

Story Summary

In an intergenerational winter's story full of quiet wonder, a little boy takes his grandfather for a walk down a forest trail.

A young boy shows his grandpa how to jump in the snow and how to make it splash into the creek. Grandpa shows the boy rabbit tracks and deer

hiding among the trees. They greet their animal neighbors by name: Raven, Rabbit, Deer, Sparrow. Back home, the little boy sets the table with cookies while Grandpa pours the milk. It has been a glorious afternoon, and soon there will be books and blankets and the big armchair by the fire.

Illustrated Book Ages 4–7 | ISBN: 978-1-77278-136-6 | Pages: 32

THEMES

Family, Indigenous Culture, Winter, Animals

BISAC CODES

JUV013030 JUVENILE FICTION / Family / Multigenerational

JUV030090 JUVENILE FICTION / People & Places / Canada / Indigenous

JUV011040 JUVENILE FICTION / People & Places / United States / Native American

JUV024000 JUVENILE FICTION / Lifestyles / Country Life

JUV074000 JUVENILE FICTION / Diversity & Multicultural

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Early Literacy Skills—Activate knowledge; infer; connect; perspectives

Family—Heritage; relationships, roles, and responsibilities

Science—Days and seasons; animals

Sue Farrell Holler is the Governor General's Award-nominated author of the YA novel *Cold White Sun* as well as the middle-grade novel *Lacey and the African Grandmothers* and several picture books. Sue grew up on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, where she wrote avidly to more than a hundred pen pals across North America. She later channelled her passion for writing into journalism studies at the University of King's College in Halifax. Sue has lived in the Northwest Territories and today resides in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

Jennifer Faria is an illustrator, painter, and graphic designer who studied at Central Technical School and George Brown College in Toronto. Her works can be found in the collections of celebrities, politicians, and especially parents, as one of her specialties is portraits of babies and small children. She lives in Burlington, Ontario with her husband and three children. While illustrating the grandfather in *Raven, Rabbit, Deer*, Jennifer drew inspiration from her maternal great-uncle, of whom she has warm memories. Similar to the boy in the story, *Raven, Rabbit, Deer* has been a walk of discovery for Jennifer as she learns more about her cultural heritage as a member of the Chippewas of Rama First Nation.

Links:

Ojibwe.net—Anishinaabemowin Lessons:

<https://ojibwe.net/lessons/>

Ojibwemotaadidaa!—Let's Speak Ojibwe (To One Another):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjUc2zAm-YA>

Pair this book with:

Sweetest Kulu by Celina Kalluk, illus. Alexandria Neonakis

THIS GUIDE CONTAINS:

ACTIVITY	MAIN SUBJECT AREA	SPECIFIC SKILLS AND TOPICS
Read-Aloud	Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate prior knowledge • Infer, make connections • Identify various perspectives
Family and Culture	Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How heritage is passed on
Family and Community	Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships, roles, and responsibilities
Winter Wonders	Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily and seasonal changes
Amazing Animals	Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Science: Animals

THE READ-ALoud

Learning expectations:

Students will:

- identify reading comprehension strategies (e.g. activate prior knowledge, infer, make connections) and use them before, during, and after reading to understand texts
- identify some simple elements of style, including voice and word choice

You Will Need

- *Raven, Rabbit, Deer*
- other picture books by/about Indigenous people, such as *Sweetest Kulu* by Celina Kalluk, illus. Alexandria Neonakis

How To:

Before Reading

Explain that in this story, a grandfather introduces his young grandson to animals in the forest, in both English and Ojibwemowin languages. Suggest that students might like to learn some Ojibwemowin words too. Pause at the endpapers, say the animals' names, and invite students to repeat the words.

During Reading

You may not want to interrupt the flow of the beautiful descriptive language with discussion, so read straight through on the first reading, perhaps pausing only to have students repeat the Ojibwemowin names of the animals.

After Reading

Discuss (Inferring): How old is the boy? How do you know? (He asks for a walk without words, calls the deer “dog”, says “this many” instead of counting, gets carried inside) As students are recalling these moments in the story, flip through the book and point them out. This is early training for citing evidence from the text to defend an inference they have made.

