



The Comeback

Enrichment Guide

Compiled for by Ksenia Broda-Milian for Royal MTC
with contributions from Charlene van Buekenhout

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Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre is proud to call Manitoba home. Royal MTC is located in Winnipeg on Treaty 1, the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Anishininew, and Dakota people, and the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. We are thankful for the benefits sharing this land has afforded us, acknowledge the responsibilities of the Treaties, and embrace the opportunity to partner with Indigenous communities in the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

The Role of the Audience

Theatre needs its audience! We are happy to have you here. Every staff person, actor, and crew member backstage plays an important part in your experience, and you also have a role in the experience of cast, crew and the people around you.

Arrive Early: Please make sure you give yourself enough time to find your seat before the performance starts. Latecomers may not be admitted to a performance. We ask schools and other groups to arrive at least 20-30 minutes before the show.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices: Please **turn off** your cell phone/mp3 player /gaming system/camera/smart watch. Texting, surfing, and gaming during performances is very distracting for the performers and other audience members. Using cameras and recording devices during a performance is **never** allowed.

Talking During the Performance: Even when you whisper, you can be heard by performers and people around you. Unless it is a relaxed performance, disruptive patrons will be removed from the theatre. Please wait until after the performance to share your words with others.

Food/Drinks: Food and outside drinks are not allowed in the theatre. When there is an intermission, snacks and drinks may be available for purchase. There is complimentary water in the lobby.

Dress: There is no dress code at the Royal MTC, but we respectfully ask you not to wear hats in the theatre. We strive to be a scent-free environment and thank all patrons for their cooperation.

Leaving During the Performance: If you leave the theatre during a performance, you will be readmitted at the discretion of Front of House staff. If readmitted, you may be placed in an empty seat at the back of the auditorium instead of your original seat.

Being Asked to Leave: The theatre staff has, and will exercise, the right to ask any member of the audience to leave if that person is being inappropriate or disruptive including (but not limited to): talking, using devices that produce light or sound, and deliberately interfering with an actor or the performance (tripping, throwing items on or near the stage, etc.).

Talkbacks: A short question and answer period with the actors takes place after student matinees, first Tuesday evening shows, and some public matinees. While watching the show, make a mental note of questions to ask the actors about the production or life in the theatre. Our artists deserve to be treated with respect! It's okay to have a negative opinion, but this is your chance to ask questions and understand the performance or process, not to criticize. If you have a concern, see the house manager after the show and they will make sure your feedback gets to the appropriate Royal MTC staff.

Enjoy the show: Laugh, cry, gasp – responding to the performance is part of the nature of theatre! As you get involved in the story, try to balance your reactions with respecting the people around you. The curtain call is part of the performance too – it gives you a chance to thank all the artists for their hard work with applause, and for them to thank you for your attention. We all appreciate when you stay at your seat and join in the applause!

Playwright Biographies

Trish Cooper and Sam Vint are a real-life couple. While *The Comeback* is not exactly their story, it draws from their lives individually and together. They live in Winnipeg with their two children.

Trish Cooper is an Honours theatre graduate from the University of Winnipeg who has worked as an actor and writer in Winnipeg and Toronto. She began writing sketch comedy with the Royal Liechtenstein Theatre Company and has written several plays for the Fringe Festival circuit including *The Year of the Panda* (with Vanessa Macrae), *The Comment Card* and *Homely Woman #2*. Trish was a writer/performer for Theatre Projects Manitoba's inaugural In the Chamber series, and has also been a regular contributor for CBC's *Definitely Not the Opera*. She worked as both writer and performer on the web series, *Wind City*. Trish's first full-length play, *Social Studies*, was written during her time with the Prairie Theatre Exchange Playwrights Unit in 2016, and won the Chris Johnson Award for Best Play by a Manitoba Playwright.

Sam Vint has held many roles in the Manitoba film industry as a camera operator, researcher, and director, including on NFB docudrama *We Were Children*, *Alice and Kevin*, and *The Tournament*. He has also directed film versions of several plays for Prairie Theatre Exchange. Sam wrote and directed *Run for Your Life*, produced by CBC New Indigenous Voices, telling the true story of his ancestor Elzéar Goulet, who is referenced in *The Comeback*. Most recently he has worked with Farpoint Films on *Michif Country* with Manito Média Inc.

Related Resource Links: Watch Sam Vint's works [The Tournament \(22:04\) on the National Film Board](#) and [Run for Your Life \(5:33\) at the National Screen Institute](#).

See the entire creative team and cast for Royal MTC's production, including their biographies, [on our website](#), where you can also download the Ovation program.

Characters

Adam Goulet – Métis man in his 30s. Adam has been commissioned by a big theatre to write a play. He begins by researching his ancestor but ends up writing the play about his family and his journey to connect with his Métis heritage.

Jesse – white woman in her 30s. Adam's partner.

Danielle – Adam's sister. A Black Métis woman in her 30s.

Lynn – Adam and Danielle's mother. A Métis woman.

Carol – Jesse's mother. A white woman.

Ben – Danielle's husband. A Black man from Oklahoma in his 30s.

Wilbur – A family friend; a First Nations Elder.

Aunty Leona – Adam's First Nations aunt.

Uncle Bear – a First Nations family member.

Gigi – Jesse's aunt, a white woman.

Finn – Adam and Jesse's son.

The action of this play takes place over several years, through Jesse and Adam's courtship, the birth of their son, and his childhood.

Content Overview

This section may contain spoilers.

Strong language. Mature content includes sex - not depicted visually onstage, but mentioned and there is an audible offstage sex scene at the beginning of the show - and unplanned pregnancy. Other mature content includes intergenerational trauma from the Day School system and legacy of colonialism, racism, and 60s scoop. Drinking alcohol and drunkenness portrayed onstage. Gunshot and smoke or theatrical haze onstage. Indigenous ceremony is portrayed onstage, with the approval of an elder.

Plot Summary

Theatres are programming more Indigenous voices than in the past, so Adam has pitched a play about his Métis heritage to a big theatre and they've accepted - but he's still figuring out who he really is and what to write about. Jesse wants to understand him and build a life together, but she doesn't know what she can ask. On the surface, Adam has a rowdy, down-to-earth, blended family, but Canada's history of institutionalized racism and assimilationist policy have left scars that nobody wants to talk about. With a surprise pregnancy, Jesse and Adam face the prospect of raising their child as a member of their Métis and settler families, developing a script, defusing mother-in-law tensions, understanding the legacy of the Sixties Scoop, learning to communicate, and hopefully keeping Christmas dinners from ending in ambulance rides. A world premiere by Winnipeg playwrights, based on their own story, about navigating the awkward and sometimes hilarious relationships of love, ancestry, and family.

Synopsis

This section contains spoilers.

Act 1

The show opens in the present, with Adam Goulet giving a land acknowledgement. He mentions that he knows it is awkward and promises that there will be lots of jokes in the play. Adam calls the white actors in the show to the stage and calls them “so well spoken” in a parody of a microaggression against Indigenous performers.

