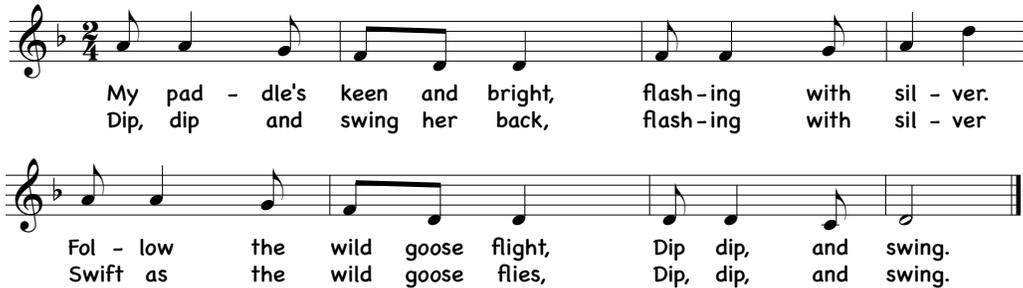


Canoe Song

Canadian Camp Song



My pad - dle's keen and bright, flash - ing with sil - ver.
 Dip, dip and swing her back, flash - ing with sil - ver

Fol - low the wild goose flight, Dip dip, and swing.
 Swift as the wild goose flies, Dip, dip, and swing.



Sung by Kate Smith

Louis Durand, Voyageur

The year was 1690 in Montreal in what is now called Quebec, Canada. It was barely daylight when Louis stepped out of his cozy stone house. Today, Louis and his crew of voyageurs would begin the next season of river travel and trade with the people up the mighty St. Lawrence River.

The spicy pork creton and toast that he had just eaten for breakfast would serve him well as he started off for months of excruciatingly hard work.

The fresh air brushed past the voyageur's soft beard and with it brought memories of his last trip up river. (Sing the song Silver Birch.)

The forests, lakes, and rivers held no secrets for this voyageur. He knew the trees and herbs of the forest, the properties of each, the habits of all the animals of the forests, how to hunt and trap them. He knew all the kinds of fish and how to catch them. He knew how to make a canoe from the bark of a tree and how to navigate it up and down the rivers and rapids. He knew how to put on a pair of snowshoes and overcome deep snow for twelve to fifteen miles in one day.⁽¹⁾ Many of these things he learned from his mother who belonged to the Huron tribes of Canada.



Louis Durand Voyageur (cont.)

As he walked to the river, singing in his ears were songs that the men sang to lighten their load and provide rhythm for paddling(Sing Alouette)

Louis tightened the colourful red sash around his waist. Hanging from his sash were his beloved pipe, a small leather pouch of tobacco and a hunting knife. He knew that up the river he would need this sash. He could tie it around his forehead or back when conditions such as a waterfall caused the voyageurs to carry or portage hundreds of pounds of supplies and their canoes over the land.

Just as the sun arose over the horizon there they were in front of him — the crew with whom he would spend the next 6 months. After a hearty welcome they all climbed into the canoe. Louis stood at the back of the canoe with his long paddle in the water. He was known as the “steersman.” He listened for the guide’s instructions to make the boat go a certain direction. Soon they were paddling altogether up the river. A song was in order for this anticipated event. (Sing Canoe Song.)

Introducing the song

- Are there animals mentioned in this song? A wild goose
- *Are there other animals mentioned?* Sing the song to check. No
- *What does a wild goose look like?* Discussion
- *It happens that I have a picture of a wild goose.* Show picture.
- *We call this wild bird a Canada Goose.*
- *What do you know about this handsome creature?*
Give students time to think and then to offer ideas.
- *What sounds do they make?* Demonstrations/discussion
- *What words in the song tell you something about the modes of travel?* Sing and check for the words, “flight & paddle.”
- Let’s look, first at flying.



