

**Visual Representation**

Create a coloured drawing that depicts your interpretation of a scene of your choice in Rita Joe’s poem, “I Lost My Talk”, or Emily Pauline Johnson’s poem, “The Song My Paddle Sings”. Read through the poem several times to become familiar with it and to clarify meaning. Your artwork must show evidence of creativity, hard work, and an understanding of the scene. Illustrations must reveal a clear understanding of a scene’s setting.

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>Exceeding Expectations 4</b>	<b>Fully Meeting Expectations 3</b>	<b>Minimally Meeting Expectations 2</b>	<b>Not Yet Within Expectations 1</b>
<b>Message</b>	A scene from a poem and the artist’s interpretation are clearly identifiable.	A scene from a poem and the artist’s interpretation are identifiable.	A scene from a poem and the artist’s interpretation may be unclear.	A scene from a poem and the artist’s interpretation are unclear.
<b>Drawings</b>	Visual details fully relate to and enhance the quality of the poem.	Visual details mostly relate to and enhance the quality of the poem.	Visual details partly relate to and enhance the quality of the poem.	Visual details do not relate to or enhance the quality of the poem.
<b>Style</b>	Uses colour, shape, size and arrangement of drawings to add visual appeal.	Uses colour, shape, size and arrangement of drawings in a neat and attractive way.	Uses colour, shape, size and arrangement of drawings, but they may be a bit messy.	Uses colour, shape, size and arrangement of drawings, but they are messy/distracting.
<b>Completeness</b>	Resembles a finished product. The artist utilizes the entire page.	Resembles a nearly finished product. The artist utilizes most of the page.	Resembles a fairly finished product. The artist utilizes some of the page.	Resembles a partially finished product. The artist utilizes little of the page.

**TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_ / 16

**Comments:**

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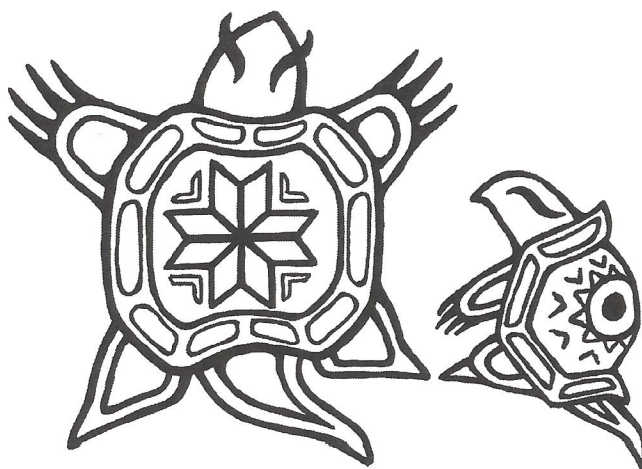
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## Rita Joe Biography



Rita Joe was born and spent her childhood on a Mi'kmaq Reserve at Whycocomagh on Cape Breton Island. She lived with foster families after her mother's death when she was just 5 years old. Orphaned when she was 10, Rita Joe left the island at the age of 12 to go to the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School on mainland Nova Scotia. Rita Joe later returned to Cape Breton to live on the Eskasoni First Nations Reserve, where she and her husband raised 10 children, including 2 adopted sons.

Rita Joe recalled being told constantly, at the Residential School, "You're no good." She began writing herself to challenge such negative messages, which she encountered again as an adult, in the books her own children were reading. In the prologue to her memoir, Rita Joe states, "My greatest wish is that there will be more writing from my people, and that our children will read it. I have said again and again that our history would be different if it had been expressed by us."



### **I Lost My Talk**

I lost my talk  
The talk you took away.  
When I was a little girl  
At Shubencadie school.

You snatched it away:  
I speak like you  
I think like you  
I create like you  
The scrambled ballad, about my word.

Two ways I talk  
Both ways I say,  
Your way is more powerful.

So gently I offer my hand and ask,  
Let me find my talk  
So I can teach you about me.

*Rita Joe, Mi'kmaw Poet*

## "I Lost My Talk" Vocabulary

Ballad- A kind of poem or song that tells a story.

Gentle- Having or showing a kind and quiet nature: not harsh, stern, or violent.

Powerful- Having the ability to control or influence people or things.

Scramble- A disordered mixture of things.

Snatch- Quickly grab (something) in a rude or eager way.

### Summarize what happens in the poem

Stanza One- Due to the speaker's time as a little girl attending Shubencadie residential school, she lost her aboriginal language.

Stanza Two- In an accusatory tone, she states that the staff at the school aggressively stripped her of her native language by forcing her to speak, think and create the way the school told her to - using English. She acknowledges that the things that define who she is (language and culture) have been disordered.

Stanza Three- The speaker talks about knowing two cultures and two languages. However, she acknowledges that the English language has more power.

Stanza Four- In a gesture of goodwill, she kindly offers her hand to those who have disempowered her. She asks for the opportunity to recover her language and culture so that she can teach these individuals about herself.

EMILY PAULINE JOHNSON (Tekahionwake) was born at "Chiefswood" on her father's estate, in the Reserve near Brantford, Ontario, in 1862. She was the youngest of four children, and early showed a marked tendency towards the reading and the writing of rhymes.