In the past, Adam and Jesse have just had sex for the first time. They realize that they have both liked each other for a long time. Adam has missed his trip to the airport, so they decide to have breakfast together.

Adam addresses the audience. He speaks about being Métis even though he doesn’t “look Métis.” He quotes Louis Riel: “My people will sleep for one hundred years, but when they awake, it will be the artists who give them their spirit back” but counters that 100 years after Riel said that, the Goulet family had not gotten their spirit back and were too busy living cheque to cheque to call themselves artists, even though many family members did practice various arts.

Jesse and Adam have been dating for six weeks. They discuss meeting each other’s moms. Adam’s mom has recently been arrested for protesting with the Shoal Lake Water Protectors. Jesse learns that Adam is Métis and says he doesn’t “look Métis.”

Adam tells the audience how he had kept his heritage quiet most of his life, but now he feels expected to “talk about it, trace it, prove it, and celebrate it” including in having the opportunity to write a play. He jokes that all Métis agree on everything all the time so he’s speaking for the whole group. He is overwhelmed but tries to convince himself “how hard can it be to write a play?” The story Adam pitched was about his ancestor Elzéar Goulet who was a Red River Resistance member, killed by a mob. Adam shares this story (you can read about Goulet in the Context section of this guide).

It is Christmas Eve at Adam’s mom’s house. Adam banters with his half-sister Danielle and introduces the audience to Danielle’s husband, Ben, who has just checked on their kids. Lynn, Adam’s mom, enters and is not thrilled about being in the play, but she gives in and leaves the room. Jesse arrives, dressed fancier than anyone else. Danielle teases her about this and the fact that Jesse asks if she should put the sour cream in a fancy dish for Christmas. Lynn returns and also comments on the fancy bowl. She’s in a bad mood, and leaves again. The family talks about other relatives and guests and their various dramatic relationships; Danielle remarks that it “wouldn’t be Christmas without an ambulance.” Jesse is uncomfortable and doesn’t want her first meal with Adam’s

mom to be when Lynn is mad. She goes home. Adam tells the audience that Jesse made the right decision.

Adam and Jesse are at home as Jesse gets ready to take a pregnancy test. Lynn calls Adam's phone, then Jesse's, and messages them on Facebook insisting that Adam help out her friend. When Jesse goes to take the test, Lynn and Uncle Bear arrive and let themselves in with the spare key. Jesse says that she didn't answer her phone because she was napping, and Lynn immediately guesses that she is pregnant – she is thrilled.

Adam tells the audience he is excited about the baby but it's putting pressure on him to finish the play. His research on Goulet is important, but feeling bleak.

Jesse's mom, Carol, shows Lynn a gift for them to work on together, a baby book about the family tree. The conversation becomes awkward – Lynn doesn't have any childhood photos and won't talk about her mother. Her first job was on a farm – but unlike Carol, who did chores on a family farm as a kid, Lynn was fostered by a family who used her only for her work, "kind of like a slave." Lynn warns that she won't participate in any church ceremonies for the couple or baby; Carol says she is involved in her church community but "not the bad stuff." Both women ask for a drink. Adam tells the audience that while there were tons of photos of him and Danielle as children, he's never seen one of his mom.

Later, at Jesse and Adam's house, the family are celebrating the birth of Finn, loudly singing. Auntie Leona and Uncle Bear are visiting from the rez, and everyone wants to spend time with the baby or give advice. Jesse is exhausted and frustrated with Adam for not asking the family to give them space.

There is a naming ceremony – Adam explains that it's not a Métis tradition but comes from their First Nations cousins. Getting ready is chaotic – family members everywhere, Jesse's mom forgets to wear a skirt and the one they find for her is very short, Jesse gets a lesson on smudging because she "aura smudges," the kids have eaten most of the feast. Wilbur, an elder and friend of the family, arrives and conducts the ceremony. He tells Danielle the name given to her by the Creator is Muskihiskwew, Medicine Woman; baby Finn is Papataweh Mikisew, Spotted Eagle, and Adam is Buffalo Man. Adam is not happy with this "uncool" name and feels like Wilbur does not see him as Indigenous enough while he tries to figure out who he is.

At the rez, Jesse, Adam, Leona, and Bear are by the fire drinking beer. Jesse is less inhibited and having fun. She and Adam are watching Danielle's kids – one of whom has a rifle in case of bears. Leona tells them Lynn is mad at her because she thinks

Lynn should go see her dying mother. Adam also doesn't want his grandmother to meet Finn, saying that she can "teach the ancient art of giving away your children" but Leona thinks he should forgive her.

Jesse asks Adam about how Leona is related to them. Adam thinks that Jesse is trying to define relationships by blood, but Jesse is just frustrated that she doesn't know what to tell Finn about his own family and heritage. This spirals into a conversation about Adam withholding information, like how long Danielle's kids are staying. Leona reminds Adam that Buffalo signifies respect. The conversation is interrupted by a gunshot.

Adam explains to the audience that nobody is hurt, the gunshot was for dramatic effect. The other characters tell him he's wrecked the cliffhanger and that the audience won't come back after intermission, but Adam has faith people will return for act 2.

Act 2

Adam jokes about the fact that even though there are kids in his family, we don't see them onstage. He says that he and Jesse have made up and he's promised to work on communication.

At Finn's birthday, Lynn, Adam, Jesse, and Gigi are tidying up. Gigi is a friend of Jesse's mom who is teaching Indigenous and Women's Studies at the university. Lynn questions her and finds out that she used to live with Salish communities and is doing research on the 60s Scoop. When Lynn learns Gigi used to be a social worker, she is incensed; her brother's kids were apprehended by a social worker when he was away at work. Gigi says that her team never would have taken children who were cared for, and Lynn believes that social workers are liars and is upset that Gigi is considered an expert because of her "bullshit degrees." The conversation grows heated and Gigi leaves. Jesse is hurt and goes to bed. Adam asks his mom why they can't just have a nice party, and she says that she doesn't get a break from her memories. Jesse accuses Adam of making Gigi look bad and wishes that he wouldn't include her in this play. Adam tells the audience the story of Elzéar Goulet and explains that's why the family gets sensitive about who teaches history.

Back in the past, Adam finishes reading Jesse his play. Jesse is proud of him, but they realize the play is unclear. He confesses that this is hard.

It's Christmas. Jesse and Adam are frantically preparing their house when Adam's family arrives several hours early. The gathering starts well but gets tense when Leona hands out presents from Lynn's mother, who Lynn still refuses to forgive. The family plays charades as a distraction. They descend into chaos as Danielle reveals that she is going to visit her grandmother. Lynn and Adam get more upset but are interrupted when Gigi's hair catches on fire.

Leona and Bear take Adam to a sweat and tell him about the ceremony. Adam is going to ask for help in the sweat to finish the play, and why his name is Buffalo Man, but they scoff at him that answers won't be spelled out. In the dark, we hear the ceremony. Adam tells us that he was thinking about his grandmother. Danielle interrupts his monologue to say that she sees her differently than Adam does. Adam tells how his mother and her siblings were "swallowed by the system," how Lynn was taught to hate herself and society agreed.

