

# Resource Mapping

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<b>What is the resource and how is it meant to be used?</b> The resource is a book called, <i>I Am Not a Number</i> by Jenny Kay Dupuis and Kathy Kacer, illustrated by Gillian Newland, published in 2018. <i>I Am Not a Number</i> follows the story of eight year old Irene who is removed from her home to live in a residential school. The end notes provide a brief overview of residential schools, and the real events depicted in the story along with photographs of the Couchie family (Aitken, 2017). There are many teachable moments in this book that help inform young children about residential schools such as describing true events about children being separated from their families and their experiences in residential schools. With this book, it encourages students to reflect and gain an understanding from a survivor's perspective. Moreover, it can be used to learn from the past and work towards reconciliation and improve relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada.	
<b>Write a brief description of the Indigenous Content in the resource:</b> How does the resource appropriately and respectfully addresses a topic related to Indigenous knowledge, practices, and perspectives? This is based on a true story about the co-author Jenny Kay Dupuis' grandmother who is a residential school survivor. Having the story told from a survivor's perspective, it appropriately and respectfully addresses this topic in numerous ways such as informing the readers about the significance of getting their haircut and their struggles of fighting back on going to the residential school. At the end of the book, the authors provide a personal afterword that touches upon the history of residential schools. Jenny Kay Dupuis also works full time supporting the advancement of Indigenous education on all Indigenous matters.	
<b>Connections to Curriculum:</b> What connections do you see to Curriculum Big Ideas, Competencies and Learning Goals – you'll need at least two? For grade 3 social studies, three out of the four big ideas reference indigenous peoples knowledge (BC's...3, 2019), and the fourth seeks commonality among diverse cultures, and one of the grade 4 big ideas refers to understanding conflict between "First Peoples and Europeans" ("BC's...4" 2019, para. 2). By incorporating <i>I Am Not a Number</i> in a grade 3, 4, or 3/4 class, students will achieve what is set out in the big ideas for social studies. First, the subject matter deals directly with an atrocity being enacted upon a specific culture. Through this, students are forced to contend with their feelings and empathise with the survivors and their families. By seeing the story from the child's point of view, the students must also examine the values held by indigenous peoples, such as	

the symbolic significance of one's hair, or the importance of interacting with others in one's own language. Second, the connection Irene has with her siblings and parents in the book hearkens to the commonalities shared by diverse cultures. Students must learn that aspects of life such as family, work, ethics and education are shared by different peoples and cultures ("BC's...3," 2019). Ernest's shop, his place as chief of the community, their family home, and the value placed on family are some examples of things non-indigenous elementary students can call upon to connect themselves with stories such as *I Am Not a Number* and the real life people depicted in them.

### **FPPoL Connections**

What First Nations Principles of Learning does this lesson cover – you'll need to name and discuss at least two?

This book strongly reflects on the various principles of First Peoples Principles of Learning (FPPoL). The eighth, "Learning requires exploration of one's identity" and sixth principles, "Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story" (FPPoL, n.d.) of FPPoL are well represented throughout the whole book of a lived experience in residential school. The author mentions that this story belonged to her grandmother and how her community fell in silence, and therefore, never shared their history. However, when the author heard it from her grandmother, she realized the need to share the tragic truth of Canadian history with the educators, students, and the public. Throughout this book, readers understand how colonialism damaged Indigenous peoples' lives and culture, how they were treated in residential schools, and learn from the past to prevent the future from repeating the same mistakes. Also, this book strongly emphasizes how exploring, recognizing, and respecting one's identity is a crucial part of one's life. Further, this book can reflect the third principle of FPPoL, "Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions" (FPPoL, n.d.). Readers learn how badly Indigenous children were treated in residential schools as they were forcibly separated from their family, shamed, and forced to give up their identity. For example, Indigenous children in residential schools were given a number instead of names, forced to redress and cut their hair, and abused when they spoke their languages. Thus, from the sufferings portrayed in this book, it represents the third principle of FPPoL as settlers' actions led to a severe consequence on the Indigenous people.

### **What background knowledge is required for educators to use this resource?**

Educators will need to consider all relevant Indigenous voices and have a substantial understanding about the history of residential schools and its impact on everyone who suffered from it. This may include understanding intergenerational trauma, the impact of colonization, and the ongoing discrimination towards Indigenous people. Due to the fact that it may be triggering to some students and their families, it is important for educators to know their student's family and background because some parents may not be ready or comfortable to let their children know about it yet (Malbeuf, 2018). Moreover, educators will need to be aware of potential issues and reactions that may arise when dealing with a sensitive topic and understand how to appropriately and respectfully address these situations.

