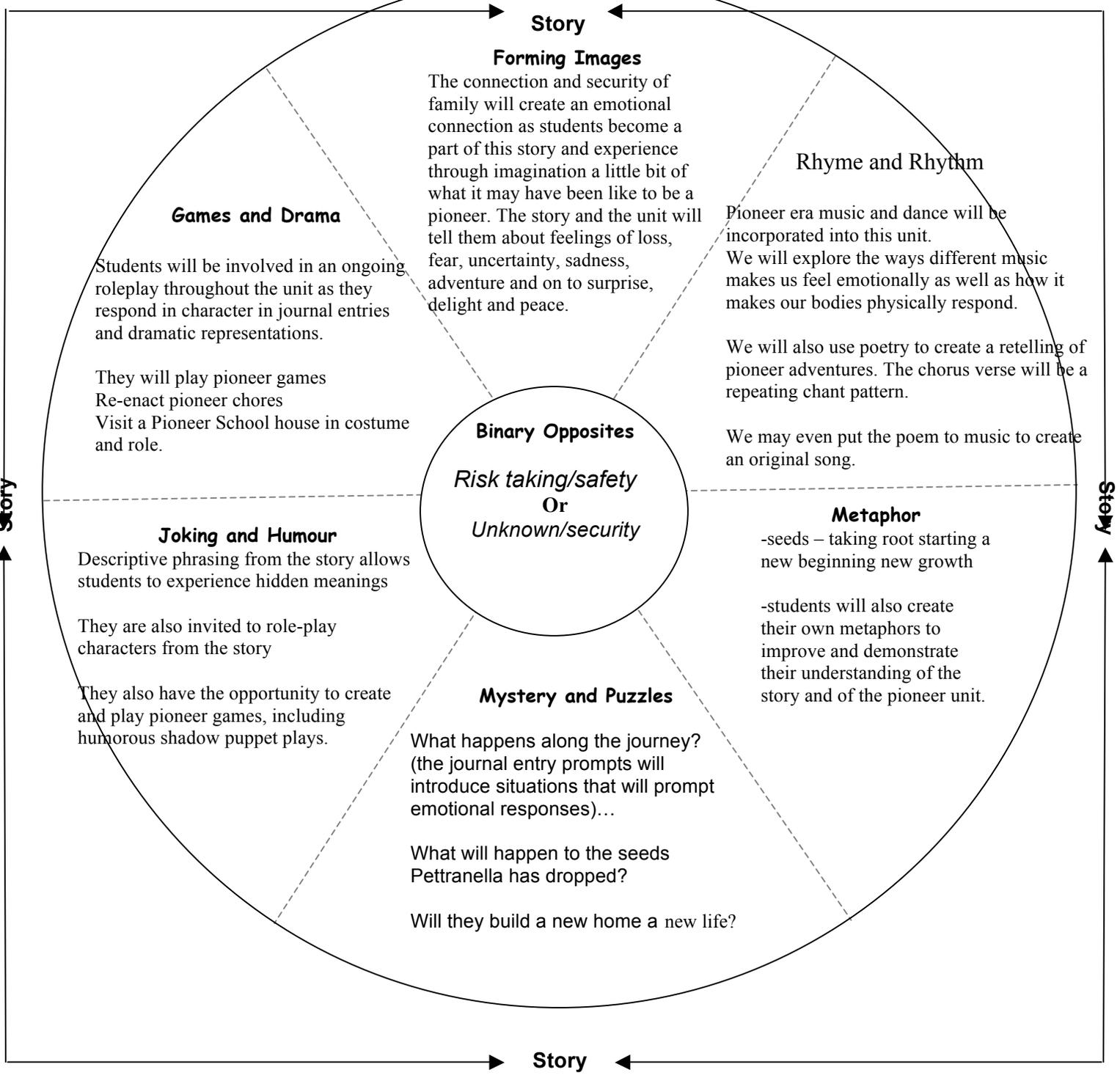


Mythic Imaginative Education Brainstorming Chart  
(The Cognitive Tools of Orality)

Pettranella by Betty Waterton



*The following unit outline is based upon an Imaginative Education framework. This framework offers a new understanding of how knowledge grows in the mind, and how our imaginations work and change during our lives. Lessons and units provided in this format allow the students to develop flexibility of thought and enrich rational thinking. The Imaginative Education approach deals with knowledge, psychology and emotions together ([www.ierg.net](http://www.ierg.net), 2010).*

*Throughout this framework there are a variety of cognitive tools. These tools allow us to making sense of the world and have become a part of our culture. By using cognitive tools our ability to think and understand is enhanced ([www.ierg.net](http://www.ierg.net), 2010)*