Leona, Bear, and Jesse talk about Lynn and her temper. They explain that Lynn gives everyone a hard time and that she speaks highly of Jesse. Jesse wants to repair their relationship and make it even better, and they give her advice.

Adam tells the audience that he's started therapy and though he was resistant, he now really likes it. Jesse tells Lynn she's also been in therapy. Lynn worries that Jesse will be seen as unfit and Finn will be taken away, but Jesse assures her she wouldn't let that happen and that Finn is lucky Lynn is his grandma. She gives Lynn a pie and says she loves her.

Christmas seven years later at Adam and Jesse's. Everyone is in good spirits. Adam has finished his play, and makes a toast to recognize how far the family has come in 50 years, and that he loves them. Adam tells the audience how meaningful it is to share his family's story near where Elzéar was killed. Finn joins him onstage to say that the Métis people are on the comeback. Adam wants him to say more or perform a jig or fiddle, but Finn asks if the family can just sing their song. They all sing "Hobo Jungle" together.

Context and Related Resources

By Charlene Van Buekenhout

I am Red River Métis

Taanshi Kiyawaaw!

How are you everyone!

Charlene D'ishnakaashon, my name is Charlene and I'm Belgian on my father's side, and Métis on my mother's. I was born and raised on Treaty 2 territory in Dauphin, Manitoba, home of Canada's National Ukrainian Festival. Ni-wikiinaan Winnipeg Treaty 1 avik mon mari pi not fiyinaan. Now I live in Treaty 1, Winnipeg, with my husband and our daughter. This is where my parents are from. Some of the language you are seeing in this introduction is Southern Michif. It is one of the unique Michif languages developed by the Michif people, and one of the many languages spoken by the Michif (Métis in French) people throughout the homelands.

Métis / Michif people were created on this land when European fur traders came to Turtle Island and "met up" (had babies) with First Nations people. My sister always says "the Métis people are lovers." We are born of the union between two people from different cultures, who came together and found a way to communicate and create a connection...and this "connection" ended up creating a whole new people!

Two of my ancestors were a Scottish fur trader and an Ojibwe woman who lived in the early 1800s. Luckily we have the Scotsman's diary, and in it he talks about love getting "the better of his reason" while living with the Anishinaabek. We hope that the love between the two was mutual because the Scotsman and the Anishinaabekwe had children: one was a daughter, Helen Ann Cameron. This child of mixed heritage grew up and found someone just like her, with a father from across the ocean, and a mother from the land we live on. They married, and they lived with both cultures providing guidance. They found others. They grew communities because of their shared ties to this new identity. They had children, and then so on, and so forth (until me, and my daughter!).

These families came together and shaped their own culture and way of living separate from those of their European and First Nations parents. These people became the Michif people, Otipemisiwak, "the people who rule themselves". The Michif people took what they needed from both cultures, and created a new one. Their ability to live "in between" the worlds of the Europeans and the First Nations further developed and defined their unique identity, and within this, culture emerged. Have you ever seen Highland dancing from Scotland? I was a Highland dancer in my youth, and when I started Métis Jigging, I noticed that the fancy steps in jigging were so like Highland dance, but with even more bouncing! Métis jigging is like a simile for the Michif people:

a coming together of First Nations Powwow dancing, and Highland dance (among other stepdances) which births a new dance, with its own music and steps and rules. You can still see the initial influences, but it has developed beyond them into a dance iconically its own, iconically Métis.

Similarly, during the fur trade, these new people were able to use skills inherited from both European and First Nation cultures and develop them further, making the Michif highly sought-after interpreters, translators, suppliers, guides, couriers, diplomats and more. I see us Michifs using our strengths as bridges, creating connections.

And hey, we invented the Red River Cart! A vehicle to connect Métis to one another, especially to follow the Buffalo Hunts. The organization of these hunts has defined the Métis people (see PDF on The Buffalo Hunt in resources) and these rules and laws in regard to how to organize a hunt came in handy when having to quickly organize for any number of reasons, one of which we will see shortly.

Around 1869, some not so great things started to happen. At this point it is impossible to talk about Michif people without involving politics. Our identity is so shaped by what happens here. In 1867 Canada became a thing, but Manitoba wasn't part of it. Manitoba wasn't a thing, but the Red River Settlement was. "Canada" (John A. MacDonald and friends) wanted to "buy" up the land and squeeze everyone (Métis, First Nations) out. So, Louis Riel (and posse) quickly formed a National Committee, forcing "Canada" to negotiate with them (you know, so they could retain their rights, homes, etc). This was the beginning of the Red River Resistance, which was a movement opposing the sneaky, illegal, and offensive land theft of a visiting government which did not own the land. This is why we don't call it a rebellion anymore. The people were not rebelling against an existing government: no such government existed. They were resisting (trying to prevent) the unlawful installment of a government which did not have their best interests in mind.

Well, in 1870 more stuff happened. Manitoba entered into Confederation ("Manitoba Day," May 12th) and Louis Riel fled to the U.S to hide out (after the execution of Thomas Scott). He became an American citizen (and this is important come 1885), and Manitoba became a Province of Canada, founded on the Métis "list of rights." Approximately 1200 Canadian soldiers called the RREF (Red River Expeditionary Force) – precursors of the RCMP, headed by Garnet Wolseley – were sent to "pacify the region" (the region being the Red River Settlement). They began murdering, raping, and assaulting Métis men, women, and children. Acts of arson and other brutalities were committed, forcing some Métis people to head west. This "Reign of Terror" lasted about 3 years.

The “list of rights” that Louis Riel and the provisional government negotiated for the Red River Settlement, the Métis, and First Nations people, was “loop-holed”, or blatantly disregarded, and almost none of it was honoured. The Métis were edged off their land by settlers, who just started living there because they were given these lands by Canada. This was unacceptable (and so illegal), and so the Métis wanted Louis Riel to come back and petition on their behalf (because, like, what gives, John A?!). In 1884, four Métis men went to Montana to get him, including my ancestor Michel Dumas! Canada replied “We will meet this petition with bullets”. So Louis and friends formed a Provisional Government. Other notable Métis in this government were Gabriel Dumont as General, and my ancestor Charles Nolin as Commissioner.

Bullets came. The battle of Batoche, the Battle of Duck Lake...things went up and then down quickly, and Louis Riel was executed for High Treason – illegally executed, for many reasons. For one, he was a naturalized American Citizen at the time. For another, the law used to justify the execution was a British medieval law from the 1300s which no one used anymore.

1885. There’s no Louis Riel and things got really bad for the Métis (yes, if possible, worse). Nobody wanted us: not European enough and not First Nations enough, for the government or the Crown. We got NO land ANYWHERE. So began, from 1885-1960, the Road Allowance period of our history. What’s a Road Allowance? It’s the ditch. It’s the land between the road and someone else’s land. That little bit. Unused Crown land.

The Métis, the Michif people, rebuilt their communities: they unified and came together. Eventually, around the mid-1930s, the government stepped in and forced them off of any place they settled. Setting their homes on fire. Killing their animals. Destroying their livelihood.

