

Overarching Question: What is my story?

Overarching Challenge: Use the format of your choice to effectively tell your story.

Lesson Question: What's the best way to retell an important story?

Lesson Challenge: Create an effective retelling of an important story.

Lesson Summary: Have you ever been inspired by a story told in a movie and wanted to retell it to your friends? Or maybe you listened to an Elder and then wanted to find a way to retell the stories so that you'd remember them? In this lesson, you'll use a thinking strategy to create an effective retelling of an important story.

Big Idea: Knowing how to purposefully retell a story can help you more effectively tell your story.



Lesson Question: What's the best way to retell an important story?

Lesson Challenge: Create an effective retelling of an important story.

Start Your Thinking

Have you ever been inspired by a story told in a movie and wanted to retell it to your friends? Or maybe you listened to an Elder and then wanted to find a way to retell the stories so that you'd remember them? This lesson will help you create effective retellings of important stories.

One day Hare made fun of the short feet and slow pace of Tortoise. In response Tortoise replied: "Though you are as swift as the wind, I will beat you in a race." Hare, thinking that this was ridiculous, agreed to a race. Hare quickly left Tortoise far behind. Thinking that he would easily win, Hare decided to have a nap. Tortoise continued very slowly but never stopped. Hare woke up and, realizing that Tortoise had passed him, frantically ran to the finish line but it was too late—Hare had already won the race.

How could you use simple drawings or shapes to retell this story to very young children? (remember: no words, just pictures!)

Lesson Question: What's the best way to retell an important story?



How could you use a messaging app such as Snapchat to retell this story to high school students? (remember: keep your message short!)



Think About the Lesson Challenge

In this lesson, you'll create an effective retelling of an important story. Before moving on to the next part of the lesson, pause and think about a story that you heard retold in a different way, perhaps as a book, movie, song, or through art or photography. What was the same? What was different? How effective was the retelling?

You can also talk with another student, a teacher, a friend, a relative, a Knowledge Keeper, or an Elder about stories they have heard retold.



What was the same?	What was different?
How effective was the retelling?	

Grow Your Thinking

In the next part of this lesson, you'll practise creating an effective retelling of an important story.

At the beginning of the lesson you used two different formats to retell a story, something that happens very often. Someone hears or reads a story, then retells it using a different format. Sometimes people retell stories for new purposes, or to share the story with an audience that may not have heard or understood the original story. Remember that the *format* is how a story is told.

A storyteller has to make many decisions when retelling a story for a new purpose or audience. The storyteller will carefully think about the parts of the original story and decide which should be included in the retelling. The storyteller could also decide to make some parts of the story smaller and less important ("shrink"), or bigger and more important ("grow").

On page 5 you will find an original version and a retelling of the story *The Scorpion and the Frog*. Read the original story, then watch the retelling. How much different was the retelling from the original? Use the four questions below to help make your decision.

How similar is the retelling to the original story?

completely different

somewhat similar

exactly the same

Were details were **added** to the retelling?

What any details from the original story were **subtracted** or not included in the retelling?

What details from the original story were **grown** or made more important in the retelling?

What details from the original story were **shrunk** or made less important in the retelling?

The original story: "The Frog and the Scorpion"

One day while out on a journey, a scorpion came to a river that he was unable to get across. The river was wide and very fast, and the scorpion stopped to consider the situation. He couldn't see any way across.

Suddenly, he saw a frog sitting by the river. He decided to ask the frog for help getting across the river. "Mr. Frog! Would you be kind and give me a ride on your back across the river?"

"Well now, Mr. Scorpion! How do I know that if I try to help you, you won't try to kill me?" asked the frog hesitantly.

"Because," the scorpion replied, "If I try to kill you, then I would die too, for you see I cannot swim!"

So the frog agreed to take the scorpion across the river. The scorpion crawled onto the frog's back, his sharp claws prickling into the frog's soft skin, and the frog slid into the river. The muddy water swirled around them, but the frog stayed near the surface so the scorpion would not drown.

Halfway across the river, the frog suddenly felt a sharp sting in his back!

