



Indigenous History Month: Week 2: Music & Musicians

Donna Wright, an Elder who works with many students in our school district, describes drumming and singing as a way of ‘opening the channel from our hearts to the Creator’. The teachings around the drum and singing are sacred to Indigenous Peoples. The teachings are different from nation to nation, but one thing that threads all the teachings together is that drumming and singing connects us all to the heartbeat of Mother Earth.

Jesse tells of a teaching of a story of the first drum sound that we hear as humans is that of our mother when we are in the womb. That life-giving heartbeat is a drum beat. Everyone who is reading this has a heartbeat. We are all connected through that heartbeat of Mother Earth.

When we hear drumming and singing from nation to nation, we can hear the land, the animals, the waters of where that nation is located on Turtle Island. When we hear drumming from the West Coast, we hear the waves. The high winds from the Prairies are heard in songs from Plains Peoples. Inuit drumming echoes across the tundra. The songs of Great Lakes peoples resound through the deep forests. The dance of the Metis people is a heartbeat of the land.

Again, the cultural and spiritual expression of singing, drumming, and dance was something that was systemically and forcibly taken from Indigenous Peoples from sea to sea by Canadian Federal Government Policy and Law. Many ceremonies and dances went underground. Tribes had tactics that allowed them to hide their cultural practices from the Indian Agent and the RCMP and resist being arrested for practicing ceremony and dance. Many of these underground groups that kept Indigenous cultures and spiritualities alive evolved into organisations that still to this day fight for Indigenous rights in Canada. More recently, Idle No More, the Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada, land and water defenders, and Cindy Blackstock have fought with diligence for Indigenous rights.

It is through songs of protest, resistance, cultural awareness, bringing attention to Indigenous Issues, reconnecting with traditional instruments and songs, that Indigenous Music and Musicians are becoming so well-known.

Many of Hannah and Jesse’s favourites are in this list. Indigenous Musicians span the musical genre spectrum. We have included some documentaries, some playlists, some podcasts, and many Indigenous Musicians. In this list you will hear Indigenous voices of history, culture, spirituality, thought, expression, creativity, and strength. You will hear language revitalisation, cultural resurgence, fusions of tradition and modern technology. You will hear Indigenous voice. Indigenous voice and perspective is strong, alive, and true.

[Buffy St. Marie](#)
[Tanya Tagaq](#)
[Indigenous Hip Hop in Canada](#)
[Snotty Nose Rez Kids](#)
[The Northwest Kid](#)
[Kelly Fraser](#)
[Northern Cree](#)
[Robbie Robertson](#)
[Rumble](#)
[A Tribe Called Red](#)
[Iskwe](#)
[Kinnie Starr](#)
[Jeremy Dutcher](#)
[JB The First Lady](#)
[Susan Aglukark](#)
[Mama Rudegyal](#)
[Supaman](#)
[N’we Jinan](#)
[The Jerry Cans](#)
[Drezus](#)
[Inez Jasper](#)

[Murray Porter](#)
[Ronnie Dean Harris](#)
[Indigenous Music Awards](#)
Junos: [Indigenous Artist or Group of the Year](#)
Junos: [Indigenous Album of the Year](#)
[Crystal Shawanda](#)
[Digging Roots](#)
[Ghost Keeper](#)
[Twin Flames](#)
[Sebastian Gaskin](#)
[DJ Shub](#)
[Quantum Tangle](#)
[Cris Derksen](#)
[William Prince](#)
[Indian City](#)
[History of Indigenous Music in Canada](#)
[Prolific the Rapper](#)
CBC: [Reclaimed](#)
Spotify: [The Sound of Canadian Indigenous nehiyawak](#)

[#MyIndigenousMixtape Challenge](#) - Anishnaabe comedian & storyteller Ryan McMahon challenges you to create your #IndigenousMixtape of music, stories, and media that inspires, teaches, or motivates you. How do the voices you share uphold Indigenous knowledges? How do they challenge systematic racism? Check out our SD8 Aboriginal Education team’s playlists of #Indigenousmixtapes [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

From the [SD8 Ab Ed Resource Library](#): “[Great Musicians from our First Nations](#)”, “[The Metis of British Columbia: Music & Dance \(DVD\)](#)”, “[Aboriginal Music in Contemporary Canada: Echoes and Exchanges](#)”,

[BC Curriculum Connections](#)

Big Ideas: Individual and collective expression is rooted in history, culture, and community. Music offers unique ways of exploring our identity and sense of belonging. Music communicates traditions, perspectives, worldviews, and stories.

Curricular Competencies: I can make connections through music on local, national, or global scales. I can investigate the relationships between music and personal, social, or cultural

change. I can demonstrate personal and social responsibility associated with creating, performing, and responding to music.

Core Competencies:

- **Creative Thinking:** Combine technical knowledge, musical literacy, and contextual observation to make musical decisions.
- **Personal & Social Responsibility:** I can demonstrate personal and social responsibility associated with creating, performing, and responding to music.
- **Communication:** Collaborate to express personal voice, cultural identity, and perspective through music.

FPPL Connections: Learning requires exploration of one's identity. Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.

How does knowledge of Indigenous music link to [Equity for Indigenous](#) students?
Including Indigenous Music and Musicians into your teaching practices gives Indigenous students an opportunity to connect with their cultural role models who are achieving balance, success, and resilience.

How does Indigenous music confront [implicit bias](#)?
Indigenous students can achieve anything. Follow your passions.

How does Indigenous music [confront privilege](#)?
Indigenous music and musicians confront privilege through offering expansive perspectives that challenge commonly held perspectives.

How does Indigenous music inform [antiracist perspective](#)?
Racist perspectives and stereotypes become irrelevant when exposed to the beauty and complexity of Indigenous music and musicians.

Possible Classroom Uses: Inquiry of Indigenous music influences on society; Exploring sounds from different cultures; Play different music and shake up your music morning routine; Understand how music plays a role in protest and resistance; Understand rhythms and beats across musical genres;

Get your school/class involved with the yearly [CBC Music Class Challenge](#)! The challenge features many different Canadian Indigenous artists to choose from. Check out [this video](#) of South Nelson Elementary School learning 'Human' by Twin Flames for the 2019 challenge.