It was dangerous to be Métis. During the Road Allowance period, if you could become invisible, this was preferable to being Métis. If you could look and pass as French, you did. For survival. My Grandmother was born in 1925. This would have been a great time to hide your identity, hide who you are and make the transition to being French Canadian. I believe my Great-Grandmother did this for her family. So my Grandmother’s children (my mom) grew up thinking they were French, their Métis identity lost to them.

My mom told me once that my daughter needed a ‘Katyn’. I asked her what that was, and she looked at me funny and said “you should know, you went through French immersion: it’s French for ‘doll’!”. As a former French immersion student I at least could tell her that that definitely wasn’t the French word for ‘doll’. I was learning Southern Michif at the time, and was able to find out that ‘Katyn’ is a Heritage Michif, Southern Michif or Michif Cree word for ‘doll’.

My mom also tells me she remembers, when she was a kid, they'd sometimes push all the furniture to the wall, and people would come over with fiddles, guitars, accordions and there would be a party! When she hears that Métis fiddle she says "Oh that's the fiddle sound I like, that's what I grew up with". It sounds to me like culture can reach out from where it's been hidden. It can reach beyond the hurt, the trauma: it can reach through generations, and light our way forward. That is its power.

When I think about my Métis identity, who I am as a Métis person, and what this means to me, I think about my role in Métis history. My role as a conduit for culture and language, my role in returning a sense of pride in being Michif to my family. I grew up fairly privileged, with land to live on, easy food and water: the only trauma I experienced were the hair perms I continually put myself and my hairdresser through. I think about how becoming invisible allowed for the privilege I enjoy. I accept that this privilege, and survival, brings feelings of guilt and shame. So I think about my role as a Michif. I know it is important for me to be active in remembering our history. I place these stories within my family, to make the invisible visible, to let my ancestors know that they will not be forgotten and that I am here to make sure they are not erased. That my Métis self, my daughter, our unique culture, language, and our identity are visible. And that identity is the spark that ignites the pride that glows within us and lights our path forward. That they, the past and the present Métis, will be seen.

I found the following quote from the Manitoba Métis Federation's website. It doesn't say when or where Louis Riel said this, but it is something I can imagine him saying as our people were struggling. It is a plea to not forget, to accept the good with the bad, to hold the people who went through troubled times in our hearts in hope that the youth, our future Métis will know who they are: The people who own themselves, the free people, the Métis.

"We must cherish our inheritance. We must preserve our nationality for the youth of our future. The story should be written down to pass on." - Louis Riel

Ekoshi.

Related Resource Links: The Manitoba Métis Federation highlights dates and events in this [article about the Nation and its culture](#) and you can find a [timeline at the Gabriel Dumont Institute](#).

Rosie Darling gives [a simple video introduction to The Métis People](#) (4:22); dive into many aspects of Métis history, culture, and tradition in more detail in the [Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada](#).

You can explore the [Michif language](#); learn about the [Red River Buffalo Hunt](#) in documents from the Gabriel Dumont Institute; be inspired by [Louis Riel's words](#) and delve deeper into his life through [Riel's biography](#) as well as learn why his trial was unjust in an [excerpt from The Trial of Louis Riel](#). The Winnipeg Free Press published a 3-part series on the Red River Resistance in 2020. Available with a free membership. [Part 1](#) [Part 2](#) [Part 3](#)

Elzéar Goulet

Goulet was born in 1836 at St. Boniface, and was murdered in the Red River trying to get back there in 1870. His story and that of his family echoes throughout some of the major events in Metis history. Briefly:

Elzéar grew up mostly in St. Boniface. He was known as a strong runner and swimmer. He was the son of Alexis Goulet and Josephte Siveright the third child in a family of six children. In his adulthood, he was a mail carrier for the Pembina (North Dakota) to Red River (Fort Garry) route. These were long journeys on horseback in the summer and dogsled in the winter that he made regularly, seeing his family for only maybe a day or two before heading back on route. This line of work takes a strong body and disposition, and it also garnered him great respect and trust. Elzéar joined Riel at Upper Fort Garry and had a role in the provisional government becoming second in command of the Metis Militia. Elzéar inherited his zeal for Métis rights from his father, Alexis. He was one of 22 other buffalo hunters and traders who assembled on August 29, 1845 to write a letter demanding Métis rights to hunt and trade at a fair price. Elzéar was named the Lieutenant General of the Métis Militia during the 1870 resistance. That year, at 34 years old, he was murdered in 1870 by members of a volunteer army (RREF*) after attempting to go into a bar on the “English” side of town (across the river from St. Boniface on Lombard Avenue). He was chased across a field (where the Goldeyes stadium is) and he jumped into the Red River to try and swim home to safety in St. Boniface, the French side. The “soldiers” threw stones and rocks at him until one hit him in the head, knocked him unconscious and he drowned. He left a wife and six children.

*The Red River Expeditionary Force was put together to threaten and terrorize Métis people into disappearing.

Sam Vint adds more about the family: Elzéar’s older brother, Roger Goulet, was the highest ranking Métis within the government in 1870. He held posts like surveyor and magistrate and was a member of the Council of the Assiniboine. His younger brother Maxime was in the first graduating class at Université de Saint-Boniface, was a part of Buffalo Bills Wild West Show, and became an MLA in Premier Norquay’s cabinet and later the Minister of Agriculture. Elzéar’s son Roger ran French language education in Manitoba for decades and was a vigorous historian, creating and leading many different groups that kept Métis history alive. Elzéar’s granddaughter, Roger’s daughter, is moderately famous Métis poet and radio DJ Marie Therese Goulet-Courchaine, also known as Manie Tobie.

Related Resource Links: The Canadian Museum of Human Rights has an [article about Goulet with additional background](#) about Métis self-determination, resistance, and historical context. [One Great History podcast](#) follows Goulet’s path in an episode featuring an interview with Jean Teillet, author of *The North-West is Our Mother: The Story of Louis Riel’s People, the Métis Nation* (1:45:41).

The Sixties Scoop

The Sixties/60s Scoop is a catchy name coined by Patrick Johnson in his report *Native Children and the Child Welfare System* in 1983. Raven Sinclair recounts that Johnston told her that a B.C. social worker provided the phrase when she told him "...with tears in her eyes—that it was common practice in B.C. in the mid-sixties to 'scoop' from their mothers on reserves almost all newly born children. She was crying because she realized—20 years later—what a mistake that had been." That realization came too late, however. From the late 1950s to early 1980s, "almost all newly born babies" were scooped from their mothers on reserves.

