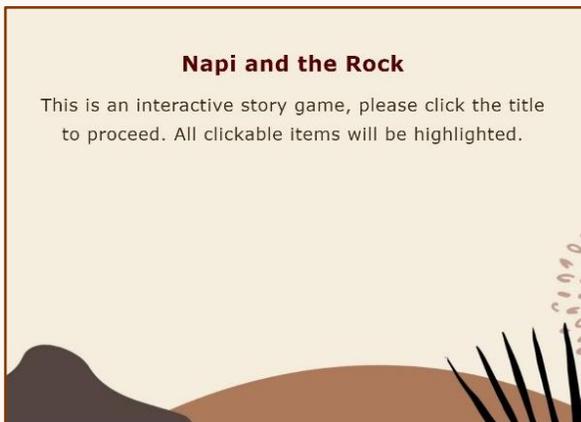# Trickster Traditions: A Collection of Interactive Story-Games for Exploring Indigenous Storytelling
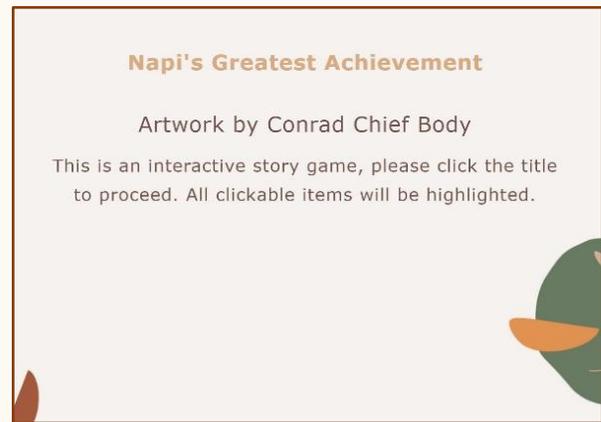
Utilizing the open resource program Twine, this collection is a ready-to-go, fun, and educational resource to learn about Trickster Tales and the way they're told through Indigenous Storytelling. Centered around Napi, the trickster figure of the Indigenous Peoples of Southern Alberta, these story-games are adapted from *Napi Legends* (2017) told by the late Willie Whitefeathers, a Kainai Elder. Tricksters are Sacred cultural figures and heroes who represent and communicate the culture, laws, and histories of Indigenous Peoples within the context of their specific locations.

To play each Story-Game, click on the title or cue card below and click "Run Game".

Napi and the Rock

Napi and the Rock

This is an interactive story game, please click the title to proceed. All clickable items will be highlighted.

Napi's Greatest Achievement

Napi's Greatest Achievement

Artwork by Conrad Chief Body

This is an interactive story game, please click the title to proceed. All clickable items will be highlighted.

Napi's Proposal

Napi's Proposal

This is an interactive story game, please click the title to proceed. All clickable items will be highlighted.

Compiled by Mary Anderson, (she/her) MLIS student at University of Alberta. Mary lives and works on Treaty 7 territory.

Napi gets in trouble sometimes. This isn't a surprise; his stories are lessons after all, and how else does one learn if not by mistakes? Listening to his stories is important if you wish to avoid meeting the same ends. Although this simplifies his purpose and importance to the Blackfoot (Niisitapi) Peoples of Southern Alberta, Napi at the end of the day can be as problematic as an especially silly friend and still inform Niisitapi Traditional Knowledges. To the Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani First Nations, Napi is the "Old Man" who is wild, passionate, and curious. Napi falls under the Eurocentric narrative description of a 'Trickster', but the controversial and insensitive nature of the term fails to remain true to Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being. Trickster figures like Napi of the Niisitapi exist in Indigenous Traditions within the unique situational circumstances of their location, and it is important to maintain this connection to the Land and the Peoples they are born from. Libraries and information sciences can encourage the correction of this mishandling by not utilizing trickster figures as a pan-tribal narrative device, but by embodying the trickster figure in how they approach and share Indigenous Ways of Knowing.

The following material can help encourage program discussions and kickstart imaginative and respectful conversation regarding tricksters and the Niisitapi Ways of Knowing:

Development Questions

- o   What are the differences between these three stories?
- o   How does Napi behave in these stories, and conversely, how should he be behaving?
- o   This story was translated from its original language as faithfully as possible, does that knowledge affect how you read it? Did you notice any syntax or didactive differences?
- o   If you were to hear this story in person as they were meant to be Orally spoken, without the visual aids provided by the game, do you think you would perceive it differently?

Additional Resources for Comparison

- o   *Napi Legends* (2017) open resource PDF of Napi stories as told by Willie Whitefeathers, Kainai.
- o   *Napi and the Rock* (2017) graphic novel by Jason Eaglespeaker of the Kainai.
- o   *Napi and the Rock* (n.d.) open resource PDF as told by Stan Knowlton of the Piikani.

Further Trickster Reading

- o   First Rider, B. & Golebiowski, L. (2020, June 17). "Our record in stone": Blackfoot perspectives of Okotoks. Retroactive: Exploring Alberta's Past.
- o   Hinzo, A. M., & Clark, L. S. (2019). Digital survivance and Trickster humor: exploring visual and digital Indigenous epistemologies in the #NoDAPL movement. *Information, Communication & Society, 22*(6), 791–807.
- o   Innes, R. (2013). Elder Brother and the Law of the People: Contemporary Kinship and Cowessess First Nation. University of Manitoba Press.
- o   Morra, L. & D. Reder. (2010). *Troubling Tricksters: Revisioning Critical Conversations*. Wilfrid Laurier University Press