Manoomini-miikaans

THE WILD RICE ROAD

Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan

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One early fall morning, Waas-kone (Flower) and her twin brother No-din (Windy) set out on an adventure. They had never traveled all the way from their village to wild rice camp on their own, but this morning their mother said it was time for them to make the voyage alone. "The trail to wild rice camp is a long one, but if you follow the Seven Grandfather Teachings, you will make it to camp before the night of the wild rice moon. Your Elders will be waiting for you to arrive. Remember to pay attention to Mother Earth; it is our duty to protect her. Her creatures may need your help along the way." Waas-kone and No-din set out.

The Seven Grandfather Teachings

Nibwaakaawin (Wisdom)
Zaagi'idiwin (Love)
Manaadendamowin (Respect)
Zoongide'ewin (Bravery)
Gwayakwaadiziwin (Honesty)
Dibaadendiziwin (Humility)
Debwewin (Truth)

As they walked through the forest, birds chirped, insects buzzed, and the faint sound of the Saganing River was heard babbling nearby. Ahead of them, a huge tree had fallen onto the trail. It was a great White Pine, over one-hundred feet tall.

Suddenly, from high above, with long wings flapping, an Eagle descended on Waas-kone and No-din. "You're back for more I see! Have you come to chop down more trees?!" the Eagle screamed.

The children were shocked to see the beautiful bird so upset, "No, we promise! We never want to see the trees get hurt; they clean our air, filter our water, and provide shelter to Mother Earth's creatures."

"My nest was at the top of the tallest tree in this forest," the Eagle explained, "and that White Pine was my family's home. My babies were just getting ready to take their first flight, but then our home was chopped down. I lost my babies and our nest! Please help me find my babies and put my home back together!"

Naa-da-mo Mi-gi-zi (Help the Eagle)

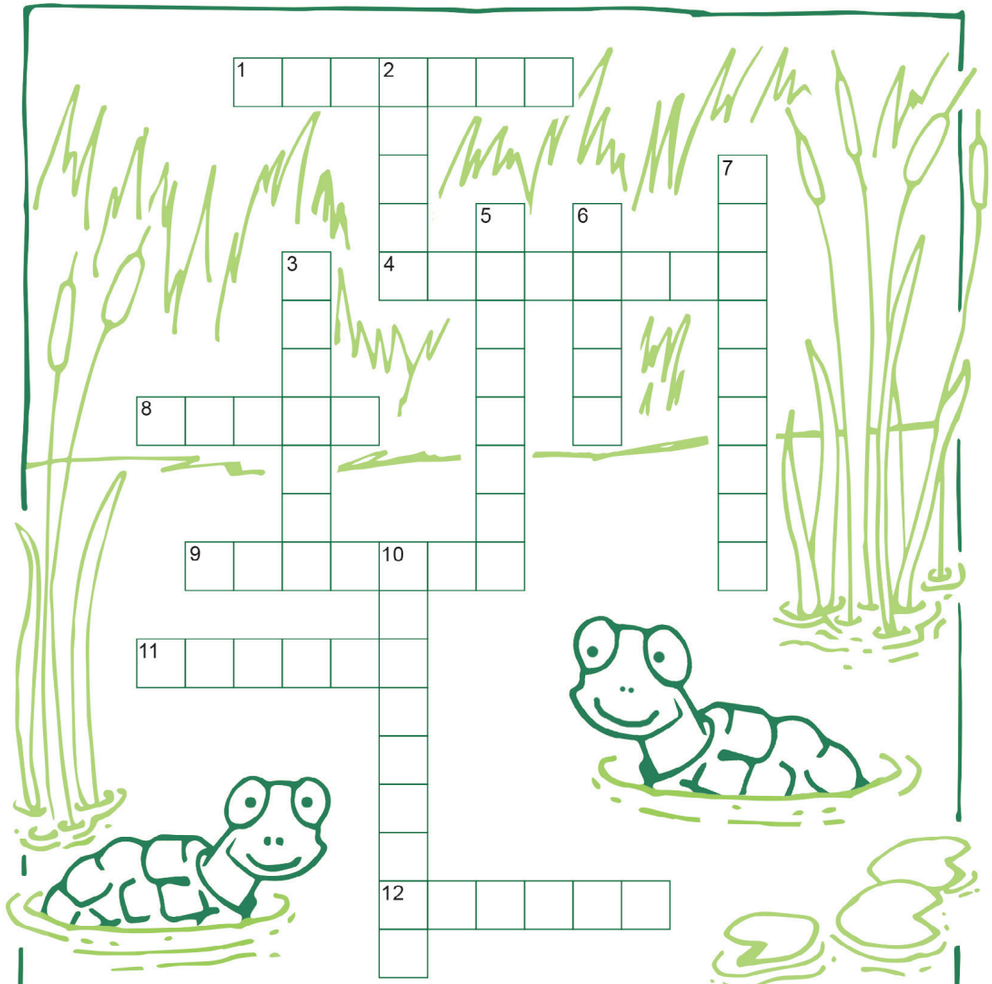
Find her baby Bald Eagles and the twigs that she used to make their nest.

