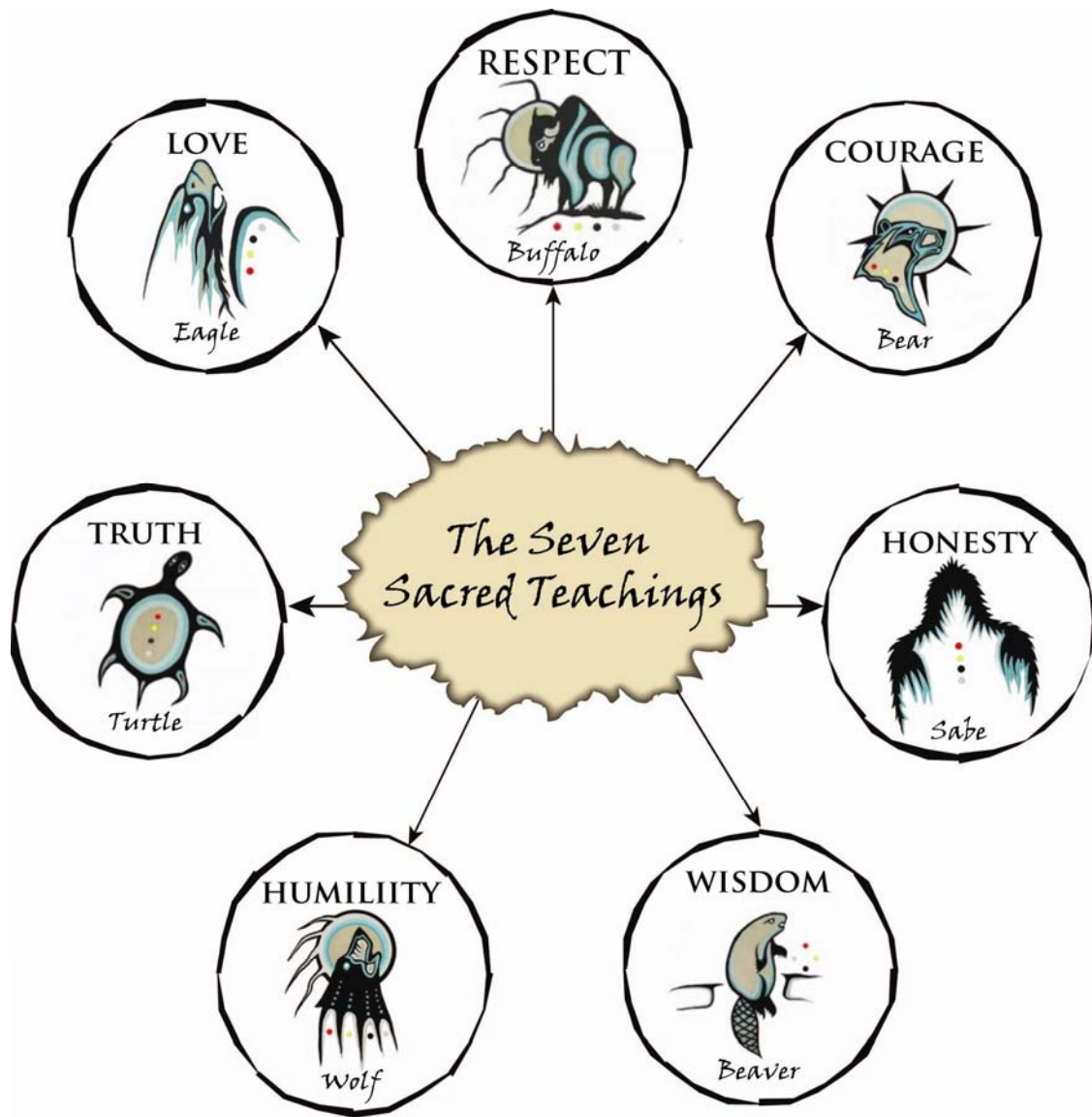


SHARING THE SEVEN SACRED TEACHINGS THROUGH PUPPETRY



© Rebecca Penner, 2010

Contents

Introduction	1
The Seven Sacred Teachings.....	3
Using Puppet Plays to Apply Learning.....	6
Plan the Puppet Play.....	6
Write the Script.....	8
Revisit and Refine the Script.....	8
Before the Performance	9
Plan the Puppets.....	10
After the Performance	12
 Sample Puppet Scripts	
Love	14
Respect.....	18
Courage	22
Honesty.....	26
Wisdom	30
Humility	35
Truth.....	38

Acknowledgements

This resource was developed through generous support from the Janice Thompson Memorial program that commemorates the goals Janice Thompson achieved as an educator. See www.curriculum.org for more details.

Cover artwork representing The Seven Sacred Teachings by Henry Guimond.

Introduction

Traditionally, First Nations cultures relied on oral story telling as the main means to pass on cultural information. *Sharing the Seven Sacred Teachings through Puppetry* helps students acquire more information about this oral tradition. This resource supports character education and can be used with English/Language, Social Studies, or Arts classes or as part of an interdisciplinary approach. It is designed to increase students' knowledge of the Seven Sacred Teachings and to help them share this knowledge with younger students through puppetry. Suggestions and tasks in this resource are meant to be flexible and can be adapted to allow for various types of participation by all students.

Key Learnings

History/Social Studies

- Demonstrate respect for other people's language, history, and culture;
- Describe the characteristics of Aboriginal communities before and after European contact.

English/Language

- Generate, gather, and organize ideas and information to create texts interrelating plot, setting, and character;
- Write effective, imaginative texts to engage and entertain;
- Use vocabulary and language conventions to present ideas and information logically and coherently in written work and revise written work independently and collaboratively.
- Develop effective communication skills;
- Communicate orally in a clear, coherent manner, using a structure and style appropriate to both the topic and the intended audience using different visual aids to support or enhance oral presentations.

Arts

- Create 2-D and 3-D artworks that demonstrate an understanding of the visual elements and principles of art and design and use that understanding as a means of communication;
- Safely use a variety of materials, tools, and techniques;
- Apply creativity to process drama and to develop drama works;
- Demonstrate effective communication skills, such as listening and speaking both in and out of role;
- Plan and rehearse presentations.

Glossary

Aboriginal Peoples: A term used in a general manner to refer to the descendents of the original inhabitants of North America that include First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. These separate groups have unique heritages, languages, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs.

First Nation(s): the original inhabitants of Canada, except the Inuit.

Inuit: Aboriginal peoples in northern Canada, living mainly in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, northern Quebec, and Labrador.

Métis: People of mixed First Nation and European ancestry. The Métis history and culture draws on diverse ancestral origins.

Elder: A man or woman whose wisdom about spirituality, culture, and life is recognized and affirmed by the community. Not all Elders are 'old.' The Aboriginal community and individuals will normally seek the advice and assistance of Elders in various areas of traditional, as well as contemporary, issues.

Sabe: (also known as kitch-sabe) a giant who walked among the people.

References

The Bison Hunt <http://www.saskschools.ca/~gregory/firstnations/bison.html>

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada www.ainc-inac.gc.ca

Powerful Symbols: Honouring the Animal Spirits

<http://www.powersource.com/gallery/objects/default.html>

The Sharing Circle: The 7 Sacred Teachings

http://www.thesharingcircle.com/sacred_teachings.html

The Turtle Lodge <http://www.theturtlelodge.org/sevenTeachings.html>

Wye School (Alberta) <http://www.wyeschool.ca/eteachers.php?teacher=997&page=4177>

The Seven Sacred Teachings

“The traditional concepts of respect and sharing that form the foundation of the Aboriginal way of life are built around the seven natural laws, or sacred teachings.” Each teaching honours one of the basic virtues intrinsic to a full and healthy life: love, respect, courage, honesty, wisdom, humility, and truth. Each of these Sacred Teachings is represented by a different animal to “underscore the point that all actions and decisions made by man are manifest on a physical plain.” The idea is that “the animal world taught man how to live close to the earth, and the connection that has been established between the animal world and that of man has instilled a respect for all life in those who follow the traditional Aboriginal way.” We can continue to learn many things from different animals and other people around us.

(The Sharing Circle: The 7 Sacred Teachings, 2009 www.thesharingcircle.com/sacred_teachings.html.)

The more the Sacred Teachings are taught and applied, the more natural they may become in all areas of life. The Seven Sacred Teachings provide practical and positive traits for use in everyday life. The teachings often overlap, are strongly linked, and can be constantly incorporated into everyday life. For example, helping an Elder by cleaning their home or spending time just talking with them are examples of both ‘respect’ and ‘love.’

There are slight variations in the Seven Teachings among First Nations’ peoples but each group uses them to show all individuals a good way to live in harmony on this earth. The Seven Sacred Teachings carry different levels of significance for different people. Some regularly follow the teachings and traditions as their belief system, while others know the teachings, agree with their ideas, and see them as good character building traits. Each individual decides how to apply these teachings in life and what they mean personally.

In small groups, students discuss the overview of the Seven Sacred Teachings and brainstorm their own interpretation of each Teaching and ways these Teachings can apply to real life. (Use p. 4 and 5 to guide their thinking.)

