

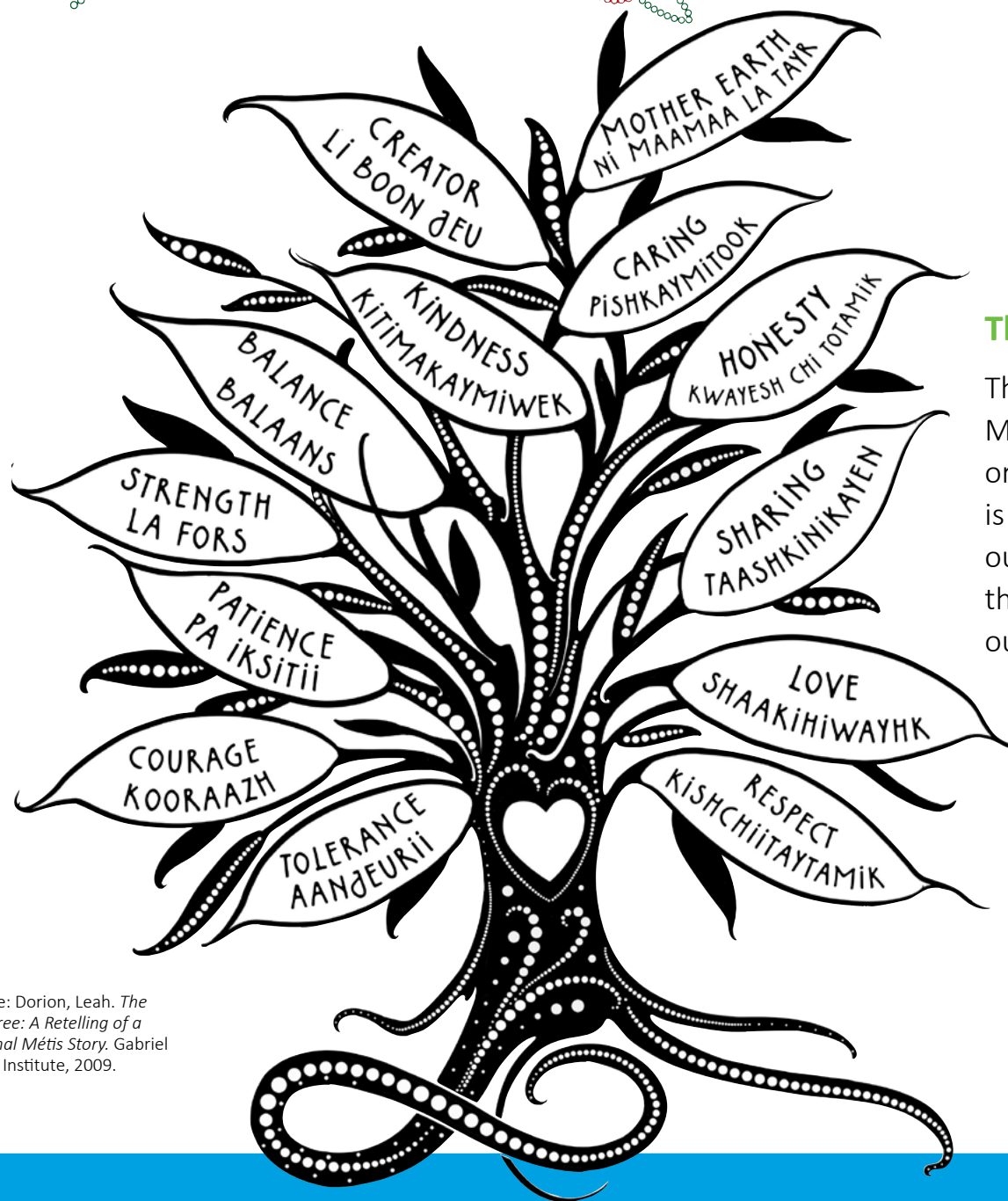
Introduction to Jigging, the Métis Dance

Taanshi! Greetings!

The Métis are one of the three main Indigenous groups in Canada. They originated in the 1700s when French and Scottish fur traders married First Nations women, creating a new race of people. Their descendants formed a distinct culture with their own food, clothing, music, games and language (Michif).

This is the story of the most famous Métis dance: The Red River Jig. It is accompanied by a tune played on the fiddle and is considered the unofficial Métis anthem. The dance is a combination of First Nations' footwork along with Scottish, Irish and French-Canadian dance forms.



