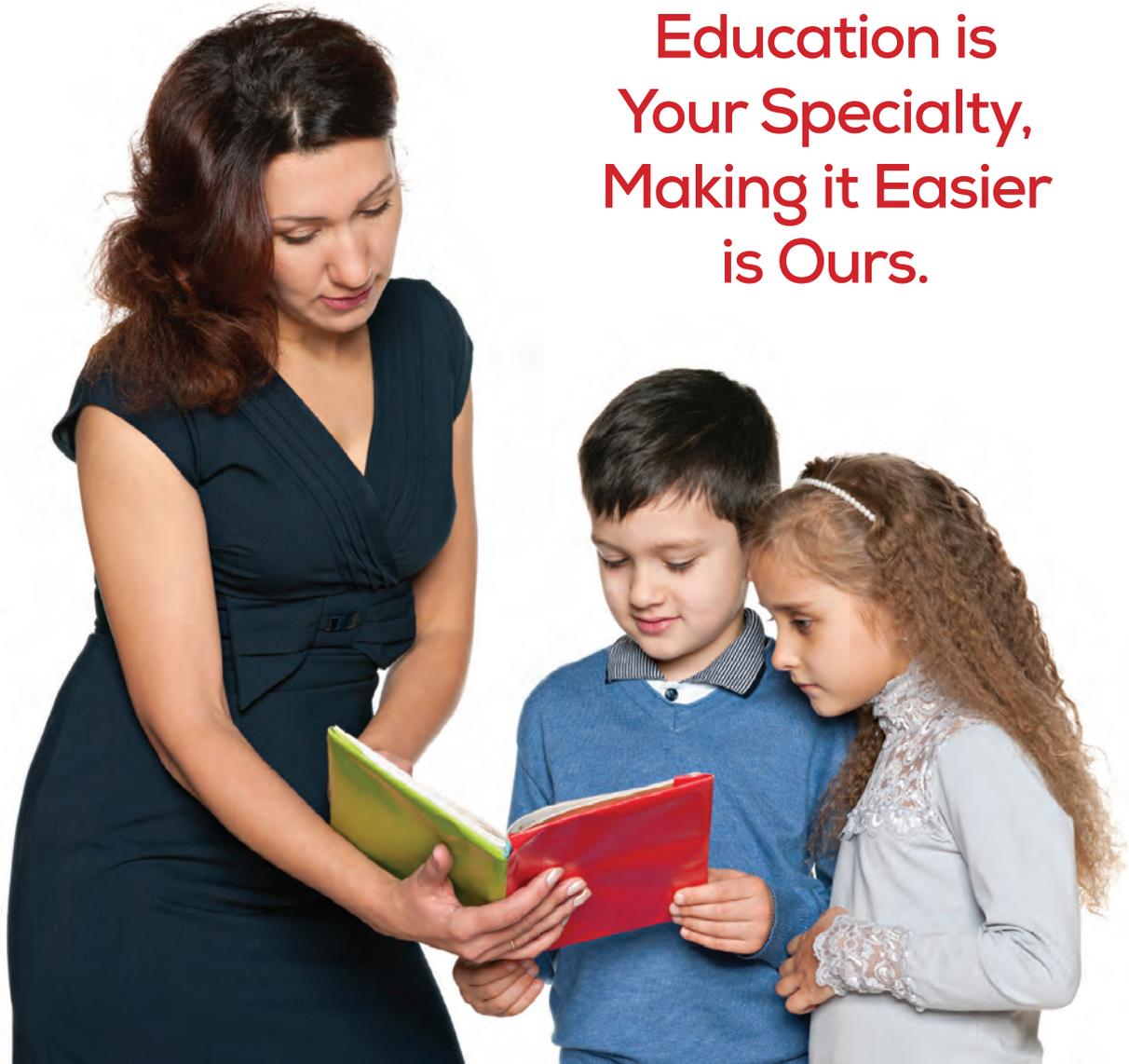
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# TEACH

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**A**s a teacher, you may be familiar with disruptive behaviours—whether it's two chatterboxes whispering away during quiet reading time or the debater who starts an argument about the merits of reading at home. None of these students are malicious or trying to sabotage reading time, so why are they doing it? In many cases something is disrupting their learning and it's up to their teacher to probe the reason. The first **Feature** story explores disruptive classroom behaviour and looks at identifying the cause, ways of addressing the issue, and helping students understand your concern.

You've likely been a student-teacher or had one in your classroom, but knowing how to host a student teacher effectively is a different matter. Our second **Feature** explores this topic and offers some advice. Should the associate teacher act more as a mentor or a monitor that simply grades the student-teacher's performance? What is the role and what are the responsibilities? What can both parties offer each other within the teaching experience? What if the student-teacher just isn't working out? Read this article to find out.

In **Classroom Perspectives**, educator and administrator Andre Mountain discusses how to transform history lessons through Jazz music. He taught the curriculum to students followed by a live Jazz band that played music pertinent to the era covered. Andre Mountain details his research-based approach and motivation that models thematic lesson plans for teachers that recapture students' attention. This approach became successful. Students appreciated the music and the history lesson.

Elsewhere in the issue are our regular columns, including **Webstuff** that introduces some Math apps that can help students grasp difficult concepts in engaging, animated ways. Many of these apps are free and suitable for all age groups. In **Field Trips**, we present some anti-bullying workshops that come right to your classroom for an in-school excursion. These presentations and activities may stimulate further discussions about anti-bullying and help students feel safe when they're at school.

Until next time,

Lisa Tran, Associate Editor

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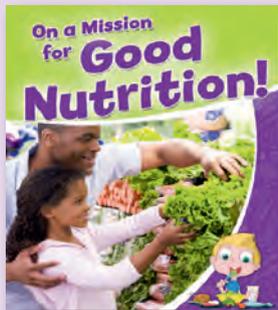


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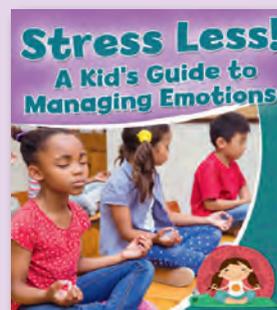
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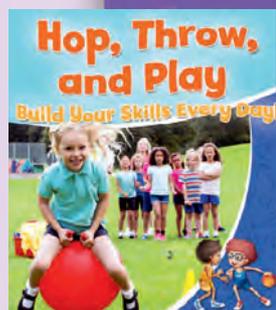
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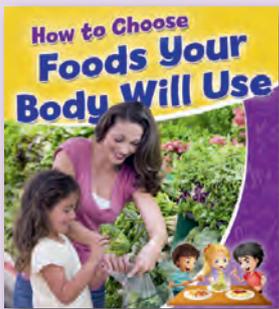
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# Teaching Teachers

## THE BENEFITS OF MENTORSHIPS

by Meagan Gillmore

You've likely been a student teacher. You'll likely have a student teacher. But you've probably never been given training about how to host one well. Here's some advice.

**S**usan McQuay had just delivered the best lesson of her first teaching placement. And then she wanted to quit. More than 30 years later, the Kindergarten teacher in Waterloo, Ontario, admits she doesn't recall every detail about the lesson. It involved playing with balls in the gym. She connected with her students, a Grade 2/3 split class in a low-income Toronto neighbourhood, and they were "eating out of (her) hand."

She also remembers her associate's exact feedback: "You should have had stuff out ahead of time." McQuay didn't

have a key to the equipment room—the associate did, but she was nowhere to be found. In the meantime, McQuay asked the students to play a quiet game while she tracked down the key. It worked, but her associate wasn't satisfied.

"She expected me to come in all ready to teach," McQuay says. (Not long after, this associate teacher was banned from working with student-teachers.) "She didn't recognize her role was to mentor me and help me grow."

Her associate had nearly done what Marie-Helene Benais, a high school teacher in Toronto describes as the worst

thing an associate can do to a student-teacher: “crush their dreams.”

“It’s a mentorship,” says Jonathan Marck, a graduate student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. “It’s not a test.” Associates should help student-teachers improve, not determine if they’d be good teachers, he says. (His second placement lasted only a week. He left because of an overly negative associate teacher.)

Placements are also course requirements. Student-teachers need to pass them to graduate and become certified. “Everybody knows that I’m going to have to pass or fail [them] at the end of this session,” says Benais, who has had at least one student-teacher every year since she began teaching nearly three decades ago. “So we know there’s a power discrepancy.”

That’s not the only discrepancy. While student-teachers likely receive some preparation before placements begin, associate teachers receive little, if any, formal training about how to be a good mentor.

“The simple answer is: no. Our associate teachers get no training for their job,” says Barbara Olmsted, an associate dean at the Schulich School of Education at Nipissing University in North Bay, Ontario. The majority of research suggests associate teachers don’t receive any preparation for this role,” she says. That’s “problematic.”

