

Arts Club Theatre Company

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

Redpatch

2018/2019 Season



Goldcorp Stage at the BMO Theatre Centre

MARCH 7 – MARCH 31, 2018

THE
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Welcome

This guide was created for teachers and students. It contains an overview of the play’s story, as well as informative resources and activities for teachers and students. The guide aims to provide background knowledge and critical perspectives on the play that will yield fruitful discussion and foster an understanding and appreciation of the theatre arts.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions for the guide, please contact our group sales representative at 604.687.5315 ext 253 or groups@artsclub.com.

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About the Arts Club Theatre Company

The Arts Club of Vancouver was founded in 1958 as a private club for artists, musicians, and actors. It became the Arts Club Theatre in 1964 when the company opened its first stage in a converted gospel hall at Seymour and Davie Streets.

Now in its 55th season of producing professional live theatre in Vancouver, the Arts Club Theatre Company is a non-profit charitable organization that operates three theatres: the Granville Island Stage, the Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage, and the Goldcorp Stage at the BMO Theatre Centre. Its popular productions range from musicals and contemporary comedies to new works and classics. Learn more about the Arts Club Theatre Company at artsclub.com.

Learning objectives

By viewing *Redpatch* and working through the following activities, students will:

- Gain a deeper understanding of the contributions and experiences of Indigenous soldiers during WWI
- Employ creative and critical thinking to analyze the relationships between Euro-Canadian and Indigenous soldiers during the Great War
- Explore the performance style of physical theatre as a mode of re-telling important historical events or personal stories
-

Connections to New BC Curriculum

English Language Arts: English First Peoples (10–12)

Big Ideas

- The exploration of text and story deepens understanding of one's identity, others, and the world
- First Peoples' texts and stories provide insight into key aspects of Canada's past, present, and future
- First Peoples' voices and texts play a role within the process of Reconciliation
- Texts are socially, culturally, geographically, and historically constructed

Core Competencies

- Demonstrate understanding of how language constructs and reflects personal, social, and cultural identities
- Respectfully exchange ideas and viewpoints from diverse perspectives to build shared understandings and extend thinking
- Recognize and understand the role of story and oral tradition in expressing First Peoples' perspectives, values, beliefs, and points of view
- Select and apply appropriate strategies in a variety of contexts to guide inquiry, extend thinking, and comprehend texts
- Construct meaningful personal connections between self, text, and world

Social Studies: BC First Peoples (12)

Big Ideas

- The impact of contact and colonialism continues to affect the political, social, and economic lives of BC First Peoples.
- Cultural expressions convey the richness, diversity, and resiliency of BC First Peoples.

Core Competencies

- Consider the role and significance of media in challenging and supporting the continuity of culture, language, and self-determination of BC First Peoples

- Explain different perspectives on past or present people, places, issues, and events, and distinguish between worldviews of today and the past (perspective)
- Assess and compare the significance of the interconnections between people, events, and developments at a particular time and place, and determine what they reveal about issues in the past and present (significance)

Social Studies (8–12)

Core Competencies

- Interaction between Aboriginal people and Europeans
- First People's contributions to the development of Canada
- Assess Canada's role in World War I and the war's impact on Canada
- Evaluate the impact of interactions between Aboriginal peoples and European explorers and settlers in Canada from 1815 to 1914

Drama (8–12)

Big Ideas

- Drama provides opportunities to gain insight into perspectives and experiences of people from a variety of times, places, and cultures
- Identity is explored, expressed, and impacted through drama experiences
- Drama cultivates collaboration through critical reflection, creative co-operation, and the exchange of ideas

Core Competencies

- Traditional and contemporary Aboriginal worldviews and cross-cultural perspectives communicated through storytelling and drama
- Explore First Peoples perspectives and knowledge, other **ways of knowing**, and local cultural knowledge to gain understanding through dramatic works
- Examine the influences of social, cultural, historical, environmental, and personal context on drama
- Students experience, respond to, and reflect on the aesthetic, cultural, and historical contexts of drama.
- Students explore, express, and reflect on their thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and imaginative ideas through individual and group participation in drama

Plot Summary

Redpatch is the story of a mixed-blood Indigenous man from the Nuu-chah-nulth nation of Vancouver Island, who fought for Canada in World War I. This new Canadian play chronicles the horrors that soldiers witnessed and endured in France, and offers a unique perspective of the Great War, highlighting the fact that over four thousand Indigenous soldiers volunteered to fight for Canada.

