When We Were Alone

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Duration: 90 minutes

LEVEL	SUBJECTS	PROVINCES / TERRITORIES	TOOL
Grades 4-6	Social Studies, English Language Arts	Across Canada	Scratch

Overview

In this lesson, students will learn about Canada's residential school history through the story of a little girl and her grandmother, as told in 'When We Were Alone' by David A. Robertson, illustrated by Julie Flett.

Prep Work

- Check out the example scratch project: bit.ly/when-we-were-alone-example
- Print the Solution Sheet: bit.ly/when-we-were-alone-solution (see below)
- Borrow (or purchase) the book: "When We Were Alone" by David A. Robinson

We have partnered with the CBC to support teachers with historical content for what is a very sad part of Canadian history.

Note to Teachers:
The exploration of sensitive and controversial issues may provoke emotional responses in students. A high degree of care should be taken before the lesson to

Key Coding Concepts

- ✓ Loops
- ✓ Sequence
- ✓ Random Numbers
- ✓ Operators
- ✓ Events

Terminology

Loops
Running the same sequence multiple times i.e. repeat or forever blocks

Sequence
Identifying a series of steps for a task; computers and Scratch read and perform commands in order from top to bottom

Operators

ensure that the learning environment allows for conflicting sets of values to be processed analytically and with respect for differences in peoples and their cultures, identities, and world views. As with all activities that involve complex thinking, teachers should build in time for reflection and metacognitive activities.

Lesson

This lesson was made in partnership with David Alexander Robertson, Julie Flett, and Portage and Main Press.

Historical Context

This video from Historica Canada is a powerful reminder of the history of residential schools in Canada. Please review the video to ensure it is appropriate for your classroom.

bit.ly/heritage-minutes-chanie-wenjack

Explore the material and links in the **References** section on the right side of this page for additional material about this topic.

Mathematical and logical expressions i.e. X+X block

Events
One thing causing another thing to happen i.e. 'when clicked' block

Curricular Connections

Students use elements of design in artworks to communicate ideas, messages, and understandings for specific audience and purpose. Students can reflect on how they can leverage their talents to create change whether that be athletic, artistic, social, etc.

References

When We Were Alone
www.portageandmainpress.com/product/when-we-were-alone/

Residential Schools: Truth And Healing
https://media.curio.ca/filer_public/73/5a/735ad052-419e-433f-ba0f-a5f088ffcccf/sep10residential1.pdf

Residential Schools
http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/residential-schools/

The Road to Reconciliation
https://curio.ca/en/video/the-road-to-reconciliation-6932/

Residential Schools and Hockey

Introduction

Have students turn, pair, and then share the 3Ws:

- What do I know about residential schools?
- What do I want to know about residential schools?
- And what do I want to learn about residential schools after reading 'When We Were Alone'?

In pairs, have students select a scene that resonated most with them to recreate using Scratch. Students may want to act out the scene to get a better understanding of how the dialogue works between the two characters.

Once students have planned their scene, have them open the starter project.

Activity

Show the **example project** (bit.ly/when-we-were-alone-example) so learners know what they are working towards. Ask them what they see/hear - what is happening in this project?

Open the **starter project** (http://bit.ly/when-we-were-alone-starter) and review the Sprites and backgrounds. Have learners open the starter project on their screens and click "REMIX." (The remix button will only be visible once they are signed into their accounts.)

Use the **Solution Sheet** (http://bit.ly/when-we-were-alone-solution) to guide learners through the following steps:

- Make Nosism say something
- Talk to the other sprites
- Make Nokom respond
- Add to the conversation
- Flashback
- Make the leaves fall

