

# THE SECRET PATH



## The Secret Path: Jr. High Lesson Plans

The five lesson plans included in this series are meant to help teachers explore the Secret Path book and video with students in grade 7 to 9. Each lesson plan has a corresponding PowerPoint with embedded video. The lessons are divided into four themes: Awareness, Acknowledgment, Atonement, and Action.

### Materials Needed

- Provided Powerpoint
- **Book:** *Secret Path* by Gord Downie & Jeff Lemire
- **Secret Path Video:** (Click [here](#) for video)
- **Maclean's Articles:** [The lonely death of Chanie Wenjack \(2016\) & \(1967\)](#)
- **Historica Canada, Heritage Minutes:** [Chanie Wenjack](#)
- Statement of Apology
- Calls to Action

### Using the Lesson Plans

The 50 minute Secret Path video can be overwhelming for students to watch in its entirety. We have decided to include one song in each lesson plan. This will give students the chance to ease into the material and become comfortable with it over a few lessons. Secret Path could be shown in its entirety after the four lessons provided here, as students may be ready to experience it in its entirety. These lessons are not meant to be a stand alone Residential Schools unit, but to be used to supplement students learning about Residential Schools. These lessons have a particular focus on reconciliation.

The lesson plans are meant to be used with the Secret Path video, but using the book together with the video will enrich understanding. You can also just use the book, and not the video. Furthermore, you are free to use the lesson plans and materials in any way you choose. There is lots of information and activities for each lesson, the hope are teachers will adapt and cut content based on what will work best for their group. The PowerPoints have embedded video so you do not have to have multiple windows open. The times to show for each video are included in the lesson plans and on the PowerPoint.

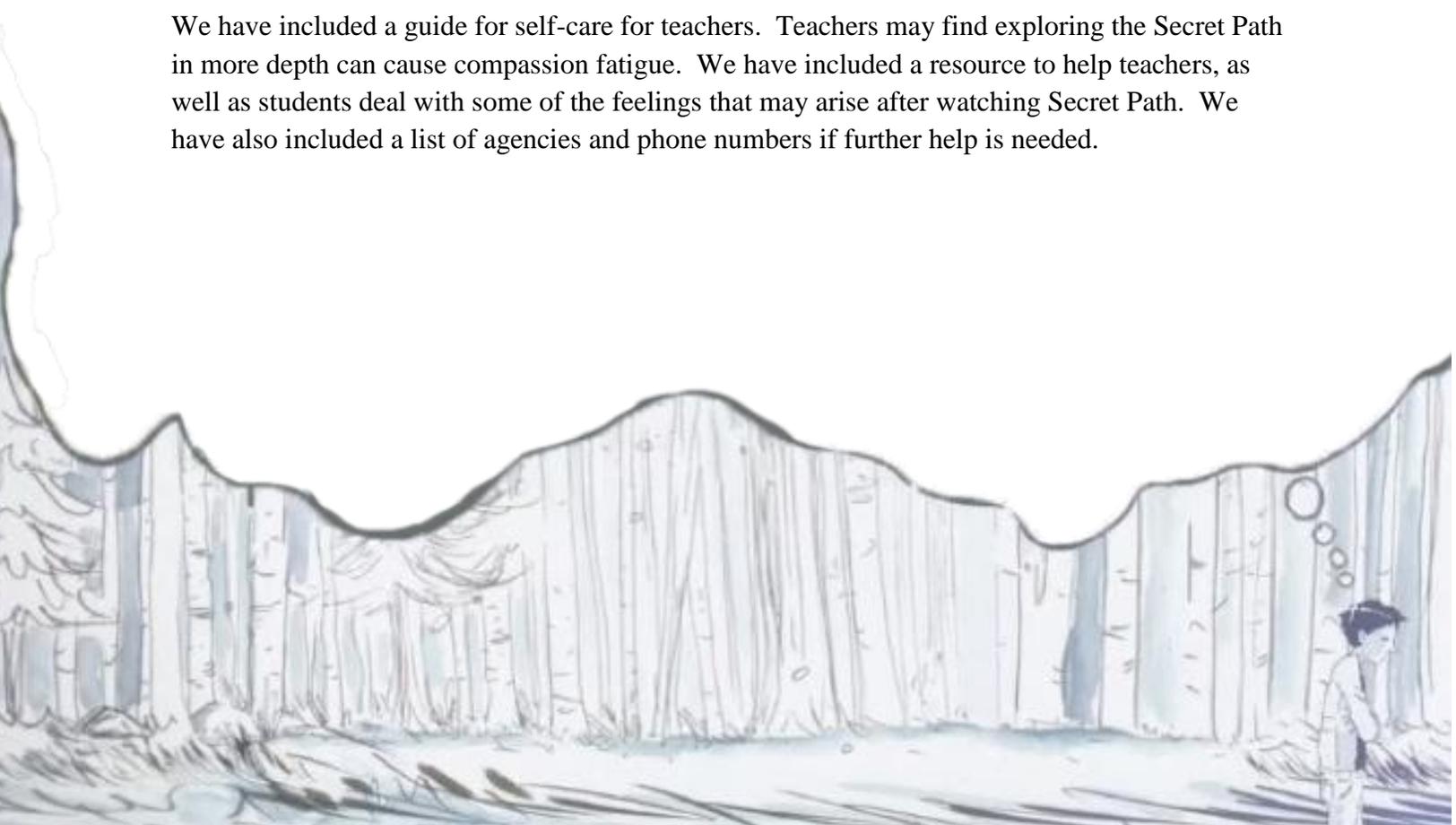
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## Warning Students

