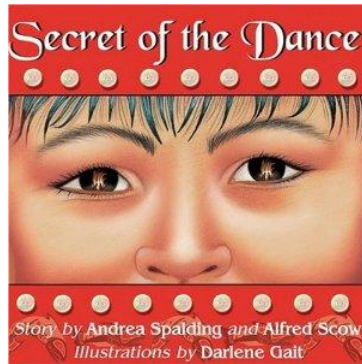


*Secret of the Dance* by Andrea Spalding and Alfred Scow



**ISBN:** 978-1-55469-129-6 (2006)

**Grade levels:** 2 to 5

**Synopsis:**

In 1885, the Canadian Government passed a law forbidding Aboriginal people to hold ceremonies, including the Potlatch. But these ceremonies were the very essence of Aboriginal culture and so were continued in secrecy.

**Pre-reading activities:**

a) Anticipation questions

- Have you ever done something that you were forbidden to do? How did you feel?

b) Illustration activity

- Pair/share—Tell about an important cultural activity that you practise with your family.

**Post-reading activities:**

a) Understanding the story

- Why did the family go on a fishing trip?
- Describe a potlatch.
- Why were First Nations people not allowed to practise their cultural beliefs?
- What factors might have contributed to the banning of potlatch ceremonies?
- How did the government try to police the lives of First Nations people?

b) Transforming your thinking

- Think back to a situation where you were forbidden to do something. What was the consequence of your choice? Do you think it was fair or unfair?
- Is it ever okay to break a law? If so, under what circumstances?
- Can you think of some other times when people of colour have specifically had their rights denied in Canada or abroad?

c) Deepening your thinking

- If you feel that a law or rule is unjust, what can you do to change it? Who can be your allies?
- Who in your community can help you to be a change-maker?