Schools may provide handbooks detailing a mentor’s responsibilities. Workshops may be offered at teacher conferences, but there’s no guarantee that associate teachers will access these resources. It would be “ideal” to provide classroom teachers with in-depth training, says Wendy Carr, associate dean at the University of British Columbia’s Faculty of Education. “Unfortunately, we don’t have that luxury of money or time.”

Student-teachers are eager, but nervous. Michele Pellis has wanted to teach in elementary classrooms since childhood, but when the University of Alberta student started her first placement, she had doubts. Lesson planning and classroom management were a struggle. The greatest challenge came through “wondering if I’m doing a good job and providing meaningful instruction.” Thankfully, Pellis worked with associates who were encouraging.

Paul Henderson, an elementary school teacher in Oakville, Ontario, describes his approach to working with one student-teacher this way: “I felt that if he was at ease with me, he would be at ease in the classroom.”

Be prepared and organized. Share timetables and schedules. Give student-teachers school tours. Introduce them to the office and department staff. Show them how to become involved in school activities outside of the classroom. In doing so, they will develop their skills in a new way and learn more about the students. (Some faculties of education require student-teachers

to participate in extracurricular activities during their placements.)

Student-teachers also need an appropriate amount of responsibility early in the placement. Photocopying resources, however, or answering students’ questions while they work are not enough. McQuay often invites student teachers to begin their placement by reading students a story. Because it’s not a long activity, students are more likely to stay engaged. This activity also positions the student-teacher as someone who has authority, she says.

Benais changes her approach for each individual; for example, very shy student-teachers will first observe her teaching a lesson. Then, they teach that lesson the same way to another class. Other times, she provides examples of lessons, that she, or other student-teachers have used.



**While student-teachers likely receive some preparation before their placements begin, associate teachers receive little, if any, formal training about how to be a good mentor.**

She then asks the student-teacher to teach the same lesson in their own way. And for “more adventuresome” student-teachers, Benais gives them free reign from the very beginning. “Just as there are all kinds of teachers, there are all kinds of student-teachers too,” she says.

Teachers’ colleges try to ensure students acquire experience in different grade levels, or, for those preparing to be high school teachers, in their main subjects of study. Student-teachers may have developed lesson plans and resources for class assignments, but these may not be related to what they’ll teach in their placement. They may be over-confident in what they can accomplish, or not realize how much material they need to review. They likely don’t realize how long lesson planning takes.

Associate teachers need to share resources. Jeremy Keetch, a high school teacher in Toronto, taught computer science in his first placement. His associate teacher gave him all he needed to teach the lessons, allowing Keetch to focus on the delivery “without the stress of creating [resources].”

The most important, and potentially stressful, aspect of a teaching placement is the associate’s feedback. It needs to be regular, thorough, and constructive. One approach asks student teachers how they would rate the success of the lessons while building feedback around the response. Carr suggests focusing evaluations on specific aspects, like moving around the classroom or interacting with

students. Take thorough notes. "You're like a scientist. You're observing," she says. "You're sharing what you've observed and then you're making some suggestions."

In many ways, mentoring student-teachers requires associate teachers to become students again. While Benais enjoys having student-teachers, she admits it's a lot of work. It requires her to write out her plans more thoroughly to show how a lesson develops. The "old things that (she) doesn't have to do anymore" now become necessities.

For the most part, associate teachers welcome the task. It makes them better teachers. Student-teachers also expose them to current research and technology. "When you've been teaching as long as I have," McQuay says, "you can just crawl into a hole and keep doing the same thing." Student-teachers bring what they're learning to the associate's classroom. They may develop resources for the associates to use in the future. They may also help with classroom management by providing a different perspective on students' behaviour. Students may connect their regular teacher to subjects with which they struggle, but when a new teacher delivers a lesson, that barrier may be removed.

Associate teachers, may be as nervous as their student-teachers; both parties are judging the other. Teachers who "aren't prepared to be observed and possibly to be judged"

likely shouldn't consider having student-teachers, says Benais.

Mistakes happen. It's important to learn from them. Henderson often tells prospective teachers to be comfortable laughing with a class when their lesson delivery doesn't go well. "If you get something wrong the first time," Henderson says, "the good news is that you're not [only] going to know why something works. You're also going to know why not as well."

The same could be said if the entire placement is challenging. After her "horrendous" first experience, McQuay had three more that were positive. It's since strengthened her resolve to provide the same to other student-teachers.

"What we do is important," she says. "It's important to support and help people grow. [Teachers] should do that for each other, but even more for student-teachers."

**Meagan Gillmore is a freelance writer in Toronto, Ontario.**

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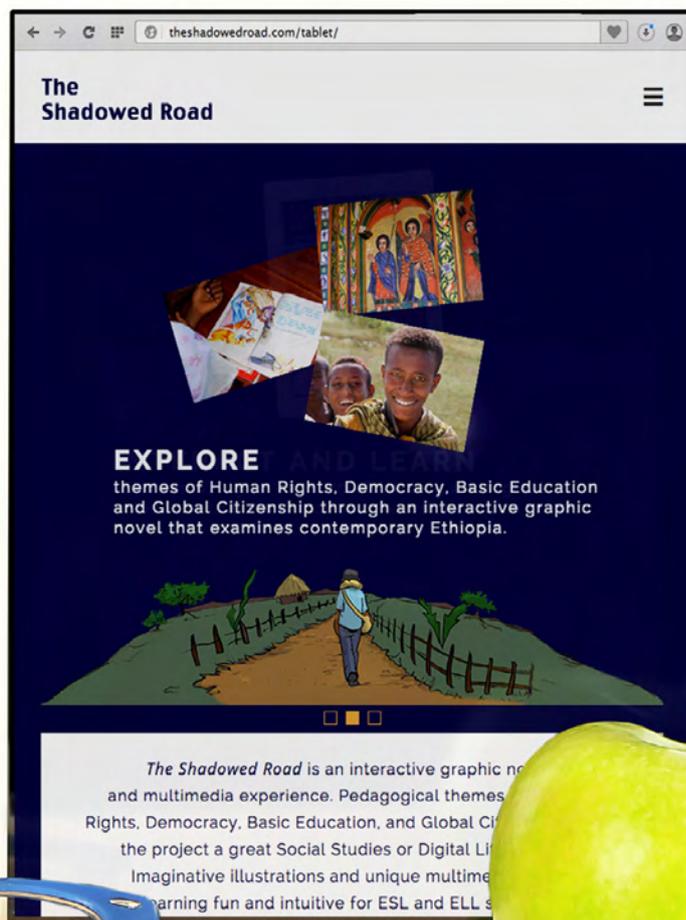
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## JAZZING UP HISTORY CLASS

by Andre Benito Mountain

Educators may find guidance in the genius of Miles Davis' advice to musicians, "Don't play what's there, play what's not there." In 2011, while I was working as a curriculum coordinator for the Richmond County School System, our student achievement data revealed a steady decline in student performance in U.S. History. This course was a requirement for graduation in Georgia so we urgently needed to reignite students' interest and empower teachers.

One of the challenges we faced centred on the lack of diversity in the U.S. History curriculum. The American story is a mélange of triumph and tragedy of people from across the globe seeking to create. Yet, the curriculum comprised mostly of a monolith of Eurocentrism, negating the significant cultural impact of Native Americans, Africans,

and Asians whose lives provided the canvas upon which the American portrait would be depicted. This inspired us to develop a project called *Taking Notes: Jazz and the American Story*, to help those students struggling with history.

The project—a multi-sensory presentation—engaged students visually, musically, and verbally. I shared interesting highlights from American history for 2-3 minutes and a live jazz band followed with a selection from the time period. For 90 minutes we walked students through a survey of American history with Jazz as the soundscape. Drawing from oral history tradition and the power of music, we created a memorable experience for students and teachers that could be replicated in the classroom. The contents of the presentation drew upon the existing curriculum, attempted to fill gaps, and made the content more relevant to the lives and culture of students of colour.

The presentation opened with a discussion about the uses of the drum and its importance in the lives of Africans, long before they were brought to the Americas. We presented students with images of the civilizations of West Africa to help them conceptualize the complexity of African cultures and the impact of slavery. This helped



students understand the importance of music in the lives of people from whom everything had been taken. Students were introduced to a sampling of musical instruments that originated in Africa and subsequently, came to the Americas in the memories of enslaved people. Most students were surprised to learn that the banjo and the xylophone had African origins. As the program progressed, they met familiar faces such as Louis Armstrong and Cab Calloway, as well as the not so familiar faces of Thelonious Monk and Mongo Santamaria. We also discussed Jazz as a way for musicians to express artistic freedom in a society of racial oppression.

