



UNIT 1 *Preparing for the Journey* 

UNIT 2 *Setting Out* 

UNIT 3 *The Journey* 

UNIT 4 *Attaining the Quest* 

UNIT 5 *What the Future Holds* 

The theme of this anthology is the journey: both the journey through life and the journey from one stage of life to another. The key to most journeys is to get prepared, to set goals, to take the journey, to achieve goals along the way, and to set new goals.

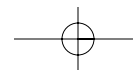
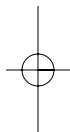
These are the steps you will read about in this book.

In this unit, you will read about journeys, and how others prepared for them. You will read texts that will help you ask and answer questions about your goals. Who are you? Who are the people who have shaped you? How do you help shape the world around you?

Think about these questions as you prepare for your journey.

CONTENTS

The Road Not Taken	4
<i>by Robert Frost</i>	
Teach Me the Ways of the Sacred Circle	6
<i>by Valerie Dudoward</i>	
My Family Tree	21
Harriet's Daughter	24
<i>by Marlene Nourbese Philip</i>	
Why Idalécio's as Canadian as maple syrup	30
<i>by Dale Brazao</i>	
Confessions of a Freak	32
<i>by Julia Gagliano</i>	
Lost...and Found	34
<i>by Danielle Harder</i>	
Boom, Bust & Echo 2000	37
<i>by David K. Foot</i>	





Before You Read

The setting of the poem "The Road Not Taken" is in the woods on a fall day. The poet comes upon two paths going in different directions. One path seems well travelled; the other looks as though very few people have walked on it. Before you read the poem, take a minute to visualize what you think the scene looks like and what you think it feels like to be in that place. Which path do you think you would follow? Why?



The *Road* Not Taken

by Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.



After You Read

1. Describe the differences between the two roads the poet mentions. Explain why his choice "has made all the difference" for his journey.

Handbook Link
How to understand and
analyze poetry

6 Unit 1: Preparing for the Journey



Before You Read

The characters Matt, Elaine, and Sam in this short play are each at a crossroads in their life journey. As they learn to play Elaine’s song “Teach Me the Ways of the Sacred Circle” for their graduation dance, they struggle with their own questions about who they want to be.

In scripts, the stage directions are usually in italics. They tell the director and actors important information about the set and the characters. Scan the stage directions on the first two pages to find descriptions of the three main characters. Based on these brief descriptions, what do you think Matt, Elaine, and Sam are like?

Teach Me the Ways OF THE SACRED CIRCLE

by Valerie Dudoward

The Characters:

- Matt (Matthew) Jack
- Granny Jack
- Elaine
- Louise Jack (Matt’s mother)
- Sam



Teach Me the Ways of the Sacred Circle

The Stage and Set Designs:

Act I, Scene I takes place in the Jack family home, in the basement.

Act I, Scene II is located just outside of and in Granny’s hospital room. (In order to accomplish these scenes without a time delay, the stage could perhaps be divided into two areas, with the action of Scene I occurring in one area, with the other part of the stage black, and then, with a fade to black of the basement room, the other set, Granny’s hospital room, could be revealed by bringing up the lights and having Mrs. Jack and Matt on stage as the set is lighted.)

Act II, Scene I returns to the basement room, and Scene II is a dream between Matt and Granny Jack.

Act III takes place totally in the hospital room, with all characters appearing. Lighting and gels would enhance the semi-reality of the dream-scene, in particular.



Act I, Scene I

Setting: Matt and Elaine are rehearsing “Teach Me the Ways of the Sacred Circle” in its instrumental version. The two are in the basement “Family Room” of the Jack home, which is sparsely furnished with an old couch, two battered bar stools with no bar, a kitchen table, and the musical equipment.

Elaine is playing at stage left, and Matt is at stage centre. The set is dark at the play’s opening, and the light comes up as the two begin

playing. They start off well, and then Matt hits a discordant note.

Matt is very stylishly and trendily dressed; his hair is styled in a contemporary way. Elaine is dressed in vivid and innovative colors, with her clothing more expressive than fashion-conscious.

When Matt makes the mistake in the music, he puts down his instrument and storms off to stage right, flopping onto the battered couch. Elaine puts down her instrument and follows him, sitting on a bar stool.



8 Unit 1: Preparing for the Journey

Matt: I'm too mad to play right now. I'm sorry, Elaine. I don't know what's the matter with me.

Elaine: That's okay. I know you've been going through a rough time....

Matt: It's not just Granny....

Elaine: How is she, Matt?

Matt: The same. She's still in a coma, lying in that hospital bed. I hate that place!

Elaine: I know. I guess no one likes hospitals, but it's the best place for her to be — for now, anyway.

Matt: I've just got so much on my mind right now — and then for this to happen to Granny.

Elaine: Sam and I know you've got a lot on your mind.

Matt: Hey, where is he, anyway? It's getting pretty late.

Elaine: Oh, he'll be here soon, unless his mom gets home late from work.

Matt: Between you and Sam babysitting, we never start rehearsing on time!

Elaine: You can feel smart about it, because you don't have any younger brothers or sisters to look after. If you did, you wouldn't be so quick to judge. *(she laughs)*

Matt: Well, I feel better now. Want to try that song again?

Elaine nods and she walks to stage left and picks up her instrument, with Matt following.

Matt: Now, try not to mess up this time, Elaine!

He laughs and she reaches to give him a playful shove. They start to play—perhaps a change in

lighting would be effective at this point—and this time, all goes well, as they play a complete instrumental version of "Teach Me."

Elaine: That was really great, Matt!

Matt: Yeah, it was okay. As soon as Sam gets here, we'll run through it again. Hey, want a Coke or something?

Elaine: Please. Hey, am I ever excited about playing for the grad dance.

Matt: I am, too. I just wish I didn't have so much on my mind.

Elaine: What's worrying you, Matt? If it's not just your granny....

Matt looks as if he is about to reveal something, when a shout is heard off-stage.

Sam: Hey, you two!

Sam walks on from stage left. He is dressed much less stylishly than Matt—there is a dated look about his clothes. He is wearing an old leather jacket and wide-legged jeans, and scuffed cowboy boots. He is a jaunty, smiling young man. He carries a paper bag, which he sets down by the chairs, and then he takes off his jacket and tosses it on the table.

Matt: Well, it's about time!

Elaine: Hey, how about that pop?

Sam: Sounds good to me.

Matt: Okay, okay—I'll go upstairs and get it. Might as well have another break; we're late—again—anyway.

Sam: Mellow out. I'm sorry I held us up, but I can't do much about it, unless I bring my brothers and sisters here with me. *(laughs)*

Teach Me the Ways of the Sacred Circle

9

As he talks, Matt walks out of the room, stage left. Sam stares after him for a moment, and then he turns to Elaine.

Sam: What's with him?

Elaine: It's not us he's mad at. I don't know what's really bugging him, but it's more than just his granny.

Sam: Did he say how she is?

Elaine: The same. No change. Listen, I was hoping we'd get a chance to talk alone. You know, what we were talking about before...*(Sam nods)* I don't think you should tell him right now. Put it off until he gets over...whatever he's going through.

Sam: What do you think it is...?

He stops talking as he hears Matt's footsteps.

Matt: Someone come and help me with these glasses!

Matt appears from stage left carrying three glasses and a large bottle of Coke. Sam takes a glass and the bottle, and they set everything on the table. Elaine opens the bottle and pours the Coke. They drink silently, and then Matt points to the paper bag which Sam put down by the chairs.

What's that?

Sam: Open it and find out.

Before Matt can reach for it, Elaine picks it up and takes a painted hand-drum out of the bag.

Elaine: Sam! You used my design!

Sam: I liked it so much, I memorized it from those sketches you showed me, and then I tried it out on my new drum.

He takes the drum from Elaine and proudly displays it for Matt, who is visibly disappointed.

Matt: I hope you're not thinking of using that tom-tom in our group!

Sam: Listen, for one thing don't call it a tom-tom. It's a drum. And besides that, I worked really hard to make this.

Elaine: *(to Matt)* Don't you know what a drum stands for, to Indian people all over the world?

Matt: You know I'm not interested in all that Indian stuff.

Sam: And what do you think you are? You're Indian, the same as us. You're Tsimshian, I'm Okanagan, and Elaine's Cree.

Matt: Yeah, I know all that tribal stuff. But we're living in the twentieth century, not a hundred years ago, when all that Indian people did was run around and play their tom-toms — sorry, drums.

Sam: Now listen here...

Elaine: Boys! Boys! I'm a singer, not a referee! *(addressing Matt)* I, for one, would like to hear Sam play.

Matt starts to object: Elaine stubbornly continues.

Matt: Now, look, do what you want on your own time, but we're here to rehearse for the grad dance. Or have you two forgotten all about that?

Sam: Elaine wrote this song for us to play at grad. But she wrote it so it could be played as a drum song, too.

Matt: You mean it has lyrics?

Elaine: Go ahead, Sam.

10 Unit 1: Preparing for the Journey

Elaine: (to Matt) Listen and learn.

Matt settles down and crosses his arms over his chest, looking impatient. Sam looks at them both and then he starts to beat his drum and sing.

