

Land of the Silver Birch

Canadian Camp Song

Land of the sil - ver birch, home of the bea - ver,
Down in the for - est deep in the low - lands.
High on a rock - y ledge I'll build my wig - wam.

3
Where still the might - y moose wan - ders at will.
My heart cries out for thee hills of the North.
Close to the wat - er's edge si - lent and still.

5
Blue lake and rock - y shore, I will re - turn once - more.

7
Boom di - ty boom boom, boom di - ty boom boom, boom di - ty boom boom boom.



Sung by Kate Smith

Introduction

Explore the cadence phrase as an ostinato

- Teacher begins an arcing motion touching elbow then wrist. *Join me when you feel comfortable.*
- Touching the elbow and wrist with each “du” sing the Gordon Syllables for the final cadence of the song....*du deta du de, du deta du de, du deta du de du* _____
- Repeat this singing and action forming an ostinato of movement and singing.
- When students become confident in singing this pattern the teacher quietly adds the song as students continue to sing the ostinato.
- *What did you notice?* Discussion
- *Was it easy to sing while someone sings something else?* Discussion
- *What did you have to do to enable you to do that?* Discussion
- Repeat the experience of singing an ostinato with the song until students can do it well.
- *Did we end together?* No
- *Who finished first?* The ostinato
- *If we want to end together, how can we do that?* Repeat the ostinato.
- *How many times must the ostinato occur so both end at the same time?* Discussion and exploration, check it out.
- *I need a little introduction before I come in. You sing the ostinato one time before I come in? So how many times total will you sing the ostinato?* 3
- Explore additional arrangements of singing the ostinato with the song.

Learn the song

- *As we sang together were you able to pick out the words of my song?* Discussion
- *Let's try that again, you sing the ostinato and I'll sing the song. See if you can discern more words of my song.* Singing followed by discussion.
- *Without singing your part, listen to my song and determine if we missed any of the words.* Discussion
- Antiphon the song using various group configurations: teacher, students—students, students — students, inner hearing.....

Identify the phrases of the song

- *Songs are divided into parts called phrases. The first phrase of this song is "Land of the Silver Birch," the second is "home of the beaver."*
- *What are the other phrases in the song?* Encourage the idea that, "Where still the mighty moose wanders at will" and "Boom di ti boom boom, Boom di ti boom boom, Boom di ti boom boom" are each longer phrases.
- *As we sing the song touch your shoulder on the first word of each phrase.*
- *This time blink your eyes on the first word of each phrase.* Exploration of further student ideas for movement may occur.

Create a game

- Students make up a game for this song. Teacher guidance might include questions such as:

Where?

- *If we set up a scene depicting this song what will we need in that scene?*
- *What elements of nature might we need?*
- *What kind of trees? What do those trees look like?*
- *How do trees move? Do tree trunks move?*
- *Would a traveler on this river want to bump the shore? Why?*

Who?

- *What characters will be in this game?*
- *What does a moose look like?*
- *How does a moose move?*

What will be the objective of the game?

- *What will this game be about?*
- *What will be the objective of this game?*
- *What will be the star/the main character?*

Game created with Kate's classes

Issues that had to be resolved with Kate's classes

- What happens if Mighty Moose is touched by a magical tree?
- What happens if the moose arrives before the song ends.
- What happens if the moose does not arrive by the time the song ends?
- How do we choose the new moose?
- How are the "magical trees" chosen? By whom?
- If we have trees will they be touching? What kind are they?
 - What parts of a tree can move?
 - Does the trunk move? So will feet be moving?
 - Would a traveler on this river want to bump the shore? Why not?

Game:

Objective - The Mighty Moose wanders through the forest and, before the end of the song, attempts to reach the lake untouched by a “magical tree.”

- Students became a grove of silver birch trees — close, scattered formation not touching, rooted but flexible.
- Students practiced moving as graceful beautiful trees.
- Star of the show was the MIGHTY MOOSE!
- The lake was at the far end of the room.
- The MIGHTY MOOSE stepped out of the grove of trees and hides its eyes.
- **All** closed their eyes pretending to be beautiful birch trees. Someone walked through the grove and at the beginning of each phrase touched a person close to them. Those persons became “magical trees.” There were 6 trees.

Land of the silver birch,

Home of the beaver.

Where the mighty moose wonders at will.

Blue lake and rocky shore,

I will return once more.

Boom di ti boom boom, Boom di ti boom boom, Boom di ti boom boom”

- Eyes open. As the song begins “Mighty Moose” returns to the forest and walks through the trees as they twist and sway. If touched by one of the “magical trees” the moose becomes a tree. The tree becomes the moose and continues through the forest attempting to reach the lake before the song ends.

Extended Study**Music**

Ensemble work:

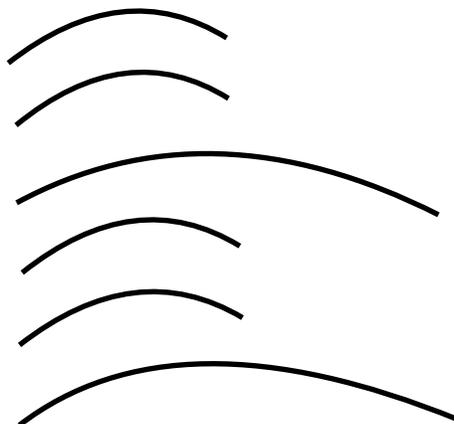
Part singing:

Partner with [Canoe Song](#) (see Sturdy Song Collection)

Ostinatos:

- Mi Re Do Ti, La, So, La, Ti, La, So, La, Ti, Do Re Mi (all quarter notes)
- Cadence phrase or any chunk of the song.
- Gordon Syllables of cadence - *du deta du de, du deta du de, du deta du de du* __

Accompaniment - One chord song for ukulele, guitar, barred instruments.....