## **A Guide to the Mythic Planning Framework for Pioneers**

### ***What is Mythic Understanding?***

***In Mythic understanding the world expands. It is at this phase of life that the child is no longer limited to making sense of the world through direct physical experiences (Somatic Understanding). In Mythic Understanding the child relies on language to discuss, represent, and understand even things not yet experienced in person by using oral language. ([www.ierg.net](http://www.ierg.net) 2010) A characteristic of Mythic Understanding is the ability to believe and enjoy fantasy, make-belief and magic.***

### **1. Locating importance**

*“All knowledge is human knowledge; it grows out of human hopes, fears, and passions. Imaginative engagement with knowledge comes from learning in the context of the hopes, fears and passions from which it has grown or in which it finds a living meaning.” ([www.ierg.net](http://www.ierg.net), 2010)*

### ***What is emotionally engaging about this topic? How can it evoke wonder? Why should it matter to us?***

In order to help students connect emotionally to the material, teachers need to first identify their own emotional attachment to it. A sense of wonder about something is usually connected to this attachment. Everything that we teach can evoke some kind of wonder and produce some emotional response in us. A sense of wonder and an emotional response to material are important in engaging students' imaginations. So this first question asks the teacher to feel for what is wonderful about the topic. This can be difficult if the topic is something like the use of the comma! The trick, though, is to try to “re-imagine” the topic through the eyes of the child, to discover what can stimulate the sense of wonder about even the most routine topics. Especially when teachers have been taught to become expert at organizing classroom activities and structuring topics into instructional units, this can be hard. It is asking the teacher to do something that is, for most of us, quite unfamiliar—to begin by feeling about the topic. Try to indicate for any topic you plan to teach what is wonderful about it, and what can provide an emotional engagement to it by the child.

***Sense of Wonder is the ability to focus on any aspect of the world around us, or the world within us, and see and enjoy its particular uniqueness (Egan, 2005).***

**Sources of wonder:**

As we begin the unit we open with a soundscape of a collection of sounds beginning with the sounds of an old town, sounds of the port, the steamer ship, the seascape, then the sounds of a creaking wagon, storms, wind in the trees, wolves, rivers and finally the sounds of a babbling brook and birds singing. Students will wonder what kind of journey they have just been taken on. Then the reading of 'Pettranella', a story about a pioneer child opens students up to a host of 'wonder'. They will wonder about other countries, pioneers, steamers, oxen, wagons, railways, travel, supplies, homesteading, as well as wonder about navigation, food storage and preparation and of course 'where did they go to the washroom'.

**Sources of emotional engagement:**

This unit provides ample opportunities for emotional engagement. As students identify with characters in the story they will feel and express their reactions to the content. The uncertainty of leaving the only home Pettranella had ever known. The deep sadness of loss in knowing she would never see her grandmother again. The fear of the crowded steamer and the fierce ocean will strike a chord. The hardships of the long journey overland through the provinces of Canada to a homestead will capture interest. Perhaps most emotionally captivating is the loss of her grandmother's flower seeds that Pettranella had promised to plant so they could always be emotionally near each other. Finally the joy and resolution of discovering the lost seeds had in fact grown into beautiful flowers that will always welcome newcomers.

In addition to the story, students will take on roles from the story and will respond to situations the teacher provides throughout the unit. As the role-playing students make their way across the ocean and the provinces, the teacher will present situations that the students will respond to. They will have opportunities to respond through various forms of expression (e.g. oral, written, drama, and drawing). These will become part of the unit assessment.

## **2. Shaping the lesson or unit**

Teaching shares some features with news reporting. Just as the reporter's aim is to select and shape events to bring out clearly their meaning and emotional importance for readers or listeners, so too, as a teacher, your aim is to present your topic in a way that engages the emotions and imaginations of your students. To do so, consider which of the following dimensions of your students' emotional and imaginative lives can be used to shape your lesson or unit—all related to the skills the good reporter works with:

### **2.1. Finding the story:**

***What's "the story" on the topic? How can you shape the content to reveal its emotional significance?***

*Story – is one of the most powerful tools. Stories shape our emotional understanding of the content. Stories can shape real-world as well as fictional material, but it is the real-world shaping that promises the most value for teaching. (Egan, 2005)*

If you imagine for a moment that you are a news reporter, you will think about events/information in terms of human interest and engagement. Remember, everything is potentially wonderful. In order to be a good reporter, one needs to think this way about whatever it is one has been sent to report on. That is, the reporter writes about or talks about an incident in a way that is interesting, or that somehow engages the reader's/listener's imagination and emotions. And so too the teacher... Ask yourself what the "story" is on your topic; identify what is wonderful or interesting or engaging about it and how you can discuss it in a way that reflects this.

**Sketch of the story structure of the lesson/unit:**

Students will be taken through their study of pioneers in the role of pioneers themselves. They will experience the chores, hardships, wonders, family times, entertainment, the preparation, storage and location of food, music and dance, the selection and preparation of a homestead, care of animals etc.

