

BENEVOLENCE

by Kevin Matthew Wong



**GREEN
THUMB
THEATRE**



TOURING PROFESSIONAL THEATRE
FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES
SINCE **1975**

RESOURCE AND ACTIVITY GUIDE

www.greenthumb.bc.ca | touring@greenthumb.bc.ca | (604) 254-4055

Green Thumb Theatre acknowledges the support of



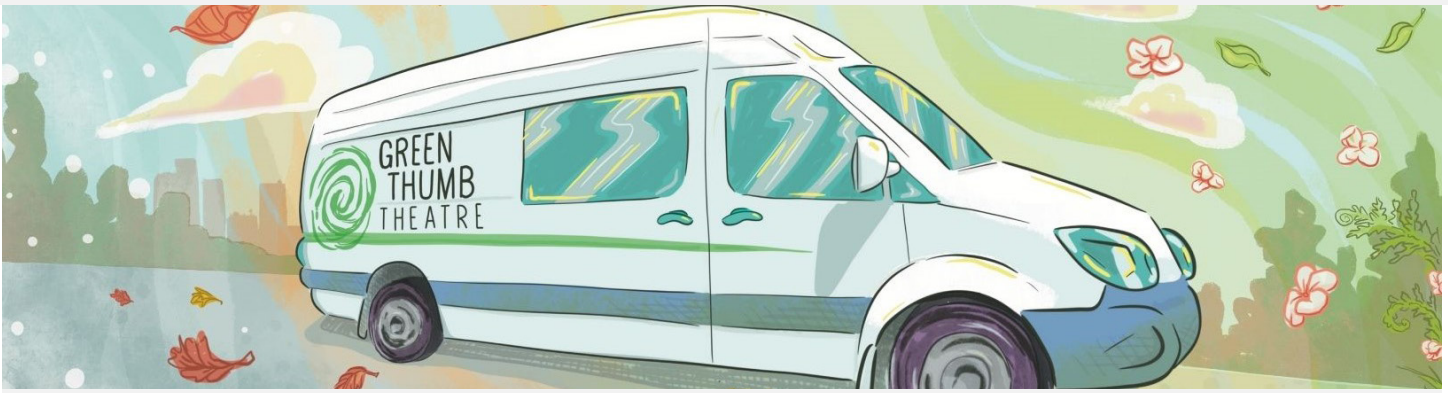
Canada Council
for the Arts
Conseil des arts
du Canada



BRITISH
COLUMBIA
ARTS COUNCIL
An agency of the Province of British Columbia



metrovancouver



Green Thumb's offices are located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. As a touring company, Green Thumb Theatre's work often takes place throughout the traditional homelands of most of the Indigenous Nations and cultures across British Columbia and beyond.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Green Thumb Theatre is committed to telling stories that spark empathy and provoke critical thinking and dialogue. This resource and activity guide is intended to help educators facilitate classroom discussions before and after the performance and to delve deeper into the themes of the show. This guide is authored by Jse-Che Lam, a 1.5 generation Chinese-Canadian writer and educator based in Toronto.

ABOUT GREEN THUMB THEATRE

Founded in 1975, Green Thumb Theatre creates, produces, and tours plays that explore social issues relevant to the lives of children, youth, and young adults. Green Thumb provides theatre that celebrates the language and stories of today's generation and culture to stimulate empathy, debate, and critical thinking. Green Thumb has performed for over 4 million people and has toured to every province and two territories in Canada, 36 US States, and 11 countries overseas. Original plays commissioned by Green Thumb have been translated into 9 languages and produced by more than 200 theatre companies worldwide. Green Thumb Theatre is a registered charitable not-for-profit organization. www.greenthumb.bc.ca

HOW TO SUPPORT GREEN THUMB THEATRE

The Green Thumb Players Society (dba Green Thumb Theatre) is a registered charitable not-for-profit organization (Charitable Registration: #118947662RR0001). Visit our website to learn more about how you can contribute.

www.greenthumb.bc.ca/support/donate

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE	
2	ABOUT THIS GUIDE AND GREEN THUMB THEATRE
4	CAST & CREATIVE TEAMS
5	ABOUT BENEVOLENCE
	PREPARING TO WATCH A SHOW
6 & 7	A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHINESE IN CANADA
8 & 9	TERMINOLOGY RELATED TO THE PLAY
10	PRE-PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
11 & 12	PRE-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY #1: FOUR CORNERS
13 & 14	PRE-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY #2: BUILDING A COMMUNITY
15	POST-PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
16 & 17	POST-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY #1: CHARACTER MAPS
18	POST-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY #2: JIGSAW SHARING
19 & 20	POST-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY #3: PERSONAL SHARING
21 & 22	POST-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY #4: WHAT'S YOUR STORY
23	EXIT SLIP TEMPLATE (for Pre-Performance Activity #2)
24	CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS
25 & 26	RESOURCES
27	GET IN TOUCH!



CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

Kevin

Kevin Nguyen

PRODUCTION TEAM

Playwright
Director
Stage Manager
Set and Props Designer
Sound Designer
Projection Designer
Dramaturgy
Study Guide Author
Promotional Illustrations
Study Guide Design and Layout

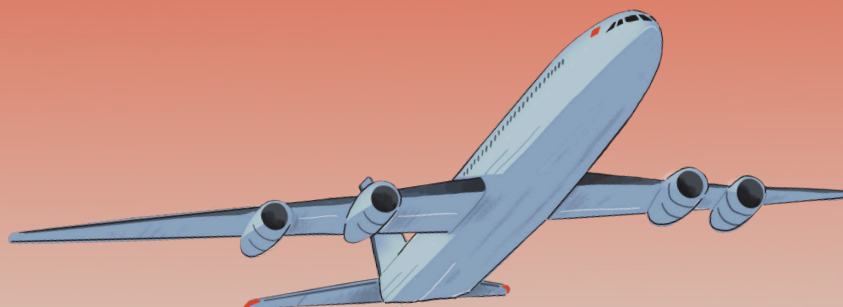
Kevin Matthew Wong
Chris Lam*
Dayna Horn
Sam Cheng
Chris Ross-Ewart
June Hsu
Anita Rochon
Jse-Che Lam
Grae Salisbury
The Art Left Creative Group

GREEN THUMB THEATRE LEADERSHIP & STAFF

Artistic Director
General Manager
Production & Facilities Manager
Tour & Sales Manager
Company Manager
Accountant
Development & Outreach Officer

Anita Rochon
Shannon Maung
Liam Kearns
Jenn Hogg
Tim Carlson
Susan Cai
Stephanie Durán

*Appears courtesy of the Canadian Actor's Equity Association



ABOUT THE PLAY



BENEVOLENCE **BY KEVIN MATTHEW WONG**

To be benevolent is to live by being kind, generous and supportive of others. This is an approach to life that helped Chinese immigrants adapt and endure the challenges of being newcomers in a country that was not welcoming. Benevolence created a sense of belonging and a community for people who left their land in search of opportunity, security and stability.

What does it mean to belong? What parts of our identity do we inherit, and which do we create for ourselves? Kevin has always wondered about his roots. He is Hakka-Chinese (客家)—he thinks. When he receives

an unexpected call asking him to take on a project about Hakka identity, Kevin is launched into a compelling journey, uncovering stories he never expected to find.

Benevolence is a multi-layered Chinese-Canadian story that explores migration, identity, and cultural inheritance. Culturally specific yet widely resonant, the play speaks to young people navigating hybrid identities and questions of belonging. Kevin's search invites students to reflect on how history, family, and personal choice shape who we are, and who we are becoming.

PREPARING TO WATCH THE SHOW

Sometimes, when young people attend a live theatrical performance for the first time, they may not realize how different it is from watching a movie or a television show. You can help them prepare for a live theatre experience by:

- Giving them a chance to use the bathroom or get a drink of water before the show begins.
- Reminding them that photos and recordings of any kind are not allowed.
- Reminding them that the actor(s) can see when they're moving around or hear if they're speaking during the performance.
- Letting them know there will be time to ask questions of the performers at the end of the show.
- Encouraging them to be active listeners by asking them to focus not only on the story, but the set, costumes, and sound design.
- Including the questions and activities from this study guide in your discussions before and after the show.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHINESE IN CANADA

1788

First documented arrival of Chinese in Nuu-chah-nulth territory, the west coast of Vancouver Island. These Chinese migrants were part of Captain John Meares' expedition and helped establish a fur trading fort in Nootka Sound.

1858

Gold is discovered in Fraser River Valley. Chinese arrive from San Francisco and subsequently from Hong Kong. Due to labour shortages, Chinese labourers were hired to build roads, drain swamps and perform labour-intensive tasks. When the gold rush dried up by 1865, these migrant workers were blamed for stealing jobs because they worked for low wages.

1872

British Columbia joined Confederation in 1871. The following year, Chinese and Indigenous peoples were denied the right to vote in provincial elections.

