

# Learn with Louis

Photo by Kim Hodgson

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## Métis Cultural Connections

OUR MÉTIS CULTURE DEFINES US AS ONE OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA. MAKE CONNECTIONS TO YOUR MÉTIS CULTURE AND LEARN WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE.

The Michif dialect shared is Southern/Heritage and was originally translated by Norman Fleury.

Gabriel Dumont Institute The Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture ([Metismuseum.ca](http://Metismuseum.ca))

### A Métis Winter Story by Kim Hodgson

Métis traditional storytelling often includes magical beings such as talking animals, both to entertain and to transfer knowledge to children. This story is about four siblings who lived in a beautiful valley of forests, and rivers surrounded by mountains. One winter's day they went on an adventure to a creek where they liked to play, build forts, and have picnics. Maamaa (mother) and baapaa (father) reminded them to stay together, keep to the main trail and be home before dark. It was a perfect winter day, the snow was deep, but light and fluffy and sparkled in the sunshine. They saw a l'aariyaanl (moose) browsing on willows, and there were animal tracks everywhere! At the creek, they went sliding, played on the ice and made a lean-to fort. For lunch they roasted wieners over a campfire, and made tea in a "Billy Can" that their father had made using a Rogers' Golden Syrup can and wire for a handle.

The children were having so much fun they hadn't noticed the time until the sun was going down, and they quickly started for home. Against their parents' advice they took a short cut off the main trail and soon the snow was so deep it was difficult to walk. Then the li vaan (wind) started blowing and quickly turned into a snowstorm. They could no longer see the trail and realized they were lost! The children huddled together under a tree, afraid

and wondering what to do. Suddenly the wind stopped, and the moon was peeking through the clouds. To their surprise four white rabbits began running around the tree chasing each other, jumping, and laughing. A flock of chickadees landed in the branches above them and sang chickadee-dee-dee. Then a la keu di renn (magpie) landed, looked right at them, and said aashtum (come) then hopped and flew a little way. They followed the magpie who would fly and wait for them until eventually they were on the main trail! The children were so grateful and said maarsii (thank you) to the magpie who winked at them and said kaawaapamatin mina (see you later)!

### Questions to discuss with your early learner.

Do you like to share stories about your adventures?

What animals do you think you might see on a winter day?

Have you made forts in the winter?

### We are interested in hearing your stories.

Are you a storyteller? Do you have a favorite story or a traditional story that you would like to share with others? Submit your short story to [metisearlyyears@mnbc.ca](mailto:metisearlyyears@mnbc.ca) to have your story included in a future issue of Learn with Louis. ❄️

# Buffalo Bulletin

MÉTIS TRADITIONAL LIFE WAYS CONNECT US TO THE LAND AND OUR ANCESTORS AND TRANSMITS KNOWLEDGE TO OUR CHILDREN. LEARN TO ACKNOWLEDGE, HARVEST, GATHER, AND SHARE NATURAL RESOURCES.

Métis people have a special way of cooking that shows our unique culture and heritage. We mix traditional foods like wild meat, fish, and berries with recipes brought by European settlers, like bannock, a tasty bread. For the Métis, cooking isn't just about making food—it's about telling stories, sharing traditions, and spending time with family and friends. When we cook and eat together, it helps keep our culture alive and brings everyone closer, like one big, happy family!

Hamburger soup is a favorite winter comfort food for many métis families, combining simple ingredients into a hearty and delicious meal. This soup is made with ground beef, vegetables like carrots and potatoes, and a tasty broth. It's a dish that perfectly shows how métis people mix different influences, blending traditional ingredients with modern ones to create meals that are easy to make and share. Hamburger soup is often cooked for big family gatherings or cozy meals at home, bringing everyone together around the table, just like many Métis traditions do. ❁

## Hamburger Soup

La Sup di Burger courtesy of Senator Earl Scofield, Ontario  
*Métis Cookbook and Guide to Healthy Living* (2nd Edition)

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 3 small onions, chopped
- 1 – 16 oz can diced tomatoes
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 6 cups water
- 3 large carrots
- sliced 3 celery stalks
- diced 3 medium potatoes, diced
- ½ cup macaroni noodles



### DIRECTIONS

- Melt butter in a saucepan, adding ground beef and cooking slightly.
- Add onions, tomatoes, salt, pepper and water. Bring to a boil, cover and simmer for 1 hour.
- Add vegetables and simmer for another hour.
- Stir in the macaroni during the last 15 minutes.
- Serve with warm bread and enjoy! ❁