Waas-kone and No-din waved goodbye to their new found feathered friends, and followed the trail along the Saganing River. The sound of water rushing over the rocks filled their ears as they noticed different amphibians and reptiles peaking at them around every turn. Frogs, Snakes, Turtles, Lizards, Salamanders all came out from hiding to see them. Eventually, they were stopped on the trail by a large Snapping Turtle who asked, "Are you responsible for all the trash in our river? Look around you, our home is covered with your litter."

Piles of litter covered areas of the banks along the river. The Snapping Turtle was right! Plastic bottles and bags, aluminum cans, and other trash had floated down the river and made a big mess of their home. Waas-kone and No-din said to the Turtle, "We are very sorry! We would never throw our trash in the river. Can we help you clean it up?"

Naa-da-mo Mshii-kenh (Help the Turtle)

Clean up their home by finishing the crossword puzzle below.



Across

1. Product created from organic waste, used as plant fertalizers.
4. Can be used again
8. Made from sand; 100% recyclable
9. Making waste into new, useable material
11. Waste disposed of inappropriately
12. Make less waste

Down

2. Made from tree fiber
3. Made from petroleum; like oil
5. Recycling picked up from households at the side of the road
6. Unusable material sent to landfill
7. Disposable through household hazardous waste programs
10. Made from trees, used as packaging

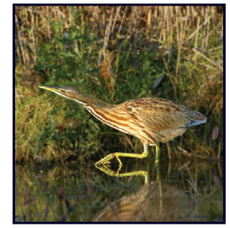
The amphibians and reptiles were happy to have Waas-kones and No-din's help in cleaning up their home. The two continued on their way, following the Saganing River. Soon they began to hear "tat-tat-tat-tat." As they turned around the bend, they saw the bridge over the river had been blocked by a fallen black ash tree. The tree was weakened by an invasive insect, the Emerald Ash Borer. The children were familiar with the invasive species. It had nearly wiped out all of the black ash trees that their family had used for generations to make ash baskets. "How will we get across?" No-din asked his sister. Nearby they heard some cackling and chuckling coming from a group of playful waterfowl on the river.

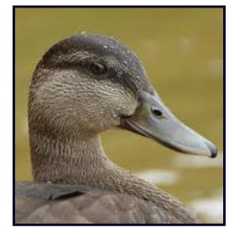
"Hello," Waas-kone shouted to the waterfowl, "we really need to cross the river to get to wild rice camp, and the bridge is out! Will you help us?"

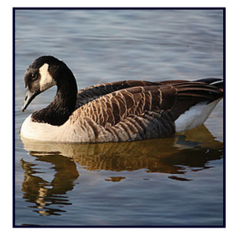
A Great Blue Heron meandered up to them with its gigantic wings lightly flapping, "Of course we can help you cross, but first we have to see if you're worthy of our help. If you can remember our names, we will help you across."

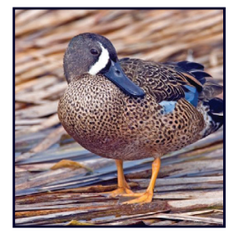
Naa-da-mo Bi-noo-jiinh-ik (Help the Children)

Pass the Waterfowl's test by matching the name to the picture of each bird.









Mooshka'osi
Bittern (American Bittern)

