

Growing Up North

Episode 1: Reading / Teaching a Canadian Children's Story

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Overview of the learning unit

Episode 1:

Reading / Teaching a Canadian Children's Story

Episode 2:

Interview with the contributor

Learning target for the episode

Learning target 1:

Sie kennen und verstehen eines der bekanntesten kanadischen Kinderbücher.

Learning target 2:

Sie können das Buch und die darin erzählte Geschichte in den politischen, sozialen und gesellschaftlichen Kontext einordnen.

Learning target 3:

Sie kennen zwei verschiedene Interpretationsansätze und können diese auf die Geschichte und darüber hinaus anwenden.

Topics

- **Introduction**

Canada in the German EFL ("English as a Foreign Language")–
classroom

- **Background**

Hockey in Canada, Roch Carrier and his famous childhood memoir

- **Thematic Approach 1: Difference**

Culture-specific and culture-general experiences of difference

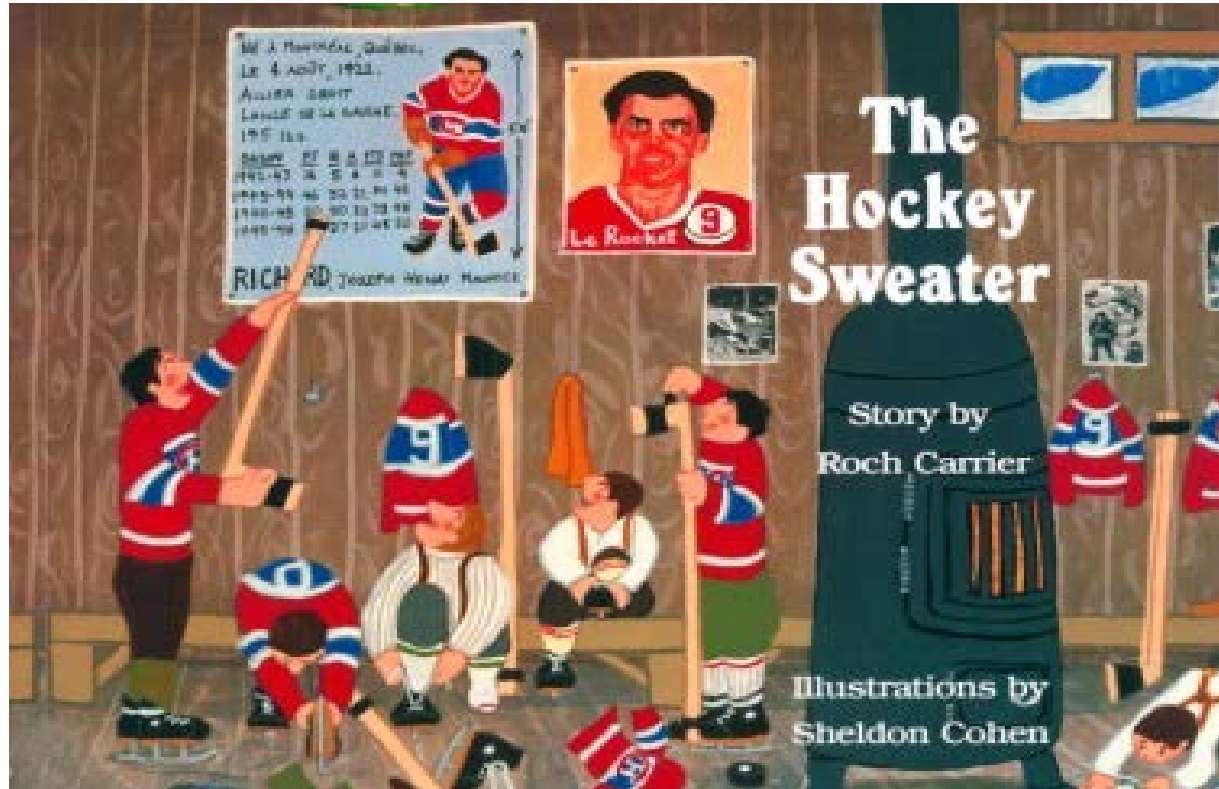
- **Thematic Approach 2: Topography**

Local and global structures of rooms, spheres and spaces

- **Resumé**

The (far?) Canadian North

The Hockey Sweater

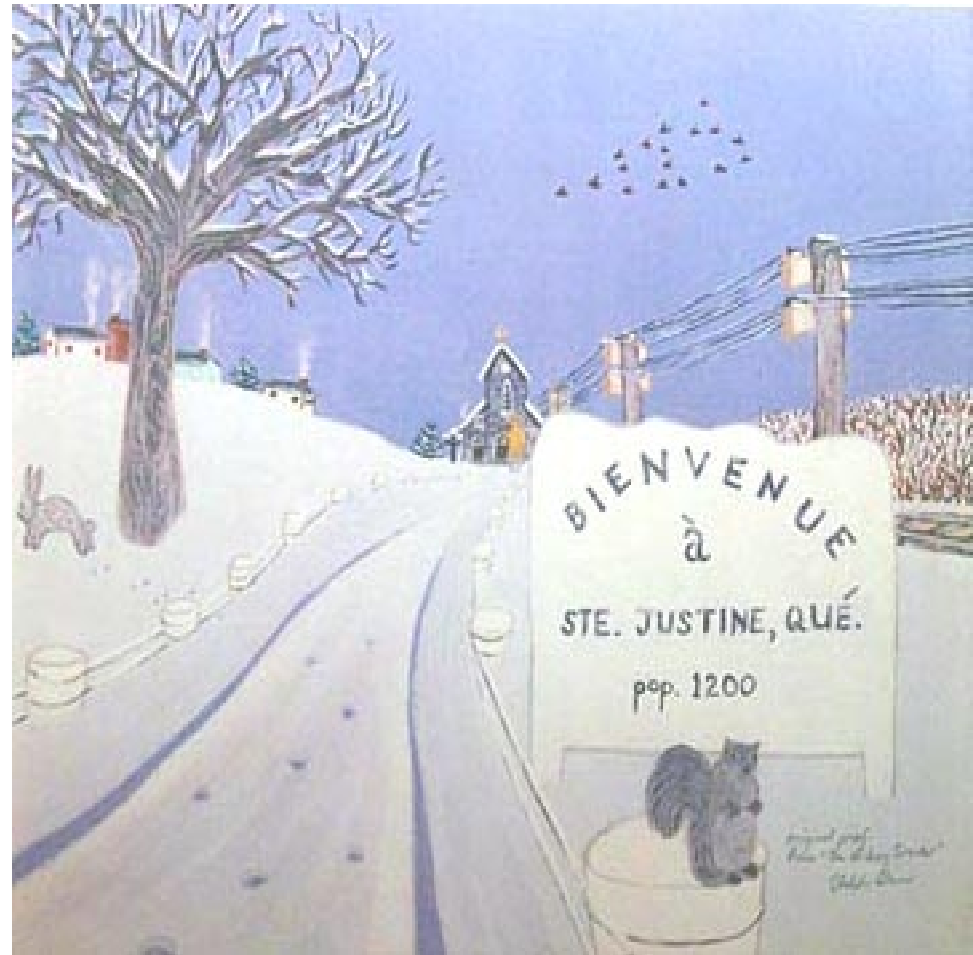


© Roch Carrier: *The Hockey Sweater / Le Chandail de Hockey* (Toronto: Tundra Books, 1979)

"The best Canadian short story ever written ..." (*The Globe and Mail*)

The Far North, "variante québécois"

"If you go back to history books describing the seventies, you will discover that there was a question that was all over Canada, and the question was, "What does Quebec want?" It was nationalism getting very high. There was a lot of push for separation from Canada, and Canada did not understand what was taking place. And the classical question was "What does Quebec want?" [...] So I was invited by CBC to write an answer to that question, and I worked really hard for three, four weeks to write something, and the result was something I didn't like. [...] I went back to my table and I started to think when was it when I felt that I was little me, little Roch [...]. So I started to write about that and it turned into the Hockey Sweater story."
(Interview with Roch Carrier, Tarasoff 2004)



Mother writing out order