Meet the Playwrights: Raes Calvert & Sean Harris Oliver



Raes Calvert is the co-artistic director of Hardline Productions, which was created in 2010. Raes is an Indigenous actor of Metis descent, who has toured Nationally and Internationally with such companies as Axis Theatre, Green Thumb Theatre, Manitoba Theatre for Young People, Newworld Theatre, and The Presentation House Theatre. Notable credits include *The Children of God* (Citadel/NAC), *Les Filles du Roi* (The Cultch), and *Redpatch* (Arts Club/Citadel/Hardline). He is also a recipient of the Reveal Indigenous Arts award from the Hnatyshyn Foundation.



Sean Harris Oliver is the co-artistic and managing director of Hardline Productions. He has actively written, directed, and acted in a number of Hardline Productions shows, many of which have been nominated for Jessie Richardson awards. His two newest plays have gone one to earn numerous distinctions including being shortlisted for the 2017 Playwright's Guild of Canada's Carol Bolt Award for *Redpatch*, the Georgia Straight's Critics Choice Award as well as a Jesse Richardson Theatre Award nomination for 'Outstanding New Script' for *The Fighting Season*.

Characters

Pte. Woodrow, aka Half-Blood: A mixed-blood Aboriginal man from the West.

Pte. LeBlanc, aka Bam-Bam: A private from Quebec.

Pte. Ogilvy, aka Howard Thomas: A medical student from Ontario.

Jonathon: Half-Blood's best friend.

Pte. LaFoley, aka Dickie: A private from Manitoba.

She Rides Between: Half-Blood's grandmother.

Raven: A spirit.

Kakawin: A spirit.

Sgt. MacGuinty: A platoon sergeant.

Various French Soldiers

A German Soldier

Where does “Redpatch” come from?

In 1914, Canada was still a colony belonging to the British Empire. So when Canada went to war, the uniforms that our soldiers wore were the same uniforms that British soldiers were wearing. It didn't take long for British Officers to get tired of confusing their own soldiers with Canadian (colonial) soldiers. To solve this annoyance, the British army issued small rectangular red patches that were sewn onto the left shoulder of each Canadian infantry soldier. This red patch was the first distinguishing mark that identified Canadians as being a separate part of the British army.

Notes on the Nuu-Chah-Nulth language

Nuu-Chah-Nulth is a southern Wakashan language spoken by about 150–200 people on the Northwest coast of British Columbia. After meeting with local elders, Ray and Terry Williams, we learned that fewer and fewer people are speaking the language and that it is most certainly in decline. Ray, and his wife Terry were consulted on the pronunciation of the Nuu-chah-nulth words used in this text, and both were supportive of the use of their language in this script.

Nuu-Chah-Nulth is a language that sits back in the throat and on the sides of the tongue. There are many “*tesh*” sounds, which are made by flattening the tongue against the sides of the molars and pushing air up through the cheeks. The Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal council has a very good language resource (www.nuuchahnulth.org) where one can listen to the pronunciations of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth words.

Notes on Nootka Island

Although not specifically mentioned in the play, the hero of our story comes from a small island off the Northwest coast of Vancouver Island, called Nootka Island. One important aspect to consider when staging this play is that Nootka island is located in a fog zone. Fog and heavy cloud often surround the island and we feel that these natural elements should be present in any staging of this story. Haze and fog were heavily incorporated in the premiere production.

Interview with the playwrights, Sean Harris Oliver and Raes Calvert

Sean Harris Oliver and Raes Calvert discuss the process of creating *Redpatch*.