**These experiences will be incorporated into all subject areas such as:**

Language Arts – story, songs and readings about pioneers

Math – the measurement of distances walked, the amount of feed needed for the animals, measurement of ingredients in pioneer recipes, problem solving involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division relating to food distribution, chores, inventorying supplies etc.

Science – celestial objects as a means of navigation, planting and harvesting, structures as they discover first hand how to build a log cabin from bread dough logs. They will also have opportunities to look at plant life cycles and animal life cycles. They will also be able to investigate light and shadow, and sound through the creation of rhythm instruments such as playing the spoons.

Planning – will be addressed through responsibilities of individuals, families and communities.

Socials – will lead to investigation of technological change over time as seen in modes of travel, communication, services, and changes in wages.

Physical Education – will encompass a variety of pioneer games and dances. In PE we will also create a ‘Pioneer Olympics’ wherein students will carry out a variety of pioneer chores in a fun format.

**2.2. Finding binary opposites:**

***What abstract and affective binary concepts best capture the wonder and emotion of the topic? What are the opposing forces in your “story”?***

*Binary Opposites – are the most basic and powerful tools for organizing and categorizing knowledge. It is a necessary consequence of using language. There are no pure opposites in reality, only a continuum, so language sets us up with opposites so we can understand. Binary opposites are found in all cultures (Egan, 2005).*

Now to the work of locating the best binary oppositions on which we can construct the “story” we are going to tell. It should be possible to select the one that seems best, though you might want to note some alternatives, in case you find the first set chosen doesn’t quite carry you through the lesson or unit as well as you might have expected. The binary opposites provide the cognitive and emotional framework of your story. Remember, all good fictional stories are built on a conflict or puzzle; the only difference here is that the “story” content is the curriculum content.

**Main opposition: risk taking and safety**

**Possible alternative: the unknown and security**

**2.3. Finding images:**

***What parts of the topic most dramatically embody the binary concepts? What image best captures that dramatic contrast?***

*Mental Imagery – is a tool of immense emotional importance. Often an image carries more imaginative and memorable force than the concept alone can hold. The use of mental images (not pictures) should play a large role in teaching and learning.*

Here the goal is to identify the drama inherent in the topic. Remember, every topic has some kind of dramatic conflict in it. Which conflict best illustrates the binary opposites we've identified? Again, trying to feel the drama is as important as thinking about it—and, of course, these are not such distinct activities. This task, too, can be quite difficult at first. It does become easier as we begin to recognize that there is something almost natural about thinking in these terms. The drama of commas may not be so obvious, nor how one might break up one's lessons about commas into binary opposites. But everything has within it something dramatic, and, as we'll see, everything can be broken down into binary opposites. We are so accustomed to thinking about content, and about concepts, that we often forget that every topic also has a wide range of images attached to it. And the image, remember, can carry the emotional meaning of the topic and can also make the topic much more memorable—if we find a good image, of course. Look for a core conflict, contradiction or drama that seems to best convey the wonder and emotion of the topic.

**Image that captures abstract binary opposition:**

Pettranella is excited at first but then is put into emotional conflict because her feelings of loss and fear conflict with the excitement of the new possibilities of her new home.

The soundscapes and the story will create images in the minds of these students to bring the experience to life for them.

**Content that reflects abstract binary opposition:**

*Pettranella's eyes filled with tears. "Then I won't go either," she said.*

*...Pettranella lay on her wooden bunk in the crowded hold, wishing she was back home in her clean warm bed.*

*...and before they could stop her she was running back down the trail.*

*"I was going to make such a beautiful garden, and now I broke my promise to Grandmother!"*

*But she left some to grow beside the trail, that other settlers might see them and not feel lonely...*

Students will have opportunities to compare their lives to what they are learning about pioneers. They will share memories of their feelings and experiences in feeling afraid, excited, insecure, etc. They may also have the opportunity as an extension or enrichment activity to write as though they are moving to a world completely different to their own experiences so they will need to explore more deeply the possibilities.

**2.4. Employing additional cognitive tools of Mythic understanding:**

***What kinds of activities might employ other tools in your students' cognitive toolkits?***

***Puzzles and mystery: How could students explore some aspects of the mystery attached to the topic? What puzzles might they wonder about?***

*Mystery and Puzzles – are important tools in developing and engaging knowledge that is beyond students' everyday environment. All subjects have mysteries and part of our job in making content known to students is to give them an image of deeper understanding that is there to draw their minds into the adventure of learning (Egan,2005).*

**Teaching strategy:**

Students will experience a sense of mystery through their role-playing journey to homestead. The journey will be marked off on a map of Canada as the class of pioneers makes their way across the vast new land. The students will be faced with challenging, fearful and joyous occasions via journal prompts that will be proposed along the journey. They will have a variety of options as to how to express their thoughts and experiences.

**Student activity:**

Students will take on a role from the Pettranella story and will reenact it as actual pioneers. They will be faced with mysterious situations that will cause them to react in character but will also cause them to learn about the situations of pioneers in more depth. The fact that they are facing unknown lands lends itself to the element of mystery.

