



# Treaty 6 Education



## Métis Dance: A Cultural Identity



*Métis Family Dancers and Jiggers, Edmonton*

### Big Ideas & Enduring Understandings:

- ❖ Dance keeps culture alive.
- ❖ Dance reflects identity.

**Grade 6**

**Arts Education  
Dance**

## Desired Results

### Stage One — What do we want them to learn?

#### Outcomes & Indicators:

##### Arts Education 6:

CP6.2 Investigate and manipulate elements of dance and principles of composition including repetition and contrast.

CH6.2 Investigate how personal, cultural, or regional identity may be reflected in arts expressions.

CR6.2 Create personal responses to a variety of arts expressions (e.g., respond to music using dance, visual art in response to dance)

-see Arts Ed 6 Curriculum guide for accompanying indicators

#### Big Ideas & Understandings:

Dance keeps culture alive.

Dance reflects identity.

#### Essential Questions:

1. How does dance contribute to identity specifically as a Métis person, and/or as a Canadian?
2. How is identity defined through dance (in both main stream and subcultures)?

#### Knowledge:

- There is a form that includes both repetition and contrast in the elements of dance, specifically of Aboriginal peoples.
- Many ways can be used to represent ideas in dance or movement through composition.
- Métis culture is reflected in their dance.

#### Do:

- Identify pattern repetition and contrast elements in Métis jigging.
- Analyze dance composition and identify the contrasting sections of dance steps by viewing Métis jigging.
- Critique a Métis dance composition on video/DVD or live performance.
- Choreograph a dance composition to show pattern repetition and contrast.

**Evidence of Understanding**  
**Stage Two** – How will we determine what they know?

**Assessment:**

Summative	Formative
<p><b><i>Performance Task</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct research about Métis dances from the materials on</li> <li>• Choose a piece of sample of Métis dance and identify how the steps change when the music changes.</li> <li>• In a jigging competition look for a main 32 beat pattern that alternates with a new 32 beat pattern, always returning to the basic core between varying sections.</li> <li>• Choreograph a dance composition, using repetition and contrast, to reflect your cultural identity.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Pre-Assessment</i></b></p> <p>Prior knowledge: discussion and role play about Métis history and culture.</p> <p>How many styles of dance can the group identify? (Hip Hop, Powwow, social, African, Salsa, etc.) What do they think the dance says about identity as a culture?</p> <p><b><i>On-going assessments of process</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research and brainstorm names of famous Métis dancers and fiddlers – both local and beyond.</li> <li>• Identify adaptations from traditional Métis dance and music that can be found in the mainstream culture.</li> <li>• Inquiry: why is Métis dance and fiddling important as a symbol of Canada?</li> </ul> <p>*Note: go to:  <a href="https://canadianaboriginalresources.wikispaces.com/Dance-Metis+Jigging">https://canadianaboriginalresources.wikispaces.com/Dance-Metis+Jigging</a>            *On this web page please click on the first link called: “<b>Metis Dances for Instruction</b> collected by Marilyn Richardson (pdf file). This will contain <b>13 video clips with music and dancers to demonstrate the jigging steps for you.</b>”</p> <p>Learn about Métis dancing, jigging and fiddling. There are videos, links and research information designed to help teachers prepare their lesson.</p> <p>Use the rubric “assessing responses to arts expression” or the rubric for “assessing the creative process” found in the Arts Ed curriculum.</p>

## Stage Three – The Learning Plan

### Métis Identity:

Métis identity and historical context provides for a deeper understanding on the unit focus of dance. As a class, discuss the following words to determine their prior knowledge about Métis people:

Freedom  
Liberty  
Voyageurs  
Interpreters  
Harmony  
Michif  
Confederation  
Nation  
Equality  
Infinity  
Sashes

Teacher and student resources: <http://www.fnmr.gov.sk.ca/community/metis-history>  
<http://www.metismuseum.ca/>

#### Role Play:

Divide the students into small groups and ask them to choose 3 to 4 of the words on the previous list. As a group, determine how do these words apply to the Métis people and their history. Students use role play to create short scenes that illustrate the selected words in a historical context.

#### Connection to Métis artists:

Don Freed, singer, song writer <http://www.myspace.com/donfreed>

Christi Belacourt, visual artist, naturalist, healing plants <http://www.belcourt.net/>

Andrea Menard, actor, writer, <http://www.andreamenard.com/index.html>

### Métis Dancing: Pattern and Contrasts:

#### Lesson 1

1. Watch video clip on internet

<https://canadianaboriginalresources.wikispaces.com/file/view/Metis+Dances+for+Instruction+collected+by+Marilyn+Richardson+Oct.+2%2C+2011.pdf>

(this is a site for teachers to use as a resource, it is not designed for student use.)

or use the DVD called “**Steps in Time**” available from the Gabriel Dumont Institute in Saskatoon.

