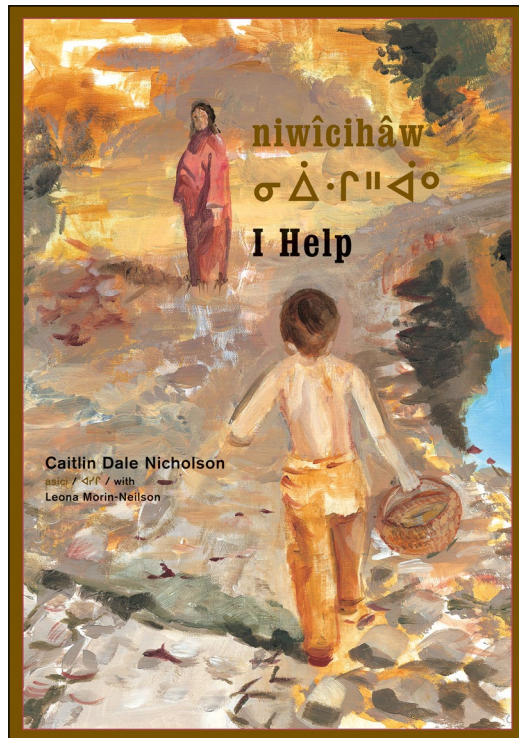




GROUNDWOOD STUDY GUIDES

niwîcihâw / ᓂᐃ·ᓯᐃᐃᐃᐃ / I Help

*Written by Caitlin Dale Nicholson and Leona Morin-Neilson
Illustrated by Caitlin Dale Nicholson*



**A classic story in Cree and English about a young child picking
rosehips in the woods with his grandmother.**

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Ages 4 to 7 / Grades K to 2

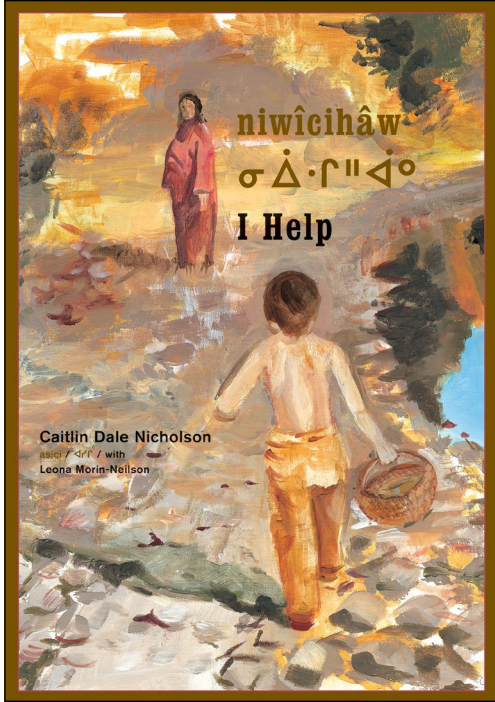
JUVENILE FICTION / People & Places / Canada; Indigenous Languages; Language Arts; Social Studies

Full-color illustrations throughout / 8.5 x 12.25 / 24 pages

Paperback / \$12.95 CDN / \$9.95 US / 978-1-77306-116-0

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groundwoodbooks.com



BOOK DESCRIPTION

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.

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.

GRANDPARENTS

Ask students: Where do your grandparents live? What is the role of your grandparents in your life? Discuss things you have done or do together with a grandparent or other family member. Why was this a special time for you?

- In many Indigenous cultures, families reside in multigenerational homes or nearby. Grandparents play an important role in the upbringing of grandchildren, sharing traditional teachings with children and caring for them.

DURING READING

GETTING READY (PREDICTION-INFERENCE)

The text says, “nôhkom mamanêw. ᐃᓂᓕ ᐱᐱᓕᓂᓂᓂ. 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. ᐃᓂᓕ ᐱᓕᓕᓂᓂᓂᓂ. Nôhkom prays. nitayamihân. ᓄᓕᓕᓂᓂᓂᓂᓂᓂ. 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?

- 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.

LISTENING

In the text, it says, “nôhkom nitohtam. ᓄ"ᓂ σᓂ"ᓂᓂ. Nôhkom listens. / ninitohtên. σσᓂ"ᓂᓂ. 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.

CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

CONNECT TO THIS GROUNDWOOD TEXT

nipêhon / σ∇"▷³ / I Wait

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WEB RESOURCES

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CREATOR BIOGRAPHIES



Caitlin Dale Nicholson is a graduate of the First Nations Studies program at the University of Northern British Columbia, and she teaches art and English at an alternative school in Prince George. She is also learning about traditional plant medicines from Leona Morin-Neilson. She lives with her family in Prince George, British Columbia.

Leona Morin-Neilson teaches Cree at the “Power of Friendship” Aboriginal Head Start program in Prince George, British Columbia, and at the University of Northern British Columbia. She also teaches people in her community about traditional plants and how they can be used for medicinal purposes.