Sam: The drum is a circle
The circle is life.
Life begins, life ends,
Then it begins again
Like the drum
It begins again.
The drum is the heartbeat
Heartbeat of our Nations
The drum is ancient
The drum is the heartbeat
The heartbeat is living
And it's me and it's you.
The drum is a circle
The circle is life.
Life begins, life ends,
Then it begins again
Like the drum
It begins again.
Great Nations of People
We follow the drum
Small children and elders
They know of the circle
The drum is the heartbeat
Heartbeat of our Nations.

Elaine stands up and Sam returns the drum to her. She picks up the paper bag from the floor and puts the drum inside, then places the bag on her bar stool.

Elaine: Aren't you guys excited? We're graduating in just a couple of days plus we're playing at the grad dance...

Sam: Plus we've got a rehearsal here that we better get started on.

The three return to the area where their instruments are, and begin tuning, etc.

Elaine: You're getting to be just like Matt.
Work, work, work.

Matt: Hey, I'm just a fun guy to be with!

Sam: Did you two get any practicing in while you were waiting for me?

Matt: Well, we tried, but I just couldn't get it together. Let's work on "Teach Me the Ways." That's our opening song. We better be able to get our opening song right anyhow.

Sam: Oh, we'll get it right...sooner or later.

Elaine: You guys want to go for it?

The three begin playing and singing, and this time, everything goes well.

Matt: All right! That's more like it!

Sam: We've still got some work to do on the chorus, though. What's your time like for practicing, Matt? I mean with your granny being sick. I can understand if you want to cut back on our rehearsal time.

Matt: No! I mean...that's okay. I don't think it's doing Granny any good for me to sit in that hospital. I'm going to talk to Mom about that later on our way to the hospital.

Matt puts down his instrument and walks over to the couch and flops down on it.

Elaine and Sam exchange a look, and then follow Matt, each of them sitting on a bar stool.

Matt: So, Sam. Do you have a job lined up for the summer?

Teach Me the Ways of the Sacred Circle

11

Sam: Not unless I get one on the reserve. I'm going to the Okanagan at the beginning of July. I'm going to spend time with my relatives there, do some food-fishing with them.

Elaine: And I'm going to travel the powwow trail with Gerry and his family.

Sam: So you're a pow wow dancer, too.

Elaine: Well, I'm really just learning, and powwow style is so different from west coast, powwow's faster and...well, it's just a different expression.

Matt: All I want to know is one thing... What is the powwow trail?

Elaine: You don't know what the...?

Sam: The powwow trail means the summer for the Indian people from the Prairies in Canada and the Plains in the United States. A lot of families travel all summer, from one dance competition to another, and they dance for purses, for prize money, and the whole families travel, from the grandparents down to the smallest babies.

Elaine: And that's what I want to do this summer, travel with Gerry and his family. I already think of them as my in-laws.

Matt: Elaine, I hope you've got more on your mind than early marriage! Think about your art!

Elaine: Oh, Matt, I am thinking about my future, and right now, my future includes Gerry, and what's important to him. And he's thinking about my future, too, about art school and what he's going to do while I'm busy with that.

Matt: Then why don't you both get summer jobs instead of all this talk about dancing and fishing? You've got to think of school — even if DIA pays for our tuition and stuff, we'll still need extra money for college.

Mrs. Jack: (calling from offstage) Matt! You asked me to tell you when I was ready to leave for the hospital and I'll be ready in a few minutes!

Matt: Okay, thanks, Mom! I'll be right up!

Matt picks up his jacket from the back of the couch and puts it on.

Matt: I've got to get going. Can you two take care of the equipment and lock up when you leave?

Elaine: Sure, no problem. I'll see you at school tomorrow.

Sam: Yeah, we've got another grad rehearsal, too.

Matt exits stage left and talks over his shoulder as he goes out.

Matt: Okay, see you tomorrow.

Elaine and Sam turn off the amp., etc., and talk as they work.

Elaine: He sure is a bundle of nerves, isn't he?

Sam: Yeah, he's worried sick about his granny.

Elaine: I'm glad you didn't tell him your news yet.

Sam: No, it don't seem like the right time.

Elaine: Sometimes it's never the right time.

Lights fade to black as they work. End of Act I, Scene I.

12 Unit 1: Preparing for the Journey

Act I, Scene II

Setting: Mrs. Jack and Matt are talking outside of Granny's hospital room. Mrs. Jack exits stage left. Matt enters Granny's hospital room and Granny is lying in bed, hooked up to some tubes, etc. Her eyes are closed and she is sleeping. Matt is feeling awkward and stands uncertainly by the bed.

Matt: Hi, Granny! Uh, it's Matt, and I've come to visit you. (pause) Maybe I'll pull up this chair and just sit awhile, since you're sleeping.

He walks to stage right, picks up a chair and puts it beside Granny's bed, sits down. There is a long pause, and then Granny opens her eyes and sees Matt.

Granny: Matt. Come closer.

Matt: Granny! You can talk!

Granny: Of course I can talk. Come closer to your granny.

Matt: (moves his chair closer to Granny and the bed) Do you know where you are, Granny?

Granny: (looks up at the tubes) Well, it looks like I'm in the hospital. Which one?

Matt: Vancouver General.

Granny: I remember a ringing in my ears and my arm going numb....What day is it? Is it still Thursday?

Matt: An ambulance brought you in Thursday night, and today is Wednesday. Oh, Granny, it's so good to hear you talking! Just wait here and I'll go and find Mom....

Granny: You leave Louise be for a minute, and let me talk to you alone. I'm glad I'm awake because I've been having awful dreams. These...dreams about you. Are you troubled by something, Matt?

Matt: This is crazy, Granny! You've been in this hospital for almost a week, and most of the time you've been asleep, and when you've been awake, you haven't known me, or Mom, or anything! And all of a sudden, you're wide awake and you know everything that's going on. Let me go and get Mom....

Granny: Did I ever tell you about the first time I saw you? No, maybe your mom told you about it, but I've been saving this story for a long time, and this is the time. You just get comfortable and listen.

You know that you weren't born here in Vancouver, you were born in your mom and dad's country, in my country. On the north coast. Oh, you were born in a hospital and everything, in Prince Rupert. But when you were a week old, on the seventh day you were born, your mom and dad took you to see me, in Port Simpson. They came over on your dad's fishing boat. Louise and Steven brought you over to see me.

And your dad, Steven, he handed you to me, and I held you in my arms, my first grandchild, my grandson, and I looked in your face and I saw the reason for all my dreams and I said then, "He's a special one." He's a special one because I dreamed he would come, I dreamed of his grandfather, my husband, for seven nights in a row. Until you were born.

And now I've been having them kind of dreams lately. But this time it's your grandfather, and I've gone to visit him somewhere, I can't remember it, but he won't turn around, he's got his back to me the whole time and he says just one thing to me, he says, "You've got to go back, Louise. I need you at home." And I ask him how can he be back home when he's dead, but he won't answer me and he won't turn around, he just says, "Louise, I need you back home."

Don't think I'm talking crazy, now, Matt, because my mind is clear and sound. I've lived my life by my dreams, and that's from our old teachings, they're Indian...what's that fancy word for it, the one you taught me?

Matt: Philosophy?

Granny: That's it! That's the one! Well, my granny taught me about dreams, and how to figure out what they mean. And I think I've figured out what my dreams about your grandfather mean.

Matt: Well, what do they mean? And what do they have to do with me? I mean, I know I'm Grandpa's...what do you call it, in our language, you know, spirit?

Granny: Baa-al(ch). You're the spirit of your grandfather come back to earth.

Matt: Baa-al(ch). Okay, I'm his baa-al(ch). So does that mean when you're dreaming of him, you might really be dreaming about me?

Granny: I told them you were special. You even know something about dreams. That's right. Boy, I want you to go home with me this

Teach Me the Ways of the Sacred Circle

13

summer, to Port Simpson. That's what your grandfather was telling me, in those dreams.

Matt: Port Simpson! But Granny....

Granny: Now, boy, I know it's asking a lot of you. But you know I've got my funeral money set aside. I've had it put away for years. But I'm not going to need that right away, it looks like I'm here to stay a while, so we can use some of that for our trip. We'll fly. I've always wanted to fly on one of them jets. Your grandfather would've liked that. And we'll only stay a month, so you can work part of the summer, like you planned. You think about it, now, you don't have to tell me right away. Although, at my age, it's never too soon to get started on new plans. Now go and find Louise. I'm tired, and I want to talk alone with her before I take a nap. Our little talk has wore me out. Matt...you just give some thought to what we talked about.

Lights fade to black. End of Act I, Scene II.

Act II, Scene I

Setting: The basement "Rec Room" of the Jack family. Matt, Elaine, and Sam enter stage right.

Matt: I hope our ceremony goes better than the rehearsal this afternoon.

Elaine: Want to know what I'm wearing to grad?

Sam: We don't care what you'll be wearing. We just care about your singing.

14 Unit 1: Preparing for the Journey

Matt: Well, tell me what you're going to wear. I know you will, anyway.

Elaine: I'm glad to see you're in a better mood today. Well, you know how every year at grad, it's always the same outfits for girls, those pastel frilly gowns. This year, it's going to be different, because I'm not going to wear a gown, I'm going to wear a deer-hide designer dress.