1881

Insufficient labour sources meant that the only way to finish the Canadian Pacific Railway would be to import Chinese workers. Sir John A. Macdonald knew it would be unconscionable if the railway was not completed. Despite anti-Chinese sentiment, Macdonald was aware that vast numbers of cheap migrant labour were necessary.

1885

The federal government introduced a \$50 Head Tax on most Chinese immigrants entering Canada. It was raised to \$100 by legislation passed in 1900 and to \$500 in 1903—an enormous sum intended to discourage Chinese immigration.

1923

The Chinese Immigration Act, commonly known as The Chinese Exclusion Act meant that almost no person of Chinese descent was allowed to enter Canada. Only a very small number of people in narrowly defined categories were permitted to enter. This policy existed until 1947. One of the consequences of the Act was family separation and also so-called Bachelor Societies where Chinese men remained unmarried because men outnumbered women in their communities.

1939

With the outbreak of war in Europe, many Chinese in Canada tried to enlist. They were unsuccessful because government officials anticipated that this would lead to demands for enfranchisement. When the conflict intensified with Japan's participation in the war, Chinese recruits were used to fight behind enemy lines in Asia.

1947

The federal government repealed the Chinese Immigration Act. The change came after years of advocacy by Chinese Canadians and in a postwar environment in which Canada's racially discriminatory laws were increasingly at odds with the human-rights principles it was promoting internationally.

1957

Jean Lumb was the only woman among 40 delegates who lobbied Prime Minister John Diefenbaker for changes to immigration legislation and a push for family reunification. One of the consequences of The Chinese Exclusion Act was a decades-long separation of families between China and Canada.

1962

Immigration requirements now focused on skills as the main criteria for immigrants. Overtly discriminatory policies were eliminated.

1967

The Federal Government now broadened their scope of potential immigrants to Canada. Skills and academic qualifications diversified the pool of newcomers to the country.

2006

Prime Minister Stephen Harper formally apologized in the House of Commons for the Chinese Head Tax and the subsequent exclusion of Chinese immigrants from Canada.



Chinese labourers at work on the Canadian Pacific Railway in Mountain 1881| Credit: Boorne and May / Library and Archives Canada



Chinese immigrant, BC. 1885
Credit: Library and Archives Canada



Chinese camp (Canadian Pacific Railway), Kamloops, British Columbia, 1886
© Edouard Deville / Library and Archives Canada

TERMINOLOGY RELATED TO THE PLAY

ANCESTRAL VILLAGE

This is the place where one's ancestors lived for successive generations. Chinese people identify themselves through the land of their ancestors, specifically the village where they originated. Upon migrating, overseas Chinese would live many years away from family but would always return to visit relatives in their home villages upon returning.

BENEVOLENCE/BENEVOLENT SOCIETIES

Extension of mutual aid to others in the community because systemic barriers exclude folks from receiving bank loans and settlement support. Early Chinatowns revolved around benevolent societies that connected newly arrived Chinese with housing, employment, and loans. This self-sufficiency existed because traditional support systems were cut off to the Chinese. Once people became established, they would pay it forward by helping other newcomers in the community.

CHEE GAH NIN (自己人)

The Chinese-Hakka phrase, "One of us," (自己人) conveys belonging and community, with an emphasis on sharing a collective identity regardless if there is a familial connection or not.

CONFUCIANISM

Confucian philosophy continues to influence Chinese society today. Confucius believed that a person's identity is determined by their relationships to others. With every relationship comes a set of rules, hierarchies and structures that establish the rules of conduct. Much of this is shaped by gender, birth order, family relationship, and age. Filial piety, respect for elders and ancestral veneration are perhaps the most striking qualities of Confucianism.

DIASPORA

This is a population of people who have spread across the globe through migration—whether forced or voluntary—and whose descendants continue to identify with their country of origin while living abroad.

ETHNIC GROUPS IN CHINA

The largest ethnic group in China is Han with 92% of its population identifying as such. China recognizes 56 ethnic groups in the country though there could be as many as 200. The Hakka are considered to be approximately 3% of the population.

GUESTHOOD

This concept of guesthood incorporates several key elements to being a good guest or someone who is temporarily in a space that is not their own. Often mentioned in sociology, the state of guesthood includes humility, reciprocity, respect for others as well as the land.

HAKKA

The Hakka (客家), literally translated as “guest families,” are a Chinese cultural and linguistic group with a long history of migration. Over many centuries, the Hakka migrated from the northern regions of China to southern provinces, most likely to escape warfare or aggression from invaders during the 4th and 9th centuries. In Canada, the estimated population of Hakka people numbers 12,000.

