



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Butterflies - Animating an Anishnaabe Story

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*Please read this Acknowledgement before the start of this lesson to respect the knowledge that is being shared and the Land of the People where the knowledge originates.:*

We respectfully acknowledge the Anishnaabe (Saulteaux) from Wikwemikong for sharing the legend of Nanabush. The Anishnaabe story is translated into English by Sally Achitawehns and the animation of the Nanabush story is designed by Anishnaabe playwright Alanis King.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

*Upon successful completion of this lesson plan, students will be able to:*

1. Represent key ideas and events, in a logical sequence and with detail, in different ways (including dramatization, pictures, sounds, physical movement, charts, models, and drawings).
  - Understand that making pictures, illustrations, and other representations clarify and extend understanding;
  - Dramatize a story (e.g., a traditional First Nations, Métis, or Inuit story).

[English Language Arts 1 - Compose and Create CC1.2]

2. Create movements and movement patterns in response to stimuli such as stories, poems, music, or objects as starting points. [Arts Education 1 - Creative/Productive CPL1]

### LIST OF ACTIVITIES

1. Listening to stories of Nanabush
2. Animating the Story
3. Closing Circle

### MATERIALS

- The Butterflies
- Embodied Games of Presence
- Sacred Tree Curriculum Guide - Guidelines for Talking Circles



### Indigenous Ways of Knowing & Being

#### Origin

Anishnaabe (Saulteaux) from  
Wikwemikong Reserve  
Manitoulin Island  
Ontario

#### Learning Level / Grade

1

Also: 2, 3, 4, 5



### 180 mins

#### Related Subjects

Performing Arts or Drama,  
English Language Arts

## DESCRIPTION

This lesson plan teaches a legend of Anishnaabe Nanabush and is called *The Butterflies*. The lesson asks students to listen to the story and understand the characters before they reenact it in the class. The teacher may choose to lead the students in warm up activities to better prepare students for participating and exploring the characters they will be representing in the animation. Their animations of the story will show their understanding of the legend.

## HOLISM AND ALL OUR RELATIONS

*This lesson plan has been developed with an Indigenous lens that is holistic in nature, a way of being and knowing that acknowledges our relationships with 'all our relations', including plants and animals, other human beings, the water, land, wind, sun, moon, stars, and more - everything seen and unseen. With 'all our relations' in mind, this lesson plan has been developed with a focus on:*

- Participatory and experiential learning activities
- Language and Culture
- Intergenerational learning with Elders/Knowledge Holders
- Relationship with family, ancestors
- Different learning styles; attention given to mind, body, and spirit
- Ethics in the classroom: care, truthfulness and trust, respect, integrity
- Nurturing healthy relationships in school and community
- Relationship with the land
- Personal reflection time (connecting with thoughts and feelings)
- Connections are made with everyday life
- Healthy relationship with self and identity

## TEACHERS' GUIDE

### Background/Foundational Information

- **Exploring a Legend**

In this lesson, the teacher is exposing students to a legend and asking them to enact the legend to better understand its teachings. This strategy can be applied to many traditional stories and legends. Teachers may find additional resources for Indigenous legends and children's literature at their local library or at Goodminds.com. This lesson also fits into early learning in their literature study of Indigenous stories.

#### **Animation Warm Up Games**

In order to prepare youth to engage in the animation, the teacher may consider introducing students to one or two warm up games that open students up to sharing in a different way. The *Embodied Games of Presence* are "games [that] enable participants to be present at the same time with each other, with the environment, the adult facilitators, the participants' own bodies, and the material and content that the workshop will explore" (p. 5, see booklet provided in the 'Materials' section of Activity 2: Animating the Story).

## ACTIVITIES

## 1 - Listening to stories of Nanabush

**Purpose**

The students will learn a legend about Nanabush called *The Butterflies*. Students will pay particular attention to meaning, but will also consider how the story evolves.