The practice of forcibly removing Indigenous children of any age from their homes led to an incredible spike of Indigenous children in the Child Welfare system (in B.C. from 1% in the early 50s to 34% in 1964). Social workers were empowered to do this by the Canadian government, who upheld Euro-Canadian values of living and child welfare. Behind the policy was essentially the same scheme as the Residential schools. The reason was to assimilate Indigenous children into the dominant white culture and to erase their heritage, connection to family and land, culture, language, and identity. Children were taken from their families with little to no warning. Sometimes they were taken while the parent was working, sometimes directly from their arms. Even social workers like Gigi in *The Comeback*, who may have thought they were helping, were upholding the supremacy of these values and were completely unfamiliar with Indigenous cultures or history of communities, judging "proper care" of children by inappropriate standards; for example assuming a home without a fridge full of Euro-Canadian food products where the family kept to a traditional diet meant that children must be undernourished.

What happened to these children and babies? The government often advertised them as adoptees to white families through the AIM Program (Adopt Indian Metis). Some were sent to live with families that used them as free labour on farms (like Adam's mom Lynn in the play) and many were abused physically, verbally, and sexually. Some had the complicated experience of being brought up loved and cared for, yet many times looking different from their families and usually accompanied by feelings of disconnection, loss and yearning. Parents and families were not told by child welfare workers where in the country or the world their children ended up until after 1980. Many survivors of the 60s Scoop are still trying to find their biological families, as documentation and papers were often lost, destroyed or are difficult to obtain. The Manitoba government, and other provinces, have issued an apology for the policies behind the Scoop; the federal government has not.

Related Resource Links: As an introduction, CBC has [a short video from 2018: The Sixties Scoop Explained](#) (1:12). [Read more about the sixties scoop in a summary](#), or in more detail from [the Canadian Encyclopedia](#). A very thorough piece by Erin Hanson, though focused on BC, gives good [background and legacy of the Sixties Scoop](#) including links to even more learning resources.

In [docu-short video Becoming Nakuset](#) (12:48), a woman explains how she was taken from her home in Thompson and adopted by a Montreal Jewish family through the AIM program. A [video from BBC News featuring survivor interviews](#) (5:33) shows how far children were sent around the world to be assimilated and how they are reconnecting.

To explore the lasting effects: A Manitoba woman discovered she was “scooped” decades later ([Global, 2:27](#)); Marlene Orgeron shares what happened to her in 1978 ([CBC, 4:08](#)); Read about [mail sent from the province to a missing survivor](#) and how that impacts his family, [survivors’ search for their birth records](#), and a gathering of [survivors reconnecting with their culture](#).

“Looking Métis”

A Métis person can have dark hair, blond hair, dark skin, light skin, blue eyes, brown eyes, and more. You name it, we have it. If you are Métis, you look Métis. There is no one way to look Métis.

Métis people have a connection to a historic Métis community. These communities created a unique culture and way of living based on their family roots, heritage, and traditions woven together from First Nation mothers and European (French, Scottish etc.) fathers. After 1870, it became very dangerous to be Métis in Winnipeg. Elzéar Goulet went to the English part of town and was murdered, sending a message to all Métis that it was not safe. If you could, you buried your Métis identity and tried to pass as French or Scottish or whatever else you could by the way you looked, since this seemed like the only way to survive. If you had lighter skin, it was easier to do this; if you had darker skin you tried to lighten it with powders. Not everyone could do this or wanted to, but hiding in plain sight became a common practice. It is this practice born out of the violence of colonization and a need to survive that has taught people (everyone, including Métis) that a Métis person looks a certain way.

Ceremony

There are over 600 First Nations communities that are recognized by the Government (Statistics Canada), not including Inuit and Métis communities. Not all Indigenous ceremonies look alike. There is no pan-Indigenous culture, and it is important to respect that each nation’s ceremonies are unique. Ceremonies depicted and mentioned in this

play, as explained by the character Adam, are “not a Métis tradition, but our First Nations cousins let us in” representing the playwrights’ own lives and not necessarily that of all Métis people.

Smudging - For many Indigenous people, smudging ceremonies cleanses our bodies and spirit of negative energy. There are different ways to smudge. The medicines used are sage, sweetgrass, tobacco, and cedar. Typically the medicines are placed as a bundle in a shell, lit on fire (usually with a wooden match), and then gently the flames are blown out and the smoke is waved either with hand or eagle feather. The person smudging can smudge themselves by cleansing their hands in the smoke and other parts like eyes (to see with goodness), ears (to listen well), head (to have an open mind), heart (to keep the heart open) and others like feet to walk in a good way and more depending on the teachings you’ve received by an Elder. See a [video about smudging from Fanshawe Institute of Indigenous Learning](#). The cast of *The Comeback* smudges before and after each performance.

Naming Ceremony - in many Indigenous cultures, an Elder or Medicine Person who has the ability to be the conduit for Spirit to speak through them can be called upon to give spirit names to babies or anyone who does not have their name yet. A spirit name comes from Spirit, or Creator or ancestors in the person’s native language and it is then a life journey to understand and honour this name. In the play we give an idea of a Nêhiyawêwin (Cree) naming ceremony including elements like smudging and feasting.

Sweatlodge - a structure made of willow boughs with a canvas cover. Grandfather rocks are heated and brought into the lodge. Water is poured over them to create the steam and heat inside. A sweatlodge ceremony is a good place for healing and for re-connecting to spirit. The Grandfather rocks are very old and hold a great amount of memory and knowledge. [Find out more about sweats at https://aht.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Lodge.pdf](https://aht.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Lodge.pdf)

Glossary and Mentions

Anne Murray – a Canadian singer known for her “heart-warming style.” Carol has an aunt that worked with her.

Buffy – Buffy Sainte-Marie is a singer-songwriter, musician, and activist with ties to the Piapot Cree Nation, whose work has focused on issues facing Indigenous peoples. In 2023 a CBC investigation accused Sainte-Marie of falsifying her claims of Indigenous ancestry, leading to conversations and arguments about community acceptance versus blood ties. This controversy is why Leona cuts Bear’s words off after she requests “sing Buffy!”

De facto – a practice that exists in reality whether or not it is officially recognized by law or other formality. Adam refers to “the de facto police” who killed his ancestor; the mob might not have been officially designated as police, but Adam is saying that they basically filled that role in the community.

Doula – a trained professional who works with a client to be a non-medical support person through a health event, usually a pregnancy.

Estrangement – a lost connection/relationship between family members through physical and/or emotional distancing. There are estrangements in Adam’s family that he

can’t keep track of or understand.

Hero’s Journey – a common story template with a hero with three stages: the departure, the initiation, and the return. In this narrative archetype the hero usually goes on an adventure, learns a lesson, wins a victory with that knowledge, and returns home transformed. Adam explores the hero’s journey in his playwriting process.

Kokum – grandmother in Cree; sometimes used to refer to great-aunts or other peoples’ grandmothers.

Living cheque to cheque – when the pay you receive from your job all goes to basic living expenses like food and shelter. There is nothing left over for savings.

Mediocre – not very good; moderate quality. Adam has been a comedian in mediocre venues.

Militia – military or fighting organization of non-professional soldiers.

Preemie – a baby born more than three weeks before their due date.

Seven Teachings – values that inspire human conduct and allow relationship with the earth. Each Teaching is represented by an animal. They are Respect (Buffalo), Love

(Eagle), Courage (Bear), Honesty (Sabe), Wisdom (Beaver), Humility (Wolf) and Truth (Turtle).

