



Orange Shirt Day Activities - K to G5

With thanks to Phyllis Webstad - Author of The Orange Shirt Story

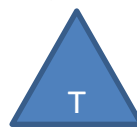
Website: <https://www.orangeshirtday.org/phyllis-story.html>

Core Competencies

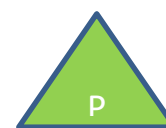
Students will connect and engage with one another through collaborative work and discussions.



Students will reflect on their experience, considering perspectives and drawing conclusions.



Students will relate to the experiences of others. This will build awareness of human rights, advocacy and diversity.



Curricular Competencies

Students will:

- Explore why people, events, or places are significant to various individuals and groups (Social Studies)
- Use developmentally appropriate reading, listening, and viewing strategies to make meaning (Language Arts)
- Develop, demonstrate, and apply mathematical understanding through play, inquiry, and problem solving (Math)
- Represent mathematical ideas in concrete, pictorial, and symbolic forms (Math)
- Explore identity, place, culture, and belonging through arts experiences (Arts)

Content Competencies

Students will explore:

- The impact of colonization on First Peoples societies in British Columbia and Canada (Social Studies, grade 4)
- Texts, both written and oral (Language Arts, grades 3-5)
- Number concepts to 1000 (Mathematics, grade 3) and practice flexible counting strategies (gr. 3-5)
- Personal and collective responsibility associated with creating, experiencing, or sharing in a safe learning environment (Arts, grade 3-5)

First People's Principles of Learning

These lessons are meant to help students better understand and relate to people who were forced to attend residential schools. It is meant to help reconciliation and thus ultimately support the well-being of the self, the family, the community and the ancestors. Elements of social studies, language arts, math and the arts support one another in this interconnected, holistic lessons that are rooted in culture, story and history.

Resources Included in this Package:

- Orange Shirt Day Math Vocabulary and Math Tasks
- Orange Shirt Key Vocabulary printout
- Song sheet printout and weblink: [300 Sleeps](#)
- Orange Shirt Day Images



Orange Shirt Day Math Tasks

These tasks address the mathematical Big Ideas of Number, Computational Fluency, Geometry & Measurement and Data and Probability

Before engaging in math tasks...

Accessing prior knowledge: distribute *Orange Shirt Day Images* around the room and ask students to circulate and record where they might “see” mathematics, and what they might know or wonder about the content of the photos in their journals. Collect and read to get a sense for student knowledge and collect good questions to address in later discussions.

Understanding key vocabulary (math): pre-teach key mathematics vocabulary.

Understanding key vocabulary (language arts): Copy *Orange Shirt Key Vocabulary* printout for students (suitable for grades 3-5) and learn vocabulary connected to Phyllis Webstad's *Orange Shirt Story*.

Engaging through story: Read Phyllis Webstad's *Orange Shirt Story*. Teachers can ask students to use their imagination and sense of wonder to think and reflect about what it would have been like to be Phyllis.

Engaging through song: Watch and sing along to [300 Sleeps](#) by Jen Whiffin, a song inspired by Phyllis Webstad's story and written to provide another medium for developing understanding and empathy for children who experienced residential schools.

Teachers can decide what tools, e.g. manipulatives, technology or calculators, they want their students to use with the suggested tasks. Phyllis did not have any when she attended school.

Important information that can be explored using a mathematical lens from, and relating to, *The Orange Shirt Story*:

- Phyllis lived on Dog Creek Reserve in Northern BC (Image 1), part of the Stswecem'cXgatem First Nation with her granny when she was young
- Once Phyllis arrived at the residential school, St. Joseph's Mission (Image 2), her cousin told her it would be 300 sleeps before she would go home.
- From the Dog Creek reserve to Williams Lake (Image 3) it is 86 (85.8) kms (Google Maps).
- Phyllis and her granny went on the blue bus (called “the stage”) to buy her orange shirt.

- From Williams Lake where Phyllis attended the Public School, to St. Joseph's Residential School was 19 (19.2) kms.
- Phyllis went on a school bus from the residential school to the school in town.



Math Tasks:

K - 2 Phyllis and children like her were separated from their families for 300 sleeps. What does 300 look and feel like? Teachers and students could have discussions and activities related to time and the ideas of 1 sleep compared to 300 sleeps (days). Classes can take 300 steps together, stay quiet for 300 seconds, hold 300 objects or a book with approximately 300 pages.

****If students find the subject of separation distressing, we recommend reading *The Invisible Thread* by Patricia Karst**

3 - 5 Teachers and students could have more "sophisticated" discussions again related to the idea of time and comparison of 1 sleep to 300 (days) sleeps for life events. Depending on the use of technology/calculators within a class it could be possible for students to explore the number of hours in 300 sleeps (the familiarity of larger numbers increases to 1000 in G3). And also the likelihood of different and simulated events (e.g. have any students ever done sleep overs with a friend or family members, how many hours were they at their sleep over?).