They will also have an opportunity to choose/ design an optimal homestead. Students will receive information on some homestead acreages each having different assets and challenges. The students (and their families) will need to weigh the choices, in order to decide which property they would choose and why.

An actual puzzle of Canada will be created and assembled as the role playing student pioneers make their way across our great land. This will also lend itself to learning about environments, interdependence and our responsibilities to our environment.

**Metaphor: How might students employ metaphor in deepening their understanding of the topic?**

*Metaphor – is the tool that allows us to see one thing in terms of another. It lies at the heart of intellectual inventiveness, creativity and imagination (Egan,2005).*

**Teaching strategy:**

The teacher will present the metaphor of the seeds to the students in an effort to guide them through the understanding of this metaphor. In this story the seeds represent the hope of setting down new roots in establishing a new home.

The needs of a plant to grow from seeds can further be related to what an individual needs for survival. Noticing that not all seeds grow and flourish may open up opportunities for discussion about needs and wants.

Then the teacher and students will look for other appropriate metaphors in the story and in the study of pioneers.

**Jokes and humor: Could students learn – and create their own - jokes about the topic? How might they expand their understanding through play with what is humorous about it?**

*Jokes and humour – can expose some of the basic ways in which language works while allowing students to play with elements of knowledge. They help keep imagination alive and protect against rigid conventions (Egan, 2005).*

**Teaching strategy:**

The teacher will provide a selection of well-known jokes and invite the students to transform them to fit pioneer times. In addition they will explore folk tales and tall tales and will create originals in class. They will look at language and double meanings both then and now (e.g., Why did the chicken cross the road? ‘It didn’t... there weren’t any roads.’)

They will also play pioneer games and make some pioneer toys.

***Rhyme, rhythm, and pattern: Are there patterns in the topic students could play with? What activities might draw attention to rhyme, rhythm, and pattern?***

*Rhyme, rhythm and pattern – are potent tools providing meaningful, memorable and attractive shape to any content. They assist in learning the rhythms and patterns of language (Egan, 2005).*

**Teaching strategy:**

The teacher will present the chorus verse to a poem. The class will sequence the types of events and challenges that Pettranella and other pioneers faced and will then work as a class to compose verses that reflect the events.

They will also experience pioneers through their music, songs and dances. The creation of rhythm instruments will bring another element to this unit of study.

**Student activity:**

Students will brainstorm the various adventures good and bad that pioneers experienced. Then working together simple poetry verses will be created. When all the verses are combined they will have created the basis of a pioneer song.

They will then use the rhythm instruments created to accompany their song.

***Games, drama, and play: How can students engage in games, drama, and play in learning about the topic?***

*Games, drama and play – are related cognitive tools. They help students free themselves from objects with which behaviour is often fused. Playing enlarges students' understanding of the norms and limits of behaviour. Play enlarges a students' self control (Egan, 2005).*

**Teaching strategy:**

The study of pioneers will be carried out through role-playing as pioneers throughout this unit. Students will research and respond to situations posed as if they were the pioneers from the Pettranella story.

Information about pioneer games will be made available for students to experience in class. Students will be able to select a game and become the teacher of that game in presentation to classmates.

**Student activity:**

Students will discover, as much as is possible, what it may have been like to be a pioneer through role playing reactions to posed situations. They will also research and present pioneer games to classmates.

***Embryonic tools of Romantic understanding: Consider ways to engage students with the heroic and human dimensions of the topic. What kinds of activities might reveal its extremes? How can these aspects draw students forward in their thinking about the topic?***

Embryonic Tools of Literacy – will be picked while students use their tools of oral language, and increasingly the new tools will be engaged, as students become more fluent readers and writers. We need to provide opportunities for students to begin using some of the later tool kit even if in embryonic form (Egan, 2005). While later tools of written language will emerge, it is vital to understand that children do not graduate from one type of understanding to another to move suddenly to the next, rather they will most likely experience a gradual shift in tendency towards or

proficiency with particular cultural tools (Egan, 2005). For example some of the tools within Mythic understanding include story, binary opposites and imagery. It is important to remember to incorporate all levels of understanding as appropriate.

*In Romantic understanding the child begins to learn and understand experiences through written language. At this point the child begins to realize his/her own independence and separateness from a world that appears increasingly complex. The child relates readily to extremes of reality, associates with heroes, and seeks to make sense of the world in human terms ([www.ierg.net](http://www.ierg.net), 2010).*

#### **Teaching Strategy:**

Being aware of Romantic Understanding the teacher will provide opportunities for students to challenge points of view. For example, what did the First Nations people think of the pioneers? The teacher will provide opportunities for students to become experts in a topic within the study of pioneers. They will be introduced to the extremes and limits that pioneers endured and will be encouraged to explore the question they wonder about. They may also be interested in looking into personal ancestral history.