SEAN HARRIS OLIVER – It all started in November 2011. I was acting in a play about World War I, and I was having a good time being on stage, but to be honest, the play kind of felt like a lesson in Canadian history and I was never much of a history buff. My good friend Raes came and saw me in this show (that was nice of him), and afterwards we talked a lot about one of the First Nations soldiers who was a character in the play. It turns out that Raes and I were taught very little in school about the inclusion of Aboriginal soldiers in Canadian army. Raes mentioned to me that his grandfather, a Métis man, had served in the Canadian Expeditionary Forces during the Second World War, and that's when Raes and I started coming up with the idea that would become *Redpatch*.

So what did we do? Well, like I said before, Raes and I were not history buffs, so we had to go out and learn about Canadian military history. We decided that we wanted to explore the idea of a Métis man fighting during the Great War (World War I), so we went online and looked in the library, and we tried to find books that would teach us about that time in history. Some of the books we read were these ones: *All Quiet On The Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque, *In Flanders Fields: Poems of the First World War* edited by Brian Busby, *Three Day Road* by Joseph Boyden, *Virmy* by Vern Thiessen, as well as a TV series called *Circle of the Sun* presented by the National Film Board of Canada.

RAES CALVERT – After we read all those books, Sean and I sat down and started writing out some scenes that we thought might be in the show. Between 2013 and 2015 we wrote and rewrote *Redpatch*. It was very challenging to take all of our book research and then try to turn it into an interesting and engaging story. We also wrote a bunch of grants to the Canada Council for the Arts, the British Columbia Arts Council, and the Department of Canadian Heritage to try and obtain funding to help us workshop our play. In August of 2015, with dramaturg David Geary (a dramaturg is like a script doctor), and a great cast of actors and designers workshopped the *Redpatch* script and had a one-night invited reading.

SHO – OK! Hold up. I should mention at this point that doing all this research took *three years!* It took three years to read all these books, watch movies about war, and go to Nootka Island. Of course, during that time, Raes and I were still writing scenes; working on new material, trying to make our story better. So then, in the summer of 2015, Raes and I got a bunch of our actor friends together and we read our workshop draft of *Redpatch*. A workshop draft means that everyone is still working on the play. It's not the final version of the story you want to tell, it's just a version that's good enough to have actors read their parts. At the end of this workshop process, we invited a bunch of theatre producers to come listen to us read the story. It's a pretty nerve-wracking experience—you invite people, who you hope will like your play, to come to a theatre to listen actors read your work out loud. And that's what we did! And from that activity, Mr. Kim Selody, an Artistic Director in North Vancouver, invited us to come to his theatre to try working on the play some more.

RC — After finishing our workshop with David Geary, Sean and I realized that we needed to visit the ancestral homeland of the main character in our play. I have a great-great grandmother from Nootka Sound and this is one of the reasons for selecting this area as the home of our character. Sean and I needed to go to Nootka Sound.

While we were on Vancouver Island (on the way to Nootka Island), we stayed our first night at my friend Kyle's house on a golf course in Courtenay! From there we set off to meet a local artist Andy Everson. We had a great chat with him and he explained a bit about his people and their history in the Komoks Nation. Andy is a high-ranking traditional dancer in his community and he showed us some of his dance regalia. We also lucked out by meeting Sean Muir, a guy who has his studio directly beside Andy's studio. We found out his company creates illustrations, posters, videos, and comic books on health and social issues for youth. And we wanted to create a play and a graphic novel with our story! So that was really amazing because we were able to hire Sean's company to help us make a graphic novel that goes along with this play. Have you seen the graphic novel? You can find it at www.redpatch.ca.

RC — So we finally got to the northwest coast of Vancouver Island. To this town called Gold River. But then... we had to fly to Nootka Island! *WHAT!?* We had to pay \$500 bucks to fly for 20 minutes to Nootka. Only a 20-minute flight from Gold River (but my first time in a float plane) we arrived at a place called *Yuquot*. We were greeted by local elder Ray Williams and his horse (a 4x4 quad). We would learn from Ray that Yuquot means “where the four winds blow”. He threw us and our gear into the trailer and

drove us to our cabin. He got a fire started for us in our wood stove and then took off back home for lunch.