4 - 5 Teachers and students can have rich discussion and activities exploring the concepts of distance and time, data and probability. Questions such as:-

- i. If school for Phyllis started on a Tuesday after labour Day in September, e.g. Tuesday 8th September, what would the day be that she was allowed to go home (after 300 sleeps).
- ii. If school started on Orange Shirt day, 30th September, what would the date be that Phyllis would be allowed to go home?).
- iii. Would Phyllis get her next birthday at home, if she had to stay 300 sleeps at school?

Students could also draw a map, trying to make a simple scale of 1 cm = 2 kms to illustrate the distances between Dog Creek reserve, Williams Lake and St. Joseph's Residential School.



Orange Shirt Day Math Vocabulary

When students are more familiar with key terms in any subject their learning is enhanced even further. The terms mentioned below are just some mathematical terms that are related to the Orange Shirt Day story; it is not intended to provide a complete list, nor are the suggestions anchored in any grade level.

Grade	Some Key Mathematical Terms
K - G1	estimate, number likely, unlikely, never/ sometimes, always / more likely /less likely how much/many
G2 - 3	certain / uncertain, benchmark, array, friendly numbers skip counting answer total / sum / product / quotient
G4 - 5	Time - elapsed / duration, daily / seasonal cycles, predict Multiples / factors/ products Data - graphs

Name _____

Date _____



Orange Shirt Day Math Tasks - G4/5

1. If school for Phyllis started on a Tuesday after labour Day in September, e.g. Tuesday 8th September, what would the day be that she was allowed to go home (after 300 sleeps).

2. If school started on Orange Shirt day, 30th September, what would the date be that Phyllis would be allowed to go home?).

3. Would Phyllis get her next birthday at home, if she had to stay 300 sleeps at school?

Name _____



Orange Shirt Day Math Tasks - K - 2

Phyllis and children like her were separated from their families for 300 sleeps. What does 300 look and feel like? Can you draw a picture of what this looks like?



Orange Shirt Day Math Tasks - G3 - 5

Phyllis and children like her were separated from their families for 300 sleeps.
Explore the number 300.

1. With **multiplication**, if the answer is 300, what are some ways the question could be written? e.g.

$$\underline{\quad 3 \quad} \times \underline{\quad 100 \quad} = \underline{\quad 300 \quad}$$

2. With **division**, if the answer to an algorithm is 300, what are some ways the question could be

written? e.g. $\underline{\quad 900 \quad} \div \underline{\quad 3 \quad} = \underline{\quad 300 \quad}$

3. What other ways could you show the number 300?

Orange Shirt Day Vocabulary

Important Words	Important Thoughts
1. tired 2. schools 3. lonely 4. families 5. voices 6. entire 7. forced 8. matters 9. attend 10. listen 11. enough 12. closed 13. remind 14. children 15. residential	<p>Why is Orange Shirt Day a very important day for all children? It reminds us that all children matter. All children have an important voice that deserves to be heard.</p> <p>It also is a time to learn about residential schools and the children who were forced to attend them. What are residential schools? They are not like regular school. If you went to residential school, you could not go home at the end of the day. You had to stay there all night, too. Even worse, you had to stay for the entire school year!</p> <p>Lots of children felt tired and lonely. They wanted to go back to their families, but no one would listen. They felt like they were not important enough for people to listen to their voices.</p> <p>Thankfully, all residential schools are closed now. No one must go to places like that anymore. Instead, we now have Orange Shirt Day to remind us that every child matters.</p>
	<p>_____ You read this quietly to yourself</p> <p>_____ You read this with a partner</p> <p>_____ You underlined the important vocabulary words</p> <p>Time to write or draw about important words and what they mean!</p>

