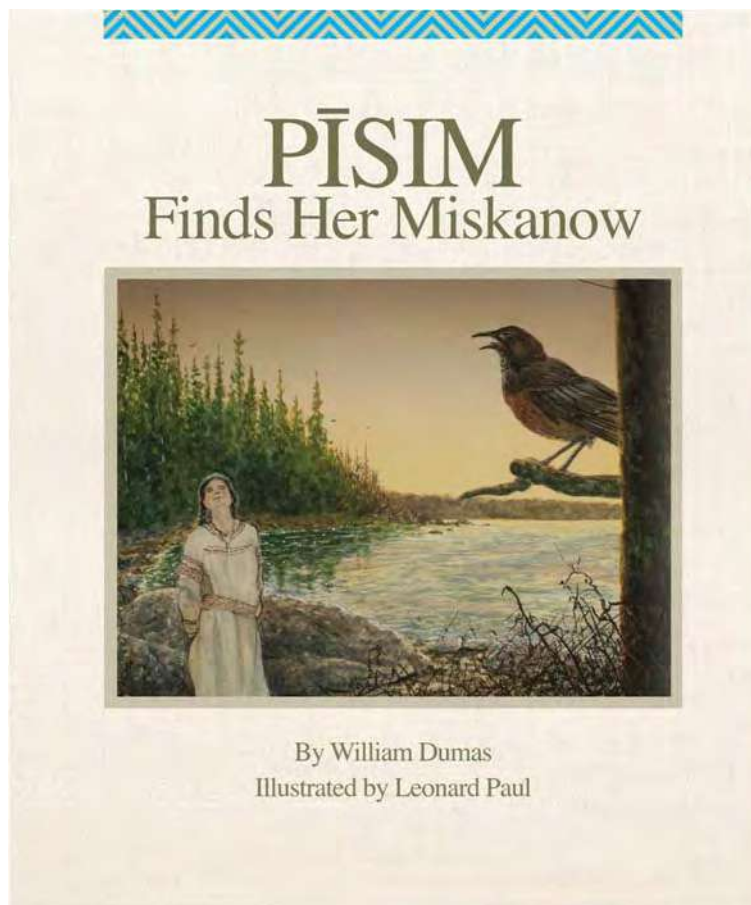


# Teacher's Guide

by Margaret Dumas and Deborah Schnitzer for

*P̄sim Finds Her Miskanow*

by William Dumas/illustrated by Leonard Paul



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**Teacher's Guide for:**

*Pisim Finds Her Miskanow*, published by HighWater Press.

ISBN 978-1-55379-543-8



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the support provided by members of the *Pisim Finds Her Miskanow* field-testing project: Pat Atkinson, Lord Nelson School; Heather Blacker, Brookland School; Angie Ferguson and Sandra McGlynn, Sister MacNamara School; Tala Gammon, River Heights School; Stacey Huggard and Sheri Wasilewski, Lakewood School; Jennifer Lamoureux, Constable Edward Finney School; Jessica LeBlanc, Oscar Blackburn School; Renée McGurry, Aboriginal Education Teacher, St. James-Assiniboia School Division; and Regine Nutten and Debra O’Neil, Buchanan School.

We would also like to acknowledge the field-testing funding support provided by the Marsha Hanen Global Dialogue and Ethics Award.

As well, we are grateful for the support provided by members of the collaborative team that created *Pisim Finds Her Miskanow*, particularly Kevin Brownlee, William Dumas, Leonard Paul, Mavis Reimer, Myra Sitchon, and the remarkable Larissa Wodtke, whose coordinating, editorial, and formatting skills sustained and enriched our efforts. We would also like to acknowledge the leadership of Doris Wolf, Director of the Centre for Research in Young People’s Texts and Cultures (CRYTC), and CRYTC itself.

There are many who have contributed their experience and expertise. For conversations along the way and contributions to the Guide, we thank Phil Baker, Angela Busch, Betsi Dolan, Leah Gazan, Roberta Kennedy, Greg Pruden, Linda Mlodzinski, Helen Robinson Settee, Barb Shearer, Laura Sokal, Dawn Sutherland, Rebecca Wood, and Cheryl Zubric.

Finally we would like to thank the participants from the *Pisim Finds Her Miskanow* Summer Institute held at the University of Winnipeg from July 14 to 18, 2014 who worked with a draft of the Guide during their exploration of Rocky Cree culture, tradition, and educational practice with members of the team who created this picture book and its resources.

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## PREFACE

The picture book and story of *P̄sim Finds Her Miskanow* (PFM) provides groundbreaking historical information about the culture and language of the Rocky Cree people of Northern Manitoba and specifically the territory around present-day South Indian Lake.

This Teacher's Guide for *P̄sim Finds Her Miskanow* came about with the realization that the book needed ideas for teachers wishing to use the book as part of various curricula.

The guiding force for my involvement in the guide was to help educators deliver this story to the youth who seek to understand the rich history of the Rocky Cree people. It is my belief that P̄sim's story can be taught in a way which can inspire youth from any cultural background. The activities in the Teacher's Guide revolve around four main units of study incorporating various themes and activities related to Midwifery, *Miskanow*, Journey Making, and Storytelling.

My personal hope and dream is that the Guide will be one that will continue to grow as other educators share their ideas for activities that will enrich and bring P̄sim's story to "Life" for students in the classrooms.

My passion as an Aboriginal educator has always been to help guide students in

finding their own *miskanow* so that they can feel a sense of belonging, identity, and self-worth. I feel personally honored to have been asked to assist in this part of that journey.

Finally, we must remember to honour the memory of Kikawenow, Our Mother from Long Ago, for it was she who first offered us her story by allowing her remains to be found . . . *kinanaskimitinan*.

—Margaret Dumas

## A NOTE ON USING AND CONTRIBUTING TO THE TEACHER GUIDE

The Guide was initially prepared for the 2014 Summer Institute at the University of Winnipeg coordinated by the Centre for Research in Young People's Texts and Cultures and members of the PFM project; participants' experiences and contributions have become part of the proposed ongoing development of educational resources that will support PFM. We hope that your experience with the activities and exercises within the Guide will encourage you to contribute to the PFM educational resources webpage ([http://crytc.uwinnipeg.ca/teaching\\_resources.php](http://crytc.uwinnipeg.ca/teaching_resources.php)) where you can share lesson plans and student work created within your classrooms, for example, with other learners and other communities.

In terms of the Guide itself, there will be overlap to a certain extent—an exercise or activity in one unit may be more fully explored in another unit. For example, an introduction to journey in relation to *miskanow* in terms of birth story and the discerning of one’s path in Unit I will be more actively pursued in Unit II, as part of the work students can do in map-making and the creating of an actual archaeological site. Teachers are invited to select from any of the ideas that are suggested and so develop their own sequences and overall methods. Throughout the Guide, we have referenced the use of technology in terms of the making and representing of work, but are aware that communities have varying resources; we hope that the exercises and activities can be adapted in relation to the variety of media and means available within the learning circles created and in relation to the range of existing web-based educational resources responsive to the context, method, and vision of the *PFM* project.

### A NOTE ON READING *PFM*

For many, reading *PFM* may mean encountering Rocky Cree for the first time. There are notes and a glossary to support that encounter. We hope you will embrace the language learning opportunities *PFM* presents, test out new words and phrases, share this process with your students, and collaborate with them during your exploration. Certainly, as might be possible, invite Rocky Cree speakers into your classrooms. You might record your progress by using audio and videotaping techniques that document and/or archive your developing expertise. We hope you celebrate the challenge and your increasing success. As you practice modeling the transformative opportunity encountering a new language presents, you become part of an adventure with a language which, while new to some, is known to others.

*The Gift of Language and Cree Culture* (<http://www.giftoflanguageandculture.ca>) is a website that might be of interest in relation to dialects of the Cree language and Cree culture.

### A NOTE ON IMAGES IN THE GUIDE

**Children’s Drawings:** In the Guide you will discover a picture created by a child who participated in the field testing of *PFM*. Students working with teacher Jennifer Lamoureux in her Grade Five class at Constable Edward Finney School in Winnipeg’s Seven Oaks School Division were invited to imagine scenes from *PFM* when they were reading the written text of *PFM*, as part of a field-testing project that took place during the 2011-12 academic year. We wanted to celebrate their work in the Guide and will reference the illustrations within Unit III.

We welcome participation from other readers and artists as part of the *PFM* community who may be responding to activities and exercises within the Guide itself and/or to creative and critical opportunities that continue to be developed in response to the picture book.

**Fractured Illustrations:** Throughout the Guide, you will also see images that have been taken from the illustrations by Leonard Paul for *PFM*. The selection represented is not exhaustive, but representative of a part-whole exercise that is presented in Unit III of the Guide. This exercise invites students to think about the fragments given, consider where they “belong” in the picture book, how they might be imagined and/or completed differently, and how the students might integrate the fractured illustrations into new compositions they themselves design. We hope this approach stimulates ongoing inventiveness with word-picture genres.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Guide has been informed by the Learning Outcomes developed in the 2006 *Grade 5 People and Stories of Canada to 1867: A Foundation for Implementation*; the 2007 *Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Languages and Cultures Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes* for Grade 5 and Grade 6; and the 2003 *Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula: A Resource for Curriculum Developers, Teachers, and Administrators for Middle Years* (Grades 5-8, 26-31). We have also consulted the 1996 *Grades 5 to 8 Social Studies Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes and Grade 6 Standards*, recognizing that this Framework is currently being revised. The Guide emphasizes a correspondence with the Grade 5 Cluster 1: First Peoples Learning Outcomes, as given in the *Grade 5 Foundation for Implementation* document, consistent with its emphasis on the origins of First Peoples, their connections to the land, their culture, types of leadership, the value of oral culture, and the forms of interaction before and during early contact with Europeans. We have also consulted the 1996 *Grades 5 to 8 English Language Arts Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes and Grade 6 Standards*, recognizing that this Framework is currently being revised.

As well, the Guide has been shaped by the Distinctive Learning Outcomes defined by *Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula: A Resource for Curriculum Developers, Teachers, and Administrators*, which underlines a respect for and understanding of the nature of Aboriginal history, language, and culture. More specifically, the Guide demonstrates a particular awareness of the Rocky Cree people and their traditions, as well as an appreciation for the dialect and sounds of the language. Consistent with the 2007

*Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Languages and Cultures Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes*, the Guide presents activities that encourage students and teachers, as well as community participants, to listen and respond to Rocky Cree, explore glossaries, word maps, lullabies, traveling songs, and related oral traditions.

Within Unit III, Part Two, given its particular focus on the analysis of PFM's iconotextual elements and the student's analytical and creative response, we note more specific Student Learning Outcomes as given for Grade 5 in the 2011 *Kindergarten to Grade Visual Arts Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes* (electronic resource). We have made the list representative of the analytical, creative, collaborative, and contextual skills students might achieve in this section of the unit, but these outcomes are applicable to Unit III, Part Three as well, and, indeed, to Unit III overall. These outcomes also respond to aspects within the range of explorations developed in much of the Guide.

The exercises and activities in the Guide are contextualized within these frameworks, as well as those provided by *Kayasochi Kikawenow, Our Mother From Long Ago: An Early Cree woman and Her Personal Belongings From Nagami Bay, Southern Indian Lake (KK)*. The Guide can, we hope, address the interests of a broad range of readers and writers. While we foreground the distinctive character of Rocky Cree history, language, culture, and tradition, we acknowledge the commonalities and/or points of intersection that will be discovered by those from diverse locations. Our hope is that PFM comes alive in your classroom and community, that the Guide contributes to this process, and that together we continue to discover meaningful approaches that integrate its voice, vision, and knowledge.

## INTRODUCING THE PICTURE BOOK

As a way of entering *Pisim Finds Her Miskanow*, you can explore the picture book's visual culture first by using Visual Thinking Strategies as developed by Visual Understanding in Education specialists. For a more complete introduction to this method of exploration, you can consult the VTS website (<http://vtshome.org>).

We are representing prompts as given on the website's VTS in Action page, prompts that demonstrate how teachers can use open-ended questions to encourage students to interact with Leonard Paul's paintings to discover Pisim's *miskanow*.

You might begin by selecting the cover image itself, the image that accompanies DAY 1 of the journey.





Here are the prompts as given by VTS.

Teachers are asked to use 3 open-ended questions:

- What is going on in the picture?
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- What more can we find?

3 Facilitation Techniques:

- Paraphrase the comments neutrally.
- Point to the area that is being discussed.
- Link and frame student comments.

In other words, show connections among their ideas and help students to see how their comments relate to their reasons for the analysis they are providing.

Students are asked to:

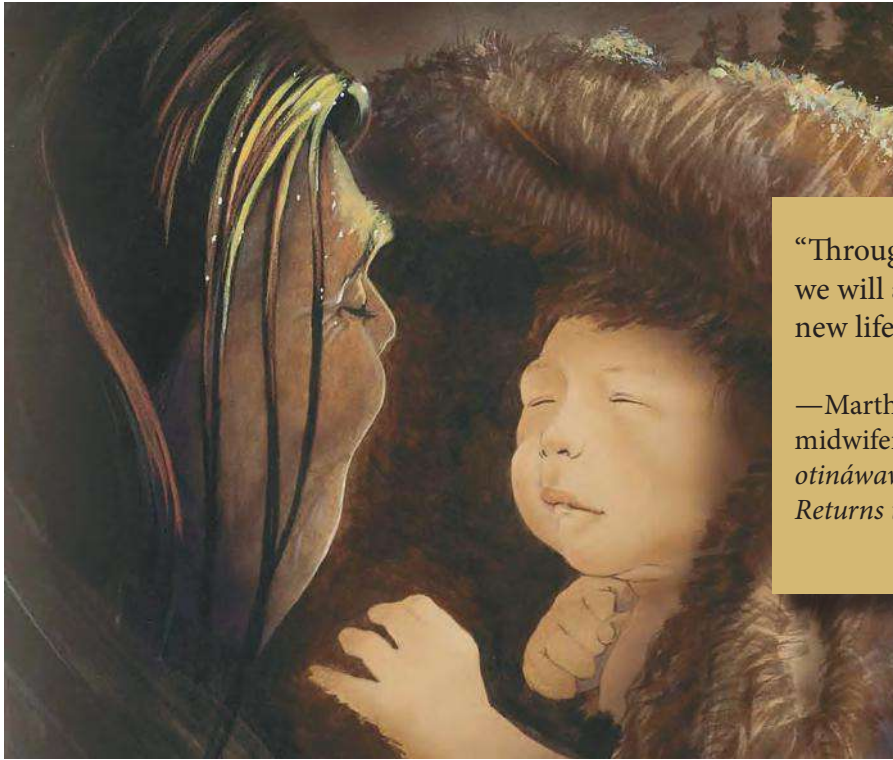
- Look carefully at the illustrations
- Talk about what they observe
- Back up their ideas with evidence
- Listen to and consider the view of others
- Discuss multiple possible interpretations

(Framing as noted above relates to matters of

how, why, when, what, and where. Questions in relation to DAY 1 will help clarify. Students can be invited to consider the following: What seems to be the focal point of the scene as given?; What details helped you see that?; What seem to be the most important elements?; Why do you think that?; When do you think that kind of clothing presented might have been worn?; What can you tell me about the shoreline?; What more can you tell me about the way Pīsim is standing?; How might Pīsim's gaze encourage us to "hear" what she is thinking?; How might the robin's open beak help us "hear" her prayer?

By asking the students to speculate within this stage of analysis, you are encouraging them to discover how the same element can support diverse story opportunities and consider which of those opportunities might be confirmed as the visual story unfolds.

Certainly, VTS can be used throughout the reading of the story as a wordless picture book, for the book can read that way as part of an introductory experience and/or in relation to any of the illustrations within the story. Students can write to the wordless picture book initially, and compare their written narrative to the verbal narrative that is given in *PFM*, testing out their assumptions and expectations in part— that is, deal with a limited portion of the journey sequence or the whole—and working with the entire story as given in visual form. We will return to this strategy in Unit III, and students can lead VTS in small groups as a way of practicing their own questioning and facilitation skills with the individual illustrations their small groups decide they might like to explore together.



“Through the midwifery practice we will again raise the sacredness of new life.”

—Martha Laubmann, Aboriginal midwifery helper (doula), from *Kanáci otináwawasowin: Aboriginal Midwifery Returns to Manitoba*

## UNIT I

### *Otinawāwosōwin: Gift of Bringing Life into the World*

#### Learning Outcomes:

**KI-004 Describe First Peoples’ stories of their origins.**

**VH-008 Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.**

**KL-017 Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples’ connections with the land and the natural environment.**

**KI-005 Describe characteristics of First Peoples cultures before contact with Europeans.**

**KI-006 Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**KH-024 Relate First Peoples’ stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.**

**KP-046 Compare types of leadership in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**VP-014 Value diverse approaches to leadership.**

Key elements are available throughout the story in terms of how P̄sim has been prepared as a Helper by her grandmother, Nōcok̄is̄iw, and in the “Becoming a Midwife” note on page 40, which also includes related materials that provide terms and contexts. We are looking at questions that include the following: What does midwifery mean?; What are traditional/contemporary midwifery practices?; How have understandings of midwifery changed?; Why would the midwife be important in traditional societies? How do midwives organize themselves today? Please consult **Appendix I** for further information.

## PART ONE

**KI-004 Describe First Peoples' stories of their origins.**

**VH-008 Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.**

**KL-017 Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples' connections with the land and the natural environment.**

**KI-005 Describe characteristics of First Peoples cultures before contact with Europeans.**

**KI-006 Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**KH-024 Relate First Peoples' stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.**

**KP-046 Compare types of leadership in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**VP-014 Value diverse approaches to leadership.**

### ACTIVATING: ASSESSING AWARENESS AND NEEDS

Explore the students' understanding of the history of midwives in Aboriginal communities and non-Aboriginal communities, particularly in relation to the erasure of midwifery as a practice and its re-formation in contemporary Canadian society.

Teachers can use guiding questions to help students set the tone and access prior knowledge/understanding:

- What does the term midwife mean?
- What do midwives do?
- When did midwifery become a profession?
- When do you think midwives were important?
- How do you think midwives are valued in communities?
- How are midwives valued in the medical community?
- Do you think there are midwives working in your community?
- How do you think midwives are trained?
- Where are midwives trained?
- Where do midwives practice their work?
- Why would women want to become midwives?
- Why might women who are going to have babies want midwives to help?

1. Explore to what extent students know their own birth/adoption/welcoming stories. In small groups, for example, students can recount orally what they know of their own stories as heard when told by families/caregivers/friends. Students can review what they know and prepare questions to help them flesh out these stories. They can record what they know in note form and/or write a brief sketch of their stories as they understand them.



“We are taught that everyone comes with their own gifts. It is the job of teachers to find those gifts. To help the children grow.”

—Mi'kmaq elder in conversation with Rupert Ross (*Returning to the Teachings: Exploring Aboriginal Justice*. Toronto: Penguin, 1996, 54).

As part of this activity, students might begin to see if they can find “baby” or childhood pictures of their own or pictures of family members, which come from childhoods that have been recorded in pictures they can access.

Here and elsewhere, students can deepen their appreciation of and for the differences between the forms of representation they are using to tell their stories, for activities in the Guide work with a range of oral, written, digital, and pictorial styles. In some exercises, particular attention is drawn toward these distinctions,

but where appropriate, differences in modes of telling and representation can be explored as a way of enjoying how words and pictures intersect in *PFM* itself, and in the materials the students gather throughout their own study.