### Set List: Planning & Challenges

Once the idea was developed, we began planning. A local community organization, *Garden City Jazz*, had been hosting free Sunday evening jazz concerts in downtown Augusta for several years. The director of the event, Karen Gordon, was a local jazz legend and champion for the Arts in the city. She became an instrumental community partner. She met with the curriculum director and me to discuss the logistics: which schools would we visit? How many musicians would be involved? What expenses would the project incur? How would it be funded? We found resources that could help teachers make their own connections with the content, the music, and the students in the weeks after

the presentation left their schools. The musicians who formed part of the project were Karen Gordon (piano), Dave Weston (bass), Joe Collier (trumpet), and Not Gaddy (drums). Weston and Collier had been key players in James Brown's band and had played in their own jazz bands in recent years. Gaddy had developed a successful program for public school children called *I Drum 2U*, exposing them to the history of the drum and therapeutic benefits of

**Most students were surprised to learn that the banjo and the xylophone had African origins.**

drum circles. We met for several rehearsals, discussing the design of the lesson, the timing and sequence of the musical selections, and the imagery that would serve as the backdrop for the presentation.

We also had to convince administrators that this was an effective use of instructional time. In a survey of principals conducted by the Public Schools of North Carolina's Department of Public Instruction, 91% of respondents believed that Arts integration was a critical component to educating the whole child (Guindon, Huffman, Socol, & Takahashi-Rial, 2014). Students who are in classrooms where the Arts are integrated into their learning are more

engaged in their work overall than students without those opportunities (The Kennedy Center, 2014). We wanted to leave high school history teachers empowered with ideas for using historical images, song lyrics, interesting stories and music to shatter the monotony of the classroom. Teachers needed to see the 90-minute session as a launch point for a new approach rather than a singular non-instructional event. The principals approved.

## A Teaching Gig: Outcomes of Taking Notes

*Taking Notes* achieved success because it evolved out of a discussion on student achievement data and a willingness to try a new approach. We wanted to introduce a concept that brought community partners into the fold to assist us with a school-based problem. It's not uncommon for schools to open their doors to artists-in-residence for mural projects and art lessons, but we wanted to try something that was more closely aligned to the curriculum and would be fun and memorable for learners.

In planning this project, we learned so much about the challenges that teachers face in covering curriculum that spans hundreds of years. It became an opportunity for us to model a type of instruction that addresses the much broader issues of the lack of access to the Arts in public schools and the inclusion of multiple perspectives when studying history. We can't feasibly discuss the achievement gap without including the contributions of people of colour to the American story. As a result of this initiative, not only did student engagement increase, but we also saw a 12% increase in student achievement in U.S. History. Teachers demonstrated a renewed interest in designing lessons that reflected student interest and an array of learning styles.

## Beyond the Bandstand: Implications

*Taking Notes: Jazz and the American Story* lived as a research-based mechanism that helped us to enhance our curriculum. If we are to truly address the opportunity gap and curriculum breadth that challenge teacher effectiveness, what adjustments must we make in the design of instruction and the partnerships we foster in and around schools? Just as Bebop led to the decline of the Big Band era, we hoped that this Arts-based approach to professional development, modelling, and thematic lesson planning would help teachers as they sought to recapture their students' attention. And when the music changes, so does the dance.

Andre Benito Mountain is a school administrator with Tacoma Public Schools in Tacoma, WA. He was previously the K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator for the Richmond County School System in Augusta, GA. He is currently a doctoral student in Curriculum Studies in the College of Education at Georgia Southern University.



Andre Mountain and the Jazz band.

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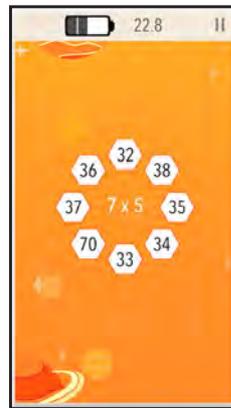


This suite of six games covers elementary math skills such as addition and subtraction, multiplication and division, and fractions and decimals. The game titles include, Fractions!,

Zoom, Hungry Fish, Wings, Questimate!, and Match. In each, students adjust the level to make it increasingly challenging, allowing more control over their progress. Prices range from \$2.99 to \$6.99 CAD each on the App Store and Google Play, with the option to purchase an educator licence from [www.motionmathgames.com](http://www.motionmathgames.com).



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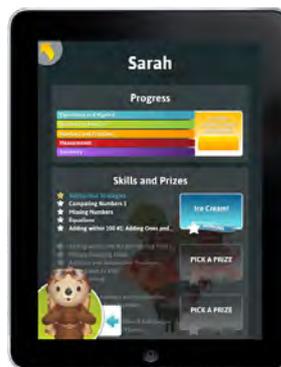


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# CURRICULA

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9 TO 10

The following is a lesson plan excerpt from *The Ruptured Sky*, a graphic novel and digital literacy title. To see the full lesson plan or to learn more, please visit [www.therupturedsky.com](http://www.therupturedsky.com).

## CURRICULUM LINKS

Language Arts,  
Native Studies

## The War of 1812: The Role of Women and Archaeology

*The Ruptured Sky* looks at the War of 1812 from a contemporary time frame. Two First Nations teenagers, Chris and Angie, are working on a school project about the war. Chris' grandfather, John Montour, figures that the teenagers might like to hear about the events of the war directly from a group of First Nations elders. As each of the elders relates part of the story of the War of 1812, the people, places, and events come to life. Chris and Angie experience the war through these important stories. They hear firsthand about the great Shawnee war chief, Tecumseh, the Mohawk War Chief, Joseph Brant and his protégé, John Norton, to name some. They come to understand the importance of the role of First Nations warriors in key battles such as the taking of Fort Detroit, Beaver Dams, and Queenston Heights. Chris and Angie learn this story of long ago is still evolving, that the events of history still resonate and influence events of today. In the end, the story is theirs to continue.

## Key Concepts

Students will explore the following concepts:

- Developing an awareness of archaeological evidence from the War of 1812
- Introduction to the Role of Aboriginal Women in the War of 1812
- Developing an awareness of Historical Perspectives regarding Aboriginal Identity

### Skills

- Communicating with peers and teachers, asking questions to clarify
- Formulating and stating opinions regarding the Roles of Aboriginal Women
- Demonstrating an ability to articulate First Nations perspectives

## Time Required

Allotted classroom periods consisting of 50-60 minute sessions (plus time allotted for homework), over a 2-3 week period, based on local program schedules and student needs.

## Lesson Steps

- Step One The Role of Aboriginal Women in the War of 1812
- Step Two The Role of All Women in the War of 1812
- Step Three Memoirs and Pioneer Quilts as Storytelling
- Step Four Archaeological Evidence of Women in the War of 1812
- Step Five Performance Task: Power Point Presentation of a Personal Reflection Journal

## Blackline Masters

- BLM #1 Student Learning Survey
- BLM #2 Student Assignment — Comparison Chart of Women in the War of 1812
- BLM #3 Comparison Chart Rubric
- BLM #4 Student Assignment — Journal and Quilt Block
- BLM #5 Journal and Quilt Block Rubric
- BLM #6 Essay Rubric
- BLM #7 Reflection Journal Criteria
- BLM #8 Performance Task Rubric

## Appendices

Appendix I Teacher Checklist

## Materials Required

For Teachers

- Appendix I
- Internet access

For Students

- Blackline Masters
- Internet access
- Reflection Journals
- Quilt block materials, either paper and markers or actual cloth materials and quilting supplies

## CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

### Overall Curriculum Expectations

The overall expectations listed below serve as an entry point for teachers. Teachers are encouraged to make connections to specific expectations in their region and grade.

### Native Studies

- Identify significant events and issues that have had an impact on Aboriginal peoples and their communities (e.g., the introduction of European, Asian, and African diseases, such as tuberculosis and HIV; residential schools; the relocation of Inuit communities in the high Arctic).
- Identify significant events and issues that have had an impact on Aboriginal peoples and their communities.
- Explain why the recognition of Aboriginal identity is an important component of understanding Canada's identity.
- Use correct terms related to the discussion of relationships involving Aboriginal peoples (e.g., treaty, enfranchisement, alliance, reconciliation).

### Language

#### Media

- Interpret simple media texts and some teacher-selected

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complex media texts, identifying some of the overt and implied messages they convey.

- Identify the perspectives and/or biases evident in a few simple media texts and teacher-selected complex media texts and comment on any questions they may raise about beliefs, values, and identity.
- Produce media texts for a few different purposes and audiences, using appropriate forms, conventions, and techniques.

## STEP ONE: The Role of Aboriginal Women in the War of 1812

### Background Information

- Documentation regarding the Role of Aboriginal Women in the War of 1812 is scarce in print. Thus, the general concept of this learning package includes, apprising students of the lack of documentation regarding this cohort, and discussing critical perspectives as to why this might be.
- Teacher should establish the checklist for organizational purposes (Appendix I).
- Teacher should spend some time navigating websites to ensure fluency during lessons. Bookmark these websites for ease of reference.

