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

TO ORDER NFB VIDEOS, CALL TODAY!
1-800-267-7710 (Canada)
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www.nfb.ca/talespinners

8 minutes 21 seconds
C9102 001

Closed captioned. A decoder is required.

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National Film Board of Canada
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A National Film Board of Canada Production
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 erhu), 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.

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 Rounihot 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.

For more teaching ideas, recommended reading and related NFB videos, visit:
www.nfb.ca/talespinners