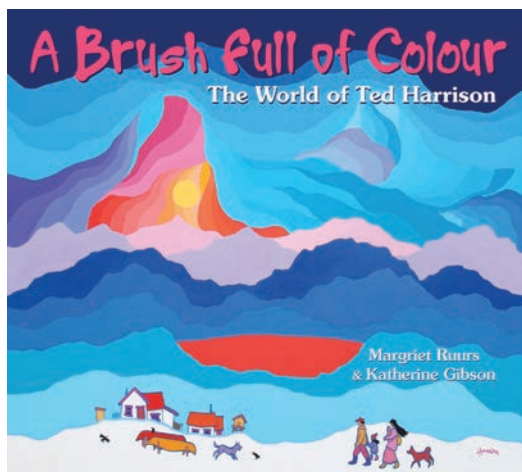


The World of Ted Harrison



STORY SUMMARY

Ted Harrison's brightly coloured and wildly imaginative paintings of the Yukon have become synonymous with the North. A biographical picture book filled with full-colour reproductions, and with a foreword written by Harrison himself, *A Brush Full of Colour* tells the story of how a boy who grew up in a drab mining town in northeast England became one of Canada's most beloved and decorated artists.

ABOUT TED HARRISON

Ted Harrison is one of Canada's most celebrated artists. A former teacher and author, he is best known for books he wrote and illustrated about Canada's North, including *Children of the Yukon* and *A Northern Alphabet*. He also illustrated two poems by Robert Service: *The Cremation of Sam McGee* and *The Shooting of Dan McGrew*, which became Canadian bestsellers. A member of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, Ted is the recipient of many honours for his contribution to the arts and culture of Canada, including the Order of British Columbia and the Order of Canada, the country's highest civilian honour. Born in County Durham, England, Ted emigrated to Canada with his wife in 1967 and lived in the Yukon for twenty-five years before moving in 1993 to Victoria, British Columbia. Ted passed away in early 2015.

OTHER RESOURCES

Online

- Official Ted Harrison Website: <http://tedharrison.com>
- Author Website: Margriet Ruurs
www.margietruurs.com
- Author Website: Katherine Gibson
www.katherinegibson.com

Books

- *Ted Harrison: Painting Paradise* by Katherine Gibson (Crown Publications, 2009)—Adult Non-Fiction
- *The Last Horizon: Painting and Stories of an Artist's Life in the North* by Ted Harrison (Merrit Publishing, 1980)
—autobiography
- *A Northern Alphabet* by Ted Harrison (Tundra, 1989)
—Children's Picture Book

Picture Book for All Ages | ISBN: 978-1-927485-63-7 | Pages: 40
Includes Table of Contents, Index, Bibliography, and Foreword by Ted Harrison

THEMES

Arctic, Art, Biography, Canada, Imagination, Immigration, Painting, Travel, Yukon

BISAC CODES

JNF007010 JUVENILE NONFICTION / Biography & Autobiography / Art
JNF006050 JUVENILE NONFICTION / Art / Painting
JNF025240 JUVENILE NONFICTION / History / Canada / Post-Confederation (1867–)

DISCUSSION

Many captions below the reproductions of Harrison's art throughout *A Brush Full of Colour* include questions to get readers thinking about the artist's work. Use these questions to prompt discussions among your students.

ACTIVITIES

- Choose a day to celebrate the life of Ted Harrison and ask students to help prepare elements of the celebration based on Harrison's life and interests. Ideas could include: baking gingerbread men (p. 9), creating and following a treasure map (p. 12–13), reading poems by Robert Service (p. 12), creating pictures of "happy" things to hang on the walls (p. 14), Playing a fishing game (p. 18), and staging an art show using the students' art (p. 28).
- Play "I Spy" with Harrison's paintings. For example, one player might say, "I spy a blue cat." The other players must then find a painting by Harrison that shows a blue cat.
- When the bottoms of clouds reflect the colours of the Northern Lights, Yukoners today call it a "Harrison Sky." Ted Harrison was inspired by the colours he saw in the arctic sky, and now those colours are known by his name. Ask your students to think about their favourite kinds of weather and natural phenomena, such as thunderstorms, tides, tornadoes, etc.. Have them each research their chosen phenomenon and present a brief report about its causes. In addition, they should create an artistic representation of their phenomenon and title it after themselves; for example, "Jordan's Thunderstorm" or "Ari's Tides."
- Paint Harrison-inspired images using wax crayons and watercolour paint. Pressing lightly with a pencil, draw a landscape using wavy lines on heavy paper. Go over your pencil lines with a pale blue wax crayon, pressing hard and making your crayon line quite thick. Paint a different colour within each pair of lines. The wax crayon will make those lines resist the paint, creating the same kind of separation between colours that Harrison used in his paintings.

- **For older students:** Go outdoors or provide photographs of landscapes for inspiration. Have students draw the landscape in a style inspired by Harrison, using large bands and blocks, or using their own style. In either case, challenge them to finish their artwork with bold colours rather than the colours they see in nature.
- **For younger students:** Download the Harrison-inspired colouring sheets available on the Pajama Press website at <http://pajamapress.ca/resource/a-brush-full-of-colour-activities>. Challenge them to colour them in using bold colours rather than those they see in nature.



OTHER FREE RESOURCES ON THE PAJAMA PRESS WEBSITE:

- *A Brush Full of Colour* word search
- *A Brush Full of Colour* crossword

Download these PDFs at: <http://pajamapress.ca/resource/a-brush-full-of-colour-activities>