Zhashagi
Great Blue Heron

Maang
Common Loon

Zhingibis
Grebe

Waabizii
Trumpeter Swan

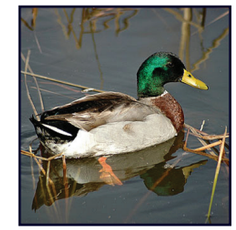
Makadeshib
Black Duck

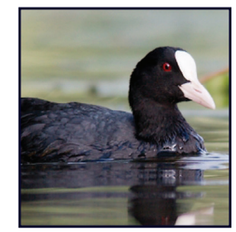
Wewiibiingwaange
Blue-winged Teal

Zhiishiib
Mallard

Aajigade
American Coot

Nika
Canada Goose

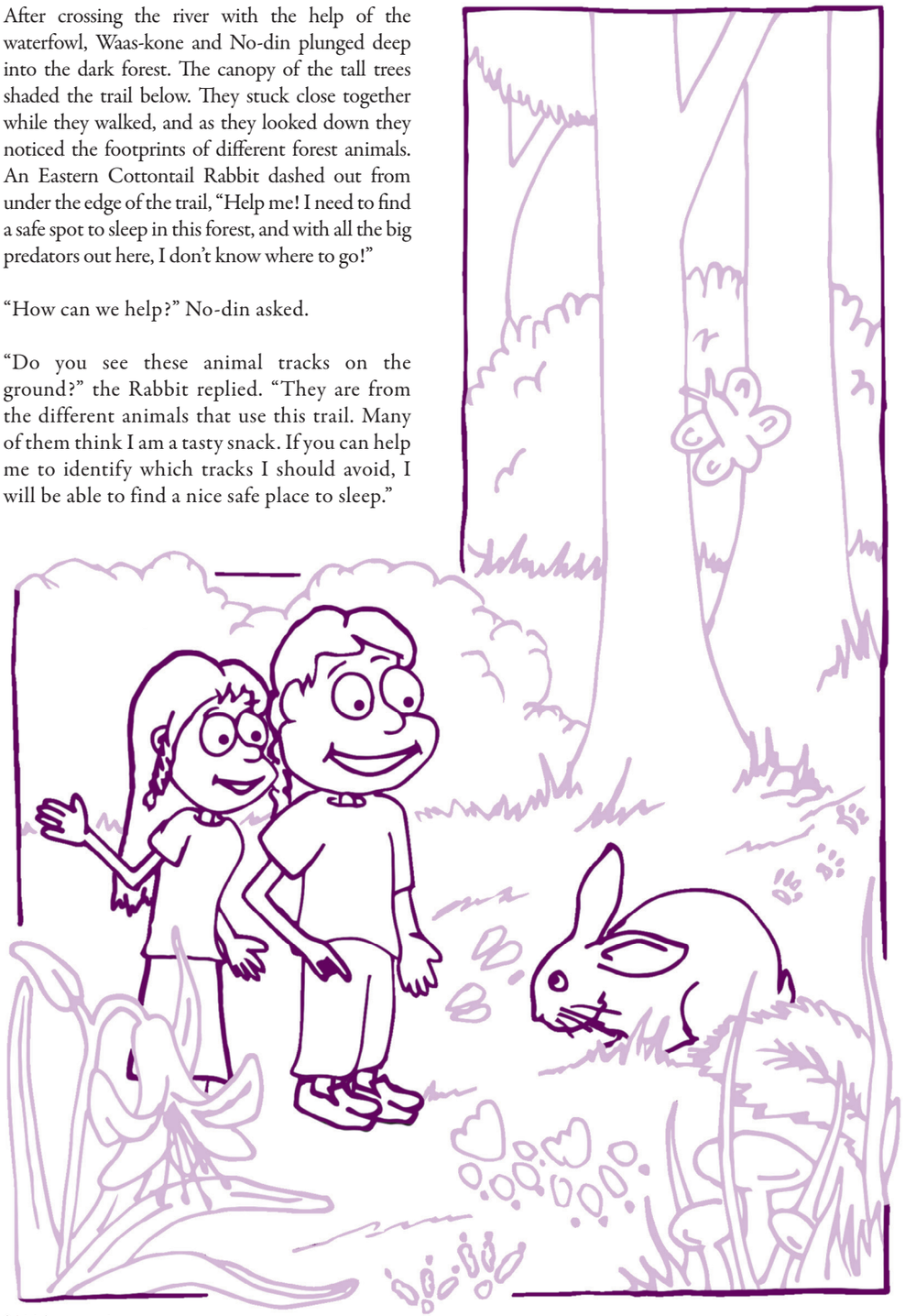




After crossing the river with the help of the waterfowl, Waas-kone and No-din plunged deep into the dark forest. The canopy of the tall trees shaded the trail below. They stuck close together while they walked, and as they looked down they noticed the footprints of different forest animals. An Eastern Cottontail Rabbit dashed out from under the edge of the trail, "Help me! I need to find a safe spot to sleep in this forest, and with all the big predators out here, I don't know where to go!"

"How can we help?" No-din asked.

"Do you see these animal tracks on the ground?" the Rabbit replied. "They are from the different animals that use this trail. Many of them think I am a tasty snack. If you can help me to identify which tracks I should avoid, I will be able to find a nice safe place to sleep."



Naa-da-mo Waa-booz-oonh (Help the Rabbit)

Identify which tracks are from which animals. Help the Eastern Cottontail Rabbit by checking the boxes of its predators.

American Mink
Muskrat
Beaver
Badger
Deer
Bobcat
Red Fox
Gray Wolf
Porcupine
Racoon
Cougar
Striped Skunk
Coyote
Turkey
Elk

Write the name of each animal on the line underneath of the tracks it left.
Check the box of the animals that eat Eastern Cottontail Rabbits.
Use all of the animal names in the box to the left.