"You stung me!" croaked the frog, "Now we shall both die! Why on earth did you do that?"

The scorpion shrugged, and did a little dance on the frog's back.

"I could not help myself. It's what scorpions do."

Then they both sank into the muddy waters of the swiftly flowing river.

The retelling of the "The Frog and the Scorpion":

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9H4knv_KsPk



Practising the Tool

On this step of the lesson you will practise using a thinking strategy to help you retell a story.

BUILDING MY TOOLBOX

Although the retelling of a story could have a different format or purpose than the original story, it will still resemble the original story in two important ways. An effective retelling of a story will:

- ✓ **Be true to the theme or learning of the original story.** Even if it uses a different form or storytelling practice, an effective retelling should focus on the same theme or learning. For example, if the theme or learning of the original story was about the importance of family, the retelling should focus on the same theme.
- ✓ **Be similar to the main parts of the original story.** A retelling of a story might add, subtract, grow, or shrink parts of the original story, but the following story parts should still be clear:
 - setting: where and when the story takes place
 - events: the most important actions of the story
 - characters: the people, animals, or things that the story is about

The Secret Path is a very famous example of retelling a story using different formats or techniques. You can practise using the thinking strategy to describe how Chanie Wenjack's story was retold in the music and book of *The Secret Path*.

Before you begin, think about how reading details about the effects of residential schools might make you feel. If you're concerned about how this story may make you feel, please talk with your teacher or a trusted adult.

Follow these steps to practise using the thinking strategy:

- Read through the questions found in the thinking strategy on pages 8 and 9.
- Read page 7 for a description of how Chanie Wenjack's story was retold. Look for details that could be used to describe what parts of the original story were added, subtracted, grown, or shrunk in the retellings. If you wish, you can also use the web links on page 7 to discover more about *The Secret Path*.
- Use the thinking strategy on pages 8 and 9 to describe the retelling of Chanie Wenjack's story. You can find sample answers on pages 14 and 15.

Lesson Question: What's the best way to retell an important story?

Retelling a story

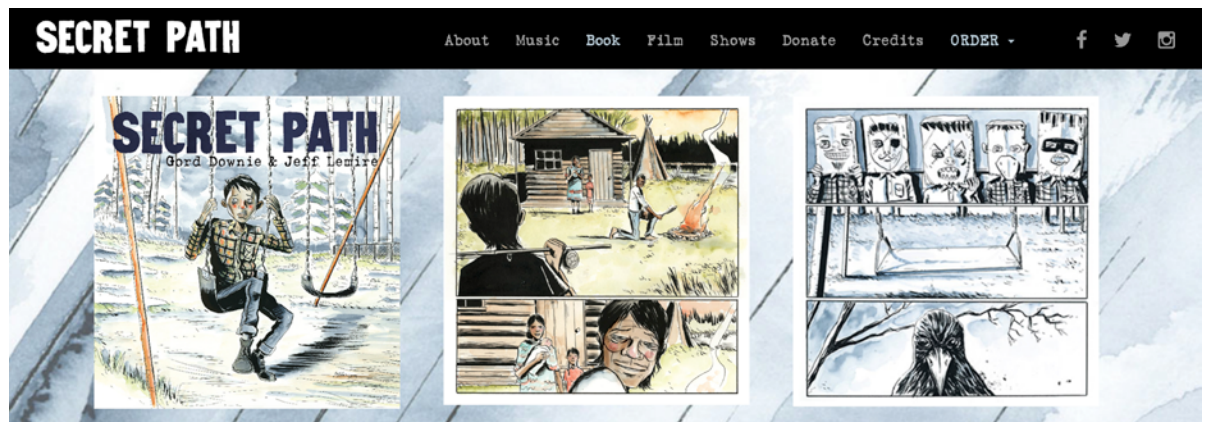


The story of Chanie Wenjack was first told in written form in a news magazine article in 1967. Chanie Wenjack was a 12 year-old boy who died while trying to walk away from a residential school in 1966.

Many years later after hearing about Chanie's story, Gord Downie, a musician, decided to retell the story by writing ten poems. To make sure that he accurately retold the story, Downie visited locations where the events occurred. He also met with Chanie's family and did research to learn more about residential schools.