Flying

- *What do these birds look like when they fly?* Brief discussion follows.
- *As I sing the song show with your upper body how these birds fly. Feet glued to the floor.* Singing on the starting pitch..... *ready, begin.* Students demonstrate.
- *Oh! Here’s a challenge. Can you sing and fly at the same time. Show me. My ears are ready to hear your voices, my eyes are ready to see you fly.* All sing and fly.
- *When these wild geese fly are their wings fully extended or short and inward?* Fully extended
- *Extend those wings. Let’s fly again. Here comes the song....* All sing and perform flying motion.
- *Some birds have smooth flowing wing movement. Others have fast choppy movement. What kind of movement does a wild goose have?*
- *Let’s try that kind of movement.*
- *Hugo show your idea of how a bird such as this might look when flying? We’ll all sing with you.* Hugo demonstrates. Watch other children demonstrate their ideas of flying.
- *Henri, can you fly around inside the circle as if you were a wild goose.* Let’s sing for Henri... All sing, Henri flies.
- *I can see you have a clear picture of what a flying wild goose looks like.*
- *Dominique, join Henri in his flight. Shall we sing with you or will you sing by yourselves?* Dominique and Hugo respond. Both sing and go flying inside the circle.
- *Flying without touching another’s wings is not easy, but you did it!*

At this point in the lesson students can begin inviting a friend each time the song ends until all are flying.

Flying (cont.)

- *This time, fly high. Think graceful and smooth. Sing the song.*
- *This time, fly low. Dip under the water and come up now and then like a goose would.*
- *Low then high*
- *Fly high then low.*
- *I saw some very acrobatic geese swooping down and then up. Some of you almost touched the floor as you swooped. Amazing..... you were able to fly, swoop, and sing all at the same time.*

Identify the phrases in the song

- *Songs are divided into parts called phrases. This is the first phrase of the song....(sing) My paddle's keen and bright. This is the second.... (sing) Flashing with silver.*
- *Think the song in you inner hearing and decide how many other phrases are in this song. Thinking time... discussion*
- *I'm thinking there are 4 phrases. These are the words that begin each phrase.*
 1. *My*
 2. *Flashing*
 3. *Follow*
 4. *Dip*
- *Sing and touch your shoulders each time we sing those words.*
- *Here's an assignment..... with your bodies figure a way to show each phrase in different ways. People plan and perform their different ideas. One half the class watches while the other half performs their ideas and then in turn shows their ideas.*

Setting the stage for flying in a V formation

- *Show a picture of wild geese in V formation.*
- *When flying long distances wild geese can be seen flying in V formation.*
- *Have you seen this phenomenon? Discussion*
- *When and where did you see it? Discussion*
- *What did you hear?*
- *I wonder why they choose to fly in a V formation ? Discussion (Lots of Google info on this.)*

Imagining

- *Close you eyes and imagine you are one of the geese flying in this formation. (Some teachers have students lie back on the floor as they imagine.) Think about where you are in the V formation. Are you the leader.... in the middle.....right or left.....in the back. Look below and see the ground beneath you. Feel the air and clouds moving around you. Teacher sings the song.*
- *What did you imagine? Turn and tell a friend what you saw in your mind. Discussion*
- *When the lead goose gets tired, do you know what happens? The lead goose turns to one side of the V and moves to the back where there is less air resistance and he can regain his strength. The NEXT goose in line from that side moves up to take the lead and the entire V formation adjusts accordingly.*
- *Let's do this again and during the final cadence, "Dip, dip, and swing." imagine that you are landing on a pond settling in for the evening.*



Flying in formation

- *Before today we've practiced flying around the room. If we were going to fly in a V formation, how would we do that?* Discussion and demonstrations.
- *Let's try this in small groups.* Guide and direct with questions such as:
 - *How many will be have in each flock? Do geese touch each other when they are flying?*
 - *If you are not touching how will you stay together?*
 - *If you are touching, how will you do that?*
- Give flocks time to plan their flights. Some time during the planning the teacher may want to offer guidance.....
- *Does the head goose always stay as the head goose? If your head goose is tired and wants a break, you will need to plan for that. How will you maneuver that with your group.*
- *Remember to settle down on the surface of the pond during the final cadence.*
- For the class each group demonstrates their ideas for flying in V formation.