2. Answer the following questions:

1. When does the music change?
2. Do the dance steps change at the same time?
3. Do you see a pattern in the music and the dancing?

4. Which performer taught you the steps clearly?
5. What was your preferred dancer to win this competition?
6. How is the Métis fiddle tuned and played differently than traditional violin technique?

View:

**To see several video samples of the Broom Dance-**Go to video clip number #4 called “Maple Sugar” or clip #6 or #7 on the above wikispaces pdf file off the home page in the Dance-Metis Jigging page.

Note: watch until several young girls have performed. They show the dance slowly and more precisely.

3. Practise the main steps that goes between all fancy steps. Use your hands on the desk and with a light tapping repeat the rhythms heard.

### **Dance Pattern A :**

R L R brush, L R L brush (keep repeating).

The word “brush” simulates the kick, which is a heel forward brushing movement.

4. First Fancy Step:

### **Dance Pattern B:**

Practise the motion of the broom dance. Beginners start with scarves or plastic bags until you are ready to advance to brooms.

Students stand by their desk with room to kick the leg forward. Hold a scarf or plastic bag in hand. Raise one leg. Pass the scarf under the raised leg from the outside of the body, in and under the leg. Then take the scarf in the L hand, passing the L hand over the thigh and under that same (L) leg. Put the scarf in the R hand. Go over and out around the thigh and repeat. See the Métisfest video for visual representation. The scarf passes around the leg in a figure 8 motion.

## **Lesson 2**

1. Watch the step dancing DVD from “Steps in Time”. Focus on the jigging step. Students may remain seated and do the steps while in a sitting position at their desks as they begin to understand the patterns and rhythms.

2. Practise the scarf movement of the figure 8 from Lesson one #3, each student standing by the desk. Ensure they have enough room to kick forward. This step down does not travel it is done in one spot and uses a defined space at this level.

3. Practise the Broom dance with the scarf. When proficient with passing the scarf (or plastic bag) quickly, students will be ready to move to switch to a broom or use a floor hockey stick in the gym. *Safety tip:* keep the broom or the hockey stick blade continually on the floor as an anchor. It does not raise off the floor in this dance.

4. Practise the basic step with the video:

- first using hands on the desk top (see #2 above)
- next using feet, but student are seated either in the seat of the desk using the floor for feet, or on the top of the desk using the seat of the chair for feet.
- use counting to total 4 beat, either  
1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ or

R L R kick/ L R L kick/ R L R kick/ L R L kick/

Tip: the kick is rather a heel swish forward as seen on the video.

### Lesson 3

#### **Prepare Your Steps in the Classroom** (before going to the gym or larger space)

1. Listen to the jigging music. Raise your hand when the music changes, indicating a new step will be introduced. Raise your hand again when the music changes. This indicates that the basic step will return.
2. Discuss the pattern of the music ABABABA if students are doing only the basic jigging step and the broom dance step. Have students stand when they hear the music change. Then sit down at the next change of the music. This will take practise using either hand raising or alternate standing and sitting.

#### **Overall Pattern of a piece of jigging music:**

- the music is organized into sections
- usually the music changes noticeably every 16 or 32 bars
- select music that indicates “jig or reel” in the title

Look at different steps and then alternated the new step with the basic steps.

Other **fancy steps to alternate with the basic step include:** the broom step, slalom jumps, Russian kicks, side to side like a pendulum, moonwalks, or any other step that can be fit into 4 beats. (see “Steps in Time” DVD for sample demonstrations.)

#### **A. Basic pattern: how to do it**

1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/

or (same thing written another way)

R L R kick/ L R L kick/ R L R kick/ L R L kick

#### **B. Broom step: how to do it**

- all kicks as you move your hands in a figure 8 holding a broom handle.
- this is very energetic and needs to be followed by a slower step

**To plan the pattern for a full piece of jigging music: Students may create their own alternate pattern at any time. All students and teacher/leader do the basic steps and then alternate with the fancy step.** Here is only one example:

The form of the following dance is **A-B-A-C-A-D-A**

**A.** Basic pattern

1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ or  
R L R kick/ L R L kick/ R L R kick/ L R L kick

**B. Pendulum-** step, kick to the side, step, kick to the side/

**A. Basic pattern**

1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ or  
R L R kick/ L R L kick/ R L R kick/ L R L kick

**C. Your choice of:**

- pattern B or
- pattern C again or
- find a line on the floor or use a broom stick and counting 1, 2, 3, 4, use Pattern A (1, 2, 3, kick/ ) in order to travel around the broom
- or zig-zag step over the broom stick, back and forth any way you like, keeping the beat 1, 2, 3, 4

**A. Basic pattern**

1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ or  
R L R kick/ L R L kick/ R L R kick/ L R L kick

**D. Broom step**

- all kicks as you move your hands in a figure 8 holding a broom handle or floor hockey stick with blade constantly touching the floor.