#### **Student Activity:**

Those students who are moving towards their Romantic understanding will be able to select a topic of interest and will uncover all the information possible on that topic. They will also be able to set up a drama interaction demonstrating different points of view. They may be interested in researching the extremes of human capabilities as related to pioneers and perhaps as related to other human challenges.

Students may also look into the heroic qualities of pioneers to compare with those of explorers past, present and future. Looking into the 'pioneering' areas of science and robotics for deep sea or space exploration is a further extension relating to heroic qualities.

In the area of the 'Literate Eye' students could plot on a map how homesteading and settlement occurred within Canada over colour coded time periods. They may further compare the more 'spotted pattern' of settlement in Canada verses the east to west settlement across the United States.

#### **2.5. Drawing on tools of previous kinds of understanding:**

**Somatic understanding - *How might students use some of the toolkit of Somatic Understanding in learning the topic? How might their senses, emotions, humour, musicality, and so on, be deployed?***

*Somatic understanding refers to the physical, prelinguistic way that a child comes to know the world while an infant. The child makes sense of experiences through the information provided by the senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell, and crucially with the emotions that these are tied up with. The child also experiences the world and sensations of balance, movement, tension, pain, pleasure, and so on, through the way the child's body physically relates to the objects and persons encountered. Some somatic tools are; bodily senses, emotional responses and attachments, rhythm and musicality, gesture and communication, referencing and intentionality ([www.ierg.net](http://www.ierg.net), 2010).*

#### **Teaching Strategy:**

The emotional components accessed in this story and role-playing allow the teacher to focus in on the physical elements. The soundscapes may be used to reach the physical reactions. Physically moving to the music creates another somatic expression. The teacher will have them re-enact the ocean voyage by using gymnastic mats in the gym, or the playground swings. Then they will use skipping ropes and caster carts to create the ox cart. The teacher will set up situations wherein the students have to keep balance during the 'waves'. They will experience the

differences of lying on gymnastic mats as compared to the hard floor simulating the hard wooden bunks on the ship.

The Pioneer Olympics will provide opportunities for students to carry out various pioneer chores, thus providing exposure to the physical demands of this time period. Carting water buckets, raking, washboard sock scrubbing, walking distances, preparing fields (picking rocks), gathering eggs, milking and other chores can all be recreated with modifications, yet will provide experiences that can help them relate to pioneer children.

#### **Student Activity:**

Students will move with and act out the music and soundscapes. They will imagine the experiences the pioneers had and will participate in recreating them.

The soundscape will be clips that tell the story of a journey, the clips will put the students in a place with ship sounds, the hustle and bustle of a dock, the seagulls, the ocean sounds, the sounds of a creaking ox cart, the livestock, the sounds of open wilderness, rain, a storm, thunder, lightning crashes, softening rain, creaking wagon, hooves, shuffling feet walking along, crackling fire, owl hoots, wolves howling, birds, a river and then the calm breeze over their meadow. The soundscape is designed to take them on an imaginative somatic journey. Room lighting and fans may also be incorporated.

### **3. Resources**

***What resources can you use to learn more about the topic and to shape your story? What resources are useful in creating activities?***

#### **List of resources**

A Pioneer Sampler: The Daily Life of a Pioneer Family in 1840 by Barbara Greenwood  
 A Pioneer Thanksgiving: A Story of Harvest Celebrations in 1841 by Barbara Greenwood  
 Aurora Means Dawn by Scott R. Sanders.  
 Belle's Journey Home  
 Cat's Cradle, Owl's Eyes; A book of string games by Camilla Gryse  
 Dandelions, written by Eve Bunting  
 Ida and the Wool Smugglers by Sue Ann Alderson  
 If You Traveled West in a Covered Wagon by Ellen Levine  
 Little House Cookbook: Frontier Foods from Laura Ingalls Wilder's Classic Stories  
 Pettranella by Betty Waterton  
 Pioneer Crafts by Barbara Greenwood. Kids Can Press, 1997.  
 Seline and the Bear Paw Quilt

[www.imagescanada.ca/r1-116-e.php?trail=trail14](http://www.imagescanada.ca/r1-116-e.php?trail=trail14)  
[www.ameriquefrancaise.org/media-1196/33\\_charette\\_avec\\_boeuf\\_2.jpg](http://www.ameriquefrancaise.org/media-1196/33_charette_avec_boeuf_2.jpg)  
[www.saskschools.ca/~gregory/settlers/rrcart.gif](http://www.saskschools.ca/~gregory/settlers/rrcart.gif)  
[www.saskschools.ca/~gregory/fun.html](http://www.saskschools.ca/~gregory/fun.html)  
[www.amug.org/~jbpratt/lds/resources/pioneers.html](http://www.amug.org/~jbpratt/lds/resources/pioneers.html)  
[www.uen.org/utahlink/tours/tourViewCategory.cgi?category\\_id=16817&tour\\_id=13292](http://www.uen.org/utahlink/tours/tourViewCategory.cgi?category_id=16817&tour_id=13292)  
[olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/saskatchewan100/pioneer%20ws/childchores/childchores.html](http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/saskatchewan100/pioneer%20ws/childchores/childchores.html)  
[www.ci.tumwater.wa.us/researchgames.htm](http://www.ci.tumwater.wa.us/researchgames.htm)  
[www.campsilos.org/mod2/teachers/r\\_index.shtml](http://www.campsilos.org/mod2/teachers/r_index.shtml)  
[www.42explore2.com/pioneer.htm](http://www.42explore2.com/pioneer.htm)  
[www.projects.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/pioneer/](http://www.projects.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/pioneer/)