Assessment

Do students use broadcast and when I receive blocks? Have students thoughtfully completed the above activities?
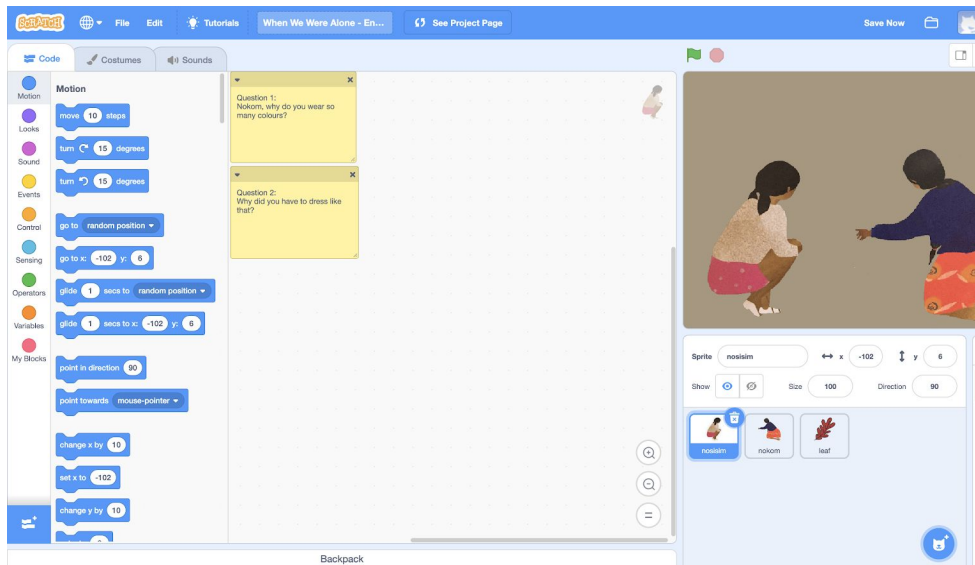
Extensions

Have students draw the flowers in the garden, leaves that cover Nokom, grass that Nokom braids into her hair, or another scene within the story.

When We Were Alone

STEP 1: Open the Starter Project

1. Sign in to Scratch: scratch.mit.edu
2. Open the starter project: bit.ly/when-we-were-alone-starter
3. Remix the project & change the project name

STEP 2: Make Nosisim say something

1. Select Nosisim
2. Make her say something
3. Replace the "hello" text with the text from the Question 1 comment (either type it in or copy and paste using ctrl + C and ctrl + V)
4. Make this happen when the green flag is clicked
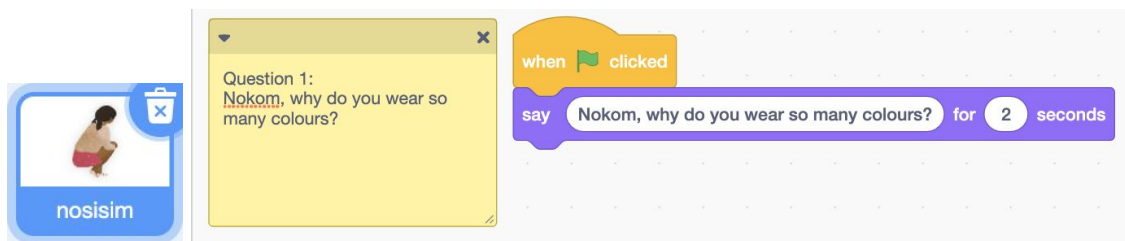
STEP 3: Talk to the other sprites

1. We're going to have a conversation between Nosisim and Nokom. If Nosisim asks Nokom a question, how can we let Nokom know when it's her turn to respond?
2. Try using broadcast messages! We can use them to communicate between sprites. We won't see anything on the screen - it's like a secret message between sprites.
3. Broadcast a new message called "1" **and wait**
4. **Waiting is important b/c Nosisim needs to listen to what Nokom says. Not adding "and wait" is like telling a knock knock joke but not waiting for the other person to ask "who's there?"
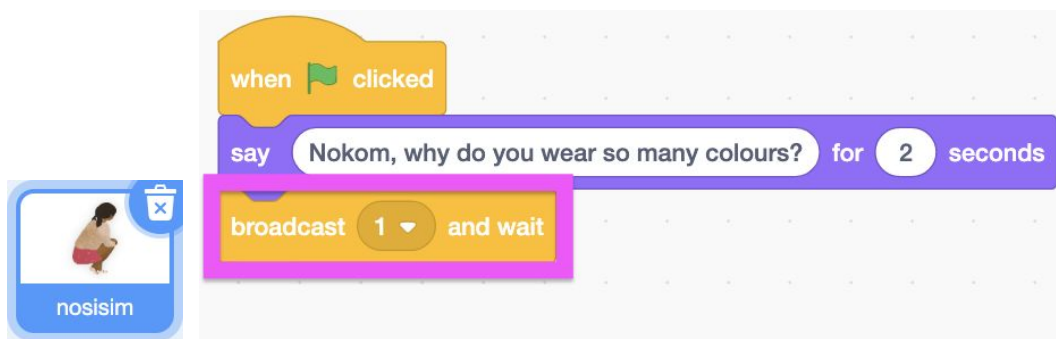
STEP 4: Make Nokom respond