Shoal Lake – Winnipeg gets its drinking water from Shoal Lake, at the Manitoba-Ontario border, through an aqueduct constructed in 1915-1919. This water is also vital to the Shoal Lake #40 First Nation. This Nation was displaced for construction of the aqueduct and relocated to a more isolated area. They were under a boil water advisory for 24 years, meaning the water there did not have adequate treatment and was unsafe to drink, yet Winnipeg enjoyed the use of this water through its treatment facility. After years of lobbying politicians about this inequality, the community launched a campaign in 2014 to educate Winnipeggers about the true source of their water. In 2021, a road finally opened to the First Nation that allowed for installation and maintenance of a treatment plant and reconnected the community to the rest of Canada in a sustainable way. For more about how this First Nation community was negatively affected by the over 100-year-old aqueduct intake to Winnipeg, [explore this article from CBC about Shoal Lake](#) and [learn about the new treatment plant](#).

Standing Rock – the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) was supposed to be built through the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota. The position of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe is that the DAPL violates a

treaty. In 2015 the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, operating as a sovereign nation, passed a resolution regarding the pipeline stating that "the Dakota Access Pipeline poses a serious risk to the very survival of our Tribe and ... would destroy valuable cultural resources." Many Native Nations, along with non-Native allies, celebrities, and several politicians supported the movement and travelled to join DAPL protesters at the Sacred Stone Camp on the Standing Rock Reservation. Conditions at the camp became intense. North Dakota law enforcement officials and private guards hired by Energy Transfer Partners clashed with protestors, sometimes violently, and made hundreds of arrests. (Adapted from Museum of the American Indian, <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/plains-treaties/dapl>)

Wang Chung Tonight – reference to the song Everybody Have Fun Tonight by English new wave band Wang Chung, which was adopted into Generation-X shorthand for a wild night out.

Wasted – slang for overcome by drugs or alcohol; very drunk. Danielle teases Jesse about being wasted when she drinks a sip of wine.

Yips – in sports, the sudden and unexplained inability for experienced athletes to perform certain skills; nervous tension.

Explore More: Recommended Library Reading List

Explore More Métis Stories

Hold Your Tongue by Matthew Tétreault

When his great-uncle Albert has a stroke, Richard, a French-Métis man, travels to Ste. Anne to tell his father the news. A rich examination of family dynamics, family history, and what it means to be Métis and francophone in contemporary Manitoba.

FICTION TETREAUULT

A Grandmother Begins the Story by Michelle Porter

Five generations of Métis women argue, dance, struggle, laugh, love, and tell the stories that will sing their family, and perhaps the land itself, into healing. FICTION PORTER

Probably Ruby by Lisa Bird-Wilson

A beautifully written book following Ruby, a 30-year-old Métis woman adopted as an infant to a White family, as she learns about herself and her people. Each chapter is a vignette which focuses on an important relationship in Ruby's life. As the storytelling jumps across perspectives and time, Ruby and her story comes more and more into focus. FICTION BIRD-WILSON

Explore More Indigenous Humour

Bury My Heart at Chuck E. Cheese's by Tiffany Midge

This collection weaves witty memoir together with hilarious musings on life, identity, and the current political climate in the United States. Midge explores what it means to be an indigenous person today, using satire, humour and blunt honesty to tell her stories.

818.608 MIDGE 2019

Sir John A: Acts of a Gentrified Ojibwe Rebellion by Drew Hayden Taylor

A satirical play which explores reconciliation and brings to life the patriarchal character of Canada's first Prime Minister whose bones are held for ransom by the star of the play – Anishinaabe man Bobby Rabbit. 819.254 TAYLOR 2018

Laughing with the Trickster by Tomson Highway

Celebrated author and playwright Tomson Highway brings his signature irreverence to an exploration of five themes central to the human condition: language, creation, sex and gender, humour, and death in a CBC Massey Lecture. 398.45 HIGHWAY 2022

Explore More Intergenerational Family Stories

Fight Night by Miriam Toews

As Swiv records her thoughts and observations, *Fight Night* unspools the pain, love, laughter, and above all, will to live a good life across three generations of women in a close-knit family. FICTION TOEWS

Half-Bads in White Regalia by Cody Caetano

Capturing the chaos and wonder of a precarious childhood, Cody Caetano delivers a fever dream coming-of-age garnished with a slang all his own. B CAETANO 2022



There are 1.4 million books, movies, audiobooks, eBooks and more at the Winnipeg Public Library, and all you need to borrow them is your library card. There are 20 locations throughout the city and there's an online catalogue for requesting items for pick-up at your library of convenience. An e-Library has thousands of eBooks, eAudiobooks and more! All free with your card. Visit us at Winnipeg.ca/library

Film Resources

The National Film Board has free documentaries with no membership required that echo themes in *The Comeback*.

Richard Cardinal: Cry from a Diary of a Métis Child Richard Cardinal died by his own hand at the age of 17, having spent most of his life in a string of foster homes and shelters across Alberta. Released in 1984, the film exposed the systemic neglect and mistreatment of Indigenous children in Canada's child welfare system.

A Place Between - The Story of an Adoption In this film, a cross-cultural adoptee struggles to find balance between his families' different ethnicities and traditions and discover how and where he fits into each world.

Foster Child: Gil Cardinal was born to a Métis mother but raised by a non-Indigenous foster family, and with this auto-biographical documentary he charts his efforts to find his biological mother and to understand why he was removed from her.

Birth of a Family: In this deeply moving feature-length documentary, three sisters and a brother meet for the first time. Removed from their young Dene mother during the infamous Sixties Scoop, they were separated as infants and adopted into families across North America.

The NFB also runs a Campus program which allows access to over a thousand exclusive films – many Manitoba schools have active subscriptions, and individual subscriptions are available for \$40/year. “Women in the Shadows” relates to Métis identity, and “Giiwe – This is Home” to the removal of Indigenous children from their homes.

Discussion and Writing Prompts

- Adam mentions The Hero's Journey. If we focus on a "hero" of a story, whose perspectives do we leave out?
- Adam tells us some of his family history in a straightforward manner. A play is another form of storytelling. What other ways are there to convey a story, and what are some of the ways each is effective? (Eg prose, poetry, graphic novels...)
- What surprised you about this play?
- Did any parts of the play make you uncomfortable?
- Did any parts of the play resonate with you or relate to your own life? Do you relate to any characters (or aspects of a character)?
- What do you think is the intended message of this show? What did you take away from the experience?
- Why do you think the playwrights chose to title their play *The Comeback*? Do you think this was an effective title?
- This play takes place over several years in many different locations. How did the set, costume, lighting, and sound design help to portray this? What choices did you find especially effective? Are there any places you would have made different choices?

Suggested Classroom Activities

Hero's Journey

Adam refers to "the Hero's Journey" throughout the script. This potentially universal concept is generally accepted to follow 12 steps broken into 3 stages.