2. Ask students to conduct interviews with parents/caregivers/friends/mentors to see what further information they can find, so that they create the most complete stories. Along the way, they may discover other important/legendary birth/adoption/welcoming, naming, and childhood stories within their

families and/or communities, including stories which might involve midwives. Students are encouraged to record this information. The process may help them discover how stories take on complexity, dimension, and shape, as memory tapped may reveal seemingly forgotten detail through conversations with others; the same event may be remembered differently within a single family, or an incidental fact may grow unexpectedly in significance. In conducting the interviews, students can use recording devices and/or take notes. They might work in pairs, if that seems useful, so that one student asks questions while another records answers. Students can also try to discover if there are resources and locations that have family and/or community *minisiwina*/genealogical histories such as memoirs, letters, diaries, or related archival materials which they can bring, if possible, to share within the classroom circle.

Invite students to compare their completed stories with the initial notes/sketches they prepared at the beginning of this exercise so that they gain a deeper sense of the journeys they have travelled in collecting material and refining their stories. Enjoy the analysis of the differences that have taken place and encourage the students to record those that they identify.

3. Ask students to share their stories and new information, as well as the key terms which are part of their stories, in a Word Splash activity, preparing for the new vocabulary that comes from the *PFM* story and story notes, working to see correlatives between terms that relate to birthing practices among various cultures.

As part of this process, students can begin to explore their own names, their official names, their nick names, the terms of endearment that might be used within their families and among their friends—the range of names that are used to “call” them. The further sense of calling and

*miskanow* taken up in Part Two will follow logically from this exploration and be integrated into how naming ceremonies within various cultures recognize special abilities, connections, and rites of passage.

In relation to naming traditions and ceremonies, students can also examine the Cree Glossary and explore the meanings that are part of many of the characters’ names in *PFM*, discovering how those meanings relate in terms of the roles the characters perform and in terms of their relationship to one another and to the land in the story. Discovering how names are given, cherished, carried, transmitted, and altered within families and communities can be an integral part of how students understand who they are in terms of their “birth” and becoming stories.

Of course, students may well reveal negative experiences with name-calling within this exploration; they can discuss how they have managed such experiences and countered them, if and where possible, by connecting, for example, with allies and anti-bullying and anti-racist resources. These explorations will resonate in relation to concepts of *miskanow*, *minisiwin*, and community central to *PFM*.

4. In an ongoing way, students can build a Word Wall with key terms, adding new terms relevant to the story and background as they emerge throughout the class study. They can introduce pictorial elements, as well, such as baby and childhood pictures, found and drawn, as the case may be, so that they achieve collage effects. They can supplement with materials that emerge throughout the *PFM* story study, such as birth announcements in the local paper, online stories relating to relevant community celebrations involving the lives of women, children and their families, and/or other materials about new birthing facilities or practices that are being established locally or nationally.



## PART TWO

**KI-004 Describe First Peoples' stories of their origins.**

**VH-008 Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.**

**KL-017 Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples' connections with the land and the natural environment.**

**KI-005 Describe characteristics of First Peoples cultures before contact with Europeans.**

**KI-006 Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**KH-024 Relate First Peoples' stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.**

**KP-046 Compare types of leadership in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**VP-014 Value diverse approaches to leadership.**



## ACQUIRING: BUILDING-VISIONING-STRUGGLING

1. Ask students to explore various contexts that might deepen their understanding of the Helper, birthing practice experiences, and histories. They might, for example, create a timeline to represent the shifting and contested status and role of the midwife, up to and including the present day. This could involve consulting and/or interviewing community members working in obstetrics/midwifery from Western and non-Western points of views. A framework which might hold the sense of “then” and “now” in terms the role of the midwife and her honoured place within the



Rocky Cree community is given by the voice which opens *PFM*: “Long ago, my grandchildren, long ago, it was beautiful, the earth. It was peaceful. The people were well, and we were healthy.” The frame narrator, who can be conceptualized as a grandparent or elder figure, opens to a time of wellness and strength, a time in which practices such as midwifery were an integral part of the community’s way of life.

Working in groups, students might explore more fully the issues that surround the loss and recovery of community-based birthing practices in Aboriginal communities. They might use their personal reflections and growing knowledge, including their understanding of how race, culture, gender, and class have affected the treatment of midwives in various communities over time. Students can create an anthology from the interviews/anecdotes/reflections/observations/stories representing midwives and midwifery practices and/or experiences. Interviewing family and community members will engage further research and consultations. Students might create a *minisiwin*/genealogy chart, revealing family/community members who were delivered by midwives at home, in reserve, rural, and/or urban hospital settings; the documenting/research process might be recorded as these stories are explored and/or celebrated.

2. Ask students to explore *PFM* to discover evidence of Pisim’s *miskanow*. The activity might begin with a teacher-led reading of the story; students can continue by taking turns reading the story aloud, providing support to one another by sounding out the Rocky Cree words together. Every opportunity can be taken to explore the effect of working with a language that might be new to many and how that in itself relates to the challenges of *miskanow*. Note and record those places in the story that

confirm Pisim’s calling and those which reveal her confusion and/or apprehension. This might include: the roles others play within this process; Pisim’s moments of insight and/or wondering; and forms of acknowledgement and/or recognition by others through their actions and through symbols and events.

As a way to begin, you might look at the opening illustration on DAY 1 and the robin’s song which acknowledges the Creator and thanks the Creator “for giving me life.” Pisim wonders if she will be “allowed to take part in that great gift of welcoming life into the world” by becoming the Helper to a midwife. This concept of recognition and acknowledgment, so important to *miskanow*, is part of the relationship between the visual and verbal elements of DAY 1. It is revealed, as well, in visual terms through connections that link Pisim and the robin in terms of location, stance, and gaze.

Questions that focus this understanding of relation or kinship might include:

- What roles do you think Pisim and the robin share?
- How is their position in the illustration supportive of that connection?
- What landscape details might help us understand a time of new beginnings?
- How is this associated with thankfulness and new life/mothering in terms of the robin’s song and Pisim’s dream?
- How is the look on Pisim’s face part of that visual strategy?
- How might her look respond to the robin’s profile, gaze, and open beak?

Students can pursue how connections between a character's developing understanding of path is actualized, challenged, and/or altered in the visual text and correlated in the verbal text.

During this process of reading and discovery, you can invite students to explore the point of view from which the written story is told and the technique that allows us to enter into Pīsim's wondering within this DAY 1 opening, so that students are made aware of her inner life. Interestingly, Leonard Paul uses an offer rather than a demand gaze here, to dramatize that inwardness, a technique he will use to render Pīsim at the evening ceremony, as well, as Pīsim, whispering a prayer of thankfulness, contemplates her arrival as Helper (p. 39). Throughout the Guide, the relationship between the verbal and visual character of the double-spreads will help students enjoy how William Dumas's storytelling strategies and Leonard Paul's illustration techniques work together to give life to the journey unfolding.

3. Encourage students to think about Indigenous knowledge and practice as it relates here to Pīsim becoming a Helper, the strength of the people, and the role played by the Ancestors during this process of becoming as acknowledged in story notes (p. 16), for example, and through the guidance and gifts of elders. By way of comparison, invite students to think about things they have done that have required them to pack carefully to ensure their participation in an important event—camping on the lake; hunting for chickens and/or rabbits; preparing for a special event like a fast, a religious ceremony, a Pow Wow, and/or other rites of passage which they have participated in and/or anticipate they will become involved with as they mature. As a way of achieving this goal, have students work in small groups to name an activity they would have participated in or might see themselves preparing for in

the future. Encourage them to develop a list of materials they would require. Each group can share their list with the class and build connections between the materials they list and the nature of the event the list is meant to support.

4. Invite students to imagine a particular kind of work they would like to do in their lives, and how this might relate to their sense of a path or calling they want to follow. This might involve exploring distinctions people often make between occupations and callings, for callings, some argue, suggest deeper passions or interests and involve a sense of greater purpose. Ask students to think about why the concept of a path might be important to them; why they might feel passionate about that path; what skills/experiences/interests they might bring to it; whom they might consult in defining that path; and what research they would have to do as they prepare themselves for that journey.

Students can journal to record this process of introspection and reflection to net their thinking and dreaming. They can share the highlights of that inquiry with others. The class as a whole might record this information as part of the ongoing study of path-making and life journeys. Students could brainstorm further with the entire class, creating pictures that represent the journey they are taking, and/or use other forms of representation, such as blogs, chats, letters, and diaries, to record this development. This process can be the beginning of an Explorer's Journal, and students might simulate the range that is involved in *PFM* itself: line drawings, illustrations, notes, key terms, sketches, stories, and diagrams. (In Unit III, this approach is more fully developed in Part One, Exercise 3.) Other ideas that might be helpful as students work with the concept of *miskanow* include: making a Word Splash to explore the concept of a calling and vocation; talking with family



members/friends whose work may have been a calling for them; examining how various traditions look at the relationship between dreaming, the spirit world generally, and rituals and ceremonies which help young people discern their paths; inviting elders into the class to discuss their sense of calling and/or vocation as it relates to the specifics of Rocky Cree culture and history; and looking at other media which represent these stories of calling in popular and traditional cultures.

Here and elsewhere, students will come to value specific differences, even as they discern and appreciate commonalities in relation to the concept of *miskanow*.

5. Ask students to explore the nature of the giveaway, the nature of the gifts given and received in the story, relating to the birth of the child, and Pisim's coming of age as a midwife in terms of her own gifts. Students are encouraged to understand the spiritual nature of the gift-giving within and to community. Perhaps they can see connections with gifts they have received and particular talents they possess. They can share stories of gifts they have given and received within these contexts, using a variety of means to represent such occasions. They can consider how gifts are valued, and see the range of gifts in terms of singing, basket-making, midwifery, and hunting in *PFM*, and explore how they contribute to family and community lives. They might also explore how gifts are recognized and rewarded in general terms, in varying circumstances that they have experienced and/or might reference. In sharing their gifts within a sharing circle, for example, students may deepen their appreciation for the fact that gifts take many forms, only one of which may be physical.

Within this context, students can construct their own personal shields to represent their strengths and their learning about how to use

their gifts and strengths in positive ways. The shields can be constructed out a range of materials, and correlations between the materials chosen and the nature of the shield's meanings will help support the students' exploration of the organic relationship between form and content integral to Pisim's own emerging vision and practice. Students can also work with the idea of a family and/or community shield as a way of extending and enriching their appreciation of the diverse nature of gifts individuals bring to one another and communities offer. Certainly, students can relate this activity back to the path making discussed in relation to life journeys as vocations and callings.

6. Invite students to write a letter to Pisim, or to a member of her family, explaining or sharing their own visions. Part of this letter could involve a drawing of what that vision looks like, which they might also share. Students might relate their own drawings to a scene from the picture book that seems to embody a corresponding value or meaning in relation to Pisim's *miskanow* in their minds: this might be anything from the robin's song, the birth of the baby, the scene in which Pisim receives the beads from Nōcokisīw, to the final image of Pisim "drifting into the dream world." Incorporating some aspect of an existing illustration by Leonard Paul into his/her own drawing or story may deepen the student's connection to the experience of *miskanow*.

7. Encourage students to brainstorm a list of qualities that seem to be required to support the capacity to "stand beside" one's responsibility. In the story, Pisim is asked to "come and stand beside" her "responsibility" during the main evening gathering. She is presented with a ceremonial bag containing her midwifery tools, and she offers a prayer of thanksgiving as a way of acknowledging her understanding of the path which has been

“chosen” for her and her willingness to “carry” her “responsibility with dignity.” Students can consider what responsibility means within this context, both in terms of the individual, the *minisiwin* (the family), and the people (the whole community). In small groups or in pairs, students can locate points in the story which show Pīsim’s capacity to take responsibility for her calling, her family, and her community, and share their findings within the larger group. Students can relate their own personal and/or family stories in terms of the concept of “standing by responsibility.” Students can be encouraged to read and share other coming-of-age stories that seem to explore the concept of “heroic” action, which may correlate with the values/actions central to Pīsim’s vision/ action in this story. They can begin to develop a list of characteristics which they think support “heroic” action and review that list in an ongoing way throughout their study of *PFM* as they refine their understanding of life journeys, gifts, and inner strengths.

8. Ask students to explore what they know about lullabies, using strategies like brainstorming, mind mapping, and/or Word Splashes, to discuss the history of lullabies and their significance within cultures and within *PFM*. Students can listen to the recording of the Cree lullaby in the story, try to sing it, and listen to other lullabies, both from Aboriginal and other cultures, traditional and contemporary. Students can explore themes, patterns, symbols, images, and tonalities which might distinguish lullaby songwriting to develop, either individually or in pairs, a lullaby of their own which they can share within the classroom, with their families, and in their communities. They may discover lullabies that have been created within their own families, and may bring those to share. These activities will be important to the discussion of the Paddling Song, the robin’s song, and other prayers in the story. Students

can consult the Songs note (p. 21) within this activity, to deepen both their appreciation for inner moods, dreams, and dream helpers as points of inspiration in song-making, and the way in which the sounds from the natural world - the sound of wind, water, animals and birds - can become part of melody and rhythm. A resource which might be helpful within this context: Lynn Whidden’s *Essential Song: Three Decades of Northern Cree Music*. The idea of original musical compositions can be extended to include rite-of-passage and work songs from various cultures, as well as songs which celebrate weddings and harvest, arrivals and departures. Activities in Units II and III will develop specific opportunities in relation to this context.

## PART THREE

### APPLYING: DOING AND PRESERVING

The following represent a variety of activities that teachers might consider in applying the learning achieved in Parts One and Two.

Working in small groups, students might create dioramas of their learning and present them with an oral telling, role play, or Reader’s Theatre piece to highlight the path of understanding they have achieved in relation to Pīsim’s journey.

- Students might explore dramatic/ video/photographic adaptation/ representation.
- As part of the in-house materials that can be achieved for the picture book study and shared in the classroom, the school, and/or the community, students might create a CD of the lullabies they have developed, in one or more languages that might be part of their class community, including Rocky Cree.

- Students might create their own dolls with traditional clothing, and/or pursue the making of related artifacts, such as moss bags, swings, moccasins, etc. They could include instructions and overviews that explore the nature and meanings of the artifacts they have chosen to create, adapting ethnographic techniques as suit their purposes. (Unit II will explore more ethnographic activities within this context.)
- Students might explore media representations of stories that demonstrate concepts of calling, vocation, gift, community, and responsibility, and create a class anthology in any form (or a mixture of forms) to reveal local, regional, and national stories that embody those principles. In developing such an anthology, in blending genres, and placing their own stories alongside stories from other sources, students can explore a range of voices, approaches, issues, images, and forms. Within this story-making exploration, students can experiment with point of view, pace, detailing, dialogue, and perspective, in relation to the narrative features they have enjoyed in William Dumas's story.
- Students can create t-shirts or find another material form that could reveal what they value and that could support their *miskanow* as they develop. For example, a student might portray an image of family (in any particular visual style) because s/he understands how family is important in the journey s/he is taking toward becoming a family counselor or social worker who helps families become healthier and stay together. This is a way of building on

the idea of a medicine/*miskanow* bag, a correlative, perhaps, for the midwifery tool bag Pīsim has in the picture book.

## SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

### EXPLORING STUDENTS' BIRTH/ ADOPTION/WELCOMING STORIES

**KI-004 Describe First Peoples' stories of their origins.**

**VH-008 Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.**

**KL-017 Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples' connections with the land and the natural environment.**

**KI-005 Describe characteristics of First Peoples cultures before contact with Europeans.**

**KI-006 Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**KH-024 Relate First Peoples' stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.**

**KP-046 Compare types of leadership in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**VP-014 Value diverse approaches to leadership.**

Pīsim's rite of passage as midwife in the picture book helps us understand the process in terms of her preparation for the birth of her nephew, the delivery itself, the acknowledgment of her skill, and the welcoming of the child into the community. There are notes that

describe rite-of-passage ceremonies, as well as traditional midwifery tools and practices.

Our approach continues to engage/develop students' understanding of oral culture and their own capacity to be storytellers: students will see the relationship between their birth/adoption/welcoming stories and that which is told in *PFM* in terms of traditional values and beliefs about childbirth and children. As part of their understanding of the distinctive Rocky Cree spiritual and cultural practices, they will explore the role of elders and community leaders who guide the people and recognize the gifts of the young men and women. The Lesson Plan's approach encourages the building capacity in terms of recalling/retrieving/composing/retelling individual birth/adoption/welcoming stories, including interviewing elders and family members; discovering important birth/adoption/welcoming stories within families/communities; understanding the importance of how children are recognized as gifts of the Creator; relating individual stories to Pīsim's experience; deepening the understanding of the importance of *otinawāwosōwin* (bringing gifts into the world); and sharing stories within the school and larger community.

### **I. Activating: Assessing Awareness and Needs**

1. Begin with a large group discussion of *otinawāwosōwin*, particularly in terms of the importance of birthing/adoption/welcoming stories they know and/or may have seen and read about to discover their prior knowledge.

2. Introduce the specific *PFM* vocabulary that is developed in the *PFM* story and notes. To reinforce this process, provide students with an opportunity to practice the *PFM* vocabulary, incorporating it into their own individual birth/adoption/welcoming stories and mother tongues.

3. Practice active listening in small groups, so that students learn how to hear the *PFM* story and provide feedback to the storytellers who are telling their own birth/adoption/welcoming stories, in terms of what they have learned about the individual story and the relationships among stories.

### **II. Acquiring: Building-Visioning-Struggling**

Ask students to assess what they have been able to recall/retell in terms of their individual stories and consult with elders/parents/caregivers to gather more information about their own stories and important stories in their families and communities. Discussion can include explorations of the concept of *minisiwin* or family in relation to the idea of a berry cluster, as well as the realities of mentorship and leadership as demonstrated in how Pīsim discovers and actualizes her path within the story.

Consultations can include the story note and graphic at the beginning of the picture book, including further explorations of the *KK* historical and archaeological resources that guided the story's development. Students can relate this material to their own experiences and cultures in terms of how new life is acknowledged. In small groups, students can share this new knowledge and perhaps begin to develop a berry cluster that represents their own sense of "family," incorporating concepts of kinship, which can involve how they may "make" family, blending biology, context, connection, choice-making, and adoption, and relating to adoption practices as given in the note on page 36 of *PFM*, which explores *wakomihitowin* or extended family within Rocky Cree culture.

Within this context, students may identify particular baby-welcoming ceremonies they know about or have participated in—baby-naming

ceremonies, baby showers, Brit milah (circumcision of Jewish male babies), and newborn full moon ceremonies—and consider how their knowledge and experiences relate to the practice revealed in *PFM*.

1. Engage students in a large group discussion of how oral stories might be written down, a discussion that will involve the *PFM* story itself. Students will think about what it means to write down their oral stories, discovering in the process the form they want to use (dramatic, anecdotal, poetic, short story, journalistic). During this activity, they can consider writing from first- and/or third-person points of view (perhaps both, as a way of testing out their choices); incorporating dialogue; bringing in concrete details as needed to build scenes; imagining their audience; discovering the story’s arc and its rhythms; and discerning its climax and possible resolution. In other words, return the students to some of the VTS and related written storytelling features they have already explored in *PFM* which might be interesting as points of comparison now both in relation to oral and written story-making techniques and using RAFT (Role of the Writer; Audience; Format; Topic) strategies as well.

In exploring RAFT and perspective, students can think about further recasting by selecting other people or forces such as animal, objects, or presences as potential narrators. They might work with alternate time frames and so discover different elements, values, and resources of memory that could reveal or release unique details that will take the story in new directions. This kind of shifting or recasting can be used in relation to any of the writing and visualizing activities in the Guide as a way to explore how the existing *PFM* may support distinct but related creative explorations.

2. Relatedly, if students desire, they might bring in baby/childhood/current “family” pictures and share these in their small groups, deciding whether or not they want to incorporate visual elements such as photographs, found images, original drawings, etc. (This might include creating a picture wall, using collage elements, and other forms to represent the range of storytelling methods students are engaging.)

