**Extension Activity**

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| **Activity Title:** Water Story – When I Was A Child | **Duration:** 30 minutes |
| **Introduction:** | |
| In this activity, students will listen to a poem written by Shirley Ida Williams nee Pheasant, and then respond to it by answering reflecting on the poem.  Shirley Ida Williams nee Pheasant is Ojibway, from Manitoulin Island, Ontario. She graduated from Trent University in 1983 with a B.A. in Native Studies. She currently is an Ojibway language professor at Trent University. She is a gifted teacher, and also an expert traditional dancer. In 2016, she was the recipient of Award for Excellence in Teaching. She is recognized as an engaging teacher who fosters a warm and inspiring learning environment for all students. This poem was written especially for this activity.     * Suitable for Grades 5 to 8 | |
| **Materials:** | |
| * When I Was A Child copy of the story | |
| **Procedure:** | |
| * Read aloud the poem “When I Was A Child.” By Shirley Ida Williams nee Pheasant * Copy of the poem is at the end of the outline | |
| **When I Was A Child - Poem** | |
| **Ojibway Words:**  Daw-ness-san = daughter  Paw-pa = father  Nodin = wind  Shir-o-less = Shirley  Shwan-zee-mo = John Simon  Kiisis = sun  Megwetch = Thank you  Bee-ing = water  Asin = stone | |
| **Activity Wrap-up** | |
| Ask students:   * What was the boat’s name? * Do you think that was a good name for the boat? Why? * Did Shir-o-lee catch any fish? * How did her Paw-pa teach Shir-o-less? (Read carefully, to notice the most important teachings) * Read the poem again, and Notice the four elements: water, air, fire, rock   Have the students participate by answering questions, or performing one of the following activities:  **Poster**: Imagine that Paw-pa is talking to you. Think of what it means to you. Make a poster, print the words, draw an illustration. Share your poster with the class. Tell why you chose that saying.  **Listening Walks**: Go to the woods or other natural environment. Close your eyes and listen. Write sound-words expressing what you hear. If you can’t go outside, try looking up nature apps that include animal calls.  After this exercise, try going to a built environment (machines and people), school yard in front of a street, nutrition break, write sound-words expressing what you hear.   * How do the natural sounds make you feel? * How did the built environment sounds make you feel?   What can we do to lessen the “machines and people” built environment sounds?   * Ride a bike to school, or walk instead of driving * Turn off screens throughout the day * Spend time outside * Practice mindfulness * Start a gratitude journal – can be as simple as jotting down 1 thing you’re grateful for * Reach out to elders in your community by writing a letter * Go out for nature walks around your neighbourhood | |

Source: Adapted from Shirley Williams “When I Was A Child”.

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**When I Was A Child**

When I was a child

I used to go fishing

Along with my paw-pa

He used to say to me

“Listen” Daw-niss-san!

Listen to the sounds of the boat.

Do you hear the water splashing against our boat?

And I’d say, oh yes Paw-pa

He said the wood of the boat

Is talking to the water spirit.

Ssh! Listen! They are singing together!

And when I listened

My ears became sharp

To the sounds of the outside world

The sound of the boat

Groaned and cried

For she, the Nodin (The Wind) was getting old.

Nodin creaked, squeal and squeak, sometimes rusty, her voice sometimes clear.

Her songs combined with sounds of water

Splashing against her

Made beautiful songs.

They sang and sang

About a child

Called Shir-o-less.

Shir-o-lee

I am Nodin, the wind

I will carry you

And your paw-pa, Shawn-zee-mo!

My pa used to say

Always listen!

Always be aware!

For your ears are not

For decorations!

Take a look – see the beauty of the world

Use your eyes to see the beauty. For when you see something

Only you can see it.

Only you can interpret

What you see.

Look how clear the water is.

When I looked

I saw – Beauty! Water

Shining and dancing

Before my eyes.

To see, to look,

To appreciate the beauty of things. Is a prayer.

Then, I felt good.

Beauty!

Life so precious

It’s a gift of Master.

My paw-pa used to say

Use everything you have

And always give thanks

For what you see

For some day you may not see.

In the morning always face the sun. For Kiisis

Fives heat and light.

Be sure to say

Megetch!

When night comes

Wait for the moon.

She provides night light

For us to see so we won’t get lost.

Shir-o-lee, daughter

Let us stop to fish

For we are near the rocks.

Look into bee-ing

Until you see three large rocks. For that’s our fishing mark.

Shh-hear the rocks speak

For they have spirit, too.

Whenever you are in trouble

Speak to a rock

For you have a special asin, too.

The asin we have is the

Foundation of us

For we need

A stone to stand on

For when we’re weak

Life is like sharp rocks

Full of mountains to climb.

Climb hard, my daughter,

And you will be strong.

Always, my child,

Look and listen. Use your eyes to see the world.

Breathe Nodin, the wind

For you will fee whole he said.

Then, I felt a bite on my line.

It’s a fish, I yelled.

Paw-pa smiled, then laughed so hard that I lost my line.

Let’s go home he said.

Megwetch! Nodin!

Then I heard Nodin sing.

We will go home, Shir-o-lee.

I will carry you home.