

sîkwahki

(In the Spring)

Sherryl Sewepagaham
Woodland Cree-Dene

♩. = 52 **With hope and anticipation**

mf 2nd time only

In the spring the earth will be more beautiful

Children's Choir
or Small Group

SOPRANO 1

SOPRANO 2

ALTO

sî - kwah - ki ay - i - wâk ta mî - yo - nâ - kwan as - kîy ta mî - yo - nâ - kwan

mf sing both times

mp sing both times **mf**

ay - i - wâk as - kîy ta mî - yo - nâ - kwan

mf sing both times

ah - ki

6

C.C.
or S.G.

S.1

S.2

A.

a - skîy sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki

nâ - kwan sî - kwah - ki ya - ha ya - ah

a - skîy sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki ya - ha ya - ah

as - kîy a - skîy sî - kwah - ki ya - ha ya - ah

rit. mp **A** ♩. = 52 **A tempo, with certainty**

mp **mf**

mp **mf**

mp **mf**

13 *mp*

S.1 ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha

S.2 ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha

A. ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha

T. *mf* The leaves will come out the rivers will flow the days will be longer in the spring
ta sa - ki-pa-kaw sî-pî-ya ta pim-co-wan-wah kin-wîs ta kîs-i-kaw sî-kwah-ki

B. *mf* ta sa - ki-pa-kaw sî-pî-ya ta pim-co-wan-wah kin-wîs ta kîs-i-kaw sî-kwah-ki

✓ = slight lift without a breath

19

C.C or S.G. *mf* the birds will fly back
pî-wiy-sak ta ta ko-pî - yâw-ak

S.1 ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha

S.2 ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha

A. ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha

T. *f* sî-kwah-ki pî-wiy-sak ta ta ko-pî - yâw-ak

B. *f* sî-kwah-ki pî-wiy-sak ta ta ko-pî - yâw-ak

PERUSAL SCORE ONLY - PLEASE DO NOT COPY

the days will be longer in the spring in the spring

B

C.C. or S.G. 25

kin-wis ta kî-si-kaw sî-kwah-ki sî-kwah-ki

S.1

ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ah

S.2

ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha

A.

ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ya - ha ah

T.

kin-wis ta kî-si-kaw sî-kwah-ki sî-kwah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah

B.

kin-wis ta kî-si-kaw sî-kwah-ki ah-ki wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah

mf *p*

in the spring the earth will be more beautiful will be more beautiful

31 *mf*

C.C. or S.G.

sî - kwah-ki ay - i - wâk ta mî-yo - nâ-kwan as - kîy ta-mî-yo - nâ - kwan

S.1

sî - kwah-ki ay - i - wâk ta mî-yo - nâ-kwan as - kîy ta-mî-yo - nâ - kwan

S.2

sî - kwah-ki ay - i - wâk ta mî-yo - nâ-kwan as - kîy ta-mî-yo - nâ - kwan

A.

ay - i - wâk sî-kwah-ki as - kîy ta-mî-yo-

T.

wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah

B.

wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah

mf *f* *mp* *mp*

36 *in the spring* *in the spring* *the earth*

C.C or S.G. a - skîy sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki ay - i - wâk

S.1 a - skîy sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki

S.2 a - skîy sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki ay - i - wâk

A. nâ - kwan as - kîy as - kîy ay - i -

T. wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah

B. wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah

41 *will be more beautiful* *the earth will be more beautiful* *in the spring*

C.C or S.G. ta mî-yo - nâ - kwan as - kîy ta mî-yo - nâ - kwan a - skîy sî - kwah -

S.1 sî - kwah - ta-mî-yo - nâ - kwan

S.2 ta mî-yo - nâ - kwan as - kîy ta mî-yo - nâ - kwan a - skîy sî - kwah -

A. wâk sî - kwah - ki as - kîy ta-mî-yo - nâ - kwan as - kîy

T. wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah

B. wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah

Rubato with curiosity



baby animals will be born
mf

46

C.C.
or S.G.