1. A-gaag ☐

2. Zhaash-koonh ☐

3. Ma-hiing-an ☐

4. Mzi-se ☐

5. Zhaa-wo-ne-si ☐

6. A-dik ☐

7. Mshi-bi-zhii ☐

8. Zhaang-wesh ☐

9. Bgo-ji Gaa-zhak ☐

10. Es-i-ban ☐

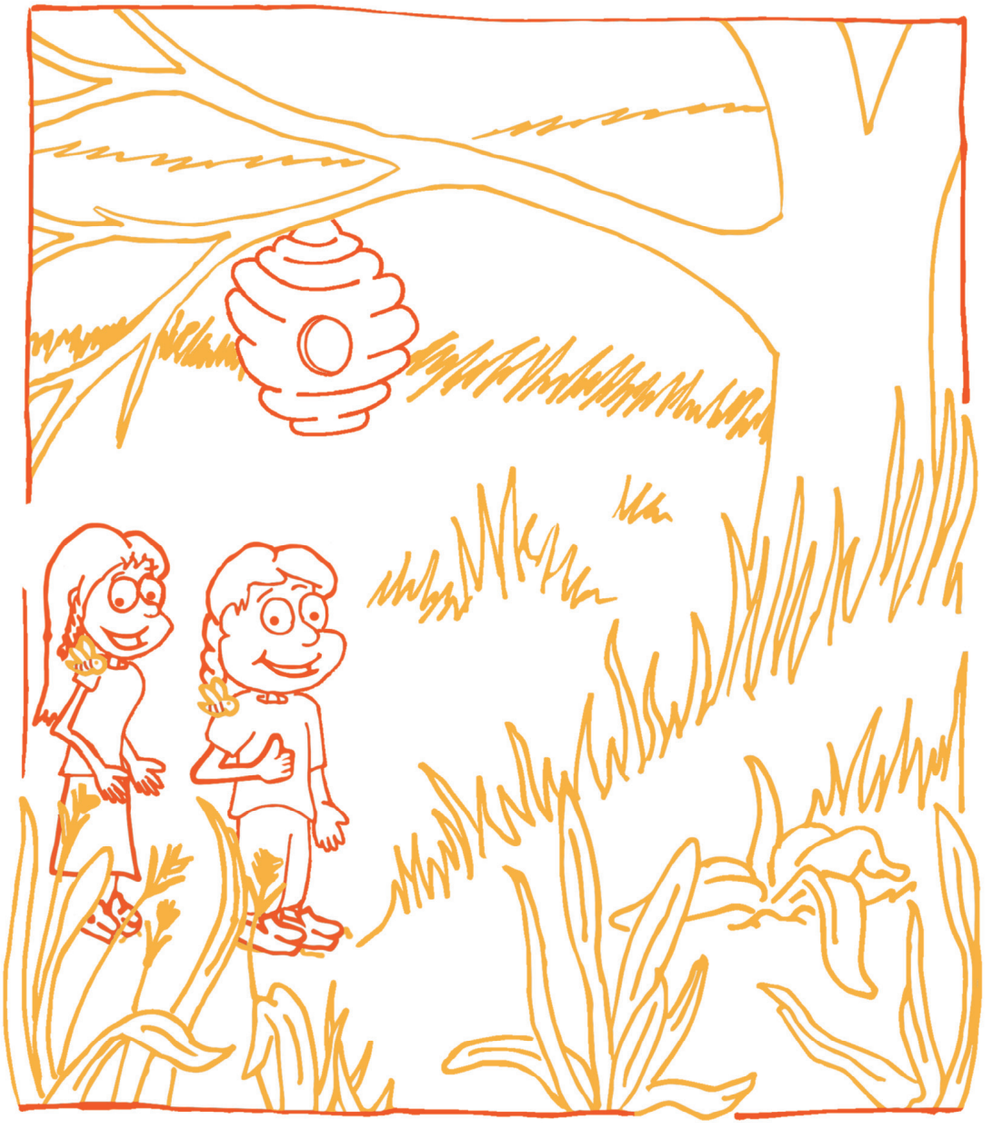
11. Waa-waash-kesh ☐

12. Zhi-gaak ☐

13. A-mik ☐

14. Mis-a-kak-o-jiish ☐

15. Waa-gosh ☐

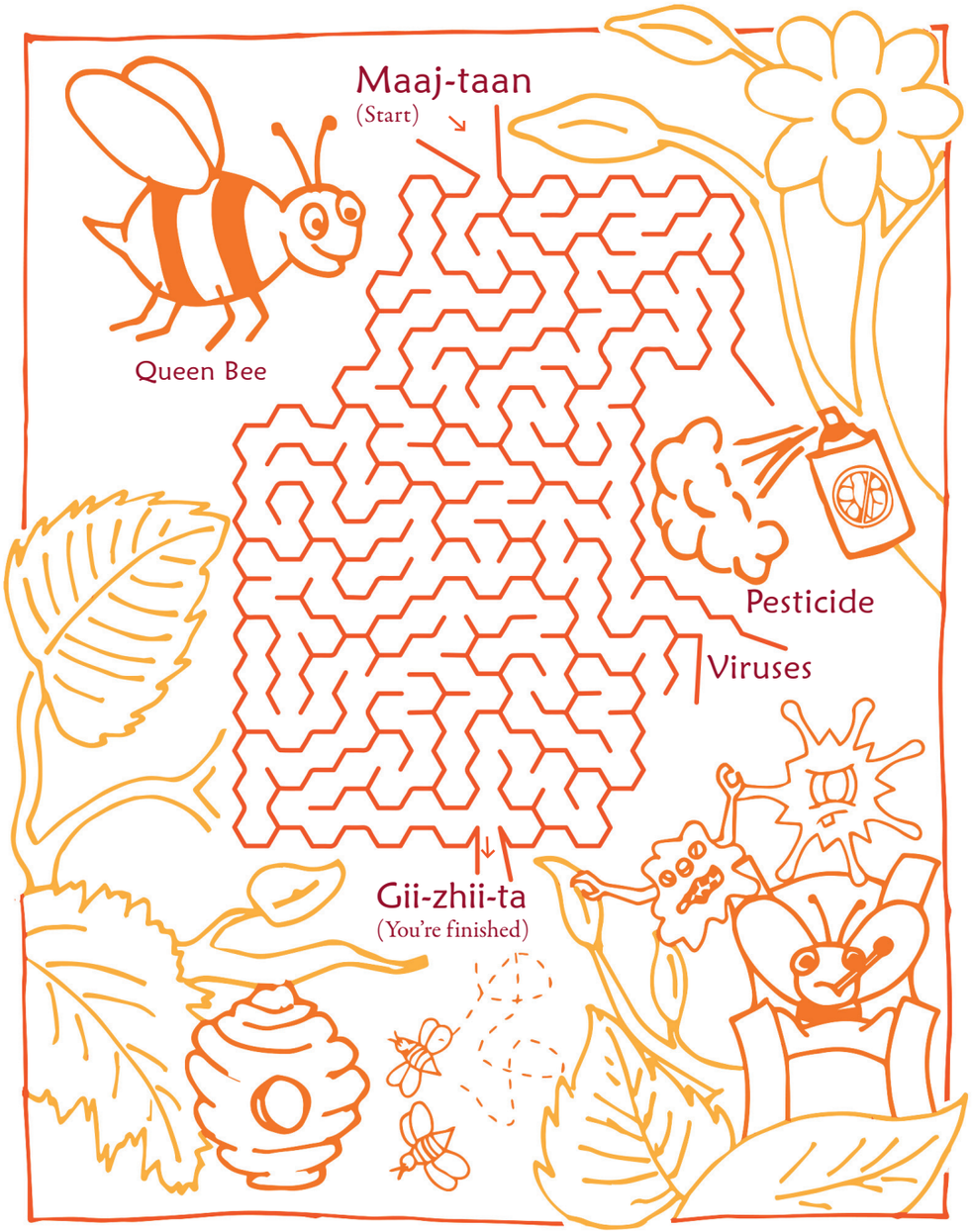


No-din and Waas-kone left the Rabbit snuggled in its den. They walked on until they finally came to a clearing in the dark forest where sunlight was poking through the dense canopy. As they emerged from the forest, they stumbled upon a wildflower prairie. Throughout the prairie, Bees were pollinating flowers. The children were careful not to disturb the Bees