**Time:** 30 mins

**Activity Instructions**

- 1. Introduce trickster Nanabozho and explain why he exists.**
  - Nanabozho is half-man, half-spirit; he has all of the powers of the Great Spirit and holds all the weaknesses of mankind; he is a magical being; he can transform; and he is often hungry.
  - Maybe share a bit about the legend and the magical nature of it.
- 2. Students will listen to the story and will contemplate the meaning of the legend.**

*The teacher will need to invite an Indigenous actor or storyteller who knows some Nanabush stories. They may have additional roles they could introduce like the clan system and the role of wolves.*

**This activity is designed to connect with learners with these learning styles...**

- Spiritual (e.g., Relational) Learners
- Intellectual (e.g., Rational, Logical) Learners
- Emotional (e.g., Feeling, Intuitive) Learners

**... in the following ways:**

1. Emotional: story is a gift that teaches something important for life. Students discuss and share what they learned and their reflections in a circle.
2. Spiritual: the spirit and emotion are tied here as both are moved through animating story.
3. Intellectual: learning lessons from an oral story or Nanabush story requires attention and listening in order to understanding of new knowledge and/or the lesson from this Nanabush story.

**Suggested Adaptations for Different Kinds of Learners**

n/a

**Materials**

*Click the 'Link' to open and view videos.*

*To open and print files, please go to the 'files' folder accompanying this downloaded lesson plan.*

Resource Title	Type
<b>The Butterflies</b>	File (The Butterflies.docx) 

This resource is a legend of Nanabush called *The Butterflies*.

## TEACHING NOTES

## 2 - Animating the Story

### Purpose

The students will learn to animate the story.

**Time:** 90 mins

### Activity Instructions

- Students will act out the story and will present a show.

Start with casting the roles of:

- Wolves – you can share Anishnaabe Clan Knowledge here ie. The wolf is the head of the Marten clan; they are the foot soldiers; the warriors; the most expendable.
  - Toddlers
  - Nanabush
  - Butterflies
- (Note: A Lesson 2 possibility is with an Elder/Language Keeper Storyteller)

The Director (Educator) rehearses an animation of the story they just heard. They prepare for a presentation. They can first explore character movement. How do wolves walk, drink water, howl – explore through movement. Then rehearse story scene by scene. Explore how a toddler would crawl, walk, etc. Explore how a butterfly would fly.

### Additional Background Information for this Activity

Nanabush stories are available widely on the internet and in libraries. This story was part of a compilation collected by April Cote, a teacher in Kitigan Zibi First Nation, PQ at the Kitigan Zibi Cultural Centre as part of a summer drama project with Alanis King. Alanis King has paraphrased the story for dramatic purposes because of her playwriting and Anishnaabe theatre background.

**This activity is designed to connect with learners with these learning styles...**

- Spiritual (e.g., Relational) Learners
- Physical (e.g., Tactile, Experiential, Visual) Learners
- Intellectual (e.g., Rational, Logical) Learners

**... in the following ways:**

The previous activities reflect the following principal learning styles:

1. Spiritual: the spirit and emotion are tied here as both are moved through animating story.
2. Intellectual: learning lessons from an oral story or Nanabush story requires attention and listening in order to understanding of new knowledge and/or the lesson from this Nanabush story.
3. Physical: Students are physically engaged in the animation to clarify or extend understanding.

### Suggested Adaptations for Different Kinds of Learners

n/a

### Materials

*Click the 'Link' to open and view videos.*

*To open and print files, please go to the 'files' folder accompanying this downloaded lesson plan.*

Resource Title	Type
Embodied Games of Presence	File (Embodied Games of Presence.pdf) 
"We see Games of Presence as one way to invite play into holistic learning, wellness, and cultural identity" (p. 6).	

TEACHING NOTES

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### 3 - Closing Circle

#### Purpose

- The students will learn a legend about Nanabush called Butterflies.
- The students will learn to animate the story.

**Time:** 60 mins

#### Activity Instructions

The educator can pose the following questions and pass a feather or rock to the first learner to begin the sharing circle.

1. What role did you play in the story?
2. What did the story teach you about wolves, children, Nanabush?
3. Do you have any thoughts on why this story is important?

**This activity is designed to connect with learners with these learning styles...**

- Emotional (e.g., Feeling, Intuitive) Learners

**... in the following ways:**

Emotional: story is a gift that teaches something important for life. Students discuss what they learned in circle.

#### Materials

*Click the 'Link' to open and view videos.*

*To open and print files, please go to the 'files' folder accompanying this downloaded lesson plan.*

Resource Title	Type
Sacred Tree Curriculum Guide - Guidelines for Talking Circles	File (Sacred Tree Curriculum Guide - Guidelines for Talking Circles.docx) 

## TEACHING NOTES

## ASSESSMENT

*This section contains information for assessing progress in students' learning. While Indigenous approaches to assessment may be highlighted, conventional assessment methods may also be discussed.*

The teacher can assess the students' learning by evaluating their role in the animation, by their response either in the discussion circle or the journal entry (see 'Personal Reflection Time'). Using an *assessment for learning strategy*, it is recommended that instructors make notes of student participation and work completed through Anecdotal Notes.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Click the 'Link' to open and view videos.

