

## Sparks Skit

Carla Belanger, Camp Rep and Sparks Caregiver  
Tanisi District, University Division  
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At our district camp this spring, our Sparks were involved in the celebration of Alberta's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. The challenge was to make the experience of 100 years ago relevant to these five and six year olds who still view themselves as the centre of the world, and still rely on concrete, hands on experience. The Sparks were asked to present a skit on the period in Alberta's history from 1905 – 1925. The skit was to be acted out around the campfire and performed in front of the Embers, Guides, Pathfinders, and Leaders.

We decided to go with a narrative poem, and have the girls take turns doing the actions. Before we practiced it with them we had a lively discussion about what it was like 100 years ago. The most memorable part of the discussion (and it was quite lively!) was the part about women not being able to vote. We explained to them that it would be like their caregivers saying "Who wants pizza and who wants macaroni for supper? Oh yeah, and only the boys can vote." The look on their faces was priceless. We explained each of the props and then we practiced the skit 3 times. The girls were each "in charge" of their own props, carrying them to campfire and using them during the skit. We had 3 leader "helpers" and a narrator. When the girls were asked at the end of camp what their favorite thing was – many of them said "the skit!". They were very proud of their accomplishment. The following is the poem that I wrote for the occasion, and the accompanying actions and props.

### Alberta 1905 – 1925

It was in the year 1905,  
When our province, Alberta, came alive.

all girls are sitting – they stand up – growing like a flower  
8 of them hold the numbers 1905 1925

We used to be part of the Territories,  
But we got our own name, and rules and things.

Alberta was named after a lovely princess  
By the Marqu de Lorne, who loved her the best.

first pair of girls: a princess with a crown and a "man" at his knees

By 1914 a million people came through  
They left their old countries to try something new.

2 girls are rowing and waving

There were Ukrainians, Blacks, Mormons and Chinese  
Scandinavians, British, American and Japanese.

8 more girls get on the "boat"  
Some are wearing aprons

To cross the ocean they traveled by ship  
Some of them even got very sick.

same girls look very sick and tired on the boat

They crossed the country on a train on the tracks  
When they saw Alberta they cheered and they clapped.

same girls are on a "train" looking excited and clapping

They bought some land for just ten bucks  
And crossed their fingers for good luck.

2 girls exchange money and cross their fingers

They built their homes the best they could    Using grass and  
dirt since there was no wood.

2 girls building with hammer props

They learned everything they needed to know In  
order to be farmers and make things grow.

They had to dig up the hard dirt and grass  
This was called plowing and they learned it fast.

4 girls are “plowing” with a kids gardening props

Then they had to plant all the seeds  
all the nasty weeds.                      And pull up

same girls are “gardening” with watering cans, rakes

And pray for rain, and sun, not snow  
So that the wheat would grow and grow.

same girls are praying while someone holds up a pictures of  
the sun and rain

Flour was made out of all the wheat  
So that moms could bake the bread to eat.

2 girls – one is a mom with an apron the other is a child  
helping with a sifter of flour.

Children helped with lots of chores,  
There was so much to do they never got bored!

They gathered eggs from under chickens,  
And chopped all the wood for the stove in the kitchen.

4 girls – two are chickens “laying” boiled eggs.  
Two collect eggs and chop with cardboard axes

They didn’t have Nintendo or pizza pops  
They rode on pretend horses made out of socks.

girls ride the ponies props – could also use the word mops

They had to make up games to play  
And sometimes their horses would jump in the hay.

girls pretend to ride their ponies into the hay

To get to school was very far  
And you must remember there were no cars.

same girls walking with book bundle and lunch sack props

So children walked a very long way To  
learn to read, do math and play.

There was only one teacher in the whole school And  
children had to obey strict rules.

same 2 girls – a 3<sup>rd</sup> is the “mean” teacher

At home in the evening the family gathered  
Around the radio to hear news that mattered

girls make a family around the radio prop drawn on box

The children all sat on their dads’ big knees  
And moms sewed and stitched and drank their tea

same 4 pretend to drink tea and listen

Along came the first tractor and the first big trucks  
That helped with the farm work and delivered the stuff.

2 girls “drive” with goggles and scarves as props

People couldn’t believe it when they saw the first car. It  
went pretty fast and it traveled so far!

And since it was a long time ago  
There is something else you really should know,

(girls get ready to come in all together)

There was a law that wasn’t so cool,  
That said that women couldn’t help make the rules.

So the women all got together and wrote  
And they told everyone it was their right to vote.

So that's the beginning of Alberta's history,  
That the women were important – for sure you can see!

All the girls marching and raising their placard props  
All girls hand out voting ballots to the audience