who were working frantically to collect pollen. Suddenly, two Bees swiftly flew onto Waas-kone and No-din's shoulders. In a buzzing whisper, the Bees said, "Please help us! We lost our Queen Bee in the hive and we need your help to find her. If we lose our queen, we will lose our hive!"

Waas-kone and No-din replied to the little Bees on their shoulders, "We will gladly help our bee friends, because you pollinate our plants and make it possible for us to grow food."

Naa-da-mo Gi-ma Aa-moo (Help the Queen Bee)

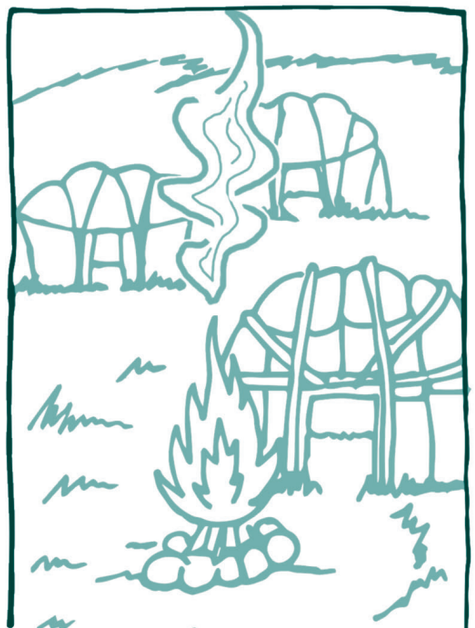
Help the children find the queen bee and guide her through the maze safely.
Make sure she avoids the pesticides and viruses that make Bees sick.