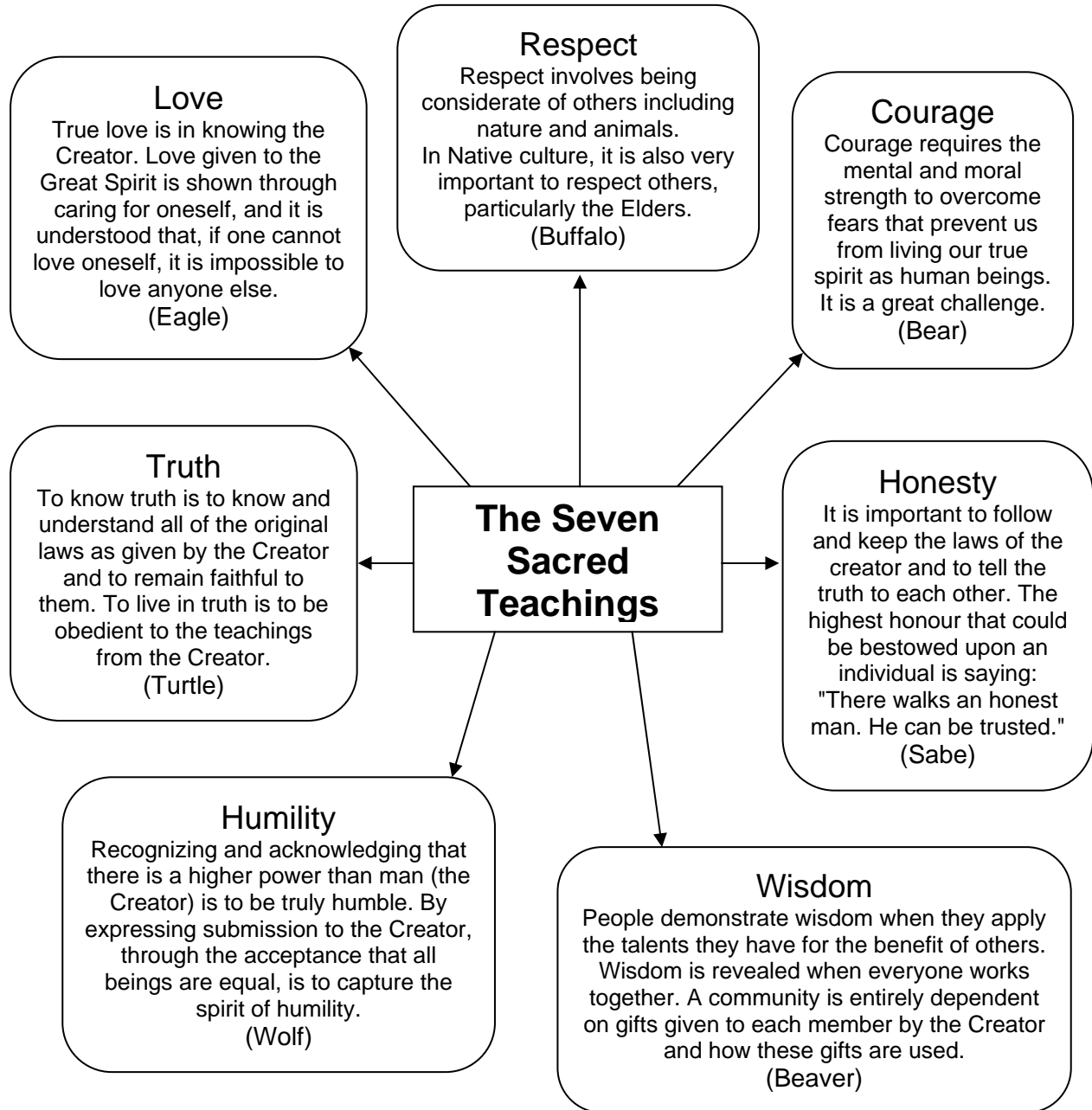
Pose the questions:

What is _____?

What are examples of this in everyday life?

In a class discussion, groups share their ideas and post their graphic organizers for reference.

The Seven Sacred Teachings

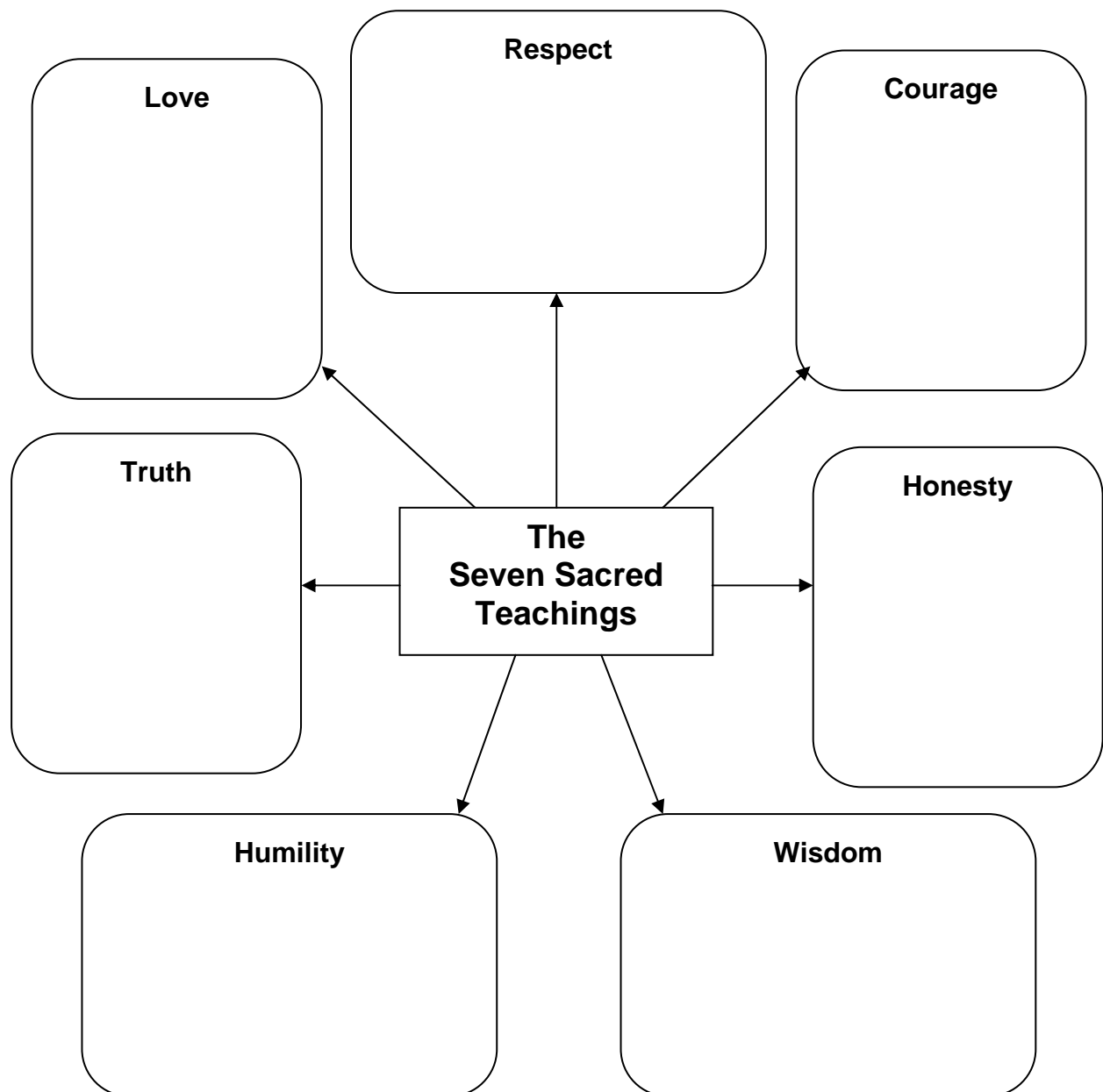


The 7 Sacred Teachings, 2009
http://www.thesharingcircle.com/sacred_teachings.html

The Seven Sacred Teachings

Individually or in small groups, define what you think each Sacred Teaching means and provide examples of what it looks like in everyday life.

Be prepared to share ideas.



Using Puppet Plays to Apply Learning

Students share their knowledge of the Seven Sacred Teachings by preparing and presenting puppet plays to younger students. They write their own scripts showing ways that the Seven Sacred Teachings could be applied in everyday life or adapt the sample scripts provided (pp. 14-40). They create puppets, props, and backgrounds.

After each performance students could answer questions from their audience about the Seven Sacred Teachings and/or the puppet performance. (See After the Performance p. 12.)