"Global access to English, like global access to the Internet, facilitates communication, it does not necessarily facilitate understanding. In fact, it requires an additional effort in discursive reflexivity and linguistic circumspection to overcome the illusion of sameness created by the use of a common language. A pedagogy of English as a global language can capitalize on the outsidership of the local, non-native speaker to foster an understanding based not only on orate uses of language but on a critical reflection that can only be acquired through literacy."
(Kramsch 2000: 42)



Mother writing out order

"With tears in my eyes, I found the strength to say: 'I'll never wear that uniform.' ' My boy,' said my mother, 'first you are going to try it on! If you make up your mind about something before you try it, you won't go very far in this life.' "



The topography of childhood

"We lived in three places - the school, the church and the skating rink - but our real life was on the skating rink. (...) School was a sort of punishment. Parents always want to punish their children and school is their most natural way of punishing us."



An open end

"I asked God to send me right away, a hundred million moths that would eat up my Toronto Maple Leafs sweater."



Exercises for Self Study

1. Describe the hockey game in the story from the point of view of the protagonist's best friend and team mate who keeps a diary. Also include a second diary entry dated two weeks later that illustrates how the story moves on.
2. You can find out more about the role of hockey in Canada on under <http://archives.cbc.ca/sports/hockey/clips/10372/> Describe the functions of this national sport in more detail and try to connect it to the geographical setting ("The Far North"). Is there anything similar in Germany, in your opinion?

References

All illustrations and texts refer to the following primary source (unless indicated otherwise):
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Further works of reference:

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- More excellent ideas on teaching English @ www.englischdidaktik.uni-bremen.de (e.g. our workshop series for language teachers: "Schnittstellen").

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