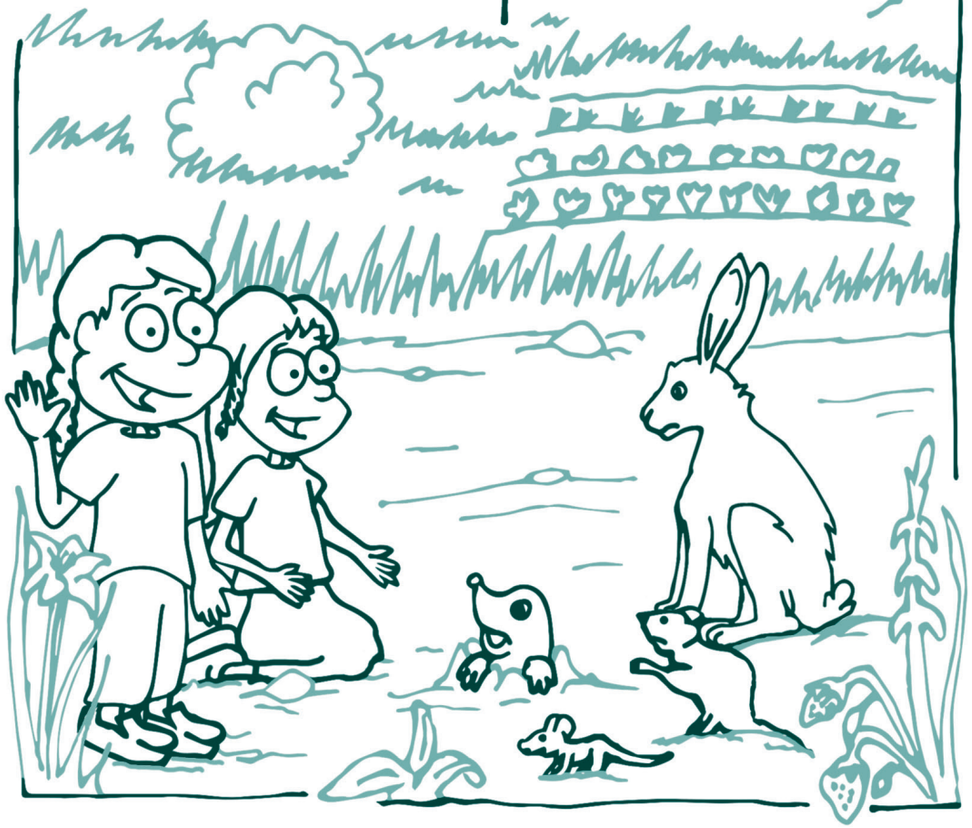


Buzzing off through the prairie, Waas-kone and No-din saw smoke coming from a campfire up ahead. As they approached, they saw that a clearing had been made in the prairie for a fruit and vegetable garden. After passing the camp, the children saw small Prairie Mammals rolling on the ground clutching their stomachs. "What's wrong little critters?" Waas-kone asked.

A tiny Vole, with its small eyes and pointy nose, squeaked, "We are so hungry! The humans harvested their fruits and vegetables, and now we have nothing to eat! We lived off of their food all summer, and we forgot how to find food for ourselves in the wild!"

"Silly critters," No-din said, "of course we can teach you to find your natural foods. You shouldn't be eating human food when there are so many tasty things for you to eat in the wild."





Naa-da-mo We-siinh-ik (Help the Animals)

Finish the Word Find and help the Prairie Mammals learn to stop eating human food and remember to stick to their natural foraging diet.

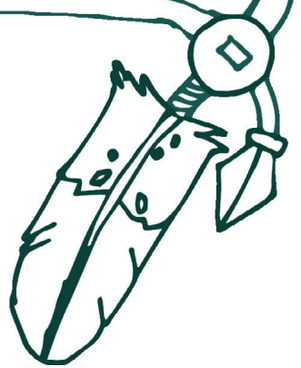
W	J	I	I	S	E	N	H	S	N	V	T	M	A	N	O	O	M	I	N
A	S	M	U	Q	R	V	C	W	I	E	S	E	C	G	T	R	E	F	T
A	T	K	P	G	T	U	T	E	M	I	I	S	H	K	T	O	N	H	S
S	C	H	L	I	J	W	Y	Z	S	R	E	E	J	A	K	Q	E	K	B
K	W	U	Q	C	G	S	K	N	I	G	O	I	H	C	G	U	O	Z	I
O	Z	G	H	Y	M	A	Q	Y	I	E	T	E	W	P	A	V	Q	R	M
N	K	H	J	W	B	N	A	F	D	W	K	O	S	M	A	A	N	A	I
E	M	O	A	E	I	D	R	N	A	P	D	E	E	L	Y	V	B	O	I
W	N	D	T	G	Y	D	L	I	W	R	L	M	S	H	I	I	M	I	N
G	D	E	Z	H	A	A	S	H	K	W	E	D	O	O	N	H	N	Z	K
F	A	H	I	A	H	A	R	K	S	R	Z	R	F	W	J	D	A	E	A
D	A	M	E	Q	U	H	N	S	M	K	T	V	M	O	W	C	A	X	N
S	M	I	Y	U	R	A	H	G	T	I	P	Y	I	Q	U	T	D	N	Z
A	I	N	D	S	I	N	U	U	W	E	L	A	I	H	P	Y	A	H	M
U	N	A	E	H	E	E	O	J	A	A	N	I	N	D	I	G	A	E	S
S	N	A	A	K	N	A	S	H	K	T	A	A	E	T	E	L	N	N	K
A	J	E	B	A	S	Y	J	R	Z	H	H	S	J	K	W	N	O	I	W
G	C	I	E	O	H	A	E	X	O	S	Q	K	H	T	L	P	R	T	A
W	I	W	V	C	C	O	H	C	W	H	X	J	M	W	T	F	N	E	M
J	V	M	N	I	D	O	S	H	E	N	H	S	A	K	W	T	H	L	I
R	J	C	I	V	G	A	S	I	G	I	N	A	A	S	H	U	O	G	N