These lessons would be best used after students have had some initial learning about Residential Schools. If that is not the case, make sure to have a discussion with the students the day before these lessons begin about their seriousness. Students should understand that this is serious subject matter that affects the lives people, and that it could directly affect the lives of people in their classroom. Also, any student can be negatively affected by what they are exposed to in these lessons, as many will be learning about them for the first time. Warn students that they may experience certain feelings during the lessons (fear, anger, sadness, depression, guilt etc.) or that they may bring up past trauma, and it is important that they talk to their teacher if they are having difficulty understanding or dealing with those feelings.

We have included a guide for self-care for teachers. Teachers may find exploring the Secret Path in more depth can cause compassion fatigue. We have included a resource to help teachers, as well as students deal with some of the feelings that may arise after watching Secret Path. We have also included a list of agencies and phone numbers if further help is needed.



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## **Background Information**

For more information on Chanie Wenjack please use the following resources:

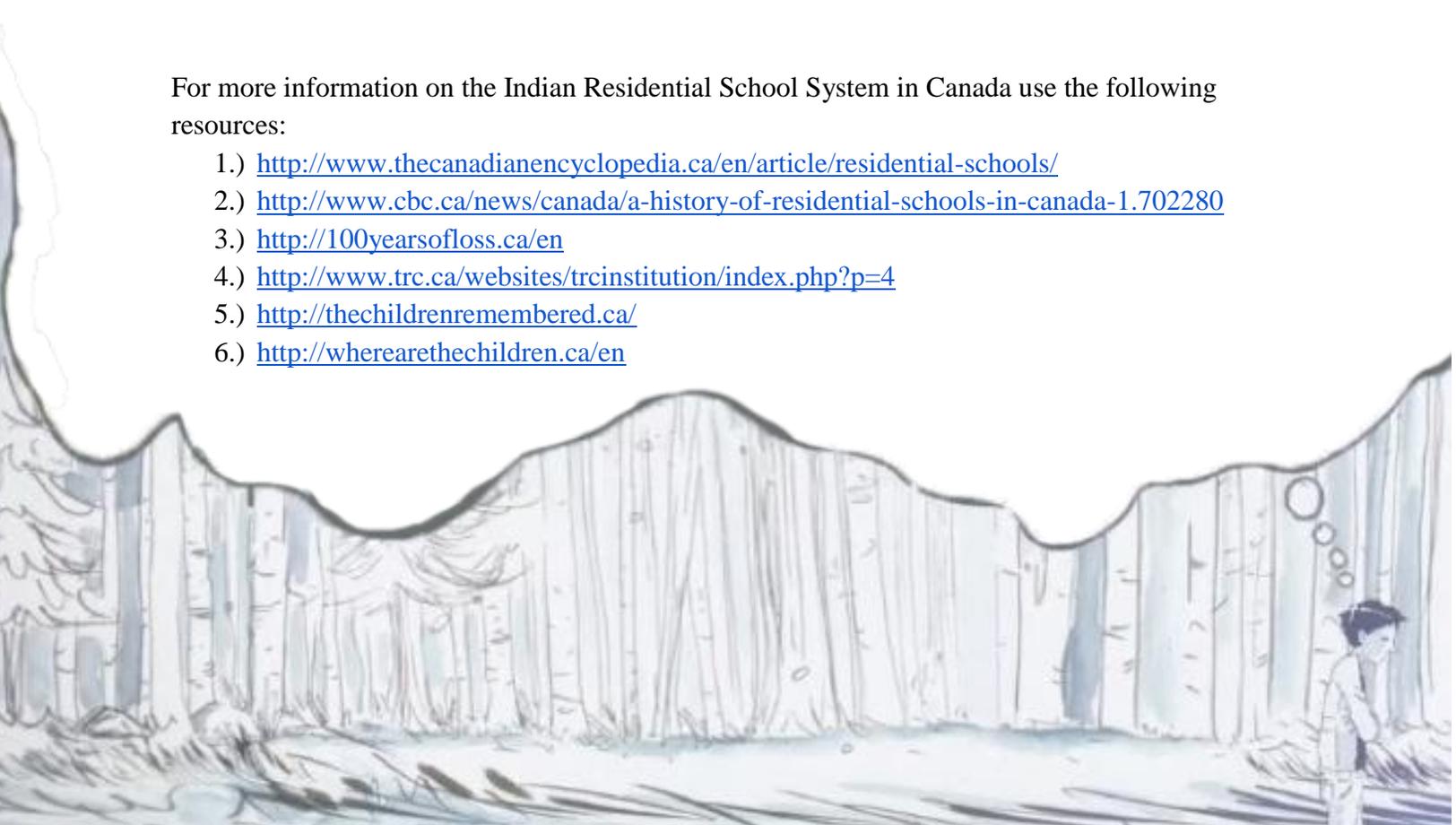
- 1.) <http://www.macleans.ca/society/the-lonely-death-of-chanie-wenjack/>
- 2.) <https://www.downiewenjack.ca/>
- 3.) <http://globalnews.ca/news/2930314/who-was-chanie-wenjack-the-first-nations-child-behind-gord-downies-new-solo-album/>

