

# Who are the Métis? Using the RAN strategy to engage in inquiry

Saskatchewan School Library Association

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SASKATCHEWAN SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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**This article chronicles a professional development session presented by Wilfred Burton, Differentiation Consultant, Regina Public Schools at Dieppe Elementary School in Regina, Saskatchewan on January 29, 2010. Author Judy Nicholson was a participant in that session and Wilfred graciously agreed to have this activity shared in *The Medium*.**

**Focus of Inquiry:** Who are the Métis?

### Commentary:

Reading and Analyzing Non-Fiction Text (RAN) is a great method of establishing prior knowledge and providing a group with a non-threatening way of confirming authentic information and determining if there are misconceptions. It also provides a foundation for further, more in-depth inquiry.

The graphic organizer at the end of this article helps students record and build on prior knowledge as they work through inquiries and the research process. To use this chart, students:

- record existing understandings (What I Think I Know)
- confirm existing knowledge based on evidence from research (Confirmed or Yes, You Were Right)
- identify and address misconceptions based on research (Misconceptions)
- record new information gathered (New Information)
- propose new questions or wonderings that arise during the inquiry (Wonderings).

The chart may be completed as a whole-group, small-group or an individual activity. Use of sticky notes to record ideas facilitates the movement of recorded ideas across the categories in the chart.

*The activities below can be used as whole group activities to pool prior knowledge, build a knowledge foundation, analyze text, and determine new wonderings to engage in further inquiry.*

## Activity One:

### “1-2-Group” Method of Generating Ideas

#### “What you already know?”

- Individually participants spend 2-3 minutes generating a list of their knowledge of the Métis. This is personal knowledge and is not to be discussed nor confirmed at this time.
- Working with a partner, participants integrate all ideas into a single list. (another 2-3 minutes)
- On individual post-it notes, they write a word or phrase for each idea. (up to 5 minutes)
- The facilitator then goes around the group having partners each contribute a post-it to the board at the front. Duplicate ideas are grouped together.
- Continue until all the notes are displayed.

## Activity Two:

### Analyzing Text to Confirm Information and Determine Misconceptions

- Provide each participant with a copy of *The Flower Beadwork People* by Sherry Farrell Racette (Regina: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 1991)
- Stagger the beginning point for the reading (depending on how many participants you can divide the book into several sections). Participants keep reading for about 8-10 minutes until you tell them to stop.
- After reading, you return to the array of post-its on the board and have participants use information from the text to decide if each one is – confirmed, a misconception or a wondering. Misconceptions and wonderings can be moved to another part of the board or onto separate chart paper.
  - Confirmed – the information is provided in the book
  - Misconception- the information is proved incorrect by the information provided in the book
  - Wondering – the information on the post-it was not addressed
- The group now has a large body of shared information that does not require further investigation.
- **Additional information:** Key information could be provided on cards that could be distributed to be read aloud at appropriate times: i.e Treaties, Royal Proclamation, Bill C31, etc. This information could also assist in confirming ideas.

### **Extending the Activity:**

- Other books or read alouds can be used to confirm additional ideas or add more information. Examples: Fiddle Dancer or Dancing in my Bones by Anne Patton and Wilfred Burton.
- Sorting or webbing: The confirmed information can be sorted into sub-headings.
- Writing notes or a paragraph: The confirmed information could be used to make jot notes, a paragraph, or the foundation for continued research along a specific topic line.
- Further research:
  - Misconceptions: These statements could be further researched and corrected to provide the right information.
  - Wonderings: These items could become the basis for further inquiry.

## Sources

Patton, A., & Burton, W. (2007). *Fiddle dancer*. Saskatoon, SK: Gabriel Dumont Institution.

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Racette, S. F. (1991). *The Flower beadwork people*. Saskatoon, SK: The Gabriel Dumont Institute.

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## Appendix

### RAN Chart

What I Think I Know	Confirmed (or Yes, You Were Right)	Misconceptions	New Information	Wonderings