Sam and Matt: What?

Elaine: There's this Ojibway fashion designer, and I bought one of his dresses, it's contemporary but based on traditional style.

Matt: You mean there's actually an Indian fashion designer in Canada?

Elaine: Oh, there's more than one. So what are you guys going to wear?

Matt: Granny bought me a new tux. You know, it looks like she'll be home in a few days, although I guess she won't make it to the ceremony.

Sam: Hey, that's good news that she's coming home. Well, I'm wearing a white shirt and my brother's suit, but Elaine's given me an idea. I think I'll wear my bear claw choker instead of a tie.

Matt: Not me, I'll stick to the standard dress. But you know, the three of us are pretty outstanding statistics.

Elaine: Well I know we're outstanding, but statistics?

Matt: Seriously. Do you know the percentage of Indian students in Canada that graduate from high school? Plus the three of us are going on to post-secondary schooling.

Sam: Uh, make that two of us.

Matt: What? You're going to business school in September. We talked about it, remember? About getting more Indian people into management jobs?

Elaine: Sam! I thought you were going to wait before you told him....

Matt: Told me what? What's going on around here?

Sam: Well, I've had a job offer, Matt. And I didn't want to tell you before because you've been so worried about your granny....*(Sam looks at Matt but he does not respond; Matt waits for Sam to go on)* You see, my band in the Okanagan has offered me a job working for the council. And they'll send me to some management courses, and it just feels like the right thing to do. Right now.

Matt: What's the matter with you two? You, going back to the reserve after you've taken a big step out here, where it counts. And you *(indicating Elaine)*, going dancing all summer, from one little reserve to another. Dancing! How can you call yourself my friends? *(Elaine and Sam try to talk but Matt continues and gets louder)* Real friends don't pretend to believe in principles and then totally forget them! I really thought we were friends! *(Enter Mrs. Jack from stage right)*

Mrs. Jack: Matt! I can hear every word you're shouting upstairs! *(Matt stops immediately and there is a pause when no one speaks)* Does someone want to tell me what this war is about? *(nobody answers)* Well, it's not really a secret, since I could hear you upstairs.

Matt: Then talk some sense into them! Tell them what you always told me, that you came



Teach Me the Ways of the Sacred Circle 15

to the city to give me a chance, a chance you never had. That after Dad died, you decided to move all the way from Prince Rupert to Vancouver so that I'd have a chance to be someone. I could get the schooling that the law denied you and Dad, in your time.

Mrs. Jack: *(as she starts speaking, she sits down, and the others follow)* Your dad and I moved to Vancouver, we moved here from the north, to do a lot more than give you a chance. We wanted you to have a choice. A choice. And I think that Elaine's parents, and Sam's parents, wanted their kids to have that choice, too. If I'm not mistaken, then Elaine and Sam are exercising their freedom to choose. And so are you. Now tell me, Matt, what is so unfair about that?

Matt: Well, of course it doesn't sound unfair when you put it that way. But you're ignoring my point of view.

Mrs. Jack: Or are you just ignoring everyone else's?

Sam: Come on, Matt. Let's not let this get out of hand. We've just got different points of view....

Matt: About life! That's all!

Elaine: Well, tell us your point of view, then. Maybe we don't understand what you mean by principles.

Matt: You two are always talking about how important it is to you, being Indian, and you're always involved in some Indian group or other, and you don't forget for a minute that you're Indian. And yet, you're throwing away the chance to really make some social changes for Indian people. You

know how we can make change — the only way we can make change? By being a part of the non-Indian world, by doing what they do but doing it better. What kind of change are you going to make on a reserve, Sam? And you, Elaine, becoming a powwow dancer for the summer. What does that have to do with your art career?

Elaine: Now you listen here, Matthew Jack! You can believe in whatever you want, no matter how narrow-minded, as long as you're including just yourself. You can't plan my life for me. And I don't think I'm doing a bad job of it. Powwow dancing happens to mean a lot to me, I get a certain kind of nourishment from the drum, and being around Indian people from just about every nation in North America. And that's where I get ideas from, for my paintings. From all of those colors and beads and feather bustles. I plan on participating in mainstream, but it'll be on my own terms, with my own expression. With my own identity!

Matt: Elaine, I never meant to attack your identity...

Sam: And while we're talking here, I hope you know what a smart mom you've got. What you were saying about choice is right on. Right now, I want to experience living on the reserve for a while, I want to do some training and work for the community. And don't tell me that's not contributing, because we all contribute, in our own way.

Matt: Okay, okay, I guess I got a little out of hand.

Elaine: A little!



16 Unit 1: Preparing for the Journey

Mrs. Jack: So tell us, Matt, what principles are important to you?

Matt: Well, I guess that I want to have my own office, someday, maybe in False Creek. And a condominium within walking distance. And I'll be a top business consultant to major corporations.

Mrs. Jack: (*very quietly*) Those aren't principles.

Matt: Well, the principles that I set for myself are hard work and good quality work and self-improvement.

Mrs. Jack: Those principles don't sound like very much fun, all by themselves.

Matt: What do you mean?

Mrs. Jack: I mean, what about your family, your friends, a social life?

Matt: Work comes first.

Mrs. Jack: Granny was asking about you this afternoon.

Matt: The three of us are going there tonight, before we go to the grad ceremony.

Mrs. Jack: Well, I'm glad to hear that we still have a place in your life. I'll let you get on with your rehearsal. Now come on, you three, no blood-letting down here.

Matt: Yeah, it's okay now, Mom. Thanks for talking to us.

Elaine: Yes, thank you, Mrs. Jack.

Sam: I said it before, you're a smart mom.

Mrs. Jack exits stage right. Matt, Elaine, and Sam start getting their instruments ready, but avoid eye contact or talking. Matt tries to break the ice.

Matt: Hey, look, I'm sorry for saying what I did. (*Elaine and Sam say nothing*) I guess I felt left out. Like I always am when it comes

down to our being Indian. And it's not because I don't feel good about my ancestry. I'm proud. Granny taught me that, and Mom. It's that I feel I have to do something different. But I'm not forgetting who I am, or what my bloodline is.

Sam: Hey, we respect that, bud. We're only asking for the same thing from you.

Elaine: Does this mean we have a rehearsal or what? I've got to get home and change.

Matt: Okay, let's see what magic we can work here.

The sound of instruments tuning as the lights fade to black. End of Act II, Scene I.

.....

Act II, Scene II

Setting: This is a dream in Matt's mind. He is dressed in an eagle dancing outfit, and Granny is also dressed in a traditional outfit, from the killer whale clan.

Granny: Tell me, now, boy, who are you?

Matt: I'm your grandson, Matthew Jack.

Granny: Who are you?

Matt: I'm a high school student in Vancouver.

Granny: Tell me who you are.

Matt: I'm Matthew Jack! I'm Matthew Jack!

Granny: Let me tell you who I am.

You know me as Granny Louise Jack. But I had a different name when I was born. I was born into the Killer Whale Clan, my mother's clan. As you were born into your

Teach Me the Ways of the Sacred Circle 17

mother's clan, Eagle. And at birth I was given a name and that name is Nii-ho. And then when I became a woman, I was given another name, and that name is Wee-hyss. And that is still my name, and I still own my name given me at birth. You see, my family gave a potlatch each time I was given a name. And they invited the people in our clan, and people from other clans, to witness this naming. And my family gave out gifts to these witnesses. And that was our government, that was law, the potlatch law. And the fur trade, the missionaries, the new people came to our country and took it and changed it. And we changed. Every generation of Indian people changes our old ways, molds them into something a little different.

From the time you were a baby, laying in my arms, I sang old feast songs and paddle songs that I remember. I sang those to you. And I'd tell you stories in our language, in Tsim-al-ya(ch). Stories about how Raven came into our world, the tricks he played, how he discovered daylight. The story of the great fire, and how it was caused by children being cruel to fish and other animals, and only two people in the whole world were saved, a grandmother and her granddaughter. These are my stories for you. This is what you have heard from my lips your whole life. You know the stories, you know the songs, but can you say what they mean to you? Can you be a brave man, and look deep for the answers? Look in yourself, look at yourself. What does that all mean to you?

The lighting changes and Matt dances an eagle dance, and then he picks up a hand-drum at stage centre and drums and says these words:

The drum is a circle
The circle is life.
Life begins, life ends,
Then it begins again
Like the drum
It begins again.
The drum is the heartbeat
Heartbeat of our Nations
The drum is ancient
The drum is the heartbeat
The heartbeat dies
And is born again.
The heartbeat is living
And it's me and it's you.
The drum is the heartbeat
Heartbeat of our Nations
The heartbeat is living
And it's me and it's you.

Granny: Now tell me who you are.

Matt: I am Matthew Jack, and I belong to the Eagle Clan and I am from the Tsimshian Nation.

Granny: I cannot help you in the choices you will make in your life. You will make those choices, good and bad. You are the new seed, our generation, and you are living in new times.

Don't live in the past, because we cannot do that, we are meant to live life by each moment. But remember your past. Know it and talk of it and feel it. Those are your roots, the gift you were born with. And

18 Unit 1: Preparing for the Journey

with that past and the living you do in your lifetime, you will create a new gift for the generation after you.