Garden Food

Mskwa-diis-min (bean)
Naa-daa-noonh (squash)
Mndaa-min (corn)
Mshii-min (apple)
Kos-maan (pumpkin)
Odeh-min (strawberry)
Mskwa-min (raspberry)
Miin (blueberry)
Zha-gaang-waash (onion)
Gchi-o-gin (tomato)
Ma-noo-min (wild rice)
Jii-senhs (carrot)

Wildlife Food

Miish-koonhs (grass)
Miin-kan (seed)
Jiib-kenh (root)
Mni-do-shenh-sak (insects)
A-sig-i-naash (earthworm)
Pi-gaan (nut)
Zhaash-kwe-doonh (mushroom)
Na-gek (bark)
Naak-nashk (rush)
Waas-ko-ne (flower)



Waas-kone and No-din continued on the path as they left the prairie and returned to the forest. A small Black Bear sat on the trail sadly weeping. The children felt sorry for the sad Bear so No-din stopped to ask, "What's the matter Black Bear?"

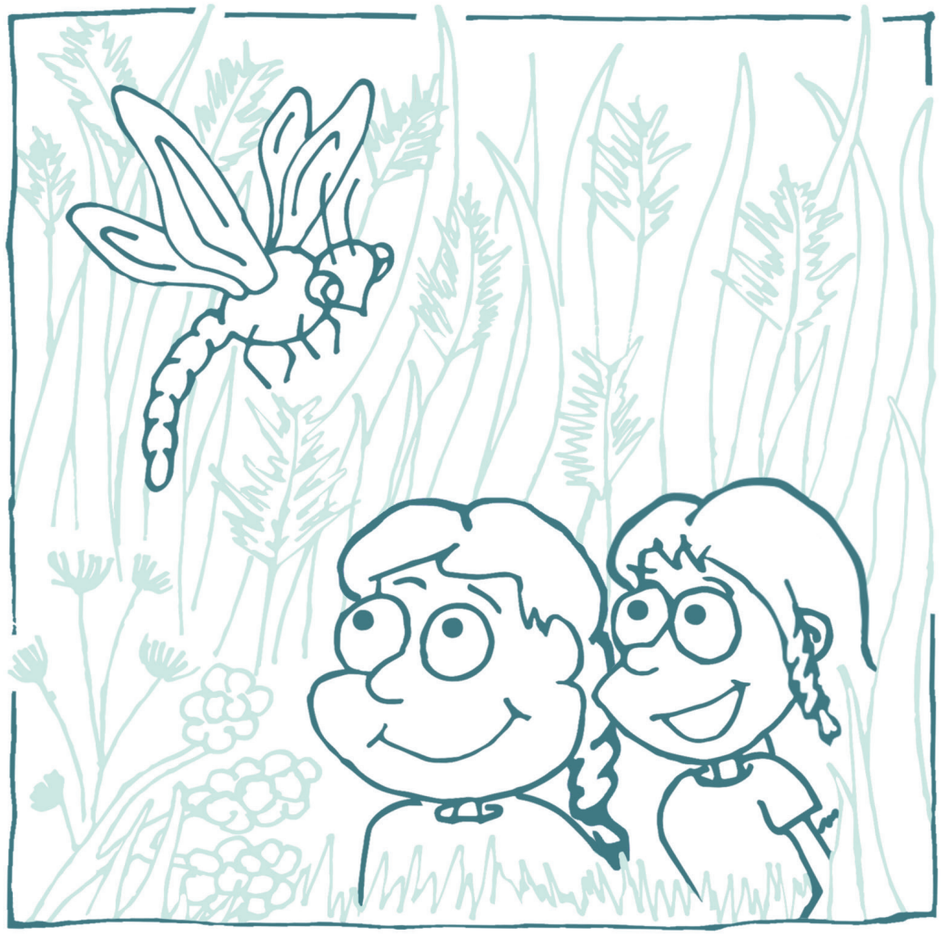
The Black Bear sniffled loudly and answered, "I'm all alone for my first winter and I can't find the food I need to eat for hibernation. My mother sent me out on my own for the first time. She says it's time for me to learn to fend for myself. I'm feeling lonely, and I'm afraid that I won't make it on my own. I'm supposed to be eating acorns, but I can't remember what they look like. Can you help me?"

Waas-kone replied, "Certainly Black Bear. First we have to look for an oak tree to find acorns. We will draw you a picture to show you what oak leaves and acorns look like."

Naa-da-mo Mkwa (Help the Bear)

Connect the dots in order to complete the drawings.

Show the bear what a Burr Oak leaf and a Burr Oak acorn look like.



After helping the Black Bear find acorns, Waas-kone and No-din went on their way through the forest. "Look, there's a cattail. We must be getting closer!" No-din said excitedly. The trail was moist and the ground was squishy beneath their feet. Dragonflies buzzed around. Occasionally they saw brightly colored Damselflies too. The beautiful Dragonflies distracted the two as they entered the wetland habitat. They walked onward, and suddenly the insects stopped darting around. Waas-kone and No-din found themselves surrounded by a 10 foot tall wall of thin plants with feathery seeds at the top, and they couldn't see anything! The roots of these tall reeds couldn't be seen through the thick woven mat beneath their feet. Curious about this big plant and why the insects had vanished, Waas-kone asked a dragonfly as it fluttered high overhead, "What is this tall plant? Why are there no more insects dancing about?"