SHO — If you have the chance to check out our website, now would definitely be a good time, because there were tons of photos that we took from this trip and we put them all up online, and you can get a visual sense of this island we were visiting.

RC — Dude! I'm trying to tell a story here.

SHO — Sorry, go ahead. I just get excited remembering all this stuff.

RC — After we got settled, we went to Ray's house and met his wife Terry and their grandson. Ray is an amazing historian for his people. He was excited by the play that we were developing and really helped us understand the area our character comes from and what it would have been like in the early 1900s. Ray and Terri still speak their ancestral language at home and he even taught us some words and how to pronounce them for our script. Ray was happy to show us the church on the island and tell us the history of the place. Over the next few days Ray and told us stories and history to help us understand the area better. Our cabin had a beautiful view. There is definitely something magical about this place. Ever since I left I have wanted to return. As Ray said to us "There is something about this place that shows you what you need to do and where you need to go next."

SHO — Boom! So in the winter of 2016, Raes and I went to Kim's theatre (Presentation House Theatre) and we did what is called a *workshop production*. This means that instead of reading the play out loud in front of people, that you actually try to do the play with costumes and props and sound and lighting. The difference between a *workshop production* and a *full production* is that in a workshop production you tell the audience that you're still not finished with the story, and that re-writes are still happening. But overall, a *workshop production* is a great way to get a story in front of audiences and get their feedback on your script. And guess what? Kim was so happy with the way that audiences responded to our show that he decided to have his company support us for a 2017 world premiere production! (That basically means that we'd be doing the show for reals.)

RC — And so *finally*... Finally, after like five years of working on this play, we put up our professional premiere. That means, the for real-sies show. That's when all the people come out and see it and it's like your final product.

SHO — We premiered *Redpatch* in April 2017, which coincided with the 100-year anniversary of the battle of Vimy Ridge, and that was a pretty special moment. It was like 100 years later, Raes and I are putting on this show, that has to do with a pretty significant point in Canadian history.

RC — And that's kind of the end of our story.

SHO — Well, for that part anyway.

RC — Ya, true, *that* part. The creation of *Redpatch*.

SHO — The next part of our story is what *you're* doing right now! Learning about *Redpatch* and hopefully, coming to see the play, and even more hopefully... learning about our Canadian history in a way that's fun.

RC — I think it's fun.

SHO — Ya, of course. I'm just saying... one of the big things that you and I wanted to achieve with *Redpatch* was to create a show that people could watch and learn something from, but that they would *also* find entertaining.

RC — Dude. I think people will love this show.

SHO — I think so too.

Discussion Questions

These questions can be used as writing prompts, as well as prompts for small-group and large-group discussions.

Pre-show discussion questions:

The following questions have been included to spark discussions and to get students thinking about what they might experience prior to viewing the production.

- Have you seen any live performances on stage before? What are your expectations about what you will see on stage in this production?
- What do you already know about the play, including the plot, production elements (such as lighting, sound, costumes, and sets) and the characters? How do you anticipate that these elements will come together in the play?
- What do you know about Canada's history in the Great War? Through which perspectives have you learned about WWI? What do you already know about the perspectives of Aboriginal, First nations, and Métis soldiers in the Canadian Force during the Great War?
- Think about how stories and experiences are told and shared. How do you tell your stories and how do the people around you share their stories? How do you think the stories and experiences will be portrayed in this production? (Consider sound, movement, ensemble work, monologues, flashbacks, memories, etc).

Post-show discussion questions:

The following questions are ideal for engaging students in reflection and exploration of the major themes, characters, and other elements of the production.

- What ideas or themes did the play make you think about?
- What did you notice about the ways in which the characters communicated with one other?
- What did you notice about the ways in which the characters displayed their emotions?
- What did you think about the technical elements of the production: which elements stood out to you the most, and why? What effects did this have on your understanding of the play?
- Imagine that you could meet with members of the cast, crew, artistic team, or production team. What questions would you ask them about the choices and elements in the production?
- How did the physical aspects and movement elements of the piece affect your experience as an audience member?