Downie then turned his ten poems into songs. After writing and recording the album *The Secret Path*, Downie met with Jeff Lemire, a comic artist. Lemire took the poems and songs and created a graphic novel to retell Chanie's story. The music and the graphic novel then inspired the creation of a movie in 2016.

Gord Downie said that he had two purposes for retelling Chanie Wenjack's story. One was to describe the experiences of Chanie and other Indigenous children in Canada's residential schools. His other purpose was to encourage Canadians to think deeply about the history of racism in Canada.



More about Chanie Wenjack's story and *The Secret Path* story can be found at:
<https://secretpath.ca/#Home>



The original article about Chanie Wenjack can be found at:
<https://macleans.ca/society/the-lonely-death-of-chanie-wenjack/>





The Theme or Learning of the Original Story

<p>The original purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> entertain <input type="checkbox"/> inform <input type="checkbox"/> question <input type="checkbox"/> express <input type="checkbox"/> persuade <input type="checkbox"/> other: 	<p>The purpose of the retelling:</p> <p>What was the reason for retelling Chanie Wenjack's story?</p>
<p>The format of the original:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> oral story <input type="checkbox"/> written story <input type="checkbox"/> song <input type="checkbox"/> movie or television show <input type="checkbox"/> photograph <input type="checkbox"/> other: 	<p>The format of <i>The Secret Path</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> oral story <input type="checkbox"/> written story <input type="checkbox"/> song <input type="checkbox"/> movie or television show <input type="checkbox"/> photograph <input type="checkbox"/> other:
<p>The original setting:</p>	<p>The setting of <i>The Secret Path</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> keep <input type="checkbox"/> add <input type="checkbox"/> subtract <input type="checkbox"/> shrink <input type="checkbox"/> grow <p>Details about the setting in <i>The Secret Path</i>:</p>

(continued on next page)

Lesson Question: What's the best way to retell an important story?

<p>The original events:</p>	<p>The events of <i>The Secret Path</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> keep <input type="checkbox"/> add <input type="checkbox"/> subtract <input type="checkbox"/> shrink <input type="checkbox"/> grow <p>Details about the events in <i>The Secret Path</i>:</p>
<p>The original characters:</p>	<p>The characters of <i>The Secret Path</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> keep <input type="checkbox"/> add <input type="checkbox"/> subtract <input type="checkbox"/> shrink <input type="checkbox"/> grow <p>Details about the characters in <i>The Secret Path</i>:</p>

If you would like more practise retelling stories, try using the thinking strategy on pages 10 and 11 to describe how the stories found in one of these short videos might be retold:

- “Sigwan” A short video of the story of a young girl who is comforted by forest animals.
https://www.nfb.ca/film/sigwan_en/
- “Hedgehog’s Home” A short animated film about a hedgehog defending its home from other forest creatures.
https://www.nfb.ca/film/hedgehogs_home/
- “The Bear and the Mouse” A short film about the relationship between a bear and a mouse.
https://www.nfb.ca/film/bear_and_the_mouse/



You can also use the thinking strategy to help tell your story. If you watch or listen to a story that inspires you, try using the thinking strategy on pages 10 and 11 to guide your thinking about a story that you'd like to tell. You can use the thinking strategy to make changes to the original story and then create a new story in a different format.

Creating a purposeful retelling of a story



The Theme or Learning of the Original Story	
<p>The original purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> entertain <input type="checkbox"/> inform <input type="checkbox"/> question <input type="checkbox"/> express <input type="checkbox"/> persuade <input type="checkbox"/> other: 	<p>What is my purpose for retelling this story?</p>
<p>The format of the original:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> oral story <input type="checkbox"/> written story <input type="checkbox"/> song <input type="checkbox"/> movie or television show <input type="checkbox"/> photograph <input type="checkbox"/> other: 	<p>The format of my retelling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> oral story <input type="checkbox"/> written story <input type="checkbox"/> song <input type="checkbox"/> movie or television show <input type="checkbox"/> photograph <input type="checkbox"/> other:
<p>The setting of the original story:</p>	<p>The setting of my retelling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> keep <input type="checkbox"/> add <input type="checkbox"/> subtract <input type="checkbox"/> shrink <input type="checkbox"/> grow <p>Details about the setting in my retelling:</p>

(continued on next page)

Lesson Question: What's the best way to retell an important story?