Discuss (Perspective): Whose voice do we hear in this story? Who is taking care of whom? How does the Grandfather take care of the little boy? (e.g. holds his hand; guides him through traffic; teaches him how to get traction when climbing a snowy hill; teaches him Ojibwemowin words, how to count, how to distinguish the male deer, and the difference between a raven and a sparrow; carries him inside; pours the milk; gives him the bigger cookie; reads him a bedtime story.) The boy has his own perspective (point of view). He thinks he is taking care of his grandfather. In what ways does he do that? (holds Grandpa’s hand so he doesn’t fall down or get lost; shows Grandpa how to kick snow into the water under the bridge; points out the animal so Grandpa can see; gives Grandpa the bigger cookie; slides a blanket over him and snuggles him to keep him safe.) Briefly discuss how two different people can experience the same event and have different perspectives on it.

Discuss (Descriptive Language): There are so many similes and metaphors in this story (about a dozen!), it’s almost a poem. Explain what similes and metaphors are and then invite your students to be detectives, searching the book for examples with your help. Read through the book again slowly, pausing at the end of any pages that contain a simile or metaphor and giving students a chance to identify them (e.g. Raven sounds like a brook in summertime; I shake the prickly hand of a tree). Record them on a chart. Encourage students to use similar comparisons in their own writing.

Future Study: Refer to the melting snow around the boots to connect to an investigation into states of matter.

Sue Farrell Holler, illus. Jennifer Faria
Raven, Rabbit, Deer

Further Reading

Read other picture books by Indigenous authors and/or illustrators. Like *Raven, Rabbit, Deer, Sweetest Kulu* by Celina Kalluk and Alexandria Neonakis also depicts the love between a caregiver and child, and a close relationship with the natural world.



ACTIVITY 1: FAMILY AND CULTURE

Students investigate how families help pass on culture.

Learning expectations:

Students will:

- identify and describe different types of families
- identify some ways in which heritage is passed on

You Will Need

- *Raven, Rabbit, Deer*
- chart paper and markers
- drawing and writing materials

How To:

1. Reread *Raven, Rabbit, Deer*. Ask a student to describe the little boy’s family. They might point out the boy, the grandfather, and the cat. Ask students if there is any evidence of other family members, and if two people and a cat can be called a family. Explain that there are many types of

families and all are equally valid. On chart paper, draw or have a student draw the boy's family.

2. Families are the main place that heritage is passed on from one generation to another. Invite students to identify things which the grandfather passed on to the boy in this story (e.g., enjoyment of and respect for nature, Ojibwemowin names, facts about animals, generosity). Fill the empty space on the chart paper surrounding your drawing with words to represent these items of heritage, including the actual Ojibwemowin names.
3. Give students a chance to describe their own families and some aspect of their family's heritage. Maybe they speak a different language, or came from a different part of the world, or have a particular way to celebrate holidays or other events.
4. On plain paper, have students draw their own family and write words around the picture to represent some aspect of their family heritage.
5. Invite an Indigenous elder to come to your classroom and teach the students a few words. If this is not possible, check out this video of children learning Ojibwemowin:

Ojibwemotaadidaa! - Let's Speak Ojibwe (To One Another):

www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjUc2zAm-YA

In addition, a series of lessons is available here:

ojibwe.net/lessons/

And a reference text can be found here:

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/ojibwe.pdf



ACTIVITY 2: FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Students investigate how families interact with their community.

Learning expectations:

Students will:

- describe some of their own roles, relationships, and responsibilities
- identify some of the significant people, places, and things in their life, including their life in the community, and describe their purpose or the role they have
- identify some of the natural and built features of their community
- demonstrate an understanding of the basic elements of a map

You Will Need

- *Raven, Rabbit, Deer*
- chart paper and markers
- drawing and writing materials

How To:

1. On chart paper, make a T-chart with the headings "Boy" and "Grandfather".
2. Reread *Raven, Rabbit, Deer*, inviting students to listen for roles and responsibilities of the two characters (some examples are given above in the perspective discussion following the Read Aloud). Record these on the t-chart. If all students are non-readers, discuss orally instead.
3. Have students make a similar chart, with one column for each of their family members, and have them describe some of each member's roles and responsibilities. Non-writers could make a booklet instead. On each page, they would draw a different family member performing one of their roles or responsibilities. Captions could be scribed by an adult.
4. Invite students to tell about some of the natural and built features of the community depicted in the story. These could include the house, busy road, walking path, park bench, forest, stream, beaver house, and bridge. Model how to draw a map of the community in the story, including these features, and any map features that students are

required to learn in your grade (e.g., title, compass rose, legend, blue for water, etc.).