1. Select Nokom
2. Make Nokom say something
3. Use the text from the Response 1 comment
4. Play with the amount of "say" blocks and how many seconds you want it to wait while the words are on the screen. Make sure you have enough time to read it.
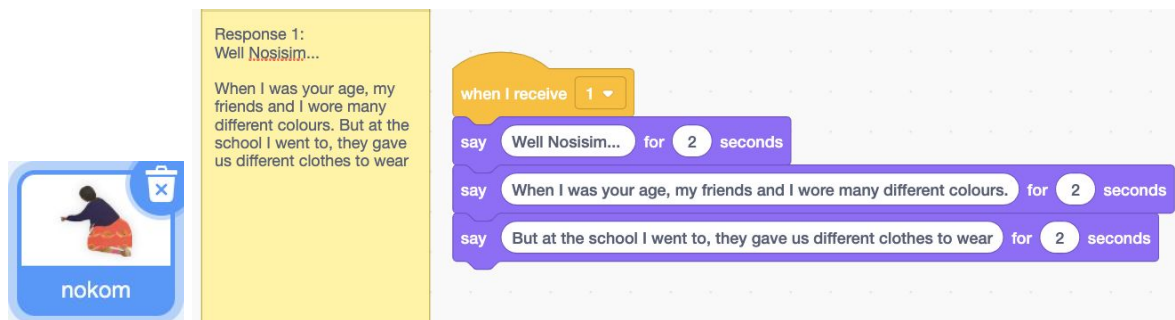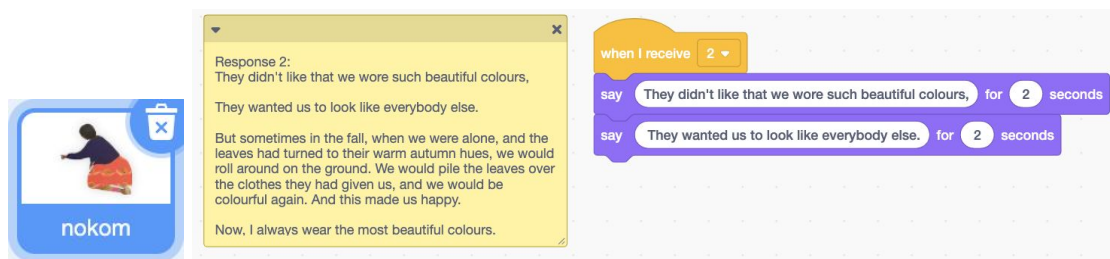
STEP 5: Add to the conversation

1. Select Nosisim
2. Make her say something else (see the Question 2 comment)

3. Make her broadcast a new message "2" and wait for Nokom's response
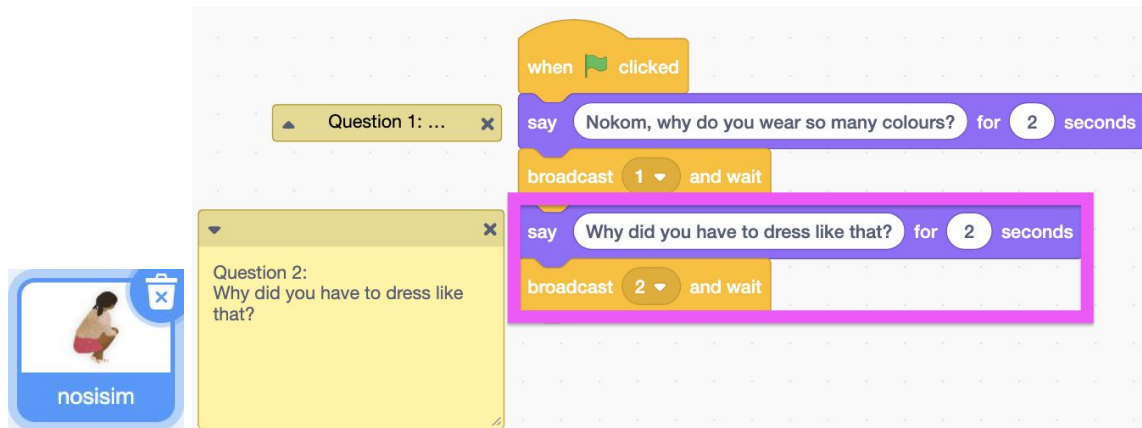
4. Select Nokom
5. Make her say something back, after she receives the broadcast message (see the first part of Response 2 comment)