### Materials Required

For Teachers:

- Appendix I
- Recommended Resources
- Internet

For Students:

- Blackline Masters
- BLM #1 Student Learning Survey
- Student Reflection Journal
- Molly Brant Biography: [www.carf.info/kingston-past/molly-brant](http://www.carf.info/kingston-past/molly-brant)

### Teaching/Learning Strategies

#### Part A

Establish learning goals with your students. Write the learning goals on the chalkboard, on chart paper, or under the document camera for students to see daily. Post them in the same spot, to use as anchor charts. Pique student interest with a hook:

Aboriginal women during the War of 1812 have been largely undocumented and underrepresented in their roles, participation, and skills during this era. Why might this be? (Think Literacy. Were Aboriginal women literate in English?)

Ask students to complete the students learning survey (BLM #1) in blue or black ink prior to any learning to determine entry points in learning, and to evaluate what students already know.

Apprise students that they will be exploring websites, then adding to their learning survey in a different color, to provide evidence of new learning.

Provide students with ample time to complete the survey.

#### Part B

Ask students to look at the following websites, and study the information, or summarize the important information. It is important to remind students there is very little documentation of what Aboriginal women were

specifically doing during the war, so it is appropriate to look at peripheral information. What were the roles of European women, compared to the roles of Aboriginal women? Remember that primarily European men wrote these perspectives.

Molly Brant Biography:

[www.carf.info/kingston-past/molly-brant](http://www.carf.info/kingston-past/molly-brant)

Mary "Molly" Brant was born c. 1736 in the Mohawk valley of the [then] Province of New York. She spent the first twenty-two years of her adult life acting as housekeeper, concubine and bearer of nine children to Sir William Johnson, the British Superintendent of Indian Affairs.

As stepdaughter of influential Mohawk sachem [chief] Brant Canagaraduncka and "wife" of Mohawk honorary sachem, and Superintendent of Indian Affairs William Johnson, Molly was a natural to become one of the Clan Mothers of her people. In matrilineal Iroquois society, Clan Mothers wield a great deal of power since it is they who appoint and fire war and religious leaders.

As Sir William's housekeeper, Molly Brant handled the accounts and did the purchasing and, according to the records, spent a great deal on clothing, blankets, and rum. Much of this, along with sums of money, went to the Iroquois people as gifts and Molly's influence increased in proportion to her generosity to such an extent that she soon became the leader of the Mohawk Clan Mothers. As one of her biographers put it, Molly "was as highly respected by the Indians as was her husband, and she was as versatile. He could dance, painted and naked except for a breach clout, around a fire with his native friends, and she could entertain the cream of white society graciously and properly in the grand rooms of Johnson Hall, with their Chippendale furniture and fine china."

In 1774, as tension mounted between Britain and her thirteen colonies, Sir William tried his best to keep the Iroquois loyal to the British Crown. It was while addressing an Iroquois council assembled at Johnson Hall that year that he collapsed and died. Molly and her children moved back to her home village of Canajoharie where she opened a store with money Sir William had left her in his will.

Less than a year later, the Revolutionary War broke out. It was a bitter conflict, as much civil war as revolution, with neighbour fighting against neighbour and brother against brother. At first, the Iroquois remained neutral. But Molly felt, as had Sir William, that the Iroquois should naturally side with the British against the Americans who were intent on robbing them of their land. She began to exert her influence with the Mohawk to keep them loyal to the British. She gathered information about the activities of the rebels on behalf of the British. She provided shelter for Loyalists fleeing from bands

of zealous Patriots. She even supplied arms and ammunition to Loyalists engaged in the fighting. Acting on information she'd gathered, Molly's brother Joseph at the head of over 400 Iroquois warriors and some white Loyalists, ambushed and killed the greater part of a band of 800 Patriots at the Battle of Oriskany, thereby ending all semblance of Mohawk neutrality. With the exception of the Oneidas and some of the Tuscaroras who sided with the Rebels, the Iroquois were now openly pro-British, thanks in no small part to Molly's own efforts.

The Patriots, however, wanted revenge and George Washington dispatched an army of 11 regiments to chastise the Iroquois. The Mohawks, Molly included, were forced to flee north.

Nevertheless, Molly continued to work hard for the rest of the war to keep the Iroquois and other First Nations loyal to the British. When news of the peace treaty arrived in 1783, Molly and her people were rightfully incensed: the First Nations had been left out of it entirely. The boundary was to be the centre of the Great Lakes and all the Iroquois land to the south went to the Americans. But there could be no turning back for Molly, who moved with her children into the house the British built for her at Cataraqui (Kingston) and accepted the yearly 100 pound pension awarded her, "In consideration of the early and uniform fidelity, attachment and zealous services rendered to His Majesty's Government by Mrs. Brant and her Family." Her brother Joseph and the Mohawks settled at Grand River in Canada.

Later, as an Indian war loomed in the Ohio Valley, the American government, aware of her influence with her people, tried to entice Molly back to the United States by offering her sums of money that she contemptuously refused. Nevertheless, she and her brother Joseph tried to persuade their western brethren to negotiate with the Americans rather than fight. But in the end, the Ohio Indians fought and lost the Battle of Fallen Timbers against "Mad" Anthony Wayne in 1794.

A late eighteenth century visitor to Kingston left us a glimpse of Molly:

"In the Church at Kingston we saw an Indian woman, who sat in an honourable place among the English. She appeared very devout during Divine Service and very attentive to the Sermon. She was the relict of the late Sir William Johnson, Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the province of New York, and mother of several children by him, who are married to Englishmen and supported by the Crown.... When Indian embassies arrived she was sent for, dined at Governor Simcoe's, and was treated with respect by himself and his lady. During the life of Sir William she was attended with splendour and respect, and since the war receives a pension and compensation for losses for herself and her children."

*Though she died over a decade before its outbreak, Molly Brant nevertheless played an important role in First Nations' participation in the War of 1812. Her own people, the Grand River Mohawk, under the nominal leadership of her nephew John Brant, were often able to tip the balance of early battles in favour of the British.*

Have students look at the following websites and use BLM #2 to answer the questions in their Reflection Journals. Students can also summarize this information, and discuss the most important details.

### **Roles of Aboriginal Women websites** [www.ajic.mb.ca/volumel/chapter13.html](http://www.ajic.mb.ca/volumel/chapter13.html)

*Women traditionally played a central role within the Aboriginal family, within Aboriginal government and in spiritual ceremonies. Men and women enjoyed considerable personal autonomy and both performed functions vital to the survival of Aboriginal communities. The men were responsible for providing food, shelter and clothing. Women were responsible for the domestic sphere and were viewed as both life-givers and the caretakers of life. As a result, women were responsible for the early socialization of children.*

*Traditional Aboriginal society experienced very little family breakdown. Husbands and wives were expected to respect and honour one another, and to care for one another with honesty and kindness. In matriarchal societies, such as of the Mohawk, women were honoured for their wisdom and vision. Aboriginal men also respected women for the sacred gifts which they believed the Creator had given to them.<sup>1</sup>*

*In Aboriginal teachings, passed on through the oral histories of the Aboriginal people of this province from generation to generation, Aboriginal men and women were equal in power and each had autonomy within their personal lives.*

*Women figured centrally in almost all Aboriginal creation legends. In Ojibway and Cree legends, it was a woman who came to earth through a hole in the sky to care for the earth. It was a woman, Nokomis (grandmother), who taught Original Man (Anishinabe, an Ojibway word meaning "human being") about the medicines of the earth and about technology. When a traditional Ojibway person prays, thanks is given and the pipe is raised in each of the four directions, then to Mother Earth as well as to Grandfather, Mishomis, in the sky.*

*To the Ojibway, the earth is woman, the Mother of the people, and her hair, the sweetgrass, is braided and used in ceremonies. The Dakota and Lakota (Sioux) people of Manitoba and the Dakotas tell how a woman—White Buffalo Calf Woman—brought the pipe to their people. It is through the pipe that prayer is carried by its smoke upwards to the Creator in their most sacred ceremonies.*

*The strength that Aboriginal peoples gain today from their traditional teachings and their cultures comes from centuries of oral tradition and Aboriginal teachings, which emphasized the equality of man and woman and the balanced roles of both in the continuation of life. Such teachings hold promise for the future of the Aboriginal community as a whole. We have been told that more and more young Aboriginal people are turning to the beliefs and values of Aboriginal traditions to find answers for the problems which they are facing in this day and age.*

### **Theories on why European/French men married Aboriginal women, Marriage, Dress** (edited for appropriate content) [www.northwestjournal.ca/XIII2.htm](http://www.northwestjournal.ca/XIII2.htm)

