

Middle School (Grade 6-7) Unit: Belle of Batoche

Unit created by Maya Anderson, 2020 Werklund Graduate

After getting a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Calgary in 2005, Maya has worked as an arts educator with many different organizations and young artists-in-training for the past 15 years. In 2018, Maya decided to become official and work towards getting a Bachelor of Education at the Werklund School of Education, which she achieved in 2020. She loved her learning journey so much that she wanted to continue working towards a Masters of Education. Her focus is on supportive, inclusive learning design through an arts immersion lens. She is passionate about experiential learning, interdisciplinary education, and the incorporation of student voice and choice. Maya is also fortunate to be the Mom of two amazing human beings who are her guinea pigs for all of her learning designs.

Resources used and possible concerns

- Belle of Batoche by Jacqueline Guest

Author/creator and/or literature background

- This historical fiction was written by Jacqueline Guest, a Métis author who lives in Bragg Creek, Alberta. The book was published in 2004 by Orca Book Publishers.
- From the publisher: Belle and Sarah can't stand each other. When both want to be the ringer of the new Batoche church bell, they must compete in an embroidery contest to win the position. Belle suspects Sarah of cheating, but before she can prove it, the 1885 Riel Rebellion explodes around them and the girls must work together to save themselves and their families, all thoughts of bell ringing forgotten (Orca Book Publishers, 2004).
- Jacqueline Guest is a Métis writer who lives in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. She writes historical fiction centering around characters who are from different ethnic backgrounds, including Métis, Inuit and First Nations (Guest, 2020).

UPE course connections

- **Educ 420 - Issues in Learning and Teaching.** In this unit plan students engage in authentic, meaningful inquiries into the history and purpose of Métis. Through this, students will explore cultural as well as experiential learning perspectives. In addition, students will have the opportunity to share their thoughts, provide feedback, and reflect on their final creation, highlighting the perspective of multiple knowledge keepers in the learning space.
- **Educ 435 - Literacy, Language, and Culture.** This resource connects all three elements of this course by encouraging practice with literacy, language and culture. It provides a way in which students can interact with literacy and the differing perspectives on the concept of textiles in an experiential manner by encouraging students to create an embroidery piece to showcase their learning.
- **Educ 450 - Diversity in Learning.** This unit plan highlights strategies on how to engage students with diverse needs in numerous ways. Learning activities include participating in group discussions, creating art work and verbal presentations, and engaging in self-reflection. Additionally, learning is broken into manageable steps to ensure that students of all levels are able to find success in the learning task.
- **Educ 456 - Assessment.** This unit plan provides multiple ways to assess students, particularly where there are gaps in learning which allows teachers to adjust lessons based on students prior knowledge and grasp of concepts. Additionally, students are given the opportunity to show their knowledge in many ways, including verbally through discussion, visually through art creation, and meta-cognition by self-reflection. This allows students to be part of the assessment process and engage in metacognition of the experience.

- **Educ 520 - Interdisciplinary Learning.** This resource connects language arts, social studies, and art in an interdisciplinary manner. Using the literary as the basis for the lesson, learning outcomes from ELA, social studies, and visual art are woven together throughout the lesson. Students explore the definition and multiple perspectives on the concept of family in an experiential manner by creating an art piece that showcases their knowledge in a unique manner.

K-12 connection

- Targeted age range: Grade 6-7
- Subjects: Visual Art, Social Studies, ELA
- Visual Art:
 - Develop competence with the components of images: media, techniques and design elements
 - Express meaning through control of visual relationships
 - Investigate natural forms, manmade forms, cultural traditions and social activities as sources of imagery through time and across cultures
 - Understand that the role and form of art differs through time and across cultures
 - Understand that art reflects and affects cultural character
- ELA:
 - Explore thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences
 - Comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts
 - Manage ideas and information
 - Respect, support and collaborate with others
- Social Studies:
 - Demonstrate skills of cooperation, conflict resolution and consensus building
 - Demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy
 - Appreciate how Aboriginal and Francophone peoples have influenced the development of the student's community
 - Appreciate how cultural and linguistic exchanges connect one community to another

Materials

- Belle of Batoche by Jacqueline Guest
- Paper
- Pencils
- Pencil crayons
- Fabric - burlap or felt
- Embroidery hoop (if possible)
- Embroidery thread
- Embroidery needles
- Tape

Rationale

Big idea:

Art forms play a large role in sharing cultural stories and traditions.

