

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

Nature Wellness Project – Activity 1

AMBIENT SOUNDS

(For Grades 4-8)

Students are often challenged to express their feelings in an authentic way using words due to the feelings of isolation of the past year caused by the impact of Covid 19 restrictions on their learning. In this project, Students break the isolation of the past year by reconnecting to the sounds of nature.

Project Summary

Elder Nk'xetko is back again to share her story of how connecting to Nature can help us with our personal wellness. She reminds us to slow down, take pause and listen deeply to the natural sounds around us. Students are invited to create music using the YouthBeat web app - including the nature sounds that have been recently added - to help themselves and others.

Our goal is to help children to feel connected to nature and their own experience of it through Elder Nk'xetko stories, and be able to express their own emotions through music and natural sounds.

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

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 mental health and wellness. In this project, students are invited to listen deeply to nature sounds, 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 their wellness music with others.

How to Use the Resources

1. Start by watching the video of Elder Nk'xetko talking about Nature and how it connects to Wellness (at the top of The Nature Wellness Project page).
2. Ask your students to brainstorm words, sentences, thoughts, ideas that inspired them. What did they learn from Elder Nk'xetko about Wellness? What steps do they need to take? Why is it important to stop and listen to sounds in Nature? What do you think Nk'xetko means when she says, "We have two ears, one to hear and one to listen."
3. Before watching the "Forest Walk" video, ask your students to relax their body and their minds, breathe in and out.
4. Play the "Forest Walk" video. Ask your students, what feelings, emotions, thoughts and ideas came up for them when they watched this video?
5. Have your students open up the YouthBeat App at:
<https://learn.rcmusic.com/youthbeat-app/>
6. Play the "Activity 1" video and stop and start as needed to help students begin the process of creating their wellness songs.
7. Students can work in teams of up to four if you are short of computers or have limited Wi-Fi bandwidth.
8. 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.

Thank you for being part of the *Nature Wellness Project*, and for helping to ensure your students learn about the importance of personal wellness.

Nk'xetko Bio

Nk'xetko, Mary Jane Joe is a singer, drummer, storyteller, quilter, published author and a survivor of the Kamloops Indian Residential School. Her book *Xwist Memin Kin. I want to go Home Memories of Kamloops Residential School and Joeyaska Ranch* is published by Tellwell publishers and available on Amazon.com.

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 Royal Conservatory's 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.