

RedRover Readers and Early Ages Gathering to Learn Empathy Through Stories (EAGLES) Program

BOWWOW POWWOW

GRADE(S): PRE-K-3 **SEL ALIGNMENT:** Relationship skills; Self-awareness
Social Awareness; Responsible decision-making

Written by Brenda J. Child | Illustrated by Jonathan Thunder | Translated by Gordon Jourdain

TIME: 45 minutes (reading and discussion - 25; activity - 20)

MATERIALS: Bowwow Powwow book, paper for gratitude activity

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Relationships with family, both people and animals. What can you learn from your family? (Relationship skills)
- Elders passing down stories, learning about culture through observation. What have you learned from your family? What practices or ceremonies have you observed? (Relationship skills, social and self-awareness)
- Gratitude. How do you express gratitude? (Social and self-awareness)

Land acknowledgment: You may want to do a land acknowledgment before this reading and lesson to determine what land you are on. [Native-land.ca](https://native-land.ca) is an app to help map Indigenous territories, treaties, and languages.

BEFORE READING: As a group, discuss the following topics.

- Have you ever seen a dog bark? Why do you think dogs bark?
- What is a stray? (An animal that is lost, wandering on the street.)
- What does family mean to you? Who is in your family?
- When you think of an uncle, who do you imagine?
- Show the students the book cover and ask: What do you think this book will be about?

DURING READING:

- How old do you think “Windy Girl” is? Do you remember when you were this age? Does this story remind you of other stories you have learned? Which ones?
- On the first page where Windy Girl finds “a lively puppy barking at a painted turtle down by the lake.” Ask: What would you do if you were Windy Girl? What do you think you could do if you came across a stray dog?
- On the page where Uncle tells the story about when he was a boy a song was sung by dancers during powwows that went, “We are like dogs, we are like dogs.” Ask: What do you think this means? How do you think people are like dogs?
- On the page where everyone is dancing and Windy Girl and Itchy Boy join in, how do you think Windy is feeling? How can you tell? How do you think Itchy Boy might be feeling? How can you tell? Do you dance or sing? How do you feel when you do?

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AFTER READING:

- In Windy's dream about the special powwow, the elders "taught her to offer tobacco to express gratitude, and to dance for those unable to dance." Ask: How do you express gratitude or give thanks to your elders?
- Think about the stories passed down from our elders. How can we help remember and protect these stories to share with the next generation? How do you remember and protect family stories?
- How is Windy Girl's relationship with Itchy Boy similar to your relationship with your pets or animals you have met?
- What have you learned from reading about Windy Girl and her relationship observing and then participating in the powwow? How have you participated or learned to participate in activities with your family (through being present, listening, observing)?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

- Gratitude Activity. Our family, both people and animals, gives us many things. What are the gifts from animals that you are most grateful for? Think about everything animals give us. On a piece of paper, write or draw five things animals give us that you are thankful for. Invite students to draw or write what they are thankful for on a sticky note and add it to a group chart.
- Storytelling Role-Play Activity. Create two equal groups of students and have them imagine they are elders. What stories, customs, food, or crafts will you pass down to the younger generation? Have students try and recall what they have learned from their uncles and aunts, parents, or grandparents. If they feel comfortable, have them take turns sharing their stories.

AT THE END OF THE LESSON: Ask students to reflect on these questions. Try this with the whole group, in a sharing circle or ask students to fill out index cards.

- How did you feel about today's book and discussion?
- Did today's book and discussion change how you think about anything in your life?
- What is one lesson from this book that you are taking home today?
- What is one thing from our time together that you can apply to your own life?
- What did you learn from today's book and discussion that you didn't know before?

DON'T FORGET TO REPORT YOUR READING:

RedRover.org/reportreadings