The eagle is a creature that flies great distances, the eagle is majestic.

Now I want you to soar, Matthew Jack.

Fly for yourself, and not just for me.

Granny picks up the hand-drum and Matt dances while she plays and the lights fade to black. End of Act II, Scene II.

.....

Act III, Scene I

Setting: Matt, Mrs. Jack, Elaine, and Sam are seated in Granny's hospital room. Granny is no longer connected to tubes. The three young people are dressed as discussed earlier for their graduation ceremony, and Mrs. Jack is also "dressed up."

Elaine: Well, how do you think we look?

Granny: I think you all look very, very beautiful. I want you to know how proud I am of all of you. You're the first high school graduate in our family, Matt.

Matt: And I'm not going to be the last one, either. There are going to be a lot more after me. (*turns to Sam*) Although I know that's not everyone's goal.

Sam: It's going to be a good time ahead for both of us (*acknowledges Elaine*)...for all three of us.

Elaine: It's going to be kind of sad saying goodbye to this part of our lives, though.

Mrs. Jack: That makes me think of that saying of yours, Mom, about the circle and the number four.

Matt: Tell us about that, Granny.

Granny: It's been a long time since I told that one. Well, my boy, think of things in nature that are made in the shape of the circle. Start with your mornings, and the round yellow sun that warms the earth. End with your evenings, gazing at the round white beauty of the moon. And there's the circles that mark the years in the life of a tree trunk. Throw a rock in the ocean and watch the circles, one inside the other, that it makes. This is what you learned to call a symbol in school. The circle means something sacred to Indian people. We follow the truth of the circle, we live in its truth. There is a path to the circle, but we never know its beginning or its end. We only know that it has been, that it is, and that it will be. We are born, we live, we die. And we are born. And live, and I've been close to dying these last days. I wasn't awake, and yet when I came back here, I knew I'd been close to something else, that I wanted to leave this life, I was ready.

Matt: Granny! Don't talk like that!

Granny: I will talk like that, because it is a truth. And it is a good and pure truth. Are you going to be as you are today forever, Matt?

Matt: Well, no...I mean, I know that I'll get older, that we all get older and...

Granny: Die?



Teach Me the Ways of the Sacred Circle 19

Matt does not answer, cannot answer.

Granny: Look at me, now.

Matt reluctantly looks at Granny.

Granny: Did you have any dreams while I was sick here?

Matt: Yeah, I did, Granny. I had these dreams...about Grandpa Jack. And they were so real.

Granny: How was your grandpa?

Matt: Well, it was just like he came back to visit me, he was just the same, he was the same age as when....Well, anyhow, he and I just talked....

Granny: Well, if your grandpa can come back, in whatever way, then you can be sure that I'll come back, too. After I'm gone, I'll come back when you need me. It's going to be a long time before we have to worry about that though, my boy.

Elaine: Oh, Granny Jack, I'm so glad you could be well enough to see us tonight. You know, I feel like you really are my granny.

Granny: You and Sam are just like my own blood. And Grandpa Jack would be proud to see the three of you tonight.

Mrs. Jack: You still haven't told us about four.

Granny: Well, that's related to what we were talking about with the circle. Things follow a pattern, and for a reason. The number four is a special number, it's another symbol, and you find it everywhere in nature. Spring, summer, autumn and winter. The four winds and the four directions. North, East, South and West. Two hands and two feet.

Two arms and two legs. The four parts of the tree, trunk, branches, roots and leaves. The four stages of our existence. Birth. Life. Death. And the other. And you know, I think that it's the other, what we don't know about, that's the stage I'm really looking forward to.

Matt walks to stage centre and the lights fade on the others who remain frozen in their positions, and a spotlight illuminates him.

Matt: I've been doing a lot of travelling in my dreams lately, and I feel like I've come back from a long long trip. And you know, I guess in some ways I'm just starting out on a trip tonight, I feel like I'm saying goodbye and yet I don't even know where I'm going.

But I know where I've been. And I know who I am. I know some long-ago stories that my ancestors told. And I can think of those stories and those people every day of my life, whether I'm downtown or at school or in my future at False Creek.

I know what the statistics say about us, about Indian people. Our child death rate is twice the national average. As recently as eight years ago, more than half of our people were on welfare, social assistance. Our unemployment rate is higher than the national average. A lot higher. We die at an earlier age than the national average.

I know those statistics. And I am determined to make some change. In my own way. On my own terms. Maybe I won't change the course of Indian history, but I'm going to make change as the human being I am.



20 Unit 1: Preparing for the Journey

Those statistics don't tell the stories of Granny Jack or Mom or Sam's family or Elaine's family. They don't tell about the love that raised me, the love that surrounds me. They don't tell the stories of the drum.

I'm Matthew Jack, and I'm the first high school graduate in my family. But I won't be the last. And I'm going to graduate from university, too.

And when I'm sitting with the other grads tonight, I'm going to be thinking about Mom and Dad, and how they weren't

legally allowed to go past grade eight. How they weren't allowed to vote in the federal elections until 1960.

I'm Matthew Jack and as of tonight, I'm a high school grad. And I've got a surprise for Granny Jack. Kind of a graduation present to her. I'm taking her to Port Simpson this summer. And she's going to fly in a jet for the first time. She's going to soar, and we're going to fly together.

Off-stage a drumbeat begins and the lights fade to black.



After You Read

1. Elaine, Matt, and Sam are graduating from high school and saying goodbye to their old lives. In your reading response journal, list the plans each of them has for the journey ahead.
2. Explain the meaning of the title of the play. What does the title have to do with the characters' journeys?

Handbook Link
How to read literature




Before You Read

When the Iscove family immigrated to Canada, they brought very few belongings. Imagine that you had to leave your home tomorrow with only one small suitcase, or think about your own experience leaving your home country and coming to Canada. What would be, or what were, the first five things you chose to put in your suitcase? Why? How would you feel, or how did you feel, about leaving all of your other possessions behind?

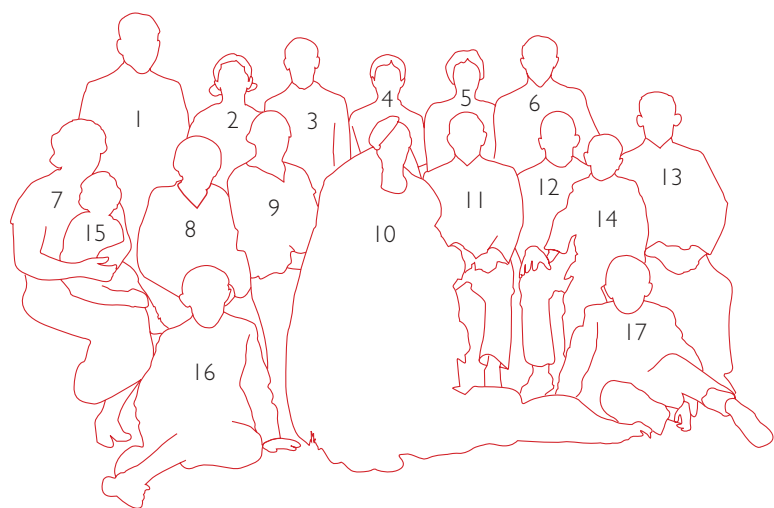
My
Family
Tree



In 1907, Jacob Eisicovitch came to Canada from Poland. He left behind his wife, Simmel, and his three children, Arnold, Min, and Sadie. He worked in a factory making dresses for the T. Eaton Company, and in 1910, was able to send for his family. His wife and three children, and his mother Leah with her young daughter Demimah, the same age as Arnold, all came to Canada. In a new country, with a new name, the Iscove family had six more children. Those children together had 27 children, and today they have grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and their family continues to grow. You can learn more about the Iscove family on the next two pages.