For more information on Gord Downie and the Tragically Hip use the following resources:

- 1.) <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/music/canadas-barstool-bard-has-a-lasting-legacy-of-enigmatic-erudition/article30124384/>
- 2.) <http://www.macleans.ca/culture/how-we-will-miss-gord-downie-and-the-tragically-hip/>
- 3.) <http://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/watching-canadas-biggest-rock-band-say-a-dramatic-goodbye>

For more information on the Indian Residential School System in Canada use the following resources:

- 1.) <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/residential-schools/>
- 2.) <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/a-history-of-residential-schools-in-canada-1.702280>
- 3.) <http://100yearsofloss.ca/en>
- 4.) <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=4>
- 5.) <http://thechildrenremembered.ca/>
- 6.) <http://wherearethechildren.ca/en>



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## Curricular Connections

| Grade                                 | General Outcome                         | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grade 7                               | 7.2                                     | Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how the political, demographic, economic and social changes that have occurred since Confederation have presented challenges and opportunities for individuals and communities.               |
|                                       | 7.2.3                                   | Recognize the positive and negative consequences of political decisions (PADM)                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Grade 8                               | 8.3.1                                   | Appreciate how a society's worldview influences the society's choices, decisions and interactions with other societies (C, I)                                                                                                                                |
| Grade 9                               | 9.1.2                                   | Appreciate the various effects of government policies on citizenship and on Canadian society (C, I, PADM)                                                                                                                                                    |
|                                       | 9.1.7                                   | Assess, critically, how the increased demand for recognition of collective rights has impacted the legislative process in Canada                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Benchmark Skills and Processes</b> | Critical Thinking and Creative Thinking | Evaluate, critically, ideas, information and positions from multiple perspectives                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                       | Historical Thinking                     | Analyze selected issues and problems from the past, placing people and events in a context of time and place<br><br>Distinguish cause, effect, sequence and correlation in historical events and issues, including the long- and short-term causal relations |
|                                       | Media Literacy                          | Examine techniques used to enhance the authority and authenticity of media messages                                                                                                                                                                          |

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## **Workbook**

Included in this package is a student workbook. Some students may find it easier to follow along with the lessons if they are able to write things down. Many of the lessons ask students to brainstorm ideas or answer questions; the workbook just gives students a space to do this. Also, in the workbook is space provided for students to write their journal entries. Teachers could take in the workbooks at the end of the unit to assess student understanding.

## **Assessment**

The reflection journal referred to throughout the lesson plans can be used as a form of assessment. Students should be able to reflect and write about whatever they want in their reflection journals. However, students may not know what to write about without some guiding questions. The questions included in these lesson plans were purposefully broad, as every class is different and will have varying types of students. You are encouraged to create your own reflection questions, based on the conversations you are having in your class. There are two rubrics included at the end of this package that you can use or modify in the marking of the journals. It's important that we don't assess a student's personal thoughts, but more the level of reflection, communication and understanding demonstrated.

## **Further Assessment**

Some teachers may want to do a more formal summative assessment after the completion of these lesson plans. One possible option is to do a research poster assignment on a specific residential school. The project included at the end of this package was developed based off of 100 Years of Loss and the website The Children Remembered.