**How will you engage with Indigenous community members to support planning or teaching with this resource? How will you engage with the People who's land you are teaching on?**

(Remember to start thinking in terms of District Personnel.)

Engaging with Indigenous community members will create opportunities to come together and develop meaningful relations with the Indigenous communities, however, there are many considerations for engagement with Indigenous people. First off, it is important to have a clear understanding of why you are engaging with the Indigenous community members and what are the goals you are trying to accomplish in doing so. With this resource, it will be beneficial to invite these members to the classroom and share their own survival stories to gain a better understanding of these experiences and how it may still impact them today - but, be mindful of what they feel comfortable sharing. You may seek advice from the community itself on the appropriate ways to support planning or teaching with this resource in the classroom. Understanding traditional protocols, preparing the classroom to create a welcoming environment, and considering appropriate gifts for these invited guests are highly encouraged when engaging with them. For example, being respectful and acknowledging the traditional territory you are on.

**List three additional resources that could be used to support your chosen resource:**

Provide a brief discussion of how each resource will be used.

The first additional resource that can be used to support this book would be to invite guest speakers to the classroom to share lived experiences in residential schools. By providing the opportunity for students to hear about the lived experience, it springs empathy and to be knowledgeable of other's experiences.

The second additional resource is incorporating other books on residential schools such as "Shi-shi-etko" by Nicola Campbell, "Stolen Words" by Melanie Florence, and "When I was Eight" by Christy Jordan-Fenton. These books are great resources that could be paired with our book, *I Am Not a Number*, because it adds emotional depth to student's knowledge and allows students to understand the varying perspectives and stories of going to residential schools. Also, every book is deeply related to the FPPoL.

The third resource is to introduce "Orange Shirt Day" and encourage students to participate and provide an opportunity for students to be active citizens. With this book, students will learn the background knowledge and understand the importance of participating in Orange Shirt Day.

**Suggested Supporting Learning Activities**

Identify two learning activities (not full lesson plans) that can be used in the classroom in connection with this resource. Include a description of: a) the activity; and b) how it connects to the resource.

**Activity 1: Identity Activity**

a) The teacher provides students with an outline of a person, students fill in different words that describe themselves, crumbles the paper into a ball, and instruct them to rip them to pieces. After, provide them with a tape and tell them to try to put the pieces back

together. The students will realize that no matter how many times they try to put it back, their identity will never be the same as before.

b) This activity can be a great representation of FPPoL's third principle "Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions" (FPPoL, n.d.). It gives students an idea of the emotional suffering that the survivors of residential schools about giving up their identity. It can also give students an idea of what things can make up and destroy one's identity, such as one's physical traits, apparel, language, practices, and culture. Therefore, this activity can deepen student's understanding, build empathy, and learn to respect others.

#### Activity 2: Creative Project

a) A second activity is a creative project where students incorporate their insights, impressions, or interpretations relating to FPPoL about the book through various mediums. Teachers should provide students with a thorough understanding of the FPPoL beforehand. Students could create an information poster for residential schools, book talks persuading other students to read this book, or poems.

b) This creative project will allow students to explore the topic of residential schools in depth. Through this project, students will be able to make meaningful connections to the story with a deeper understanding of the history of residential schools. They will also be able to reflect and value the FPPoL as they are creating their projects.

#### **Contribution to Decolonization, Reconciliation or Self-Determination:**

How does the resource support or contribute to the goal of integrating themes of decolonization, reconciliation, or self-determination?

This book provides testimony from the perspective of a residential school survivor. The vitalness of these testimonies exists due to the ongoing legacy of residential schools, which continues to have a multigenerational effect on "individuals, families and communities" (Hare and Davidson, 2015, p. 255-256). This resource is part of the public discourse on the criminality displayed by the Canadian government and the churches that ran residential schools which explicitly relates it to the theme of reconciliation. The sharing of survivor experiences has led to government action, including the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996), and public apologies from officials including the Indian affairs minister and the Prime Minister of Canada (Hare and Davidson, 2015). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2008-2014) made documentation of survivor and witness testimony, such as the events depicted in *I Am Not a Number*, mandatory. Currently efforts for reconciliation are an area of constant struggle for Indigenous peoples, as they are attempting to seek redress for the wrongdoings against them within a system that creates the definitions for the very things Indigenous peoples are seeking. Without confronting the fact that Canadians with settler backgrounds have benefited from colonialism, restitution and reparations are argued to be without meaning. Among the scholars advocating this viewpoint are Martin Canon (2012), Taiiike Alfred (2009), and Jeff Corntassel (2009) (Hare and Davidson, 2015).

## References

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