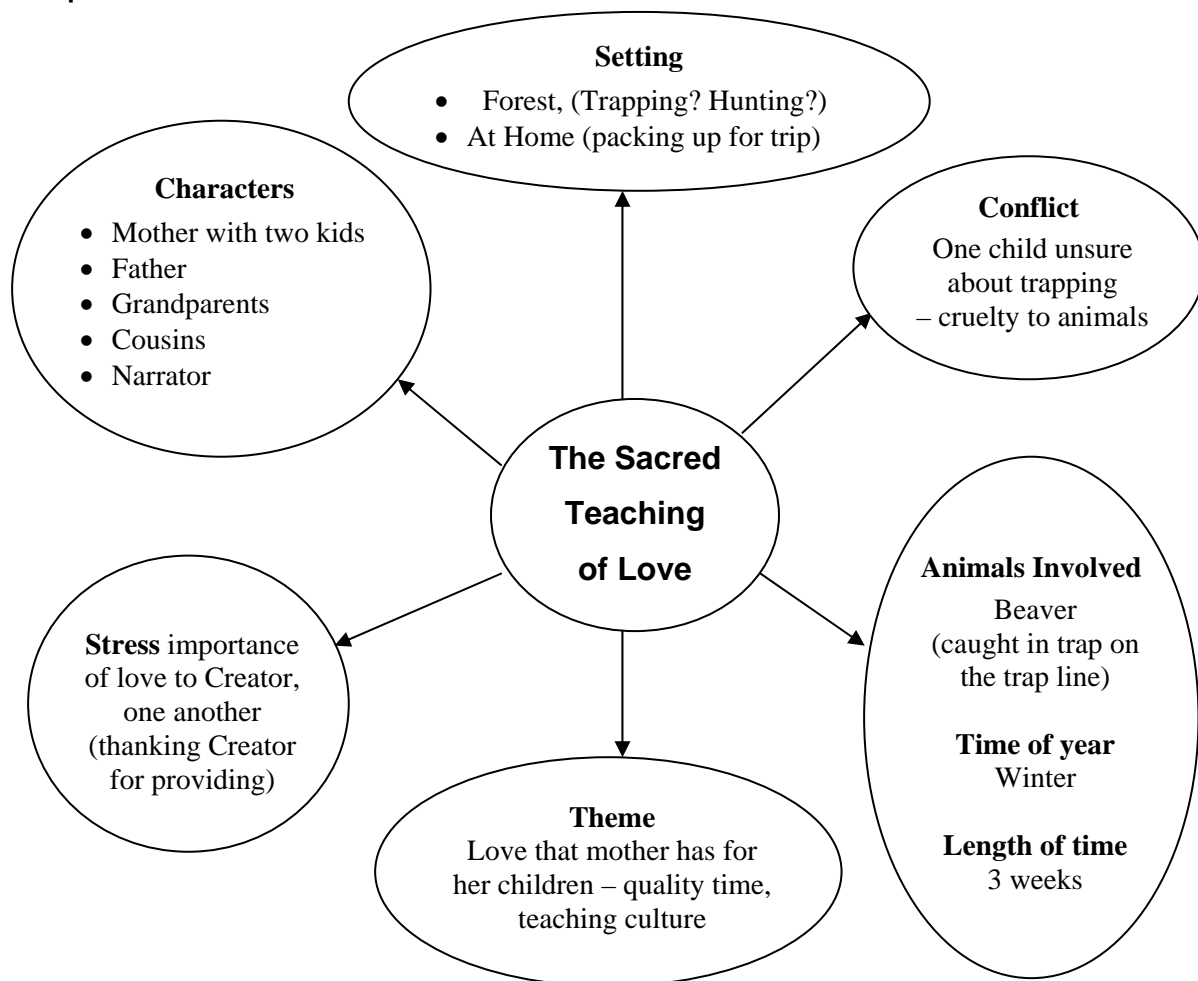
Plan the Puppet Play

Scripts provided (pp. 14-40) are just a framework and can be altered to best fit the intended audience and to best work with the number of puppeteers available.

Choose a Theme (Topic)

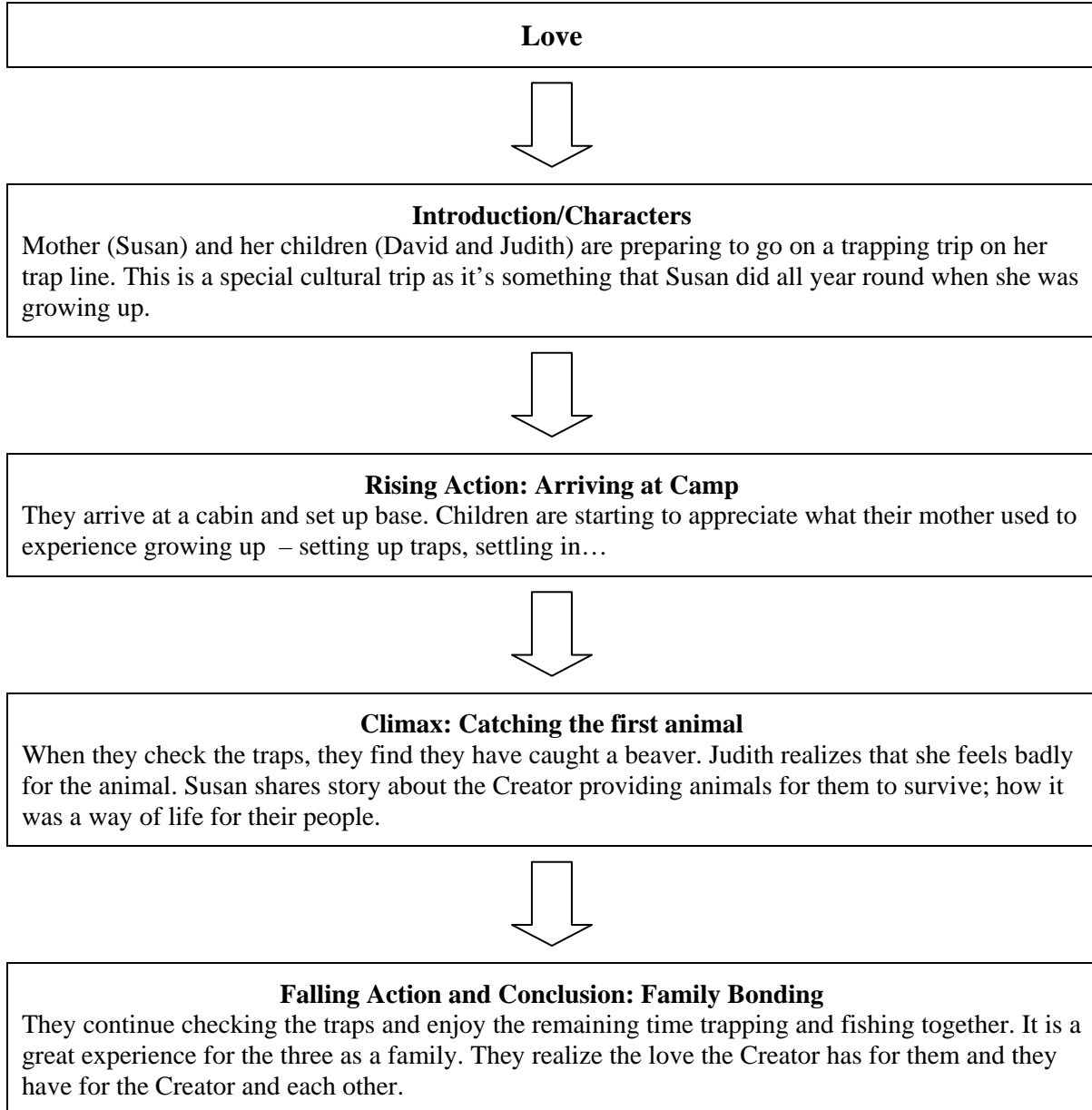
Working in small groups, students choose one of the Seven Sacred Teachings as the topic for their puppet play and use a graphic organizer to outline their big ideas.

Sample



Students organize their thoughts for developing the plot on a story map.

Sample



Write the Script

Use a simple story line. Keep the story simple and the dialogue for each puppet short and to the point to engage the audience.

Consider the audience. For whom will this play be performed? The audience determines the language and terms used and the length of the script.

Set the scene. The audience needs to know the details of the play, e.g., what time of day it is and where this story is taking place. This information helps the audience to visualize the scene. These things may need to be spoken right within the script to make it clear or you could add backdrops and/or large signs to provide some of this information.

Characters: For a 10-minute performance, 3-7 characters are usually sufficient to tell the story. Consider how each character's lines contribute to the story. Consider the 'voice' of each character and give each one his/her own way of speaking to make the characters more distinct and stand out from one another.

Sample

Script Outline Template

Scenario: Show love to the Creator and others

A mother and her two children are trapping together. The mother teaches the children how important it is to thank the Creator for all that is provided, including the things they hunt. There is also a focus on loving others.

Time of year: December, present day

Location: Just west of Thunder Bay, Ontario

Characters

Susan (mother)
David (son)
Judith (daughter)
Narrator

Props

- Three backpacks and a large shopping bag or sack
- Beaver puppet/stuffed animal
- Backdrops of a small log cabin with some snow and evergreen trees
- Two snow machines
- A trap

Revisit and Refine the Script

Small groups re-read and revise their scripts and exchange with another group. The groups make constructive suggestions for refining other draft scripts.

Before for Performance

When they have a final script, students focus on performance preparations and practice. Students decide on the best puppets to portray the characters.

They create the puppets as well as the props, backgrounds, and sound effects and practise their performances behind a puppet stage before performing them for their audience.