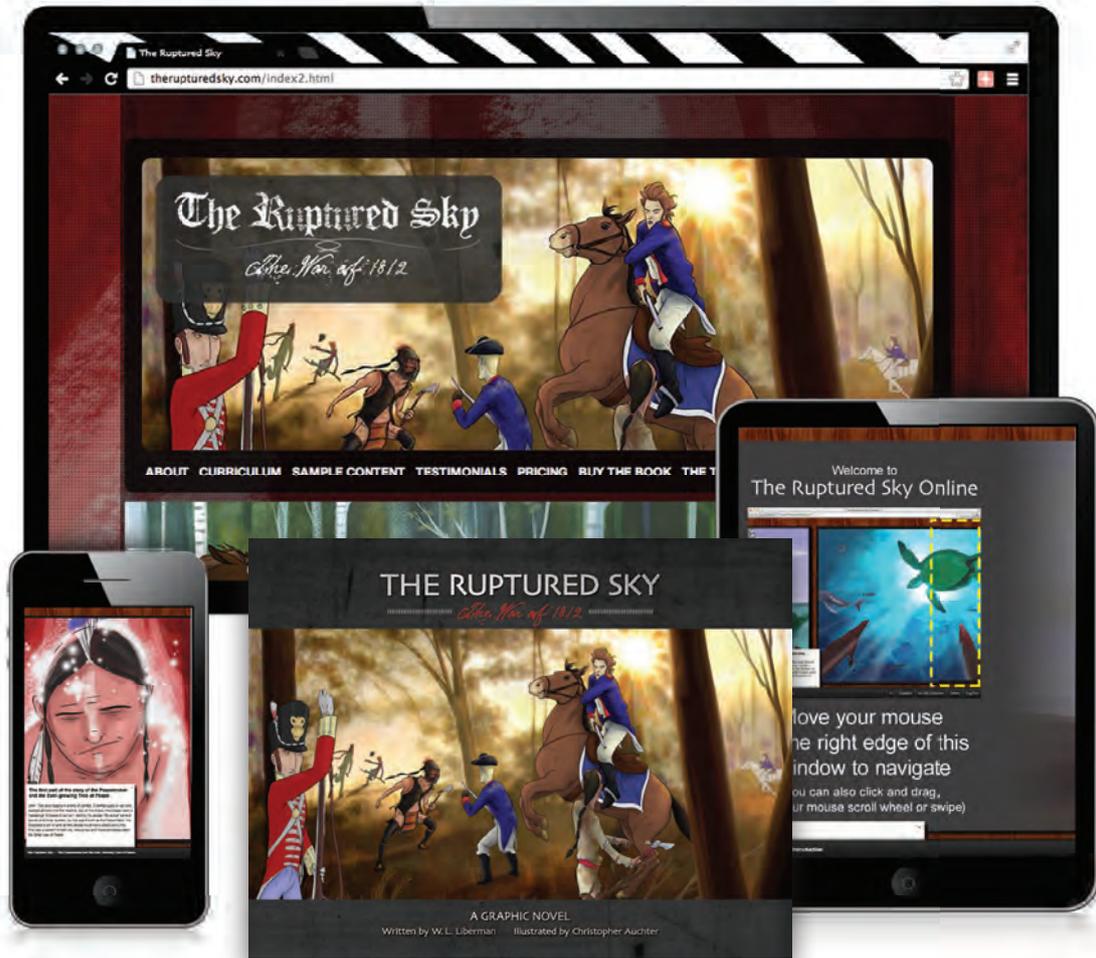
#### **Introduction**

*The roles played by women in the fur trade were incredibly varied. Although there was a handful of white women in the fur country after 1812, most fur traders married Native or Mixed-blood women. These relationships had a firm, practical foundation. By marrying a Native or Mixed-blood woman, fur traders strengthened trade ties with her Native relatives. The marriage also could help to improve relations with the rest of her nation, as the fur trader now had ready access to inside information on their language and culture. There were also tangible benefits to having a 'country wife.' In Native cultures, women usually set up camp, dressed furs, made leather, cooked meals, gathered firewood, made moccasins, netted snowshoes, and many other things that were essential to daily life for both Natives and fur traders, yet were unfamiliar tasks for Europeans. Country wives were more than diplomatic pawns or unpaid servants, however; they were women with minds and hearts, thoughts and feelings, who occupied a unique position between two cultures.*

#### **Marriage in the North West Company**

*The attitude toward marriage in the North West Company and its Montreal-based precursors was quite different from the Hudson Bay Company's policy. Marriage was not a dubious privilege allowed only to those with a high rank within the company. All ranks, from wintering partner to voyageur, were allowed to marry. Married men were more likely to renew their contracts so as to stay with their families. NWC employees had to get permission from their bourgeois (boss) to marry, but permission seems usually to have been granted. At first, only Native women were in the fur country. As the daughters of marriages between Native mothers and trader fathers grew up, however, the next generation of European traders could marry these Mixed-blood women, and did. It was not unusual*

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for Mixed-blood girls to marry at age twelve, and be mothers at fourteen [3].

As time went by, the number of NWC employees and their families swelled. Since the NWC fed and clothed its employees' families, this meant expenses were increasing at a time when competition with the HBC was heating up. In 1806, the company introduced a new policy: NWC employees were not to be allowed to marry Native women. Instead, they would be encouraged to marry Mixed-blood women, who were already being supported by the company. Exceptions were made when the company needed to make trade alliances with new tribes, as the company's operations expanded westward[4].

## Fur Trade Weddings

There were no priests or ministers in the Northwest to officiate at weddings until 1818. Before then, most men married according to Native custom (*à la façon du pays*). Daniel Harmon's journal describes such a fur trade wedding in December 1801:

*'Payet one of my Interpreters, has taken one of the Natives Daughters for a Wife, and to her Parents he gave in Rum & dry Goods &c. to the value of two hundred Dollars [5].*

Native customs varied, but once the parents consented to the marriage, tradition often called for the payment of a bride price: gifts given by the groom to the bride's parents, probably to compensate for their loss of her labor. Payet paid \$200 worth in rum and other goods for his country wife. In 1803, Alexander Henry the Younger noted that 'it is common in the North West to give a horse for a woman.'[6] Once the bride price had been agreed upon, the pipe was smoked to seal the agreement, and sometimes the bride was lectured by her parents upon her new life and responsibilities. The new couple then went to the home of her new husband, where she often donned new European-style clothing. According to Native tradition, the couple was free to separate at any time, at least until the first child was born, but the bride price would not be returned [7].

This was in strong contrast to English culture of the time, in which legal marriages were made for life by the clergy. In Scotland, the law allowed marriages to be made by mutual consent, without clergy [8]. This led to some confusion amongst fur traders about the status of a marriage *à la façon du pays*. Many men, especially senior Nor'westers, regarded it as a life-long commitment equivalent to a legal marriage; other men viewed it as a common-law union which could be dissolved by either partner at anytime [9].

## Tent Mates and Canoe Mates — Fur Trade Women at Work

For years, it was against Hudson's Bay Company policy to

permit their employees (called servants) to marry Native women. Marriages took place anyway— after all, the company executives who made this policy were in London— and sometimes the employees tried to explain why they broke the rules. When Samuel Hearne and his men built Cumberland House in 1774, it was the first HBC post to be established at a significant distance from Hudson's Bay. As they prepared to spend their first winter there, Hearne arranged for two or three Native women to stay with them. He explained that he needed them to 'Make, Mend, Knitt Snowshoes &c. for us dureing the winter.'[10] In 1789, HBC clerk & surveyor Philip Turnor noted that 'Women are as usefull as men upon the Journeys.'[11] When the HBC's Malchom Ross was travelling to the Athabasca country with his wife and two children in 1790, fellow traveler Peter Fidler noted in his journal that 'an Indian woman at a House [i.e., fur post] is particularly useful in making shoes, cutting line, netting snow shoes, cleaning and stretching Beaver skins &c., that the Europeans are not acquainted with.'[12]

By 1802, HBC employees were openly defiant. When the London Committee of the HBC hinted that they did not care to clothe their servants' wives, the York Factory council indignantly responded that 'the women are deserving of some encouragement and indulgence from your Honors, they clean and put into a state of preservation all Beaver. and Otter skins brought by the Indians undried and in bad Condition. They prepare Line for Snow shoes and knit them also without which your Honors servants could not give efficient opposition to the Canadian traders they make Leather shoes for the men who are obliged to travel about in search of Indians and furs and are useful in a variety of other instances, in short they are Virtually your Honors Servants.' [13]

In the rival North West Company (the 'Canadian traders' mentioned above), women were part of daily operations. In 1789, as Nor'wester Alexander Mackenzie explored the river which would later bear his name, the wives of his voyageurs were busily sewing moccasins while the men towed the canoe past rapids [14].