JOOK SING

Jook sing (竹升) is a critical and derogatory term that refers to first-generation or Canadian-born Chinese (CBCs) who are caught between cultures. They are called jook sing because they lack strong connections to Chinese language, culture and traditions. In its literal sense, jook sing means hollow bamboo.

RED POCKETS

Red pockets or envelopes are also known as “lai see” or “hung bao.” They contain a token sum of money and are handed out for special occasions such as birthdays or as a way to thank someone for completing an important task.

TAM KUNG TEMPLE

Tam Kung Temple, established in 1876, is the oldest Chinese temple in Canada. The temple is under the guardianship of the Yen Wo Society, a non-profit organization founded by Victoria’s Chinese Hakka community in 1905. A fire broke out at the temple on June 15, 2026, and the building is currently closed while damage is assessed and restoration work is planned. The historic wooden statue of Tam Kung survived the fire.

TSIUNG TSIN

Tsiung Tsin is a Hakka community centre that promotes and supports activities to engage new generations while also providing a gathering place for elders who are the keepers of knowledge and history. These were separate because Hakka newcomers faced discrimination from other ethnic Chinese.

PRE-PERFORMANCE QUESTIONS

These discussion questions aim to stimulate creative and critical thinking while providing an opportunity to hypothesize about the production:

1. Discuss the emotional impact of the question, “Where are you from?” In what way would this be both a question that was sparked by curiosity as well as one that assumes that people do not belong?
2. Canadians have developed a greater awareness about how we can be better, more responsible guests on this land, especially with the Calls to Action noted in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s final report. List FIVE examples of good guesthood and then explain whether this is actually being done in Canada.
3. How do expectations from others determine how our identity takes shape?
4. Is there any particular person or key life event that has significantly influenced who you are right now or who you aspire to be
5. Many Canadians describe themselves using hyphenated identities. (e.g. Chinese-Canadian, Irish-Canadian, Syrian-Canadian, etc.) How is this a celebration of one’s cultural connections? How may this complicate how people see Canadians?

PRE-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1

FOUR CORNERS: SOME THEMES IN 'BENEVOLENCE' (ALL GRADES)

Preparing for a discussion: Prepare the four corners in the classroom with signs representing the four choices students can use to express their opinion (e.g., strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree).

If desired, prepare a handout for students to record their initial responses, reasoning, and evidence before they move into their corner to discuss with their group. The handout may also include space for students to write down new ideas or reasons from members of their group. Additionally, students may use this document to reflect on the discussion after listening to other groups' opinions and record whether their views have changed and why or why not.

Statements:

1. First-generation kids have a responsibility to keep the culture, language and traditions alive.
2. We have to know who we are and where we come from in order to understand our identity and sense of purpose.
3. Being a good guest is more important than being a good host.
4. A young person's growth requires risk-taking, vulnerability, and recognizing opportunity.
5. Knowing how to speak the language of one's ancestors is an important aspect of cultural identity.

How this works:

1. In each corner of your classroom, post a sign with one of four opinions students can have (e.g., strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree) about the statements you wish to use.
2. Allow a limit of 1-2 minutes for everyone to think about how they wish to respond. When they go to their corner, students should be prepared to discuss their choice.
3. Instruct students to move to the corner of the room that corresponds with their choice.
4. Once everyone has taken their place, provide 3-5 minutes to discuss their position and share evidence with others in this group.

5. One spokesperson from each group will summarize and present their members' discussion points to the class.
6. All groups will have a chance to share.
7. If any student changes their position based on evidence they hear, they can join a new group. You can ask these students to discuss why their opinion shifted.

Debrief: Provide an opportunity for a larger group discussion. This is a good exercise in examining how perspectives and opinions can change through discussion and exploration of new evidence.

Adapt the activity: If you want to structure this activity more, here are some questions to help guide students through Four Corners. After allowing a limit of 1-2 minutes for everyone to think about how they wish to respond to a statement, ask:

- What are the reasons you have for taking this position? (Individually, rather than one spokesperson from each group summarising/presenting the groups' discussion points).
- After discussing with others who also chose this position, did you gain any new insights? OR did your position shift?

ACTIVITY #2

BUILDING A COMMUNITY: SHARED EXPERIENCES (ALL GRADES)

Purpose: This community-building activity encourages students to get acquainted with others individually while also highlighting what they may have in common. A number of these statements are tied in with the content of the play.