-ki sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki pis-kî - sak ta nih-ta

S.1

as - kîy sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki umm

S.2

-ki sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki umm

A.

as - kîy sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki umm

T.

wey - ee - yah sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki umm

B.

wey - ee - yah sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki umm

rit. mp *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

53

C.C.
or S.G.

wi-ko-wak pis-kî sak ta nih-ta - wi-ko-wak ta nih-ta-wi-ko-wak

S.1

pp

S.2

pp

A.

pp

T.

pp

B.

pp

mp *pp* *pp* *pp* *pp*

D ♩ = 54 A tempo with joyous celebration

59 *f* 2nd time only

C.C. or S.G. yah - wey-ee - yah-wey-yo yah - wey-ee - yah wey-ee-yah wey-ee-yah wey-ee-yah wey - hey

S.1 *f* 2nd time only

sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki ta mî-yo - nâ - kwan sî - kwah - ki

S.2 *f* sing both times

yah - wey-ee - yah-wey-yo yah - wey-ee - yah wey-ee-yah wey-ee-yah wey-ee-yah wey - hey

A. *f* sing both times

yah - wey-ee - yah-wey-yo yah - wey-ee - yah wey-ee-yah wey-ee-yah wey-ee-yah wey - hey

T. *f* sing both times

yah - wey-ee - yah-wey-yo yah - wey-ee - yah wey-ee-yah wey-ee-yah wey-ee-yah wey - hey

B. *f* sing both times

yah - wey-ee - yah-wey-yo yah - wey-ee - yah wey-ee-yah wey-ee-yah wey-ee-yah wey - hey

67

C.C. or S.G. *mf*

yah - wey - ee - yah-wey-yo yah - wey - ee - yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah yah

S.1 *mf*

yah - wey - ee - yah-wey-yo yah - wey - ee - yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah yah

S.2 *mf*

yah - wey - ee - yah-wey-yo yah - wey - ee - yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah yah

A. *mf*

yah - wey - ee - yah-wey-yo yah - wey - ee - yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah yah

T. *mf*

yah - wey - ee - yah-wey-yo yah - wey - ee - yah wey - ee-yah wey - ee-yah

B.

yah - wey - ee - yah-wey-yo yah - wey - ee - yah wey - ee-yah

75 *mp* *in the spring* *poco rit.*

C.C. or S.G. *mp* *p*

S.1 *mp*

S.2 *mp* *p*

sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki

sî - kwah - ki

sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki sî - kwah - ki

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The Story of the Song

After enduring the harsh and challenging winter of Northern Alberta, Canada, the arrival of spring was a time of joyous renewal and celebration. As the earth thawed and the ice on the rivers and lakes receded, the melting snow nourished the once-dry ground, giving life to new growth. During the long winter months, food and essential supplies would dwindle, but with the warmth of spring came the opportunity to harvest the bounty of the land and waters. Moose, buffalo, rabbits, ducks, chickens, beavers, bears, otters, and muskrats were hunted and trapped, while nets were set out for fish. The return of migratory birds heralded a season of abundance, and the birth of young animals added to the sense of renewal. For the Cree people, this time marked a special gathering to celebrate the return of warmth, the success of their hunts, and the blessings of the land. They would come together for a feast, dancing to the rhythm of the Tea Dance drums and singing songs that lasted deep into the night, celebrating for two or three days. This gathering was not only a reunion of families and friends but also an opportunity for young adults to form new connections and relationships. The women of the community would skillfully craft moccasins and clothing from the hides of the animals they had harvested, while the men would trade animal pelts with the Hudson's Bay Company, which operated on the Little Red River Cree Nation reserve. The sale of these animal pelts provided much-needed income, enabling the people to purchase cloth, canvas, sugar, and flour; materials to make colorful clothing, teepees for shelter, and supplies for the year ahead. The arrival of spring marked the beginning of preparations for the summer season, with a focus on the coming fall and the readiness for the next winter. My people, known as sîpîwînowak, or "river people," lived along the mighty Peace River, where the rhythm of nature and the seasons shaped our lives, traditions, and survival.



Sherryl Sewepac (Cree-Dene), a proud member of the Little Red River Cree Nation in northern Alberta, Canada, is an accomplished composer, educator, and singer deeply committed to Indigenous song practices and language revitalization. She is currently pursuing Doctoral studies in Ethnomusicology at the University of British Columbia, of which she holds a 2024 Vanier Scholar title, and was awarded a SSHRC Doctoral Award and a UBC Indigenous Graduate Fellowship award in all the same academic year. Sherryl holds degrees in Education, Music Therapy, as well as a Master of Education focused on Indigenous curriculum and pedagogy. Her research examines how Cree song practices impact language reclamation, and she advocates for the resurgence of nêhiyawêwin (Cree language) songs sung by women—work that contributes to her ongoing efforts in music education, research, the choral arts, and community song revitalization. Sherryl's work also centres nêhiyawêwin through Standard Roman Orthography (SRO) to establish linguistic sovereignty within her choral compositions and infusing Indigenous epistemologies of sound and voice creating a distinct Indigenous sonic presence that disrupts Eurocentric choral aesthetics.