Note: When performing the play, it is helpful to highlight the script lines in different colours for each puppet. Students could pre-record their lines so they can focus on the operation of the puppet during the actual performance.

Suggestions

- Before you start, do some basic finger and arm stretches. (Your hands and arms may get tired when you are performing even just a 5-10 minute puppet show!)
- Try having your puppet say a few one-syllable words! (Hi, Hey!)
- Next, try some two syllable words (Hello, good-bye) (techniques – mouth half open, then all the way open)
- Try a full sentence (Hey, how are you? Where are you going? How is the weather?).
- Allow lots of time for rehearsals!
- Practise with mini-puppet shows (two puppets at a time) using these topics:
 - Conversation among two friends about completing their Science project.
 - A child, dreading going to the dentist, is talking with his/her mother.
 - One child just found \$50 on the sidewalk and tells another friend about it.
 - One child just got back from a trip to Hawaii and is telling his grandmother all about it.

Tips

- Treat the puppets with respect – as if they have feelings – this will make them seem more realistic.
- Always open the puppet's mouth when you are talking. Push out with the puppet mouth as you pronounce each syllable. When your puppet isn't talking, remember to keep its mouth closed (except for when making facial expressions that require an open mouth). Pretend you are going up a flight of stairs to enter the puppet stage with your puppet. When leaving, turn the puppet around and make him or her go back down the imaginary set of stairs.
- Face the puppet that is speaking/listening to you. Add non-verbal gestures and expression to show you are listening (nodding, shaking the head, mouth open when shocked, etc.).
- Once you are comfortable with basic movements, use arm rods, and other props to help to make your puppet "come alive!"

Plan the Puppets

Small groups brainstorm ideas for the most suitable type of puppets for their play. They create a materials list and plan the steps for creating the puppets.

Types of Puppets

Stick Puppets

The stick puppet is one of the most simple to make. The puppets are made by decorating card stock/cardboard shapes with paint, markers, or collage materials. The stick can be a chopstick or a drinking straw or a pencil taped to the back of the puppet.

Hand Puppets

A hand puppet is controlled by the hand inside the puppet. These puppets are most often flexible, made from fabric, possibly with some stuffing and attached decorations for eyes, nose, and so on. The mouth could be a decoration that does not open and close, or the thumb can be inserted in a separate pocket to allow the puppet to 'talk.' Simple hand puppets are usually not much larger than the hand itself.

Sock Puppet

A sock puppet is a simple hand puppet made from a sock. Most sock puppets have some fabric or plastic facial features added, such as eyes or a mouth. Some sock puppets may also have clothing and/or accessories, such as a hat. Sock puppets are controlled by putting a hand through the sock. Glove puppets are a variation of sock puppets. They allow for more movement as the thumb and small finger can act as arms. The un-costumed hand of the puppeteer is usually concealed from the audience.

Rod Puppets

This type of puppet requires one of the puppeteer's hands to be inside the puppet, controlling the head. The puppet's body hangs over most of the forearm of the puppeteer, and possibly extends further. Other parts of the puppet are controlled by rods operated by the puppeteer's free hand.

Paper Bag Puppets

These puppets can look like people, animals, or even creatures! The flap of the bag, made by the bottom fold, forms the mouth. "Found objects" such as material scraps, buttons, pipe cleaners, and yarn are added for features and costumes.

Finger Puppets

These small puppets are manipulated using only one finger inserted through the bottom of the puppet. They are made from soft materials, such as felt or fabric, with decorative material added for features and costumes.

Plan the Puppets

Group Members:

Date:

We chose: (*circle one*)

love

respect

wisdom

truth

honesty

humility

courage

Questions to Help Your Group get Started!

1. Where can you gather additional ideas about puppet making (e.g., library, specific websites, books)? Do some preliminary research and list websites, books, etc. that will provide suitable information.
2. What types of puppets will you use? (paper bag, sock, etc.)
3. What will your puppets look like? What interesting features will your puppets have? (Provide sketches)
4. What types of materials do you plan on using? Where might you obtain these materials?
5. How will you assemble the puppets?
6. How will you divide up the responsibilities in your work?
7. How are you going to test the puppet? Who will be your test audience?

After the Performance

Students might engage their audience in a discussion, using questions they prepared ahead. They should think about possible answers the audience might suggest.

Sample Questions

Puppet Script: Love

1. What was the theme of this puppet play?

Love – Loving the Creator and all the Creator gives to us, and loving one another as a family.

2. Why did the mother take her two children out to the trap line?

This was something that Susan had done all year round when she was a child. It was an educational experience for her to share with her children, as well as a cultural activity to help pass on her First Nations' heritage to her children.

Do you think Susan's children will want to go trapping again with her?
Explain why or why not.

Yes, I think they will want to go with her again. David said that this was the best trip ever. Judith was more hesitant at first, but later really enjoyed the trip, as well. Their mother had a great attitude about the trip and the children were able to experience something special to her.

3. What lessons did the children learn?

They learned:

- *the Creator loves them and provides the animals for them;*
- *more about their mother's love for them and that she provides for them because she cares about them;*
- *about the trapping process and to survive in the outdoors without home comforts;*
- *more about their own culture (first-hand) and the importance of family spending time together.*

4. Compare and Contrast David and Judith's reaction to trapping.

When they caught the first animal (the beaver) in the trap, Judith was hesitant for a moment to see an animal's life being taken. David shared with Judith that he was sad, too. However, he immediately saw that the animal was being provided by the Creator for them to eat. Judith later understood this.

5. Why is the Creator important in Aboriginal culture?

Many Aboriginal people believe that the Creator created them, and provides for them. They show love and respect to the Creator. The Seven Sacred Teachings are all linked to the Creator. The family showed love to the Creator by only catching what they needed and not wasting any animals.

6. What other ways do you think the Sacred Teaching of Love could be shown among Susan and her children in their home setting?

Susan's children could show their love by helping with household chores and responsibilities, e.g., cleaning their rooms, taking out the garbage, raking leaves, shovelling snow, washing dishes. Susan could show love by continuing to spend time with them; rewarding them for accomplishments.

Reflect on Creating a Puppet Play

Name:

Date:

Group:

Did you follow all instructions provided?	
Did you include your brainstorming, rough copy plans, edits, etc?	
Did you include accurate design elements where applicable? (line, shape and form, space, colour, texture, and value)	
Did you include accurate design principles where applicable? (movement)	
Does your project include communication of ideas, feelings, and understandings?	

Group Contributions

Explain what each of you did to contribute to the puppet play.

Group Member Name	Contribution

Scenario: Show love to the Creator and others

A mother and her two children are trapping together. The mother teaches the children how important it is to thank the Creator for all that is provided, including the things they hunt. There is also a focus on loving others.

Time of year: December, present day

Location: Just west of Thunder Bay, Ontario

Characters

Susan (mother)
David (son)
Judith (daughter)
Narrator

Props

- Three backpacks and a large shopping bag or sack
- Beaver puppet/stuffed animal
- Backdrops of a small log cabin with some snow and evergreen trees
- Two snow machines
- A trap

David enters excited and starts pacing back and forth.

David: I can hardly wait! We are going on the trap line! For three whole weeks too!

Susan enters.

Susan: Good morning, David! I see you are up nice and early. ...time to get some breakfast. We have a big day ahead of us.

David: I know, ma. I'm so happy that you're taking us to the trap line.

Susan: Yes, I want you two to learn about survival on the trap line, just like I did when I was your age. Is your sister up yet?

David: I don't know... Probably not, 'cause I heard her snoring a few minutes ago...

Susan: Oh dear... I'd better wake her up... David, are you all packed?

David: Yes.

Susan: Did you pack lots of warm clothes?

David: Sure, including four pairs of long johns.

Susan: Good. You'll need them. At least we will have snow machines. That is something that we never had when I was a child. We had to walk to check on each trap.

David: Do you think we're going to catch a lot of animals?

Susan: I hope so. Start eating your breakfast please and I'll go wake Judith up!

David: Ok, Mom.

Susan walks off the stage in the direction she came in, while David walks the other way to get his breakfast.

Narrator: Two hours later they arrive at the entry point of their trap line about three hours west of Thunder Bay. Then, they drive their two snow machines into the forest to reach their trapping cabin.

Susan, David, and Judith all enter together sitting on two snow machines with backpacks and luggage.

Susan: Well, here we are at our trapping cabin.

Judith: This is it Mom? It's so... so....

Susan: Wonderful?!

Judith: Uh, I was going to say 'small.'

Susan: This is actually luxury. When I was young, we stayed outside in only a canvas tent, even in the dead of winter, sometimes in -35 degree temperatures.

David: Wow! That is seriously cold. I'll take this little cabin any day!

Judith: Did you just come trapping for three weeks like we are?

Susan: No, we stayed on the trap lines all year round. That was our home. We relied on the food we caught to survive. Well, let's put our things away and get to work.

David: Alright, Mom.

All three of them walk off to the side towards the cabin.

Narrator: In the days that followed, Susan and her children set up the traps in the surrounding areas in the forest.

Susan enters.

Susan: Let's get going! ...time to check out our traps.