5. Have students tell about features of their own community and then create a map that includes these features. The geographical accuracy of these maps is not vital, as it depends on the students' stage of development.
6. Discuss how the boy and grandfather interacted with the features of their community and then invite students to describe how they and their families interact with the features of their own community, perhaps using their drawn maps as a visual aid.



ACTIVITY 3: WINTER WONDERS

Learning Expectations

Students will:

- discuss ways in which daily and seasonal changes have an impact on society and the environment (e.g., In winter, it is harder for birds that do not migrate and animals that do not hibernate to find food and water. Some plants die when summer is over; others undergo changes, such as losing their leaves and

going dormant until spring. Amongst the Anishnaabe people, there is a tradition of telling their stories only in the winter when there is snow on the ground.)

- discuss the impact of daily and seasonal changes on human outdoor activities
- describe how humans prepare for and/or respond to daily and seasonal changes

You Will Need

- *Raven, Rabbit, Deer*

How To:

1. Hold up *Raven, Rabbit, Deer*. Ask students what season is depicted. Invite them to watch carefully as you read for evidence of winter in the illustrations or the text, and how the people, plants and animals are responding to winter. Examples:

Cover: Snow covers everything.

Endpapers: The deer is eating the only green thing available.

First Spread: The boy brings his boots to request a walk.

Second Spread: Someone has built a snowman.

Third Spread: The boy is wearing a coat and earmuffs.

Fourth Spread: The boy is showered in snow.

Fifth Spread: The beaver house is covered in snow. (This could lead to an investigation of what beavers do in the winter.)

Sixth Spread: The pair put their boots in a V to gain traction on the hill.

Seventh Spread: The boy starts to learn about animal tracks in the snow.

Ninth Spread: The boy is wearing mittens. The deciduous trees have no leaves, but the conifers still have needles. The deer are in a group. (This could lead to an investigation of why deer congregate in the winter.)

Eleventh Spread: What do the presence of a bird's tracks tell about that bird's behavior? Whose tracks would not be seen? (migratory birds)

Twelfth Spread: Grandpa's face is red and his eyebrows are frosty. The boy plays in the snow.

Thirteenth Spread: The snow melts from the boy's boots and makes a puddle.

Fifteenth Spread: There is a fire and they snuggle under a blanket.

ACTIVITY 4: AMAZING ANIMALS

Grandpa's words, "Sparrow is Raven's friend," may call to mind the special understanding of animals in Indigenous culture. In this activity, students will investigate both a western scientific understanding of animals, and Indigenous ways of knowing. For their own education around combining these two ways of knowing, teachers may wish to read *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Indigenous botanist Robin Wall Kimmerer. Background and classroom activities on Indigenous storytelling can be found in this document:

The Learning Circle—Classroom Activities on First Nations in Canada:

www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1316530132377/1535460393645

Learning Expectations

Students will:

- investigate the ways in which a variety of animals adapt to their environment and/or to changes in their environment, using various methods (e.g., read simple non-fiction texts and Indigenous stories)
- investigate the needs, physical characteristics, behaviour, life cycle, and adaptations of animals
- gather, sort, and classify information for writing
- identify and order main ideas and supporting details
- use a variety of forms (oral, written, graphic) to communicate the results of an investigation

You Will Need

- Raven, Rabbit, Deer*
- Indigenous animal stories
- age-appropriate non-fiction texts on animals

How To:

- Reread the eleventh spread of *Raven, Rabbit, Deer*. Ask students what Grandpa might mean when he says, "Sparrow is Raven's friend." Explain that in many Indigenous cultures, an animal (or even a plant) is considered a "who" instead of an "it." Adopting this perspective can help us be more respectful of nature.

- Listen to some Indigenous animal stories, perhaps from a local Indigenous elder. You might also refer to *Keepers of the Animals* by Joseph Bruchac and Michael J. Caduto. Discuss with students what can be learned from the stories.
- Using a gradual release of responsibility format, demonstrate and then assign a research project on an animal. A detailed guide to this process can be found in the teaching guide for *Bat Citizens: Defending the Ninjas of the Night*, found here: pajamapress.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/BatCitizensTeachingGuide.pdf. An outline is also attached to the end of this teaching guide.
- Encourage students to include in their graphic or oral presentation, an Indigenous understanding of the animal they have researched.

