

About the Book (Teacher Overview)

Key Themes

Resilience, Belonging, Memory, Sacrifice, Preserving Cultural Heritage

Plot:

Lee Duck, a Chinese settler in early 1900s Alberta, arrives seeking work and a better life despite the challenges of racism and isolation. As he works on boats, railways, and laundries, he meets other Chinese settlers who share similar struggles and dreams. Together, they form a close-knit community, supporting one another through generosity, traditions, and resilience. Over time, Lee Duck finds strength in these connections, enabling him to build a legacy for himself and eventually his family for generations to come.

Why Found?

At its heart, the narrative follows Lee Duck as he finds a community and a sense of belonging among fellow Chinese settlers in Alberta. The word *found* carries multiple meanings, such as the idea of being lost and rediscovered, as depicted in Lee Duck's journey with a family keepsake -- a jade pendant. The pendant is lost, returned, or rejected, only to find its way back to him. *Found* also signifies the act of establishing something, a metaphor for the way the Chinese settlers construct their lives and legacies despite challenges. The concept of "found family" resonates deeply, reflecting the bonds forged amidst shared struggles. On another level, *Found* speaks to the process behind this project itself; many stories shared in this work were uncovered through deep conversations with local seniors and their families. These narratives, often undocumented, required careful effort to bring to light. *Found* reflects the power of rediscovering what might otherwise have been forgotten.

Teaching Tips

- This book is recommended for grades 5-9.
- This book can be taught as a single lesson or as a unit. If teaching a lesson, have students read pages 1-3, pages 6-7, and pages 9-12.
- Encourage students to analyze a character's actions, feelings, and motivations as they navigate a new life in a foreign place.

Outcomes

- Social Studies, English Language Arts, Fine Arts
 - Example:
 - Examine cultural groups that experience discrimination in Canada: “Diverse cultural communities continue to face discrimination and racism in Canada”
 - Alberta Education. (2023). Draft K-12 Social Studies Curriculum. <https://curriculum.learnalberta.ca/curriculum/en/s/sss>
 - Grade 7:
 - How did Asian immigrants contribute to the development of Canada (i.e., Chinese railway workers)?
 - In what ways did the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway affect the growth of Canada?
 - Alberta Education. (2005). Social studies kindergarten to grade 12: Program Rationale and philosophy. <https://education.alberta.ca/media/160201/program-of-study-grade-8.pdf>

Pre-Reading (Activate)

Agree or Disagree?

1. I would leave my family to live in another country by myself
2. I could work 12 hours a day, outside, in all kinds of weather
3. I would do anything to keep my family from going hungry
4. It's important to preserve stories from the past
5. Being treated unfairly would make me want to give up

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly disagree									Strongly agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Activities (Apply)

Guiding Questions

1. Why do you think the *Chinese Head Tax* was introduced, and how did it shape systemic discrimination in Canada today?

The Head Tax was introduced to limit immigration and prevent competition for jobs. It fueled systemic discrimination by reinforcing negative stereotypes and creating lasting barriers that are still felt today.

2. Almost every small town in Canada has a Chinese restaurant. Why might that be?

After the railway was built, Chinese immigrants were barred from most jobs. To survive, some Chinese immigrants opened restaurants that still stand today.

3. Chinese immigrants like Yee Voon often ran laundries as a means of survival in the past. Why do you think we see fewer laundries today?

The invention of modern technology like the washer and dryer means that less people have to rely on hand-washing laundry.

4. What landmarks or traditions in our city today highlight the contributions of Chinese pioneers to developing our community?

Calgary's Chinatown has a long history of being a cultural hub; many restaurants became more than businesses, serving as gathering spaces for people of all backgrounds. Ginger beef (dish) was invented in Calgary by the Silver Inn restaurant in Chinatown.

5. How do you think the *Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923* halted Chinese community growth in Canada? Use examples from the text.

Women were not allowed to join their husbands, making it difficult for families to join the community. Lee Duck's wife and kids were not allowed to enter Canada for many years.

6. How does Hop Sing's job as a ranch cook help illustrate the importance of work for Chinese settlers in Canada?

Working hard was the only way to survive for Chinese settlers. Not working hard meant "losing face" (Chinese idiom meaning to lose respect) and giving up on the future.

7. How does Yee Voon's story of running a laundry with bound feet reflect the strength and perseverance of Chinese women?

Having bound feet was painful and physically limiting. Most women would not be running a business during this time period, but Yee Voon and her kids were strong enough to be able to carry on the family business.

8. How do you think years of displacement impacted families who were living separately due to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923?

Children would not get to know their fathers, who became strangers living across seas. Some bachelors, who never managed to have their own families, were known as "uncles".

9. How does the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923 parallel the treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada? Consider related legislation and previous knowledge to illustrate the connections.

Both the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923 and policies toward Indigenous peoples, like the Indian Act, were rooted in systemic discrimination, restricting these groups' rights and opportunities.

10. In your opinion, is the following statement true or false: "Canada was and is a welcoming country to immigrants". Explain your answer using at least two pieces of evidence from the text.