Instructions: Have students form a circle. Explain that you will first read a series of statements and then give people a chance to move into the circle if they relate to or agree with the statement. Ask students to form the circle again after each statement. Read the next statement.

Suggested statements:

- I grew up with grandparents in my life.
- I speak a language other than English at home.
- I was born outside of Canada.
- I am a first-generation or second-generation Canadian.
- I have had people within my family express disappointment in my inability to speak our language.
- I have had older people encourage me to take a greater interest in my cultural community.
- I know how to be welcoming to others so that they feel like they belong.
- I think about how society treats marginalized people.
- I have encountered discrimination because of my identity.

Debriefing the activity:

1. At which points did you feel a sense of belonging with others in the room?
2. Was there a particular statement that resonated with you?
3. Did you, at any point, feel like you would be standing alone forever? What made you think this way?

Continued on next page...

Adapt the activity: Pair-Share

1. **Think:** Have students write a response to one of the statements. They can also illustrate their response, if they prefer.
2. **Pair:** In pairs, students share their responses with a partner. (The partners do not need to share the same statement)
3. **Square:** Have the pair find another pair to make a "square." This group of four will take turns to share their points in this new configuration.
4. **Big Share:** Bring the class back together and ask the squares to report the highlights of their conversations.
5. **Exit Slip:** a short, informal assessment given to students at the very end of a lesson to check what they have learned before they leave. The Exit Slip template can be found on Page 23 the end of this guide.

Extend the activity: Ask students to complete the statement

A. Belonging in my culture looks like this

B. My family decided to leave our country of origin because

C. An older person can make a difference in a young person's life by

D. Doing something challenging can be

E. I feel connected to my community because

POST-PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These discussion questions are designed to encourage reflection and deeper analysis of the performance. Students should be encouraged to think critically about the characters, themes and key moments of the production.

1. How does the play explore the importance of cultural identity?
2. Kevin encounters pushback from George, who feels that Kevin is too far removed from his Hakka ancestry to be speaking for his elders. When asked if he is “Hakka enough,” is this a challenge to explore and understand his identity, or is this intended as an insult because he is disconnected?
3. In what ways can you relate to Kevin’s identity crisis? How important is it to your family that you have a strong connection with your cultural ancestry?
How important is it to you (at this time)?
4. Which events in the play best illustrate diaspora, community and place?
5. Kevin initially rejects Sonia Chin’s invitation to create a show for the Hakka conference. He admits that he does not see how he fits into the world of the Hakka. Discuss how Kevin eventually makes peace with how he does belong?
6. Kevin opens up the show with an offer of friendship and hospitality. What does that say about building community and capacity for understanding? For cross-cultural interactions? What are some of the responsibilities that we have as guests on this land?

POST-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1

CHARACTER MAPS: SHOWING HOW CHARACTERS CONNECT & GROW (ALL GRADES)

All drama depends on conflicts between characters. Characters are complex. Others will make demands on them. Their own needs and wants will create tension in their relationships with others. Understanding what motivates and drives a character to act becomes the most compelling part of watching a play.

The task: Create a character map after watching 'Benevolence'. Students can work in partners to brainstorm ideas for their character map. Your students can decide how their character maps will be created: using paper, pencil and markers OR with digital tools.

Extension task: Write about how audiences witness Kevin's growth throughout the play.

Before you start: Think about...

- How you want to structure the character map.
- Which characters should be included?
- Who should be at the centre of the character map?
- What connects the characters to each other?
- Include a line of text or dialogue when you create your character map. A selection of excerpts from the play has been provided on the next page.

Create your map:

1. Identify the key characters that you wish to include in the character map.
2. What are your observations about the relationship between the characters?
3. Describe the attitude that characters have towards each other.
4. Is there any subtext (hidden or unspoken meaning/intent) that is evident in the quotation used?

Scripted dialogue on next page...

SONIA

You, my dear boy, are going to write and perform a script to explain our journeys to those countries and - importantly - what it means to be a Hakka!

KEVIN

*Wow! Wow... uh... "what it means to be a Hakka?"
I don't know much about "the Hakka," Sonia...*

I imagine 3000 Hakka nerds gathered in a theatre. And I picture myself on stage... I feel their eyes piercing right through me – judging me as another one of those kids who's lost their culture, some kid who's never known it at all... a fraud... a joke.

SONIA

*Unless there are younger Hakka like you to carry on, I...Kevin,
I don't think we'll be here in a few years...*

KEVIN

My grandmother is so many things. She's the glue to my dad's side of the family, and it feels like she's my last, best connection to... something.