- [Learn about the concept of The Hero's Journey by watching an introductory TED-Ed video](#) (4:33).
- Alone or with a partner, discuss whether Adam's journey in the story reflects the Hero's Journey (including events that we might not have seen onstage but that he tells us about, like the theatre commissioning a play from him.)
- Work collaboratively in small groups or as a class to see if you can fill in all the steps in the cycle.
- After looking at the play through this lens, do you think you can classify *The Comeback* under this structure? If not, justify what leads you to that conclusion. Do you think the playwrights diverted from this track and if so, why?

Alternate activity: students use the Hero's Journey structure to retell a true (or mostly true) event from their life. Teachers could specify whether this is in the form of a story, comic, or other format, with rubric according to the activity.

Related Resource Links: Dive deeper into The Hero's Journey with breakdowns from [Grammarly](#), [Writing Kylie](#), [Masterclass](#) (which actually uses 17 steps!), [Reedsy](#), or [TV Tropes](#).

Selling the Show

At a large theatre like MTC, marketing images are set the winter before the season begins, so in this case, the images used to promote *The Comeback* were developed in January of 2023, before the script was completely finished! Now that you have seen the show, do you think that these images were a good representation of the production? Design a poster for an imaginary future presentation of *The Comeback* that emphasizes characters, events, themes, or messages that you think are most important in the play and entices people to come see the show. Think about what target audience you will choose – even if this play wasn't your favourite, who would enjoy it instead and how could you convince them? How can you use colours, shape, and images to give the impression you are going for?

Costume Creation

The Comeback features a big cast of characters. The performers use their bodies and voices to give unique performances, but their costumes visually tell us something about who the person is before they even say a word. The purpose of the costumes is not only to clothe the performer but to communicate their character to the audience and reflect the style, mood and setting of the production.

Imagine there was a play about your family or group of people in your life. (Alternative: characters in a book or real people from a news article). Design costumes that give the audience a clue to their personalities, backgrounds, and relationships.

Working individually or as a group, students should consider the following:

- What colours do you associate with each costume? Use any media to create a colour palette for the set and characters. Who blends into the background and who stands out? Do they contrast with each other or are their palettes aligned?
- Where does each costume piece fall on the spectrum of simple vs elaborate, well-maintained vs worn, trendy vs unique?
- The space that a character takes up can be conveyed by their costume's silhouette or shape. What is hidden or exposed, looser or tighter? What kind of volume does each costume have?
- Would the costumes change as the show goes on? Are pieces added or removed?
- Does any character have a signature piece (eg always wearing a hat, scarf, etc)?
- Are there any cultural influences in anyone's costume?

Create the costume by sketching it ([generic body forms available here](#) for proportion) or making a collage that shows colour, texture, shape, and references. You can include pieces of fabric as examples.

The Comeback has a large cast of characters. Many actors use music as a tool in their preshow prep, playing the same songs as they get ready each day. Choose 8-10 moments in the play that affect the character, or 8-10 aspects of that character's life or personality, and select a song for each. Will you focus on emotions, the characters' circumstances, their actions?

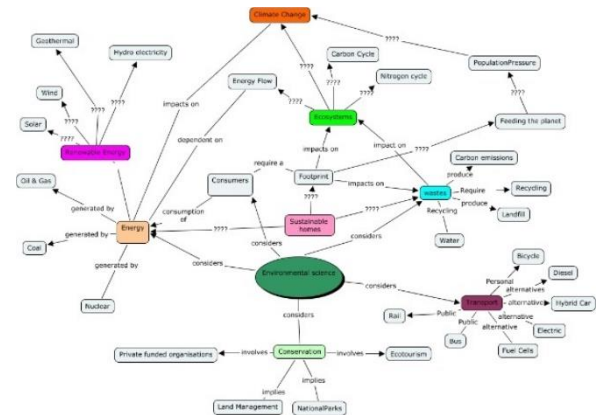
Considering all those aspects of each character, make one playlist that contains a signature song for each character in the show. Share this list with a classmate – can they tell which song goes with which character?

Suggested by Charlene van Buekenhout

A circular embroidery design, likely for a commemorative or religious purpose. The design is composed of several concentric elements:

- Outer Border:** A decorative wreath-like border made of stylized green leaves and small purple berries, arranged in a circular pattern.
- Inner Ring:** A ring of text in a cursive script, repeating the words "Gloria Patri" and "Gloria in excelsis Deo" around the perimeter.
- Central Medallion:** A central oval area containing the name "Furbane Lashburne" in a large, elegant script, with the number "000000" printed below it.

The design is presented on a light-colored background, possibly a piece of fabric or paper, with a small orange logo in the bottom right corner that reads "MySewTool".



Find some Métis jigging videos on Youtube (Charlene suggests anything by the Ivan Flett Memorial Dancers, Ryan Richard and Desmond Colombe, Asham Stompers, and even any of the jigging competitions at Festival du Voyageur). Then explore some Scottish Highland dancing, and French traditional dances. Are there any similarities?

Additional Materials and Resources

Parris consulting has published a [timeline of racist events and legislation](#) in Canada involving multiple cultures for use as an educational tool.

Find out more about Water Protectors:

An [Indigenous Community's Transformational Fight for Clean Water video](#) from CBC's The National.

[Safe Water Drinking Foundation](#) – includes lesson plans and teacher kits:

CBC article: [Art and Spirituality defining Water Protectors](#)

Explore events, important people, and artefacts at [The Virtual Museum of Metis History and Culture](#)

Finding Focus: Framing Canadian Métis and First Nations on Film resource guide and DVD from Winnipeg film group features 15 short films and a guide with topics of discussion and curriculum connections for each. Available for \$85 from <https://shop.winnipegfilmgroup.com/products/15134>

Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties offers classroom workshops as well as tools for teachers to facilitate activities in their own classrooms. [Reach out here to connect with MARL.](#)

The See Different in-school program from the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion offers free teacher toolkits for classroom or extra-curricular programming. Each of the five toolkits contains:

- Professional development learning resources
- A facilitator manual for each activity
- Student handouts, and
- A corresponding PowerPoint presentation that includes embedded multi-media resources (e.g. videos and images).

The toolkit topics range from early introductions to diversity and identity, to exploring privilege, to becoming an ally. More information is available here:

<https://ccdi.ca/campaigns/see-different/> and the kits can be downloaded for free here: <https://ccdi.ca/toolkits/>

Teaching While White: Audio and resource lists for all episodes available at <https://www.teachingwhilewhite.org/podcast/>

Curriculum Connections

Attending Royal MTC's production of *The Comeback* and discussing it, or participating in some of the suggested or similar activities, will fit into the Manitoba curricula in Drama, English Language Arts, Social Studies, History, Global Issues, and Music.

Drama/Theatre

Connecting: The learner develops understandings about the significance of the dramatic arts by making connections to various times, places, social groups, and cultures.

DR-C1: The learner develops understandings about people and practices in the dramatic arts.

DR-C2: The learner develops understanding about the influence and impact of the dramatic arts.

Responding: The learner uses critical reflection to inform drama/theatre learning and to develop agency and identity.