- What moments of the production were most powerful to you? What emotions did these moments evoke, and what made them so impactful for you?
- The Nuu-Chah-Nulth language is southern a Wakashan language spoken by about 150–200 people on the Northwest coast of British Columbia. The playwrights met with local elders to consult with them on the pronunciation of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth words used in the text. What are your thoughts about the incorporation of the Nuu-Chah-Nulth language in the production? What are some of the words that you remember hearing when you watched the play? For more information, visit the Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council website to see their language resource (www.nuuchahnulth.org).
- Imagine that you are in the process of creating a play about a historical event. Which event will you choose, and why? Which perspectives will you highlight, and who will you consult in your process? How would you like the play to be staged? What emotions and lasting thoughts might be instilled in the audience members?

Activity 1: Physical Theatre Exploration

(Recommended for Drama, Social Studies, and English Language Arts)

Rationale: The staging of *Redpatch* and the creation of its script is strongly influenced by the performance style of physical theatre, where the story is told not only through acting but also through movement and sound. The playwrights note that this is because they intend for the audience to feel as they are ‘in the war’ as part of the theatrical experience. This immersive form of theatre can be overwhelming and also difficult to interpret, therefore it is helpful for students to explore the style of physical theatre in relation to a historical event before viewing *Redpatch* to gain a deeper understanding of how the creators intended the soldiers’ experience to be interpreted. Physical theatre is also a great tool to use to re-tell or create experiences in the context of drama, English or social studies classrooms so that students internalize the experiences that they are re-interpreting through a multi-modal exploration.

Step One – *Physical Warm-up*

1. Have students make a circle so that everyone feels involved. Explain that the intention of the warmup is for everyone to be able to explore physically. Allow students to make adjustments as needed.
2. Going around the circle, each student will suggest a stretch or simple warmup. The rest of the students will mirror the stretch/warmup and adapt as needed.
3. If one part of the body has not been warmed up, guide students to focus on that part of the body. The point is for the whole body to be warmed up by the end of the exercise.

Step Two – *Introduce Physical Theatre as Stylistic Form*

Explain to students that sound and movement heavily influence the form of physical theatre. It is about interpreting a story or event through multi-modal storytelling so that audiences and actors can experience the story or event in a heightened fashion or altered perspective. This can be achieved through a multitude of tactics such as choosing complimentary music, lighting, interpretive dance, or symbolic movement. It is about focusing on the physical aspect of storytelling to share a story in an alternative way. Physical theatre is a very open form but for the purposes of this exploration, we will focus mainly on movement and sound.

Step Three – *Review Details of Historical Event*

Have students pick and research a historical event to explore through physical theatre. Some options include:

- Building the CPR (Canadian Pacific Railway)
- The Somme
- Residential Schools
- Japanese Internment
- Chinatown riots of 1907
- A story from a War veteran

Take some time to review the details of these historical events that are being explored. It is also up to the teacher to decide whether each group will have a different historical event or each group in the classroom will explore the same historical event.

Step Four – *Create Physical Representation of Historical Event or Personal Story*

Allow students to work in small groups to create their physical theatre piece. The goal is to re-tell the event or personal story through movement (dance, mime, simple actions etc.) and simple sound (chanting, single words, singing, lines of poetry, short dialogue, sound effects etc.).

Step Five – *Presentation*

After intended rehearsal time, allow students to present their interpretations in front of the class/audience. Physical theatre is largely dependent on the effect that it has on audience so it is important that students have the chance to participate in both an interpretation and witnessing an interpretation.

Optional: Group Feedback Session

Have students consider the following questions:

1. What was clear and what wasn't clear about the piece?
2. Did the physical and movement choices made in the piece clearly tell the story of the historical event? What physical choices could have made it clearer?
3. Did the sound used in the piece clearly tell the story of the historical event? What sound choices could have made it clearer?
4. What physical and sound choices resonated with the audience? Why do you think they worked so well?

Step Six – *Post-Presentation Discussion*

After the presentations, have a post-discussion with the entire class or in small groups with these guiding questions as inspiration.

