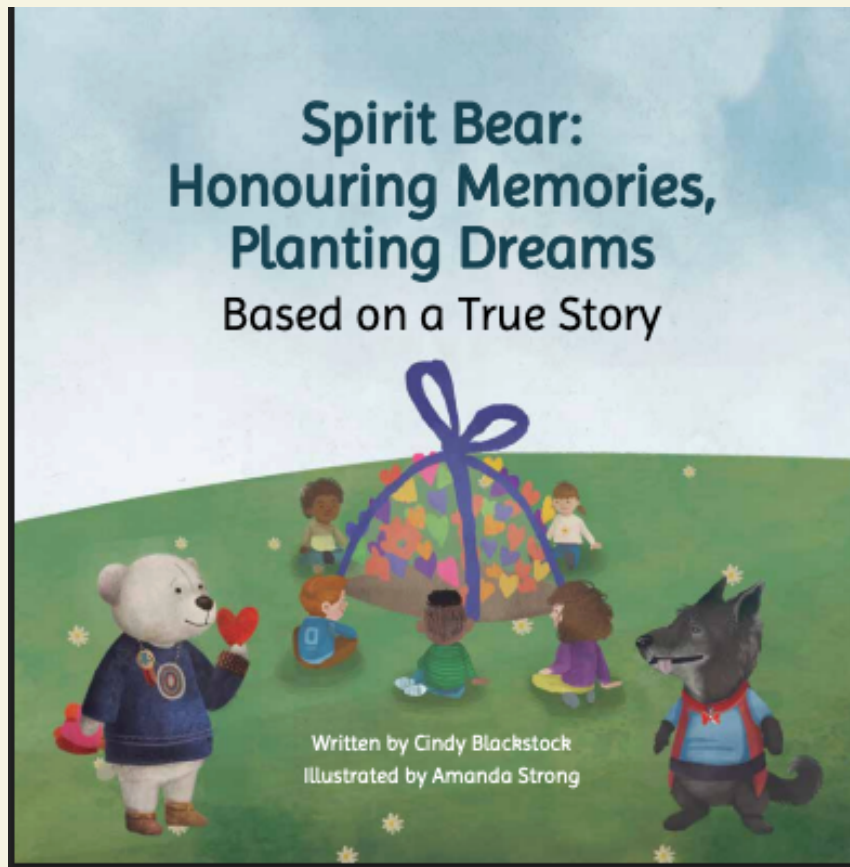




# Spirit Bear: Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams



Cindy Blackstock, Amanda Strong

Lesson Plan Part One  
Questions adapted from Educator Guide



## THEMES:

Truth and Reconciliation, well-being (emotions), belonging

We understand that beginning conversations about residential schools is not easy. One resource that we have explored and is geared to helping young children with this topic is **Spirit Bear**. There is an educator guide (which is available on our site) along with read alouds that can be used. For more visit: [Spirit Bear](#)

**\*Collaborating with Indigenous educators/community elders when possible helps ensure that activities like read alouds and conversations are appropriate and respectful, fostering a deeper and more inclusive appreciation for Indigenous communities.**

This read aloud **Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams** can be partnered with **When We Were Alone** (or any of our read alouds that have been recommended). As these conversations are deep and can cause some discomfort, we **recommend informing parents** before beginning discussions.

If you are teaching kindergarten, as you read the story you may wish to adapt vocabulary or read a portion of each page. For grade 1-2 you may keep it as is or adapt. You know your children best. As well if you find this story is too long for one session, divide the story into manageable parts and read over a few days. This is not a typical repeated read aloud, rather a read aloud for discussion to support the lead up to Orange Shirt Day (September 30<sup>th</sup>). We also recommend reading *When We Were Alone* afterwards to continue discussions.

### Before reading this book:

Consider introducing or reviewing emotional literacy vocabulary. Use visuals to support conversation about emotions. Visuals are available on our site. Discuss the cover and introduce the story. Sharing who is the main character of the story (Spirit Bear) and brief summary of what happens. Talk about what the word healing means and that healing is not always instant, sometimes it takes time for healing to happen. If you have completed the activity for Trudy's Healing Stone, the students can bring their stone to the reading area to hold onto as you read the story. Reading of the story could be shared over two to three days, giving more time for questions and discussion.