#### 4. Conclusion

**How does the story end? How can the conflict set up between the binary opposites be resolved in a satisfying way? Alternatively, what new questions emerge as students make sense of these opposing forces? What aspect of the topic might draw students forward in wonder?**

The resolution is the mediation or movement between the binary opposites and how the story ends. The teacher may choose to reveal this to the children or with guidance may allow them to discover the resolution.

Every story has an ending in which the conflict is in some way resolved or at least explained. For younger students a simple resolution may be appropriate; for older students an exploration of the opposites and the dramatic space between them can be explored. The conclusion can therefore take on many forms; from students' presentations, to displays, to a story that shows another form of the opposition being worked out, to dramatic presentations of the story with visuals, and so on. Remember, the conclusion is another opportunity for students to feel the drama of the story and internalize the material while expressing their understanding of it in imaginative ways.

#### **Concluding activity:**

Once the students have researched pioneers, have experienced the role-playing of being a pioneer, have selected a homestead site and have determined the things that need to be done to create a new home they will finish the unit by constructing a small log house from bread dough logs they have created. They may also use a large box lid to set up a section of their homestead, complete with fencing, crops, livestock etc. They will be able to discuss their knowledge journey.

Before hearing the ending of 'Pettranella', the students will have opportunities to create their own conclusions, finding their own satisfaction through writing their own story endings.

In Pettranella, the little girl discovers that the spilt seeds grew into a field of flowers, some of which she took home to fulfil her promise to her grandmother, while other were left to welcome other pioneers. Students will have opportunities to respond to this conclusion.

#### 5. Evaluation

***How can one know whether the topic has been understood, its importance grasped, and the content learned?***

Any of the traditional forms of evaluation can be used, but in addition, teachers might want to get some measure of how far students' imaginations have been engaged by the topic. Remember, various kinds of information evaluations, including discussion, debate, art work, journal writing, experiment analysis etc. can be done as the unit is being taught. You can also note the amount of time and degree of commitment students bring to the topic beyond what is required.

Through assessment the teacher will know whether the topic has been understood, its importance grasped, and the content learned ( Egan, 2005). It is important to do ongoing and mid lesson or mid unit assessments so necessary adjustments to lessons can be made if needed ( Egan, 2005).

#### **Forms of evaluation:**

Students will be assessed on their responses to the journal prompts.

They will present information learned about pioneers.

They will present and teach pioneer games to classmates.

They will research and select a homestead site; they will defend their choice of two offered homestead sites.

They will participate in at least three quick writes throughout the unit.  
They will do a web and then a summary of what they have learned about pioneers.

### Unit Sequence

The students will close their eyes and listen to a soundscape that takes them on an imaginary journey through a city, to a port, onto a ship, the sounds of the ocean and then to the creaking ox cart, storms, wolves, fivers and finally a babbling brook and the sound of birds delighting in the day.

The soundscapes may be used to reach physical reactions. Physically moving to the music creates another somatic expression. The teacher will have them re-enact the ocean voyage by using gymnastic mats in the gym, or the playground swings. Then they will use skipping ropes and caster carts to create the ox cart. The teacher will set up situations wherein the students have to keep balance during the 'waves'. They will experience the differences of laying on gymnastic mats as compared to the hard floor simulating the hard wooden bunks on the ship. After experiencing the soundscape students will tell the story they think matches the sounds.

Following this the story *Pettranella* will be read. The story will not be read completely through but will have pauses wherein students can respond to the emotions portrayed in the story. Students will be able to write, illustrate or dramatize the responses they feel.

The ending of the story will not be read until a later time in the unit. Students will be guided to identify the binary opposites inherent in the story, the risk-taking versus safety conflict that the story characters must endure. Students at this age easily understand the conflict of risk-taking in the unknown and the safety of the known. As they can relate to the conflict they will then be able to recognize it in the adventures of pioneers.

