

Wapos Bay All Access episode 10

Episode Description

Jacob is building a ramp in preparation for the arrival of Cousin Betty, who is in a wheelchair. Talon, T-Bear and Raven learn that Betty has two broken legs because of a degenerative bone disease and that they should avoid any rough play with her. Preparations are under way for the annual Wapos Bay Talent Show, and the prize is to be chief for a day. Jacob is enticed to use his staring skills, while T-Bear and Devon get creative haircuts to better emulate the band Lipsync for their performance. Betty's feelings are hurt when T-Bear avoids any contact with her but he makes it up when his winning performance means that Betty will have improved wheelchair access in Wapos Bay.

Background Information

Drumming and singing are an important part of Aboriginal life in most communities. Traditional songs can be inherited and owned by individuals, families, clans and nations. Many Aboriginal societies view each individual as possessing a special gift. Gifts can include a talent, skill, ability or knowledge.

Most First Nations bands elect a chief and council to make decisions in the interest of their community. There are approximately 615 First Nations in Canada. Each one elects a chief and council and may belong to an umbrella tribal council organization as well as a provincial and national organization.



Key themes

- Varying physical abilities highlight the need for improved access to allow participation for all. Changes in the abilities of loved ones can bring out strong emotions that can be difficult to understand. We have a moral responsibility to avoid discriminating or creating unfair situations by ignoring physical disabilities that prevent people from enjoying a quality of life that respects their human dignity.
- Mathematical skills are needed to build wheelchair access ramps.
- Some traditional and contemporary Aboriginal songs consist of vocables: sounds without a particular meaning.
- Physical disabilities can result from a range of factors, including genetics. Research can help us understand diseases and how they affect personal lives.
- Through radio, TV and the Internet, pop music influences youth in even the remotest communities.

PREVIEWING ACTIVITIES

- 1 ► What challenges do those with varying physical abilities face every day? What adjustments are made to improve access for those with physical disabilities? What responsibility do we have as a society to improve access for handicapped people? What are the responsibilities of elected officials in improving access for the disabled?
- 2 ► Have you noticed that many individuals possess a special gift? Gifts can include a talent, skill, ability or knowledge. What gift do you have? What about your peers?
- 3 ► Who is/are the chief(s) of the local First Nations band(s)? What do they do as chief? What's involved in electing a chief?
- 4 ► What activities in this episode of Wapos Bay demand math skills?
- 5 ► Introduce the Cree words used in episode 10, and ask students to listen for them when they watch the film.

CREE GLOSSARY

mushom – grandfather

tansi – hello

- 6 ► What are common diseases that affect bones? What is brittle bone disease? What does it mean for a condition to be a result of genetics? Is it preventable?
- 7 ► Is it possible to convey meaning with words that have no meaning? How?
- 8 ► How do the media influence our tastes in entertainment?

VIEW THE EPISODE

Introduce and view *Wapos Bay: All Access*.

POST-VIEWING QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- 1 ► Why does T-Bear avoid his cousin Betty? How does he come to understand what he should do to repair his relationship with her? Who do you have in your life that helps you understand your emotions and relationships with others?
- 2 ► What “gifts” are possessed by each of the members of Wapos Bay? Mushom, Jacob, Alphonse, Talon, T-Bear, Raven, Devon, Kohkum Mary?
- 3 ► What did Jacob and Alphonse do to remove physical barriers for Betty? What else could they have done? What was T-Bear’s first decision as chief? What would you have done as chief?
- 4 ► What math skills should Jacob have used in building the ramp? Determine a formula that can be used in planning for the building of ramps.
- 5 ► Review the Cree glossary. How do you say *grandfather* in Cree? What does *tansi* mean?
- 6 ► What is the disease that has affected Betty’s bones? Is it preventable or genetic?



- 7 ► How do songs express meaning without the use of words that we can understand? What vocables were used in Sarah's song? (Ya way hi ho, Ya way hi yo.)
- 8 ► Which talent show competitor do you believe was the winner? Why? Why are talent shows such as *Canadian Idol* so popular? How do they make us feel?
- 9 ► Do you know the movie that was referenced when Jacob was practising his staring skills?
Star Wars: Return of the Jedi

PROJECT IDEAS

- Do you know anyone who faces a physical challenge? What are the ethical principles involved in understanding the difficulties faced by those with disabilities?
- Think about personal gifts. Brainstorm the gifts of students in class, recording responses on a flip chart. Allow students to take the ideas home to share with their family.
- What examples of improved access are present in your home, school and community? What led to these improvements? What is your school policy regarding handicapped access? Develop criteria for making schools accessible for the physically challenged. Assess your school using the criteria you have developed.
- How are the chief and council of a First Nation band elected? What are their responsibilities once elected?
- Betty has osteogenesis imperfecta, which is normally genetic. How do we come to know about such diseases?
- Do some research on bone diseases. Which ones are preventable? Create posters to show what you've learned.
- Invite a guest to share traditional Aboriginal songs with the class. Ask them to explain their songwriting. Listen to music and read the lyrics to a variety of contemporary musicians such as Buffy St. Marie, Robbie Robertson, Sandy Scofield, Susan Aglukark, Shane Yellowbird, Andrea Menard and Leela Gilday. What are the themes found in the songs? Create a song that emulates your favourite Aboriginal musical artist. Host an "Idol" contest in your class, school or community.