**Reading of this book:** As you read, pause to think out loud, to describe your thoughts and feelings. Take time to label the emotions that characters (and you) may be feeling.

Some questions to ask children or to ponder out loud:

**What were residential schools?**

**Why did the government set them up and send Indigenous children to go there?**

**What does reconciliation mean? Why is it important?**

You can select a different question as you read the story over time or use the same questions each time.

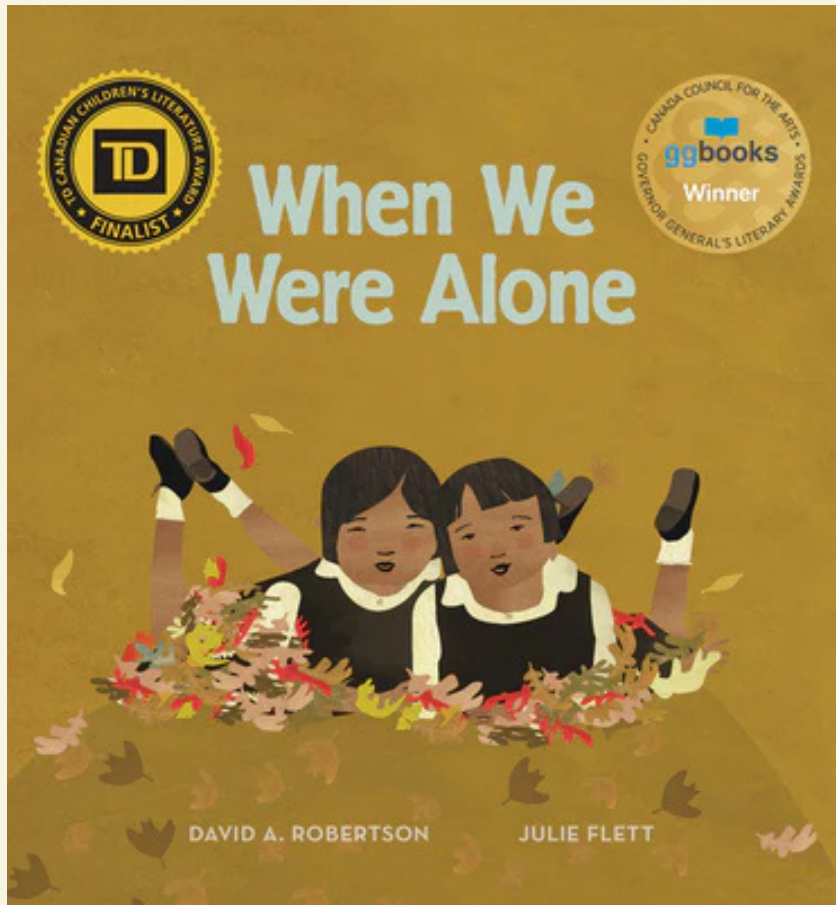
**After Reading:**

**What does it mean to live on Indigenous territory? What does Indigenous title mean?**

**Whose territory are you on right now?** At this time you can make a connection to the land acknowledgement that we say every morning.



# When We Were Alone



David A. Robertson, Julie  
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## Lesson Plan Part Two



## THEMES:

Truth and Reconciliation, well-being (emotions), belonging

**Reading of this book:** As you read, pause to think out loud, to describe your thoughts and feelings. Take time to label the emotions that characters (and you) may be feeling.

Some questions to ask children or to ponder out loud:

**Why did the children have to dress with no colours? Or Why does Nókum wear beautiful colours?**

**How do you think the children including Nókum feel when they arrived at the school?**

**What does reconciliation mean? Why is it important?**

You can adapt the questions to support understanding, you know your children best.

## After Reading:

**What are you wondering about after reading this story?**

**What do you think Spirit Bear is wondering about?**

Note to Educator:

Document learning over the reading of each story. Take time to add new learning each day to the chart or slides. These can lead to new conversations or deeper conversations at the next group gathering. Small groups may work best, we leave it up to you.

## Resources

**<https://fncaringociety.com/SpiritBear>**

Questions adapted from Spirit Bear Educator Guide