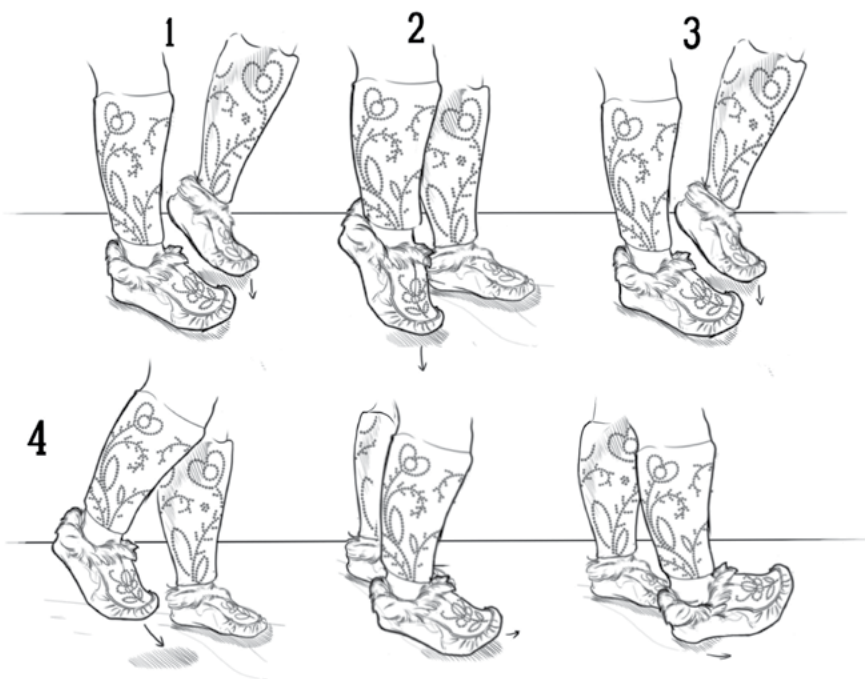


The Giving Tree

These are traditional Métis core values, or worldview. This is the way we see ourselves and move through the world in our everyday lives.

*Resource: Dorion, Leah. *The Giving Tree: A Retelling of a Traditional Métis Story*. Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2009.

Basic Jig Step



Let's learn the Basic Step
first with Métis Jigger
Madeline McCallum:
Skuff, step, step, step
Skuff, step, step, step



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Lesson 1:

Introduction of the Métis People and the Basic Step

? Who are the Indigenous Peoples
of Canada?

? What do you know about the
Métis People or the Red River Jig?

The Red River Jig:

The Métis are a lively Nation of people that have a rich history of family and community gatherings with food, tea, music and dance. Most families had a fiddle player, with music and gathering going on for days at a time. Jigging is primarily composed of the basic or resting step, along with adding an assortment of fancy steps with the change of the fiddle music.



Try out some of the fancy steps by scanning the QR code, and encourage students to create their own fancy steps with the music playing.



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Lesson 2: Métis Music and Fancy Steps

In earlier times when the Métis People followed the buffalo herds for food and clothing, they brought along with them their fiddle and dancing moccasins. Stories and jokes were shared while people gathered around the campfires and sang songs. Métis music is lively and passionate, and tells a story.

There are over 100 fancy steps in jigging. When the fiddle music changes, you can choose a fancy step to dance.



The Bunny Hop

1



2



Skipping



The Horse Step

1



2



3



4



5



6



Post-reflection Questions

- ? Did you notice any patterns in the dance steps?
- ? How does the Red River Jig tell a story about the Métis People?
- ? Which of the Métis core values did you see, hear, or feel?

More Métis Resources

Consider introducing the history of the Métis to your students by utilizing the resources of the Métis Nation British Columbia, the governing nation for Métis in B.C. at: www.mnbc.ca.

Information and access to other resources can be found on the website:



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Acknowledgements

Madelaine McCallum is a Cree/Métis dancer from Ile a la Crosse, Saskatchewan who shares her cultural knowledge.

Kaija Heitland is a Métis artist who belongs to the Cowichan Valley Métis Nation. She works in beadwork, quillwork, fabric, graphic design, tattoo art and music.

The indigenous illustrations in this resource are copyright Kaija Heitland, Indigenous Nouveau 2021.

John Arcand is a Métis fiddler who started playing at the age of six. With coaching from his Father and Grandfather, he was playing at dances at the age of 12. His impeccable sense of timing and flowing rhythm came from learning to watch the dancer's feet.



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View online or download the colouring pages and Metis Jigging resource