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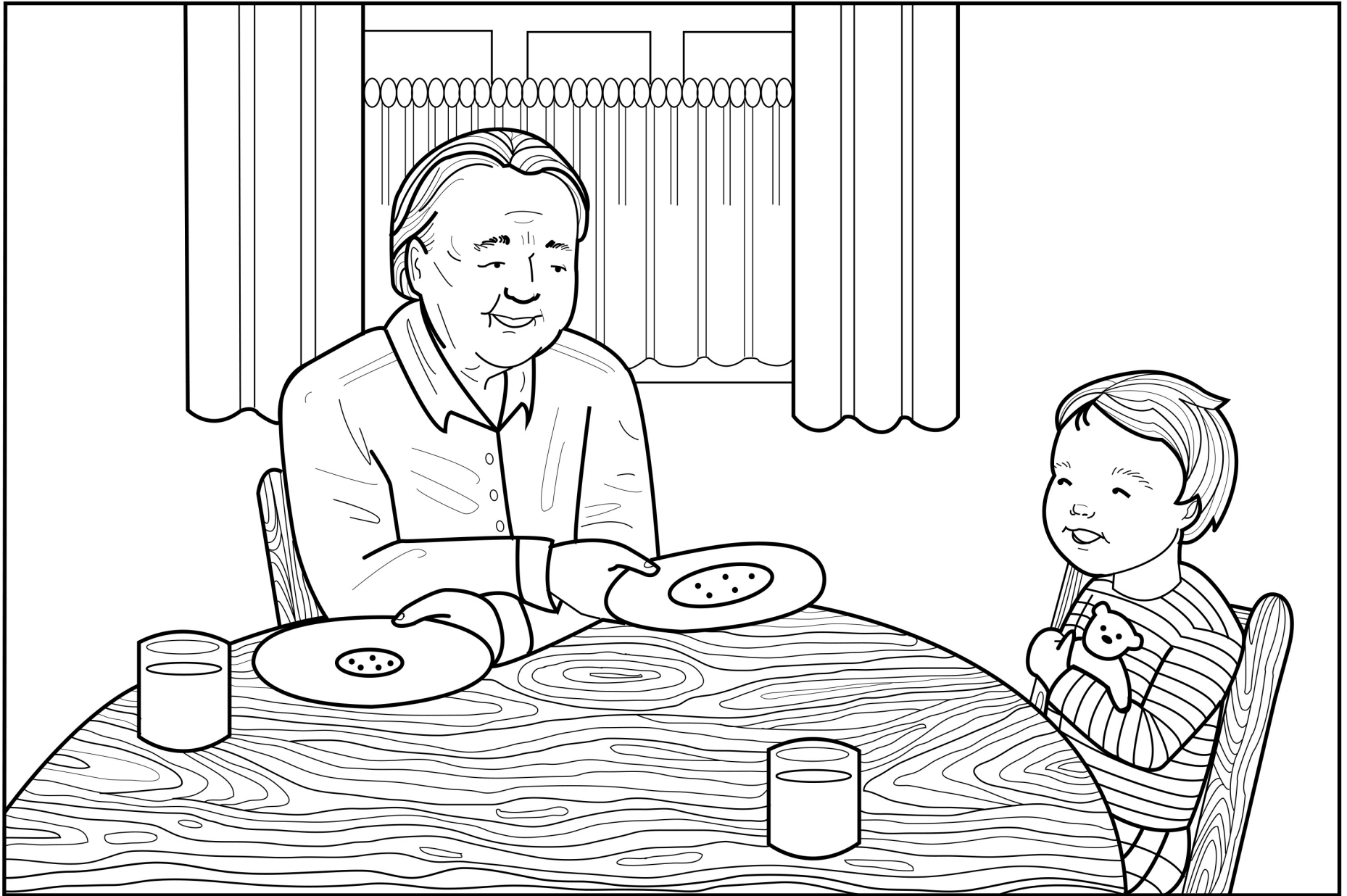
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Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2013

GRADUAL RELEASE OF RESPONSIBILITY—OUTLINE:

1. Modeled/Shared Information Gathering
2. Guided/Independent Information Gathering
3. Modeled/Shared Writing
4. Guided/Independent Writing
5. Editing
6. Modeled/Shared Graphic Presentation
7. Independent/Guided Graphic Presentation
8. Modeled/Shared Oral Presentation
9. Independent Oral Presentation

Raven, Rabbit, Deer



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Picture Book Ages 4–6

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Raven, Rabbit, Deer

Draw animals you can find in your neighbourhood!