Form:

From the Terolle's classrooms

Practice tapping the cadence phrase

- *Sing the song. During the final cadence tap the rhythm on back of one hand with the index finger of your other hand. All sing and move.*
- *Do the same thing but tap the cadence phrase on your shoulder. All sing and move.*
- *Alexandria, we have tapped on our hand and on our shoulder. Where shall we tap next? Alexandria responds. "On our neighbor's shoulders."*
- *How many places have we tapped? 3 — back of hand, shoulders, neighbors shoulders.*
- *Sing the song and repeat the cadence phrase 3 times. First time tap on the back of your hand, next on your shoulder, next on your neighbor's shoulders.*
- This game can continue accumulating places to tap.

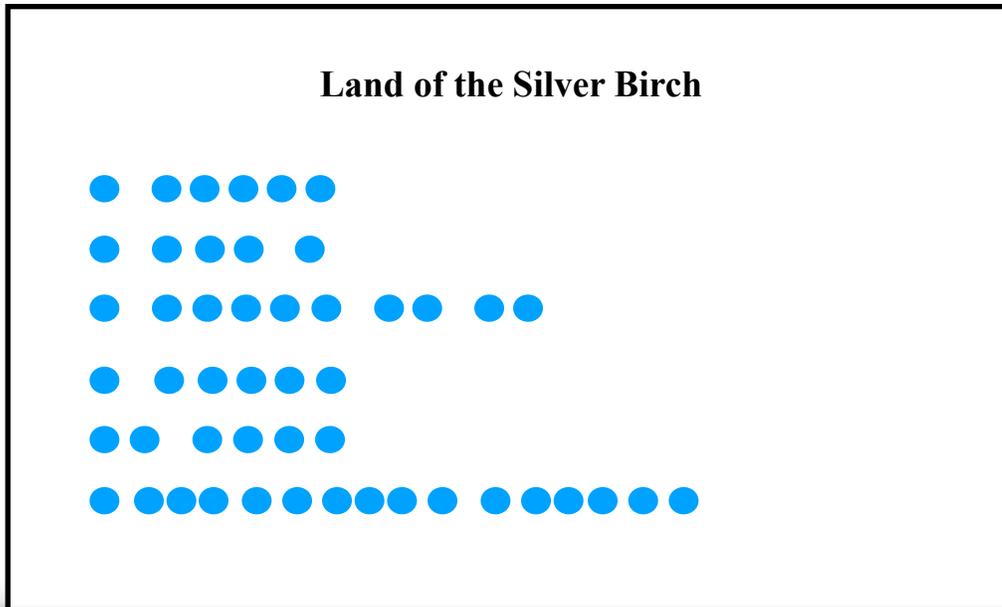
Relay Game

1. Form 4 equal teams in line formation.
2. Leader of each line holds a marker with the cap on.
3. As the song begins the leader runs to the board and sings and taps the final cadence. All sing with the tappers until the third time. This helps assure this activity does not become a race instead of an exercise in listening and accuracy.
 - *First time sing the words of the song and with marker cap on tap the cadence phrase.*
 - *Repeat cadence phrase tapping and singing the Gordon rhythm syllables.*
 - *Third, take cap off the marker; sing the song. Audiate, and tap the cadence phrase forming song dots across the board. (Really listen to hear the words of the cadence.)*
4. The leader returns to the second person in line, hands the marker to her, and goes to the end of the line.
5. The new leader repeats the activity.
6. Continue until all in each team have had a turn.



Notating/reading

- Present a song dot score. Give students their personal score to explore at their seats.
- *Watch as I follow the first line, Land of the Silver Birch.* Teacher sings and follows the first line of song dots.



- As we all sing, follow the first line of dots on your own score.
- Watch your partner follow the first line of their dot score.
- Who will come to the board and show how to follow the first line of the song dot score? Students volunteer.
- Let's sing, start from the beginning going on to the second phrase following those dots. Students sing and follow.
- How did you do? Who was successful? Come show us how you did that.
- Continue exploring the complete song dot score.
- What do you notice about the spacing of the dots? Some are closer than others.
- Why, do you suppose, I made the dots this way? Explore student responses.
- Read through your score again and find the dots where the words "mighty moose" occur. Draw a circle around those dots.
- Other words can be identified and enclosed in a different configuration.



Explore the rhythm score

Display the following chart.



- *What do you notice here?*
- *What do you know about these notes? What are their names?* Quarter, eighth, sixteenth
- *What do the flags tell us?* Discussion
- *This is the rhythm score for the final cadence of a song that you know.* Mention any 3 songs that the students have sung including Land of the Silver Birch. Ex. *Is the cadence phrase for this High Stepping Horses, Darby Town, or Land of the Silver Birch?*
- Students offer ideas. With each idea sing the cadence phrase of that song to determine whether or not it fits the score. Note that the tempo will need to be slower to accommodate following of the dots but keep the relationship of the notes intact.
- *Yes, it is Land of the Silver Birch.*
- *Let your eyes follow the score as we sing.* All sing and follow.
- *Who will come follow the score as we sing.* Volunteers follow the score.

Display the following chart under the first chart.



- *Hmmmm! What can you tell us about this score?* Students offer their thoughts.
- *Who will follow this score?* Volunteers follow the score.

Give students individual charts of the rhythm scores.

Final cadence - Land of the Silver Birch

- Discuss what the children notice.
- *Explore and follow the rhythm on your individual scores.*
- *In groups of 4.*
 - *Watch as each individual follows the score.*
 - *Explain what you know about these scores.*
- *Did anyone mention something about this score that hadn't been mentioned before?*

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



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