North West Company journals show country wives working at a wide variety of tasks which varied with the seasons. As winter approached, the women put the netting on snowshoes [15]. Indeed, it seems that many fur traders were unable to net their own snowshoes; in 1786, Alexander Mackenzie wrote a letter complaining that 'I have not a single one in my fort [at Île-à-la-Crosse] that can make Rackets [snowshoes]. I do not know what to do without these articles see what it is to have no wives. Try and get Rackets— there is no stirring without them.'[16] During the winter, the women sewed the bags for holding pemmican. 'Women all busy stretching buffalo hides to make pemican bags and pack cords', Alexander Henry the Younger noted in his Fort Vermilion journal for February 4, 1810

[17]. Making pemmican was a year-round task, and women were responsible for every step: cutting the fresh meat into long thin strips, drying them, and beating the dried meat into flakes; cutting up fat and rendering it into tallow; gathering and drying berries; making the leather bags; and finally mixing the ingredients into the high-protein, high-calorie mixture that fuelled the voyageurs. One pound of pemmican was generally accepted to be the equivalent of eight pounds of fresh meat. Another job that fell within the women's sphere was collecting and preparing wattap (spruce roots) and gum (pine or spruce resin) for use in building and repairing birchbark canoes. Wattap was used to sew the birchbark, and gum was used for caulking.

In the early spring, 'the juice of the maple tree began to flow, and the women repaired to the woods for the purpose of collecting it' [18] for maple sugar. Later, when the soil could be worked, it was time for the women to turn their attention to the small garden which was attached to almost every fur post; there they were occupied in 'preparing ground, sowing potatoes, corn, & squash, burning brush, etc.' [19] As soon as the rivers were free of ice, it was time to take the furs east, where they would be exchanged at a rendezvous point such as Grand Portage, Fort William, or Gordon House, for a fresh supply of trade goods. Sometimes the canoes were manned solely by men, but it was not unusual for women to travel with them, as passengers, guides, and occasionally paddlers. When travelling, the women would pitch the tents, make & mend moccasins, and gather berries and firewood. On a difficult overland journey in 1806, Henry the Younger was happy to arrive at the camp of another Nor'wester, to find that 'Madame Dorion...had made a good fire to drive away the mosquitoes. She was sent on ahead for that purpose, and had also prepared some excellent appalats of buffalo meat and gathered some nearly ripe pears [saskatoon berries].' [20] The women who stayed behind often supported themselves and their children throughout the summer by fishing [21].

### Dress of Country Wives

The largest Native group to have good relations with the fur traders was the Cree, and most Native wives of Canadian fur traders were drawn from this group. NWC fur trader and explorer Sir Alexander Mackenzie provided a full description of Cree women's clothing in 1801:

'Their shoes are commonly plain, and their leggins gartered beneath the knee. The coat, or body covering, falls down to the middle of the leg, and is fastened over the shoulders with cords, a flap or cape turning down about eight inches, both before and behind, and agreeably ornamented with quill-work and fringe; the bottom is also fringed, and fancifully painted as high as the knee. As it is very loose, it is enclosed round the waist with a stiff belt, decorated with tassels, and fastened

behind. The arms are covered to the wrist, with detached sleeves, which are sewed as far as the bend of the arm; from thence they are drawn up to the neck, and the corners of them fall down behind, as low as the waist. The cap, when they wear one, consists of a certain quantity of leather or cloth, sewed at one end, by which means it is kept on the head, and, hanging down the back, is fastened to the belt, as well as under the chin. The upper garment is a robe like that worn by the men. Their hair is divided on the crown, and tied behind, or sometimes fastened in large knots over the ears. They are fond of European articles, and prefer them to their own native commodities. Their ornaments consist in common with all savages, in bracelets, rings, and similar baubles. Some of the women tattoo three perpendicular lines, which are sometimes double: one from the center of the chin to that of the under lip, and one parallel on either side to the corner of the mouth.' [22]

Fellow Nor'wester and explorer David Thompson's description of their dress agrees with Mackenzie's, and adds some details:

'The dress of the [Cree] women is of 1½ yards of broad cloth sewed like a sock, open at both ends, one end is tossed over the shoulders, the middle belted round the waist, the lower part like a petticoat, covers to the ankles, and gives them a decent appearance. The sleeves covers the arms and shoulders, and are separate from the body dress. The rest is much the same as the men. For a head dress they have a foot of broad cloth sewed at one end, ornamented with beads and gartering, this end is on the head, the loose parts are over the shoulders, and is well adapted to defend the head and neck from the cold and snow.' [23]

Cree women wore bracelets of copper or brass scavenged from broken kettles, made earrings from brass snare wire, and were fond of brass finger rings. Women from other Native groups, such as the Assiniboine and Sarcee, dressed much like the Cree [24].

There are a number of other clues as to how the women dressed. In 1791, the HBC's Duncan Cameron described Nor'westers' country wives as being 'drest in Scarlot, Callicos, and Silk ribbands.' [26] In 1800, when a Native woman married a NWC fur trader, she was 'clothed after the fashion of the Canadians, with a Shirt, short Gown, Petticoats & Leggins &c.' [27] Fourteen years later, when a Spokane woman married a Pacific Fur Company clerk, 'she was handed over to the dressmaker, who instantly discharged her leathern chemise, and supplied its place by more appropriate clothing...' [28] When Royal Navy midshipman James Back left the NWC's Fort Chipewyan in 1821, all the women of the fort turned out to say goodbye. 'They were all dressed after the manner of the country in blue or green cloth— with their hair fresh greased— separated before and falling down behind not in careless tresses— but in a good sound tail— embellished with black

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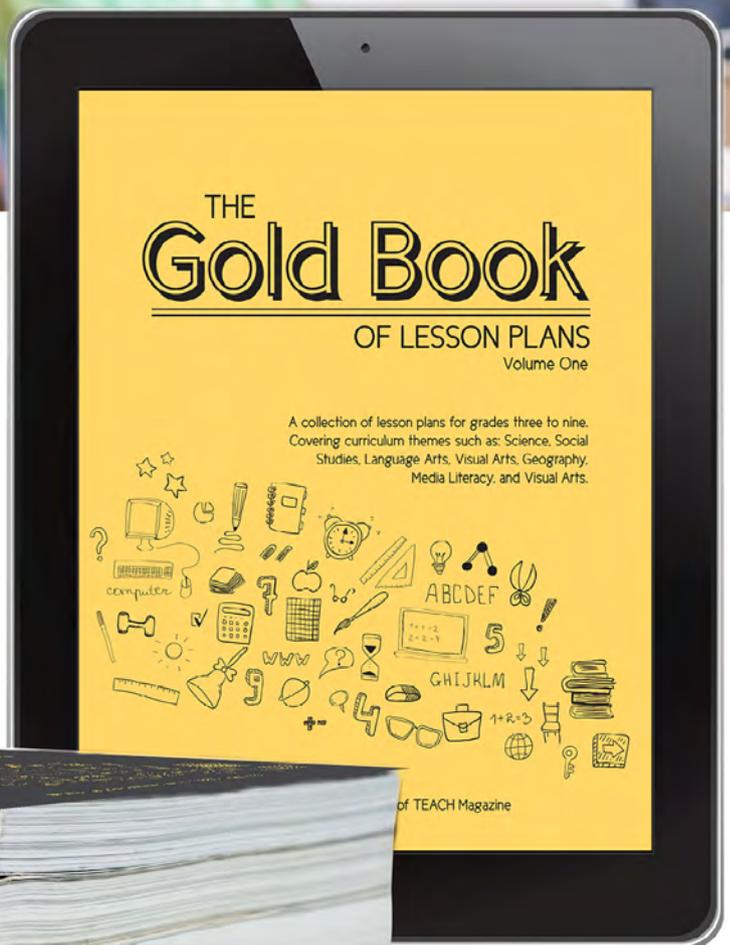
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tape and ribband.’ [29]

HBC servants and officers could ask the company to purchase things for them in England. From 1790 to 1810, they ordered cloth of all kinds (e.g. calico, chintz), gartering, ribbons and lace, silk embroidery thread, shawls, shifts, earrings & brooches for their wives and sweethearts [30]. They also requested ladies’ magazines for the latest fashions. Cloth and clothing also shows up regularly on lists of trade goods. The cloth that was available included broadcloth, duffel, flannel, melton, and stroud, with red and blue being the most popular colors. For the HBC servant who had to pay for his wife’s clothing, cloth was an economical choice, as it could be made up into strap dresses like those described by Thompson above. Melton cloth sleeves and leggings, mantlets (short gowns) of calico and calimanco, and shirts made from calico, gingham, and white and colored cotton all show up on North West Company trade good lists, and this ready-made clothing was available to the women. Women’s hoods, moccasins, and petticoats were probably always made by the women themselves.

Women’s hoods were apparently worn by country wives as well as Cree women. In December of 1800, Nor’wester Archibald N. McLeod noted in his journal that four Assiniboines were seen travelling with an unusual assortment of horses and goods which he feared had been taken from some other NWC employees. Among the suspicious items was ‘2 womens hoods garnished with Ribbons’ [31]. A woman’s hood is worn by the wife of a HBC trader in a 1809 painting. In 1846, Paul Kane noted that Mrs. Lane, wife of an HBC trader, wore a hood [33].

