

I Grew Up

by Lenore Keeshig-Tobias

Learning Goals

- examine a narrator's perspective
- analyze effects of a refrain
- write a poem based on a model
- research and report on other works by an author

i grew up on the reserve
thinking it was the most
beautiful place in the world

i grew up thinking
"i'm never going
to leave this place"

i was a child
a child who would
lie under trees

watching the wind's rhythms
sway leafy boughs
back and forth

and rocking me as
i snuggled in the grass
like a bug basking in the sun

i grew up on the reserve
thinking it was the most
beautiful place in the world

i grew up thinking
"i'm never going
to leave this place"

i was a child
a child who ran
wild rhythms

through the fields
the streams
the bush

eating berries
cupping cool water
to my wild stained mouth

and hiding in the
tree-tops with
my friends

we used to laugh at teachers
and tourists who referred to
our bush as "forest" or "woods"

"forests" or "woods"
were places of
fairytale text

were places where people,
especially children, got lost
where wild beasts roamed

our bush was where we played
and where the rabbits squirrels
foxes deer and the bear lived

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"i'm never going
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↳ Lenore Keeshig-Tobias is a member of the Chippewa of Nawaswala in Ontario. Often delicate and humorous, her poems draw the mythological symbols of her people. Her poetry has and anthologies. "I Grew Up" first appeared in *Canadian Women* ten two bilingual (English/Ojibway) children's books. (Born W