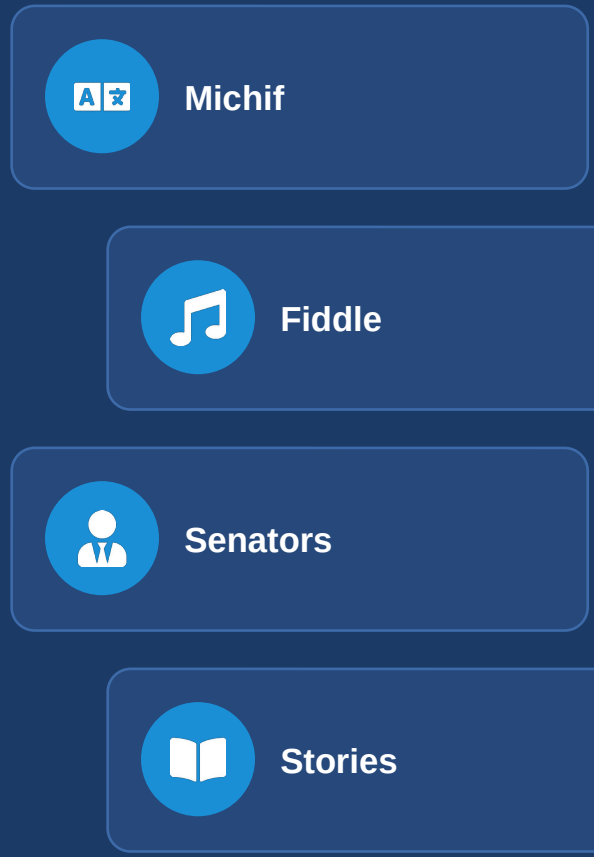
NBE3U Living Words, Lesson 7

Métis Voices

Michif, the fiddle and stories of the road allowance



Today's goals

We are learning…

- About Métis oral traditions and how they carry meaning.
- To interpret and analyse an oral text using evidence.

I can…

- Describe Michif, Métis fiddle music and the role of Métis Senators.
- Interpret a recorded oral text using what I hear and see.
- Analyse how an oral text influences listeners.
- Explain why a writer might keep a storyteller's own English.

Today's plan

Time	What we're doing	You will…
0–8 min	**Hook**	Discuss
8–25 min	**Traditions**	Note
25–50 min	**Listen**	Listen and analyse
50–65 min	**Voice to page**	Discuss
65–75 min	**Journal**	Write

Warm-up



A people with roots in more than one culture becomes its own Nation. What might its language, music and stories sound like?

Sentence starters

“It might mix…”

“It would still be its own because…”

“I'd listen for…”

How it works

- Pairs: 3 minutes.

Big idea

Métis oral traditions grew from many roots: First Nations, French-Canadian and Scottish. They live in Michif, a language that mixes Cree and French, in fiddle tunes and the Red River Jig, and in stories told by Métis Elders and Senators. When Maria Campbell wrote down stories from Michif, she kept the storytellers' own English.

Michif

Michif is a Métis language that blends French and Cree: French gives most of the nouns; Cree gives much of the grammar, including the verbs. It is spoken mainly on the Prairies and in parts of North Dakota and Montana.

In the 2021 census, 1,845 people reported speaking Michif. Experts estimate fewer than 1,000 are fluent. Every speaker matters.

The fiddle and the jig

Many roots

Métis fiddling blends First Nations, Scottish and French-Canadian traditions.

The Red River Jig

First Nations footwork meets Scottish and French-Canadian step-dancing; recorded from 1860.

Family music

Many learned by ear; many families made their own fiddles.

Gatherings

Fiddle and jig remain at the heart of Métis gatherings today.

Métis Senators



In the Métis Nation of Ontario, Senators are respected Elders valued for their knowledge and life experience. A Senator sits on each community council.

Ask: Why might a government want Elders at its table?

A Métis oral text



Teacher-chosen recording

From a Métis-led source: a fiddler, a Michif speaker or a Métis Senator speaking publicly

For example, the Gabriel Dumont Institute, the Métis Nation of Ontario or the Louis Riel Institute

While you watch: Listen for purpose, tone, pace, repetition and humour. Watch for setting, gesture and instruments.

Listening analysis

On page 2:

1. Name the speaker or performer and the source.
2. Note oral and visual cues.
3. Write your interpretation with evidence.
4. Explain how it influences listeners.

From Michif to the page

In Stories of the Road Allowance People (1995), Métis writer Maria Campbell set down stories told by Métis Elders. She translated them from Michif into the village English the storytellers used, not into standard English.

Ask: What would be lost if she had “corrected” their English? What does her choice protect?

Talk it out



When an oral text becomes a written one, what should the writer protect?

Sentence starters

“The speaker's voice, because…”

“The humour…”

“The right to say no…”

How it works

- Groups: 5 minutes.
- Connect to Johnson and Capilano (Lesson 4).

Journal entry

In your listening journal:

1. What did you hear today that you'd missed before?
2. Compare Campbell's choice with Johnson's in Legends of Vancouver.
3. One question you would ask a Knowledge Keeper.
4. 80 to 100 words.

Check yourself

Be honest. This helps you choose what to work on next.

Success criteria	Not yet	Almost	Got it
I can describe Michif, Métis fiddle music and the role of Métis Senators.			
I can interpret a recorded oral text using what I hear and see.			
I can analyse how an oral text influences listeners.			
I can explain why a writer might keep a storyteller's own English.			

Exit ticket

1. One fact about Michif.

2. One cue that shaped your interpretation.

3. Why Campbell kept village English.

Next class: Inuit Voices.

Teacher reveal

Métis voices: key points

Michif: A Métis language mixing French (mostly nouns) and Cree (much of the grammar, including verbs); endangered, with fewer than 1,000 fluent speakers.

Fiddle and jig: Blend First Nations, Scottish and French-Canadian roots; the Red River Jig is recorded from 1860; music was central to social life.

Senators: Métis Elders who carry knowledge and culture and take part in Métis governance.

Analysing an oral text: Use oral and visual cues: tone, pace, repetition, humour, gesture, setting, the speaker's introduction.

Campbell's choice: Keeping village English keeps the storytellers' voices, humour and rhythm; standard English would have smoothed them away.