Guiding Questions:

1. What did this physical theatre exploration reveal about the historical event/personal story?
2. Did the physical theatre exploration help or hinder your understanding of the historical event/personal story? For both answers—why and how?
3. How does storytelling change when it is primarily reflected through sound and movement?
4. Did this exploration do justice or did it take away from the historical event/personal story that was being interpreted?
5. How did this exploration make you feel—emotionally, mentally or physically—about the historical event/personal story that was being explored? Did this differ when you were a part of the exploration to when you were witnessing it as an audience member?
6. Why do you think the creators of *Redpatch* chose the performance style of physical theatre to help tell the story?

Activity 2: Critical Analysis of Scenes with Historical Context

(Recommended for use with Drama and English classes)

Rationale: *Redpatch* highlights the experience of an Indigenous soldier during World War I; therefore, it is important for students to gain a deeper understanding of the contributions of Indigenous soldiers and the important role that they played during the Great War. This study guide includes some historical and informational context to help with this process but it is also important to analyze the relationships between Euro-Canadian and Indigenous soldiers during the war. This can be done through the analysis of some provided scenes from *Redpatch* so that students are acquainted with the Indigenous perspective of the First World War but also have an idea of the racial tension and prejudice that accompanied this experience.

Step One – Review contributions of Indigenous soldiers in WWI

Indigenous Peoples Experiences and Contributions to the Great War:

Indigenous people enlisted in the First World War for a number of reasons such as a regular wage, friends and family enlisting, travel, and even for patriotic reasons. Aboriginal soldiers were able to employ their traditional skills like hunting, navigating and tracking to help them be successful as soldiers. These abilities and racial prejudices also affected their placement in dangerous military roles, causing many Indigenous soldiers to become snipers and reconnaissance scouts. A very significant result of Indigenous soldiers enlisting was the social interaction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. This caused many non-Aboriginal soldiers to better understand Indigenous people and to dissolve their prejudices of Aboriginal people. Unfortunately, this comradeship shared amongst Aboriginal and Non-aboriginal veterans did not extend past the war and the racial tensions were very much still alive at home.

(Source: 'The Canadian Encyclopedia: Indigenous Peoples and the World Wars' and 'Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada: Aboriginal contributions during the First World War')

Step Two – Read Throughs

As a class or in small groups, read through the scenes below:

Definitions of Nuuchah-Nulth language used in the *Redpatch* script:

Kaka-win = King of the Ocean. Orca Whale. Protector.

Kwooshin/Kuoshin = Raven. Trickster.

Mamak-neh = White people.

Kwees = Snow.

Kwee-shaht = Mixed-blood. From mixed places.

Naneek-su = Grandmother

Resource to hear language: <http://www.nuuchahnulth.org/language/alpha/alpha-1>

Scene 1: Scene between She Rides Between and Half-Blood

A beach on Vancouver Island. Summer 1914.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: So... you want to be brave, do you?

HALF-BLOOD: I want to be a warrior.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: A warrior?

HALF-BLOOD: Everyone's going. Even Frankie Thompson signed up. And Frankie's got a lazy eye!

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: If everyone decided to light their hair on fire, would you?

HALF-BLOOD: Depends on how cold it was outside.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: Ha! So you're a trickster then? Just like Raven?

HALF-BLOOD: Maybe.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: Have I ever told you the story of kakawin and quʔušin?

HALF-BLOOD: Grandmother... I know all your stories.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: Do you?

HALF-BLOOD: And you only tell me *that story* when you're trying to stop me from doing something.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: Oh, I wouldn't do that.

HALF-BLOOD: Every man in every village is enlisting.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: The war to end all wars. Ha! And this must be the fire to end all fires. And that tree must be the tree to end all trees. You must have rocks in your head if you believe that.

HALF-BLOOD: It's time for me to prove myself.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: This is the *mamaatni* war, Rock-Head. You want to leave your home – go over to some piece land you've never even seen before – to what? To fight for the whites?

HALF-BLOOD: The world is changing. Every man in the country is going.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: Country? When did we all of a sudden become a part of the whole country?

