



THE CHINESE VIOLIN

Talespinners
Collection

THE CHINESE VIOLIN

A young girl and her father leave everything familiar behind when they move to Canada from China. The only piece of home they bring with them is a Chinese violin. As they face the huge challenges of starting new lives in a new place, the music of the violin connects them to the life they left behind – and guides the girl to a musical future.

The Chinese Violin is part of the NFB's *Talespinners* collection. Created for children aged five to nine, *Talespinners* uses vibrant animation to bring popular stories from a wide range of cultural communities to the screen.

Director: Joe Chang
Producer: George Johnson


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8 minutes 21 seconds
C9102 001

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Book by
MADELEINE THIEN



VHS
C9102 001



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Study guide

A. Performing for an Audience

We have all had the experience of performing in front of an audience, either for a school play, a holiday pageant, a religious event, a competition or a music or dance recital. Questions to think about and discuss:

- How did you prepare?
- Did you choose what you would perform or did someone else make that decision?
- Who was invited to the performance?
- How did you feel before, during and after?

These questions could be discussed as a class or in groups. Students can also write their responses in a journal.

B. Musical Instruments

Different countries are associated with different musical instruments, for example, the Chinese violin (also called the *ehru*), Indian sitar, Caribbean steel drums and the balalaika, from Russia. Ask the students for other examples of musical instruments from around the world.

C. Extortion

The father in the story is the victim of extortion. Children might recognize the term "taxing." Invite a representative from the local police department to speak to the class about this crime.



Technical director
and special effects:
SHELLEY MCINTOSH

Composer:
RUI-SHI ZHUO

Sound supervisor:
JAMIE MAHAFFEY

Voice:
LULU LI

Pre-production design:
JOE CHANG

Research:
GINTARAS ZUBRICKAS

Editors:
SHIRLEY ANNE CLAYDON
ILEANA PIETROBRUNO

Re-recording mixer:
MARK HENSLEY

Executive producer:
SVEND-ERIK ERIKSEN

Producer:
GEORGE JOHNSON

RELATED NFB VIDEOS

Le Violon de Gaston: A young boy faces a dilemma about playing in the hockey game or at an important violin recital.

The Magic Flute: An animated fable for children showing that things can be malignant or benign depending on how they are used. Part of the video compilation *Children's Favourites: Tales of Wonder*.

Playing Fair: A 4-part series to spark discussion about racism, respect and equality.

Bully Dance and When the Dust Settles...: Two animated shorts from the award-winning *ShowPeace Series* for conflict resolution.

Visit these websites:

www.bullying.org

www.nfb.ca/showpeace



Joe Chang received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from Lu-Xun Art University in China. He worked as an art teacher at Lu-Xun Art University before beginning a career in animation at Natterjack Animation in Vancouver in 1993. He had a key role as animator for the 1997 YTV series *Rounihold the Reindeer* and completed the computer ink-painting for the 26 episodes of *Kleo, the Misfit Unicorn*, which aired on the Family Channel in 1998. Joe has produced and designed an animated short entitled *Ink* and lent his animation skills to the creation of a one-minute short that appeared in the documentary *Made in China*. Since 1998, he has been a director and animator at the National Film Board.

Director:
JOE CHANG

Animation:
CELEST BROWN, GINTARAS ZUBRICKAS, JOE CHANG

For more teaching ideas, recommended reading
and related NFB videos, visit:

www.nfb.ca/talespinners

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The Chinese Violin
written by Madeleine Thien
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