<p>The events in the original story:</p>	<p>The events in my retelling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> keep<input type="checkbox"/> add<input type="checkbox"/> subtract<input type="checkbox"/> shrink<input type="checkbox"/> grow <p>Ideas for the events in my retelling:</p>
<p>The characters in the original story:</p>	<p>The characters of my retelling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> keep<input type="checkbox"/> add<input type="checkbox"/> subtract<input type="checkbox"/> shrink<input type="checkbox"/> grow <p>Ideas for the characters in my retelling:</p>



Reflect on Your Thinking

Think About the Lesson Challenge



Think back to the beginning of this lesson. Which two ideas might be the most useful when retelling a story using a different format or technique?

1.

2.



Can you think of other times and situations where you could use this thinking strategy?

Think About the Overarching Challenge

Remember our overarching question: What is my story? After you've finished the English lessons, you'll select the format of your choice to tell your story.



How might the tools in this lesson help me tell my story?

Sample answers for retellings of *The Secret Path*

The theme or learning of the original story	
<p>That the history of Canada includes racism.</p> <p>That residential schools had very significant negative effects on many children, families, and communities.</p>	
<p>The original purpose:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> entertain</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> inform</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> question</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> express</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> persuade</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> other:</p>	<p>The purpose of the retelling:</p> <p>What was the reason for retelling Chanie Wenjack's story?</p> <p>To make more people aware of Chanie's story. To encourage non-Indigenous people to think deeply about Canada's racist history.</p>
<p>The format of the original:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> oral story</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written story</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> song</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> movie or television show</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> photograph</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> other:</p>	<p>The format of <i>The Secret Path</i>:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> oral story</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> written story</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> song</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> movie or television show</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> photograph</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: poem</p>
<p>The original setting:</p> <p>The original story was set at Cecilia Jeffrey School in Kenora, Ontario. The original was also set along the railway tracks where Chanie walked. The original was set in 1963 to 1966.</p>	<p>The setting of <i>The Secret Path</i>:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> keep</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> add</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> subtract</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> shrink</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> grow</p> <p>Details about the setting in <i>The Secret Path</i>:</p> <p>The retellings kept the setting at the Cecilia Jeffrey School. The retellings were also kept in the same year and time of year.</p> <p>The retellings shrank the setting and focused on the path that Chanie walked along the railway. The time was also shrunk to focus mostly on October 1966.</p>

Lesson Question: What's the best way to retell an important story?

<p>The original events:</p> <p>The original story included details about Chanie and his friends running away from the residential school and then meeting at a cabin. Chanie's friends left with their uncle to walk home. Chanie walked along the railroad tracks, trying to get home.</p>	<p>The events of <i>The Secret Path</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> keep <input type="checkbox"/> add <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> subtract <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> shrink <input type="checkbox"/> grow <p>Details about the events in <i>The Secret Path</i>:</p> <p>The retelling kept Chanie running away and walking along the railway and later dying.</p> <p>The parts about being at a cabin with his friends was subtracted.</p> <p>The retelling shrank the focus of the story on to Chanie's walk along the railway.</p>
<p>The original characters:</p> <p>Chanie Wenjack</p> <p>Chanie's family</p> <p>Chanie's two friends</p> <p>The principal and teachers at the residential school</p> <p>Police</p>	<p>The characters of <i>The Secret Path</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> keep <input type="checkbox"/> add <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> subtract <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> shrink <input type="checkbox"/> grow <p>Details about the characters in <i>The Secret Path</i>:</p> <p>The retelling kept Chanie and his family. Although there were some other people from the residential schools in the retelling, the focus was shrunk to be mostly on Chanie. His two friends were subtracted from the story. Details about the things that Chanie carried, like the matches and his windbreaker, were kept.</p>