3. Once students have discovered the form(s) they want to use to record their stories, they can create the stories, working in pairs to provide feedback and encouragement through the original draft process.

4. Working in pairs, students can review, revise, and edit their stories.

### III. Applying: Doing and Preserving

1. Students review how their stories relate to the *PFM* story, emphasizing what has been confirmed and what has been developed regarding their own understanding of the importance of oral culture and *otinawāwosōwin*. In conducting this comparison, they can discover points and approaches that coincide with the way in which the *PFM* story is constructed and consider more fully the distinct approaches they have taken in their own compositions. They can try to figure out the reasons for both the similarities and the differences, as a way of appreciating how form and content work together to create stories. In doing so, they will increasingly enjoy how choices are made by storytellers working with both words and pictures, how ideas are refined, words sharpened, images revised, speaking voices shaped, points of view determined, timelines secured, surprises planned, and beginnings and ends crafted.

2. Students can create a classroom collection of their birth/adoption/welcoming family stories. This will involve a consideration of the book design overall and elements which can be individually or collaboratively developed, such as a preface, a cover, a letter to Pīsim, a note to the community, a dedication to *otinawāwosōwak* (elder midwives), a glossary, and/or a pronunciation key, as well as the lullabies students will have

created within this unit. Students can create a classroom family tree, conceived of in terms of a berry cluster perhaps, and integrate as an element within the collection, incorporating the names of those who have worked with them as part of the research and consultation process. Of course, here and elsewhere, the collection can take electronic form, depending on the technological resources available.





## UNIT II

### *Miskanow*: Life Journey

#### Learning Outcomes:

**KI-004** Describe First Peoples' stories of their origins.

**VH-008** Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.

**KL-017** Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples' connections with the land and the natural environment.

**KI-005** Describe characteristics of First Peoples cultures before contact with Europeans.

**KI-006** Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.

**KH-024** Relate First Peoples' stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.

**KP-046** Compare types of leadership in diverse First Peoples communities.

**VP-014** Value diverse approaches to leadership.

In this unit, we're focusing more particularly on *miskanow* in relation to the concept of seasonal gatherings generally and the Spring Gathering central to this picture book. In *PFM* the people come together for a very important spiritual time, and this gathering, centred on the spring, is revealed as a time of "budding" of renewal—a coming back to life. Attention is paid to new plants and animals, birds returning, food sources returning, and medicines growing. The celebration within families and among family groups in relation to these significant dimensions and processes in human and natural worlds involve the gathering of food from parts of the land, and takes place through small and large journeys which connect the people to their past, present, and future. Preparation—material, mental, emotional, and spiritual—is led by guiding figures who are present from the outset, who read the land and the elements, and whose experience can

guarantee the survival of the people. They are gifted with ways of securing food and of honouring the land and the people's relation to it, with ways of telling time and reading the weather, with the understanding of the ceremonies which acknowledge gifts, with *miskanow*, and with respect for how history and culture must be received, shaped, and transmitted so that the people and the land are sustained.

You are invited to refer back to #4 in Part Two of Unit I in terms of having students explore P̄sim's tool kit, note #5, and photographs/sketches of materials as given in the story. There are a variety of notes/illustrations that will be useful here, including pre-flood landscape photographs (see **Appendix III**), notes/illustrations that demonstrate making clay pottery, the camp layout, roasting fish, smoking meat and fish, birch bark basket making, hunting and hunting tools, and the making of clothing, as well as notes on transportation and gathering eggs.

## **PART ONE**

**KI-004 Describe First Peoples' stories of their origins.**

**VH-008 Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.**

**KL-017 Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples' connections with the land and the natural environment.**

**KI-005 Describe characteristics of First Peoples cultures before contact with Europeans.**

**KI-006 Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**KH-024 Relate First Peoples' stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.**

**KP-046 Compare types of leadership in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**VP-014 Value diverse approaches to leadership.**

## **ACTIVATING: ASSESSING AWARENESS AND NEEDS**

1. Explore the students' understanding of the concept of journeys generally and the concept of journey in relation to *miskanow*, as might develop in terms of rites of passage, or special ceremonies that distinguish important life-cycle events. Some of this work will have been done in Unit I, but here the focus in the unit will be on the intersection with the land and methods of preparation, map-making, and archaeological constructions.

Questions that focus understanding of the concept of *miskanow* might include:

- What does the word "journey" mean to you?
- What are related terms for "journey"?
- What kinds of journeys are there?
- Why do people take journeys?
- Are some journeys more important than others?
- Do some people make their living by having to take journeys?
- What kind of risks are involved in taking journeys?



- Are some journeys riskier than others?
- How do people prepare for journeys?
- What kind of food might be necessary for certain kinds of journeys?
- What are some important tools you might need?
- What qualities do people need to succeed in their journeys?
- What kind of training would you need to go on a journey?
- What kind of people need to take journeys?
- How would our ancestors in Canada have traveled across this country?
- How would we make a journey across Canada today?
- How would we make a journey through Manitoba in the past?
- How would we make a journey through Manitoba today?

2. Encourage students to think about things they have done which have required them to pack carefully to ensure their participation/survival, such as hiking in the bush; traveling across a winter road lake; hunting in the fall; and/or preparing for a special event like a fast, a religious ceremony, a *Mamawewin* (dances, gatherings, ceremonies also known today as Pow Wow); and/or other rites of passage such as a naming ceremony, a graduation, or an initiation. Ask them to think about the ways in which events are organized, the kinds of leadership roles that are involved, the values that are represented, and the levels of

preparation that have been undertaken. Ask students to be as detailed as possible in their explorations as they name and compare the various events they discuss.

As a way of achieving this goal, have students work in small groups to name a specific activity they would have to prepare for and encourage them to develop a comprehensive list of materials they would require, the elements they would have to consider in terms of organization, leadership, duration, consultation, and focus. Each group can share their list with the class so that the entire class sees the range of materials and discusses their similarities and differences. Within this process, students will deepen their appreciation for certain materials and their significance in relation to the particular kinds of journeys they have undertaken or may undertake. To support this process and understanding, experts/elders might be invited to talk about experiences that relate to the particular journeys the students have selected as their points of entry into this unit.

3. Invite students to examine the kinds of journeys that are undertaken and/or represented in *PFM*—everything involved within the circle of life, and in the body and on the land. This would involve the passage of the seasons, the cycle of a single of day, the birth of a baby, the maturation of the child and connections among family members and communities, food gathering, the reaching for one's north star (*miskanow*), and the life cycle of animals, which includes birds, fish, and four-legged creatures.

Activities, in pairs and/or in small groups, might include: brainstorming, mapping from the general to the specific to reveal intersections among these various journeys, and oral sharing of stories that students have experienced/read about/seen that would



demonstrate parallels with stories told by Wāpistan, the storyteller in *PFM*.

## **PART TWO**

**KI-004 Describe First Peoples' stories of their origins.**

**VH-008 Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.**

**KL-017 Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples' connections with the land and the natural environment.**

**KI-005 Describe characteristics of First Peoples cultures before contact with Europeans.**

**KI-006 Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**KH-024 Relate First Peoples' stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.**

**KP-046 Compare types of leadership in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**VP-014 Value diverse approaches to leadership.**



## **ACQUIRING: BUILDING-VISIONING-STRUGGLING**

1. Ask students to record the stories they are developing in terms of the particular journey they see themselves preparing for as developed in Part One above. They can choose to tell the story of that journey as individuals or as group. What is important here is that they tell the story orally to the class as a whole. They can talk about their experience as oral storytellers,

sharing what they discover about themselves and the story itself which will change in the telling within this context. This telling can be recorded and played so that the students can hear their own voices, the rhythms they create as tellers, the words they choose, the images they create, the point-of-view choices they have developed, and their sense of the audience for which they are composing.

A follow-through activity invites students to transcribe some of the stories told orally to see what the process is like and compare the oral and the transcribed stories. They can transform the transcribed version of the story into a more developed written form and explore that process as well. Students can discuss the nature of their experiences in relation to *the telling of* and *the listening to* story and contextualize this in relation to oral traditions and oral storytelling as they understand those traditions. They can share this experience with professional storytellers who might come to the classroom and provide further examples of how oral and written stories behave in different forms. Students can bring this experience back to *PFM* by trying to tell its story orally and exploring the differences between telling and reading the story, and comparing the kinds of choices they are making when they engage with this process. Working with part or whole of *PFM* in this way will secure and extend that understanding.

Students can do the same thing kind of comparative analysis of the impact of form by examining some of the differences between the transcribed story and the revised, edited story. They can also try to tell the story in pictures in their own way as another way of experiencing this distinctive form of telling, compare the oral telling to the polished written form, and then reference the iconotextual possibility (the picture book

achieved through verbal and visual forms) as achieved in *PFM*. The interplay between words and pictures will be the main focus of Unit III of the Guide, providing further opportunities for the examination of the way in which *how* a story is told effects *what* is revealed.

2. Ask students to more fully explore how the community in *PFM* prepares for the journey. They can highlight some aspects of those processes by referring to relevant picture book objects and notes that detail the range of activities family members undertake to try to ensure their survival. Students can refer, as well, to the specific mapping strategies, tools, and gifts that characters use as they are trying to read the weather on DAY 5 of the journey, for example. They might develop a simulation game, in which each group imagines a particular scenario of their own. This scenario could be a problem that develops within a journey and which the travelers must confront and attempt to resolve, a problem that tests the travelers' survival skills. The individual scenarios the small groups develop should be grounded in a specific place and time under concrete conditions. Once the group has developed the scenario, the scenarios can be traded; each group will figure out how to resolve the problem they have received from another group in detailed form. That detailing could include the specific steps taken to resolve the problem—the presentational form might include pictures, maps, photographs, artifacts, tools, mode(s) of transportation, as well as modes of communication. Groups would evaluate the success of the problem-solving strategies developed, compare strategies, offer support, and further tools, as needed, if groups run aground.

3. Invite students to explore various aspects of map making. They might begin with the prayer song at the outset of the journey, *Kiskisitōtāwin Nasīpīēni* (“Remember me when

you come down to the water to pray”), for example, as this song expresses P̄sim’s family’s respect for their relationship with the land, especially the water as a life line. Students can integrate related information involving the naming of places: “How Place Names Are Formed in Rocky Cree,” note #3, p. 6; “Camp Layout,” note #1, p. 7; “Place Name and History of Original Camp,” p. 14; “Keeping Ancestors Alive By Acknowledging Them,” p. 16; “Marking Travel Routes,” note #1, p. 20; “Dimensions of Southern Indian Lake,” note #1, p. 24; “Reading the Weather,” note #2, p. 24; the “Paddling Song,” p. 33; and the variety of maps that show the journey’s progress. Even characters’ names can represent journeys: see p. 7, note #2 regarding *K̄misak̄at* whose name means “he or she who arrives by water.”

In large and small groups, students can share information about place names, and naming ceremonies/practices related to the land they know about, and/or have experienced in urban and/or rural settings. This can include a variety of naming events, such as official and unofficial contested names for locations, people, circumstances, and times. Past and ongoing debates in their own communities/ neighbourhoods/families about the “proper”/“correct” names/pronunciations/ origins/ownership/location of properties, places, and sites will deepen students’ appreciation for multiple experiences, interpretations, challenging mainstream and dominant approaches to how places and people have been given and altered over time.

Students can be reminded of the meaning of the characters’ names in *PFM*; they can review how place names are formed in Rocky Cree, and consult once more the variety of ways in which midwives are named among Indigenous peoples. They may consult naming traditions in their cultures as a further way to explore and

celebrate the variety of ways in which a single place/individual/event can be known over time and in a given time, depending on point of view, circumstance, convention, and tradition. Throughout, students will deepen their awareness of naming and map making in this picture book, appreciating the consultations with elders and fishers in South Indian Lake who provided the original names for the maps and helped to frame how place names were formed in Rocky Cree culture and how places used by the people in the past are honoured in the minds and hearts of the people.

In small groups, students can also be invited to create fictional sites using certain criteria that would help them understand how features in the sites they have created can then inform the naming practices of their imagined worlds. Another way in which this simulation might be interesting is if one group of students designs a fictional site with fully developed concrete features and then invites another group to assign place names for that imaginary. Students will have to examine carefully, critically, and creatively the characteristics of the sites that have been constructed by site designers and share the rationales for the choices they are making and the back stories they have developed to help account for the names given. Of course, entire stories can be developed from this point in terms of what “happens” in these sites, and students can be invited to take off from any point along the way toward the fuller development of an imaginary.

Students might invent a new way of mapping familiar territory within their own school or its immediate environment, eschewing the official place names and or directional guides and developing their own descriptors. Each unique map would be given to a group that had not designed it, and the group would see to what extent it could successfully decipher and navigate this unprecedented “guide” and

its terminology. In this way, familiar ground takes on an unfamiliar character; new ways of looking are achieved; established routes are reconceived; habits of association are released and assumptions displaced, in keeping with the emphasis on diverse journey-making mapping histories within this Unit.

Where relevant, students might use photography and/or other forms of documentation and representation to do a comparative “Now and Then” exploration of a site of their own choosing. They might imagine the past and present in relation and expose such differences along a timeline in their own community.

This might involve taking a look at municipal records in a relevant urban setting, so that students can see what the land looked like, for example, in their school neighbourhood one hundred years before (even three hundred years before, at the time of Kayasochi Kikawenow). This kind of comparative framework might be applied to rural and reserve settings as well, so that students could do primary field work, determining if there is archival material available that could reveal earlier incarnations of their “home” ground.

In this way, students could assess the nature of the changes that have taken place in relation to their physical environment in terms of naming, as well as in terms of land use, the character and location of physical structures, population, culture, and economies. The class could add to the range of relevant features that they think might be interesting and/or possible to trace/map over time. In so doing, students will appreciate the senses of past, present, and future integral to *PFM*.

4. Students can invite experts—environmentalists, naturalists, keepers of traditional knowledge, map makers, and

archaeologists—into the class to share their expertise and experiences as a way of deepening this exploration of journey and mapping.

## **PART THREE**

**KI-004 Describe First Peoples’ stories of their origins.**

**VH-008 Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.**

**KL-017 Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples’ connections with the land and the natural environment.**

**KI-005 Describe characteristics of First Peoples cultures before contact with Europeans.**

**KI-006 Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**KH-024 Relate First Peoples’ stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.**

**KP-046 Compare types of leadership in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**VP-014 Value diverse approaches to leadership.**

## **APPLYING: DOING AND PRESERVING**

1. Students can create a diorama of one of the campsite experiences along the journey in the picture book or the Spring Gathering itself. Teachers can consult the diorama (Figure 59) created as part of the *Selkirk Healing Site Public Archaeological Project* begun in the fall of 2002, which involved grade school classes from rural

Manitoba and Winnipeg, families, educators, and experts in an archaeological dig at the Healing Site located on the bank of the Red River, north of Selkirk, Manitoba. The diorama, which tells the story of people who lived in the area between 200 and 1,200 years ago, can serve as a model for the process which teachers can undertake with students reading *PFM*.

Equally important resources for this activity are *Digging The Past: Archaeology for Kids* and *Kayasochi Kikawenow (KK)*. To set up the activity, teachers can reference *PFM*, as well as *KK* in terms of the artifacts that were found when Kayasochi Kikawenow's remains were discovered in 1993. These include: pin cherry seed beads, a stone scraper, a stone knife, a bone knife, a birch bark bundle, moose rib knives, moose bone scrapers, and two glass beads (pp. 12-38). You can decide which materials the students can replicate and/or find, working in consultation with the students, the story as given in *KK*, experts, hunters, and elders.

Ask students working in teams to design an archaeological site. They are going to have to develop the back story in terms of how the site will be discovered. They can record this orally and/or present it in written/electronic form or use any combination of media. Students will have a kit bag which will contain materials that they can use to recover artifacts: spoons, pencils, a tooth brush, a candle, and a ruler, for example. From such a list, students might select a specific number of materials that they are going to bury in the site, and they can keep these decisions as secrets within their group. Students will develop their sites using stratigraphic techniques to bury their artifacts.

When the groups sites have been established, the groups will switch and each will begin the excavation process of a site they themselves did not establish.

Groups will record their progress, documenting their discoveries, identifying materials, and creating the story of the lives of community members they imagine would have inhabited that site. In representing their findings, students can use interactive questions, exhibition cases, and pull-out drawers, posters, storyboards, dramatic re-enactments, and/or illustrations.

Students can compare the stories they have created to account for the sites they design and uncover, seeing to what extent they “match,” discerning difference, and relating that compare and contrast analysis to the *KK* investigation itself and the *PFM* story-making process it inspired.

Students can decide how they might want to introduce other members of the school and the larger community to their exhibits and whether they might like to use dramatic forms such as soliloquies or dramatic monologues to enact the back stories for the artifacts/sites they have created.

2. Students can try to recreate as much of the campsite experience as given in the picture book as possible—including the traditional preparation of fish, the making of clay pots, the making of jewellery, the making of the fire pit, etc. Students can bring such hand-made materials back from the site to create an in-class diorama, supplementing with materials made in art class and in consultation with *KK*. Of course, students may have created any number of artifacts such as the *tihkinākan* itself, in consultation with elders and artists and/or from *KK*, including Pisim's clothing, the pin cherry beads, the moss bag, etc. to extend their collections.

3. Students can more fully explore traditional cooking methods and prepare a meal that would replicate as carefully as possible that

which Pisim and her family prepare during their five-day journey or the feast they imagine distinguishes the evening Spring Gathering where the young are recognized as “the new men and women.” The meal or feast can be enjoyed within the class or shared with others, as determined by participants, and, of course, a recipe book can develop, comparing traditional and contemporary foods that might be prepared during journeys such as the one Pisim and her family undertakes, as well as the ceremonial foods that would be shared during rite-of-passage events which honour community members. In conjunction with thinking about and preparing for ceremonial meals, students might also research “Finest Clothing” references and story elements in *PFM* and in their own communities and cultures, exploring how they could incorporate this sense of “dressing up” as a way of showing respect for the event itself and the work they have achieved together.

4. Students can be invited to prepare a Case Study or Life Story for an object in nature that they have found during a nature walk either taken during their campsite experience or relevant classroom activity. Students might prepare for their presentation of the object by considering the following features: origin, use (including history of use over time); age; location; properties (i.e., colour, shape, texture); condition; and ownership (and history of that ownership over time, if relevant). Students can research the life of the object so that they can understand the complex array of characteristics that the object they have selected contains. In presenting their work students can consider various approaches to display their story, using exhibit cases or diorama methods to combine visual and verbal materials.

When students have developed their presentations, they might create a matching game with cards which identify key features for



the objects and introduce the game to younger children, for example. In this kind of exercise, students might pay particular attention to both the traditional and contemporary names for artifacts in *PFM* itself to see how the changing names for things affects the object they are working with. For example, they may consider the contemporary name for moss bag (cloth diaper, Pampers), *tihkinākan* (cradle board, snuggly), and *mikiwap* (tent), as part of their experience of Pīsim's journey. They might integrate other languages from students who come various cultures and ethnicities, demonstrating the various ways in which a single object has been named over time or a method/practice has changed, depending upon time, circumstance, cultural practice, relationship to the land, and understanding of resources.

5. As a related exercise, students might explore whether or not there are practices involving heirlooms or keepsake objects within their families or communities that have stories that they can discover and share. Having elders and curators discuss the history and significance of mementos/memorabilia/artifacts within this context will help students understand the Case Study and/or Life Study approaches they are developing and the significance of Pīsim's necklace, the two blue beads she is given by Nocōkīsiw, and the new objects that are revealed by Mahikanawāsis, the chief of all the *minisiwina*, as evidence of European presence and/or contact.