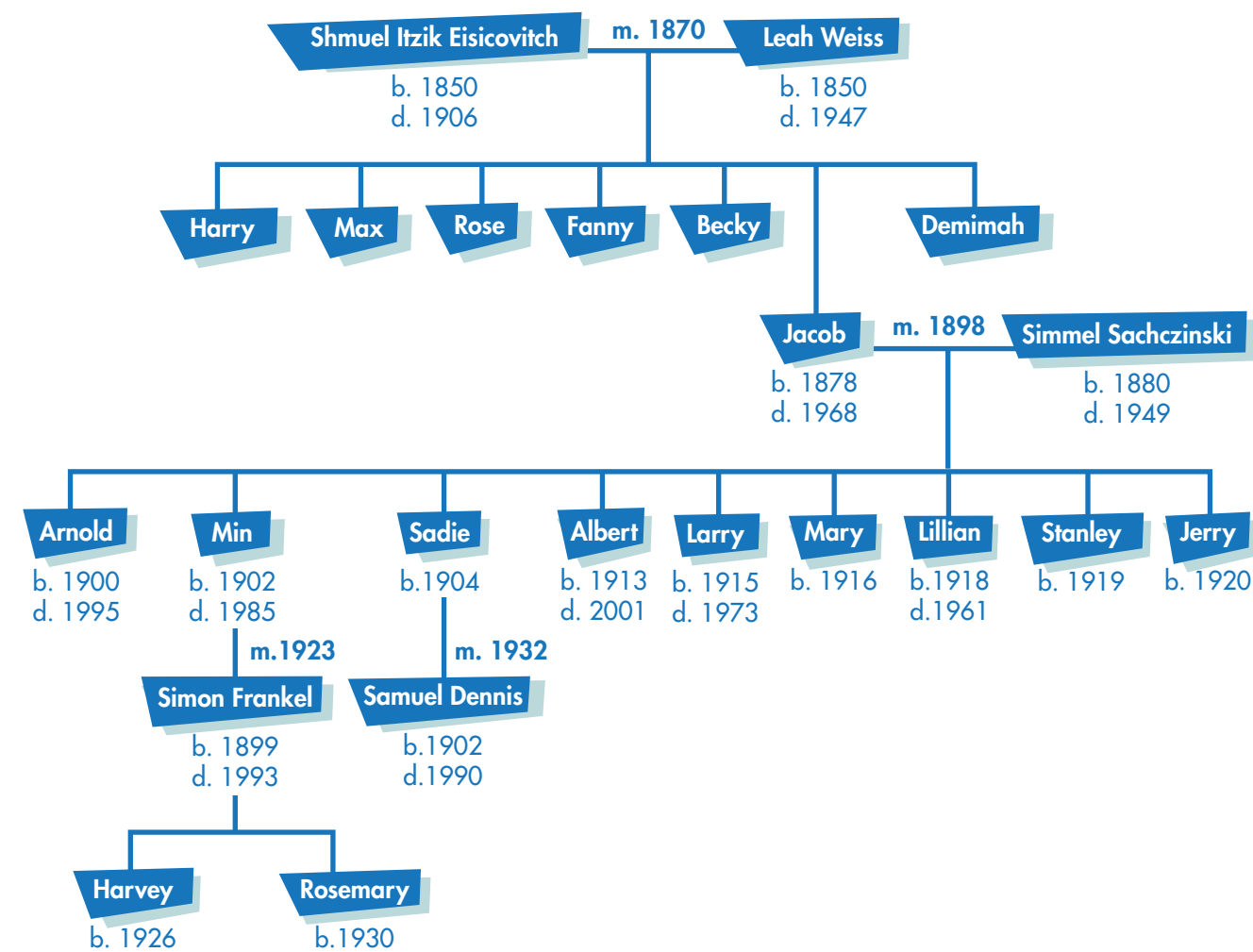


This is the Iscove family, in the backyard of the family home at 39 Cecil Street, Toronto, Ontario, on the day of Sadie Iscove's wedding to Samuel Dennis in the spring of 1932.



Back Row: **1.** Simon Frankel **2.** Lillian Iscove **3.** Larry Iscove **4.** Mary Iscove **5.** Rose (Harnick) Iscove **6.** Dr. Arnold Iscove
 Middle Row: **7.** Min (Iscove) Frankel **8.** Leah (Weiss) Eiscovitch **9.** Simmel (Sachczinski) Iscove **10.** Sadie Iscove
11. Samuel Dennis **12.** Jacob Iscove **13.** Albert Iscove **14.** Harvey Frankel (on Jacob's lap)
 Front Left, on Min's lap: **15.** Rosemary "Cookie" Iscove
 Front Left, on ground: **16.** Stanley Iscove
 Front Right, on ground: **17.** Jerry Iscove

On the day of Sadie and Samuel's wedding, part of the Iscove family tree looked like this.



After You Read

1. In *Teach Me the Ways of the Sacred Circle*, Matt's grandmother told him to know and remember his "bloodline." In your reading response journal, explain how completing a family tree and knowing your bloodline can help prepare you for your journey.

Handbook Link
 How to read visual information



Before You Read

In this excerpt from the novel *Harriet's Daughter*, Margaret thinks about changing many things in her life, starting with her name. Being a person of action, Margaret makes a plan to help her carry out the changes she wants to make.

Skim the beginning of the excerpt to find out Margaret's organizing scheme. Following her scheme, write at least five things that you would like to change in your life, and a plan that would allow you to make those changes. Discuss your list with a partner.

HARRIET'S Daughter

by Marlene Nourbese Philip



For the next week or so I was mad as hell. I refused to talk to anyone at home. I said good morning and good evening, and that was it. I was still burning from the unfairness of my mother — her refusal to help me help Zulma, but I was also excited about what she had told me about my 'godmother'.

Out of everyone else she had liked me best and that was real important to me. Families are O.K. — sometimes better than O.K., though mine hasn't been that way for a long time, but you have to like whoever you're stuck with in a family. I'm supposed to love my sister, the Chub Queen, my brother, the Rib Roast Prime Minister,

my mother *and* my father, and I suppose I do love them. I mean I would help them if they were in trouble, but I don't often like them — maybe except my mum. Zulma I love and like, she's closer to me than my own sister; and Mrs. Blewchamp, who was no relative of mine, liked me and thought I was special — she was even white.

Maybe it was then I first started thinking of changing my name, from boring old Margaret, to Harriet. Mrs. Blewchamp had really lived, she was in the war, in a concentration camp, and had escaped and she wanted *me* to have her name. I mean, like who was Margaret? My father's mother, whom I didn't really know, and didn't like, because HE was always threatening to send me to her for some Good West Indian Discipline.

I do know that that was when I made my list:

THINGS I WOULD MOST LIKE TO SEE CHANGED IN MY LIFE.

1. My father. I want a different father, or no father at all.
2. My mother's attitude. My mother has an attitude, a real problem, she won't stick up for me or for herself.
3. Zulma's life. It would be the end of the world, for me, if she went back to Tobago, but I would like her to be happy and she will only be happy there.
4. My sister. My sister should gain another 50 lbs; I would love her even more because she would be *so* unhappy and I would have to feel sorry for her. She wouldn't be so pretty either.
5. My skin. At least five shades darker, like Zulma's, and braids like hers. Right now I'm too in between, like the colour of mud — brown mud. (How come Jo-Ann's called cinnamon?)
6. My name. I want a name that means something — important?
7. My brother. An outbreak of pimples.

Then I drew up another list:

THINGS TO DO TO MAKE THOSE CHANGES.

1. Send my father away — far away — for some Good West Indian Discipline? Ha, ha. Impossible — must learn to tune him out more.
2. My mother must get a job. She has worked before, but HE won't let her, says she should be home for us children. HE means HIMSELF of course. She's always happier when she's working, though she buys more junk. I will try and find her a job. How can I make her stick up more for me????? Agree to have my hair straightened?? No way!

3. Zulma: pray. Never hurts to try everything, although I don't really believe God — He or She — ever listens. Much too busy with more important problems. Get a job to earn money for her fare? Run a marathon? Walk across Canada? Maybe, maybe. That would get them, I could see the headlines: GIRLS WALKING ACROSS CANADA TO RAISE MONEY TO GO HOME. I could carry a sign: HELP ZULMA GO HOME TO GRAN or HOME TO GRAN. Sounds great, won't work though. The adults would probably stop us, but something *MUST BE DONE*.
4. Chub Queen — buy her chocolates, chips and Coke. She loves them.
5. Can't change my skin or the length of my hair, but I do have some nice things about me — my eyes. I like the way they slant and sparkle. My mother says it's because we have Carib Indian in us, but she won't say more than that, so maybe I have a great, great, great, great-grand-mother who was Carib, with eyes like mine. I've got good teeth and a nice smile, so I've been told. Don't feel there's much to smile or show my teeth about though.
6. My name. Go to the library and look up famous women to see what their names were. Maybe I could change my name. I'm sure *HE* would never let me.

That was how it happened that me, Ti-cush (believe it or not) and Zulma happened to be walking along St. Clair on a Saturday afternoon. We were on our way to the library. I wanted to check out famous women and to get some books for a music project for school.

Ti-cush had got a little friendlier with Zulma and we had been hanging out together.

'Hey guys,' I said, 'can you imagine being killed "in the line of duty"?' I dropped my voice on the last words, 'and getting medals after you die? That would be real exciting wouldn't it? I think I would like to be a spy.'

'Once you're dead,' Ti-cush said, her voice real dry, 'you're dead, you've got no way of knowing whether or not you've got a medal. What d'you want to die for? It's boring, painful as hell I'm sure and I hate pain — I can't stand it.' She gave a little shudder, all for effect, as she said this. 'You know when I get my period I just have to go to bed and take pills. It's terrible. My mother says I have a very low pain threshold.'

I didn't say anything. I didn't want to start Ti-cush on her period. She could go on forever on that. I hadn't started mine yet and never felt I could say anything

anyway. Zulma would *never* talk about hers. If I asked her something direct she would answer, but she would never go on like Ti-cush. But then everything was a problem for Ti-cush and she loved being the centre of attention.

After a while I went on: 'Well I wouldn't want to be tortured, I'd want to be killed quickly so I didn't have to feel any pain. If I were a spy, I would have cyanide capsules in a false tooth that I could bite on — I saw that on T.V. I would die immediately. That way I wouldn't be tortured and I wouldn't have to give away my country's secrets. I read something about a woman like that; her name was Mata Hari, she used to dance naked in clubs and had a lot of boy-friends.'

'She have a cyanide tablet?' Zulma asked.

'No, they made her stand against a wall and soldiers shot her.'

