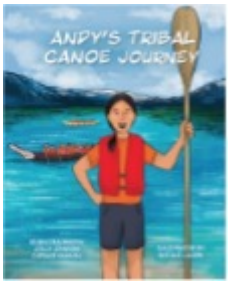
Andy's Tribal Journey

Lesson Plan



Author: Seabacola, Jorja and Cadence

Illustrator: Natalie Laurin

Grade: 3-8

"We only have one Earth. Let's take care of it. - Deb Haaland

Teacher Reflections:

Book Summary:

At the end of a rough school year, when Andy's Grandpa announces he'll be joining the Tribal Canoe Journey, he feels like he's being punished. In this book, we follow Andy as he prepares for and experiences the Tribal Journey alongside his canoe family for the first time. Through the physical and emotional challenges, Andy learns what it means to belong, about culture, and discovers the answer to the important question, "Who am I?".

Teacher's Notes:

Resources:

Andy's Tribal Journey

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Pre-Reading Questions:

1. What kinds of things do you learn at school? What kinds of things do you learn outside of school (with friends, family, on sports teams, in your community, etc.)? Do you think one is more important than the other?
2. When you introduce yourself to new people, what information do you include about yourself?
3. Have you ever had an experience that you started feeling unsure or upset about, and that you ended enjoying? Or, an experience that really changed how you think?
4. Read about the Tribal Canoe Journey and the inspiration for the book on p.70. Discuss what you think the book will be about.

Activities:

Activity 1: A 450 Year-Old Tree Into a Dugout Canoe (Teacher-Facilitated Group Discussion)
Watch a video of a massive, ocean-going dugout canoe being made from a 450 year old cedar by Champagne and Aishihik First Nations youth with the guidance of a master dugout boat builder. Discuss why is it special that these youth are helping to carve the canoe and the connection between the carvers and the tree they are creating the vessel from.

Lesson Plan

While Reading

Questions:

1. What is the trick question on the assignment Andy doesn't do?
2. How does Andy feel about joining the Tribal Canoe Journey at first?
3. Why does Evan introduce himself situating himself in his larger family and nation?
4. Why does Andy get pushed out of the canoe? What are his friends trying to teach him?
5. How were canoes used before cars?
6. What is protocol? What are some of the protocols practiced on and off the water during the Tribal Journey?
7. Re-read Andy's canoe log from Day 2 (p.37). What do you think about his reflections on success and culture? Why does the Elder think he is a warrior?
9. Why did Evan participate in the Tribal Canoe Journey this year?
8. How does Rick feel at the end of the Tribal Canoe Journey? What did the Journey mean to him and others?

Activities:

Activity 2: Culture & Protocol (Groups of 2-4)
Students will break off into groups of 2 and research elements of culture and/or protocol of their chosen nation or community to create an info sheet about it and then share back with the class.

Post-Reading

Questions:

1. How does everyone in the canoe family treat each other? Do you have some examples of this happening in the book?
2. Andy is able to tell Evan and Riley who they are to him - why do you think he is struggling so much to answer the question, "who am I?" for himself?
3. What do you think the purpose of the Tribal Journey is? (see totem pole p.53)
4. How did reading this book make you feel? What stood out to you? What do you think was the most important part?
5. Are there any opportunities or experiences in your culture/community that have a similar message or purpose to the canoe journey?

Activities:

Activity 3: "Who am I?" (Individual)

Students will imagine that they are filling in their own Canoe Log. After reading the story, ask them to reflect on, and journal on their own answers to the question, "Who am I?". Once finished, ask a few students to share their responses with the class, or with a partner.