HALF-BLOOD: Grandma, people will call me a coward if I don't fight.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: Not fighting doesn't make you a coward.

HALF-BLOOD: Jonathon would have gone.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: Young one —

HALF-BLOOD: Jonathon was brave and I want to be brave too!

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: There's a difference between bravery and foolishness and I thought you boys would've learned that lesson already!

Beat.

Young one... listen to me. War doesn't make men brave; it doesn't make them heroes. War drowns men.

HALF-BLOOD: Grandmother, I'm not asking for your permission.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN nods.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: You will go far from here. Across mountains and the ocean.

To the other side of the world.

HALF-BLOOD: I know.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: Far from me.

HALF-BLOOD: Yes.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: Far from your home.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN produces a medicine bag.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: Medicine. For strength. Wolf hair. Cedar. Smooth pebbles from this beach. Wet stones, carved from the sky.

HALF-BLOOD: naniiqsu...

SHE RIDES BETWEEN hugs her grandson.

HALF-BLOOD: Grandmother.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: Yes?

HALF-BLOOD: You're crushing me.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN releases HALF-BLOOD.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN: Always remember, Grandson, no matter what happens to you in this life... no matter how far you go... you are where you come from.

SHE RIDES BETWEEN exits. HALF-BLOOD stands alone, holding the medicine bag. He looks out over the ocean. We hear a whale call way off in the distance. RAVEN takes flight.

RAVEN: Kraa! Kra-Kraa! Kra-Kraa!

Scene 2: Soldiers on the Front

The rear lines near Ypres, 1915.

RAVEN descends from the sky and lands on a rock.

RAVEN: Kra. Kra-Kraaa.

DICKIE, BAM-BAM, and HOWARD THOMAS approach HALF-BLOOD, who sits quietly by himself.

HOWARD THOMAS: (To DICKIE.) Go on...

DICKIE: Hey Woodrow. Me and the boys we... we just... ah shit.

HOWARD THOMAS: Dickie.

BAM-BAM: We want to say you were pretty good out there today.

DICKIE: For an Indian.

BAM-BAM *Oui, c'est sûr, pour un Indien.* [Yes, of course, for an Indian.]

HOWARD THOMAS: You were the best of all of us, Woodrow. You're a great soldier.

HALF-BLOOD: I killed a man today. With my bare hands.

DICKIE: Damn right you did!

HALF-BLOOD: Right in front of me. The light went out in his eyes like a burnt out candle.

BAM-BAM: Hey Woodrow. Maybe you could scratch a notch in your shovel.

DICKIE: Why would he do that?

BAM-BAM: So he can keep track of how many Germans he kill.

DICKIE: That's stupid.

BAM-BAM: You're stupid.

DICKIE: No, you're stupid!

BAM-BAM: *Oui, mais toi Dickie, t'es vraiment stupide* [Yes, but Dickie you are very stupid.]

RAVEN: Kraa. Kraa. Kra--Kraa!

DICKIE: Holy cow, look at the size of that crow!

DICKIE grabs his rifle.

BAM-BAM: It's the size of a racoon!

RAVEN: Kraa. Kra--Kraa!

HOWARD THOMAS: What are you doing, Dickie?

BAM-BAM: Shoot it, Dickie. Shoot it!

DICKIE aims the rifle at RAVEN. With sudden ferocity HALF-BLOOD grabs DICKIE by the wrist.

DICKIE: Ah!

BAM-BAM: Hey!

RAVEN: Kraa! Kraa! Kra--Kraa!

HOWARD THOMAS: Woodrow.

DICKIE: My wrist... He's crushing my wrist.

BAM-BAM: Let go of him. Let go!

DICKIE: Help me!

HOWARD THOMAS and BAM-BAM try to pull HALF-BLOOD off DICKIE

RAVEN: Kraa! Kraa! Ka--Kraa!

HOWARD THOMAS: Woodrow, let go.

BAM-BAM: Let go! You'll break his wrist.

DICKIE: AH!

HOWARD THOMAS: JONATHON!

HALF-BLOOD releases DICKIE. They all fall to the ground.

