

The Crows

In-School Outreach Program Outline
with Gwaandak Theatre Society and
the Yukon Human Rights Commission

Good Day!

Hello, my name is Keira Nolting, and I am the Director of Educational Outreach for our Spring Production of *The Crows*, a play by Frances Koncan. This play was created to educate youth in our communities about workplace sexual harassment, as part of a federally funded project “Towards a Yukon Without Workplace Sexual Harassment” by the Yukon Human Rights Commission. In 2021, Gwaandak Theatre Society and the Yukon Human Rights Commission (the Commission) got together and created a play called *Situation* around the topic of workplace sexual harassment for adults, and this premiered online. This year, we are excited to produce a youth-focused play that is more in line with real life scenarios youth might face in their workplaces, and are doubly excited to show this play in schools across the territory!

We have created this guide to help you learn more about this important work and to help you feel informed and empowered when having conversations around *The Crows* and workplace sexual harassment.

What is Gwaandak Theatre?

Gwaandak Theatre Society is Yukon’s only Indigenous professional theatre company, led by Theatre Maker, Colin Wolf. Our board is filled with Indigenous voices and the company is staffed by Mixed marginalized artists, technicians, and theatre makers to form the core of the company.

Our stories question, honour, and celebrate. They explore themes around decolonization, cultural identity, social justice, underrepresented voices and human rights. We tour to both tiny communities and major centres. Gwaandak Theatre develops, produces and tours plays for both youth and adults. Our programming also includes new play workshops, readings and training for theatre artists.

We also have a Youth Advisory Board that runs from October to June and pays an honorarium for youth that participate, if you’d like to mention this as an opportunity for next year!

Fun Fact: Gwaandak can mean “Storyteller” in Gwich’in

About the Playwright

Frances Koncan (she/her) is a writer, and theatre director of mixed Anishinaabe and Slovene descent, originally from Couchiching First Nation.

Frances is a graduate of the University of Manitoba (BA Psychology) and the City University of New York Brooklyn College's Playwriting Program (MFA Playwriting).

When she isn't busy doing artsy things or writing about other people doing artsy things, she can be found watching and participating in sports, practicing the MCAT just in case, and trying her best not to get into fights on the internet.

She is low-key obsessed with the evolution of language, and strives to keep her vocabulary as lit as possible!

What is *The Crows*?

This story follows Ash - a young non-binary hockey player who moves to a small town in Yukon, and takes a job working the concession stand at the local hockey rink. The play covers themes of sexual harassment, gender identities, and power imbalances.

The goal of this piece is to ensure that youth understand their rights regarding workplace sexual harassment, and their options when faced with workplace sexual harassment.

Through the Pre and Post shows, and the Play itself, we are exploring different scenarios and examples of what workplace sexual harassment is, and what it is not. The purpose of this Pre show - Show - Post show format is to lay the foundation for the play, review terms that may come up, and make youth aware of workplace sexual harassment under the Yukon Human Rights Act. Showing the play will illustrate the examples presented in the pre-show, using that knowledge to look deeper at the content. Finally, the post show will allow youth to reflect on what happened in the play, tying all these pieces together. The post-show will also provide the opportunity to meet with some Human Rights Officers from the Yukon Human Rights Commission, should the youth have any questions.

We hope by the end of this tour the youth will walk away with a few things...

Key Learning Outcomes

- What is workplace sexual harassment under the Yukon *Human Rights Act*?
 - different elements involved in workplace sexual harassment (prohibited grounds, protected areas, discrimination, harassment, reasonable person, reporting options, power imbalance, myths)
- What resources are available to you when an incident of workplace sexual harassment occurs?
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Curriculum Connections

The Crows highlights many of the “Big Ideas” found in Yukon-specific Social Studies, Social Justice, Law, English, and Arts Education curriculum for grades 8-12. The play may be used to launch larger units that explore other content within these “Big Ideas” and explore individual’s rights as employees, students, and community members when it comes to sexual harassment and other violations of human rights.

Examples:

Social Studies 8-9

Contacts and conflicts between people stimulates significant cultural, social, and political change.

Disparities in power alter the balance of relationships between individuals and between societies.