'And you think *that's* exciting?' Ti-cush said. 'You're sick, that's what. It's gross and depressing, all this talk of dying and soldiers.'

'Haven't you ever thought of what it must be like to die . . . I mean what it must feel like?' I asked her. 'Not the pain, but just the feeling. It's really too bad people can't come back and tell you what it's all about.'

'Ghosts!' Zulma said. 'You talking 'bout ghosts, dead people coming back to talk to you!' Ti-cush was looking real angry now and I began to laugh.

'God, both of you are real depressing, first death and cyanide and now ghosts,' she said.

'Me gran use to tell me plenty of ghost story, and some of dem real funny. You want me tell you guys some?'

I could see Ti-cush getting all sullen and pouty, so I told Zulma she could tell us some other time — 'like when we're in bed. I love feeling scared when I'm safe,' I said.

'O.K.,' she said, 'the next time me sleep over — right?'

'Right.' I laughed. 'So what would you like to be Ti-cush? I said I wanted to be a spy.'

Ti-cush didn't say anything for a while, then: 'I'd like to be a queen, with lots of fancy clothes and servants and money, and . . . lots of boy-friends.' You could tell from her tone and attitude, sort of angry and defiant, that she expected us to challenge her. We did. Zulma jumped in first with both feet.

'But Ti-cush, queens don't have boy-friends. Me mean queens does have kings, right Margaret?'

Before I could answer, Ti-cush said, 'Well a movie star then.'

Zulma jumped in again. 'Me think you better off being a movie star, because me read where a lot of dose queen get dey head chop off, and dat must

28 Unit 1: Preparing for the Journey

be real painful — having some big chopper come chopping down on your neck. What if de blade dull, like when me gran was trying to chop off de neck of dis chicken — it was an old cock. Lord, you never see so much sawing back and forth to chop off dat poor old fowl neck. If you can't stand pain, me say a movie star make a lot more sense, Ti-cush.'

I was watching Ti-cush's face as Zulma went on — it got more and more — the only word I have to describe it is growly. She is quite light-skinned for a black person (what my mother calls red-skin) and her face got sort of fatter and redder and growly as Zulma talked. When Zulma got to the part about her gran sawing the chicken's neck, Ti-cush covered her ears. When Zulma was done, she turned to her and spat the words out:

'When I want your stupid opinion, I'll ask for it. Otherwise shut to hell up about you and your stupid gran.'

'Hey c'mon Ti-cush,' I said, 'that's nasty and mean. Zulma was only trying to help.' I looked at Zulma and I could tell she was angry and hurt, but before I could say anything to her Ti-cush told her she was sorry.

'Look Zulma, don't take it personally — I've got some things on my mind.'

'Now Zulma,' I said, 'your turn. Who do you want to be?'

'You guys ever hear about Angela Davis?' She didn't give us a chance to answer, but she rushed on. 'Me gran use to tell me about she, how she fight for black people, and how she had to run for she life. Gran had pictures of she stick up over she bed and me bed — me still remember de Afro she used to wear — it was de biggest Afro me did ever see on anybody. Me use to ask Gran to tell me 'bout she every night, before me go to bed. Gran say de police frame she because dey didn't like she fighting for she people — black people in de United States — and dat it remind she of some of de stories she use to hear about slavery time. How de owners use to always try and kill or maim people who try and help other slaves. And you know what, me have one of dose pictures with me. When me coming away me ask Gran if me could have it and she let me bring it with me. Me have it up over me bed now, and dat is who me would like to be — somebody like Angela Davis . . . and fight for something real important.'

By the time she was done, we were standing outside the library; we were all quiet — I don't know why — thinking about Angela Davis (at least I was) and what Zulma had just said.

Harriet's Daughter 29

I got some great books on reggae music and Rastafarians for my music project; one on Mata Hari, and two on Harriet Tubman. When the librarian gave me a list of famous women with Harriet Tubman's name on it, I remembered I had learnt something about her in my Black Heritage class; that she had helped slaves escape from the States to Canada. She had the same name as Harriet Blewchamp — that made me feel good — like I was on the right track or something.

By the time I got through at the library though, I knew I was going to be half an hour late for supper.

'HE is going to be mad as hell with me,' I said. They understood. 'You know what guys,' I went on, 'the world would be such a fun place without certain adults — like parents — my parents.' We all laughed. 'We should form a group: WORLD WITHOUT PARENTS — WWP — or WAP — world after parents; recruit other kids to the cause.' That really broke us up.



1. List the reasons Margaret wants to change her name to Harriet. What does this new name mean to her? How do you think it might help her on her journey?
2. In *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare asked, "What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." Do you agree with Shakespeare? What makes names so powerful?

Handbook Link
How to read literature



Before You Read

A popular ad campaign, called I Am Canadian, told Americans loudly and clearly why Canadians are not like them. Dale Brazao, a Portuguese immigrant who grew up in Northern Ontario, wrote this column as his own version of I Am Canadian.

Before you read, think about the following questions. What are the best things about living in Canada? What are some of the most challenging things about living here? If you have come to Canada from another country, or if you have family in another country, what would you say makes Canada different from that home country?

Dale Brazao



Why Idalécio's as Canadian as maple syrup

My name is Idalécio and I am Canadian.

I am not a lumberjack or a fur trader, although I've lived among them.

I don't live in an igloo, but after the snowstorm of 1999, our house in the Beaches could've passed for one.

I've never eaten blubber and I don't own a dogsled, but at one point I did own a team of huskies, hooked them up to a toboggan, and had the ride of my life.

I do know a Jimmy, Sally and a Suzie from Canada and they are nice people. I've run into them in Florida.

I, too, believe the beaver is a noble animal. But the wolf and the eagle are far nobler, and I've seen them all close up in the wild.

Canada is the second largest land mass, the first nation of hockey and the best part of North America.

But Portugal is warmer.

My name is Idalécio. And I am a Portuguese immigrant.

The son of southern peasant soil, as my sister-in-law, Agatha, often calls me. Portuguese by birth, Canadian by choice.

I lived in the bush among natives for the first three years of my life in Canada and am a better person for it. I arrived wearing shorts and it was snowing.

I was called DP — that's short for Displaced Person, for those of you who are too young to remember the fallout from World War II — and had the living daylight punched out of me. I fought back and kicked the living daylight out of them.

I earned respect. And often took another licking from my dad for beating up those nice "Canadian" kids.

My first teacher at St. Julian's, a one-room schoolhouse in Franz, Ont., couldn't pronounce my name. So he chopped it up to fit his ignorance and sentenced me to a lifetime of explaining how a nice Portuguese boy could have a name like Dale.

My name is Idalécio, and I am a Canadian.

I, too, believe in diversity — not assimilation. In peacekeeping, not policing.

I'm glad we have a prime minister who defends his wife with a soapstone Inuit carving, instead of a president who goes down on his knees in the Oval Office.

I grew up in Sault Ste. Marie, home of the Esposito brothers, the Algoma steel plant, and the Soo Greyhounds.

I sold ice cream from a truck, made pizza in a strip joint.

I didn't drink beer in high school and that made me both awkward among my peers and indispensable — as designated driver — for parties and dances.

Mostly, I managed, despite the fact that my dad's 1961 Ford Falcon desperately needed a ring job and, enveloped in noisome engine smoke, it was a common sight on the Soo's weekend scene.

I was the only Portuguese kid on an all-Italian soccer team. I didn't go to a Catholic school,

thereby avoiding both the tuition and mandatory confession.

My name is Idalécio, and I am a Canadian, but I learned to swear in Italian.

I kicked the winning convert that brought Bawating Collegiate and Vocational School its first football championship.

I was a hero, and it felt good.

I left the Soo to get away from the steel plant, which trapped so many of my childhood friends in early and bad marriages.

I proudly sewed the Maple Leaf on my backpack — but my friend Joe Lobko and I still couldn't hitch a ride in the mountains of Spain.

I went in search of fame and fortune.

I joined The Star which said I was exactly what they were looking for. I spoke English, Portuguese and Spanish, read French, and understood Italian with the use of my hands.

I wanted to travel. The Star delivered.

My name is Idalécio and I am Canadian.

And I still don't drink beer.

Dale Brazao is a Toronto Star investigative reporter.



After You Read

1. a. What do you think makes Idalécio Canadian?
- b. In your reading response journal, reflect on what makes you Canadian; or on why you do or do not want to become a Canadian.

Handbook Link

How to analyze longer prose works

How to identify elements of, and create, a magazine or newspaper



Before You Read

Before beginning their journey, many people try to determine who they are. In this article from the online magazine *Reluctant Hero*, 14-year-old Julia Gagliano tells how difficult that can be.

Think about the unwritten rules of your group of friends. With a partner, create a list of those rules. Include points about how to dress, how to talk, what music to listen to, and so on. Then read "Confessions of a Freak."

Confessions of a Freak

by Julia Gagliano

"She's a freak." I look up, at whoever dared to use such words, from my humble spot on the dorm steps, where I am hidden, unseen among the dark night sky. I see three people nodding, agreeing with the statement, and I know they are speaking of me. But it doesn't really hurt, at least if it does I don't feel it, because I was appointed this evil word, this condemnation of no acceptance, earlier today. They called it to my face, and I told them in my mind they were also freaks, loving who would surely hurt them and wearing their tight clothes, only to fit in amongst the sea of "normal" people.