David and Judith enter.

David: May I drive a snow machine?

Susan: Yes, and Judith will drive the other one with me on the back of it.

David: Thanks, Mom!

*They drive off on the snow machines together.
All three of them dismount from their snow machines and walk over to one of the traps.*

Narrator: When they arrived at one of the traps, Susan dug it up from under the snow and ice to see if they had caught anything.

Susan is ahead of her children.

Susan: Oh, it looks like we caught a beaver in this trap!

David and Judith catch up to their Mom.

David: What Mom, what is it?

Susan: We caught a beaver.

Judith: Wow! Mom, a friend of mine at school thinks hunting is cruel. That's not true, is it?

Susan: No, dear it isn't. The Creator made us and loves us. The Creator provides animals for us to eat, so we can survive off the land. We need to thank the Creator for everything He gives to us and that includes the things that we catch when we hunt.

David: I get it. Judith, don't you see? We need to eat and we are only catching enough to live off.

Judith: I suppose you're right. I always thought that was okay, but then I started to wonder.

Susan: I love you both very much and, as your mother, I want to provide for you. Sometimes, it's difficult being a single mother. But, I want you to learn about our culture and it includes the trap line.

David: Thanks, Mom. We want to learn about trapping.

Judith: Thanks for bringing us.

Susan: You're welcome. It may take time to get used to trapping and that's okay. I'll get the beaver out of the trap and we can check out the other traps in a few minutes. Next week we'll do some ice fishing.

All three exit.

Narrator: Over the next three weeks, Susan and her children caught two beavers, four foxes, a marten, six rabbits, and ten fish when ice fishing. They learned to enjoy a more simplistic way of life and enjoyed one another's company without the everyday pressures and modern distractions of home. They also learned just to catch only what they needed to live off, as this was not being wasteful and it also showed love to the Creator, too. As they packed up to go home, the children started to realize they were actually going to miss this place!

All three enter.

David: This was the best trip ever! I didn't even miss my game system that much!

Judith: This was really good and the food was delicious. It's good to eat what we have hunted ourselves.

Susan: You two had such a great attitude. I am so happy that you can learn about part of your culture. The trap line is something that your ancestors did for many years. It's part of who we are and I'm glad you two respect that. We can have new traditions and enjoy some new things too. For instance, why don't we go get some pizza?!

David: Sure!

Judith: Hawaiian?

Susan: You bet.

Judith: Sounds good.

All three exit off to one side.

Scenario: Respect for all life

A Mooshum (grandfather) takes his three young grandchildren out to catch sturgeon to make snowshoes. He tells of another animal that symbolizes respect: the bison/buffalo. The Mooshum shares how the buffalo/bison used to be in the West: it was a very important animal for tribes as it provided shelter, food, utensils and more. He also shares the way he shows respect by offering up tobacco. This Elder shares the life lesson of how important it is to respect one another and for the youth to show respect to their Elders.

Mooshum Is a First Nation's term used for grandfather. It is still commonly used by children today.

Kokum is a First Nation's term used for grandmother.

Medicine Ball In this play, it refers to a ball of buffalo hair. Such a ball, sometimes two inches or more in diameter, was a great find.

Time of year: June, present day

Location: At a fictitious river in Manitoba

Characters

John (Mooshum)
Lois (granddaughter)
Karen (granddaughter)
Michael (grandson)
Narrator

Props

- Large car with windows cut out for puppet heads
- Large picture/drawing/stuffed animal of sturgeon fish and a bison/buffalo
- A pair of snowshoes and 4 fishing poles
- Backdrop of a river, trees, rocks, sky, sun, ...
- Backpacks (1 or 2 to carry the fishing gear and lunches)
- Sound effects: music and/or sound during transitions (e.g., driving in the car, going off for lunch)

*All four puppets enter in their car
(driving along from one side of stage to the other).*

Karen: Mooshum, are we here? Are we here? Are we here?

John: Well, I think so. I just saw the sign for Smooth River, Manitoba.

Lois: Yippee!!

Michael: Sturgeons, here we come!

Karen: And this time I bet I'll get the backbone out of the sturgeon first.

Michael: We'll just see about that.

Narrator: Every year, the children's grandfather challenged them to see who could get the spine of the sturgeon out. They would use this to make the snowshoes. It was a real challenge to see who could pull it out first!

*Car drives off the side of the stage.
All four puppets enter excitedly from that side
with fishing poles and backpacks.*

John: Well, let's get fishing!

Everyone: Yes!

*All of the puppets walk off the stage and back onto the stage again.
Then, they hold up their fishing rods and cast for sturgeon.
All four are standing together holding their fishing rods.*

Lois: I think I got a bite... Oh, it's nothing...

John: It will take some time and patience, while we're waiting for a catch. Do you remember the lesson I told you last year about fishing for sturgeon?

Michael: Was it to do it with respect?

John: Yes, it was.

Karen: Oh, yes. You told us that when we catch sturgeon, we need to respect them and to thank the Creator by offering tobacco to thank Him for providing us with the sturgeon.

John: That's right. You have good memories.

Lois: Why tobacco, Moshum?

John: Good question. We offer tobacco because it is a very sacred object and it shows our appreciation for his providing for us. There is another animal that also provides a good example of how First Nation peoples show respect.

Michael: What is it, Moshum?

Karen: Is it a moose?

John: The moose is also a good animal, but the one I was thinking of is the bison or buffalo that the plains Natives used to hunt.

Lois: Oh. Why is the bison important?

John: Well, the bison used to provide our people with many different things. Do you know some things it provided for them?

Michael: What about food? I like buffalo meat. I tried it once and it was good!

John: Yes, definitely, meat was one thing. It could be roasted or even boiled and could also be made into things like sausages or jerky. What else?

Karen: How about warmth from the fur?

John: Very good, Karen! Yes, people used the hides to make all sorts of things such as blankets, gloves, sweat lodge covers, membranes for drum heads, and, of course, clothing. They used much more than just the meat and fur as they didn't like to waste anything.

Lois: What about the bones, Moshum?

John: Very good, Lois! They used the bones for arrowheads, sled runners, and knives. But, they used even more than just these things!

Karen: Really? What else did they use from the bison?

John: So much more! They used the teeth for necklaces, the sinew (muscles) for webbing for snowshoes. They also used the horns for horns, cups, and containers for holding tobacco.

Michael: Wow! What else, Moshum? This is cool!

John: They even used the hair for medicine balls and pillow stuffing.

Karen: Interesting! I can't imagine having a pillow filled with bison hair!

John: There were so many other uses. They used the bladder for water containers and pouches. Even the dung was used for campfires and making smoke signals.

Lois: You sure weren't joking when you said they made use of everything!

John: Yes, the Native peoples sure showed respect to the bison and the Creator by making good use of all parts of the animals they killed. They didn't just kill for one part and waste the rest of the animal.

Michael: So, we can show respect to the sturgeon and the bison and to the Creator! Can we show respect to all animals in this way, Moshum?

John: We certainly can. But, even more than just that, we can also show respect to one another.

Karen: How?

John: Well, you seem to know that already. You show respect to me by listening to me and following my directions when we are out here fishing. You follow my safety rules and you come when I say to come. That is showing respect to me, as your Elder, and as a person.

Lois: Oh, I see...

Michael: Hey! Karen, your line is moving.

Karen: Ah! It is! It is!! I think I have one!!!

Moshum moves in closer to help Karen and, together, they lift it up. (At this point, attach a picture of a large sturgeon to her fishing rod and Moshum and Karen can reel it in together.)

Michael: Yeah!! You got one.

Lois: Well done!

John: I think this calls for a break. We'll continue after we have enjoyed some lunch. Your Kokum has prepared some delicious tuna sandwiches for us to have today.

Karen: Yum. I love tuna sandwiches!

All four puppets exit of stage carrying the first fish of the day.

Narrator: The children and their Moshum had a wonderful day fishing for sturgeon. They ended up bringing in a total of five sturgeon. They all got to try to take out the spine. With Moshum's help, they each were able to remove a backbone. Later, their Moshum would make each of them a pair of snowshoes out of the sturgeon backbone. That day, the children learned some great lessons about respect for nature and for one another.

Scenario: Being courageous in difficult times

A father is afraid of the uncertainty of moving his family to another town. One of his children just learned about courage in school. He tells his father the story about a bear protecting her cubs from the wolves and the courage that the bear shows as she puts her own safety on the line to protect those she loves.

Time of year: July, present day

Location: Northern Manitoba and Northern Alberta

Characters

Dan (father)
Sarah (mother)
Brent (son)
Hayley (daughter)
Narrator

Props

- Backdrops: the inside of a living room; inside of a room with packing boxes; a forest and highway
- Backdrop or stuffed animals of bears and wolves

*Dan enters and starts pacing back and forth.
He is joined by Sarah who his holding their baby (Jane).
Suddenly, he calls out...*

Dan: Family meeting! Everyone please come to the living room!

Hayley enters quickly.

Dan: Hayley, we are just going to tell you some important information.

Sarah: Brent! Let's go! We're all waiting for you downstairs!

Brent slowly appears...

