



Bison Truths: LIVE Arts with Kevin Wesaquate and Nyle Miigizi Johnston

Strand: Visual Art
Grades: 6,7,8
Content: 45 minute broadcast + hands-on activity

Overview

Kevin and Nyle will explore indigenous stories and storytelling. Students will write their own stories and use them as the basis for a visual artwork that combines text, image and colour.

* Please see page 3 for a **Teacher Guided Post-Broadcast Activity**. This activity will give students the opportunity to apply what they have learned during the broadcast.

Artist Bios

Kevin Wesaquate is from the Piapot First Nations located in Treaty 4 Territory. Kevin is employed as the Aboriginal Arts Leader at SCYAP (Saskatoon Youth Community Arts Programming) and as Artist/Writer-in-Residence at Saskatoon Polytechnic. He is the founder and Artistic Director of the Indigenous Poetry Society, and has a diverse artistic practice that includes writing, painting and performance.

Nyle Miigizi Johnston

Nanaboozhoo. Wiishkoonhseh Miigizi Nini. Maemaegwissenhsag N'Doodem. Neyashiingnigming N'Doonjiibaa. My name is Whistling Eagle Man. I am from The Little People Clan of The Chippewas of Nawash First Nations in Ontario. Sources of inspiration in my work include my apprenticeships with Storytellers, woodland painters and the traditions of my Anishinaabe culture. As an artist, co-founder and Master Artist at Inkigenous Tattoo & Art Studio in Toronto, I want to spread the medicine encompassed in Anishinaabe worldview, stories and imagery.

In a time of reconciliation, it is important to share the Indigenous legacy of stories and teachings about love, kindness, fairness and care for Mother Earth. We each have a responsibility to share our gifts, and I have the gift of being a Storyteller and a Visual Narrator.

Curriculum Aims & Goals

Creative/Productive:

Students will experiment with storytelling and how text can be used to create visual artwork.

Critical/Responsive:

Students will respond to indigenous modes of storytelling by writing their own stories.

Cultural/Historical:

Kevin and Nyle will share stories from their own cultures and perspectives.

Saskatchewan Curriculum Outcomes

[CP6.11](#)

Investigate and use various visual art forms, images, and art-making processes to express ideas about identity.

[CH6.2](#)

Identify ways that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit artists express cultural identity in contemporary work.

[CP7.12](#)

Use image-making skills, tools, techniques, and problem-solving abilities in a variety of visual art media.

[CP8.12](#)

Solve visual art problems using a variety of processes and media.

[CH8.4](#)

Examine and respond to the work of artists who incorporate more than one art form in their work (e.g., combining poetry and music).

Broadcast Program (45 min)

Artist Intro/ video bios
On-air Activity 1
Storytelling Part 1
On-air Activity 2
Storytelling Part 2
On-air Activity
Artist Demonstration of visual art activity
Wrap up and questions

Resources required during broadcast:

- Students will need paper and pencil during the broadcast.

Post-Broadcast Teacher Guided Activity (60-90 minutes)

1. Write the story/poem

Students will begin by writing a story or poem, drawing on their own experiences or memories.

- a. Invite students to choose four landmarks, places or people that are important to them, one for each of the four directions.
- b. For each place or person, students should select a wish, dream or memory that is, for them, related this location or individual. Invite student to write a few sentences for each of these on their loose leaf or scrap paper. Remind students that it is important to be respectful as young writers and that, if they are naming people, they should first names only and/or use titles like friend, brother, sister, cousin, mother father, etc.
- c. Help students proofread or edit their story or poem.

2. Draw the bison outline on art paper

Give each student a photocopy of the bison image or project it so everyone can see. Invite students to draw the outline of the bison in pencil and then retrace with a sharpie/permanent marker.

3. Add the story or poem to the artwork

Invite students to add their story or poem to the artwork. This may be done with a pencil and later traced over with the sharpie/ permanent marker. More confident drawers may wish to write the text directly with permanent marker.

4. Add colour

The last step is to add colour using watercolour paints.

Materials and Resources

- Watercolour paints and brushes
- Containers of water to rinse brushes
- Paper towels for spills
- SHARPIE or waterproof/permanent marker, 1 per student
- Heavy art paper or cardstock, 8.5 x 11" or larger, 1sheet per student
- Pencil and eraser, 1 per student
- Looseleaf or scrap paper
- Photocopies or projection of bison image for students to refer to while drawing (the image can be found on page 4)