# Louis' Kids Club

MÉTIS CHILDREN WILL LEARN ABOUT THEIR CULTURE AND THE WORLD AROUND THEM WITH A FUN ACTIVITY. FAMILIES WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE, CONNECT AND SHARE TIME TOGETHER

## Autumn Adventures: Explore Métis Culture Through Nature Stamping

**Spoon-tastic Musical Adventure!** Get ready for some fun, noise-making excitement with spoons! Grab some spoons and masking tape and create your own "clapping spoons!" (Hint: Roll a small piece of tape into a ball and place it between the spoons to make a fun, clapping sound.) You can find reference photos below. Start by investigating the spoons—ask questions like, "What happens when we tap them together?" Then, let your creativity shine! Make your own songs, rhythms,

materials to create your own unique instruments and compare the different sounds you make! Once you're ready to move, turn on the Red River Jig and let your feet dance freely! Finally, show off your musical talents and create a mini performance with your family using your spoons. It's going to be a spoon-tacular time!

### Nature Walk Scavenger Hunt Adventure- What Colors Can You Find this Winter?!

Grab your explorer hats and let's go on a nature walk full of colorful discoveries! We're going on a scavenger hunt to find nature's hidden treasures.

Make a scavenger hunt sheet with different colors on it—your mission? Find things in nature that match each color! But that's not all—take your time to touch the textures, smell the scents, and notice how the rocks, flowers, and dirt feel. Is something smooth or rough? Heavy or light? And don't forget to think about what lives here!

Explore the different grasses, flowers, rocks, and dirt as you connect with the earth. Compare what's similar and what's different and enjoy

every discovery. It's your chance to see nature like never before, in all its colorful glory! ❁



and beats by tapping and clanging those metal spoons. Feeling crafty? Want to explore even more? Use natural



## Scavenger Hunt

Place a ✓ in the box beside each item you find:

<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	



# Louis' Journey

FOLLOW ALONG AS LOUIS TRAVELS. FULL OF CURIOSITY AND A LOVE OF LEARNING, LOUIS WILL BRING JOY AND LAUGHTER TO CHILDREN AND ADULTS ALIKE. SHARE WITH US YOUR LOUIS' JOURNEY BY SUBMITTING PHOTOS AND A BRIEF DESCRIPTION TO [MÉTISEARLYYEARS@MNBC.CA](mailto:MÉTISEARLYYEARS@MNBC.CA).



**Today, Louis is going to share with you all he learned about seed starting while visiting a Vancouver Island seed farm.**

Even though it still feels like winter, here on the coast we are beginning to think about starting our seeds.

Louis was curious about how plants grow, so he headed to a local seed farm to find out. Seed starting is the process of planting seeds indoors or in a greenhouse before moving them outside when the weather is right. This gives the plants a head start and helps them grow faster and healthier.

Louis meets farmers Simon and Heather, who own Good Earth Farms in Black Creek, BC. They take him through the steps of starting seeds.

First, we need to choose the right seeds for the season. Farmer Simon has a wide variety of seeds, from tomatoes to peas and herbs. Louis is fascinated by all the different kinds of seeds, each one with the potential to become something incredible! He is excited to try

planting seeds himself. The farmers show him how to make newspaper pots, fill them with soil and then place the seeds gently into small holes. Louis is ready to plant them all!

"All seeds need to be planted at different times," one of the farmers says. "Starting in mid to late March we can plant tomatoes, spinach, lettuces and fava beans"

By starting seeds indoors, Louis learns, the plants have a better chance of surviving when they are transplanted outdoors. Plus, it allows farmers to grow more plants and keep their farm sustainable. He also knows that all seeds are different and it's important to know the growing season and needs for what you are planting. Not all seeds like to be started this way.

Louis can't wait to start his very own garden! He's thinking of all the vegetables, fruit and flowers he can share with his family and friends.