Images from *Pettranella* that reflect binary opposition are:

*Pettranella's eyes filled with tears. "Then I won't go either," she said.*

*...Pettranella lay on her wooden bunk in the crowded hold, wishing she was back home in her clean warm bed.*

*...and before they could stop her she was running back down the trail.*

*"I was going to make such a beautiful garden, and now I broke my promise to Grandmother!"*

*But she left some to grow beside the trail, that other settlers might see them and not feel lonely...*

At this point we will brainstorm all the ideas/questions they wonder about on the topic of pioneers. These items will be listed on an "I wonder..." chart. Students will be able to add to the "I wonder..." chart as they come across new ideas they wonder about.

Once again relating to *Pettranella*, students will choose a pioneer character, a child or parent. Then the students will take on this role-playing persona throughout the rest of the pioneer unit. Students will do a 'Quick Write' to express their initial ideas and knowledge about their new character.

A map of Canada will be set up on the bulletin board. The progress of the students' pioneers will be marked as they make their way from the eastern seaport to their homestead in Saskatchewan. As they journey across Canada, there will be various challenges, new experiences and joys posed to which the students will respond to while in role. Most often students will respond to these situations as journal prompts, sometimes they will respond in dramatic representation or

through illustrations. The purpose of this portion of the unit is to draw students emotionally and imaginatively into the experiences of the pioneers.

Some of the posed situations are as follow;

Fourteen in total - the teacher will select which ones to use )

- We could see the port. There were so many people everywhere. How could there be room for all of them in this country. What if there isn't room? What will we do?
- We finally left the office and the trading company and have started on our way. The ox doesn't smell very nice and walks slow. How long will it take to get there? There is not a lot of room in the cart so I have to walk.
- Everyone is getting hungry, so we stop for awhile to eat. There are a lot of trees around. Dad goes off to hunt for awhile. The rest of us look for berries.
- Last night there were noises I've never heard before. It sounded as if the world was crying. I wanted to be close to my momma. The sound of her sweet comforts made me feel better. Dad said the sound came from the wolves. That made me think of more things.
- Today we could hear these sounds far away and we could see dark streaks coming down from the sky. The clouds looked angry. The sounds got louder as the clouds got closer. As it began to rain, I could see our tracks disappear. It was as if the heavens were erasing our past.
- Finally it stopped raining and we could see the beauty of the blue sky. We could hear birds singing as if they were thankful for a new day. The air smelled sweet and thick of earth and greens. I wonder what tomorrow will bring. I miss my grandparents.
- Last night we all slept under the cart, all except Dad and the chickens. The chickens seemed upset about something. He sat up all night watching something. I heard Mom and Dad talking about keeping an eye out for unwanted visitors. I wonder what they meant?
- Today I was so excited. When I was walking I found some tracks in the muddy ground. The tracks were bigger than my feet. They looked like they had long pointy toes. The tracks were pushed in the mud more than mine too. I wonder why? Mom said I couldn't walk away from the cart today.
- Last night was so cold. We had to cuddle together by a fire to keep even a little bit warm. When we looked up the sky was so clear, it looked like it didn't have an end. I have never seen so many stars. Then we saw the most amazing thing ever. Lights moved and danced across the sky, disappeared and then were there again. I wonder if they were angels? I wonder if my grandmother can see them?
- We have been traveling for so long. We had to take the cart through a river today, but when we went up the other side we hit a big boulder and broke the shaft on the wagon. While we were waiting for the repair, I explored.
- I heard something coming. It was a familiar creaking and squeaking. Somebody was coming in another ox cart. Maybe it was another family. It would be so nice to see other people.
- We are finally at our homestead. It is so big that I can't see where it ends. I wanted to run and explore but Momma said there was much to do. First we had to find where we would get fresh water. Then Dad and Momma had to decide where we would plant crops and where we would build our house. I had lots of ideas about what we should do.
- The first things thing we had to do was prepare the ground for our crops. Then we had to make shelters for ourselves. I had to gather the boughs of spruce and tamarack and make beds out of them. The boughs smelled so wonderful. I wondered what it would be like to sleep on them.
- Today we heard new sounds; we heard wild geese honking their way along. We heard squirrels chattering at us, telling us that this is their home. Red winged black birds sang the most beautiful songs. I felt my grandmother's love in my heart and I new that this could be home.

As we begin our imaginary journey to our homestead the students will be given a new puzzle to solve. They will be offered three sections of land upon which to homestead. Each section of land will offer different characteristics. The students will take these choices home and with the contributions of family members will decide which lot of land they will homestead upon. The students will be required to present their choice and the reasons behind their selection. They must consider which section of land would be best for farming, which would provide fresh water access, which would provide timber to build with, which would have the most wildlife for hunting, which may protect them from elements of weather.

The two choices are as follow:

Section 112: Saskatchewan

This section of land offers a lot of hard, flat, clear land. The land has tall prairie grasses blowing in the wind. The only trees are far off near a river to the east of the section.

Section 319:Sask

This section of land offers rolling forested hills. There are some flat areas covered with bushes. There is a distant lake and a nearby stream.

Section 287:Sask

This section of land has a large plateau, surrounded by flat lands. The forested area is north and west of the plateau. There is only a small river running through the land on the far west side beyond the trees.