Maybe I am a little strange. I have short hair, like a boy's, I always look down when I walk, I scowl at the teeny-boppers I am stuck with for three days on this retreat. I barely speak to anyone. But that is all they know of me; what they see on the outside. Yet it seems as though they have dived into my mind and soul, read it like a book, and are now using what they know to try and break me down.

The truth is, I have been depressed for many years now. It started, it seems, when my cousin told me my family (my uncles, aunts and cousins) don't like me. Now, as a teenager, when I walk into my high school classes, I can't help but feel everyone is against me, cursing me, hating me with their eyes. I know nothing has happened to make them feel this way, but still, this belief is imprinted in my mind, slowly but surely turning me against myself.

After every night in my own world, I return to the truth. The name-calling, the hate, the abuse. I am living in two separate hells; the names, though, have started rather recently. All I can do is hide, fade away, turning to my poems, music and my Internet friend to keep me sane. And all I can do is make these joys of mine watch me through glass, witnesses of my self-brought pain, unable to touch me. And all I can do is pray that one day you will all see the real story and leave us be.



After You Read

1. What are Julia's "two separate hells"? With a partner, discuss what you think Julia needs to make her happy.

Handbook Link
How to analyze longer prose works



Before You Read

As a child, Jarad Paul never knew his birth mother, who was only 15 when she signed him over to his adoptive parents. In this interview from *What* magazine, Jarad tells the story of preparing himself to find her, and the journey they are still taking together.

Think about the three following statements. Choose the one you most agree with and explain why.

- I am the person I am because of the influences of my family and home life.
- I am the person I am because I was born that way.
- I am the person I am because of the choices I've made.



Lost...and FOUND

by Danielle Harder

Jarad spoke with his mother for the first time shortly after he turned 18. Little did he know they'd been living just 15 minutes away from each other, all these years.

What: Were you ever curious about who your biological parents were, before now?

Jarad: Oh yeah, I was always curious, ever since the first time I was told I was adopted. I always wondered where my mother is, or who she is, or what she's doing. When I got a little bit older — 14, 15 — I started to really wonder.

W: What else did you wonder about them?

J: Physical characteristics. Where they lived. What they did. How they lived. If I had any brothers or sisters. When you're

a kid you have fantasies, you know — superstars or rock stars or something like that. When I grew out of that phase, I just thought [they might be] straight, down-to-earth type people.

W: How did you find your birth mother?

J: I was at my adoptive parents' house, working on my car. I live by myself now [and] I just happened to be there. The phone rang and Ray, a social worker, said he was calling on behalf of my birth mother and she would like to get in touch with me. I told him I'd take a

couple of days to think about it and get back to him.

W: What was your reaction when he said, "Your birth mother wants to get in touch with you?"

J: I was shocked, first thing, and thinking "Here she is looking for me." I knew she would be, but I didn't think this soon. There wasn't much she could do until I turned 18. I turned 18 on February 22 and I think it was a week later that I talked to Ray for the first time. I could hardly hold the phone. I was shaking and nervous and had this whole feeling of relief.

W: Why did you tell Ray you needed a couple of days to think about things?

J: I wanted to talk to my adoptive parents. It affects them too. And I just wanted to think — make sure this is what I want.

W: What kinds of things were going through your head?

J: "Do I really want to meet these people? Do I want to be in that family? I don't want to hurt the family I've grown up in and known all my life. I want to make sure they're okay with it." It affects a lot of people. The people I live with now, and lived with when I was growing up. I have a whole family on this side, on the adoptive side.

W: When did you tell your adoptive parents that your birth mother was looking for you?

J: Just after I hung up with Ray for the first time. And they said, "Wow. That's great." They were pretty supportive of the whole thing from the beginning. I think they were ready to say yes before me!

W: What happened next?

J: I phoned [Ray] back and I had to sign a piece of paper from Alberta Children's Services saying [he] could release contact information to my birth mother. He came to my apartment to sign [it]...and before Ray left the parking lot of my apartment, my [biological] brother was on the phone.

W: What did he say?

J: I guess Ray phoned my mom and she was so excited she couldn't even talk on the phone, so my 15-year-old brother talked to me first. He said, "She's here. She's just going to calm down for a second and then I'll pass the phone." So my brother and I talked for a bit.

W: What was that like?

J: It was different. It was weird talking to my 15-year-old brother for the first time.

W: What did you talk about?

J: Everything. Where they lived and what they did and where he goes to school and how life was and what did I miss.

W: What did you miss?

J: I didn't miss a whole lot, I don't think. I missed my actual family. They've been in the Edmonton area for as long as I've been. It's just pretty funny. We've only been about 15 minutes away from each other for the last 18 years.

W: When did your mom come on the line?

J: About 45 minutes later. She couldn't talk because she started to cry as soon as she heard my voice. So she put the phone down for a few minutes and she picked it up and she said, "How's it going?" [I said], "Not bad," and she just said she was glad she found me and that it didn't take too long. She'd been waiting 18 years and now she had some closure. It was really good for her.

W: What did she tell you about the moment she gave you up?

J: She was in tears when she signed the piece of paper. Social services basically cornered her into signing the piece of paper. She didn't want to but there wasn't much she could do. She didn't have very supportive parents and without that support, she couldn't really do much but sign the piece of paper to give me away.

W: Did she give you any insight into your father?

J: First name (laughs), and that's about it. She's given me the option that if we want to find him, we know the name of his



36 Unit 1: Preparing for the Journey

best friend so we can maybe get in touch with him that way. But to me, it's not really important knowing who my father is. I have my mother and if my father doesn't want to be part of my life, well then, I don't need him to be.

W: How did you feel after you hung up the phone?

J: I felt happy. It was good to know she was nearby now. I could go see her and start hanging out, doing stuff. All that stuff we missed 18 years ago. Catch up on everything.

W: How did you feel toward your adoptive parents after that phone call?

J: They'll still always be Mom and Dad. There's no question. They raised me. They helped me through thick and thin. You don't forget the family you grew up with.

W: What happened the first time you met your birth mom?

J: I was supposed to be there at 11:30 and I got there about 11:00. I sat there in the parking lot. No one was home yet. Then I saw this car come around the corner. This woman got out and just started walking over to the truck. I guess she knew it was me right away. We went inside and put on a pot of coffee and just caught up on the last 18 years.

W: What did you talk about?

J: What I did when I was this old and that old. How many times I've been to Disneyland. Everything. We compared some baby pictures with the other kids. How when we were one or two months old you could barely tell us apart. We looked so much alike.

W: How many other kids did your mom have?

J: I have two brothers and a sister. So there's four of us now.

W: Did you notice any similarities?

J: The way we act, the way we talk. My brother Travis and I both have ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) so I guess that runs in our family. We look alike, we talk alike, we have the same learning problem. Grant and I like to work on cars.

W: What about your mom? Any similarities with her?

J: The nose. It's got to be the nose.

W: Is that a good thing or a bad thing?

J: It's a good thing!

W: What was it like when your mom met your adoptive parents?

J: That was interesting. We decided we'd just eat supper, and leave the talking until after. We got

talking and that's when the picture albums came out — and the funny, embarrassing stories about what Jarad did when he was little.

W: What thoughts went through your head that day?

J: I was wondering, "What do they think? Are they accepting my family here? Are they just pretending to laugh and smile at the funny stories or not?" But I think the general consensus is, whatever makes me happy.

W: Is it difficult having both your adoptive parents and your birth mom in your life now — and giving enough to both?

J: No, it's different, for sure. I have my adoptive parents and my birth mom and her stepdad, who's a great guy, too. Mom and Dad were there for the first 18 years, now we're *all* going to be there for the rest.

If you were adopted and would like to try to contact your birth parents, it's best to phone the social services department in your province, first. Each province has its own laws about if, how and at what age a child can contact a birth parent.

Handbook Link
How to identify elements of, and create, a magazine or newspaper

**After You Read**

1. Describe Jarad's journey. Do you think the title "Lost ... and Found" is effective for this magazine article? Explain.

Boom, Bust & Echo 37

Before You Read

The book *Boom, Bust & Echo 2000* is a report on demographics (the study of certain groups of populations), and how people in different age groups have shaped the economy and social trends in the 1990s and into the 2000s. This selection from the book describes who demographers think you are. That knowledge can be an interesting start point on your journey.

Choose a movie that's popular with your peers right now. Conduct a survey to find out how many times people in your class saw the movie. Arrive at a total number of times the film was viewed. Multiply that by the cost of a movie ticket. How much money was generated by the film in your class alone? Why might the movie industry be interested in what you and your peers want to see?

Introduction to the Revised Edition**Boom, Bust & Echo 2000**

by David K. Foot

Just before Christmas 1997, *Titanic*, a movie based on the sinking of the largest ocean liner in the world, arrived in the world's theatres. Would it be a hit? Rule Number One in Hollywood, as screenwriter William Goldman once wrote, is that "nobody knows anything." That is, nobody knows before a movie opens whether it will be a hit or a flop. *Primary Colors*, a film released three months after *Titanic*, was a good example of the truth of this dictum. Everyone expected it to be a big success because not only was it a good movie with a popular cast, it also had perfect timing. The movie, about a Clintonesque presidential candidate whose sexual adventures get him into trouble, arrived in theatres just as allegations about President Bill Clinton's personal life were dominating the U.S. media. Yet despite garnering oceans of publicity and rave reviews, *Primary Colors* failed to attract much of an audience and soon slipped from view, much as the *Titanic* had vanished after colliding with an iceberg off the Grand Banks in 1912.