Purpose:

As a response to the novel, Belle of Batoche, during this lesson, students will gain an appreciation for the role that art plays in sharing cultural stories and traditions. Students will gain insight into the significance of embroidery and textiles in Métis culture through observation and inquiry into the work of Christi Belcourt, a Métis artist. The inquiry ends in an experiential manner with students creating their own embroidery piece of an image that

	<p>has personal meaning to the student. Through this activity, students will be immersed in the language of embroidery and at the same time responding to the novel, Belle of Batoche. Students will be able to empathize with the main character and express their personal story through art.</p> <p>NOTE: This lesson should come after students/class have finished or is part way through reading the novel Belle of Batoche</p>	
Lesson Overview		
	Details	Assessment
Engage	<p>Welcome students to class/lesson/activity. Invite students to stand in a circle. Using a talking stick, encourage students to respond to prompt “What is one thing you remember about the book, Belle of Batoche, that we just finished reading?” Students will pass the talking stick around the circle. The person with the talking stick is the only one who is allowed to speak. Students may pass the stick on without responding if they are not ready or would prefer to remain silent. If time permits, go around the circle one more time and allow those students who passed to speak if they are ready.</p>	<p>Formative Assessment: Anecdotal evidence about students' knowledge and recall of the book.</p>
Explain	<p>To give context for the project recap the story of Belle of Batoche and the embroidery competition. Explain the significance of embroidery to Métis culture: “Much like beadwork, embroidery was prevalent on clothing, as well as on personal and household items throughout the regions in which the Métis travelled and lived. A common motif is the floral pattern, which exists in a relatively narrow spectrum of colours. The flower designs are a carry-over from the time prior to the 1850s when women used quills in their embroidery. Flowers are usually embroidered in shades of pink through red, with the buds in shades of blues and purples. The flowers' centres are white or dark yellow, and the leaves are green. A three-dimensional effect is produced with a combination of layering.</p> <p>An introduction to the European techniques of silk embroidery was provided in Catholic mission schools in the 1830s at Red River. Once the Métis girls were outside the nuns' influence, they experimented with various styles and decorations, developing their own unique artistic tradition. Embroidery appears on both functional and decorative items such as mittens, jackets, leggings, moccasins, vests, knife sheaths, bags, dog blankets, wall pockets, pillowcases, piano covers, picture frames and purses.</p> <p>The tradition of embroidery remains alive today, though silk is commonly replaced with cotton and rayon floss or thicker wool and synthetic yarns. Embroidered items have</p>	<p>Formative assessment: Anecdotal evidence of students prior knowledge of Métis art and embroidery</p>

	<p>long been popular items in the tourist trade, but many are still produced as gifts for friends as well as for personal use and adornment. In fact, among the Métis in the Subarctic, women have long made embroidered mitts and moccasins to give to husbands and male kin as special New Year’s presents.” (Canadian Geographic, n.d., para 12)</p> <p>Watch the video: The Flower Beadwork People https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54ipBLZJ6L4</p>	
Explore	<p>Debrief the video and the information on Métis embroidery by inviting students to share what they learned from the video.</p>	<p>Formative Assessment: Anecdotal evidence of students engagement and understanding of the video.</p>
Explain/ Elaborate	<p>Explain that we will create our own embroidery pieces. Show students samples. Explain that we will go through the process together and work on one step at a time. First we will work on creating a basic pattern.</p> <p>Ask students to draw out a simple shape or image that they would like to illustrate in embroidery. Like Métis embroidery, this image should have some meaning to you.</p> <p>Show students the work of Christi Belcourt, a Métis artist, as inspiration http://christibelcourt.com/</p> <p>Play music and invite students to spend time creating their template for their embroidery. Students should also select colours for their embroidery.</p>	<p>Formative assessment: Understanding of task and process. Use questioning to check students’ understanding of the task.</p>
Explain	<p>After a certain amount of time, pause students. Demonstrate how to transfer the pattern onto the fabric. Trace your pattern onto your fabric using chalk so that we can erase it if needs be.</p>	<p>Formative assessment: Understanding of task and process. Use questioning to check students’ understanding of the task.</p>
Explore	<p>Invite students to transfer their patterns onto their fabric for their embroidery. Circulate among students to provide assistance where needed.</p>	<p>Formative assessment: Understanding of task and process. Teacher will circulate among students and assist where necessary.</p>
Explain	<p>After a certain amount of time, pause students. Demonstrate how to put fabric into an embroidery hoop. Show students how to stitch their embroidery:</p> <p>For great videos on how to do different stitches see Red Ted Art: Running stitch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1-B01FB56s&list=PL2vt_TPKQbZpAuVKmMVKmKID239UwrydL&index=14</p>	<p>Formative assessment: Understanding of task and process. Use questioning to check students’ understanding of the task.</p>