6. Activities that encourage appreciation for this historical perspective can involve further explorations of the role of the storyteller in *PFM* and the critical role he plays in sharing information in consultation with community leaders and through his travels. Students can take up the role of the storyteller as he appears in *PFM*, and imagine where he has been and where he might go after the Spring

Gathering. They can develop stories together, working from his point of view, or imagine other storytellers from other *minisiwina* who might meet one another along their travels.

Students can experiment with voice, perspective, period, and form, blending periods, if they wish, crossing timelines, using first- and third-person points of view, traveling through inner and outer landscapes, and exploring tensions and struggles that would have emerged through contact and colonization.

Within the *PFM* context particularly, students can re-examine the “new things” that are revealed at the Spring Gathering. They might consult the “New Objects and European Contact” (p. 41) and related notes in the picture book, and conduct ongoing research into trading routes and traded materials as a way of fleshing out the stories they might tell around the imaginative campfires they create in their collection of writings. These traveling stories by the professional storytellers the students bring to life might also find expression in a variety of dramatic forms, including plays, readings from letters, diary/journal entries, radio plays, and/or dramatic monologues.

7. Another form of mapping that might intrigue students involves the creation of a Concept Map. Students are invited to use any variety of materials—words, photographs, sketches, notes, paintings, stories, dialogues, editorials—to create this document.

Working with an organizational principle such as the sense of the seasons, the sense of time, the sense of space/location, and/or sense of importance, students can map key concepts that are important to them as part of their own journeys. They will have done work with the idea of identity, *miskanow*, and gift giving and receiving, and explored their developing understanding of themselves in relation to identity, rites of passage, and connections to



family and community. As well, they may have created shields and/or other kinds of stories and materials that help give expression to their visions of themselves and their relations to the land and to others.

This developing portfolio can be used here to yield a cluster of key words, phrases, and images that students can harvest and place within their Concept Map. Students might work with images and text from *PFM* as well, using pictorial and written elements that respond creatively and critically to their own journeys. They can arrange the words, phrases, and images in any order, determined by their organizing principle, and they can share these maps in a class collection and/or exhibit them in any way they think interesting and exciting. The Concept Map approach can be used to encourage students to map their own histories as part of a culture, event, location, or time frame that is important to them.

8. Another form of mapping, might involve the composing of journey songs. Students can refer back to the work that they may have done in the composing of their own lullabies and continue to explore how songs can be inspired by a variety of sources. For the Rocky Cree, as the note suggests, songs can come from moods and from *pawākanak* or dream helpers (p. 21). Students can explore sources of inspiration for song-making in Rocky Cree and other traditions and cultures, and consult the journey song that is part of the first morning, sung by Pípon (p. 5), and the Paddling Song (p. 33), which works with vocables to reveal how the paddle and the rhythm of the waves move in concert. A way of building songs can involve exploring contemporary and folk songs that reveal journey-making, and a consideration of how routes are featured in traveling songs by highlighting incidents, times of day, people, and conspicuous features, which for the Rocky Cree, involve the presence of ancestors who

have come from *kayas*, the mists of time. Their presence is part of the sacred meaning of given places and the stories which surround them.

9. A related activity in terms of mapping and the reading of events, might involve asking students to discover alternate ways of reading the weather. An elder might be invited into the class to reveal his or her gifts as a reader of the weather, and this kind of knowledge could be compared to contemporary and/or Western climatology techniques. Other forms of traditional knowledge that are revealed in *PFM* can be integrated into this approach: the gifts that will help little Píponasíw journey through his lifetime (pp. 35-36), including the gifts of story and history, of hunting and fishing, and the gift of searching the dream world.

Students can work in pairs or in small groups to see how gifts are understood in their families or communities. They can consider how people with specializations are defined in both conventional and non-conventional ways. They might discover how dreams are understood within their families and if there are relatives who read dreams; they can explore the names that cultures have for professionals who work in between the everyday world and the dream world and how these kind of spiritual, or perhaps paranormal, activities are characterized (psychics, palm readers, tarot card readers, mind readers, spiritualists, fortune tellers), respected, and/or perhaps dismissed.

This exploration can be linked back to our preliminary discussion of midwives and the changing perception of their role in various societies and to the way in which certain skills may be dismissed at one point or in one culture and revered in another time and/or culture. Students can be invited to explore these changing contexts by connecting back to how

the role of midwife was honoured among the Rocky Cree; how contemporary Canadian society is relearning the value of midwifery; and how there are various ways in which the specialists can assist the life journeys of their people, including those who work between worlds and in dream and waking states. In Unit III, students will be invited to visualize those dream visions, dream worlds, and related imaginaries, represented in *PFM* in the reference to the *Mimikwisiwak*, the Little People (p. 32).

Of course this movement from indifference to welcoming, from animosity to respect can become part of any discussion of the pre- and post-contact worlds of which *PFM* is part.

10. Where possible, the planning of field trips to museums or actual archaeological exhibitions and/or sites might be an interesting way to deepen students experience within this unit.





## ROCKY CREE GLOSSARY FOR BOOK DESIGN TERMS

**kāispīcākimasinaykiwinsa (font)** - the complete group of one size and style of type characters, including letters, capitals, symbols, accents, numbers, and punctuation marks, of a typeface

**kākāwīmasinapathīcikana (continuous tone)** - images, such as photographs and television images, that are made up of graduating tones ranging from black, through various grays, to white

**masinaykanikān (dummy)** - a prototype or mock-up of a book or page

**nīsopathinaw (duotone)** - a black and white halftone image made from two different negatives of a single original, printed in two different colours or tones

**picimasinakykiwin (body text)** - the main text of a book, not including headings, captions, and other display type

**wāsīnākwan/kāwāsīnākwāk (gloss/matte)** - gloss can refer to paper or ink that is shiny and reflects the light; a matte finish is not shiny

## UNIT III Exploring *PFM's* Picture Book Form

### Learning Outcomes:

**VH-008** Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.

**KL-017** Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples' connections with the land and the natural environment.

**KI-006** Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.

**KH-024** Relate First Peoples' stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.

**VP-014** Value diverse approaches to leadership.

The exploration here invites students to see how visual and verbal elements work together to reveal the story, both in terms of the specific written narrative elements, but also in terms of the array of peritextual elements that support that written narrative realization—the double-spread maps, notes, translations, songs, sketches, vocabularies, and illustrations. Even the seemingly extra-text elements that some argue might exist outside the “body” of the picture book—the cover, the frontpage, the Introduction with the cluster of Story Characters, the border designs, the Cree Glossary, and Contributors page—participate in the overall environment of the picture book's story.

## PART ONE

**VH-008 Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.**

**KL-017 Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples' connections with the land and the natural environment.**

**KI-006 Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**KH-024 Relate First Peoples' stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.**

**VP-014 Value diverse approaches to leadership.**

### ACTIVATING: ASSESSING AWARENESS AND NEEDS

1. You can do a preliminary exploration of the overall design of the picture book, examining the component parts that include the peritextual and written story text so that students can appreciate how various elements intersect to create the contexts within which Pīsīm as Kayasochi Kikawenow allows herself to be “found.” Students can develop expertise in appreciating how the Introduction, for example, establishes a framework for understanding her relation to the 1993 discovery of her remains at Nagami Bay and build on that awareness in terms of the historical notes and related sketches that support contexts for her actualization within the story. Enjoying the interplay among textual and peritextual values and forms is central to Unit III.

2. Using the glossary of Rocky Cree-English terms to explore the overall design of the

picture book, students can examine how various elements intersect to create the story itself and the contexts that support its realization. Students can develop expertise appreciating how the Introduction establishes a framework for understanding Pīsīm's relation to South Indian Lake and how her voice comes alive through historical fiction in picture-book form. She tells us, “I allowed myself to be found by the people,” and this finding is revealed through the relationships between words and pictures. Understanding these relationships is central to Unit III.

3. As a way of appreciating how voices are given pictorial dimension, you can draw the students' attention to the frame narrator. Her/his words, which are in italics, open the story in Rocky Cree and can be found in between the robin and Pīsīm. Students can be invited to explore why the narrator's voice is placed in this position. They can imagine her/his voice and discuss how that imagining is supported pictorially. This understanding of the sound of a character's voice can be grounded not only by word choice as given in the dialogue, but also by facial expression, colour values, placement, correlative tones, and surrounding forms. Students can be invited to examine such relationships—even when a character's voice is not described in the text itself, particular qualities are conveyed which dramatize that which is spoken. Invite students to choose a moment in the text where such pictorial dimensions are given and to prepare a dramatic reading of the character as revealed. The portrait of the storyteller (p. 9) provides a compelling example, as do the series of portraits of Pīsīm herself. Further opportunities for portrait making, dramatic readings, and dramatic forms are found throughout the Guide.

4. You might wish to use the VTS strategies which opened this Guide and explore how

visual and verbal elements work together to reveal Pīsim's journey. Students can work with DAY 2 (pp. 11-12), for example, noting the difference in detailing between the visual image and the verbal text. Students can use VTS to examine the event, comparing their understanding of past and present, as well as their Unit II experiences, to reinforce their work with journey-making. In this way, they will deepen their sense of how all members of the family work together to prepare for leave-taking. Students can consider why the bustling activity is shown in visual terms rather than verbal terms and examine the relationship between Pīpon's sense of humour in the single line—"Get up, let's go! It's almost dark already!"—and the sense of purpose and importance that is also engaged within this irony, as developed by William Dumas. Students can consider how the notes on this double-spread help them understand how much work had to be done as part of the preparation and how self-reliant the people had to be in undertaking such a journey.

5. Write to Art: As a class, students can look carefully at an illustration of their own or your choosing in *PFM*. Ask them to work through the following stages:

- Record the concrete physical details in the scene you see— describe the objects, the number, location, size, relation, and the physical perspective from which they are seen.
- Describe the colours in the scene—their hue, tone, texture, the effects of light and shadow.
- Describe the sounds in the scene— those present or absent, imagined and/or possible.
- Describe your feelings about the scene—how would you interpret it?

Give the students sufficient time at each stage within the exercise so that they can record their observations. At the conclusion of the whole (after the final step), they can share their observations and explore the changes in their observations as they moved through the stages, from the objective toward the subjective, from the external to the internal. They can see the variety of words they are using and then compare them to the verbal text that accompanies the illustration selected.



Another way of revealing the word painting is to ask students to share their words after each stage in the exercise, compare their developing word palette, and enjoy the variety achieved among class members one step at a time. Regardless of approach, students will discern the differences in words, points of emphasis, and observational style/inclinations in terms of interpretative *feel* for the scene itself.

As a follow-through activity, invite students to create a written response in a form of their own choosing. They might develop a particular poetic image, a prose poem, and/or a short narrative addressed to the illustration in a voice that they design which comes from one of the characters in *PFM*, or from a character they imagine might enter into this world; or they might become one of the elements they see in the visual field and speak from that perspective. They can use some of the words harvested from their word palette to bring that voice to life, incorporate (with permission) words they find intriguing that other classmates discover during this exercise, and/or introduce words they will need to complete their word drawing, as dictated by the needs of the forms they are working with.

Another way of bringing this activity to completion is to have the students place the words that they value from their word palette on a blank page in positions that exactly correspond to the visual object(s) that the words represent. In this way, their words compose the scene that evoked them and they can enjoy this preliminary wordscape as a twin correlative for the illustration itself. To extend the process, students might introduce other media—watercolours, pencil crayons, acrylics, fabrics, found objects—to experiment with the wordscape if they desire.

To complete the activity, students might “read” their wordscapes, choosing to approach their

text from any direction they think most appropriate. They can read from top down, from the bottom up, from the inside out, or the outside in, or use any variation within that circuitry that makes sense. They will establish the focus for the listener in keeping with the focal point that distinguishes the illustration they are working with. Students can use rhythm, tone, and pace, as well, to move into and through the text to vocalize the illustration’s compositional values. In discussion, they can share how their words embody the character and texture of line, the quality of colour, the relationship among figure—enjoying the effects/affects of mood and tone realized in the “sister” art form they have composed.

## PART TWO

**Note:** Within Part Two, given its particular focus on the analysis of *PFM*’s iconotextual elements and the student’s analytical and creative response, we are noting more specific Student Learning Outcomes as given for Grade 5 in the 2011 *Kindergarten to Grade Visual Arts Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes* (electronic resource). We have made the list representative of the analytical, creative, collaborative, and contextual skills students might achieve in this section of the unit, in Part Three as well, and throughout the unit. Certainly the outcomes respond to the range of activities and exercises we have developed within the Guide overall.

**5-6 A-L1.4 Demonstrate an integrated understanding of the elements and principles of artistic design in analyzing visual components in artworks and in natural and constructed environment.**

**5-8 A-L.8 Use appropriate art vocabulary to explain the use of art**

**elements and principles in own compositions.**

**5-8-A-C1.1 Generate multiple ideas and images for artmaking from personally meaningful and relevant resources.**

**5-8A-C2.6 Collaborate with others to develop and extend artmaking ideas.**

**3-6-C3.5 Demonstrate knowledge of and select appropriate settings and/or contexts (e.g., publication, community exhibition, school website, public installation) in which to present own artworks and “artists statements.”**

**5-8 A-U1.2 Identify, describe, and compare works of art and design from various times, places, social groups, and cultures.**

**5-8 A-U3.1 Demonstrate understanding of the multiple roles and purposes of art and design in society.**

## **ACQUIRING: BUILDING-VISIONING-STRUGGLING**

1. Invite students to select their favourite or one of their favourite illustrations from *PFM* and explain why they feel connected to it. Using some of the elements they have already worked with in the VTS Exercise #2 above, they can examine things like perspective, the relationship between figures, colour and line, and their emotional and interpretative responses, as well as their sense of how the visual landscape responds to the written text. Students can write down their observations first to prepare for class discussions. In guiding them, you can list the specific features

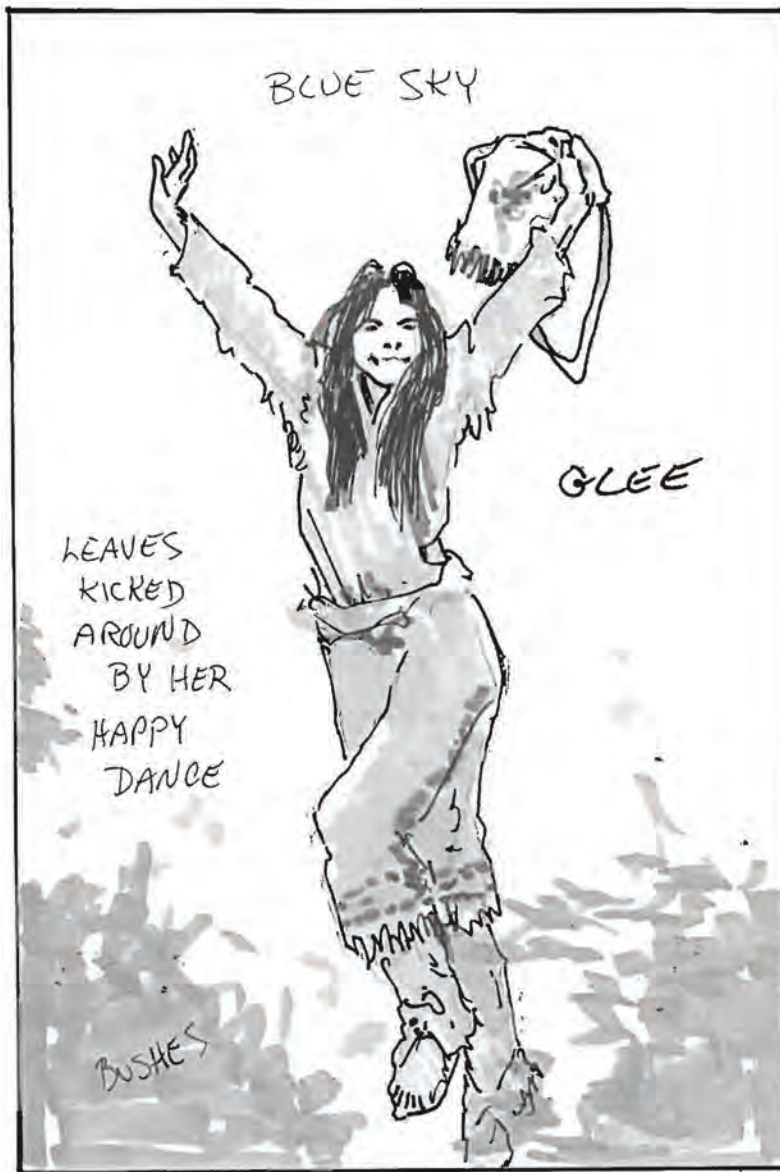
you would like them to account for as they highlight why they are drawn to a particular illustration. As part of their exploration, you can remind them to connect their exploration to the written text as well, so that they can explain how they think the illustration itself relates to the written text that is presented alongside.

2. Here are some questions that might prove useful:

- Is the illustration a direct representation of what the written text reveals?
- Does the illustration reveal something different than what the text tells them? (Does the illustration alter the text by expanding or diminishing, etc.?)
- Does the illustration contradict/ challenge what the written text tells them?
- Does the illustration show something else other than what the written text reveals?

In naming what they like about the illustration and how it relates to the story which is part of the particular double-spread they are examining, students should try their to explain how the illustration and the story work together in terms of these and related questions the children themselves develop.

3. Invite students to explore why they think Leonard Paul chose to represent certain moments in the story rather than others and then consider why he chose to represent them as he did. You will notice that the Guide includes a preliminary drawing by Leonard which shows his first sketch of Pisim receiving her gift from Nocökisīw and his annotations in the sketch which describe her “glee,” the



Leonard Paul's first sketch of Pisim receiving her gift from Nocökisiw





Leonard Paul's final illustration of Pīsim receiving her gift from Nocōkīšiw

up stretched arms, dancing feet, and “leaves kicked around by her happy dance.” The second shows the final illustration of Pīsim who is described in the written text as having been “formally acknowledged,” called by her grandmother. Pīsim stands proudly “by her responsibility.” William Dumas’s text goes on to reveal that Pīsim, bursting “with pride and joy,” begins to dance. Pīsim’s movements are characterized by thankfulness; her ceremonial bag, is raised “toward the sky” in prayer. It is Pīsim’s dignity and maturity which the artist chooses to embody as a “new” woman, joining the procession of “new men and women” who are being honoured at the evening gathering.

Discuss this shift from preliminary sketch to final illustration with the students and help them examine the tone and/or mood of other illustrations and their connection to the written story that accompanies the illustration as given. It might be that they are drawn to the DAY 6 illustration which reveals the little boy held joyfully, listening to his mother’s “first lullaby.” Using VTS and insights/skills developed from previous exercises in this unit, students can discuss how the sound of that lullaby is expressed in the visual choices Leonard Paul has made to represent the moment of intimate connection. In doing so, they can explore alternate ways in which the scene might be represented in keeping with the shift between sketch and completed illustration they have already engaged above.

4. In this exercise, students are invited to explore how they can deepen their appreciation for how a single line, such as “don’t give up. Keep going” in the storm scene, for example (pp. 25-26), becomes the inspiration for the way in which Leonard Paul renders the characters struggling in the midst of the “threatening” “swells of rolling water.” In our field testing with students from Constable Edward Finney School, students had the

written story and this single moment as the only illustration that Leonard Paul had completed at the time of the field testing. We have included a representation of Hans Santiago’s visualizations so that you can appreciate how that moment resonated in his work.

You might invite your students to prepare visualizations of scenes that strike them as significant—ones that have been rendered but which they might render differently. Students could be formed into a team of storymakers and as such could discuss a range of choices as part of a book production meeting, exploring alternative ways to render the scene, discussing rationales, duplicating in real ways the very consultative and collaborative processes that led to the creation of a *PFM* double-spread (and *PFM* overall).