Brent: I just lost at the level I was playing on my gaming system.

Dan: Aw, sorry Brent. Well, there will be other games.

Brent: Yes, but I was soooo close.

Sarah: Listen up. Your father and I have something very important to tell you.

Dan: I have just been offered a job in a small town in Northern Alberta. We will be moving away from Manitoba.

Hayley: That's a pretty big move!

Brent: Does that mean we have to go to a new school?

Dan: Yes, it does, but I'm sure you will make lots of new friends.

Brent: ...What kind of job did you get there?

Dan: I'll be the Safety and Inspections Officer. It is a good, secure job and I'll be able to better provide for us as a family.

Hayley: I don't want to move...

Hayley runs out of the room.

Sarah: Wait Hayley! Come back!

Dan: It's okay, Sarah. We should let her go and have some time to think about this. It's really big news.

Sarah: You're right. Brent, do you have any questions?

Brent: Um, not right now. I don't really want to move, but I'm okay with it.

Dan: Oh, Brent, you will get your own room in our new place, so that is something exciting to look forward to!

Brent: Cool. I'm happy with that.

*Brent leaves and Dan and Sarah are left there.
Sarah is still holding baby Jane in her arms.*

Sarah: Just give Jane a few years and I'm sure she will have plenty of questions about everything.

Dan: Sarah, do you think we are doing the right thing by moving?

Sarah: Of course we are, Dan. There is no work for you here at the moment, and this is a great opportunity. The children will be fine. All of us will be fine.

Dan: I'm just concerned. It's difficult to know what it will be like once we get there.

Sarah: I know. Just give it time. You'll see.

Dan: I hope you're right. I'm going to start some of the packing.

*All three exit the stage.
(Dan goes one way, Sarah and Jane go the other way).*

Dan enters once again and begins packing up boxes.

Narrator: Dan begins packing up boxes. The more he packs, the more worried he becomes. He really wants what is best for his family. He can't help but be afraid of the uncertainty of moving to a new place.

Brent enters.

Brent: Hi, Dad.

Dan: Oh hi, Brent.

Brent: Can I talk to you for a minute?

Dan: Of course.

Brent: I couldn't help but overhear you telling Mom that you are worried a bit about us. I remembered one of the Sacred Teachings we were taught at school.

Dan: Oh, which one was that?

Brent: Bravery or courage.

Dan: Yes, that certainly is one I could use more of right now.

Brent: When our teacher went over that Teaching with us, she told us the story of a mother bear protecting her cubs. The mother bear put her own safety on the line for her children. She protected them against dangerous animals like wolves or other predators that might want to attack her cubs.

While Brent is telling the story, the backdrop or illustrations of the bear with cubs and the wolves trying to attack could be displayed – possibly off to the side of the stage.

Dan: Yes, that is what a mother bear does for sure.

Brent: I think you are protecting us the same way.

Dan: You do?

Brent: Yes, I do Dad. You know that we can have a better life as a family in this new town. You are willing to make the move for us and face uncertainty.

Dan: Thanks, Brent. This is a good example and I appreciate hearing it from you. How is Hayley doing?

Brent: She's okay. I actually told her the same story and I think she feels okay now.

Dan: What a good older brother you are.

Brent: Thanks. Now, when are you going to be finished in here?

Dan: Ah, not for a while... Do you see this mess? ... *(smile... and pause)*... Why do you ask?

Brent: I need someone to shoot some hoops with me!

Dan looks around the messy room for a few seconds...

Dan: Well... I could spare about twenty minutes and by then it will be dinnertime anyhow... Sure, why not?

Brent: I've been practising, so I'm sorry if I beat you...

Dan: That sounds like a challenge!

Brent: You're quick!

Dan: I'll take it! Let's go!

Brent and Dave exit the stage together.

Hayley enters and looks around.

Hayley: I need to be brave. I bet those bear cubs try to be brave, too. I need to be brave. That's what I'll do, no matter what.

Hayley nods her head and smiles then exits off the stage.

Narrator: Three weeks later, Dan and his family are all packed and ready for the long drive to Alberta! By now, they are excited about starting a new life in a new town. They see it as a chance to meet new people. They won't have to forget their old friends. There is always the Internet and telephone for them to stay in touch. Plus, they will be going back to visit during holidays.

*All the family enters and gets into the family car
(heads peering out of windows). Before driving off...*

Dan: Okay, everyone buckle up!

Sarah: Is everyone ready to drive to Alberta?

Everyone together: Yes!

Dan: Alright then, let's go! Alberta, here we come!

*Car drives off from one side of the stage to the other.
(Have puppets talking, laughing, muffled tones as the car drives off
– add a car horn beeping and driving sound effects, too.)*

Scenario: Being honest with others

Tim repeatedly gets into trouble at home and with his friends by lying. His friend, Larry, tells him about something that his father told him – how he should be honest and careful with his things. This included being honest to the Creator. The two friends are walking outside together when they come across a wolf in the forest. They tell an Elder about it and the elder has important information about wolves and how loyal and honest they are to the other wolves in their pack.

Time of year: January, present day

Location: In the countryside in Labrador

Characters

Larry
Tim
Diana (an Elder)
Narrator

Props

- Wolf (puppet/stuffed animal or drawing)
- Backdrops of a forest (possibly snow on the trees and ground) and a living room

Narrator: It is January in Labrador. Larry and his friend, Tim, are walking home from school feeling the cold winter wind tugging against their coats.

Larry and Tim enter together and walk together.

Larry: Wow, Tim. Is the wind ever strong today!

Tim: Sure is. I feel the wind going right through my jacket. Let's walk faster.

Larry: Okay...

*Larry and Tim quicken the pace
(off one end of the stage, then turn around and head the other way
to continue walking).*

Tim: Larry, did I tell you that I caught ten caribou on the weekend with my dad?

Larry: No, you never mentioned that.

Tim: Yeah, well I did.

Larry: That's a great hunting trip. What did you do with all the meat, Tim?

Tim: Um... we gave most of it away.

Larry: Oh really, Tim? This wouldn't happen to one of your usual exaggerations would it now?

Tim: Nope... *(gulps)* I swear. It's the truth. I always tell the truth.

Larry: ... See, that's how I know you are lying. You don't always tell the truth. You're always making up things. Why, Tim? You have an interesting life without making up things.

Tim: Um...Well...

Tim and Larry keep walking right off the stage.

Narrator: Larry's speech about not being honest was not the only one Tim had received. Recently, Tim's parents had really been talking with him a lot about how important it was to be honest. He had been grounded a few times in the last week just because of the lies he had used to cover up the truth. That weekend, Tim and Larry are walking out in the forest exploring.

*Tim and Larry enter (the forest backdrop is displayed).
They whisper to one another.*

Tim: They say that if you're really quiet in the forest, you are likely to spot more wildlife.

Larry: That makes sense. Is that why we are whispering?

Tim: Yes. Stand very still.

*They wait five seconds and look around slowly...
They switch back to louder voices.*

Tim: Okay, never mind. It doesn't work.

Larry: Well, we didn't exactly give it much time. Hey Tim! Let's walk down this trail over to the right!

Tim: Okay.

*Wolf prop appears off in the distance and is looking right at them.
They begin to whisper once again.*

Tim: Larry, are you seeing what I am seeing?

Larry: You bet. Does he look like he's vicious?

Tim: No, but I don't think we should take any chances. Let's back away and get out of here.

Larry: I normally like wolves, but I agree that, right now, I am not too sure and think we had better get more distance between us.

Tim and Larry walk away off to the other side. The wolf looks out at the audience for a moment, howls once, and then runs away.

Narrator: Tim and Larry kept walking away for a short distance, then they broke out into a fast sprint. They stopped at their elderly friend and neighbour, Diana's house, who lived just around the corner from Larry's house. Larry called her Auntie Diana. She was known for her stories about animals and hunting, trapping, and fishing.

*Tim and Larry knock on a door
(knocking from behind stage).*

*Diana appears
(pretends to go to the side of the stage to open the door).*

Diana: Oh, hello Tim and Larry! How are you two doing today?

Larry: Hi Auntie Diana!

Tim: Hello. We're doing well, but you're not going to believe what we just saw!

Diana: Oh. Hmm... Well, try me. I want to know.

Tim: We saw a wolf out in the forest!

Diana: Wow. Beautiful. Did you see it too, Larry?

Larry: Yes, I did. We bolted as we weren't sure if it might attack us if we got too close.

Diana: You did the right thing boys. You just never know. It is good to keep your distance if you aren't sure. I just love wolves. I've always particularly liked the gray wolf.

Tim: Do you know some stories about wolves?

Diana: Well, as a matter of fact, I do. They are said to be teachers and pathfinders. They can find new ways to solve problems for others within their pack. They are also said to be very loyal to their family, but they still maintain some individualism.

Larry: Cool. Auntie Diana! What else did you learn?

Diana: Wolves are known for their strength and they also demonstrate humility. They will bow their heads to the leader wolf. They are also honest as they won't eat food they have hunted until they can share it with the pack. I think that must take some self-control and consideration for the others.

Tim: Yes. It would be so much easier for the wolf just to feast once it caught something. But, it is honest and shares. Well, I guess if a wolf can do it, I certainly should be able to.