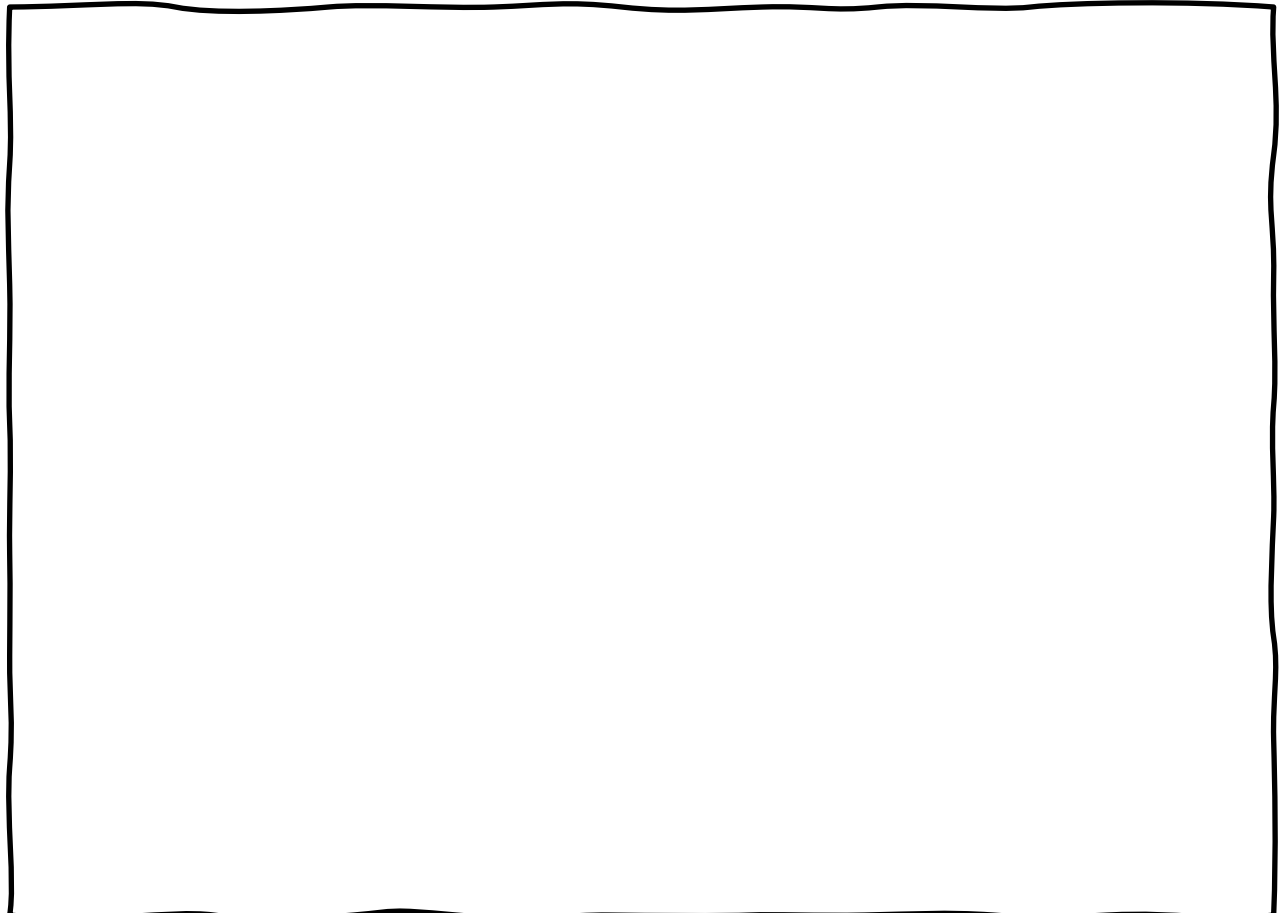
What do you think are the **top 3 most important words** from the reading?

1. _____ is an important word because

2. _____ is an important word because

3. _____ is an important word because

Time to **draw a picture** about the reading. Use **words** to describe what you drew:



300 Sleeps
by Jen Whiffin

Many children
Tired children
Worked at school each day.
And when the day was done,
When the day was through,
Many children
Tired children
Through the night would stay.

Waiting 100, 200, 300 sleeps
300 sleeps

Not so long ago,
Not so far away,
Many children
Lonely children
Always dreamed that they
Could cuddle with their mums,
Their families back home
But many children
Lonely children
Didn't have a say.

They waited 100, 200, 300
sleeps
300 sleeps

Why did they stay there?
They didn't have a choice.

Tell someone! Tell someone!
They didn't have a voice.

And then one day
Those schools all went away
Those tired lonely children
all grew up and now they say:

Not so long ago,
Not so far away,
We had no choice
We had no voice
They took it all away.
And now that it is done
We're really hoping you
Will understand
what happened to us
Will know the real truth.

We waited 100, 200, 300 sleeps
300 sleeps

300 sleeps.



Orange Shirt Day Images

Why use them? When placed around the classroom, they give children a chance to:

- Move
- Explore
- Make connections
- Recall

They are a wonderful way of introducing a concept and accessing prior knowledge. It is very important to ensure a quiet environment. Encourage students to record notes on what they notice and what they wonder as they travel from photo to photo. Conclude the activity by sharing ideas as a class.

