

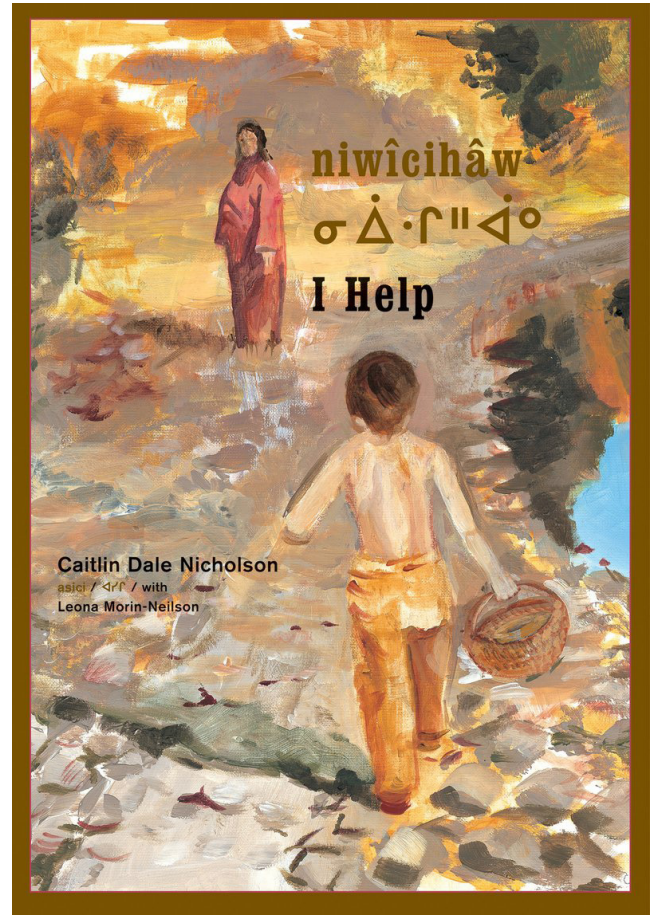
A TEACHERS' GUIDE TO NIWÎCIHÂW / σ Δ · ρ " ◁ ° / I HELP

Written and illustrated by Caitlin Dale Nicholson

Translated by Leona Morin- Neilsen

INTRODUCTION

This simple story in Cree and English explores a young child's relationship to his grandmother, or nôhkom, as they go for a walk in the woods to pick rosehips. The young boy follows his grandmother, walking, listening, praying, picking and eating, just as she does. In doing so, he absorbs the rich cultural traditions and values of his Cree heritage.



niwîcihâw / σ Δ · ρ " ◁ ° / I Help

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JUVENILE FICTION

Reading Ages 4 to 7

9781773061160

Paperback

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BEFORE READING

To increase students' oral language and written language skills, have students respond to any of the questions during discussions as a whole class, in small groups or in partners and then record their responses in a journal, report or other written format.

Cover Illustration

Looking at the cover of the book, pose the following questions:

- What do you see in the illustration?
- Who do you think is in this illustration?
- What do you think they are doing together?
- What season do you think this is? Why do you think that?
- Why do you think the child has a basket?
- What meaning do you think the colors have?

Languages

Looking at the title, ask students if they know what it says. Write the title down on the board. Discuss how you might pronounce the words. Keep a vocabulary list running for the duration of the story.

Picture Walk

Take a "picture walk" with students through the book. Discuss what you see in each of the illustrations (location, landscape, characters, activity, print, etc.).

Landscape (Observed During the Picture Walk)

Have students describe the landscape that they see in all the pictures throughout the story and discuss the importance of where the characters are going. Students should pay close attention to the different landscapes. Ask them to notice what the characters are doing in each location.

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DURING READING

Getting Ready (Prediction-Inference)

The text says, "nôhkom mamanêw. ᓄᖃᓂᓂ ᓄᓂᓂᓂ Nôhkom gets ready." Ask students: Who do you think Nôhkom is? Where do you think she is getting ready to go? What clues do you see in the illustration that make you think that?

Have students look at the illustration with the boy, and ask them: What is he getting ready for? Why do you think that?

What do you see in the illustration that tells you things about the family? What might their interests be?

Where do you think they are driving to?

Where do you think they are walking to?

Offering Prayers

In the book, it says, "nôhkom ayamihâw. ᓄᖃᓂᓂ ᓄᓂᓂᓂ Nôhkom prays. nitayamihân. ᓄᓂᓂᓂ I pray." Ask the students to think about why they are praying. What do you see them doing in the pictures? What else do you notice in the pictures?

See the websites listed below for more information.

Many Cree people pray to the Creator by offering tobacco with their prayers. Tobacco is one of the four sacred medicines (sweetgrass, tobacco, sage and cedar). Before picking plants from the earth, tobacco is offered to thank the Creator for providing them.

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DURING READING

Listening

In the text, it says, "nôhkom nitohtam. ᓃᓂᓂᓐᓂᓂᓐ Nôhkom listens. / ninitohtên. ᓃᓃᓂᓂᓐᓂᓂᓐ I listen." Ask students: What do you think they are listening to? Why do you think that this is important in this story? Have students close their eyes in the classroom and listen to the sounds that surround the class; when they are finished listening, ask them to describe what they heard.

If possible, pause reading the story here and bring your class outside to the school grounds. Have them sit, stand or lie down, close their eyes and listen. Let students know they will have an opportunity to share their experiences with the class when listening time is up.

If you are unable to go outside, ask students to think about a time when they have been outside. What did they hear?

Cross-curricular Connection: Visual Arts — have students create a visual representation of one or more of the things they heard.

Feelings

Look at the last page of the story and ask students:

- What do you see the characters doing?
- How does this make you feel?
- How do you think they are feeling? What clues tell you that?
- Read the text and discuss why there is an exclamation mark after "Not me!" Discuss the purpose of this exclamation mark.

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AFTER READING

Tell Your Story

Have students generate on a graphic organizer (create your own) a list of things that they like to do with a grandparent or adult. Once they have created a list, give students time to describe each activity in short sentences in a draft (one per page). Have students exchange stories and read them with a partner to get feedback on their work. Ask students to illustrate the story in a booklet format and share these with the class when complete.

Alternative Ending

After reading the story, invite students to write an alternate ending that fits within the story line, including the traditions of the book.

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CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

Procedural Writing

Ask students to predict what the boy and his grandmother are going to do with the red seed pods they picked. You can tell them that the characters are picking rosehips and share the recipe at the back of the book. Read the recipe together.

Make tea or a drink with the class. Then create success criteria based on the essential elements of a recipe. Do a shared writing activity as a class, creating your own recipe to follow for a drink. This can be extended to other recipes and individual writing opportunities.

Science Connection: Parts of the Wild Rose Plant

As a class, examine the parts of a wild rose plant and the uses and purposes of the plant. You may also examine the flowering cycle of the plant so students understand that the rosehip occurs after the bloom is finished. This may also give students a clue as to what time of year rosehips are collected.

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CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

Connect to This Groundwood Text

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Web Resources

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