Larry: What are you talking about Tim?

Tim: Being honest. This is an important teaching for me. I think I am probably more intelligent than a wolf, so if they can figure that Sacred Law out, then surely I can too.

Diana: Well, Tim, I think that is a good lesson you learned just now. It's wonderful to spend lots of time in the great outdoors as nature can be an excellent teacher!

Tim: Yes. I love being outside even in this -30 degree weather!

Larry: Me too, though I do like going inside to warm up from time to time!

Diana: That's a smart idea, too. Your body needs some time to warm up. Well, who would like some of my nice hot cedar tea and the special bannock I made today?

Larry: Sounds delicious! Did you put those raisins in the bannock like you sometimes do?

Diana: I sure did!

Larry: Great!

Narrator: Diana prepared the tasty snacks for Larry and Tim. Larry helped her get everything ready and Tim just sat by Diana's nice warm fireplace contemplating his newly made decision to be honest with everyone around him. "I can do it" he told himself. "It sure would make my life a lot easier and people would become more trusting of me as well. Why not? I've got good friends and family around to help me and why do I need to lie when I can tell cool factual stories like seeing that wolf today."

Diana and Larry bring out the snacks.

Diana: Let the feasting begin!

Tim: Thanks, Diana!

Larry: Mmmm, good. Thanks again, Auntie!

Diana: You're both most welcome.

Scenario: Wisdom in working together

The community is not working together. Each person is doing his or her own thing. One day, Charlie returns to the community and wants to see some changes. He convinces the townspeople that the building of a community is entirely dependent on making wise use of gifts given to each member by the Creator. A friend in the group makes a comparison to the beaver. The beaver uses his sharp teeth for cutting trees and branches to build his dams and lodges. By doing these things, he is using his gifts to his full potential. Charlie helps convince the community to start working as a team and to use their gifts to help the community succeed.

Time of year: Winter, present day

Location: A small town outside Prince Albert, Saskatchewan

Characters

Belinda (baker)
 Matt (mechanic)
 Helen (hairdresser)
 George (garage and gas attendant)
 Olivia
 Charlie
 Narrator

Props

- Winter scene showing storefronts, snow on cars, trees, snow falling
- Inside of a mechanic's garage (tools hanging up, a couple of trucks they are working on...)
- The backdrop for a hair salon with a 'Helen's Hair Salon' sign and arm rods for the hairdresser (optional, but would make it easier for her to work).
- Sound effects: radio playing background music in the garage and hair salon, doorbell or knock at door

Belinda enters and looks around...

Belinda: Oooooohhhh, it sure is a cold winter's day out here! I think the temperature reads -40 for today's forecast! Good thing I plugged my car in or I certainly wouldn't be going anywhere. Which reminds me... I'm due for an oil change... already...

Matt enters.

Matt: Good morning, Belinda! Cold enough for you?

Belinda: Yes, it sure is. That's good old Saskatchewan weather for you though. When some wind passes through, all of us on this flat province feel it.

Matt: It's not all that flat. *(pause)* Well, certain spots aren't.

Belinda: Hmm... Well, I'd better head to work. I've got lots of baking to do today for my bakery. I'll be by later though to drop off my car for an oil change at your garage.

Matt: Sounds good. See you then!

Belinda: Bye!

Belinda leaves.

Matt: I'll be sure to charge her double price. She doesn't know a thing about cars.

Olivia enters and walks in Matt's general direction.

Olivia: Oh, hello, Matt! How are you today?

Matt: Okay. I'm running late for work. I've got to run.

Olivia: Okay then... See you around!

Matt: Okay.

*Matt rushes on and Olivia exits the other way ...
Just before Matt exits the stage...*

Matt: I've never liked that Olivia.

*Matt exits. Seconds later, George enters from other side
(in the garage).*

George: Uhhh... I hate this job. I'm always working so hard and my boss hates me. He always gives me the worst jobs to do and I work extra hours for no more pay.

Matt enters from the opposite side that George entered from.

George: Good morning, boss!

Matt: Hi. That truck needs the oil changed and a new set of winter tires added.

George: Okay, I got it...

Matt and George continue working on cars.

Narrator: Matt and George worked hard all day and as usual, George stays late without extra pay.

Matt: Well, I'm off. Let's call it a day. See you at 6 a.m. tomorrow?

George: Yes, I'll be here.

Matt and George leave together.

A few seconds later, Helen enters (at her hair salon now).

Helen: Lots of customers keep coming in today! Must be the winter "blahs" that are causing people to want a new hair cut or something!

Olivia enters.

Olivia: Hi, Helen!

Helen: Olivia, come on in...

Olivia: Sorry I'm a few minutes late. The roads are all covered in snow, so I drove slow. It's my husband's truck I'm using since my car is at the garage for an oil change.

Helen: You left it there overnight?

Olivia: Just this once.

Helen: I see... Well, let's get started on your haircut, Olivia. Same as last visit?

Olivia: Yes, please...

Narrator: Helen works on Olivia's hair and gives her the usual trim. Helen listens to Olivia gossiping and complaining about everyone, but sort of tunes her out and wishes she would just stop talking.

Helen: Well, there you go!

Olivia: I love it. Thanks!

Helen: Great. See you again in two weeks then!

Olivia: Two weeks it is.

Olivia leaves.

Helen leaves to go home for the evening.

Narrator: One week later, a friend named Charlie moves back into the community. For several years, he has been living in a close-knit community in Yellowknife. Over the next few months, he starts spending more time with some of the locals such as Belinda, Matt, George, Olivia, and Helen. He leaves that they are not practising the Seven Teachings towards one another. They often pretend to like one another, but then say mean, hurtful things behind their backs. He sees the wonderful gifts each person has and wants them to use them for the good of the community and to help one another. He is determined to do something to help this community become better friends and to help them to live in wisdom among each other. He applies some of the wisdom he has learned in life to help them.

Charlie enters and starts pacing.

Charlie: I hope my friends arrive soon. I've cooked up some delicious moose meat stew. This was always a favourite among our family growing up in the North, along with caribou meat.

*Matt, George, Olivia, Helen, and Belinda all enter from the stage
(add doorbell sound effect or a knock at the door).*

Charlie: Hello everyone! Come on in!

All: *(at various different times)* Hi, Charlie!

Charlie: Hi there! I guess you are wondering why I wanted everyone to come over to-night!

Matt: Well, it was something about eating moose meat stew, wasn't it?

Charlie: Yes, there will be that, but first I just want to tell you about a concern I have.

Belinda: Oh really?

Charlie: Yes. I know I am fairly new, but over the past few months I have seen how all of you have not been working together as a community. You all have many talents and gifts, yet you talk poorly about one another and don't help one another, as I think you should.

George: Why are you telling us this?

Charlie: I'm only saying this because I care and I want you all to be real, true friends who laugh together and have a nice time together, but it's not possible if we all don't apply the Sacred Teaching of Wisdom.

Helen: This gives us something to think about Charlie. I, for one, know what you are talking about and I want us to stop the gossip and mean talk. I am willing to start over. Who is with me?

Matt: I am.

Olivia: Me, too. I respect all of you, but sometimes I don't give you enough credit for the wisdom you show in your jobs and the community. Everyone in this community works so hard to do their best.

George: It's true. I often get mad at you Matt, but I need to start talking to you about how I feel about working these long hours for no extra pay.

Matt: I should have figured that was the case. I haven't been the best boss. We really need to start working together more as a team.

Narrator: Everyone continued to discuss their issues and problems while they enjoyed the moose meat stew and feasted on bannock and other delicious treats.

Matt: Thanks, Charlie for taking this risk with us and being a firm, but wise leader.

Charlie: I was very worried you would all be angry with me, but I just wanted us to address this and be able to move on. The community needs all of you, but in order to grow; we all need to get along! As adults, our negative actions impact our youth. We need to foster good relationships now and show our youth the best way to leave in peace. All of us are important role models in our community!

George: Here, here!

Others nod in agreement.

Helen: Our community reminds me about the wisdom of the beaver.

Matt: Canada's symbol? What does it have to do with this?

Helen: Well, my father used to tell my siblings and me about how the beaver is so intelligent that it uses his sharp teeth for cutting trees and branches to build his dams and lodges. By doing these things, he is using his gifts properly to his full potential.

Charlie: I like where you are going with this idea, Helen!

Helen: Just like the beaver, we need to help the community start pulling together as a team and use our gifts to develop our full potential and see the community succeed.

Charlie: What a good point. I like that illustration – working with what gifts we have to help provide for everyone.

Belinda: Thanks for the dinner, Charlie. I think that one of your gifts is in cooking. Perhaps we should come here every night for dinner?

Charlie: Hmm... I'll have to think about that one!

Narrator: And so Charlie was glad to have initiated and mediated some discussion. What started out as an uncomfortable meeting ended up creating a much more open, honest, and friendly meeting.

Scenario: Humbling yourself

A woman goes to a Sweat Lodge ceremony and invites a non-native friend. The two of them agree to remain at the ceremony for as long as they can (through all the heat and drumming rounds). It is a humbling experience as they remain together supporting one another in this traditional experience. The Native friend tells about the porcupine and how he is a symbol of humility. She shares a legend in which the porcupine used to have a beautiful fur coat, but became too proud, so the Creator replaced the coat with quills.