Some part of me. The Hakka part, maybe?

*Have you ever felt that sense of dread...
like you were just about to lose something dear.*

*I was struck by the fact that those early Chinese decided that one of the antidotes to a world of discrimination and difficulty was... benevolence?
Kindness? Really?*

SONIA

George, you know there have been entire generations – afraid or ashamed – of being Hakka. And so you know what happens to generations that follow them? They are afraid and ashamed too – not of being Hakka, but of not knowing what being Hakka means!

Here's what I know: for 2000 years, we, Hakka, had to figure out what we could keep and what we needed to leave behind in order to survive... yes?! Right. And in each new place we had to figure out what we could take, without taking too much...without overtaking those there before us. We know what it means to be guests. I think we know what it means to be good guests too.

You may feel grief at the things you will never know. I understand. And yet I know, dear one, that you will feel great joy at the stories you've yet to write! The revelations you've yet to uncover!

ACTIVITY #2

JIGSAW SHARING: OPENING UP ISSUES & THEMES IN 'BENEVOLENCE' (GRADES 8 TO 10)

Seeing a play and knowing the social, historical or cultural background enriches the work and deepens the connection between the audience and the work. In this activity, students will work on a jigsaw activity to explore some of these elements.

This strategy involves two stages.

- **Stage 1:** Students are grouped into Expert Groups where they become knowledgeable on one particular topic or theme.
- **Stage 2:** The Expert Groups meet with others to share their expertise.

Instructions: Divide the class into small groups of 3-5 and assign a different "jigsaw piece" of the topic. Allow enough time for the expert groups to develop their expertise by brainstorming, developing ideas, and, if time permits, researching their topic.

Once the expert groups of students have developed expertise in their topic, shuffle the groups so that the members of each new group have a different area of expertise. Students will then take turns sharing their expertise with their new group members, thereby creating a completed "puzzle" of knowledge about the main topic.

Stage 1 – Expert Groups: All groups should have approximately the same number of students, aiming for one group per topic from the list below. Each of these groups in the first round of the jigsaw is an Expert Group.

Expert Groups will choose or be assigned one topic from the list provided. These topics are issues and themes explored in the play. Each group will have a few minutes to look up information on their topic. Together, they will choose **THREE** key topic points to share with another group. Emphasize that everyone must be able to confidently address these points solo and in their own words.

Once finished, each person in the expert group should choose a number, starting from 1. They must remember their number for Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Sharing Groups: Students form new groups based on their chosen number (1, 2, 3, etc.) These numbers determine their Sharing Groups. Each Sharing Group member will have a different topic to teach their group members. Please ask a student in each group to act as a timekeeper to ensure that each person has sufficient time to share their topic's three points.

Topics:

Chinatown, Victoria BC | Chinese Benevolent Association | Chinese Exclusion Act (1923)
Chinese Lion Dance | First generation, 1.5 generation and second generation | Guesthood
Hakka-Chinese | The Head Tax | Tam Kung Temple

ACTIVITY #3

PERSONAL SHARING: GUESTHOOD & PLACE (GRADES 9 TO 12)

In Chinese culture, one's ancestral home is more than just a hometown. This is the starting point of one's origin story, the place where one can trace their lineage. Because China was an agrarian society for a long time, people were deeply connected to the land.

What is intriguing about the Hakka is that they are known as "guest families" or 客家. They are nomadic people who migrated from Northern China to the South, on the move because of displacement from war or uncertainty.

'Benevolence' explores this through the perspective of its protagonist. Kevin, a young filmmaker, develops an understanding of how his Hakka identity is tied to his life as a second-generation Chinese-Canadian. In this assignment, students will explore the notion of guesthood, place and identity.

The task: Using the information gathered through students exploring the questions below, students can write, illustrate or record how this place has shaped their identity. Provide students with the opportunity to share this with others. Emphasize that the ultimate goal is for everyone to observe and appreciate how place and guesthood are perceived by others in their classroom community.

1. Do you have a place that is significant to you?

Students gather images of their place, draw their place or describe their place.

2. Connections to my place:

Why does this place hold such special meaning for me? When did I first begin developing a connection to this place? What does the place provide to me (prompts: sanctuary, escape, recreation, nostalgia, peace)? What do I do to ensure I am able to enjoy this place? What kinds of feelings are evoked when I am able to be in this place?

3. Perspective:

How does this place change as my perspective changes? Will this place feel different to me five years from now? Ten years from now? What kinds of changes can I anticipate happening to this place or to me in the future?