To illustrate, students could pursue the moment that reveals the *tipinawahikan* (lean-to), where Pīsim delivers the baby. Using VTS, students could explore the scene as given, and then compare the written and visual texts, building on skills they have already achieved in Exercise #2 in this unit. They could continue to discover other approaches they might take to picture this moment. Here they might work in small groups as story collaborators and publishers to discuss a range of choices that they might make in approaching this part of the story. They could list the choices, select one, and draft the scene they imagine they would create. Sharing their decision with groups will help to demonstrate the variety any illustrator might imagine as part of the process of creation and selection in response to the written story. The same exercise can be pursued with any other moment in the story.

To enhance their appreciation for the collaborative nature of picture book making, you might connect with resources in your



Illustration of storm scene by Hans Santiago, student at Constable Edward Finney School. Used with permission.

community—publishers/editors/designers, picture book writers and illustrators—so that students could experience more fully book making as a collaborative, multifaceted process.

5. Another way of changing the visual landscape of the picture book is by picturing other aspects of the story which are not visualized in the illustrations that have been created in *PFM*. In this exercise students are invited to visualize a moment in the picture book not represented by Leonard Paul, but which the students feel might be represented. There are a variety of alternatives which can present themselves. As selections are made, students are also invited to alter William Dumas's written text to reflect the choices they are making in terms of the visual worlds they are bringing to life in their illustrations. This can be done individually or in groups, and then shared as part of a process of ongoing analysis of how visual and verbal worlds interact and how changes in what is being visually represented may alter the nature of the picture book story as given and vice versa.

6. Ask students to compare and contrast illustrations within the picture book overall. The differences among the illustrations, differences that can be grouped in terms of colour and line (saturation, intensity, direction); number, placement, and relation among figures/volumes; the position of the viewer and perspective, focal point, pattern; and design, including layout, such as the location of the visual and verbal story which takes into account the peritextual elements such as notes, translations, and songs.

Students can also explore differences in the overall effects that are achieved among double-spreads and group them according to qualities they share and differences they observe. In this way they gain a sense of the distinctive styles at work within the picture book, and the patterns

that relate the rendering of some visual events to others, etc.

For example, there are various picturing and telling techniques that situate those parts of the story that bring the *minisiwin* to the shore (pp. 5-6); the *kotawan*, main fire (pp. 7-8); and camp (pp. 11-12). In terms of layout and tone, the character of these double-spreads is distinct from other moments in the story where individual character portraits are conceived for Wāpistan, the travelling storyteller (p. 9); the grandmother gifted with interpreting the weather (p. 23); the mother and newborn (pp. 29-30); and Pīsim (p. 39).

There are a number of ways in which students can explore these differences. Individually they can be asked to do a compare-contrast of these realizations and then share that within a small group, or a small group can be asked to prepare notes on a compare-contrast and share that with the class. Within portrait making, students can also refine their understanding of the differences and similarities among the approaches, so that while the category remains the same, distinctions in terms of tone, hue, colour, perspective, etc., can be discerned, appreciated, and incorporated into the students' own creative work.

By assessing the characteristics that appear, a grid can be developed to show how compare-contrast elements can be charted. In this way, the larger design of the book can be broken down into smaller units. Students can examine how many double-spreads have peritextual elements and how many do not; how many have a single note, and how many a number of notes; how many have a range of saturated colours and how many have a restricted and perhaps subdued palette; how many isolate a single figure and how many develop a grouping of characters; how many explore characters within an expanse of

landscape; and how many use a close-up technique to frame a compelling moment between characters.

In each instance, students can consider why such choices are made and compare the effects achieved in terms of the overall and specific development of the story itself. In so doing, they may discover how such choices contribute to the dramatic arc of the story; the liveliness of characters they have come to know; the scenes the characters inhabit; landscapes that emerge; the relationships between major and minor characters that are realized; the “heard” and “unheard” voices that appear; the time sense of the particular story; and the historical period within which it is revealed.

Of course, as these explorations are conducted, students can examine the character and characteristics or “sound” of the visualization in relation to the character/characteristics or sound of the written text that accompany the illustrations themselves. They can explore the point of view from which *PFM* is told, the quality and range of the speaking voices, emotional tones, pace, perspective, moments of intensity and calm, and discern correlatives between visual and verbal forms of telling in individual double-spreads as the story advances.

### **PART THREE**

As well as the Student Learning Outcomes noted for Grade 5 in the 2011 *Kindergarten to Grade Visual Arts Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes* (electronic resource) in Part Two:

**VH-008 Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.**

**KL-017 Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples’ connections with the land and the natural environment.**

**KI-006 Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**KH-024 Relate First Peoples’ stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.**

### **APPLYING: DOING AND PRESERVING**

1. Invite students to compare and contrast double-spread strategies and designs in *PFM* so that they can replicate some of these approaches in the story-making work that follows. You might begin by inviting students working in small groups to develop an original story of their own using a relevant storyboarding strategy that can outline the action and main characters. The story does not have to be entirely written but the concept should be in place. This story can emerge as something new, or can take its inspiration from any of the previous exercises they may have completed (family stories, birth stories, coming-of-age stories, journey stories, etc.). The story can develop from any point of inspiration in *PFM*—it can be a breakaway story developed from one of its elements, from one of its characters, from its ending, from the following day, from another season, from an older *Pisim*, a grown *Piponasīw*—the options are endless and beguiling.

The group can develop the opening of the story together, and then replicate and/or incorporate any of the double-spread elements/techniques within *PFM* into their double-spread designs. Their designs can work with a note on place names, a word, an artifact, an historical element, a map, a translation, a recipe, or any other peritextual material that they think

would provide useful contexts. The notes can be factual and/or fictional, or any combination thereof suited to their story material.

If, for example, the group is returning to a mapping exercise from Unit II, they will have research materials in hand as resources they can adapt. If they are working with an imaginary site they have created, they will have their own place names and accounts for the name as given and their sense of the implication of possession and identification as evolving over time. The notes they develop here in this emerging story will reveal a logic consistent with their inventiveness in previous exercises. Naming strategies, as revealed in *PFM*, will help students understand how logic and imagination work together to establish history and context. They can be reminded of the fact that *minisiwin* means family, and takes its inspiration from the root *min*, Cree for berries, which suggests clusters, and thus actualizes the concept of relatedness and relation. This strategy can be adapted for individual stories that the students may develop, given that they are working with places and forms of identification and identity-

making and formation. As students incorporate note ‘events’ into their double-spreads, they demonstrate their grasp of the multidimensional story building and presentation concepts central to *PFM*.

2. Students can create portraits of P̄isim, using any media as their form of expression. This might involve choosing to portray P̄isim in a scene where she is present in William Dumas’s written story but not represented by Leonard Paul in the existing visual narrative of the picture book. It might involve considering other non-representational ways in which a character like P̄isim may be revealed. For example, students can return to the concept of the shield that they worked with earlier when they were developing their ideas about *miskanow* and journey and related concepts associated with mapping. While they may choose to reveal P̄isim in more traditional or conventional representational ways—showing P̄isim in terms of her surface or physical appearance—students might also reflect on ways in which P̄isim’s inner life might be revealed through the objects, thoughts, events, and experiences which have come to be associated with her life.



The portrait conceived of in these terms may be less concerned with “photographic” accuracy and more concerned with emotional qualities, with ways in which Pīsim’s thoughts, relations, dreams, skills, and emotions might be represented, in conjunction with her physical attributes or in lieu of her physical appearance. Students might discover colours, lines, and shapes that they find symbolic of Pīsim and use those, along with the rendering of key objects, to represent her in their portraits. In this way, they are including ethnographic work in terms of a different kind of character-drawing, imagining a life through a range of objects/elements associated with that life.

There are many possibilities for how ideas of portraiture may expand. Students may wish to reveal their character drawing by combining letters to Pīsim or members of her family with portraits of themselves, and/or combining portraits of themselves with portraits of Pīsim or other characters from the picture book. These composites will deepen their appreciation for how we can exhibit influence/interest—how others, and their worlds and experiences affect our own. Throughout, students will return to their explorations of voice and character—sounding out those sections of the story where characters are speaking; reading again characters’ interior monologues that perhaps reveal the thinking and/or dreaming of characters as given by the *PFM* narrator; and reconnecting with characters’ actions or with stories which are told by others and reveal their actions— as ways of developing their understanding of how characters are created by William Dumas in the written text.

Students will discover how time frames might intersect so that past, contemporary, and future versions of Pīsim and themselves might evolve as part of this portrait-making adventure. An exhibition of these portraits—in any medium

—can involve the class, school, and community, with artists’ statements and talks as a way of sharing how the picture book inspired these forms of exploration in terms of creative identity and world. It may be that the students will discover, as well, ways in which the creative identities they created through portrait-making might communicate with each other in story form—the building of a collaborative story may come as a possible next step.

3. An activity related to the portrait-making above can involve inviting students to work with *inside-out* and *outside-in* viewing and writing strategies that can reference the larger portraits of characters that are presented in *PFM*, but can as easily engage any of the characters, objects, and animals that students might be drawn to.

As an example of an inside-out approach, if we look at the portrait of Wāpistan as he tells stories of the events that have happened during the preceding winter, particularly the reference to the “strange hairy-faced men who had been sighted at the mouth of the Missinipi” (p. 9), students can be asked to explore the illustration which exhibits that vision of the “Other” in Wāptistan’s mind. Students can give further voice to that vision, writing from the storyteller’s perspective, imagining what else he might know or wish to say, even though we are aware at this point, the storyteller knows he must wait until he has consulted with the chief of the *minisiwina* before he can say more.

In revealing the inner landscape as they imagine it in soliloquy or dramatic monologue form, students can explore the emotional and psychological state of the speaker. Depending on the student’s age and the amount of research s/he might have done about storytelling traditions, trading, and European contact—the notes provide significant detailing within

this context—s/he can incorporate important historical details into the subtexts s/he creates. Within this inside-out exercise, students are imagining that the unsaid might be heard. They are revealing unspoken but possible/believable insights, concerns, ideas, feelings the character they are working might have. While Wāpistan would not reveal his thoughts at this point, students can compare what they imagine he might say with what in fact is said during the final evening, and then discuss why it is the chief of all the *minisiwina*, Mahikanawāsis, who has the final responsibility for revealing the “remarkable things” that come from the “unknown place” (p. 41).

An alternate approach involves an outside-in perspective. Again, using this illustration as a point of reference, the students might speak as in his or her own voice or create an alternative identity to address Wāpistan, himself, and/or members present within this gathering, giving voice to a range of ideas and feelings to develop a relationship between the student’s world and that revealed by the storyteller. The form of address—soliloquy, dramatic monologue, diary or journal entry, letter, poem, dialogue— can be selected by the student and bring him or her into dynamic relation with a range of characters, objects, and animals within the picture book. Certainly, students can explore third- and even second-person points of view as part of these processes.

In each of these activities, students can work individually or collaboratively and render their *inside-out* or *outside-in* imaginaries in pictorial form, using means they think suit the form of writing they are developing.

4. Students can be invited to visualize the dream visions, dream worlds, and related imaginaries represented in *PFM*. For example, sacred places for the Rocky Cree are places of the ancestors, and prayers of thankfulness

acknowledge these presences. Nikik and Pīsim make such an offering to honour the birth of the baby (p. 31), and afterwards, Pīsim thinks she hears the *Mimikwīsiwak*, the little people, similar to leprechauns in Irish legend and culture. Another example finds expression in the book’s opening, with Pīsim hearing the robin’s song of thankfulness for being given life, *pimātisiwin*; the robin itself in mist-of-time Rocky Cree legend is Ayās’s mother (p. 3).

Pīsim’s wondering about her *miskanow* in the midst of hearing this song culminates in the achievement of her path as Helper of *otinawāwosōwin*, and the picture book ends with Pīsim “ready to dream” of her future, “drifting into the dream world,” where “she heard in the distance the robin singing in the new day.”

Given the presence of dream, dream readers, ancestors, mist-of-time elements, and alternate forces in the story, students can be invited to visualize these kinds of values/forces/presences in their own lives as part of stories they have been writing/imagining, and/or as part of stories they would like to tell in relation to concepts like *miskanow* and *otinawāwosōwin*.

5. Students can be encouraged to appreciate the picture book form as a whole by making their own picture books that tell stories about any aspect that interests them in terms of taking a journey, discovering a path or gift, developing a “how to” guide, or relating a legendary event in a family’s history. Students can work individually, in pairs, or in groups. They can create artists’ statements, prepare introductions, adapt peritextual elements, and provide author and illustrator biographies, back blurbs, cover designs, and related picture book apparatuses that suit the nature of their stories. They can draft the story, peer edit, storyboard



the text and the accompanying visuals; work in editorial teams to provide constructive and creative feedback throughout the revising process; create book dummies; field test their developing stories with other groups or classrooms; and then proceed to the final draft. This is a rich, complex, and exciting process, and you can invite picture book authors and illustrators, as well as storytellers, into the classroom to provide feedback and support throughout the picture-book-making journey.

Students can record themselves reading parts of the books, so that they can fine-tune them. Hearing what they have written; having others read their work aloud; recording others reading their developing stories—such strategies during the composing and revising process strengthen the stories in terms of focus, clarity, word choice, coherence, story integrity, believability, character authenticity, dialogue, and dramatic force. Student work can culminate in a storytelling festival and picture book gallery which might involve the school and larger community.

6. Students can be invited to work with the fractured illustrations that circulate throughout the Guide. They can respond to the following questions:

- What does this fragment remind you of?
- Does the fragment bring back memories from your own experience?

- How would you complete this fragment?
- Where do you think this fragment comes from in the story?
- Why do you think it was chosen?
- What kind of importance does the fragment have in the story?
- Are there other fragments that you might select as a kind of puzzle piece?

Students might work with the fragments to create a collage piece of their own, designing a new composition out of existing fragments and examining the kind of story such a new composition might begin to tell. Exploring the relation between a part that has a prior history and a whole that depends upon that part to construct something “new” might encourage students to not only appreciate how part-whole relationships work but also how individual elements can have many different kinds of lives as we come to know and work with them in changing environments.

This sense of change over time, of discovering new ways of seeing, of seeing the same thing differently, of appreciating varying contexts, of working with multiple points of view and integrating fragments to create new wholes is part of what we have been trying to do with *Pisim* as our guide throughout the exercises and activities presented.



## UNIT IV

### Exploring *PFM* and the Narrative Form

#### Learning Outcomes:

**KI-004** Describe First Peoples' stories of their origins.

**VH-008** Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.

**KL-017** Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples' connections with the land and the natural environment.

**KI-005** Describe characteristics of First Peoples cultures before contact with Europeans.

**KI-006** Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.

**KH-024** Relate First Peoples' stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.

**KP-046** Compare types of leadership in diverse First Peoples communities.

**VP-014** Value diverse approaches to leadership.

Unit IV responds to the narrative form which distinguishes *PFM*, and its analysis and exploration may be usefully integrated into the variety of writing activities students might have engaged in other parts of the Guide. As a way of introducing the narrative structure, students might explore the questions which identify the frame narrator, the “oral” quality of her/his address, her/his position as guide from present to past, and related RAFT elements that will encourage students to understand the path that is being created from one world to another, a path which engages the nature of historical fiction as presented through *KK*, through the range of resources within *PFM*, and its two-language world. The importance of Rocky Cree, the intersection of mist-of-time and this Spring Gathering story (see the Storytelling note p. 10), as well as the pivotal role of the frame narrator as one who opens the portal, are highlighted in the series of questions that are presented in Part One.

Explorations within this unit also underline the relationship between the frame narrator and the third-person, omniscient narrator who tells P̄sim’s story, often through focalization techniques that allow readers to “hear” what characters are thinking, feeling or observing. Unit IV activities are meant to help readers understand how the narrator operates as a guide who can be relied upon, insofar as the illustrations and related peritextual elements seem to confirm what is being revealed in the

story. Referencing Unit III, Part Two, Exercise #2 in terms of the relationship between visual and verbal elements might be useful as Leonard Paul’s pictorial details often confirm and/or extend the accompanying narrative within the given double-spread.

## PART ONE

**KI-004 Describe First Peoples’ stories of their origins.**

**VH-008 Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.**

**KL-017 Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples’ connections with the land and the natural environment.**

**KI-005 Describe characteristics of First Peoples cultures before contact with Europeans.**

**KI-006 Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**KH-024 Relate First Peoples’ stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.**

**KP-046 Compare types of leadership in diverse First Peoples communities.**



**VP-014 Value diverse approaches to leadership.**

**ACTIVATING: ASSESSING AWARENESS AND NEEDS**

- Who addresses the reader at the outset of the picture book with the following words: “Long ago, my grandchildren, long ago, it was beautiful the earth. It was peaceful. The people were well, and we were healthy.”
- Why might that address be important?
- How would you define the RAFT elements that define this address?
- Who is speaking at the opening of DAY 1: “It was the season of long evenings . . .”
- Is this narrator the same person who addresses the reader as “my grandchildren”?
- How would you define the RAFT elements that reference this address?
- The narrator seems to know everything that is going on. How is that possible?
- Do you trust what the narrator is telling you?
- What evidence might you collect that can confirm why you might trust or distrust the narrator as a guiding figure?
- What is the time in which *PFM* is set?
- How can you establish that time frame?
- How do we know what P̄isim is thinking?

- Are there other places in the story where you can detect what a character is thinking, feeling, or seeing?
- How does the narrator enable you to enter into another character’s point of view?

1. Have students work either individually or in pairs to recast the opening of *PFM* from a third- to a first-person point of view. Encourage them to maintain the tone and texture of the story as given, to retain as well the sense of the speaker as they understand him/her, and to further explore that nature of the narrative voice that William Dumas has developed to tell P̄isim’s story. As part of their recasting, have students complete a RAFT analysis for the choices they are making so that they are aware of the role and nature of their teller and audience, their format, and their topic/approach.

2. The robin sings a song of thankfulness, a prayer which acknowledges the Creator and the gift of life. Throughout *PFM* there are songs and prayers which work in similar ways to distinguish important aspects of the journey that is being taken. Invite students to think about why such songs and prayers are important in *PFM* and to consider how they symbolize the people’s relationship to the land, the circle of life, the gifts of the Creator, the ancestors, and the connections that bring all forms into vital and ongoing relation. Ask students to discover moments in the story where these understandings are particularly important. Together build a song line that traces these moments along the story’s arc so that students can see how the song line supports and strengthens P̄isim and her family as they make their way to the Spring Gathering. Invite students to discover within their own families and communities prayers and songs which might operate as

correlatives for the song lines they have discovered in *PFM*, and share these within the learning circle to deepen awareness of the way in which the spiritual dimensions of journey-making, *otinawāwosōwin*, and *miskanow* function within *PFM* and within other cultures and traditions.

3. Have students begin to practice saying the Rocky Cree names of the individual characters in *PFM* so that they become more familiar with the Rocky Cree sounds and rhythms. In earlier units, students explored naming, name calling, and place naming ceremonies, events, and practices, and these contexts can be referenced here and in the work done in the activity which follows. Once again, consult *PFM* notes which highlight how historical events, natural features, and celebrations are incorporated into the names as guides and points of reference and commemoration. Encourage students to consult family members, elders, and friends who might have stories about people and places whose names hold significance so that they can see correlatives. Share these correspondences. Have students collaborate to create a *PFM* map with place names as given; include as many definitions as possible for those names so that students become increasingly at home in *PFM*'s territory and with the Rocky Cree language.