Before its release, the main thing *Titanic* seemed to have going for it was the track record of Canadian director James Cameron, who had shown his flair for cinematic spectacle in the *Terminator* movies. On the other hand, skeptics warned, the story had been dramatized many times before, both in movies and on television. And, for the predominantly youthful movie audience, the sinking of the *Titanic* was a legend from a distant past that had little current relevance. Moreover, disaster movies were a dime a dozen.

As it turned out, however, *Titanic* had better timing than *Primary Colors*. Cameron's mastery of special effects was only part of the reason for the movie's great success. Even more important was his casting of two young actors, Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet, as the romantic leads. An important demographic shift was underway in North America at the end of the 1990s. Millions of members of the echo — the offspring of the boomers — were becoming teenagers. And some female members of this important population cohort were reportedly lining up to see *Titanic* 30 times or more, so smitten were they with DiCaprio's charms. Had *Titanic* been made a decade earlier, it would not have succeeded on the same scale as it did in 1997 and 1998 for the simple reason that a few years earlier there weren't as many teenage girls to line up for tickets. *Primary Colors* also had a popular star in John Travolta but his boomer fans, while numerous, are older. They don't have time to make 30 trips to see the same movie, and, even if they did, they are too grown up to do anything so silly. So while *Primary Colors* had good political timing, *Titanic* had good demographic timing. And demographics are more powerful than politics when it comes to filling theatre seats.

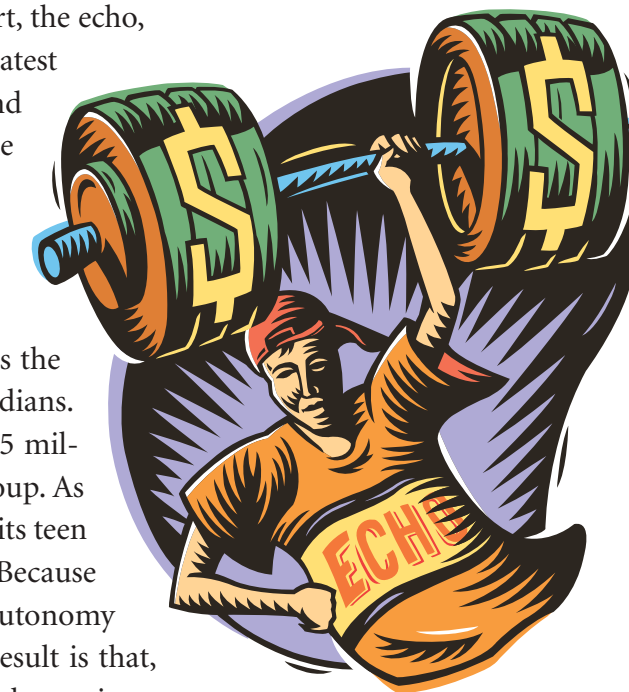
Eager to exploit a favourable demographic shift, the U.S. movie industry had 60 high-school-related films in production as of May 1998. These movies were aimed at a domestic audience of 76 million American echo kids, the offspring of 79 million American boomers. Meanwhile, a Toronto newspaper also scented demographic change in the air. "13-year-old girls rule the world," it declared in huge type in a headline over a story about the popularity of the Spice Girls and other stars with strong youth appeal. As readers of the first edition of *Boom, Bust & Echo* know, it was perfectly predictable a decade ago that teen culture would be more prominent towards the end of the 1990s than it was in the early years of the decade. The reason is not that Leonardo DiCaprio or the Spice Girls are more talented than comparable artists of the 1980s or

early 1990s. All that's changed is that a larger cohort, the echo, has replaced a smaller one, the baby bust, as the latest group to be in their teen years. And teenagers attend concerts and movies more often than older people and are the biggest buyers of recorded music.

The coming of age of the echo gives Canada a more complex demographic environment than the one described in the first edition of this book. The boom is still the dominant group because it is the largest — almost 10 million out of 30 million Canadians. But the boomers' offspring, the echo kids, total 6.5 million and are the second most important cohort group. As the millennium approaches, most of the echo is in its teen years with the eldest entering young adulthood. Because they are older, they have more money and more autonomy than they did in the mid-1990s. The predictable result is that, at the approach of the millennium, the echo is becoming a more important social and economic force than it was until just recently.

The complexity of this new demographic environment shows itself in many ways. In the spring of 1998, for example, *Rolling Stone* magazine produced a cover story on Vancouver's relatively tolerant attitude towards pot smoking. Yet this was an old story — the only new element was the recent growth in numbers of the pot-smoking segment of the population. That same segment was increasingly taking to the ski slopes — not on skis but on snowboards, which were overtaking skis in popularity because of their appeal to young people who already knew how to balance on skateboards.

Yet in the midst of this youthful exuberance, signs of aging were everywhere. Canadian book publishers, for example, were enlarging typefaces to accommodate the failing eyesight of aging boomers who make up the largest group of readers. When Margaret Atwood's first novel, *The Edible Woman*, was published in 1969, it was set in nine-point type. But back then Canada was a country dominated by young people and optometry was not yet a growth industry. By 1996, when Atwood published *Alias Grace*, the eldest boomers were on the verge of 50 and some of them were squinting at nine-point type. So *Alias Grace* came out in 12-point. The aging of boomer eyes also explains the 25% jump in 1997 of map publisher Perly's sales of its large-print street



maps for Montreal and Toronto and the larger, more readable faces Timex has put on its newest watches.

At the millennium, Canada is a country with expanding populations of both 50-year-olds and 20-year-olds. Therefore, it's a country where both cheap beer and \$20 bottles of wine can enjoy rising sales and where impecunious kids cram into basement suites while affluent 50-somethings lavish \$100,000 renos on already luxurious empty nests.

Because it had the world's biggest baby boom followed by a sharp drop in births that resulted in a baby bust, Canada has an unusual population age structure. The differences in population among various age groups are more pronounced than in other countries, although the United States has a similar population profile. Canadians are increasingly aware of the importance of taking demographic phenomena into account when discussing such community issues as whether to build a new hockey arena or close a hospital.

The Baby-Boom Echo (1980 to 1995)

These are the children of the boomers. The boomers began having children in the 1970s and by 1980 enough of them were reproducing to produce a mini-boom of their own. The boomers, however, never matched the reproductive prowess of their parents. At its peak, in 1990, the echo produced 406,000 babies from a population of 27.7 million, compared with 479,000 from a population of only 17.5 million in 1959. This generation is most noticeable in Ontario and western Canada. Quebec and the Atlantic provinces (except for Halifax) haven't had much of an echo because so many of their boomers moved to Ontario and the western provinces and had their children there. So the echo won't have as much impact on society in eastern Canada as it will in Ontario and the west.

As of 1998, there were 6.5 million members of the echo generation. The boomers haven't finished having children, but annual births had declined so much by 1995 that the echo had to be considered at an end. What is the outlook for the echo kids? It won't be quite as smooth sailing as the baby-busters have had, but it won't be as disastrous as for Generation X either. These echo kids are part of a large cohort and that's always bad news. They crowded nurseries in the 1980s, pushed elementary school enrolments up in the late 1980s, and did the same for high school enrolments in the mid-1990s. Like the boom, the echo has a front end, born in the 1980s, that will have an easier ride



than its back end, born in the first half of the 1990s. The latter group, Generation X-II, will experience the familiar disadvantages of arriving at the rear of a large cohort. Think of a cohort as a group of people all wanting to get into the same theatre to see the same show. There is no reserved seating. So who claims the best seats? The ones who get there first. The back end of the echo generation, Gen X-II, will have a life experience similar to that of its parents, the first Generation X. Just as the first Gen-Xers have done, Gen X-II will have to scramble.

However, Gen X-II should be better prepared than its parents were to cope with youth unemployment and other difficulties associated with a large cohort. That's because these kids have their Gen-X parents to teach them. By contrast, the original Generation X was the offspring of a small cohort that wasn't equipped to prepare them for the difficult world they encountered when they left home in the early 1980s.

The Millennium Busters (1996 to 2010)

These are the millennium kids, the generation that is following the echo. As of 1998, just over 1 million of them had arrived. The women producing them are the baby-busters, a cohort 14% smaller in each year than the boomers and 44% smaller in total. That's why, in 1998, there were 67,000 fewer children under one year of age than 8-year-olds. Because of immigration, the millennium kids won't necessarily be 44% fewer than the echo kids, but they will definitely be a smaller group. As the new millennium approaches, it is clear that another small, and therefore favoured, cohort is emerging from Canada's maternity wards.



After You Read

1. According to David Foot, many movies, and other trends, are successful if they have "good demographic timing." In your notebook, explain what this term means. Add the word "demographics" to your personal dictionary.

Handbook Link

How to use reading strategies to understand text
How to create a personal dictionary