4. The History:

What do you know about the history of this place? Is it an established history or is it fairly new? Are there any controversies associated with this place?

5. The People:

Describe three individuals who also have a strong connection to this place. Describe these people as well as their connections with this place as well as with each other. Have these people been part of a positive or negative experience that you associate with this place?

6. Guesthood:

Think about the definition of guesthood (prompt: being thoughtful and intentional that we are visitors and how our actions must show respect and reciprocity). How do you practice the concept of guesthood when you are in your special place?

Adapt the activity: The final product can be a slide deck with images, a podcast with sound enhancements, or a narrative essay.

ACTIVITY #4

WHAT'S YOUR STORY: WRITING A ONE-PERSON SHOW (GRADES 10 TO 12)

Why are solo shows appealing?

One type of writing that has become very popular today is the autobiography, memoir, or solo theatre show. Personal stories are compelling because they are real and engage people with their humanity. Solo shows like 'Benevolence' are special because the artist successfully taps into the heart of what we need to feel a sense of belonging and a sense of pride in our identity.

The task: You will create a short solo show about a significant moment in your life. Consider what you will write about or include. What incidents would you share about your life to give audiences an idea of who you are?

A positive or happy event might include: your first day at school, a special moment or occasion, a realization about yourself, a funny situation, or an emotional moment such as receiving special recognition for an achievement. **A negative or sad event might include:** a frightening moment, the end of a friendship, or a lesson learned about a situation.

Pre-writing: (the brainstorm)

- Setting (time and place)
- A plot (a beginning, a middle, and an end)
- central character and distinctive supporting characters (especially important in a one-person show)
- An inciting incident: this is a moment that must grab the audience's attention
- As many specific details as possible about the event (who, what, where, when, why, and how)
- The writer's understanding of why this event still remains significant now

Developing your characters:

- Begin with the main character: consider their thoughts, mannerisms, gestures, speech and movement
- Secondary characters: these characters contribute to making the story more believable. They may be characters who exist only through flashback, dialogue or offstage
- For all characters, aim to develop depth through creating complexities in these individuals

Organizing your story:

- Map out your story so that the audience can follow along
- Consider the chronological order you wish to use
- Think about transitions and flow
- Take into account how to most effectively develop the arc of the story, remembering that each scene needs to move the piece ahead

Write and rehearse:

- Test out the story by writing and rehearsing aloud
- If you do not feel ready to workshop it with another classmate-actor, record yourself and listen to the audio to figure out how to revise and rewrite

PRE-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY #2

EXIT SLIP TEMPLATE

NAME: _____ EXIT SLIP	
3	Things I Learned Today ...
2	Things I Found Interesting ...
1	A Question I Would Like to Ask ...

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

GRADE AND SUBJECT

	ENGLISH STUDIES 8	CREATIVE WRITING 12	SOCIAL STUDIES 10	COMPARATIVE CULTURES 12	DRAMA 12
BIG IDEAS	Exploring stories and other texts helps us understand ourselves and make connections to others and to the world.	The exploration of text and story deepens our understanding of diverse, complex ideas about identity, others, and the world. Texts are socially, culturally, geographically, and historically constructed.	Worldviews lead to different perspectives and ideas about developments in Canadian society. Historical and contemporary injustices challenge the narrative and identity of Canada as an inclusive, multicultural society.	Understanding the diversity and complexity of cultural expressions in one culture enhances our understanding of other cultures.	Traditions, perspectives, worldviews, and stories can be shared through scriptwriting and directing. Scriptwriters and directors are influenced by history, culture, and community.
CURRICULAR COMPETENCY	Construct meaningful personal connections between self, text, and world Respond to text in personal, creative, and critical ways	Identify and understand the role of personal, social, and cultural contexts, values, and perspectives in texts Transform ideas and information to create original texts, using various genres, forms, structures, and styles	Assess the significance of people, places, events, or developments, and compare varying perspectives on their significance at particular times and places, and from group to group (significance) Explain and infer different perspectives on past or present people, places, issues, or events by considering prevailing norms, values, worldviews, and beliefs (perspective)	Use Social Studies inquiry processes and skills to ask questions; gather, interpret, and analyze ideas; and communicate findings and decisions Analyze continuities and changes in diverse cultures at different times and places (continuity and change)	Intentionally select and combine dramatic elements, principles, materials, processes, and technologies Demonstrate creativity and innovation through scriptwriting and directing

RESOURCES

Benevolence – Tam Kung Temple Documentary:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KaKIWAekYn0>

This is a short documentary made by Kevin Matthew Wong about the Tam Kung Temple and members of the Yen Wo Society of Victoria. The documentary shows the deep connections felt by the congregants who visit the temple. Tam Kung was a seafarer deity who protected those who travelled the sea or fished as their livelihood.