Social Studies 10

Historical and contemporary injustices challenge the narrative and identity of Canada as an inclusive, multicultural society.

Worldviews lead to different perspectives and ideas about developments in Canadian society.

Indigenous Studies 11-12

Indigenous peoples are reclaiming mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being despite the continuing effects of colonialism.

Arts Education 8-9:

Artists often challenge the status quo and open us to new perspectives and experiences.

The arts provide opportunities to gain insight into the perspectives and experiences of people from a variety of times, places, and cultures.

English 10:

First Peoples' texts and stories provide insight into key aspects of Canada's past, present, and future.

First Peoples' texts plays a role within the process of Reconciliation.

The exploration of text and story deepens our understanding of diverse, complex ideas about identity, others, and the world.

Language shapes ideas and influences others.

Law 12:

Laws can maintain the status quo and can also be a force for change.

A society's laws and legal framework affect many aspects of people's daily lives.

Understanding legal rights and responsibilities allows citizens to participate more fully in society.

Social Justice 12

Social justice issues are interconnected.

Individual worldviews shape and inform our understanding of social justice issues.

The causes of social injustice are complex and have lasting impacts on society.

Social justice initiatives can transform individuals and systems.

Career-Life Education 10-12:

Career-life choices are made in a recurring cycle of planning, reflecting, adapting, and deciding.

Career-life decisions are influenced by internal and external factors, including local and global trends.

Careers 9:

The value of work in our lives, communities, and society can be viewed from diverse perspectives.

Physical and Health Education 8-9:

Healthy relationships can help us lead rewarding and fulfilling lives.

Advocating for the health and well-being of others connects us to our community.

PRE-SHOW FOUNDATIONS

Access prior knowledge, familiarize students with terminology, lay the foundations

The Crows draws on real-life scenarios and information from sexual harassment reports, and creates a framework for understanding the prohibited grounds of sex, sexual identity and expression, and sexual orientation in any aspect of employment as defined by the Yukon *Human Rights Act*. Two facilitators from Gwaandak and a pre-recorded presentation by the Commission will familiarize students/the audience with some of this knowledge before watching the play to provide context for students to begin thinking of the layers of power imbalance, discrimination, and injustice that exist in the story.

Terms and definitions

Misgendering

refer to (often someone who is of non-binary gender or a transgender person) using a word, especially a pronoun (he/him/she/her/they/them etc.) or form of address (dude, girl, queen, lady, miss, guy, etc.) that does not correctly reflect the gender with which they identify.

Non-Binary

denoting or relating to a gender or sexual identity that is not defined in terms of traditional binary oppositions such as male and female or homosexual and heterosexual.

Pronouns

a word that refers either to a person or people without using an individualized name (e.g., I, you, we) or to someone mentioned in a conversation (e.g., she, he, they, etc.).

Himbo

an attractive but unintelligent man.

Roll Tide

a phrase trademarked by the University of Alabama. It is a cheer used to rally fans of the college's athletics teams, known as the Crimson Tide. Made popular by social media, including TikTok.

Discrimination

harassing or treating a person or a group of people unfavorably in part or in whole because of a characteristic protected under the *Yukon Human Rights Act*.

Harassment

to engage in a course of vexatious conduct or to make a demand or sexual solicitation or advance that one knows or reasonably ought to know is unwelcomed.

Protected Grounds

A personal characteristic that may be a cause for discrimination. Includes 14 elements that are protected by the *Yukon Human Rights Act*: Ancestry, National Origin, Ethnicity and Language, Religion, Age, Sex and Pregnancy, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, Physical or Mental Disability, Criminal Charges or record, Political Belief or Activity, Marital or Family Status, source of Income, Actual or Presumed Association.

Workplace Sexual Harassment

To engage in a pattern of distressing actions or to make a demand, sexual solicitation or advance in relation to gender, sexual orientation, or sex that one knows or ought reasonably to know is unwelcome, in any aspect of employment. May range from asking a co-worker on an unwanted date, to demands for sexual acts in return for a promotion, and is in violation of the *Yukon Human Rights Act*.

Yukon Human Rights Commission

The body created by statute to administer the *Yukon Human Rights Act*. The Commission accomplishes this through research, education, and enforcement of the *Yukon Human Rights Act* through a complaint-resolution process. The Commission is a public body independent from all levels of government.