	<p>Backstitch: https://youtu.be/sjHm8CL9WDA</p> <p>Blanket stitch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9zegUYdPmg&list=PL2vt_TPKQbZpAuVKmMVKmKID239UwrydL&index=17</p> <p>French knot: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEXSDKPtrs8&list=PL2vt_TPKQbZpAuVKmMVKmKID239UwrydL&index=16</p> <p>Cassie Stephens is also great at explaining embroidery for kids: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mf9Fj_om3ro</p>	
Explore	<p>Invite students to stitch their embroidery. Circulate among students to provide assistance where needed.</p> <p>The remaining time in the lesson will be used to stitch their embroidery. If students finish quickly, invite them to write an artist statement that explains what their embroidery is about.</p>	<p>Formative assessment: Understanding of task and process. Teacher will circulate among students and assist where necessary.</p>
Evaluate	<p>At the end of the creation time, invite the students back to the circle. Pass the talking stick around the circle and encourage students to share their creations with one another and reflect on their experience with the activity. Prompt students to share what they liked best, what worked well, what they learned and what they would do differently next time. Also invite students to share how they could take care of the item that they chose. As before, only the student with the stick is allowed to talk, and if students wish to pass they may do so.</p> <p>Invite students to fill in their self-reflection form (see below). Go through the categories to make sure that students understand the criteria.</p>	<p>Summative assessment: Assess completion of their number circle based on criteria below. Students will fill in the self-reflection form.</p>
Total Time	<p>Approx. 85 mins (Could be split into multiple sessions: Session 1: Recap story, respond to story in sharing circle, learn about Métis embroidery, design embroidery, create holes for threading Session 2: Recap project, stitch embroidery Session 3: Finish embroidery, write artist statement, share and self reflect</p>	
Supporting sources		
<p>Belcourt, Christi. (2020). Christi Belcourt.i http://christibelcourt.com/ Canadian Geographic. (n.d.). Material culture. https://indigenouspeoplesatlasofcanada.ca/article/material-culture/ Guest, J. (2020). About Jacqueline. https://www.jacquelineguest.com/about-jacqueline/ Parks Canada. (2016, May 25). The flower beadwork people [Video]. YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=54ipBLZJ6L4</p>		

Red Ted Art. (2016, May 6). Backstitch how to - basic sewing and hand sewing [Video]. YouTube
<https://youtu.be/sjHm8CL9WDA>

Red Ted Art. (2016, April 27). Blanket stitch how to - basic sewing and hand sewing [Video]. YouTube
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9zegUYdPmg&list=PL2vt_TPKQbZpAuVKmMVKmKID239UwrydL&index=17

Red Ted Art. (2016, May 18). French knot how to - basic sewing and hand sewing [Video]. YouTube
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEXSDKPtrs8&list=PL2vt_TPKQbZpAuVKmMVKmKID239UwrydL&index=16

Red Ted Art. (2016, April 29). Running stitch how to - basic sewing and hand sewing [Video]. YouTube
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i1-B01FB56s&list=PL2vt_TPKQbZpAuVKmMVKmKID239UwrydL&index=14

Stephens, C. (2018, Mar 8). Simple embroidery for kids [Video]. YouTube
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mf9Fj_om3ro

Embroidery Project

We have spent time reading the book Belle of Batoche. In the novel, Belle and Sarah compete to become the bell ringer and are asked to create an embroidered cloth. As we have learned in class, embroidery plays a large role in Métis. We have also looked at the work Métis artist, Christi Belcourt. Using the knowledge that you have gained, you will now create your own embroidery piece of an image that has significance and meaning to you. You will share your creation at the end of the project, write a brief artist statement, and complete a self reflection.

How will you be graded on this assignment?

Your grade will be based on a combination of self reflection and the rubric below.

Embroidery Self Reflection Form			
Choose which level you think you are at for each part of the project using the three categories below. Circle your choice.			
My Name Is:			
	I am an expert	I'm almost there	I'm still learning
I created a pattern that was easy to use and included an image that had meaning to me.	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊
My design is well laid out, creative and is pleasant to look at.	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊
My stitching is neat and even.	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊
My artist statement was clear and easy to understand. I explained why I chose my image for embroidery. spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar is accurate.	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊
My spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar is accurate.	😊😊😊	😊😊	😊

Embroidery Rubric

Name: _____

	Excellent	Good	Basic	Not Meeting
Pattern	The pattern is very well drawn and is very easy to use. The image selected has great meaning for the student.	The pattern is well drawn and is easy to use. The image selected has meaning for the student.	The pattern is fairly well drawn and is somewhat easy to use. The image selected has some meaning for the student.	The pattern is not well drawn and is difficult to use. The image selected has no significant meaning for the student.
Design	The design is extremely well laid out, displays creativity, and is very pleasant to look at. It is exceptionally attractive and creative.	The design is well laid out, displays creativity, and is pleasant to look at. It is attractive and creative.	The design is somewhat well laid out, displays limited creativity, and is somewhat pleasant to look at. It is somewhat attractive and creative.	The design lacks creativity, and is not pleasant to look at. It is unattractive, disorganized, and unappealing.
Artist statement content and accuracy	The spelling, punctuation, capitalization and organization is accurate on all of the included content.	The spelling, punctuation, capitalization and organization is accurate on most of the included content.	The spelling, punctuation, capitalization and organization is accurate on some of the included content.	The spelling, punctuation, capitalization and organization is lacking on all of the included content.

Sample