The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923 restricted Chinese immigration, while discriminatory practices such as the unequal treatment of Chinese labourers and market gardeners show that Canada's immigration policies were not welcoming to certain groups.

11. Traditions like serving tea to guests and hosting a dinner for families on Lunar New Year are highlighted in the narrative. How do these moments show the importance of preserving cultural identity for Chinese settlers and their community?

Chinese settlers maintain cultural traditions in an effort to stay connected to their homeland, creating a sense of belonging in a foreign land, and ensuring that their heritage continues to be passed down through generations.

12. *Personal Connection:* How do you think your actions today will be remembered by future generations?

13. *Personal Connection:* Have you or your family ever faced challenges in a new place? How did you overcome them?

“In Their Shoes”: Illustration Activity

Objective: Encourage students to empathize with characters by illustrating their perspective and reflecting on their choices.

1. Choose a character:

Pick a character from *Found*. Imagine what the world looks like through their eyes.

2. Create an Illustration:

Draw a landscape or setting from the character’s perspective. *Example: Bark Ging’s view as he starts his day tending to the farm.*

3. Write an Artist Statement:

Describe your drawing using strong adjectives and details from the story. Include explanations for specific artistic choices you made and how they relate to the story.

4. Extension Option:

Pair with a classmate who chose a different character.

Compare your characters’ perspectives using a Venn diagram.



Example: I drew Bark Ging’s room. There is an open, small suitcase in the corner because he lives out of it while searching for work. The room has no decorations because he rents it in exchange for labour. Out the window, the sun hasn’t risen yet because he starts working early. I added candy on the table because he’s a teenager and likes sweets.

Discrimination Role-Play Activity

Objective: Use role-playing to explore discrimination and inequality in society.

Materials: small candies or other rewards

Steps:

1. Divide Students

- Split students into three groups based on their birthday month
 - Group 1: January - April
 - Group 2: May - August
 - Group 3: September - December

2. Assign Tasks on the Board

- Write simple math problems for Group 1 (e.g., 5×7)
- Write medium difficulty math problems for Group 2 (e.g., 8×20)
- Write harder problems for Group 3 (e.g., 32×21)

3. Time the Task (3 minutes for each group to solve their problems)

4. Distribute Rewards Unequally

- Group 1 gets 3 candies each
- Group 2 gets 2 candies each
- Group 3 gets 1 candy each

5. Reflection:

- How did you feel about the rewards?
- Was this fair? Why or why not?
- Explain that this activity reflects how discrimination works in society, where some groups face unfair treatment despite equal or harder work.
- Relate this to the Chinese railway workers who did the most dangerous jobs for the least pay.

6. Extension:

- What other marginalized groups face similar treatment? Do you think this is still an issue in society?

Reading Comprehension Multiple Choice

1. Why does Lee Duck thoughtfully hold onto his jade pendant during his journey?
 - a) To make a wish
 - b) To secure his savings
 - c) To remind himself of his goals
 - d) To show off to the other passengers
2. How do the local people's attitudes towards Lee Duck affect his experience in Canada?
 - a) They make him feel at home and accepted in Canadian society
 - b) They motivate him to work harder and prove himself despite the challenges
 - c) They encourage him to give up on his dreams of success
 - d) They inspire him to seek help from strangers to find a job
3. Why does Lee Duck decide to open a laundry business in Canada?
 - a) It is the most profitable business
 - b) He has a passion for helping people wash clothes
 - c) He wants to compete with other local laundries
 - d) It is one of the only options for Chinese settlers
4. How does Hop Sing's character reflect the challenges and strengths of Chinese settlers in Canada?
 - a) His leadership and cooking skills help him find a sense of belonging despite the racism he faces
 - b) He is disappointed by the lack of respect for his culture and accepts his low status in society
 - c) He is unable to communicate with the cowboys and isolates himself
 - d) He ignores the racist sentiments and focuses only on making money
5. What does Bark Ging's act of picking up Lee Duck's pendant symbolize in the story?
 - a) A sign of distrust, as Bark Ging wants to keep the pendant for himself
 - b) A foreshadowing of Lee Duck's bankruptcy in his new life in Canada
 - c) A simple act of kindness that highlights the strong bonds between Chinese settlers
 - d) An indication of how much Lee Duck depends on his material possessions to succeed.

6. In what way does Yee Voon's experience of running a laundry demonstrate her strength and resilience?
- a) She is always successful and faces no problems
 - b) She works tirelessly despite her physical condition
 - c) She maximizes efficiency by only working when it is convenient for her
 - d) She relies on other people to help run the business for her
7. What significance does the act of Lee Duck telling stories to his grandchildren hold in this scene?
- a) It reflects Lee Duck's desires to entertain them with fantasy
 - b) It foreshadows that he is forgetting his past and only focusing on the future
 - c) It suggests that Lee Duck is trying to motivate his grandchildren to work hard
 - d) It shows the importance of family traditions and oral history in passing down memories

Answer Key:

- 1. C
- 2. B
- 3. D
- 4. A
- 5. C
- 6. B
- 7. D



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