This resource includes activities for before, during and after viewing Gord Downie’s Project, “The Secret Path” which is available for free, through the CBC. These activities may take up to 6-50 minute periods and touch on curriculum expectations for Language Arts, Music and Visual Arts. Some students may be sensitive to the content of this assignment and the music/video. Please preview to ensure that this assignment is appropriate for the students in your classroom.
Before Viewing

1. Word Study
Find a definition or explanation for the terms below:
reconcile
reconciliation
residential school
bleak
desolate
Indigenous
assimilate
metaphor

2. Gord Downie's project, "The Secret Path" was inspired by a Maclean's Article from 1967. Read the article at:
After reading, find a key:
Sentence
Phrase
Word
Your sentence, phrase and word should all try to capture the essence of Chanie's story.
While Viewing

While you are watching the film, consider the following questions. Pause after each subtitle to answer the questions for that section.

The Stranger
1. Why does Chanie see himself as a stranger?
2. How is his school similar to jail?
3. We see the juxtaposition of happy and sad memories near the end. Which do you think are more motivating for Chanie and why?

The Swing Set
1. Do the content/lyrics match the tone of the song?
2. We’ve seen the raven twice now. What do you think the significance of the raven is? What does it symbolize?

Seven Matches
1. Why is something like a jar of matches so important to Chanie? What do they represent?
2. What do you notice about Chanie in this song? How is he changing?
3. Chanie lights his final match. What do you think will happen?

I Will Not be Struck
1. We see the image of Chanie’s teacher in the classroom. We have seen other adults in the school throughout the film. Why do you think the artist chose to never show the faces of the adults in the school?

Son
1. When we see Chanie’s father, he is in full colour. Why do you think the artist chose to do this?

The Secret Path
1. Chanie’s fire has gone out. What is the significance of this?
2. Chanie has left his empty match bottle behind. What does this mean? How is he feeling?

Don’t Let This Touch You
1. Why do you think the artist continues to show a close up of Chanie’s eye?
2. This song employs many metaphors. For example “Words are ghosts”. Choose and explain one of these metaphors for words.

Haunt Them, Haunt Them, Haunt Them
1. The raven says, “What you can’t escape you’ve got to embrace.” What do you think the raven is telling him?
2. The raven is much bigger in this scene. Why do you think this is?
The Only Place to Be
1. What "place" do you think this song is referring to?
2. Chanie collapses at the end of this song. What do you think will happen?

Here, Here and Here
1. What is Chanie envisioning?
2. What is actually happening?
3. Why do you think Gord Downie chose to end Chanie's story this way?
4. The final image is captured in the eye of the raven. What does this mean? Would the story be the same without the imagery of the raven?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>While Viewing</th>
<th>Level One</th>
<th>Level Two</th>
<th>Level Three</th>
<th>Level Four</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thinking</strong></td>
<td>Little thinking has gone into these responses. The assignment is incomplete.</td>
<td>Some thinking and analysis have gone into these responses.</td>
<td>A considerable level of thinking and analysis have gone into these responses.</td>
<td>A deep level of thinking and analysis have gone into these responses.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
<td>Sentences are incomplete. Editing has not been done.</td>
<td>Responses are written in simple sentences. Some attention to detail has gone into editing.</td>
<td>Responses are written in complete sentences with a variety of structures. Good attention to detail has gone into editing.</td>
<td>Responses are written in complete sentences with complex structures. A great attention to detail has gone into editing.</td>
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After Viewing

Choose one of the following activities to complete. If you have an alternative idea you would like to propose, please see me and we will discuss it!

Art Analysis: Collage

Create a collage of all of the symbols in Gord Downie’s music and Jeff Lemire’s art. For example, the raven is a symbol for death or truth. Find an appropriate image for each symbol you found (could be directly from the artist’s work if you can find it) and include the word for what it symbolizes.

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<td>3-4 symbols identified with accurate meaning</td>
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<td>-organization was considered -the overall &quot;look&quot; was thought out</td>
<td>-organization was deeply considered -the overall &quot;look&quot; was very well planned -looks professional and artistic</td>
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Art History: Indigenous Art Symbolism

The raven is a common symbol in Canadian Indigenous art. Learn about its use in Canadian art and outline as many examples as you can find. Include an image of the art along with a brief explanation about what the raven symbolizes in each piece. Please include citations.

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Music Analysis: Album Review

Use the elements of music from the Ontario Curriculum to critique Gord Downie’s Album. Write a one page (½ to ¾ typed) review of the “Secret Path”.

A good music review...
Has clear opinions
All factual material is accurate
The tone is firm and assertive
The review (positive or negative) is supported with reasons/details and direct references to the material being judged
The review should be engaging and interesting

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Music: The Creative Process Research

Use the “Creative Process” image from the Ontario Curriculum to help you to understand and research about Gord Downie’s artistic process during “The Secret Path” project. How was he inspired? What did he do? Who was involved? What was the end result? What has been the public’s response? Outline your learning in a few, well formed paragraphs.

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