



Indigenous Music Through the Seasonal Round Reconciliation Through Music

***A teaching resource featuring local Indigenous Musicians
created by a Learning Team Group in SD 57, Prince George.***

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WHAT is this project about?

- Started with teachers who asked for help incorporating Indigenous music into their music classrooms.
- They wanted to know if what they were teaching was appropriate or authentic
- They were interested in creating a list of local songs that could be used in their classrooms
- A team of Music educators and Indigenous leaders was created.
- Once musicians and songs were chosen, the team created lessons with curricular connections, lyrics pages, printable templates, & book links to accompany the music
- Songs were included in many different formats: audio only, video, youtube links, etc.
- We then highlighted links to the Dakelh dictionary to encourage learning of our local language
- We also added on French versions to include our French Immersion and Metis learners



HOW do you get started?

- Connections: Teachers who are interested (LTG – Learning Team Grant)
- Indigenous Education Department (ILTG)
- We combined both of these grants and these departments
- Indigenous Community – reach out for names of local musicians
- Resources – videographers, technical people, people who know about contracts



WHO? Choosing musicians

- ▶ Ask for guidance: Indigenous Education Office – who would they suggest?
- ▶ Before asking the musician, listen to some of their music and see if it is appropriate for the grade level audience
- ▶ Have a mix of traditional and contemporary
- ▶ Combine both the Indigenous Ways of Knowing with the BC Ministry Learning Standards (curriculum) to make it useable for teachers
- ▶ See which songs spark teachers' imaginations for accompanying lessons
- ▶ Ask about payment – every district has a budget!

Francois (Guy) Prince



➤ In our past, we have a belief system, value system, knowledge system, and skills system. Shun (song/magic) is attached to all of it in connecting and documenting every aspect. Every child was raised to become a respected Elder.

➤ - Francois Prince, Nakazdli

Francois Prince's commitment to creating connections and promoting reconciliation has inspired us to continue this work.

Kym Gouchie



Kym Gouchie

Kym Gouchie has moved us to tears with her inspiring stories and her spirit filled songs.

“As an Indigenous artist and musician, I have never felt so seen, heard and valued in my home community as I have while being a part of this incredible music project. I've had the joy of working with the Indigenous Music Learning Team and we've shared some raw emotional moments together that I will cherish as a part of the learning steps that we have taken towards reconciliation and inclusion of authentic local Indigenous songs. I can't think of a better way to honour the ancestors that have taken care of these lands. I'm hopeful that my music will awaken the hearts of children, parents and teachers and impact the way that we learn and live together on the unceded territory of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation.”



Protocols/Contracts/Permissions

- ▶ Ensure authenticity – ‘alongside of’ not ‘on behalf of’
- ▶ Make sure to SPEAK with each musician individually. Find out if they want to be involved, how they want to be involved, and how they would like to be compensated for this important work.
- ▶ Each response may be different depending on their needs (ie: if audio is already done, if they want video to accompany, if you want them to write up a paragraph regarding what is it about)
- ▶ Videos –
 - *do they want to pay and have ownership of the videos? Then create a district license and a password for use.
 - *or.... district pays for filming, pays musician for their time recording it, and then just keeps the video with no password needed



Technical Aspects



- ▶ Ensure you have a 'tech person' on your team to help.
- ▶ Our original was beautiful and interesting in how it worked, but once we went 'live' we had many teachers respond that they were having difficulty accessing what they needed.
- ▶ We also found out that people were downloading and sharing with others, and because parts of it were purchased with district license this was not acceptable (contract obligations).
- ▶ Switched to a system on our Microsoft 365 account so that only people in our district could access. Not as beautiful, but easy to use and easier to add on to as we continue to expand.



WHERE Do We Go Now?

- ▶ Continuing to add on to the Elementary resource with more songs – this is a living/breathing document. Sometimes there will be a song link and the lesson section will be ‘in progress’.
- ▶ Adding on the ‘O Canada’ song in Dakelh so that it can be played and sung in assemblies and school gatherings.
- ▶ Currently adding drumming segments by local drummer and artist, Clayton Gauthier, for schools who have created class sets of drums: protocols, importance, basic drumming patterns.
- ▶ Adding a new section of ‘Morning Drum In’ songs so that teachers and IEW’s can continue to drum and sing with students after being visited by the morning drummers.
- ▶ Currently working on a Secondary version of the project called ‘Reconciliation Through Music’ which includes more mature content for older learners.
- ▶ It will have a different format: lists of songs that are ‘tagged’ with subject content such as MMIW, Residential Schools, Highway of Tears, Reconciliation and cross curricular/land based tie ins so that they can be used in a variety of subject areas



The stories and messages in how their songs came to be and the beauty of their music has made me feel more connected to their Indigenous ways of knowing and understanding.

My interest in the project lays alongside my interest in opening the eyes of our youth to a world greater than their own. Exposing them to various Indigenous songs and dances is key to understanding both their own people's histories, as well as the cultures of their classmates and greater community.

I love learning about different cultures and their music and I know how important it is for teachers to have a resource that they can feel comfortable using.

I felt lost when the ministry of education and our school district first asked us to incorporate indigenous elements into our teaching because I couldn't find any resources or guidance.

Gone are the days of the “old, dead, white guys” in the elementary music classroom. As we move forward through a nation-wide journey of reconciliation, its critical we make space for long repressed voices and silenced songs of the Indigenous peoples of Canada.

This project started as a resource to help my colleagues, but ended up in my own learning journey towards truth and reconciliation.

It is my sincere hope that this ongoing project will inspire others to reach out to their local indigenous musicians and connect these gifted artists with the hearts and minds of students.