Her father was the late G. H. M. Johnson (Onwanonsyshon), Head Chief of the Six Nations Indians, and a descendant of one of the fifty noble families of Hiawatha's Confederation, founded four centuries ago. Her mother was Emily S. Howells, of Bristol, England.

Pauline's education in school lore was meagre,—a nursery governess for two years, attendance at an Indian day school, near her home, for three years, and two finishing years at the Brantford Central School—but her education in the School of Nature was extensive, and that with her voracious reading—of poetry particularly—and retentive memory, richly stored her naturally keen mind.

As a poet and recitalist, Miss Johnson won her first distinction of note in 1892, when she took part, in Toronto, in a unique entertainment of Canadian literature, read or recited by the authors themselves. Miss Johnson's contribution was 'A Cry From an Indian Wife,' which presented the Redman's view of the North-West Rebellion, and won for the author the only encore of the evening. The next day the Toronto press so eulogized her performance and spread her fame, that another entertainment was quickly arranged for, to be given, two weeks later, entirely by herself. Her best known poem "The Song My Paddle Sings", was written for this occasion. There followed a series of recitals throughout Canada, in the hope that their financial success would be such as to enable the poet to go to England and submit her poems to a London publisher. In two years this object was attained, and *The White Wampum* appeared. It was received with enthusiasm by the critics and the public generally. Pauline Johnson had 'arrived,' and as a poet and entertainer she was henceforth in demand in the British Isles, as well as in Canada and the United States.

In 1903, her second book of verse, *Canadian Born*, was published and the entire edition was sold out within a year. Miss Johnson continued her recitals for sixteen years, when failing health compelled her to retire. She moved to Vancouver, B.C., where she lived until her death in 1913.

## The Song My Paddle Sings

By Emily Pauline Johnson

West wind, blow from your prairie nest,  
Blow from the mountains, blow from the west.  
The sail is idle, the sailor too;  
O wind of the west, we wait for you!  
Blow, blow!  
I have wooed you so,  
But never a favour you bestow.  
You rock your cradle the hills between,  
But scorn to notice my white lateen.

I stow the sail and unship the mast:  
I wooed you long, but my wooing's past;  
My paddle will lull you into rest:  
O drowsy wind of the drowsy west,  
Sleep, sleep!  
By your mountains steep,  
Or down where the prairie grasses sweep,  
Now fold in slumber your laggard wings,  
For soft is the song my paddle sings.

August is laughing across the sky,  
Laughing while paddle, canoe and I,  
Drift, drift,  
Where the hills uplift  
On either side of the current swift.

The river rolls in its rocky bed,  
My paddle is plying its way ahead,  
Dip, dip,  
While the waters flip  
In foam as over their breast we slip.

And oh, the river runs swifter now;  
The eddies circle about my bow:  
Swirl, Swirl!  
How the ripples curl  
In many a dangerous pool awhirl!  
And far to forward the rapids roar,  
Fretting their margin for evermore;  
Dash, dash,  
With a mighty crash,  
They seethe and boil and bound and splash.

Be strong, O paddle! be brave, canoe!  
The reckless waves you must plunge into.  
Reel, reel,  
On your trembling keel,  
But never a fear my craft will feel.

We've raced the rapids, we're far ahead!  
The river slips through its silent bed.  
Sway, sway,  
As the bubbles spray  
And fall in tinkling tunes away.

And up on the hills against the sky,  
A fir tree rocking its lullaby  
Swings, swings,  
Its emerald wings,  
Swelling the song that my paddle sings.

### "The Song My Paddle Sings" Vocabulary

Bestow- To present as a gift; give; confer.
Drowsy- Half-asleep; sleepy.
Eddies- A current of water or air running contrary to the main current.
Emerald- A rich green variety of beryl prized as a gemstone.
Idle- Not working or active; doing nothing.
Keel- A long heavy piece of wood or metal that runs along the center of the bottom of a ship.
Laggard- A person or thing that does not go or move as quickly as others.
Lateen- Pertaining to or having a lateen sail or sails.
Lull- To cause to sleep or become sleepy.
Mast- A long pole that rises from the bottom of a ship and supports the sails and rigging.
Paddle- A wooden pole that has a wide, flat part at the end and is used to move and steer a small boat.
Scorn- A strong feeling of disgust and anger.
Slumber- Sleep.
Stow- To put (something that is not being used) in a place where it is available.
Swift- Moving or capable of moving with great speed.
Woo- To try to gain the love of.

#### Summarize what happens in the poem

The speaker is sailing through a river in a canoe. She begins by complaining that the wind won't blow for her and her lateen sail. Undaunted, she puts away her sail and uses her paddle to propel her forward. She expresses her thought that her paddle is singing softly and lulling the wind to sleep.

The river water currents start to move with great speed. Counter flowing currents circle around the front of her canoe and dangerously crash and splash against it with mighty force. The speaker tells her paddle to be strong and her canoe to be brave. A nearby fir tree on a hill swings its branches to the paddle's song.