4. Invite students to consider how major and minor characters interact in *PFM*. Ask them to identify minor characters who perform significant tasks within the story. Have students brainstorm to identify those tasks. As a further way of helping students make these rankings, invite them to discover if such distinctions are present in the narrative form itself and supported in its verbal culture. For example, a significant act might take up more space in the narrative. A minor act might take up less space. Is this always the case? Are there unexpected points of emphasis? See if they can find

examples that might confirm the rankings they are establishing. Ask them to note how significance is developed in the written text and confirmed in visual texts within a double-spread.

Students can work in pairs or in small groups and share their findings. As a way of building this understanding, students can be invited to recall major events they have experienced which involved a number of people. They can consider how they might rank the roles of the people involved so that they see correspondences with the analysis they are establishing for *PFM*. Sometimes the sense of rank is established in the story by virtue of the attention given to dress and the duration of the speeches the characters are given. Ask students to examine the role that Mahikanawāsis performs after the entering-in ceremony (p. 38). As the chief of all the *minisiwina*, he is distinguished in the written story. Given Pīsim's new found honour, however, students can be invited to explore her foreground position within the accompanying illustration by Leonard Paul as a way of appreciating how verbal and visual cultures comprehend established and emerging roles within this moment of acknowledgment for Pīsim. Invite students to find other double-spreads where visual and verbal narratives might complement each other in this way.

5. During the reading of *PFM*, invite students to consider how they might get a sense of the kind of winter that has passed before the preparations the family undertakes for the Spring Gathering. In small groups, have them identify the narrative techniques that are used to provide these larger perspectives that allow us to enter different time frames, other *minisiwina*, and locations, even as the journey toward the Gathering moves forward. They might extend this understanding of the

narrative techniques by finding correlative visual techniques that also support these larger views—for example, bird’s eye perspectives that reveal the *minisiwina* arriving at the ceremonial camp; related vistas; and foreground groupings with extended family.

6. Wāpistan must consult with Mahikanawāsis before he tells the stories that relate to the “strange, hairy-faced men who have been sighted at the mouth of the Missinipi” (p. 9). Explore the sense of pre-contact and contact realities with students and the related need for permission that is relevant by asking students why Europeans would be characterized in this way and why the storyteller would need to consult with the chief before speaking. Consult relevant *PFM* notes and explore alternate naming strategies for familiar objects with students as a way of understanding how the unknown might be named differently, and how insider and outsider perspectives function because of early contact trading relationships. Students can experiment with every day classroom objects and develop names that demonstrate this process of defamiliarization. They can bring that appreciation to the Rocky Cree-English language character of *PFM* overall.

Their inventiveness within this context can be related to the “new objects” the chief does reveal, and lead to further discussion of the impact of the “new” on Aboriginal culture in relation to understandings of language, mapping, midwifery, identity, and *miskanow* achieved in other units within the Guide. Within this framework, students can explore concepts of permission and forms of leadership. They can discuss circumstances, events, ceremonies, and rites they have experienced or read about where the seeking and granting of permission has been important and relate to Pīsim’s journey within *PFM*. Students may try to identify and map the

number of occasions within the narrative where permission is sought or guidance is given to family members as the journey progresses. Within this context, students will also deepen their grasp of *miskanow* as elders guide the process of apprenticeship through a number of stages. Students can begin to see what kind of characteristics distinguish those who lead in *PFM*, bringing that sensibility to their sense of how Pīsim is able to “stand by her responsibility” at the end of the picture book.

## PART TWO

**VH-008 Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.**

**KL-017 Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples’ connections with the land and the natural environment.**

**KI-006 Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**KH-024 Relate First Peoples’ stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.**

## ACQUIRING: BUILDING-VISIONING-STRUGGLING

1. Have students recast the first page of the story as given in the first person, choosing any one of the characters in the picture book as the teller. In small groups have the students share their openings. Encourage them to record the differences that obtain due to the choices that have been made with respect to storytellers. In the large-class discussion that follows, pursue those differences to refine their understanding of the impact William Dumas’s choice will have on how we come to know Pīsim. This impact can be related to the Introduction itself and to



the way in which finding Pīsim has been mediated through time, through Kayasochi Kikawenow, archaeologists, historians, the collaborative team, and William Dumas as storyteller.

2. Invite students to consider how the process of discovering Pīsim and her story might relate to other kinds of “translations” they have read or heard about. In groups students are asked to identify a figure they can research whose life has taken fictional form—a short story, a novel, a poem, a picture book, a play, a graphic novel, a television program, a film, or a song. Once students have made their selections, they can explore how the process of translation for the figure they have chosen has been achieved; how facts are discovered; how processes are authorized; how permissions are secured; how forms are chosen; how adaptations are made; how further consultation/research is achieved; how the creative process proceeds; how the creation is field tested and the “product” revised and tested anew; and how the finished piece is assessed, marketed, released, reviewed. In this exploration students will find correlatives with *PFM*, and they will be asked to note and assess the significance of those findings as part of their research process.

3. Work with the names of the characters in *PFM*, practicing reading them aloud, exploring their meanings as given in the Cree

Glossary, reviewing the berry cluster provided in *PFM*, and extending that sense of clustering by developing connections that would display the full range of characters and *minisiwina* who are involved in the telling. As part of demonstrating their grasp of the Rocky Cree within this context, manipulate the *PFM* map created in Part One above. This might involve a variety of exercises: 1. cutting up the map as a puzzle with place names intact which students can reassemble; 2. cutting up the map as a puzzle with the place names erased which the students can reassemble and to which the place names can then be added; 3. cutting up the map as a puzzle with 2014 place names in place which the students can then reassemble. The students can form groups and create puzzles for one another defining the constraints that are to obtain. In comparing contemporary and *PFM* place names, students will consider differences and similarities, explore pre-contact and contact implications, for example, in relation to *PFM* realities as given.

4. Ask students to consider the symbolic nature of particular landscapes and/or episodes within *PFM*, as a way of demonstrating how Pīsim’s story overall “symbolizes the birth of a sacred bundle” (Introduction). You might focus, for example, on DAY 3, as Pīsim journeys through Little Narrows, one of her “favourite places,” and determines that she will “come back that evening” maybe with her cousin Sakimīs, “to

see the sun setting” on the high rocks (p. 18). Invite students to explore how the landscape relates to the birthing event that will occur; how water and journey symbolism within *PFM* might be involved; how Pīsim’s wish to mark this site relates to Pīpon’s acknowledging of ancestors in the double-spread that precedes this moment; and how the related gifts seem to demonstrate Pīsim’s growing capacity to discern, lead, and act.

Students can pursue this sense of the symbolic through small group discussion and create a portrait of Pīsim’s birth as Helper as revealed through symbolic moments and landscape details. They can use earlier expertise with Concept Maps and personal shields, as well, to create this portrait/character study.

## **PART THREE**

**VH-008 Value oral tradition as an important source of knowledge about First Peoples.**

**KL-017 Describe practises and beliefs that reflected [reflect] First Peoples’ connections with the land and the natural environment.**

**KI-006 Compare daily life in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**KH-024 Relate First Peoples’ stories of their pre-contact and early contact with Europeans.**

**KP-046 Compare types of leadership in diverse First Peoples communities.**

**VP-014 Value diverse approaches to leadership.**

## **APPLYING: DOING AND PRESERVING**

The activities which follow represent a few of the many opportunities for creative and critical thinking with *PFM*. Students can proceed individually, in pairs, or in groups. They can use oral, print, and/or electronic media in any combination they think appropriate. Where relevant, they are asked to incorporate the Rocky Cree language as part of their writing/telling strategy, to pay particular attention to the historical, collaborative, and research consults that “ensured” Pīsim’s story could be told (Introduction), and to define RAFT elements effectively.

Any project will include a combination of individual and peer revision and editing strategies. As well, students are encouraged to prepare materials such as a writer’s statement, introduction, biography, bibliography, glossary, notes, and/or any other supporting documents that seem interesting/appropriate as part of the creative process/exploration.

1. Compose a narrative or backstory for an event in the *PFM* story: the “difficult birth,” for example, that is referenced in *PFM* (p. 9) where Pīsim and her grandmother “walked through the night” to help one of the Bear women safely deliver her baby (p. 9).
2. Compose a sequel to *PFM* that tells the story of Pīsim’s ongoing work as Helper.
3. Re-tell the story of Pīsim’s emergence as a “new woman” at the Spring Gathering from a perspective other than that engaged by *PFM*.
4. Compose a sequel or prequel to *PFM*, using any of the forces, presences (dream, ancestral, *mīmikwīsiwak*/little people), and animal, human, or landscape forms as point(s) of view, and any timelines and/or combinations thereof as point(s) of entry and contexts for the telling.



5. Compose a contemporary version of Pīsim's story, making sure that correlative themes and elements are carefully considered in the contemporary version, including concepts such as contact, *miskanow*, journey, *otinawāwosōwin*, and *minisiwin*.

6. Create a diorama of any event or combination of events that distinguishes *PFM*, and develop a format to introduce the diorama: a sketch, a narrative poem, a dramatic monologue, a dialogue, a scene, a soliloquy, a song, a dance, etc.

7. Develop a Readers' Theatre presentation for *PFM*, incorporating Rocky Cree as part of the exploration.

8. Develop a piece that works with the concept of Spring Gathering as revealed in *PFM*, using any format/form that seems appropriate to explore those dimensions.

9. Taking inspiration from the *kotawan* stories that are told by Wāpistan (pp. 7-8), and/or the contact stories as given by Mahikanawāsis (p. 41), tell or write, either individually or collaboratively, stories that might be revealed within such contexts.

10. Develop non-fictional writing such as a letter to the editor, an opinion piece, a letter to a political leader, a campaign speech, an introduction to an archival exhibit, and/or an introduction to a picture book like *PFM*, exploring the nature and significance of fiction that is rooted in historical evidence and archaeology, and that has secured permission from the people to whom the story belongs.

11. Develop a dramatic form for *PFM* —a radio play, a video, a monodrama, a mime, and/or a dramatic adaptation that might be a one-act play that concentrates on an event in *PFM*, etc.

12. Using print and/or electronic media, prepare documents that would be necessary if an exhibit of artifacts, as revealed in *PFM*, were to be made public. It might be that students in another class and working in another unit are in fact curating such an exhibit. Students working within this exercise might imagine an exhibit or a the creation of an artifact as well as the materials that would re/present them.

Students can work with *PFM* and *KK*, as well as related research materials, to gain an understanding of what they might need to introduce and document the exhibit they plan. One of their team members might take on the role of reviewer for a local paper or blog. Another might prepare an opening speech. Yet another might design the individual descriptions for specific artifacts. Another might set up a Facebook page and/or develop related social media strategies to promote the exhibit and establish feedback mechanisms. There will be biographies to write for each participant, and backstories to compose for the exhibition project itself. Students can research their roles and writing assignments required to secure the multiple dimensions involved.

We hope you have found approaches, forms, and processes that are interesting and relevant to your own practice, and thank you for exploring *PFM* with us in this way.

Ekosi.

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# Appendix I

## NOTES ON MIDWIFERY

Your interest in midwifery will be supported by resources such as the National Council of Aboriginal Midwives (<http://www.aboriginalmidwives.ca>), the Canadian Association of Midwives (<http://www.canadianmidwives.org>), as well as the Midwives Association of Manitoba (<http://www.midwivesofmanitoba.ca>). You can explore a range of resources about traditional midwives and contemporary practices as noted in the teachers' resources. A particularly significant resource is *The Days of Augusta*, edited by Jean E. Speare, with photos by Robert Keziere, which presents the life of Augusta Tappage, a ninety-nine-year-old midwife and survivor of residential schooling, born at Soda Creek in the Cariboo Country of British Columbia. Augusta speaks of her experiences as a midwife and the tensions that marked her life as she struggled with colonization and loss. Though the book is out of print, permission can be gained to print copies of it for classroom use at a reasonable cost. Bringing in Augusta's stories about being a midwife will help students see differences between westernized doctoring and midwifery within an Indigenous community that your research into diverse birthing practices reveals. If the 1973 Preface uses words like "taken away" and "being discharged" to reference Augusta's Mission School experience, which

began at age four and lasted until she was thirteen, a more extensive understanding of the colonial history and attending racism which led to the removal of First Nations children from their homes and the erasure of traditional Aboriginal educational and birthing practices can be secured by resources such as *kanáaci otinawáwasowin: Aboriginal Midwifery Returns to Manitoba*.

This 2008 report published by the National Aboriginal Health Organization explores the varieties of birthing practices among Métis, First Nations, and Inuit communities and highlights the central role midwives played within Indigenous communities and for Europeans when they first arrived. Their significant contribution and expertise was eroded by colonization and by growing resistance to midwifery generally, as characterized by North American medical practices from the mid-1800s. Women generally were excluded from medical training, midwifery was discredited and/or marginalized, and hospital births were privileged. In the United States, for example, lay midwifery was outlawed in many states. These "modern" attitudes in support of forced hospital birthing and medicalized birthing generally undermined midwifery and Aboriginal midwifery particularly, compelling Aboriginal women to abandon their work or go underground. Indigenous midwifery knowledge and practices were lost;

most births happened outside the community. Women were removed to southern hospitals and isolated from their communities. For example, the 2008 report observes:

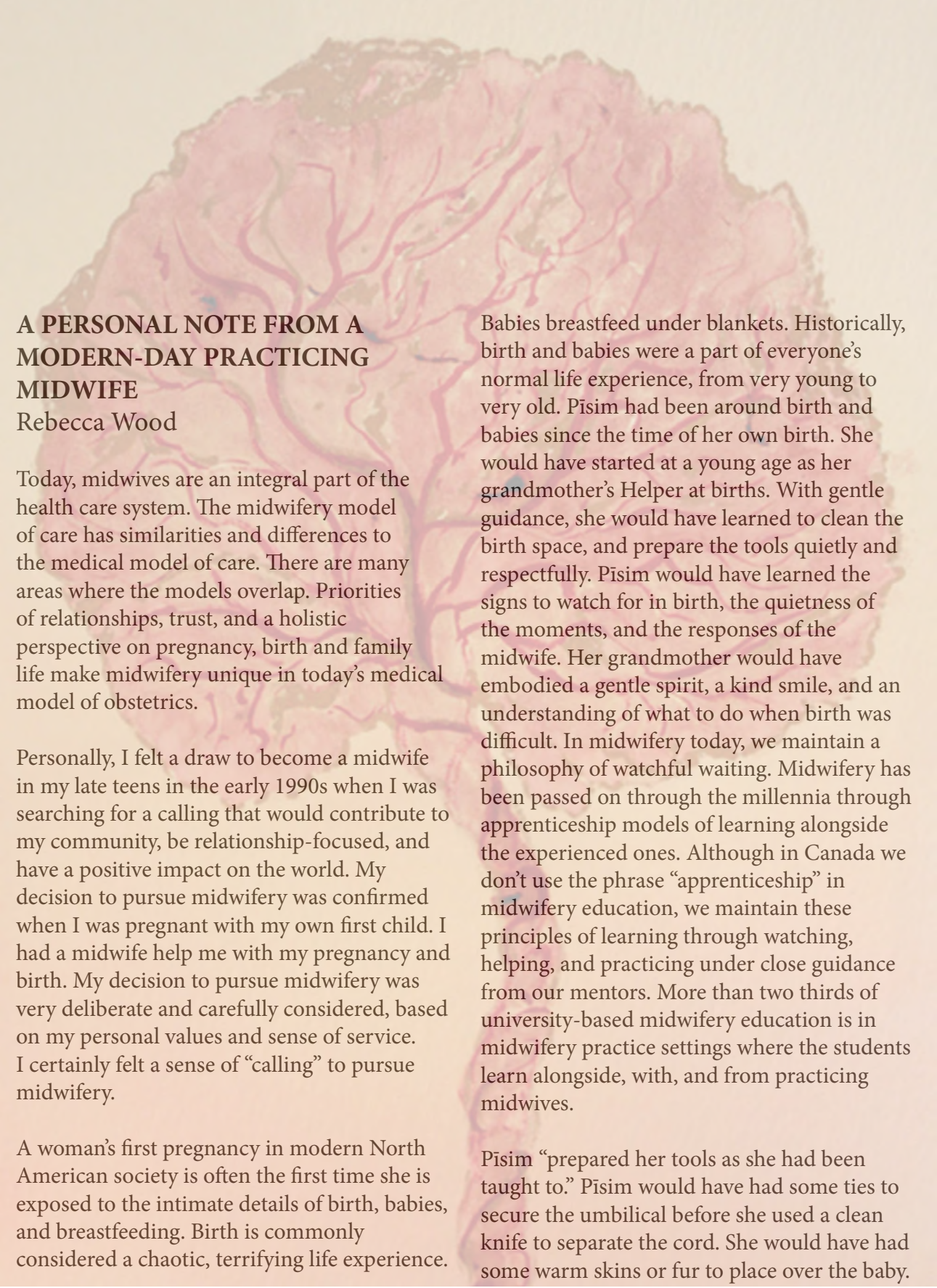
“The removal of birthing services from Aboriginal communities stands as one of the most critical and negative impacts of colonization. Elders . . . spoke poignantly about the loss of their ability to act as midwives to the women in their communities, their inability to pass on to the next generation the traditions and practices, and the inevitable loss of traditional birthing knowledge that occurred when giving birth in the community was disallowed. They noted that the loss of this knowledge is almost complete as the Elder midwives who hold this sacred knowledge are now very old; many others have already passed on. As well, they noted that Aboriginal communities now see only death rather than the whole circle of life including birth. Many of the social problems facing Aboriginal communities today are linked to the loss of birth within these communities and the concomitant loss of traditional community commitment to the support and guidance of their children” (5).

The development of midwifery programs, the regulation of midwifery programs through bodies such as Manitoba’s College of Midwives (CMM), and the development of Manitoba’s *kanaci otinawawasowin* Bachelor of Midwifery program present a multifaceted overview of the way in which midwifery is currently located in a Canadian landscape.

Betsi Dolan, Program Coordinator for Manitoba’s *kanaci otinawawasowin* Bachelor of

Midwifery, observes that the National Aboriginal Council of Midwives and Aboriginal Midwives of Manitoba have chosen to use the term/title Aboriginal Midwife. Aboriginal midwives participate in regulated and funded midwifery, and contribute to the standing committee on Aboriginal midwifery unique to the CMM, named the *kagike danikobidan*, “always making grandparents.” “The focus of the education program as ‘two-eyed seeing’ (blended aboriginal and ‘western’ curriculum) is the result of commitments made in this partnership under legislation, and the program is named ‘kanaci otinawawasowin’ (sacred midwifery).”

As a way of appreciating how *otinawāwosōwin* is conceived among Aboriginal cultures, you can explore words in various Aboriginal languages for “a woman whose hands assist a child coming into the world.” The exploration deepens our understanding of how the midwife is valued in her culture: Nuuchahnulth call a midwife “she who can do everything.” The Coast Salish translate the term midwife as “to watch, to care.” For the Chilcotin, midwives are “women’s helpers.” In Michif, a midwife is “la faam kaa kaachitnaat li bebii” which means “the woman who catches the baby.” Inuktitut terms for midwife are “the one who waits for the birth” and “the helper.” The Cree word for midwife is “the one who delivers.” In Ojibwe, the terms means “the one who cuts the cord” (*celebrating birth* 10). Dimensions embodied in these terms suggest women’s power in this central area of life, the partnership between a woman and her midwife, the sacredness of the task, and ways of knowing.