More than one flock moving at once

- After students have performed their ideas for V formation flying.....*Oh, here's a challenge..... Can two flocks fly at the same time? What must happen for this to work?*
- *Three? Four?* Build to the entire class singing and flying in various V formations throughout the room. (The trick is to NOT cut through another group while flying.)

Additional ideas

Create four groups. Perform the flying in canon. When each group finishes, the geese can gently settle on the surface of the pond and wait for the other groups to land!

Age appropriateness

Consider the age group for each of these activities. What will the students need to be able to do on their own without teacher assistance to complete the challenges successfully?

Game: Who's Coming to Supper?

Introduction - Sometimes the voyageurs arrived at their campsite and saw all these plump juicy geese. AHA! They exclaimed. Delicious roasted goose for dinner.

- A paddler is chosen. Paddler wears a red sash or other clothing that a voyageur might have worn.
- Paddler stands outside the circle with his back to the group.
- As the song is sung a designated person walks around the circle and taps the closest person on the first word of each phrase of the song. My, Flashing, Follow, Dip.
- These four people will be "secret geese."
- The students begin singing and flying. Dipping involves touching the floor with both hands, all fingers! Only the "secret geese" will fly **and** dip.
- The paddler turns, looks at the flyers, and tries to spot those who are taking dips, "secret geese," as they fly.
- After the song is sung the paddler questions various geese who, he believes, were dipping. "Will you be coming to dinner?" The questioned goose, if he is not a "secret goose" replies, "Not invited." If the answer is, "yes," he replies with a sound a goose might make, e.g., "Honk."
- Rules of the game will emerge:
 - How many guesses the paddler gets before this turn is over
 - Who will be the next to touch people to determine "secret geese"
 - How the next paddler is chosen, etc.
- Game begins anew with new "secret geese" and paddler.

Additional Studies:

History - Share the many interesting facts about Voyageurs and their importance in the early days of what is now called Canada.

French - Learn other French songs the voyageurs might have sung during their river and lake travels. Other songs Kate sung during her lessons about voyageurs:

Listen: [Alouette](#), [A la caire](#), [Enroulant](#)

Music -

Syncopation - Sing Gordon Syllables while lightly tapping the beat.

du de de du de du du de de du du
du de de du de du du de de du

Touching the note heads of a rhythm score first sing the words of the song and then the Gordon Rhythm Syllables.



Part Singing

Partner with Land of the Silver Birch

Sing in Canon

Use chunks of the song as an ostinato. Explore which phrase is most pleasing.

Sing with the following descant. Add solfege hand signs. All quarter notes. ([listen](#))

Mi Re Do Ti₁ La₁ So₁ La₁ Ti₁ La₁ So₁ La₁ Ti₁ Do Re Mi

Instruments

Perform the song or any of the part-song activities on barred instruments or recorder as an accompaniment to the singing.

This one chord song plays well on the ukulele autoharp or guitar.



These lessons emanated from the classrooms of Kate Smith

A reminder that Canoe Song and Land of the Silver Birch are newer songs often sung around campfires or while paddling canoes by children at summer camps especially in northern Ontario . These two songs are not to be confused with traditional and authentic songs of the voyageurs or songs of First Nations people. For the purpose of this document, we had these more modern songs occurring at the same time as centuries old voyageurs and their lives and work in early Canadian history.

I see the preceding write-ups as a buffet offering of SongWorks ideas, techniques, and strategies. Consider student abilities and needs at a particular time. Choose from the buffet what you wish and how much you wish! Ideas included here can stand alone as individual lessons, individual servings from the buffet, and can span many years of study with your students. You may want to enjoy just the flying activities for K, 1, 2. Then for other lessons - the next day, another time of the year, or even another year - additional activities can be pursued. - Kate

Compiled by Kate Smith and Marilyn Winter

Scored by Marilyn Winter