Although capots (blanket coats) were imported to the fur country in good numbers, I haven’t found anything to suggest that they were regularly worn by country wives. Instead, blankets were routinely used by women for protection from the weather. At first this seems surprising, but shawls and cloaks were routinely worn by European men and women during this time period. (For more on the wearing of blankets and capots by women, see the following article on capots in this volume of Northwest Journal.)

### Louis Riel Institute – Role of Métis Women

[www.louisrielinstitute.com/women-of-the-fur-trade.php](http://www.louisrielinstitute.com/women-of-the-fur-trade.php)

Aboriginal Women were the bridges from the old world to the new. These women provided the necessary links to the Aboriginal tribes and much needed Aboriginal knowledge of the land, the flora and the fauna. Without an Aboriginal woman to make moccasins and snowshoes, the men would not be able to survive the harshness of the land. These women provided the knowledge of which plants could be eaten, held the knowledge of the medicinal properties of the plants, acted as pack mules, tanned hides and furs for clothing and were the mothers of the new nation: the Métis.

Finally, collect the student learning surveys. Check for understanding. Provide descriptive feedback.

### Literacy Extension

Conduct further Internet searches to find more information on the Role of Aboriginal Women in the War of 1812, the Roles of Aboriginal Women in the Fur Trade, and Early Settler Life. Create a classroom bibliography of websites to share among the class. Create a wall of inquiry where students can post their questions.

## STEP TWO: The Role of All Women in the War of 1812

### Background

Documentation and resources of the role of all women in the War of 1812 provides a glimpse of their livelihoods. Eyewitness accounts through journals of both European men and women, are well documented. They are not always readily available, as some lie within the walls of preservation museums. In contrast however, Aboriginal people during this time, were perhaps not literate in the English Language, and therefore, documentation that provides eyewitness accounts from an Aboriginal perspective, is scarce.

One of the most glaring issues regarding documentation of this time proves to be the perspective or voice in which the documents were written. Journals, laws, treaties, etc., were more often written by European or French men, thus, the perspectives are seemingly male dominant. Women were not considered equal in early settler society.

Society and livelihoods for women during this time were significantly different for Aboriginal women, and Non-Aboriginal women. This lesson provides students with the opportunity to critically compare these livelihoods, and draw their own assumptions, conclusions, and perspectives on the role of all women in the War of 1812.

### Materials Required

For Teachers:

- Internet access
- Comparison Chart Rubric (BLM #3)

For Students:

- Comparison Chart (BLM #2)

- Internet access
- Laura Secord video: [www.historicacanada.ca/content/heritage-minutes/laura-secord](http://www.historicacanada.ca/content/heritage-minutes/laura-secord)
- Laura Secord Biography: [www.warof1812.ca/laurasecord.htm](http://www.warof1812.ca/laurasecord.htm)
- Women in War Article: [www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/women-and-war](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/women-and-war)
- Women in War: [www.algoma1812.ca/category/women-and-families](http://www.algoma1812.ca/category/women-and-families)
- Aboriginal Women in the Fur Trade: <http://whoisaenna.deviantart.com/art/Aboriginal-Women-Fur-Trade-145414028>

## Teaching/Learning Strategies

### Part A

Review BLM #2 and BLM #3 with students.

Have students review the following websites, and compare the lives and roles of Aboriginal women, and Non-Aboriginal women, during this era using BLM #2. They will compare the similarities and differences, and the reasons why the comparison is significant in history.

Laura Secord video  
[www.historicacanada.ca/content/heritage-minutes/laura-secord](http://www.historicacanada.ca/content/heritage-minutes/laura-secord)

Laura Secord Biography  
[www.warof1812.ca/laurasecord.htm](http://www.warof1812.ca/laurasecord.htm)

Women in War Article  
[www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/women-and-war](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/women-and-war)

Women in War  
[www.algoma1812.ca/category/women-and-families](http://www.algoma1812.ca/category/women-and-families)  
Aboriginal Women in the Fur Trade  
<http://whoisaenna.deviantart.com/art/Aboriginal-Women-Fur-Trade-145414028>

Collect students' handouts and evaluate their work using the rubric. Provide descriptive feedback.

### Literacy Extension

Have students search for images of Aboriginal women, and Non-Aboriginal women to print, and add to their comparison charts. Students can compare clothing of women as well.

## STEP THREE: Memoirs, and Pioneer Quilts as Storytelling

### Background

Story telling exists in a plethora of forms. Memoirs can include written prose, journals and poetry. Artwork can include sketches, paintings and even quilts. Just as journals of the past tell a story through words, quilt blocks tell a story through images. Students will explore the various forms of stories told by women in the war, and explore the stories of pioneer quilters.

### Materials Required

For Teachers:

- See Recommended Resources
- Quilting supplies for the avid teacher/quilter
- Paper, scissors, glue and markers for a paper quilt block
- Internet access
- Student Journal and Quilt Block Assignment (BLM #4)
- Rubric for Journal and Quilt Block Rubric (BLM #5)

For Students:

- Student Journal and Quilt Block Assignment (BLM #4)
- Women's Journals: <http://umbrigade.tripod.com/articles/women.html>
- Memoirs of war: [www.nornet.on.ca/~jcardiff/transcripts/amelia/index.html](http://www.nornet.on.ca/~jcardiff/transcripts/amelia/index.html) and [www.carf.info/kingston-past/molly-brant](http://www.carf.info/kingston-past/molly-brant)
- Roles of ALL women in the war: <http://15starnb.edublogs.org/2011/03/09/womens-roles-in-war/>

## Teaching/Learning Strategies

### Part A

Review the assignment expectations (BLM #4) and rubrics (BLM #5) with the students.

### Part B

Have students review the following letter Laura Secord wrote in 1861 when she was 85 years old to an historian (Benson J. Lossing) who was writing a book on the War of 1812.

DEAR SIR,—I will tell you the story in a few words.

*“After going to St. David’s and the recovery of Mr. Secord, we returned again to Queenston, where my courage again was much tried. It was there I gained the secret plan laid to capture Captain Fitzgibbon and his party. I was determined, if possible, to save them. I had much difficulty in getting through the American guards. They were ten miles out in the country. When I came to a field belonging to a Mr. De Cou, in the neighbourhood of the Beaver Dams, I then had walked nineteen miles. By that time daylight had left me. I yet had a swift stream of water (Twelve-mile Creek) to cross over on an old fallen tree, and to climb a high hill, which fatigued me very much.”*

*“Before I arrived at the encampment of the Indians, as I approached they all arose with one of their war yells, which, indeed, awed me. You may imagine what my feelings were to behold so many savages. With forced courage I went to one of the chiefs, told him I had great news for his commander, and that he must take me to him or they would all be lost. He did not understand me, but said, ‘Woman! What does woman want here?’ The scene by moonlight to some might have been grand, but to a weak woman certainly terrifying. With difficulty I got one of the chiefs to go with me to their commander. With the intelligence I gave him he formed his plans and saved his country. I have ever found the brave and noble Colonel Fitzgibbon a friend to me. May he prosper in the world to come as he has done in this.”*

LAURA SECORD.  
“CHIPPEWA, U.C., Feb. 18, 1861.”

Have students peruse following journals with a peer.  
Encourage discussions.

Women’s Journals

<http://umbriqade.tripod.com/articles/women.html>

Memoirs of war

[www.nornet.on.ca/~jcardiff/transcripts/amelia/index.html](http://www.nornet.on.ca/~jcardiff/transcripts/amelia/index.html)  
and [www.carf.info/kingston-past/molly-brant](http://www.carf.info/kingston-past/molly-brant)

Roles of ALL women in the war

<http://15starnb.edublogs.org/2011/03/09/womens-roles-in-war/>

Writing Assignment (BLM #4): Have students complete  
Journal entries from a woman’s perspective.

Collect student journals. Evaluate with BLM #5.



Image Source: [http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam\\_archives/index.php](http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/index.php)

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# INTERRUPTING and Other 'BAD' Behaviours

by Martha Beach

It's quiet reading time. You ask students to grab a book, take a seat, and glue their eyes to the page. All is well for about four minutes. Then two chatterboxes start whispering. The clown at the back is making fart noises. The silent one claps hands over ears and the debater starts an argument about the merits of reading at home while the absentee slips out to check the Lost and Found for the third time this week.

None of these kids are maliciously trying to sabotage reading period. In all likelihood, they want to succeed. "If they're not doing well, then something is getting in the way," says Jeanne Williams, an Edmonton-based psychologist. It's an educator's job to find out what that block is and find a solution with the student. Perhaps social issues make them clam up during group work. Lagging math skills means they'll chat to avoid the work sheet. Or maybe they're just plain bored because the reading level is too easy so it's more fun to make rude noises.

In a lot of cases, chatting, disruptive noises, and leaving class are addressed by a reward-punishment system. "So we look for the right reward or punishment, we don't look for what's in the way," says Williams. "We have the wrong lenses on as to why kids are misbehaving. It's important to change

the lenses." Finding a solution is not about bending over backwards for the student, it's about figuring out how to get to the goal in a way where the student and the teacher are comfortable.