HOWARD THOMAS: Shit...

DICKIE: My wrist.

BAM-BAM: *Sacrament.*

HALF-BLOOD: I'm sorry. I'm sorry Howard Thomas.

HOWARD THOMAS: It's all right.

BAM-BAM: Es-tù malade dans tête!? [Are you sick in the head?] You almost break his wrist.

DICKIE: What the hell's wrong with you?

HOWARD THOMAS: Dickie, stop.

BAM-BAM: You crazy, or something?

DICKIE: He's a God damn savage that's what he is.

HOWARD THOMAS intervenes, pushes BAM--BAM and DICKIE back.

HOWARD THOMAS: Everyone calm down.

DICKIE: Savage!

BAM-BAM: *T'es fou, l'Indien! Complètement fou!* [You're crazy. Completely crazy.]

HOWARD THOMAS: Stop it, now. Hey. Stop. C'mon, Dickie. I'll take a look at your wrist. Hey Bam-Bam, come one, let's go.

HOWARD THOMAS leads the men away. HALF-BLOOD is left alone with RAVEN.

HALF-BLOOD: Aren't you even going to say thanks?

RAVEN nuzzles up against HALF-BLOOD

RAVEN: Kra. Kra-Kraa!

RAVEN takes flight.

Step Three – Discussion

As a class or in small groups, explore the following questions within the context of the scene that was read. Questions can also be used as writing prompts:

Scene 1 Questions:

1. How is the relationship between Half-Blood and his grandmother represented in this scene?
2. How do you think this relationship and her warnings might affect his experience during the war?
3. What do you think She Rides Between means when she says, "Young one... listen to me. War doesn't make men brave; it doesn't make them heroes. War drowns men."?
4. Half-Blood's grandmother does not understand why he wants to leave home to fight with Euro-Canadians. Based on colonization and the racial tensions of the time, do you think her point of view is sound?
5. She Rides Between addresses her belief that Indigenous people are not 'part of the whole country'. Based on the historical context, what does she mean by this and why might she have this belief?

Scene 2 Questions:

1. How did this scene differ from the first scene?

2. Violence is addressed very casually in this scene- you could even say that the soldiers are celebrating the violence that they have committed. Is this an example of de-sensitization and, if so, how is that fact important to the action of the scene?
3. What prejudices and/or stereotypes do the Euro-Canadian characters make about Indigenous people in this scene? How does this reflect the racial tensions between Euro-Canadians and Indigenous people at the time?
4. Based on what you read in 'Indigenous Peoples Experiences and Contributions to the Great War' and what occurs in the scene, how do you think that Half-Blood's comrades valued/viewed him?

Additional Resources

Visit redpatch.ca to learn more about the play, including the making of the play, a graphic novel to accompany the play, information highlighting Canada's role in World War I, introductions to the creative team, curriculum connections and activities for classrooms (including learning projects), and a link to the *Redpatch* blog.

Here is a list of books and plays highlighted on the *Redpatch* website:

All Quiet On The Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque
Hamatsa: The Enigma of Cannibalism on the Pacific Northwest Coast by Jim McDowell
In Flanders Fields: And Other Poems of the First World War edited by Brian Busby
Songs from the Front and Rear by Anthony Hopkins
The 500 Years of Resistance Comic Book by Gord Hill
The Nootka: Scenes and Studies of Savage Life by Gilbert Malcolm Sproat
The Raven Steals the Light stories by Bill Reid and Robert Bringhurst
Three Day Road by Joseph Boyden
Tsawalk: A Nuuchahnulth Worldview by Umeek E. Richard Atleo,
Vimy by Vern Thiessen
White Slaves of Maquinna by John R. Jewitt

Here is a list of online sources highlighted on the *Redpatch* website:

www.warmuseum.ca
www.canadaatwar.ca
www.nuuchahnulth.org
www.veterans.gc.ca

Sources

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British Columbia Ministry of Education. "Arts Education: Drama 10." (n.d.): n.pag. Web.

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Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. "Aboriginal Contributions during the First World War". (n.d.): n.pag. Web

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