*Thank you, Heather and Simon for sharing your knowledge. Good Earth Farms sees themselves*

*as stewards of the seeds, not keepers, with a responsibility to reestablish relationships, foster food security and seed sovereignty in their community and beyond. 🌱*





# What is your name? Where are you from?

SHARE YOUR FAMILY'S CONNECTION AND JOURNEY WITH THE MÉTIS NATION COMMUNITY. TELL YOUR STORY AND HAVE YOUR FAMILY FEATURED IN THE NEXT EDITION OF *LEARN WITH LOUIS*. SUBMIT YOUR STORY TO: [MÉTISEARLYYEARS@MNBC.CA](mailto:MÉTISEARLYYEARS@MNBC.CA)



## The Vos Family

My is Jaymee Vos and we are the Vos Family. We live in Tofino and have two sons (Thatcher 5 and Arden 3), and a third on the way. My husband Kyler runs a local gallery & mercantile (the Factory) and I am a Nurse in the small community hospital serving the Tofino/Ucluelet communities, including surrounding First Nations; aaḥuusʔaṭḥ (Ahousaht), hišqʷiʔaṭḥ (Hesquiaht), ʔaʔuukʷiʔaṭḥ (Tla-o-qui-aht), Yuuḥuʔiʔaṭḥ (Ucluelet First Nation), and tukʷaaʔaṭḥ (Toquaht Nation).

I was born in Smithers, BC and raised in various small towns across the province. My family names are Ballendine, Ouelette, Cardinal, Racette and Houle; to name a few.

My family's story begins in the Red River settlement and eventually North Battleford Saskatchewan. While I didn't grow up immersed in Métis culture, I am proud of my Métis ancestry. Our ancestors fought in many battles for the Métis people and for Canada in WWI and WWII. Eventually, my Great Grandfather, Edward Ballendine (a WWII veteran), settled in Fort St John BC.

Having grown up in small communities, I couldn't imagine raising my kids any other way. We spend tons of time outdoors, fish to fill our freezer for the winter, do some foraging available to us, and preserve as much food as we can. The kids love being involved in the process from baking bread, to filleting fish. While our practices may not be totally

traditional, we are committed to raising our children with the knowledge of hunting/harvesting/preserving, in hopes that they will one day teach their kids the same. 🌸





# Caring for our Children

FOSTERING A FUTURE OF COMPASSION AND GROWTH



As we have settled into the winter (*l'ivayr*) months of this season it is time to follow our ancestors and take time to rest. Historically Métis families would often spend more time indoors during the colder, winter months working on art or beading projects, cooking together, telling stories, making and listening to music and resting for the busy spring ahead.

It is important to find a balance between indoor and outdoor activities to keep our young ones busy during this season. A great

way to add in daily physical activity, learning on the land and connecting to our Métis roots is through snowshoeing. The Métis used snowshoes contrived of wood and rawhide and would spend time on traplines and tracking animals. Today we can spend time walking the land and through our neighborhoods looking for signs of wildlife. Have you seen animal tracks in the snow?

We can practice the **Métis Core Values** during this season by spending time outside even

when the weather is not favorable. Having these experiences can teach children the core values of **patience** (*pa iksitii*) **tolerance** (*aanjeurii*), **respect** (*kishchiitaytamihk*), and **Mother Earth** (*ni maamaa la tayr*) creating a deeper connection to the land regardless of the season.

Many Métis families have stories to share and would often spend time around the fire together, listening to stories or tales of the old days. Here are a few conversation starters to encourage your family to make up or tell

stories as you spend time with each other during this cold season.

## WINTER CONVERSATION STARTERS

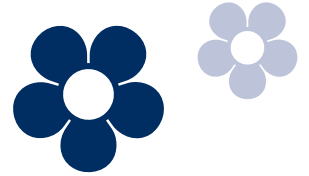
- Do you know which of the seasons is the coldest of the year?
- Which season do we see snow falling?
- Did you know every snowflake has 6 sides?
- Does the sun look smaller or bigger in the winter?
- Do trees still grow in the winter?
- Do plants still grow in the winter?
- Do we have longer or shorter nights in the winter?
- Did you know that some animals hibernate in the winter?
- Which season comes before spring?
- Do you know what a really bad snowstorm is called?
- Do you know which day in December is the shortest day of the year?

*Southern Michif translations by Norman Fleury, Gabriel Dumont Institute*



# Michif with Maddy the Magpie

THE NATIONAL MÉTIS LANGUAGE IS MICHIF, A DISTINCT LANGUAGE DEVELOPED FROM FRENCH, CREE AND OTHER FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES. HAVE FUN LEARNING MICHIF WITH MADDY THE MAGPIE.



## ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF MICHIF WORDS:

Monday	–	Laenjii
Tuesday	–	Morjii
Wednesday	–	Mikaarjii
Thursday	–	Jhwijii
Friday	–	Vaandarjii
Saturday	–	Samjii
Sunday	–	Jimaansh
Hello	–	Taanishi
Métis Language	–	Michif
January	–	Zhaanvyii

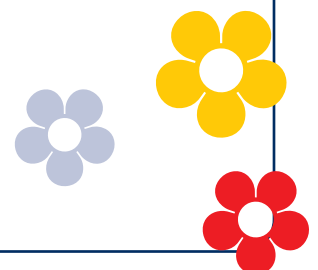
## WORD SEARCH

### Southern Michif Days of the Week

Find the words listed below. Solution on page 8.

X	C	L	L	M	J	V	Z	M	M
X	T	D	A	O	H	A	H	I	I
J	A	S	E	R	W	A	A	C	K
I	A	A	N	J	I	N	A	H	A
M	N	M	J	I	I	D	N	I	A
A	I	J	I	I	J	A	V	F	R
A	S	I	I	O	I	R	Y	A	J
N	H	I	Z	C	I	J	I	D	I
S	I	A	W	P	D	I	I	S	I
H	I	D	Y	C	H	I	G	E	A

Laenjii	Vaandarjii	Michif
Morjii	Samjii	Zhaanvyii
Mikaarjii	Jimaansh	
Jhwijii	Taanishi	





# Community Connections

SEEING MÉTIS CULTURE REPRESENTED THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY, FOSTERING CONNECTIONS AND ACTIVELY HONORING AND CELEBRATING MÉTIS TRADITIONS, VALUES, AND HERITAGE.

## Service Provider Highlight: Métis Family Services, Surrey, BC

Métis Family Services is the service delivery agency of the Métis Community Organization called "La Societe de les Enfants Michif." Métis Family Services is a non-profit society whose vision is to advocate for a world in which Métis children (all children) and families have the right to family ties, security, culture, love, acceptance and opportunities for success.

Métis Family Service's Early Years department provides a safe and non-judgmental space to celebrate and honor Métis culture and traditions through programs that foster connections between children and their families.

Join our Family Drop-In and Beading Circle sessions held every Tuesday and Wednesday from 9:00 am to 11:30 am, and experience our open, warm, and inviting space. Experience the grounding of Métis culture through engaging activities like sage and white yarrow gardening, berry canning, and beading.

To nurture positive relationships, we provide not just refreshments, but an opportunity for families to connect, learn, and grow together to foster a deeper understanding of the "Métis way".

We are also pleased to announce that we are opening a no-fee early learning and child care centre in Mission, BC. The centre is called Growing Roots/tsi'semolet/Nutr raasin aahkikiwaq Early Learning and Child Care. There are 16 spaces for children aged 3-5 years and 8 spaces for children 0-30 months. This child care was created in partnership with MNBC, Mission School District and the Fraser Valley métis Association. This small centre is built around a Métis curriculum and is child- and family-centred.

Métis Family Services | Surrey  
([metisfamilyservices.ca](http://metisfamilyservices.ca))

**Please connect with your Métis Family Connections Navigator if you would like support in connecting with the Métis service provider in your region.**

## Métis Family Connection Navigators: Fostering Culture and Community

Navigators are located around the province supporting families in their communities through every stage of their child's life. Navigators can assist families with the Métis Family Connections Program enrollment process and provide information and referral support to ensure Métis children and their families are connected to culture, programs, services, education and child care supports within their community. Reach out to your navigator or [metiseducation@mnbcc.ca](mailto:metiseducation@mnbcc.ca) to connect and explore the valuable programs and resources available in your local community and at MNBC. 🌸



Métis Family Connections Navigator Chandni with the Swift family at North Fraser Métis Association's Louis Riel Day Celebration.





# Where's Louis? Find Louis the Buffalo



ANSWER: **Southern Michif**  
**Days of the Week**



Laenjii  
Morjii  
Mikaarjii  
Jhwijii

Vaandarjii  
Samjii  
Jimaansh  
Taanishi

Michif  
Zhaanvyii



X	C	L	L	M	J	V	Z	M	M
X	T	D	A	O	H	A	H	I	I
J	A	S	E	R	A	A	A	C	K
M	N	M	J	J	I	N	D	H	A
A	I	J	I	I	I	A	N	I	A
A	S	I	I	O	I	V	A	F	R
N	H	I	Z	C	J	I	I	A	J
S	I	A	W	P	D	I	I	S	I
H	I	D	Y	C	H	I	G	E	A

To hear audio of Southern Michif words, you can visit  
<https://www.metismuseum.ca/resource.php/149520>