## A PERSONAL NOTE FROM A MODERN-DAY PRACTICING MIDWIFE

Rebecca Wood

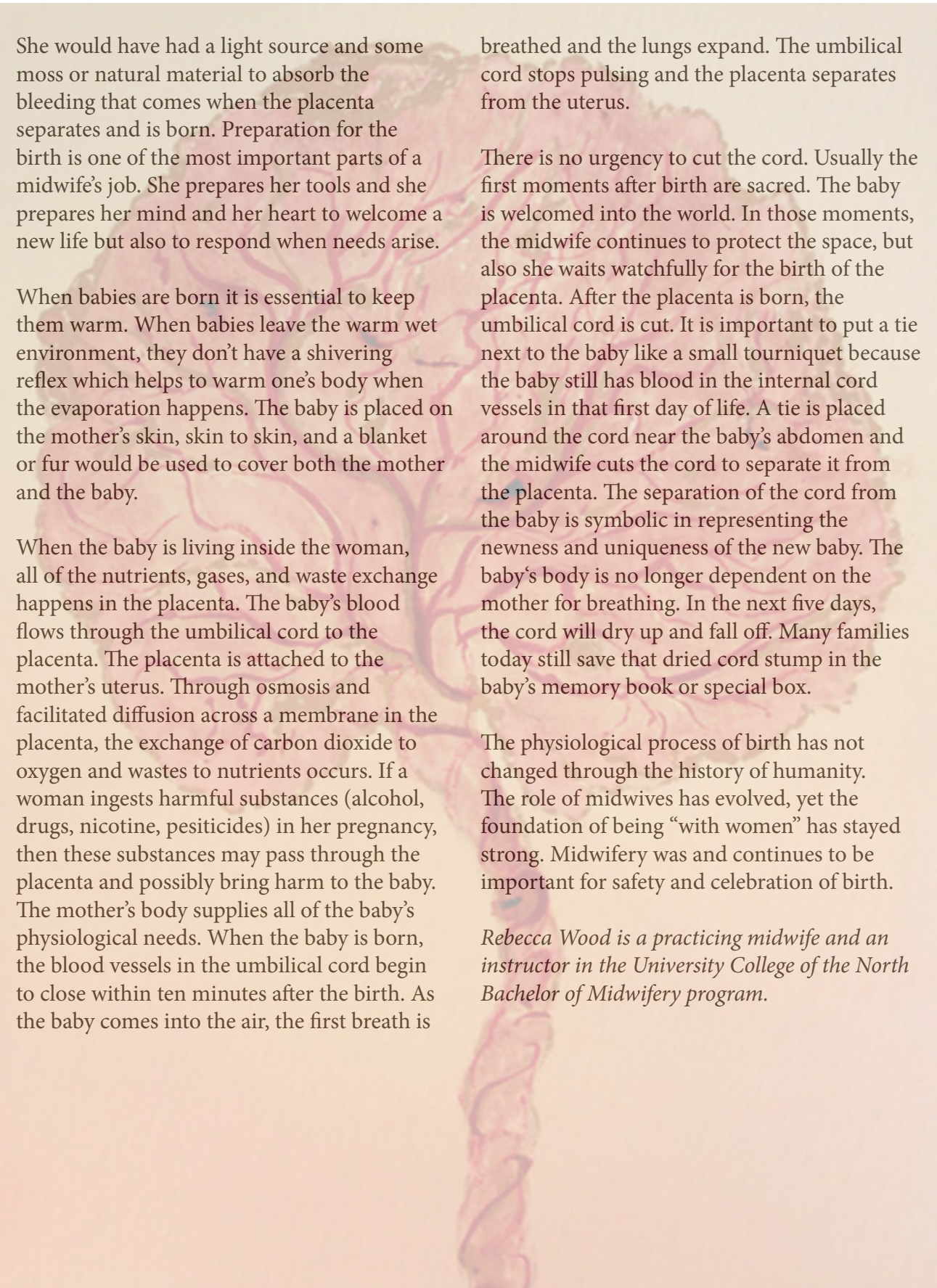
Today, midwives are an integral part of the health care system. The midwifery model of care has similarities and differences to the medical model of care. There are many areas where the models overlap. Priorities of relationships, trust, and a holistic perspective on pregnancy, birth and family life make midwifery unique in today's medical model of obstetrics.

Personally, I felt a draw to become a midwife in my late teens in the early 1990s when I was searching for a calling that would contribute to my community, be relationship-focused, and have a positive impact on the world. My decision to pursue midwifery was confirmed when I was pregnant with my own first child. I had a midwife help me with my pregnancy and birth. My decision to pursue midwifery was very deliberate and carefully considered, based on my personal values and sense of service. I certainly felt a sense of “calling” to pursue midwifery.

A woman's first pregnancy in modern North American society is often the first time she is exposed to the intimate details of birth, babies, and breastfeeding. Birth is commonly considered a chaotic, terrifying life experience.

Babies breastfeed under blankets. Historically, birth and babies were a part of everyone's normal life experience, from very young to very old. P̄sim had been around birth and babies since the time of her own birth. She would have started at a young age as her grandmother's Helper at births. With gentle guidance, she would have learned to clean the birth space, and prepare the tools quietly and respectfully. P̄sim would have learned the signs to watch for in birth, the quietness of the moments, and the responses of the midwife. Her grandmother would have embodied a gentle spirit, a kind smile, and an understanding of what to do when birth was difficult. In midwifery today, we maintain a philosophy of watchful waiting. Midwifery has been passed on through the millennia through apprenticeship models of learning alongside the experienced ones. Although in Canada we don't use the phrase “apprenticeship” in midwifery education, we maintain these principles of learning through watching, helping, and practicing under close guidance from our mentors. More than two thirds of university-based midwifery education is in midwifery practice settings where the students learn alongside, with, and from practicing midwives.

P̄sim “prepared her tools as she had been taught to.” P̄sim would have had some ties to secure the umbilical before she used a clean knife to separate the cord. She would have had some warm skins or fur to place over the baby.



She would have had a light source and some moss or natural material to absorb the bleeding that comes when the placenta separates and is born. Preparation for the birth is one of the most important parts of a midwife's job. She prepares her tools and she prepares her mind and her heart to welcome a new life but also to respond when needs arise.

When babies are born it is essential to keep them warm. When babies leave the warm wet environment, they don't have a shivering reflex which helps to warm one's body when the evaporation happens. The baby is placed on the mother's skin, skin to skin, and a blanket or fur would be used to cover both the mother and the baby.

When the baby is living inside the woman, all of the nutrients, gases, and waste exchange happens in the placenta. The baby's blood flows through the umbilical cord to the placenta. The placenta is attached to the mother's uterus. Through osmosis and facilitated diffusion across a membrane in the placenta, the exchange of carbon dioxide to oxygen and wastes to nutrients occurs. If a woman ingests harmful substances (alcohol, drugs, nicotine, pesticides) in her pregnancy, then these substances may pass through the placenta and possibly bring harm to the baby. The mother's body supplies all of the baby's physiological needs. When the baby is born, the blood vessels in the umbilical cord begin to close within ten minutes after the birth. As the baby comes into the air, the first breath is

breathed and the lungs expand. The umbilical cord stops pulsing and the placenta separates from the uterus.

There is no urgency to cut the cord. Usually the first moments after birth are sacred. The baby is welcomed into the world. In those moments, the midwife continues to protect the space, but also she waits watchfully for the birth of the placenta. After the placenta is born, the umbilical cord is cut. It is important to put a tie next to the baby like a small tourniquet because the baby still has blood in the internal cord vessels in that first day of life. A tie is placed around the cord near the baby's abdomen and the midwife cuts the cord to separate it from the placenta. The separation of the cord from the baby is symbolic in representing the newness and uniqueness of the new baby. The baby's body is no longer dependent on the mother for breathing. In the next five days, the cord will dry up and fall off. Many families today still save that dried cord stump in the baby's memory book or special box.

The physiological process of birth has not changed through the history of humanity. The role of midwives has evolved, yet the foundation of being "with women" has stayed strong. Midwifery was and continues to be important for safety and celebration of birth.

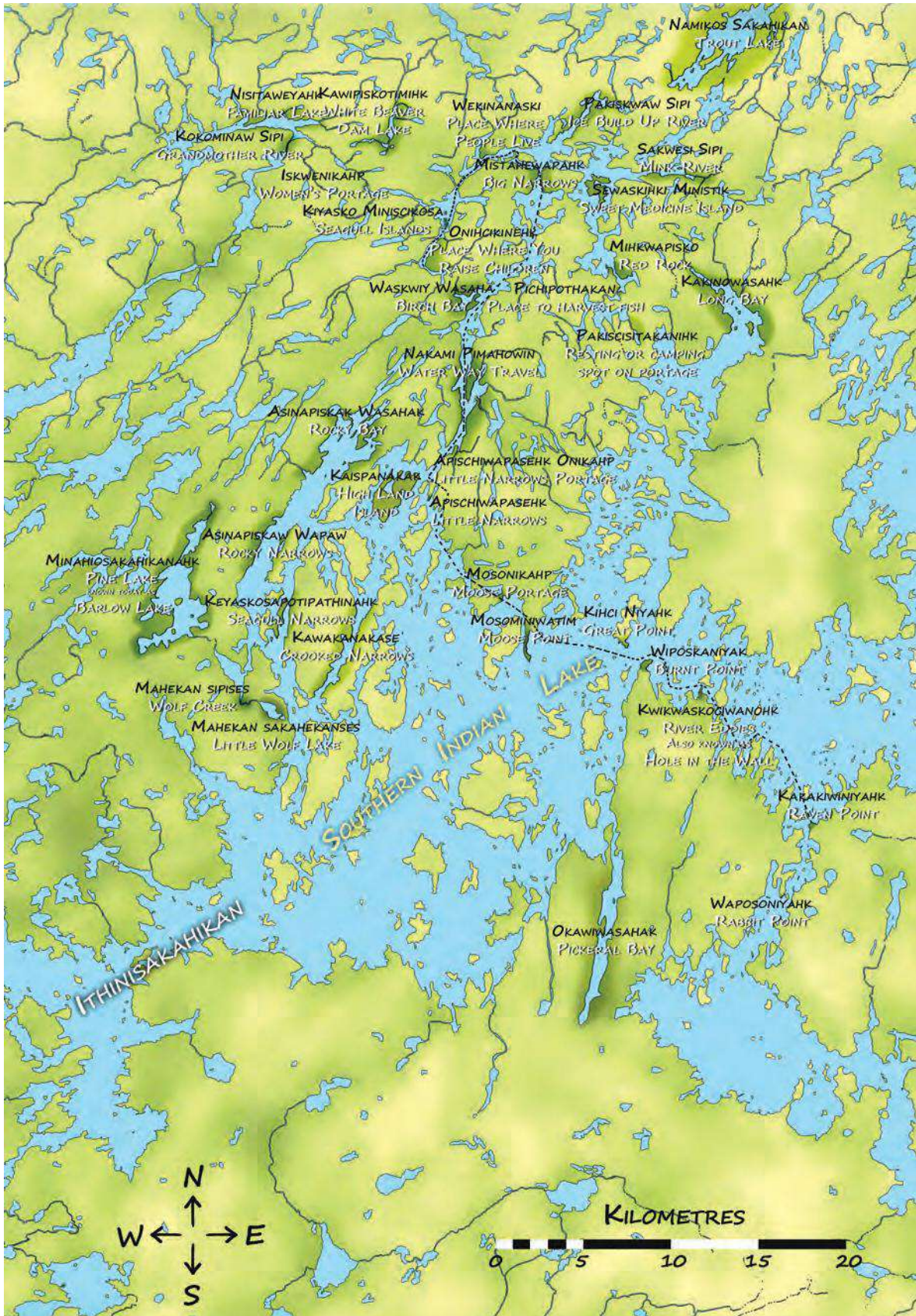
*Rebecca Wood is a practicing midwife and an instructor in the University College of the North Bachelor of Midwifery program.*



## Appendix II



Cree community names provided by Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre Inc.



Map of journey to the Spring Gathering

## Appendix III



View of the beach of Kakakiniyahk (Crow Point) as illustrated by Leonard Paul



Pre-flood Crow Point (HeLr-12). Photograph by Tim Jones, pre-1975  
(courtesy of The Manitoba Museum).



Post-flood Nagami Bay, the burial site of Kayasochi Kikawenow, photographed in 1994 (courtesy of The Manitoba Museum).



Pre-flood Crow Point (HeLr-12). Photograph by Tim Jones, pre-1975 (courtesy of The Manitoba Museum).



Post-flood shoreline on the Churchill and Vermillion River site (HdLw-13), 2001 (courtesy of The Manitoba Museum).



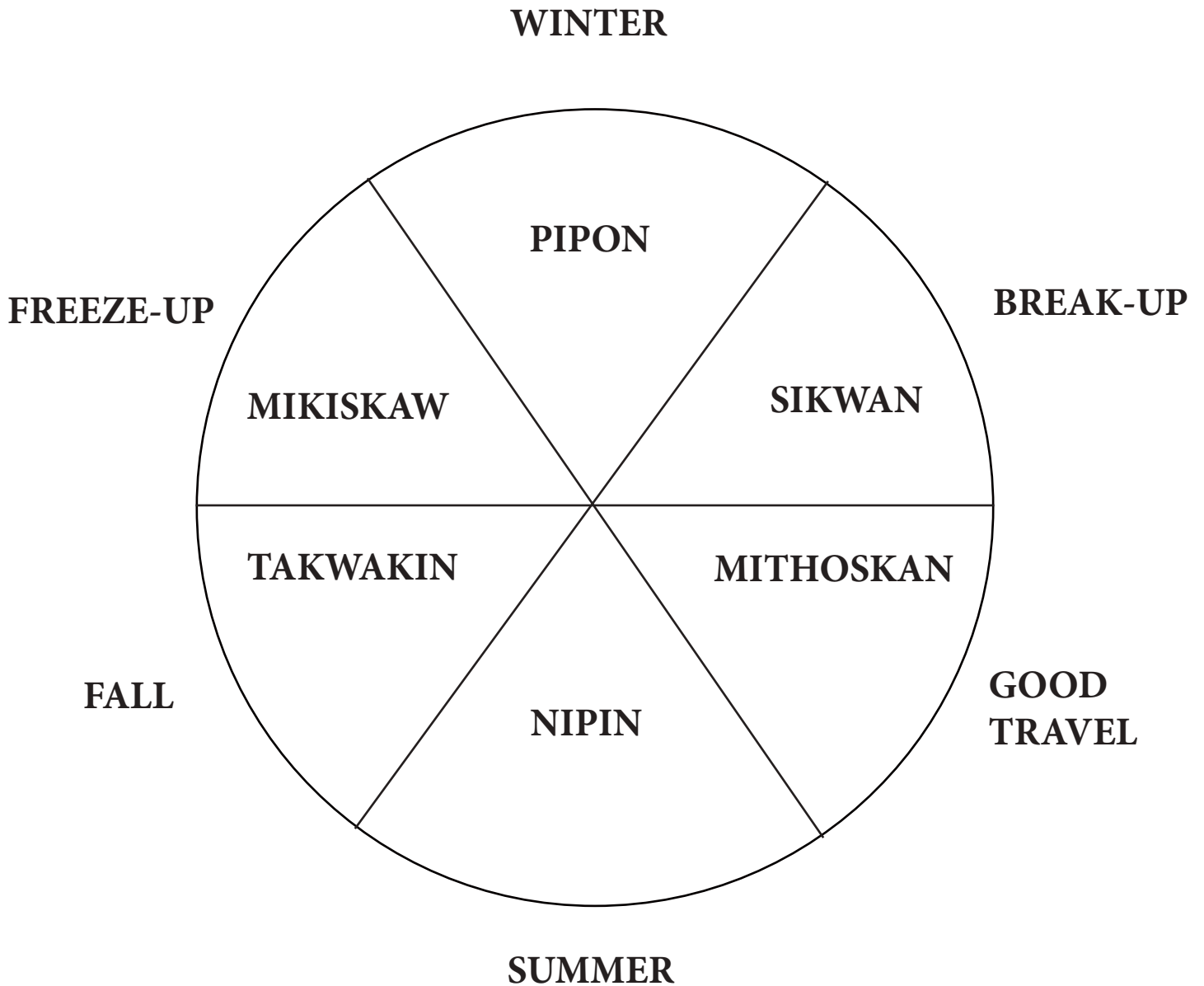
Pre-flood Stony Portage Site located in South Bay. Photograph by David K. Riddle, 1970 (courtesy of The Manitoba Museum).



Post-flood Poplar Point site (HeLu-2) on the Churchill River, Southern Indian Lake, 2001 (courtesy of The Manitoba Museum).

## Appendix IV

### SIX SEASONS OF THE ROCKY CREE



There are two moons in each season. *Pīsim Finds Her Miskanow* takes place in mithoskan.

## Appendix V

### Reader's Theatre Activity Adapted by Angela Busch for *Pīsim Finds Her Miskanow*

Angela Busch is proud to be an Asiniskow Ithiniw, one of the people of South Indian Lake. She grew up in the communities of South Indian Lake, Lynn Lake, and the city of Winnipeg, where she attended the University of Manitoba. Angela completed a Bachelor of Arts degree, as well as a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Manitoba and has been working as an educator, Aboriginal Education Consultant, and administrator for almost fourteen years. Angela has a sixteen-year-old son named Frederick, and she believes that it is imperative that he and all Rocky Cree youth find their *miskanow* - just like Pīsim did. Youths of all nations must discover their life journeys and see them through.

**PREVIEW:** Pīsim, a thirteen-year-old Rocky Cree girl, is in the midst of her lifelong journey, or her *miskanow*.

**GENRE:** Folktales, legends, Cree Culture

**CULTURE:** Rocky Cree

**THEMES:** Midwifery, Life Journey

**READERS:** 13

**READER AGE:** 9-15

**LENGTH:** 10 minutes

**ROLES:** Narrators 1-3, Pīsim (Sun), Amo (Bee), Nikik (Otter), Kāmisakāt (He or she who arrives by water), Mkwakwa (Loon), Pipon (Winter; Year), Kīwetin Kānimit (North Wind Dancing), Nōcokīsīw (Old Lady), Okimow Acapi (Master of the Bow), Wāpistan (Marten)

**NOTES:** This reader's theatre is based on some of the main events of the plot of *Pīsim Finds Her Miskanow*. The characters' names, names of places, names of some objects, verbs, etc., are in the Rocky Cree dialect, the language of the people in which the story is set, which is the modern-day community of South Indian Lake or O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation in Manitoba, Canada. The people are known as Ithininsākahikanihk, which means "the People of Southern Indian Lake."

# SCRIPT

**Narrator 1:** Our story begins in the territory of the Rocky Cree people, also known as the *nīthithowak* or beings of four, in keeping with their holistic teachings and traditions. More specifically, Pīsim’s story begins at Onihcīkinihk, or the Place Where You Raise Children.

**Narrator 2:** Pīsim is a thirteen-year-old young woman who is giving thanks to the Creator for giving her life and wondering if her *miskanow*, or life journey, is indeed the path she is meant to follow. In the Rocky Cree culture, this was an important rite of passage in a young person’s life. Pīsim’s life journey is to eventually become a midwife, one who helps bring life into the world—a great responsibility indeed.

**Narrator 3:** The first stage in Pīsim’s *miskanow* was that she was allowed to be an observer in the birthing process so that she could be a learner from other midwives. The next stage would be progressing to status of “Helper.” However, Pīsim would need to be acknowledged at the Spring Gathering in order to move forward in her quest.

**Narrator 1:** The family is gathered together, and Pīsim’s grandfather, Pīpon, has said a prayer for everyone to give thanks for their lives and the food they are about to eat. Pīsim’s uncle Nikik and his wife Kāmisakāt are expecting their first child. Wāpistan, a traveling storyteller, is visiting the family and telling stories after the evening meal of roasted whitefish. The family is planning to leave Onihcīkinihk, or the Place Where You Raise Children, the next day to head to Mistahiwapahk, which means “Big Narrows” or “Big Open Gathering Place.”

