

Wapos Bay

A TIME TO LEARN episode 5

Episode Description

Talon and his father are planning an exciting trip to the trapline with a lot of guidance from mushom. Talon negotiates time off from school because he understands how important the trip is to his learning. With his family's support Talon agrees to do a significant amount of school work before and during the trip. Mushom's stories of going to his trapline with his dog team serve to inspire Talon's creative writing assignment. The younger T-Bear, however, is creative in his own way by avoiding the tasks that mushom assigns him. The intense preparations leading up to the trip provide a time for everyone to learn what taking care of things really means.



Background information on this episode

Traditional education in this particular context means a gradual introduction to varying degrees of responsibility and independence beginning in childhood and well into adulthood. Family members from each generation contribute what is appropriate to the complex preparations for a trip to the trapline. The younger members take direction from the elders, who have the knowledge and years of experience to direct the overall project.

Key themes

- Understanding the meaning of care, taking care and being careful involves effective communication skills with those we interact with, such as family, friends, teachers and peers. Effective communication means understanding and preparing for how your message will be received as well as listening with empathy (understanding the thoughts and feelings of others).
- Family members and school staff can work together to support traditional forms of Aboriginal education that occur away from the school yet lead to the development of independence and responsibility.
- The northern Cree way of life includes traditional practices such as trapping and managing a trapline that continue to have an important role in contemporary life.

PREVIEWING ACTIVITIES (Refer to Background Information guide for series' preview activities)

- 1 ➤ Introduce the Cree words used in *A Time to Learn*.

CREE GLOSSARY

mushom – grandfather

wapos – rabbit

- 2 ➤ **A)** What are some of your responsibilities that contribute to your family's well-being and livelihood?
B) What are the varying degrees of responsibility and independence in your household?
- 3 ➤ **A)** What are the Aboriginal rights that are contained in Canada's Constitution?
B) What Aboriginal rights do you see practised in your community?
C) How did your ancestors make a living?
D) What skills have they passed on to your parents and to your generation?
E) How will you pass on those skills?

VIEW EPISODE

Introduce and View *Wapos Bay: A Time to Learn*.

POST-VIEWING QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- 1 ➤ **A)** What is the meaning of the title *A Time to Learn*?
B) Who did the learning?
Everyone learned something. Family members from each generation contribute what is appropriate to the complex preparations for a trip to the trapline.
- 2 ➤ How did Talon learn about care, respect and being careful?
- 3 ➤ Why was it important for Talon to go on this trip to the trapline?
Traditional forms of Aboriginal education that occur outside school can develop independence and the ability to manage responsibilities.
- 4 ➤ How did mushom help Talon with his journal?
With his use of the oral tradition to inspire Talon to write.
- 5 ➤ What is the purpose of trapping?

PROJECT IDEAS

- Discuss, plan and create ways for the school community to recognize, acknowledge and respect Aboriginal knowledge both formally and informally.
- Create and label the components of a dog team and sled and write how each contributes to the overall operation.
- Describe the unique features of the trapping practices in northern Cree communities. Research and report on how to manage a trapline.
- Research and report on the Aboriginal rights in the Constitution.

- Read the story *As Long As the Rivers Flow* (Groundwood Books) by Cree author Larry Loyie, who tells the story of a summer spent with his extended family gathering resources and preparing for the winter ahead. The story ends with sadness when the children are taken to residential school. The book contains historic photos and information about residential schools.
- The creators of **Wapos Bay** were inspired by their family and community stories. What stories would you tell about your own family or community? (To get ideas you could invite elders, grandparents and other family members to tell you stories about their lives.) Students can use animation to tell the stories by creating storyboards. Go to <www.nfbkids.ca> and click on “Fun Stuff” for workshops on storyboards, using clay animation to create characters and tell a story.
- Generate questions to ask the series’ creators, Dennis and Melanie Jackson. See *the Wapos Bay Background Information guide for more information about Dennis and Melanie Jackson*.
- Discuss the effectiveness of animation in telling stories. What makes it appealing? Generate criteria for engaging stories. What makes a story worth listening to? What makes a story worth watching?

Create a storyboard for the events in this story. Use speech bubbles to include dialogue. A storyboard is a graphic organizer used by people who work with film and video to tell stories. The storyboard assists in planning and capturing the essential elements of each scene. Size 11 X 17 inch paper can be folded to create 8 frames for a storyboard.