Big Fight in Little Chinatown:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YlcKYLRX-YQ>

Across the globe, Chinatowns are under threat of disappearing and along with them, the rich history of communities who fought from the margins for a place to belong.

This documentary is set against the backdrop of the COVID pandemic and an unprecedented rise in anti-Asian racism, Big Fight in Little Chinatown takes us into the lives of residents, businesses and community organizers whose neighbourhoods are facing active erasure, and who collectively fight to save Chinatowns across North America. (*Content warnings: profane language*)

Everything Will Be:

https://www.nfb.ca/film/everything_will_be/

Everything Will Be captures a significant moment of time in Vancouver's Chinatown, with the condo developments and new, non-Chinese businesses. The documentary follows a year in the life of several individuals, including a 90-year-old Chinese newspaper street vendor, a second-generation tea shop owner, and a prominent real estate developer with interests in Chinatown. **Content warning: This film contains scenes of nudity and/or sexuality. Viewer discretion is advised.** (Timestamp: 32:02–33:34)

Tarragon Theatre Talk:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6XV8_-ptpg

Pre-show talk about the making of 'Benevolence' with Kevin Matthew Wong (playwright), Yizhou Zhang (dramaturg), and Jeff Ho (associate artistic director). The three artists discuss the key themes of 'Benevolence', specifically how the framework of guesthood provides an entry point to how we explore our identity and place in the world.

A Brief Chronology of Chinese Canadian History:

https://www.sfu.ca/chinese-canadian-history/chart_en.html

This timeline begins with the arrival of the Chinese on the West Coast of Canada in 1788. The chronology shows the history of migration, exclusion, acceptance and resilience.

Tam Kung Temple:

<https://tamkungtemple.ca/>

This is the official website for the Tam Kung Temple, Canada's oldest Chinese temple. Established in 1876, the temple is located on the top floor of the Yen Wo Society. The Tam Kung statue was brought by an early Chinese migrant from Guangdong province who believed that this deity would protect him during the journey by sea.

Voices Into Action:

<https://www.voicesintoaction.ca/lessons/unit6/overview/>

An educational platform offering interactive modules detailing how personal identity connects directly to a sense of national and cultural belonging in Canada.

The Government of Canada Youth Digital Gateway:

<https://youth-jeunesse.service.canada.ca/en>

The central federal node for young Canadians. It links to diverse leadership programs, exchanges, and heritage grants through Canadian Heritage aimed at increasing cross-cultural understanding and a sense of shared belonging.

Canadian Multicultural Education Foundation:

<https://www.cmef.ca/>

A NFP society to promote public awareness of the opportunities and benefits of an evolving multicultural society in Canada.

Empowering the Spirit:

<https://empoweringthespirit.ca/>

Site with support for all levels within school jurisdictions to increase awareness, understanding and application of First Nations, Métis and Inuit histories, perspectives and ways of knowing for the purpose of implementing treaty and residential schools education and Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action for education.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS & OPINIONS!

We love getting mail and your students' feedback!

GREEN THUMB THEATRE

Mailing address:

5522 McKinnon Street, Vancouver, BC, V5R 0B6

Email: info@greenthumb.bc.ca

Phone: (604) 254 -4055

WRITE A LETTER!

Ask your students to write us a letter/email to share their thoughts and opinions on the performance of **BENEVOLENCE** by **Kevin Matthew Wong**. Send it to us at Green Thumb!

WRITE A REVIEW!

Have your students write a theatre review about this performance of **BENEVOLENCE**. Send it in to us at Green Thumb! A theatre review usually includes the following:

- A brief summary of the story
- A comment on the quality of the play itself
- A description of the costumes and set and a comment on whether these were interesting and appropriate
- A comment on the actors' portrayal of the characters and on the director's skill at pulling the whole show together

There are many examples of reviews in newspapers and online that you could use to introduce the concept and format of a theatre review. For help getting started, take a look at "How to Write a Play Review" on Wiki How: <https://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Play-Review>

CHECK US OUT ONLINE!

 /greenthumbtheatre

 @greenthumbtheatre

 @greenthumbtheatre

 @greenthumbtheatre

WWW.GREENTHUMB.BC.CA