

# We Can Too!

## Outline

### Introduction

Help students orient to the idea of learning outdoors. Set expectations for respectful ways of being together. Introduce students to Cate the caterpillar. Practice the call and response: "If Cate can do it" ... "We can too!"

### Land Acknowledgement

Connect to each of the Indigenous groups that signed Treaty 7, as well as to the Métis people. Acknowledge that each group is unique, yet all have in common a deep and respectful relationship with the land. Learn the word for butterfly in the Îlethka, or Stoney Nakota language: sâwîwîn.

### Active Cycle Game

Get up and move around as a class: does nature move in straight lines or in cycles?

### Story of Cate the Caterpillar – Part 1 – Gratitude\*

Throughout the program, students will follow along with the story of our puppet Cate the Caterpillar as she transforms from a caterpillar to a chrysalis, and finally, to a butterfly. In this segment of the story, Cate is a young, hungry, and grateful caterpillar.

### Graterpillars

In groups of 3, the students form caterpillar bodies. Each little caterpillar explores the outdoor space, finding something in nature to be grateful for.

### Musical Poetry

Using the observations collected during the previous activity, we play "musical poetry" – moving our bodies to the sound of the music until the music stops. Each time we stop, we add a line of poetry to our gratitude poem.

### Gratitude Art

Having experienced gratitude for nature's gifts, we collect loose parts in the schoolyard (sticks, rocks, leaves, grass, dandelions, etc.) and create our own works of art.

### Story of Cate the Caterpillar – Part 2 – Honouring Difficulties\*

Cate the caterpillar knows it is time to stop growing and to find a safe space on the branch to begin her transformation. In nature, things are always changing.

## **Schoolyard Walk**

We do a brief, guided walk around the schoolyard, looking for evidence of how nature is changing. In the fall we see life slowing down. In the spring, we notice the natural world waking up from a long winter. How are these same patterns found in our own learning? Are we blooming all the time?

## **Story of Cate the Caterpillar – Part 3 – Honouring Difficulties, cont'd**

Cate's caterpillar body has been transformed into a chrysalis. Inside the chrysalis it is dark; Cate's body has dissolved into a great caterpillar soup. How is she feeling inside there? Do you ever feel that sense of disorientation and discomfort when you are writing or learning something new? Is that the end of your story?

## **Story of Cate the Caterpillar – Part 4 – Seeing with New Eyes\***

After more than a week as a chrysalis, Cate emerges as a butterfly. Having honoured the difficult chrysalis stage, she sees the world with new (butterfly) eyes and waits for her wings to expand. As with Cate, our difficulties don't last forever. When we persevere, are willing to make mistakes, and even experience failure, new learnings and understandings arise – resulting in that “aha” moment! We can cultivate a growth mindset.

## **Nature Starfish**

We spread out onto the school field, connecting to the earth in this brief, guided grounding meditation.

## **Story of Cate the Caterpillar – Part 5 – Going forth with Active Hope\***

Cate is ready to try out her new wings. We'll sing with her to encourage her to take her first flight. After finding some nourishment, she knows her next job is to find a mate and lay her eggs to keep the butterfly life cycle alive! Like Cate, we can find our own unique gifts and share them with the world.

## **Up the Coulee, Down to the Creek**

An active, running game where students act out an adventure in the coulee. Grade 4s, instead, play a similar game called “Up the Mountain, Down to the Prairie”, connecting to the natural vegetative regions of Alberta.

## **Talking/Sharing Circle**

We'll acknowledge again the land that we're on. Each student will have the chance to share something that they would like to remember about the day.

\*Note: The phases of the butterfly's life cycle have been mapped to the four-fold cycle from Joanna Macy's [The Work That Reconnects](#) (Macy & Brown, 2014). Thimbleberry Learning's Butterfly Cycle invites students to compare their own experiences in life and learning to the stages of a butterfly's life cycle.

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## Curriculum Connections

### Grade 2

#### English Language Arts and Literature (2022)

- Poetry can expand how we think and feel about what can be seen, heard, smelled, tasted, touched, or experienced in the world
- Participate in a sharing circle
- Contribute to a variety of listening and speaking activities to build confidence in oral language skills
- Contribute to discussions as a listener and a speaker
- Include adjectives and adverbs to enhance ideas in creative writing

#### Science

- Small crawling and flying animals
- Water cycle
- Hot and cold temperature

#### Social Studies

- Communities in Canada
- Appreciation of physical and human geography where we live

#### Physical Education and Wellness (2022)

- Physical activity can be connected to experiences on the land
- People, land, and animals are interconnected
- Explore how the roles and responsibilities of people, land, and animals contribute positively to community well-being.
- Self-regulation strategies include: breathing techniques
- Practice a variety of self-regulation strategies
- Self-regulation is connected to signals from the body, mind, and spirit
- Identify signals that support self-regulation

## Grade 3

### English Language Arts and Literature (2022)

- Experiment with creating limericks
- Participate in presentations as a respectful audience member
- Make connections between a text and personal feelings, experiences, or background knowledge
- Persevere through challenges that may arise in the creative expression of ideas

### Science

- Animal lifecycles: come to appreciate the beauty and fragility of life

### Social Studies

Quality of life

### Physical Education and Wellness (2022)

- Each season offers different opportunities for active living
- Modify plans for physical activity in response to changing seasons and diverse environments
- Practice self-regulation to maintain engagement in a variety of situations
- The development of resilience is supported through understanding of emotions
- Identify emotions in a variety of situations

## Grade 4

### English Language Arts and Literature (2022)

- Poetry engages the imagination and can encourage individuals to connect with other people, places, ideas, or emotions
- Experiment with creating free verse
- Contribute respectfully to a variety of interactions that involve listening and speaking
- Vary word choice to appeal to an audience
- Experiment with sensory detail or figurative language to add interest and keep audiences engaged

### Science

- Plant growth and changes – observe plant growth within the community

### Social Studies

- Alberta: relationships between Indigenous people and the land
- Value and respecting one's relationship with the environment
- Natural regions of Alberta

### Physical Education and Wellness (2022)

- Students interpret how resilience and perseverance can be influenced by a variety of life experiences
- Experiences on the land are significant to learning and personal development in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities
- Examine how experiences with places or artifacts can be meaningful
- Describe strategies that support resilience
- Perseverance is continuing with a difficult task for a short or long period of time
- Perseverance can enable an individual to succeed despite obstacles
- Examine how challenging situations can involve perseverance
- Reflection and feedback on success and failure provide opportunities for personal growth and learning
- Perseverance is finding ways to continue to improve skills and stay motivated during difficult situations
- Social-emotional factors influence positive mental health and well-being
- Explore ways of supporting personal development

# Reference

Macy, J., & Brown, M. (2014). *Coming back to life: The updated guide to the work that reconnects*. New Society Publishers.