

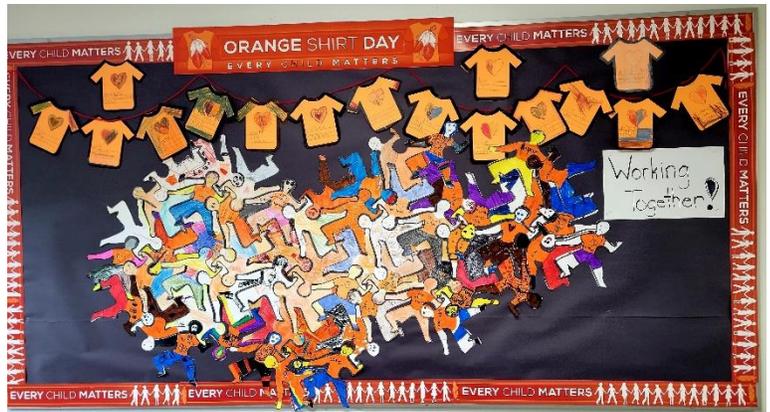


CLES – THE BEGINNING OF A NEW YEAR 2021

Canyon Lister Elementary has had a gentle start to the year. I was greeted with the most wonderful surprise - art work created by Ms. Rachel and Ms. DeBoone. Reading the message that Every Child Matters as we walk through the front door each day, reminds us all of what is truly important each and every day. It has been a month of introductions, greetings and making plans for the months ahead. Students are happy to be back at school, rekindling old friendships and making new ones.

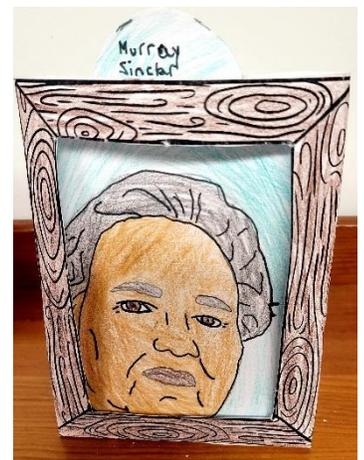
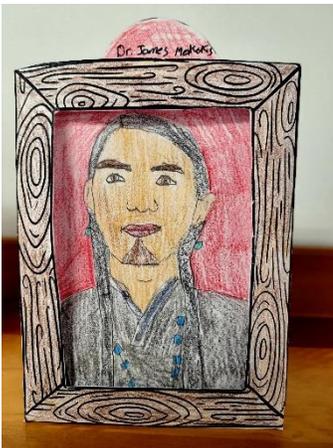
Orange Shirt Week was filled with learning, listening and reflection. Our 'Every Child Matters' flag flew half-mast, accompanied by Canadian Flag. Morning announcements began each day with the Ktunaxa greeting for good morning – 'Kisuk Wi (k) num' –, the acknowledgement of territory and words explaining the importance

of Orange Shirt week. Teachers had a variety of classroom activities organized for their students including the creation of Orange Shirt artwork and writings. With each class, I had the opportunity to share stories of knowledge and emotion: Stolen Words, Cheyenne, The Train, When I Was Eight and Lily, to name a few.



Our week ended with the Grade 4/5 class sitting in a circle within our tipi.

There we held a sharing circle with each student sharing a thought, a memory or even a question about the truths we had learned about during the week. Students were kind and thoughtful with one another as the feather was passed from student to student. Feelings of sadness, and sometimes indignation, were shared about the fact that Residential School was wrong and hurtful: "No one should be allowed to take away your children". Two students shared that they and their families had attended the candle vigil at the recently renamed Creston Valley High School on Truth and Reconciliation Day. (Picture of candle vigil) Another student shared that he and his family visited the burial grounds of his grandmother that had attended a Residential School. Another spoke of sharing the Orange Shirt story with her family. "How many Residential Schools were there – do they still happen?" "How many Indigenous languages are there?" "How many students went to those schools?"



We talked about the importance of learning the truth. That learning 'truth' is an act of Reconciliation. Students were eager to learn more, share more. My heart was full! It's going to be a good year. It's going to be a year of learning a mile-deep vs a mile wide.

Texas.

Mrs. Ewashen