Time of year: March, present day

Location: In a First Nation's reserve in Quebec

Characters

Marie
Lana (Marie's
mother)
Damaris (Marie's
cousin)
Tamara
Narrator

Props

- Drum (played by Damaris during drumming rounds)
- Teepee/wigwam backdrop
- Porcupine puppet/stuffed animal/drawing

Narrator: It was a cool day in March and Marie had invited her friend, Tamara, to join her mother and her Mother's cousin, Damaris, to participate in a traditional Sweat Lodge ceremony. Tamara was non-native and not too familiar with First Nation's traditions, but she was looking forward to learning more about the culture. Maria had let Tamara know that she would need to drink a lot of water to hydrate herself prior to starting the ceremony.

Marie and Tamara enter

Marie: Tamara, it is going to take a lot of effort to stay in the ceremony for all the sessions.

Tamara: Why is that again, Maria?

Marie: Because it gets pretty hot inside the tent.

Tamara: That's right. Is it because of the steam?

Marie: Yes, for each round, my mother will be adding more and more water to the rocks inside and it will create a sauna-like effect, where we will feel the heat from the steam.

Tamara: It sounds intense.

Marie: We will need to be humble. If it's too much for you, feel free to go outside the tent.

Tamara: I want to stay in as long as you do.

Marie: Okay, but remember; it's okay if you leave.

Tamara: Thanks.

Marie and Tamara exit together.

Narrator: The Sweat Lodge ceremony is about to begin. Maria and Tamara are in the tent with Maria's mother, Lana and Lana's cousin, Damaris. The drumming is about to begin.

*Drumming sounds start
(should be a tent shape around the puppets).*

Lana: Welcome Tamara. Thank-you for coming today. We are here to cleanse our mind, bodies, and souls. There are four rounds to this ceremony.

*All four sit around as the ceremony takes place and drumming
continues, if possible, steam is shown.*

Narrator: The ceremony continued for several hours. It certainly was a time of humility as each participant spent time praying for others and sharing.

All the puppets exit and the tent is removed.

Marie and Tamara enter together.

Tamara: Wow, Marie! That was such a wonderful experience.

Marie: So, you liked participating?

Tamara: Liked it? I loved it! I mean, of course, it was difficult and, at times, I just wanted to leave the tent, but then when I waited for you after each round, I was so glad.

Marie: Did you have trouble breathing at all?

Tamara: Sometimes, it felt like I couldn't breathe, but I was fine. It was so hot sometimes, but I kept reminding myself to be humble and just be myself. It really helped for me to pray for my friends and family.

Marie: Well, that's good. I'm so glad you joined in.

Tamara: Thanks for inviting me!

Marie: My father used to always tell me that one of the most humble animals he knows today is the porcupine.

Tamara: Oh yes. Why's that?

Marie: Well, it wasn't always that way. My grandfather told a legend about the porcupine.

Tamara: Oh? I haven't heard that one.

Marie: Once the porcupine was a beautiful creature with a gorgeous coat of fur. All of the other animals were jealous of it.

Tamara: Oh... I can picture that now.

Marie: Yes, well, he often gazed in water pools at his own reflection and became very proud. The Creator saw this, and that is why, one day, He decided the porcupine was just too proud.

Tamara: Oh, I see.

Marie: And that is why the Creator changed the porcupine's pretty smooth fur coat to have prickles, called quills, all over him!

Tamara: I see. And that's where humility comes into it.

Marie: Yes. He learned to be humble in that way. And that is why he only comes out at night now. As he is too ashamed of his new prickly coat of quills.

Tamara: Aw, but that's so sad.

Marie: Well, it's a legend that they used to tell. I have heard other versions of it as well, but this one is kind of neat.

Tamara: I like it. But, I still think porcupines are okay. Maybe that is a lesson to us to be humble too.

Marie: In my culture, for years, many of the women do quill work and make beautiful crafts from dyed quills that they almost sew into material such as birch bark.

Tamara: I think I have seen a quill box before. It's amazing!

Marie: Yes, that is one of the things they have made.

Tamara: This is great! Well, my Mom told me to come home as soon as the ceremony was over, so I guess I'd better go. We're having fresh bass that my dad just caught on yesterday's fishing trip with his friends. Hey wait a minute. Do you want to come over for some too?

Marie: Thank-you! That sounds great.

Tamara and Marie exit together.

Scenario: Truth is important

Three cousins are walking together and come across a turtle on the road. One young cousin is about to kill it, but another one stops him. This turtle reminds him what a teacher shared about the turtle and truth. The cousin shares the story about the symbolism and markings on the back of the turtle. (The 13 larger markings, each representing the truth of one cycle of the Earth's rotations around the sun. The 28 smaller markings at the edge of the shell represent the days of each cycle of the moon. The shell of the turtle represents real events as created by the Higher Power, and serves as a reminder of the Creator's will and teachings).

Time of year: July, present day

Location: Near Abbotsford, British Columbia

Characters

Ellie
Selena (Ellie's cousin)
Tom (Ellie's younger brother)
Narrator

Props

- An image/stuffed animal/puppet of a turtle
- General backdrop showing a lake – can show some beach, maple trees, driftwood, pebbles, sky with a few clouds

Narrator: It's summertime once again and for Ellie and Selena this means sleeping in late and having lots of time together at their shared family cottage. They spend most of their days outside enjoying the hot sun and exploring in the great outdoors. It is July and the cousins are walking along the beach on near Crystal Lake. They have been trying to rid themselves of Ellie's younger brother all morning and have finally succeeded (for now).

Ellie and Selena enter and walk along together.

Ellie: Selena, this is the life! I wish it could just be like this all year round!

Selena: I know what you mean.

Ellie: Another beautiful, warm day! We should definitely go swimming today.

Selena: I'm waiting for the water to warm up a bit.

Ellie: That is a good idea...

Ellie suddenly stops and looks down...

Ellie: And what might this be? A turtle?

Selena: Whoa...

Narrator: Just then Ellie's brother appears and walks up to them, happy he has found them!

Tom: Ah-ha! I've found you two!! What do you have here? Cool. ...a turtle. Let me see if I can squish it by jumping on its back.

Tom lifts up his feet (or at least one foot).

Selena: Nooo!!!

Tom stops.

Tom: What? It's just silly old turtle

Ellie: Are you kidding Tom? Are you crazy?

Tom: Uhhh...I don't know...

Selena: It's so cute. It never did anything to harm you!

Ellie: Plus, it is a very special symbol in our Native culture and besides that we shouldn't kill something without a reason. The Creator would not want us to do that.

Selena: I hadn't thought of that either.

Ellie: My teacher told our class all about the turtle this past year. We even had one for a class pet.

Tom: What do you mean, Ellie?

Ellie: Well, my teacher told us about the symbolism and markings on the back of the turtle. Did you know on the turtle's back, there are 13 large markings that represent the 13 moons? Each one represents the truth of one cycle of the Earth's rotations around the sun. The 28 smaller markings on the turtle's back also represent the days in each cycle of the moon.

Tom: Oooh...

Ellie: There's more, Tom! The shell of the turtle represents the real life events that happen to us from the Creator. When things happen to us in life, we must remember the Creator and His life teachings.

Selena: I never knew all of this. I wish my teacher had told me these sorts of things.

Tom: I just thought that turtles were silly animals and only used their shells as protection to hide from their enemies.

Ellie: Well, that's true too, but now you know that there are deeper meanings for many First Nations people.

Tom looks down at the turtle and speaks to it.

Tom: Sorry little fellow. I won't ever try to hurt a turtle again!

Selena: Awww. That's good, Tom.

Narrator: Ellie, Selena, and Tom spent the next hour or so observing the turtle and playing in the sand around it. They just enjoyed seeing what it was doing and being outside.

Tom: Sis, can we keep the turtle as a pet?

Ellie: I don't think that's a good idea, Tom. It's used to being out here in nature. We shouldn't rob it of its freedom.

Tom: I suppose you're right.

Selena: Hey, you two. Isn't there spaghetti for lunch today?

Ellie: Yes, it certainly is!

Selena: Well, it's about lunch time now, so what do you say we give our turtle friend a break from us and go get some lunch.

Tom: Okay, my stomach won't stop growling.

Ellie: It's always growling, Tom!

Tom: Hey!

Ellie: Well, it's true.

Selena: Let's race back to the cottage. Last one there has to wash the dishes!

Ellie: Is the turtle going to be in the race?

Tom: Ha, ha, ha. Very funny. Then, we would know who would lose for sure.

Ellie: Are we ready... Ready, set, go!

All three puppets race off and exit the stage.

Narrator: The children learned an important lesson about the turtle and some truth learned from its marking. They would learn that they need to live in truth in all areas of their lives. By obeying the will of the Creator, their family, and Elders, they could live a much better life. When the three returned back to the same spot later, they saw the turtle there again and had a new respect for it because of the truth they learned about turtles and the symbolism that exists within the Native culture.