Image 1: Dog Creek Reserve in Northern BC

Image 2: St. Joseph's Mission

Image 3: Williams Lake

Image 4: Northwest Coast cannibal bird dance

Image 5: Northwest Coast Winter Ceremonial

Image 6: Images of various Northwest Coast people wearing traditional clothing

Image 7: Northwest Coast child with cedar cape

Image 8: Students in residential school classroom

Image 9: Before and after photos of a child who needed to attend a residential school

Image 10: Residential school students praying before bedtime

Image 1



Image from: <https://sxfn.ca/>

Image 2



Image from: <https://www.orpheshirtday.org/about-us.html>

Image 3

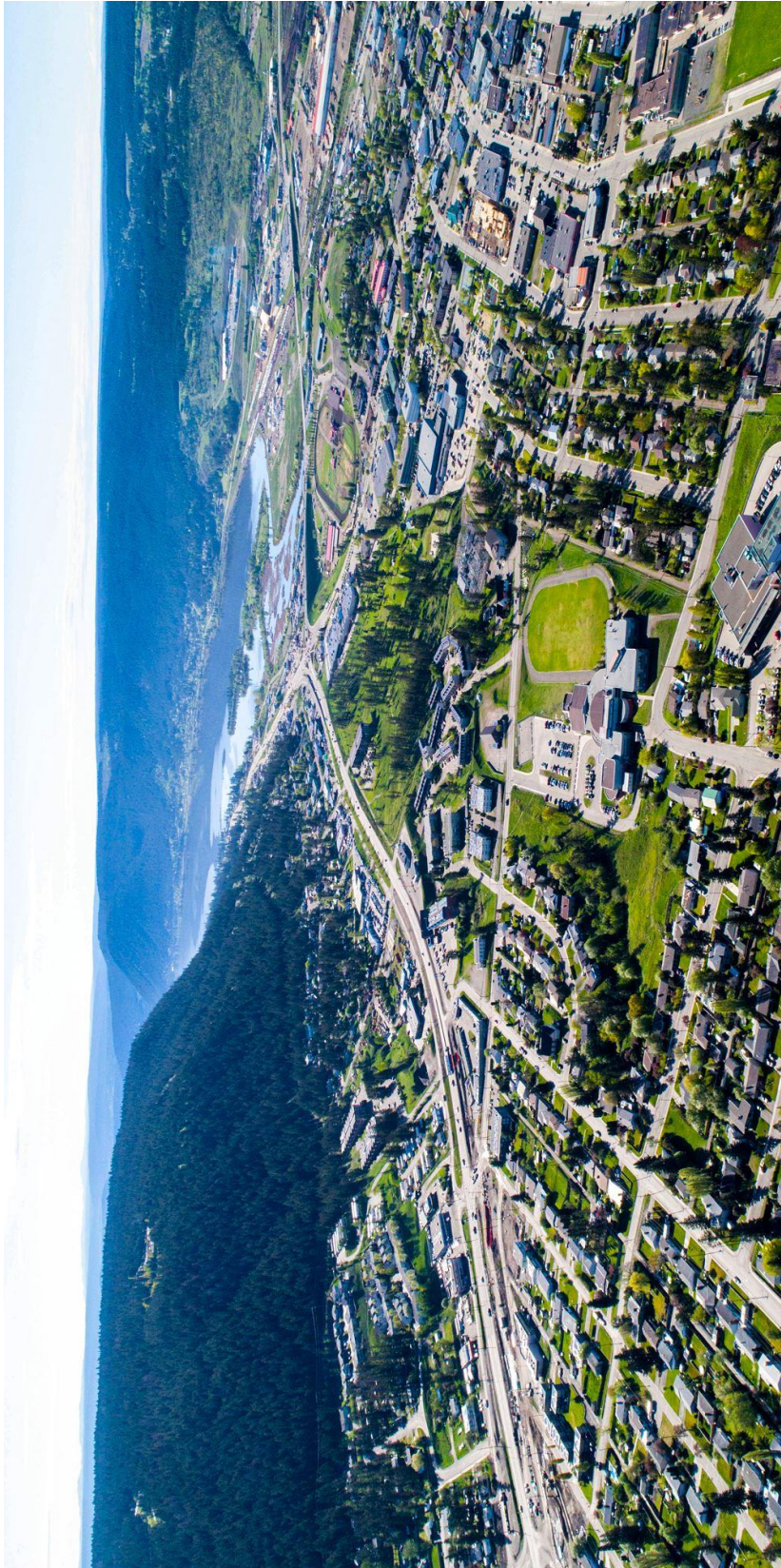


Image from: <https://www.williamslake.ca/>



Image by Edward Curtis

Image 4

Image 5



Plate 308

From *Empire of the Northwest*, 1906, by E. S. Curtis

Photographed by *Richard S. Stear*

MASKED DANCERS - QÁGYUHÍL

Image by Edward Curtis



Image by Edward Curtis

Image 7



Image by Edward Curtis

Image 8



Image from: <https://www.anglican.ca/tr/schools/>

Image 9



Image from: <https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/assault-on-residential-school-students-identities-began-the-moment-they-stepped-inside>

Image 10



Image from: <https://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/letters/todays-letters-the-evil-of-residential-schools-has-always-been-apparent>