To open and print files, please go to the 'files' folder accompanying this downloaded lesson plan.

Resource Title	Type
<b>Office of the Treaty Commissioner</b>	<a href="#">Link</a> 
The Office of the Treaty Commissioner has resources for groups or individuals in school or in workplaces who want to be educated.	
<b>Inspiring Success: First Nation's and Métis, Pre K – 12 Education Policy Framework</b>	<a href="#">Link</a> 
The Saskatchewan Ministry of Education's <i>Inspiring Success: First Nation's and Métis, Pre K – 12 Education Policy Framework</i> is being followed. It contains guidelines and protocols for Indigenous content, as well as the content itself.	
<b>Full Circle: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Ways of Knowing</b>	<a href="#">Link</a> 
"Full Circle: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Ways of Knowing is the fifth in a series of Common Threads classroom resources produced by and for Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) members. Each project in the series tackles an important social issue that is cross-curricular in nature and compels students to examine their beliefs, choices and actions."	
<b>The Stories I Can Tell by Lynn Cote</b>	<a href="#">Link</a> 
A story of Nanabush and how the owl got its name.	

## HOLISM AND ALL OUR RELATIONS

*This lesson plan has been developed with an Indigenous lens that is holistic in nature, a way of being and knowing that acknowledges our relationships with 'all our relations', including plants and animals, other human beings, the water, land, wind, sun, moon, stars, and more - everything seen and unseen. With 'all our relations' in mind, this lesson plan has been developed with a focus on:*

<b>Relationship with the land</b>
<p><i>The Butterflies</i> is a story that is about Nanabush and comes from the Anishnaabe. Alternatively, teachers could invite an actor, Elder, or storyteller from your local area to share a story of their choosing. They may be representative of the Indigenous groups where you live, for example, from Treaty 4 who are the Salteaux, Cree, Dakota, Lakota and Nakota.</p> <p>***Each representative group shares stories or teachings. One of these stories can also be chosen for animation.</p>
<b>Participatory and experiential learning activities</b>
<b>Language and Culture</b>
<p>The telling of story by an actor, storyteller or Elder is embracing the oral tradition of how knowledge is passed on. Language use may come to light in the oral telling. The Elder or storyteller may introduce a work or two in sharing their story.</p>

**Relationship with family, ancestors**

The students could share the animation of the Nanabush story with parents on parent night or parent(s)/guardian(s) could be invited to the class to watch the animation. This could be the first time parent(s)/guardian(s) have heard a Nanabush story. If a production of the animation for parent(s)/guardian(s) does not happen, students are encouraged to share the story with their parent(s)/guardian(s) at home.

**Connections are made with everyday life**

The actor, storyteller, Elder, or Knowledge Keeper, as community members, are welcome to join the classroom to share a legend, story, or teaching while respecting the protocol of appropriate season for storytelling.

**Intergenerational learning with Elders/Knowledge Holders**

Were Elders or Knowledge Holders involved in the development of this Lesson Plan? Yes  
Can Elders or Knowledge Holders be invited to help teach part of this lesson plan? Yes

**Intergenerational learning with Elders/Knowledge Holders****Ethics in the classroom: care, truthfulness and trust, respect, integrity**

This lesson plan manifests care, respect, truthfulness, trust and integrity by respecting the actor, storyteller or Elder and being a "good listener".

Respecting protocol and offering tobacco to the Elder or storyteller by the teacher or a select student models an ethical practice.

The students are respectful of the group as they animate the legend. They all need to play their role well in order for the audience to understand the story.

**Different learning styles; attention given to mind, body, and spirit****Healthy relationship with self and identity****Personal reflection time (connecting with thoughts and feelings)**

Students will reflect on what they have learned from the Nanabush legend and will write their reflections in their writing journals.

For students in Grade 1, they may need a writing prompt. For example, *One thing that I learned from the Nanabush legend is \_\_\_\_\_.*

**OTHER DETAILS**

This Lesson Plan aims to meet curriculum expectations or outcomes for: Saskatchewan Yes

**Stream:** Academic

**RELATED LESSON PLANS**

- [Histoires de Premières Nations](#)
- [First Nation Stories](#)

**CONTRIBUTORS**

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**QUESTIONS/MORE DETAILS**

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