DR-R1: The learner generates initial reactions to drama/ theatre experiences.

DR-R2: The learner critically observes and describes drama/ theatre experiences.

DR-R3: The learner analyzes and interprets drama/ theatre experiences.

DR-R4: The learner applies new understandings about drama/ theatre to construct identity and to act in transformative ways.

Visual Arts (Senior Years)

Creating: The learner generates, develops, communicates ideas for creating visual art.
VA-CR1: The learner generates and uses ideas from a variety of sources for creating visual art.

VA-CR2: The learner develops original artworks, integrating ideas and art elements, principles, and media.

English Language Arts (Senior 1 through 4)

General Learning Outcome 1: Explore thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences.

Express ideas 1.1.1

Consider others' ideas 1.1.2

Experiment with language and forms 1.1.3

Develop understanding 1.2.1

Explain opinions 1.2.2

Combine ideas 1.2.3

General Learning Outcome 2: Comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print, and other media texts.

Prior knowledge 2.1.1

Experience various texts 2.2.1

Connect self, texts, and culture 2.2.2

Appreciate the artistry of texts 2.2.3

Forms and genres 2.3.1
Experiment with language 2.3.4
General Learning Outcome 3: Manage ideas and information.
Make sense of information 3.2.5
General Learning Outcome 5: Celebrate and build community.
Cooperate with others 5.1.1
Work in groups 5.1.2
Share and compare responses 5.2.1
Appreciate diversity 5.2.3

Social Studies

All Grades - Social Studies Skills
Critical and Creative Thinking
Communication
Grade 9 Cluster 1: Diversity and Pluralism in Canada
9.1.2 Human Rights
9.1.3 Living Together in Canada
9.1.4 Integration and Pluralism
Grade 10 Cluster 1: Geographic Literacy
S2.1.3 Place and Identity

Grade 11 History of Canada

1.3: How did First Peoples and Europeans interact in the Northwest, and what were the results?
2.2: How did the fur trade, European settlement, and the rise of the Métis nation transform life for the peoples of the Northwest?
3.1 Why did the Métis resist the westward expansion of Canada, and what were the consequences?
5.3 How are First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples seeking a greater degree of cultural, political, and economic self-determination?

Grade 12 Current Topics in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies

Cluster 1: Image and Identity
1.1 The Ghosts of History
1.2 From Time Immemorial
1.3 Worlds Colliding
Cluster 2: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Relations with Government
2.4 O-Tee-Paym-Soo-Wuk (the Métis): The People Who Own Themselves

Grade 12 Global Issues

Areas of Inquiry: Poverty, Wealth, & Power; Indigenous Peoples, Global Issues, & Sustainability

Mental Health Resources

Some of the content in *The Comeback* may be deals with some heavy subject matter. If feelings become overwhelming for you, please access some of the following resources.

For immediate help in a mental health crisis:

For Indigenous Community members specifically:

Hope for Wellness Indigenous Peoples Helpline: 1-855-242-3310 24/7 or chat online at <http://www.hopeforwellness.ca>

Indian Residential School Survivors Society 24/7 Crisis line: 1-800-721-0066 for anyone experiencing pain or distress as a result of their Residential school experience.

For everyone:

KLINIC Crisis Line: Winnipeg 204-786-8686; toll-free Manitoba 1-888-322-3019 24/7

Manitoba Suicide Prevention and Support Line: 1-877-435-7170

Manitoba Farm, Rural, and Northern Support Services: 1-866-367-3276 24/7

Winnipeg Crisis Stabilization Unit: 204-940-3633 24/7

Winnipeg Mobile Crisis Service: 204-940-1781 24/7

Winnipeg Youth Mobile Crisis Team: 204-949-4777, 1-888-383-2776

Seneca Warm Line: 204-942-9276 (24/7)

Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868 or text 686868 24/7

The Manitoba Métis Federation Mental Health Support Line is open from 7 am to 11 pm daily and provides access to Métis counsellors and resources by calling **1-833-390-1041 ext. 1**

The MMF also runs a Sixties Scoop Wellness Centre with various programs and services for survivors. Visit the [Wellness Centre website](#) for details or call 1-877-595-2194 or 431-317-3366.

The Southern Chief's Organization Pathways to Healing Program supports healing for Survivors of the Sixties Scoop and child welfare system, as well as the residential and day schools, and the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and gender diverse people. Contact pathwayshealing@scoinc.mb.ca or call 204-946-1869 or toll-free 1-866-876-9701 during regular office hours. <https://scoinc.mb.ca/sixties-scoop-survivors/>

Wa-Say Healing Centre provides holistic health and wellness services and programs, and hosts various events, groups, and ceremonies. <https://wa-say.com/> or 1 (204) 774-6484, and keep up to date with their [Facebook page](#).

BIPOC Mental Health Worker List is a free open-source resource for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour-identifying individuals seeking low-barrier BIPOC

therapists, counsellors, and mental health workers in Winnipeg, Manitoba. [Links to the latest versions are on this website](#), or download the pdf directly at <https://ninecircles.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/BIPOC-MENTAL-HEALTH-WORKER-LIST-8-%C3%97-11-in-3.pdf>

BIPOC Mental Health Resource Guide includes links, apps, books, and podcasts. Please note that this is an American publication, so helplines and directories are not tailored to Canadians.

https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/ssi/mental/SSI_BIPOCMHResourceGuide.pdf

KLINIC Community Health - <http://klinik.mb.ca>

Provides health care, counselling, and education as well as a crisis line (suicide as well as sexual assault) for people of every age, background, ethnicity, gender identity, and socio-economic circumstance. Klinik's crisis line is open to people of all ages, genders and backgrounds. **You do not have to be in crisis or suicidal to call.** Calling the Crisis Lines can be a good place to start when trying to sort out a problem. Klinik can also refer you to other services or programs.

MB Farm, Rural and Northern Support Services offers free, confidential, non-judgmental counselling for anyone living on a Manitoba farm or in a rural or northern community: 1-866-367-3276 or 204-571-4180. Live chat and resources online at <https://supportline.ca>

Enrichment Guide Contributor Biography

Charlene van Buekenhout is the Assistant Director of *The Comeback*. She is an actor and theatre creator of Belgian-Métis ancestry. Charlene's MTC credits include Assistant Director of *The Woman In Black*, an actor in *Di and Viv and Rose*, *Jane Eyre*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Bleeding Hearts*, and she was a member of the 2022/23 National Mentorship Program. Elsewhere, she recently played Josephine-Marie in *Li Keur: Riel's Heart of the North* (MB Opera); has been in 5 Shakespeare in the Ruins productions, and acted in and produced *Minoosh Doo-Kapeeshiw* (currently touring). Charlene is also the Artistic Producer of Echo Theatre, which is the Company in Residence at PTE for 2023-2025. She holds a BA Hons. in Theatre (U of W) and has been jigging for 5 years with Métis Jigging instructor Dean Davis. Charlene says "Happy birthday to my Grandma who turned 100 this year. And to Kevin and Phoebe, ki-shakihiitin <3."

Sources

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