

Teacher Resource Guide - Orange Shirt Day Project

Project Summary - The Healing Music Project

Two courageous Indigenous Elders share their personal memories of what it was like to live in Kamloops and St. Cyprien Residential Schools. Students are invited to create music using the YouthBeat web app to help the survivors, their families, and all Canadians with the healing process.

The project helps children to feel empathy with the experiences of these Elders and to be able to express their own emotions through music as they hear these stories, while making a difference through their music to the healing process for the Elders.

The Royal Conservatory has been collaborating with Indigenous communities and Elders since 2010 to ensure that their culture and stories are included in public education.

For Grades 4-8

Elder Biographies

Nk'xetko is a singer, drummer, storyteller, quilter, and a survivor of the Kamloops Indian Residential School. She discovered that traditional culture, language, and the arts have been like medicine that brings healing. A trained teacher with her Master's in Education, Mary Jane not only lectures on Indigenous history, residential school life and traditional culture, she assists in lesson planning and curriculum development. She is proud to be an Elder in Residence for the Learning Through the Arts Program and Langara College. Nk'xetko also enjoys teaching her three grandchildren cultural crafts, story, songs, and dances to make the circle complete.

Issapaakii means Crow Woman. This is the name given to her by her grandmother. Issapaakii attended St. Cyprien Residential School in southern Alberta. She has spent her career working with Indigenous People. She is the proud mother of 5 sons, the grandmother of 18 grandchildren and great grandmother of 3. In 2009 she received the Esquoao award for her work in education and in 2012 she won Elder of the Year in Fort McMurray at the Ra Ra awards. She is proud to be the first Elder to take part in

Learning Through the Arts' Elder-in-Residence program which she helped to develop. She has led workshops about Indigenous Culture and the impact of residential school for the Banff Centre, Keyano College, Vancouver School Board, and INDspire. She has travelled to Thunder Bay Ontario to meet with Elders and help the Lakehead School District develop their own Elder-In-Residence program. Her wish is for our Indigenous children to know their culture, tradition, history, and language.

Learning Objectives

Students are often challenged to express their feelings in an authentic way using words. We've heard from many teachers that they lack the tools to support students around learning that provokes strong emotion, such as Residential Schools.

In this project, Students are invited to reflect, ask questions and use music to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings. The project also offers a way for students to make a difference, by creating and sharing healing music with survivors and their families.

How to use the Resources:

1. Start with the Residential School video introducing Elder Nk'xetko and Elder Issapaakii. Have students reflect on the inquiry questions at the end of the video. Have them brainstorm words, sentences, thoughts that they would like to share with the Elders.
2. Play video # 2: Drum Story in which Elder Nk'xetko tells the story of the drum beat and why it is so important in creating healing beats in music. Have students think, pair share with a partner some of what they learned about the drumbeat
3. Have students open up the YouthBeat App at <https://learn.rcmusic.com/youthbeat-app/>
4. Play the Healing Music Project video and stop and start as needed to help students begin the process of creating their healing songs.
5. Students can work in teams of up to four if you are short of computers or have limited WiFi bandwidth.
6. When students have completed their music, have them share their Export URL with you by email or by copy and paste to an online folder.
7. Copy the URL's of outstanding student work to a single document, and email it to shelley.macdonald@rcmusic.ca. Shelley will share these with the Elders. Please feel free to share the music with local Elders in your school board or region!

Suggested Student Assessment Questions

a) Did the students learn the curriculum about residential schools, and were they able to reflect, share and communicate their thoughts and ideas clearly in the class discussion and/or to their Think, Pair, Share partner?

b) Were the students able to express their thoughts and ideas clearly through the music they created using the YouthBeat app?

c) Did your students show evidence of understanding the concept of healing music and the idea of a heartbeat pattern on the drum?

- Did they follow the directions and try out the various tools?
- Did they experiment, or just accept the first idea they came up with?
- Did they encourage each other, and give and receive constructive feedback?
- Were they able to find out how to use a technology feature on their own or from peers, or did they get frustrated and stop trying?"

Thank you for being part of the Healing Music Project, and for helping to ensure your students learn about the lasting impact of residential schools on the lives of Indigenous Elders and their families and communities, and all Canadians.