Gwaandak Theatre

Yukon's only Indigenous-centered theatre company, with a vision to illuminate Indigenous and Northern stories around the world and tell stories that explore themes around decolonization, cultural identity, social justice, underrepresented voices and human rights.

Bystander

a person who is present at an event or incident but does not take part.

Whisper Network

an informal chain of information passed privately between people. It is typically to warn others of powerful people in an industry alleged as being sexual harassers or abusers.

Reporting

give a spoken or written account to an authority of something that one has experienced, in order to follow a course of action for justice.

Privilege

a special advantage or entitlement based on factors such as race, ethnicity, sex, gender-identity, religious affiliation, social class, etc., which benefits one person or group to the detriment of others.

Intersectionality

the interconnected nature of social categories such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination, disadvantage or oppression.

A video will then be presented by the Yukon Human Rights Commission.

After this we will move into a tableau exercise where students turn themselves into a still frame of how they would represent some of these terms using their bodies. After we have some discussion around that, facilitators will hand out resource cards letting students know which organisations they can go to for help, and directing them to our social media where that information will be listed as well. Then the pre-show is complete!

DURING THE PLAY

things to watch for, things to think about

Coach students on how to be an active and respectful audience member:

1. Listening and watching attentively
2. Avoiding distractions (neighbours, phones, etc.)
3. Reacting when it's appropriate (laughter, applause, etc.)

Encourage students to pay close attention to:

1. When and how harassment or discrimination occurs in the script. Ex: How many direct instances of misgendering are there?
2. Symbols and metaphors - What objects, sounds, or images are significant, and why? (this is more of a "theatre" question. Ex: What does the whistle represent?)

(think: whistle-blowing), what does hockey represent? What does “center ice” represent?)

3. How are the different members of the team reacting to instances of WSH? Why are they reacting differently?

You could split the class into groups focusing on one of each of the questions or thinking about the questions together.

After the show the director and actors will come out onto the stage and host a Scripted Talk Back about the play, highlighting things that weren't exactly addressed in the play and providing more context about what could be considered workplace sexual harassment. There will be time and space for students to ask questions. If there are more specific questions that actors are not able to answer at the time, we can always write them down and pass it to the post-show crew, which will consist of one Gwaandak Facilitator and two Human Rights Officers from the Commission, who may be able to answer more technical or specific questions.

AFTER THE PLAY

reflect, transform prior knowledge, take the next steps

While the play is about a person's singular experiences of harassment, it also addresses more universal issues with power imbalance and how our culture allows for vulnerable people to be in potentially harmful situations. The play can be used as the “spark” that ignites bigger projects and learning about power imbalance & privilege, intersectionality, human rights, and gender studies.

One Gwaandak facilitator and two Human Rights Officers from the Yukon Human Rights Commission will be hosting the post-show presentation; starting off with a discussion about the play and the students' thoughts. We have a couple of guiding questions in case the conversation isn't flowing; these include option for self-reflection, with students writing down what they think or answering some of our prompts.

We will have time for students to reflect on what Ash might've felt at various points in the play, writing down words or images that may come up for them. We'll then do another tableau activity, following up on what we did in the pre-show, exploring Ash's feelings and also what a resolution to the play might look like.

We will have a PowerPoint talking about workplace sexual harassment and their reporting options:

- Talk to Spot
- Supervisor or Manager
- Human Resources
- Union
- Occupational Health and Safety (employer focus)

- Yukon Human Rights Commission (complaint process)
- Victims Services (provides support, self-referral)
- Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)

A resource card with information about these organisations will be given to students, and can also be downloaded from the Gwaandak Theatre website.

Links are also available on the Gwaandak Theatre Society's Instagram @GwaandakTheatre

We will also discuss reasons why people may choose not to report.

We hope that these conversations will spark something in the youth, encourage them to consider their rights at work and outside of work, and to ponder the question "How do we reduce instances of discrimination and harassment in our communities?"

Shãw níthän. Kwànàschis. Gunalchîsh. Mahsi Cho. Thank you. Merci.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions

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You can also reach the Yukon Human Rights Commission

[Here!](#)