STEP 6: Flashback

1. What did Nokom's flashback to when she was a child look like in the example? Who was on the screen, what were they doing, etc?
2. Nosisim wasn't in the flashback, so make her hide
3. Test it out! Nosisim starts off hidden when we restart. Make her show when the green flag is clicked.
4. Then, we need to tell Nokom that it's time for her to talk - create a new broadcast message
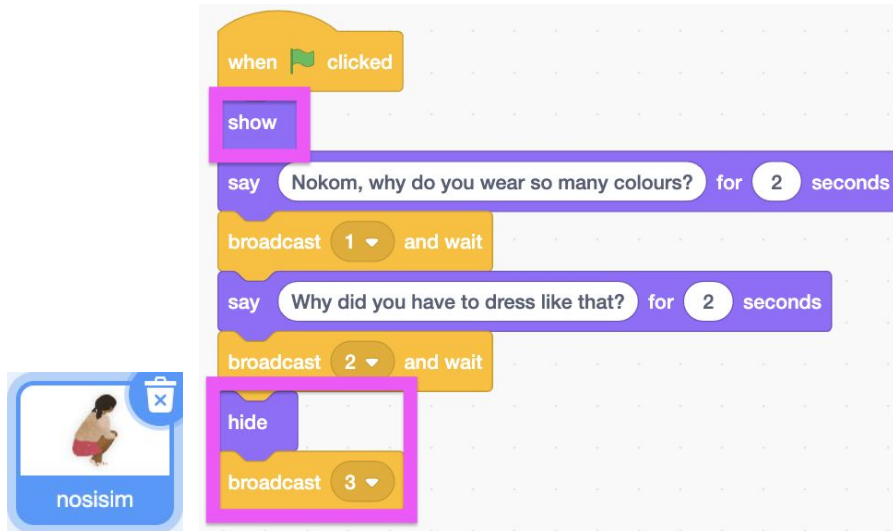
5. Select Nokom
6. Nokom was her younger self, so change her costume to the "leaves" costume
7. Nokom was still telling her story, so make her say something (use the rest of the Response 2 comment - time it out however you like)
8. Make this all happen when Nokom receives the broadcast message "3"
9. Test it out! Nokom begins as a child when we restart the story. Make her begin with the original costume when the green flag is clicked
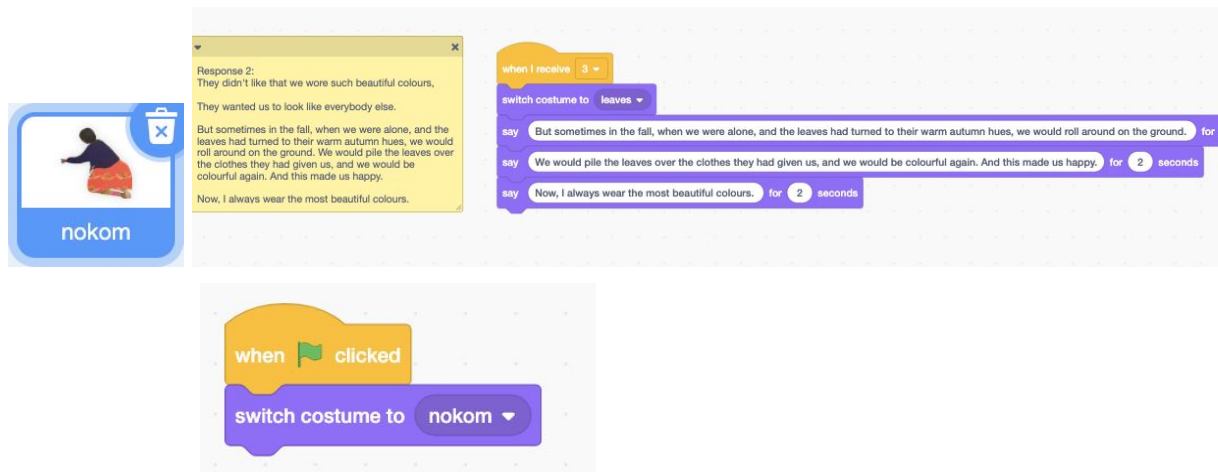
STEP 7: Make the leaves fall

1. Add the pen extension to your project
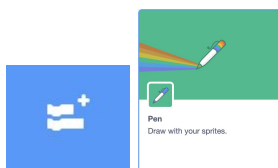
2. Select the leaf sprite
3. Play around with the stamp tool (under the pen category)
4. In this example, we make the leaf show when it receives the message "3"
5. Then, it goes to a new position, changes colours, turns, and stamps
6. This is looped over and over (100 times!)