**Pīsim:** (*praying aloud*) *Kinanāakomitin*, my Creator, thank you for giving me life. I am so grateful for all you have provided for my family and my people. Please guide me in my *miskanow*. Grant me the humility and wisdom to learn from my mentors and my Elders. It is my wish to help bring life into this world, if that is your purpose for me. *Ekosi*.

**Narrator 2:** Pīsim rejoins her family as they are listening to Wāpistan, the storyteller, as he tells them stories, shares humorous events with them, and also shares news of events from nearby camps.

**Narrator 3:** Pīsim enters the family *mīkiwap*, or birch bark dwelling, to the sounds of laughter and all of the attention is focused on Wāpistan. Her grandfather, Pīpon, looks up when he sees her.

**Pīpon:** *Tanisi*, my girl? Our relative was just telling us that your brother in Nisichawayasihk is recovering from his illness!

**Pīsim:** That is great news, *nimosōm*, my grandfather!

**Nōcokīsiw:** Wāpistan, what news have you heard about our camp in your travels?

**Wāpistan:** The people speak of one of the Bear women who had a very difficult delivery at Minahikosakāhikanihk, Pine Lake. They say that you, Nōcokīsiw, and Pīsim walked all night to assist with this difficult birth and that the baby arrived safely into this world.

**Narrator 1:** Pīsim dropped her eyes. Nōcokīsiw was the midwife and Pīsim was her observer.

She was apprenticing to become a midwife later in life. Pīsim slept well that night in her family's dwelling.

**Narrator 2:** The next day the family loaded their canoes, and Pīsim's mother Kīwetin Kānimit gave instructions to her daughter, Amo, and her son, Mwakwa.

**Narrator 3:** The family stopped to set up camp on the third day at Apisciwapāsīhk, Little Narrows. This was one of Pīsim's favourite places.

**Narrator 1:** Pīsim's heart swelled with pride as she looked at her *minisiwin*, her family.

**Pīsim:** Our family is so strong and healthy, I feel so safe.

**Kīwetin Kānimit:** Yes, we are strong, my girl. We eat good food like *pimihkān*, smoked moose and caribou meat, and pounded fish. Keeping active also allows us to live healthy lives and keeps us strong.

**Okimow Acapi:** I am looking forward to the birth of our grandchild, may he or she be healthy and strong. Pīsim, *nitānis*, I know that you will be a great helper to Nōcokīsīw, the midwife, once the baby comes.

**Pīsim:** I will do my best to assist Nōcokīsīw when uncle Nikik and auntie Kāmisakāt's baby arrives. I have prayed to Creator for guidance in finding my *miskanow* and have asked for assistance when the time comes.

**Pipon:** *Ekosi, nitānis.*

**Narrator 3:** The family traveled to the Spring Gathering in small groups by canoe. They set out for Mōsominiwatim, Moose Point, on the fourth day. One canoe held Pipon and Nōcokīsīw; another had Pīsim's mother,

Kīwetin Kānimit, and father, Okimow Acapi, with her younger sister, Amo; Nikik and Mwakwa were in a third; and Pīsim and her auntie Kāmisakāt were in a fourth canoe.

**Narrator 2:** On the following day, one of the grandmothers who was gifted with interpreting the weather cautioned that although the morning would be calm, a shadow on the clouds indicated that there could be a sudden turn.

**Narrator 1:** Pīsim's family packed up their camp, as Pipon had decided that they would try to make it to Kwekwaskociwanohk, or "Turning Current." Suddenly, the wind picked up and the waves became enormous. Pīsim began to worry, as the paddling began to feel dangerous and dark clouds formed in the sky.

**Pīsim:** Auntie, I can see everyone's canoes just popping in and out of sight. Mother and Father look like they are just fighting to move forward.

**Okimow Acapi:** (*shouting*) Pīsim! Stick close to your uncle. He's just ahead of you.

**Kāmisakāt:** (*calling*) There they are. I see them.

**Nikik:** (*yelling*) Follow us, we're going to try to make it to Kwekwaskociwanohk.

**Pīsim:** (*loudly calling back*) Okay, uncle!

**Narrator 3:** Pīsim remembered what she had been told about paddling in this type of storm situation—no matter how tired you are, you cannot stop or the next wave would swamp you. Pīsim's arms were getting tired, and the rain was blinding her.

**Kāmisakāt:** Pīsim, don't give up my girl! Keep going!

**Narrator 1:** Suddenly a moan from behind



caught Pīsim's attention, and she turned back to look. Her aunt Kāmisakāt was bent over her paddle.

**Pīsim:** Uncle Nikik, there is something wrong with nitōsis, my auntie.

**Narrator 2:** Nikik and Mwakwa paddled beside them.

**Nikik:** Are you okay?

**Kāmisakāt:** I think so... I think so...

**Nikik:** Let's make for the shore.

**Pīsim and Mwakwa:** Okay, *nohkomis*.

**Kāmisakāt:** The baby's coming.

**Pīsim:** I have to deliver the baby. I have to do it because *nohkom*, our helper, is not here. And, Mwakwa, you have to be my helper.

**Narrator 3:** Once they made it to the shore, they made a *kotawan*, a fire, and set up a *tipinawahikan*, a lean-to. Pīsim assessed which tools she had, boiled water, and prayed for a calm spirit while she prepared for the task.

**Pīsim:** Keep the fire going, Mwakwa, I know what to do.

**Mwakwa:** Okay, Pīsim, just let me know what I can do to help.

**Pīsim:** *Nohkomis*, my uncle. Your knife.

**Nikik:** Here you go, *nitānis*.

**Narrator 2:** Through the long evening and night, Mwakwa kept the fire going, and Nikik handed Pīsim the tools she needed. In the early hours of the morning, Kāmisakāt and Nikik's firstborn child arrived into the world.

**Narrator 1:** As the newborn baby boy cried out, Pīsim felt that she had truly found her *miskanow*—the gift of *otināwawosōwin*, of helping life into the world. Pīsim fell asleep to the sound of Kāmisakāt's first lullaby to her son.

**Pīsim:** (*praying aloud*) *Kinanāskomitin*, my Creator, thank you for this gift of life. I believe I have finally found my *miskanow*, my life journey. It would be an honour to use my teachings and my gifts to help women bring this precious gift of life that you have given us into the world. It will be my lifelong journey to always learn more and to teach others what I have learned.

**Narrator 3:** When the newborn was brought to the gathering that evening, he was welcomed by all of his relatives who feasted in his honour and blessed him. It was decided that his name would be Pīponasīw, in honour of his grandfather. Everyone in the *minisiwin* welcomed the baby boy and declared the promise of a gift for his survival.

**Narrator 2:** Next Nōcokīsīw shared the story of Pīsim's first delivery.

**Nōcokīsīw:** Pīsim has earned her rightful place as my helper, and she shall be acknowledged for such at the Spring Gathering.

**Narrator 1:** The Spring Gathering was a very important event as people would partake in ceremonies, games, dances, recognize courtship, arrange marriages, and acknowledge rites of passage. This was a critical rite of passage for Pīsim.

**Narrator 3:** When the Spring Gathering finally arrived, the people were very busy in preparation for the main evening's gathering, and the sounds of rattles and drums could be heard throughout the camp.

**Narrator 2:** The Moswak elders, or elders of the Moose people, Pison, and Nōcokīsīw stood to acknowledge their grandchild Pīsīm, on behalf of the Moswak *minisiwin*, and Nōcokīsīw spoke.

**Nōcokīsīw:** Pīsīm delivered a baby on her own, with the assistance of her uncle, Nikik, and her brother, Mwakwa. Therefore, she has earned her rite of passage as my Helper as a midwife. Come, *nosisim*, and stand by your responsibility.

**Narrator 1:** Pīsīm stood proudly and went to her grandmother where she received a

ceremonial bag containing midwifery tools. The rest of the Moswak stood to honour her and acknowledge her.

**Pīsīm:** I recognize the path that has been chosen for me. I will carry my responsibility with dignity.

**Narrator 3:** And so Pīsīm and the other young people present were acknowledged for finding their *miskanow*. A great dance and feast was held, and the Spring Gathering was enjoyed by all. There we will leave Pīsīm until we meet her again.

# Appendix VI

## CREE GLOSSARY AND PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

**acathokan** (ah cha tho kun) - mist-of-time/sacred story

**acathokana** (ah cha tho kun na) - mist-of-time/sacred stories

**acimowina** (ah chi moh wih na) - popular stories

**amihkowāpi** (u maa ko wah pee) - rawhide strips used for a variety of purposes

**amo** (ah moo)– bee

**aniskotāpan** (u nih sko taa pahn) - tying of a knot to extend length or to pull things, as when you tie one toboggan behind another; great-grandchild

**apwānask** (up whan naask) – process of roasting fish

**apikosīs** (ah pih koo sees) - mouse

**apisciwapāsihk** (upis chi wah paa seek) – Little Narrows

**Asiniskowithniw** (uh si nee scow ee thi new) - Rocky Cree person

**Asiniskowithniwak** (u si nee scow ee thi new wuk) – Rocky Cree People

**askihk** (us keehk) - clay pot

**askihkwak** (us keehk kwuk) - clay pots

**atamiskakiwin** (a tum isk ka kee win) – series of formal ceremonies that are used to recognize the passages of human life

**Atikowithiniwak** (a tee ko thi nee wuk) - Caribou People

**Cipwayan** (chee pwa yaan) - person of the sharp hooded parka; Dene person

**Cipwayanak** (chee pwa yaa nuk) – people of the sharp hooded parkas; Dene people

**Ithinisakāhikanik** (ee thi nee sa ka hee ka nehk) - the people's lake; People of Southern Indian Lake

**Kakakiniyahk** (kaa kaa kee nee yahk) - Crow Point

**kāmisakāt** (kaa mih sa kat) - he or she who arrives by water

**Kawapskotimihk** (kaa waa pi sko tih mihk) - White Beaver Dam

**kayas** (ka yaas) – the distant past or the mists of time

**kimosōm** (kee moo soom) – your grandfather

**kīwetin kānimit** (kee wee tin kaa nee mitt) - north wind dancing

**kīyaskominsčikosa** (kee yaas ko min is chi koh sa) - seagull islands

**kiyaskowāwa** (ke yaas ko waa wa) - seagull eggs

**kiyaskwacanasīs** (kee yaas kwa cha naa sees) - arctic tern

**kohkom** (koh kom) – your grandmother

**kotawan** (koh ta waan) - main fire

**kwakwāiwaht** (kwa quiy wut ) - birch basket

**kwekwaskiciwanok** (kwee kwa ski chee wa nohk ) - turning current; Hole in the Wall

**mahikanawāsis** (ma hee gun uh waa sis) - wolf child

**Mahikanīthiniwak** (ma hee gun ee thi nee wuk) - Wolf People

**Maskeko** (mus kee ko) - Bear person

**maskosīwaht** (mus ko see wut) - reed basket

**Maskowithiniwak** (mus ko thi nee wuk) – Bear People

**Mihkwapisko** (meh kwa pis ko) - Red Rock

**mikiwap** (mee kih wahp) - birch bark dwelling with a rounded roof

**mikiwapa** (mee kih wah pa) – birch bark

dwelling with a rounded roof

**mīmikwīsīw** (mee mee kwee sew) - little person; butterfly

**mīmikwīsīwak** (mee mee kwee see wuk) - little people

**Minahikosakāhikanihk** (mih na hee koh sah ka heh ka nehk) - Pine Lake

**minisiwin** (mee nis see wihn) – immediate family group as in cluster of berries

**minisiwina** (mee nis see wih na) - family groups as in many clusters of berries

**mīthīstowewak** (mee thi stoo wee wuk) - hairy-faced /bearded ones

**miskanow** (mee skaa now) - life journey

**Missinipi** (mih sih nih pee) - Big Water

**Mistahiwapahk** (mih sta hey wah pahk) – big narrows; big gathering place

**Mōsominiwatim** (moo so me nee wah tim) – Moose Point

**Mosowithiniwak** (moo so thi ney wuk) – Moose People

**moswa** (moos wah) - one moose

**moswak** (moos wuk) - more than one moose

**mwakwa** (mwaw gwa) - loon

**nāpew** (naa pew) - recognized male protector

**niciwām** (nee chi waam) - my cousin

**nīhithow** (nee hih thow) - being of four

**nikāwiy** (nih kaa wee) - my mother

**nikik** (nih kick) - otter

**nimosōm** (nih moh soom) - my grandfather

**nīpīsīwaht** (nee pee see wuht) - willow basket

**nisīmis** (nih seem is) - my brother

**niskewāwa** (niss kee waa wha) - goose eggs

**niskī siimōwin** (niss kee sih mow win) –  
Goose Dance

**nīsocīsak** (nee soh chee suk) - two walking  
together; twins

**nitānis** (nih tah nis) - my daughter; my niece

**nitōsis** (nih too sis) - my aunt

**nochinewsīw** (noo chi nih sew) - hunting hawk

**nōcokīsiw** (noo choh kee sew) - old lady

**nohkom** (noh gom) - my grandmother

**nohkomis** (noh go miss) - my uncle

**nohtāwiy** (noh taa wee) - my father

**nohisim** (noo sih sim) - my granddaughter

**okimow acapi** (oh kih maw uh chaa pew) -  
master of the bow

**Omithacisithiniwak** (oh mih thaa chee si thi  
nee wuk) - Wolverine People

**Onihcīkenihk** – (oh nee chiy kee nihk) place  
where you raise children

**onikahp** (oh nih cahp) - a portage

**opapāmitāwew** (oh pah pah mah tah wew) -  
traveling trader

**opimācihiwew** (oh pi ma chee hih wew) - my  
Creator

**oskāpesak** (oh skaa pee suk) - young male  
helpers

**otinawaso** (oh tih nah wha soh) - person who  
brings the child into the world; midwife

**otinawāwosōwin** (oh tih nah wha soh win) -  
gift of bringing life into the world; midwifery

**ototemihitowin** (oh toh tee me hi too win) -  
family tree

**paskwāskitew** (pa skwa skee tew) - burned area

**pawākanak** (pa wa ka nuk) - dream helpers

**pimātisiwin** (pee ma tih si win) - life

**pimihkān** (pi mih kahn) - preserved food  
composed of berries and/or meat and fat

**pipon** (pih bohn) - winter; year

**pīponasīw** (pih bohn ah sew) - gyrfalcon;  
winter hawk

**pīsim** (pee sim) - sun

**pithesimowin** (pee thi sih mow win) - Chicken  
Dance

**pītokīwin** (pee toh kee win) - entering-in

**pīwāpisk** (pee wah pisk) - any metal, as in  
copper

**sakimīs** (sa key mees) - mosquito

**sāpotawan** (sah poh ta wahn) - main

ceremonial hall made of tree poles bent and tied together, and covered with spruce branches

**saskahōn** (sus ka hoon) – family staff

**sīsīpīwāwa** (see see pih waa wha) - duck eggs

**tansi** (tan sih) - “how are you?”

**thīwahikan** (thi wah hih kun nuk) - pimihkān made with powdered fish instead of meat

**tihkinākan** (tih kih nah kun) - cradleboard

**tipinawahikan** (tih pih nah wah hi kun) - lean-to

**wakomihitowin** (wah koh toh win) - extended family

**wāpamawasowin** (waa pa ma wah so win) - “seeing the child” as it is being born

**Wāpawakatenahk** (waa pa wa ka tih nahk) - White Sand Hills

**wāpistan** (waa pee stan) - marten

**watapīwaht** (wa ta pee wut) - root basket

**Wīposkāniyak** (wee poh skah nee yahk) - Burnt Forest Point

**Yapewokimawīthinīwak** (yah pew oh ki maw ee thi nee wuk) - Bull Chief People

**Yapewthinīwak** (yah pew ee thi nee wuk) - Young Bull People

## CREE PHRASES

### Storyteller’s Introduction

**Kayas nosisimak, kayas, kimithwasin askī, kipiayakan. Kimithwaya ni wan.** (ka yaas noo si si muk, ka yaas, ki mi thaw sin us key, kee pee yaa ta kun; ki mi thaw yah nih won) - Long ago, my grandchildren, long ago, it was beautiful the earth, it was peaceful. The people were well, and we were healthy. There was wellness.

### Robin’s Song

**Kinanāskomitin, opimācihiwew kāpimacihiyin.** (ki na naas koh mih tin, oh pi mah chi hih wew, kaa pim maa chee hih yin) - I thank you, my Creator, for giving me life.

### Lullaby

**Tanipaw nipipim** (ta nih pow nee pee peem) – My baby will sleep.

**Tapawamiw nipipim** (ta pah waw mew, nee pee peem) – She or he will have a dream.

**Apo itoki onitawihiwīw** (ah poo ee to kee oh nee ta wee hee wew) – Maybe she or he will be a healer.

### Prayer After Birth

**Kamithat awa napesis pimātisiwin.** (kaa mee thut uh wa nah pee sis pih ma ti si win) - Thank you for giving this little boy life.

### Paddling Song

**Kiskisitōtāwin nāsipīēni. Ayamihistāmāwin.** (kis kis sih toh tah win, nas si peh ih nee) - Remember me when you go down to the water. Say a prayer for me.

**Nimosōm kipimiskaw oma sipi** (nih moh soom kih pim mis kow oh mah see pee) – My grandfather paddled this river.

**Ēspīcikamathik kipīmiskawak** (ee spee chi ka ma thik kih pi mis kow wuk) - The whole length of the body of water they paddled.

**Ēta ēmithawsinthik ēkota kēkapēsiwak** (ih ta ee mi thaw sin thik ee koh ta key kah pe see wuk) - Where it was nice was where they camped.

**Tātwow ētakoskīcik kēnanapathithēw askī** (taa twow ee ta kos kee chik kee na num pa thew us key) - Every step they took the ground vibrated.

## **Pīsim's Acknowledgement**

**Astam nōsisim pinacikapawīsta kitatoskīwin.** (ah stum noo se sim peh na hih ka pa wee sta key ta tos ke win) - Come, my child, come and stand beside your responsibility.

**Eyati nisitawinaman nimiskanow. Kwayisk nakwe pimotatan nitatoskiwin.** (ee ya teh ne si tah wee na man nih mee ska now) - I recognize the path that has been chosen for me. I will carry my responsibility with dignity.

# Appendix VII

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## SRO CREE SYLLABIC CHART

	▽ ī	△ i	▷ o	◁ ō	◁ a	◁ ā	
w	▽• wī	△• wi	▷• wo	◁• wō	◁• wa	◁• wā	◦ w
p	∨ pī	∧ pi	> po	> pō	< pa	< pā	◌ p
t	U tī	∩ ti	∪ to	∩ tō	C ta	Ċ tā	∕ t
k	q kī	p ki	d ko	j kō	b ka	ḃ kā	◌ k
c	ᑭ cī	ᑭ ci	ᑭ co	ᑭ cō	ᑭ ca	ᑭ cā	◌ c
m	ᑭ mī	ᑭ mi	ᑭ mo	ᑭ mō	ᑭ ma	ᑭ mā	◌ m
n	ᑭ nī	ᑭ ni	ᑭ no	ᑭ nō	ᑭ na	ᑭ nā	◌ n
s	ᑭ sī	ᑭ si	ᑭ so	ᑭ sō	ᑭ sa	ᑭ sā	◌ s
y	ᑭ yī	ᑭ yi	ᑭ yo	ᑭ yō	ᑭ ya	ᑭ yā	◌ y
th	ᑭ thī	ᑭ thi	ᑭ tho	ᑭ thō	ᑭ tha	ᑭ thā	◌ th
	" h	x hk	≧ R	≦ L	x Christ	ᑭ• kwā	

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