After students select their section of land they will create a map, and then the homestead planning diagram detailing buildings, crop fields, hay fields, fencing for animals, pens, outhouses etc.

We will explore possibilities for storing and preserving food, including the creation of a hay/straw icehouse.

To delve even deeper into the story Pettranella, the teacher will guide students through the understanding and use of metaphor. The teacher will present the metaphor of the seeds to the students in an effort to guide them through the understanding of this metaphor. In this story the seeds represent the hope of setting down new roots in establishing a new home. Then the teacher and students will look for other possible metaphors in the story and in the study of pioneers.

To add joy to their accumulation of pioneer knowledge, students will transform known jokes into pioneer jokes. They will also research, learn and teach pioneer games to classmates.

At this point in the unit, students have researched topics of interest, they have made decisions about homesteading, they have experienced the journey across Canada to Saskatchewan. Students are now prepared to sequence the experiences of pioneers and to create poetry verses that reflect specific situations. The poetry verses will be held together with a repetitive chorus verse. The verses will then be put to the music of an existing pioneer/folk song. Students will create rhythm instruments to accompany the song. They will also learn to play the 'spoons'.

The chorus verse is:

*They left home and family  
to travel across land and sea  
together to make a brand new home  
somewhere in the vast unknown.*

Extending students thinking will be accomplished by providing opportunities for students to challenge points of view. For example, what did the First Nations people think of the pioneers? The teacher will provide opportunities for students to become experts in a topic within the study of

pioneers. They will be introduced to the extremes and limits that pioneers endured and will be encouraged to explore the question they wonder about. They may also be interested in looking into personal ancestral history.

The conclusion of this unit will resolve the binary opposition in Pettranella. Once the students have researched pioneers, have taken on the role of a pioneer, have selected a homestead site and have determined the things that need to be done to create a new home they will finish the unit by creating a log house from bread dough logs. The significance of creating a new home is that it symbolizes the new home that Pettranella and other pioneers built on their homesteads. These homes formed the basis for the development of settlements, and then towns and eventually to the communities we live in today.

Students will be assessed on their responses to the journal prompts.

They will present information learned about pioneers.

They will present and teach pioneer games to classmates.

They will research and select a homestead site; they will defend their choice of two offered homestead sites.

They will participate in at least three quick writes throughout the unit.

They will do a web and then a summary of what they have learned about pioneers.

***Resources to learn more about the topic and to shape the story of pioneers are listed here:  
List of resources:***

Pettranella by Betty Waterton

Ida and the Wool Smugglers by Sue Ann Alderson

Cat's Cradle, Owl's Eyes; A book of string games by Camilla Gryske

Belle's Journey Home

Seline and the Bear Paw Quilt

Aurora Means Dawn by Scott R. Sanders.

Dandelions, written by Eve Bunting

If You Traveled West in a Covered Wagon by Ellen Levine

Little House Cookbook: Frontier Foods from Laura Ingalls Wilder's Classic Stories:

Pioneer Crafts by Barbara Greenwood. Kids Can Press, 1997.

A Pioneer Sampler: The Daily Life of a Pioneer Family in 1840 by Barbara Greenwood

A Pioneer Thanksgiving: A Story of Harvest Celebrations in 1841 by Barbara Greenwood

[www.imagescanada.ca/r1-116-e.php?trail=trail14](http://www.imagescanada.ca/r1-116-e.php?trail=trail14)

[www.ameriquefrancaise.org/media-1196/33\\_charette\\_avec\\_boeuf\\_2.jpg](http://www.ameriquefrancaise.org/media-1196/33_charette_avec_boeuf_2.jpg)

[www.saskschools.ca/~gregory/settlers/rrcart.gif](http://www.saskschools.ca/~gregory/settlers/rrcart.gif)

[www.saskschools.ca/~gregory/fun.html](http://www.saskschools.ca/~gregory/fun.html)

[www.amug.org/~jbpratt/lds/resources/pioneers.html](http://www.amug.org/~jbpratt/lds/resources/pioneers.html)

[www.uen.org/utahlink/tours/tourViewCategory.cgi?category\\_id=16817&tour\\_id=13292](http://www.uen.org/utahlink/tours/tourViewCategory.cgi?category_id=16817&tour_id=13292)

[olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/saskatchewan100/pioneer%20ws/childchores/childchores.html](http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/saskatchewan100/pioneer%20ws/childchores/childchores.html)

[www.ci.tumwater.wa.us/researchgames.htm](http://www.ci.tumwater.wa.us/researchgames.htm)

[www.campsilos.org/mod2/teachers/r\\_index.shtml](http://www.campsilos.org/mod2/teachers/r_index.shtml)

[www.42explore2.com/pioneer.htm](http://www.42explore2.com/pioneer.htm)

[www.projects.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/pioneer/](http://www.projects.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/pioneer/)

