

Festival of Trees: Indigenous Christmas Tree

Mrs. Irwin's Grade 4 and 5 class got in the Christmas spirit early this year! In November, they honoured a classmate's First Nations heritage by decorating a Christmas tree with traditional decorations. Room 16 was transformed into a workshop of cutting, sewing, beading, and gluing decorations for a Christmas tree for the Jasper Yellowhead Museum & Archives annual Festival of Trees.

In preparation for the crafts, the students helped collect goose feathers in the schoolyard, birch bark, sticks, leather and faux fur scraps for the special ornaments. Hidden talents were revealed!

The grade 5 students tried their hand at making bows and arrows, beading (mittens) and sewing birch bark canoes with the help of Mrs. Zaniol, while the entire grade 4/5 class coloured paper feathers and decorated teepees. The finishing touch was a handmade birch bark teepee tree skirt which amalgamated all of the First Nation symbols.



Writers at work in troisième année

Since the beginning of the year, students in Madame Josée's troisième année have been referred to as "writers" during their classroom writing workshop. Each day for an hour, the students pick up a non-traditional writing implement for third grade - a pen! The students use this non-erasable tool to record their ideas while focusing on detail, and dialogue (narrative). The students are engaged and motivated because they choose what they write about and use their drawings to create stories. The inspiration for Josée implementing writers' workshop in the classroom was fuelled after attending a Lucy Calkins writing conference in October hosted by Isabelle Robert.

In the first unit of the workshop, called Small Moments, a key component is to celebrate the students' work. The authors of 3e année published their favourite book and displayed it at the Municipal library for the month of November. For Madame Josée, it was a great way to share her passion for children, literature and art.

