

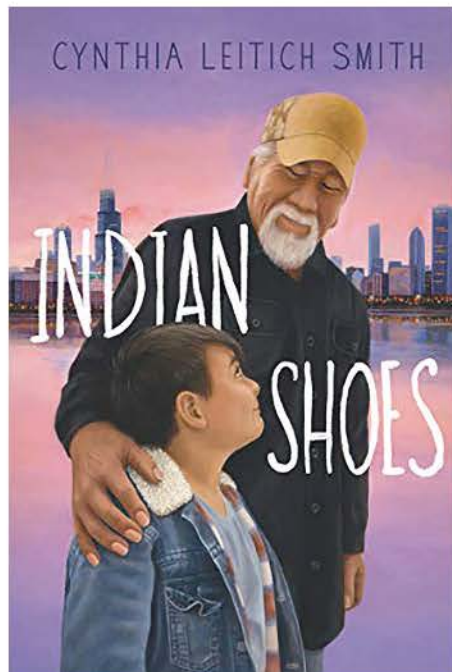
# Reading <sup>with</sup> Relevance<sup>®</sup>

Building INDEPENDENT READERS and THINKERS

A TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR

## Indian Shoes

A novel by Cynthia Leitich Smith



Recommended for:  
Grade Levels  
2-3

# A tool to inspire change

This literacy curriculum is constructed around an authentically engaging novel that builds students' literacy skills and supports their social and emotional development. Students are motivated to read because they relate to the strong, diverse, and resilient characters featured in our selected novels and because each session gives them the opportunity to connect what they've read to their own lives.

Developed, field-tested, and refined in our own tutoring and mentoring programs, this standards-aligned curriculum has inspired persistently low-performing students to engage with literature, make meaning in their lives, and improve their English language arts skills. Now, *Reading with Relevance* is available to help you dig deep into the social, emotional, and academic needs of your students, whether in your classroom, after-school program, or youth development agency!



## Why *Indian Shoes*?

Get to know Ray Halfmoon and his beloved Grampa Halfmoon, and follow along as they navigate the joys and challenges of their adventures at home in Chicago and in Oklahoma, where their extended Cherokee-Seminole family lives. We chose this story for its heartfelt and uplifting exploration of important social-emotional themes: culture, family, home, loss, resilience, and joy. Inspired by the ways that Ray and Grampa persevere and support each other through the ups and downs of life, students will find themselves making connections between Ray's experiences and their own.

### This teacher's guide includes:

- A facilitator's guide with tips and resources for implementing the curriculum
- A map of Common Core Standards addressed through this program
- Seven individual lesson plans, including vocabulary, discussion questions, journal prompts, extension activities, and all handouts
- An assessment to monitor student progress throughout the program
- Regular checkpoints to help teachers assess their students' progress on ELA standards
- A culminating essay-building unit
- An appendix with additional teaching resources and activities to continue exploring this novel

# Session 2

pages 12-22

## Vocabulary

**terrace** (pg. 12): n., a flat area next to a building where people can sit and relax

**expertise** (pg. 15): n., advanced skill or knowledge in a particular field

**puttered** (pg. 18): v., moved with a rapid intermittent sound

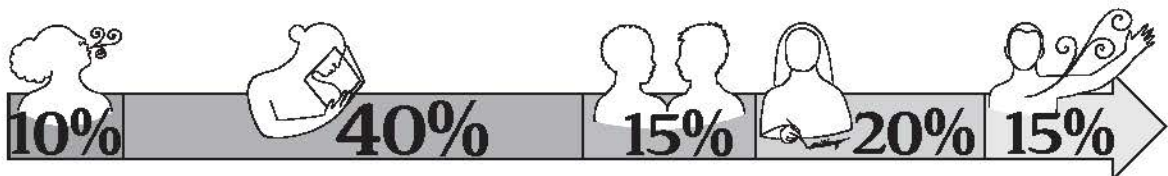
**glanced** (pg. 19): v., looked at someone or something very quickly

## Today's Theme


Today's themes are **problem-solving** and **support**. Ray and Grampa's friends are getting married, and Ray will be the ring bearer at the ceremony. As they prepare for the ceremony, Ray and Grampa support each other to come up with creative solutions for a variety of mishaps that come their way. Help your students connect to these themes by thinking about their own experiences solving tricky problems. Who can they turn to for support when they need to solve a problem?

## Session 1 Recap

We meet Ray Halfmoon and his Grampa, and get to know the deeply caring relationship they share as family. Grampa and Ray came from Oklahoma but now live in Chicago. They love baseball and spending time together. When Grampa Halfmoon feels sad and homesick, Ray uses "the most money he'd owned at one time" to buy Grampa a pair of moccasins that remind him of home.



## During Reading



**Polish-Menominee** (pg. 12): a term is to describe Jonah's mixed heritage, having ancestors from both Poland and the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin

**Choctaw** (pg. 12): a Native American people originally occupying the Southeastern United States

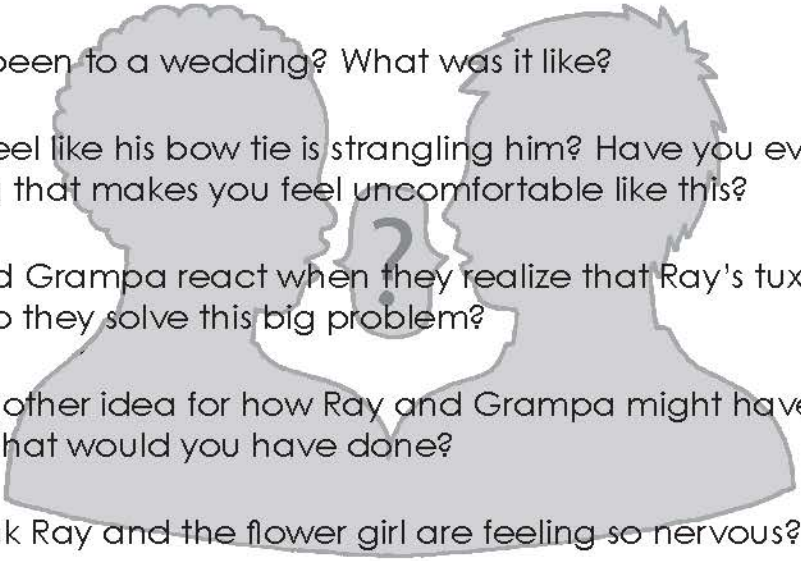
**ring bearer** (pg. 13): A role during some wedding ceremonies, usually given to a child with a special relationship to the people getting married. That child's job is to carry the rings down the aisle and give them to the people getting married.

**tux** (pg. 13): short for tuxedo, a tux is a formal, often black, suit worn with a white shirt and a bow tie

**groomsmen** (pg. 14): a friend or relative who helps a groom at his wedding

**boutonniere** (pg. 20): a flower or small group of flowers worn pinned to a jacket for a special occasion, such as a wedding

## Discussion Questions

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- The author takes care to be specific about each of the characters' backgrounds, such as "Polish-Menominee from Chicago" or "Choctaw from Norman, Oklahoma." Why do you think she does this?
  - Have you ever been to a wedding? What was it like?
  - Why does Ray feel like his bow tie is strangling him? Have you ever had to wear something that makes you feel uncomfortable like this?
  - How do Ray and Grampa react when they realize that Ray's tux pants are missing? How do they solve this big problem?
  - Do you have another idea for how Ray and Grampa might have solved this problem? What would you have done?
  - Why do you think Ray and the flower girl are feeling so nervous?
  - How do you think Ray felt when he saw Grampa Halfmoon with the lace tablecloth tied around his waist and the ring in his hand?

MIXED FEELINGS

- Ray is feeling some mixed emotions in this chapter! He is nervous about his ring bearer role at his friends' wedding, but he is also looking forward to being an important part of the ceremony.

**Write about a time when you had mixed feelings about something.**

- » What happened? What were the different feelings that came up?
- » How does it feel to experience more than one feeling at the same time? What is this like?
- » What advice would you give to Ray?

SUPPORT

- Throughout all the nerves that came with being the ring bearer at the wedding, Grampa was there to help and support Ray—including when Ray's pants went missing and when Ray discovered he forgot the ring!

**Who is someone in your life who is always there for you when you need them?**

- » Write about a time when this person showed up for you.
- » How did this person show you their support?
- » How do you show this person that they are important to you?



Extension Activity

It is common in families to have special objects, such as Nancy Lee's wedding ring, that are passed down through generations and hold important meaning to family members. In this activity, students will share an important object they want to pass down to future generations. It could be something that has been passed down to them, or something new they would like to pass down when they become elders.

**Handout:**

- » Family Heirlooms

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# My Family Heirloom

**3-5 words about what makes my family heirloom so special:**

**2-3 sentences sharing why this object is meaningful to me:**

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Many families have objects, often called heirlooms, that they pass down through the generations to hold their family history—like Nancy Lee’s wedding ring, which belonged to Jonah’s grandmother. Think of an object that is special to you and your family, something that you would want to pass down to future generations. Maybe there is already something that has been passed through your family that you want to draw and write about. You can also share a new object or item that is important to you that you would like to pass on to future members of your family.

## Family Heirlooms

# Appendix

## *Additional Activities*

### Contents

Real Life Connector .....	48
Venn Diagram .....	49
Vocabulary Match .....	50
Linking Quotes .....	51
Connections: <i>Feelings</i> .....	52
Vocabulary Fill In .....	53
Standards Quiz .....	54
Answer Key .....	55
Student Evaluation .....	56
Teacher Reflection .....	58
About Us .....	59



### Our Story

**We are a collective of progressive educators** on a mission: sharing and scaling the program we've built for (and with!) our students over the last decade, to inspire relevant reading experiences, heartfelt conversations, and instructional breakthroughs in classrooms across the nation. We wrote *Reading with Relevance* because we couldn't find the tool we needed to effectively teach our students. Most of the young people in our classrooms not only came to us two to four years below their grade level, but also with very real social and emotional struggles that sometimes felt more important than school. We came to believe that meeting students' social and emotional needs was the key to unlocking their academic potential.

*Reading with Relevance* leverages student interest in highly engaging social and emotional learning activities to develop crucial academic skills: reading fluency, comprehension, and critical thinking. We turn barriers to learning into the very tools that accelerate literacy.

### Training and Professional Development Services

*While lesson plans are designed to be easily facilitated by classroom teachers and after-school staff alike, our training and professional development services will ensure fully effective implementation of the literacy curricula. Additionally, we offer technical support, classroom observation, and program evaluation services to help your program be successful. Contact us for more information about these services.*

### Contact Us

*Contact us today to learn more about how the Moving Forward Institute can support your students and staff!*

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### If your students liked *Indian Shoes*. . .

...they might love some of our other book selections! We suggest that you check out *Donavan's Word Jar*, *Keena Ford and the Second-Grade Mix-Up*, and *Charlotte's Web*. Please visit our website today to browse our full selection of socially and emotionally rich novel-based curricula!