To find that solution, we must keep in mind that one size does not fit all. "Each situation is very different, just like each child is very different," says Rebecca Lewis-Zarkos, a Grade Four teacher in Toronto. "Strategies that I use with my Grade 4s wouldn't necessarily be as effective with younger or older grades." A lot of the time we put everyone together. But they each have their own unique style," says Julie Romanowski, an early childhood consultant specializing in children's behaviour and discipline, based in Vancouver and the lower mainland. As a teacher, the top goal is to effectively communicate the lesson. Considering that each child is an individual, Romanowski says the first question should be, 'How can I change or adapt my style to all of these students in order to be effective?'

That question is easier to ask than to answer and it starts with observation and conversation. "As adults, as authoritative figures, we often jump into fixing the problem without knowing the problem," Williams says. It's important



to have a conversation first, but starting up a conversation with the chatterbox in the middle of reading time won't work. "It needs to be proactive," says Williams. Ask the student to have lunch with you or stay in for recess. Bring up the issue and try and find out what's in the way. ('I've noticed you start talking to your neighbour during reading time. Why do you think that is?') "Then tell them your concern," Williams advises. ('I'm worried because you won't get the same reading practice as everyone else and it distracts classmates.')

Lewis-Zarkos usually pulls the student aside and tries to be upfront and honest regarding how their behaviour is affecting everyone in the classroom. "For the most part I find using this strategy, while staying very serious, and showing them you mean business, is pretty effective," says

**It's an educator's job to find out what that block is and find a solution with the student.**

Lewis-Zarkos. In some cases, she finds the student needs a consequence, sitting apart from friends, for example. But usually she leans toward very open and direct conversation as opposed to reward-and-punishment. In her short, two years on the job, Lewis-Zarkos has also learned there is a big difference between a simple apology ('I'm sorry') and taking full responsibility for behaviour. "From my experience, you are much less likely to see a behaviour repeated if a child has to fully reiterate it and apologize," she reveals. ('I'm sorry for pulling your hair while you were sitting on the carpet in front of me. I know that it probably hurt and I won't do it again.') This method helps them be more accountable, aware of their actions, and empathetic of the outcome.

The goal is to work with the student to find a solution. "Work together. This 100 percent meets the kid's concern and 100 percent meets my concerns. I don't even use the word compromise, [which would denote a 50-50 resolution]," Williams says. First have a conversation with the student, then let the parents know what is going on. "It's not to get the kid in trouble. It's more just to let them know you're trying to find a solution," says Williams. Also, talk to the parents about ways

to carry the solution over into home life: chances are that if the debater argues in class, they likely argue at home too.

If the first conversation doesn't yield a solution, just try again. "Kids aren't always articulate. The first time you chat about this, they may not even know why they behave the way they do and so the solution is based on partial information," Williams says. "It's an art, finding out what the problem is."

You'll know pretty soon if your conversation and potential solution yielded results. "Behaviour is communication," Williams says. The student's behaviour during the week following your conversation will indicate if it worked.

Sometimes it takes many tries. "But every time you have a conversation, they're building cognitive skills and they're working toward a solution," says Williams. These skills can be used by students to solve issues between each other. "In Grade 4, they still love to tattle on each other about everything. I try to limit this and encourage them to solve their own problems with each other by using 'I-Messages,'" explains Lewis-Zarkos. 'I-Messages' are phrases starting with 'I' that help students express their feelings about a given situation. For example, 'I'm sorry I hit your hand. I was mad you took my favourite green eraser. I should have used my words instead.'

Sometimes, a teacher doesn't have the luxury of waiting for a better time to have a conversation. What's needed is an in-the-moment quick fix to help bring the focus back to the task at hand. "We know the background stuff. But in the heat of the moment you can't rip open a text. You need a mental checklist," says Romanowski.

First, validate their thoughts and feelings. Affirm that you've heard and recognized the child. "We all want the same thing, it's human nature, and that is love," Romanowski says. "Generally that boils down to the action of validation."

Second, state the boundary and expectation. 'I understand you need to check the Lost and Found. You can do that during lunch. Right now is reading time.'

Next, give them options. "Offer choices within a desired outcome," Romanowski says. 'Would you like to read a graphic novel or a fantasy book?' "This allows them to still have their own unique style."

Remember to give notification and allow time for

processing or transition. “A lot of [bad] behaviour stems from anxiety or lack of confidence,” says Romanowski. Kids often are most at ease when they know what is happening next, otherwise they may feel anxious. As a result they may respond with behaviour that is typically labelled as ‘bad,’ like whispering to their friend or making jokes to help them feel comfortable. Continuously notify students, both on a grand scale and within subject, suggests Romanowski.

Always be consistent. Constant communication in the same way will help create stability. “It becomes a lifestyle thing. Inconsistency sparks insecurity,” Romanowski says. “The important thing is to set the pace and help kids rest assured. They’ll have lower stress levels and be less anxious,” she says. “The mind isn’t able to absorb any information until it has calmed down.”

Following those steps is something that can be done every day and can be tailored to any personality type: the chatterbox, the quiet kid, the debater, the disrupter, the absentee. In general, make sure you’re having conversations each time an issue occurs. The multiple-conversation method does take some time and commitment on the front end, but Williams points out that it saves time down the line. “If you’re worried about the 10 minutes it takes to chat once a

week, just keep in mind that it saves class time and helps the student in the long run.” These conversations are also a great way to learn problem-solving skills. “It’s a long-term benefit,” she says. “Over time, kids who are reactive and explosive, having these conversations with them will help them learn how to solve the problem on their own.”

In many cases, the behaviour problems stem from a lack of something. Lewis-Zarkos tries to remember that she is simply dealing with another (little) person. “They are still learning and growing. I try to remind myself of this when I find myself frustrated by one of my students’ behaviour. While consequences are necessary in some cases, I find that in many cases giving a student what they are missing [some extra attention or a little extra praise] is ultimately a better solution.”

So, have that conversation, find out what may be in the way, and find a solution together. If nothing else, your student will be building those problem-solving skills they’ll need later in life. Their future teachers will thank you.

Martha Beach is a graduate of Ryerson University’s journalism program. Currently, she is a freelance writer and factchecker in Toronto.

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## Anti-Bullying

It's important for students to feel safe at school. When there is a lack of perceived safety at school, it can affect them personally and academically. This is a growing concern with the increased number of mobile devices and cyber bullying amongst youth. A focus on anti-bullying in schools can open student's minds, offering them ideas and methods for positive social change. If you cannot make it to a workshop or to learn more about anti-bullying, here are some in-school field trips that may stimulate this discussion in your classroom.

### Red Cross Nation-wide

Red Cross Training Partners delivers a three-hour 'Beyond the Hurt' bullying and cyberbullying prevention workshop to youth in grades 6-12. Through this workshop, students learn about bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Students also learn about how their role is critical in bullying prevention, how they can use their power to resolve and prevent problems, and how to find and use resources to respond to bullying and harassment. Visit [www.redcross.ca/how-we-help/violence--bullying-and-abuse-prevention](http://www.redcross.ca/how-we-help/violence--bullying-and-abuse-prevention) for more information.

### Stand Up Now In Southern Ontario

Stand Up Now Productions travels to your school. They offer character education, anti-bullying and cyber-bullying assemblies for students in grades K-12. Presented by experienced teacher, Bruce Langford, live music, video, and dramatic arts are used to teach students of all ages anti-bullying strategies. Students get to watch, as well as, participate in the production. More information can be found at [www.standupnow.ca](http://www.standupnow.ca).



### Imperative Education In British Columbia

Imperative Education offers an Anti-Bullying workshop in which students practice positive ways to behave and react in difficult situations. In the Anti-Bullying-in-Action workshop, a facilitator works with school leadership students (volunteers) to determine what areas need further development within the school community. Then, through dramatic arts workshops, students present scenes that reflect the school's dynamics and challenges. The audience enacts possible solutions voluntarily. Imperative Education also offers other programs encouraging positive social development, including a workshop in which teens can explore mindfulness. For more visit: [www.imperativeeducation.org/#!anti-bullying-in-action/c146f](http://www.imperativeeducation.org/#!anti-bullying-in-action/c146f).

### Kids Now In Edmonton, Alberta and Southern Ontario

This program is a free after-school, 12-week leadership training program that complements existing school curriculum. In the workshop, led by trained adult mentors, students in grades 7-8 are offered a safe space to learn 5 important developmental skills used to avoid negative influences as they transition to high school. Through the program, students develop self-confidence, conflict resolution skills, communication skills, and skills of everyday stress management. Students also develop strategies on how to overcome bullying and peer pressure. The sessions promote positive interaction and positive social skills through open discussions, games, and activities. Visit [www.kidsnowcanada.org](http://www.kidsnowcanada.org) to learn more.



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