**A. Basic pattern**      1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/ 1, 2, 3, kick/

## **Lesson 4**

**In the Gym or Large space for dancing:**

1. Students watch the DVD “**Steps in Time**” or “**Maple Sugar**” on the **Smartboard or LCD projector**.

2. Try the individual steps with the DVD or Smartboard or follow a leader/teacher to dance a pattern A- B- A-C-A-D-A-E-A-F-A .

3. There is much freedom in creating or doing their own steps in any section that is not the basic A section. There is no need for all students to do the same fancy steps in the alternating sections. However, all students should come back to the basic step when the music changes to the A section. Students will hear the change in the Métis jigging music.



## Sample Rubric for Assessing the Creative Process

This rubric may be adapted for use with those creative/productive outcomes that involve students in expression of ideas through creative processes in dance, drama, music, or visual art.

Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Thoroughly investigates, clearly identifies, and describes sources of ideas for own arts expressions.	Usually identifies and adequately describes sources of ideas for own arts expressions.	Sometimes identifies sources of ideas for own arts expressions.	Rarely identifies or considers sources of ideas for own arts expressions.
Work is consistently well-developed and demonstrates age-appropriate skills, expressive techniques, and application of prior knowledge.	Work is usually well developed and attempts are made to improve skills and techniques.	Work is somewhat developed but skills and techniques are lacking in major areas.	Little or no regard for development or application of skills or techniques.
Consistently demonstrates effective problem-solving and decision-making abilities. Provides a range of alternatives or innovative solutions to artistic problems.	Moderately effective problem-solving abilities. Provides occasional solutions to artistic problems.	Minimally effective problem-solving abilities. Follows directions, but has difficulty solving many artistic problems.	Ineffective problem-solving abilities. Always relies on others to solve artistic problems.
Demonstrates confidence and risk taking during creative process. Is self-motivated and often works independently.	Needs some direction but can work independently when prompted.	Follows instruction but rarely works independently.	Has difficulty following instructions. Never works independently; needs constant support and guidance.
Demonstrates a variety of collaborative abilities to support group creative processes.	Contributes some ideas and works co-operatively with others on most occasions.	Rarely contributes ideas or solutions to the group process.	Disrupts or does not contribute to group process.
Always uses reflective thinking when engaged in the creative process.	Sometimes uses reflective thinking, with teacher prompting, when engaged in the creative process.	Rarely uses reflective thinking when engaged in the creative process.	Does not demonstrate reflective thinking during or after the creative process.



## Sample Rubric for Assessing Responses to Arts Expressions

This rubric may be adapted for use with critical/responsive and/or cultural/historical outcomes that involve students in responding to arts expressions and conducting inquiries into the artists' lives and the contexts in which the work was created.

Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Consistently demonstrates critical and creative thinking when responding to the work. Consistently applies prior knowledge to new situations. Uses age-appropriate arts terminology.	Often demonstrates critical and creative thinking when responding to the work. Often applies prior knowledge in new situations. Attempts to use age-appropriate arts terminology.	Occasionally demonstrates critical and creative thinking when responding to the work. Applies prior knowledge sporadically. Rarely uses arts terminology.	Demonstrates limited critical or creative thinking. Has difficulty applying prior knowledge. Does not use arts terminology.
Thoughtfully examines and describes the work using focused observation. Analysis and interpretations are insightful and supported by evidence in the work.	Adequately examines and describes important features of the work. Provides general analysis and provides reasonable interpretations of the work.	Examines and provides a general description of the work. Analyzes in a vague or limited way. Provides a simplistic interpretation.	Offers first impressions and vague descriptions of work. Does not focus attention on the work. Rarely contributes to analysis or interpretations.
Asks thoughtful and compelling questions in response to the work. Accesses multiple sources of information.	Often asks relevant questions in response to the work. Accesses several sources of information.	Sometimes asks questions in response to the work. Accesses a few sources of information.	Rarely asks questions in response to the work. Research is limited to one or two sources.



Sample of pattern and contrast in beadwork. Start in the centre. Change color on every row for six rows around the centre bead. Then use one color to do the centre loop on each of the six pedals. Every row added around that petal centre must be the same color for each row. Find my error in making this pattern.