The shimmering Dragonfly floated down to answer, "Invasive Phragmites is destroying our wetland. It leaves no open water for us to lay our eggs. Dragonflies only stay where we can find places to rest, lay our eggs, and fly around. Phragmites takes those places away from us. Children, can you help us by removing all the invasive species found in our wetlands?"

Naa-da-mo Bi-naak-wesh-iinh (Help the Dragonfly)

Unscramble the letters of the short words and fill in the blanks to decode the names of common invasive species.

1. pilot

1. Pur_le _o_ses_r_fe

2. N_n-na_iv_ _hrag_ites

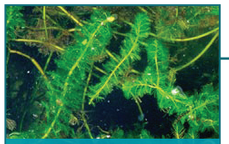
2. tempo

3. gears

3. Re_d can_ _y-_ra_s

4. Nar_ow-l_a_e_ cat-ta_l

4. fired


5. alter

5. _ur_sian wa_e_-mi_foil

6. Gia_ _ h_gw_e_

6. noted

7. vault

7. _u_ _mn o_i_e

8. Sp_t_ed kna_w_e_

8. depot

9. limbs

9. C_i_ _ing n_ght _hade

10. _ _rlic m_sta_ _

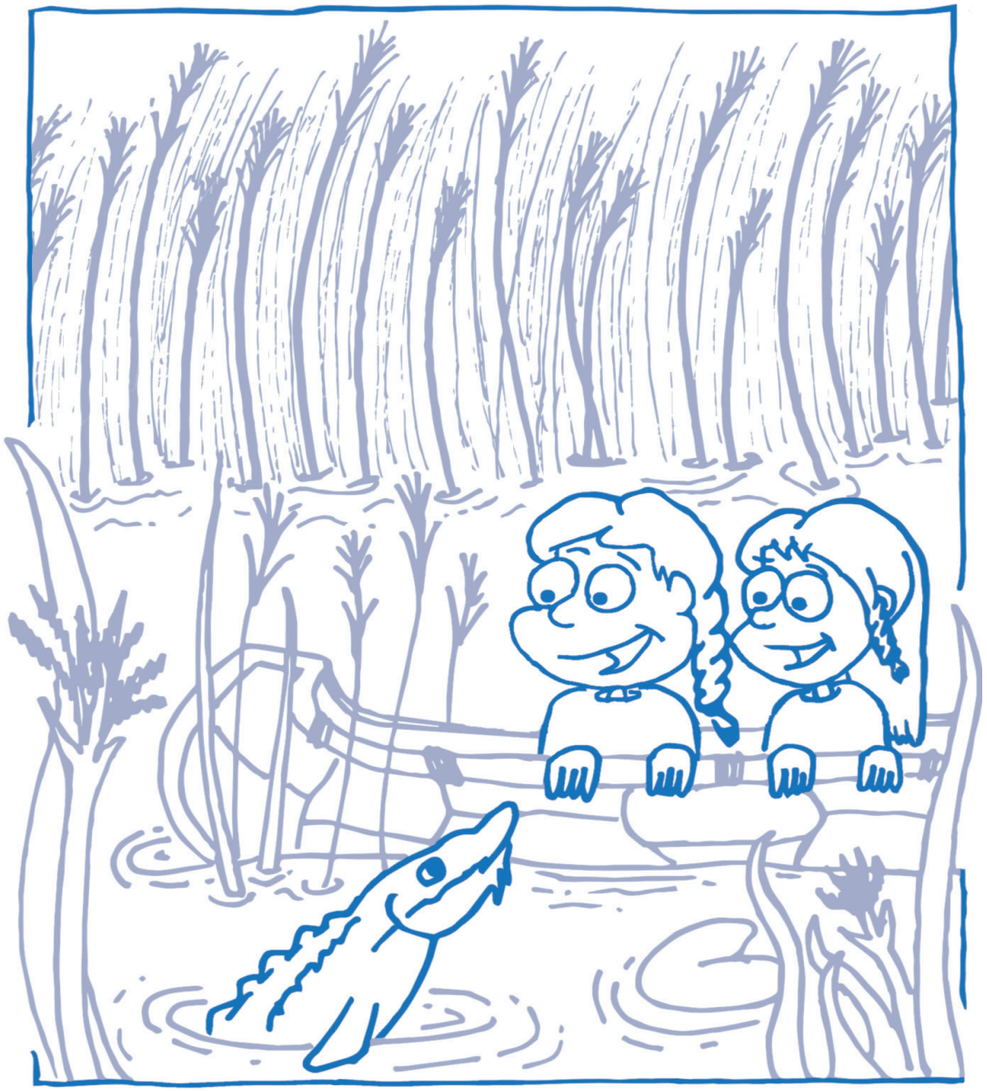
10. guard

11. moles

11. _ultif_ _ra ro_ _

12. Glo_ _y b_ck_ _orn

12. shuts



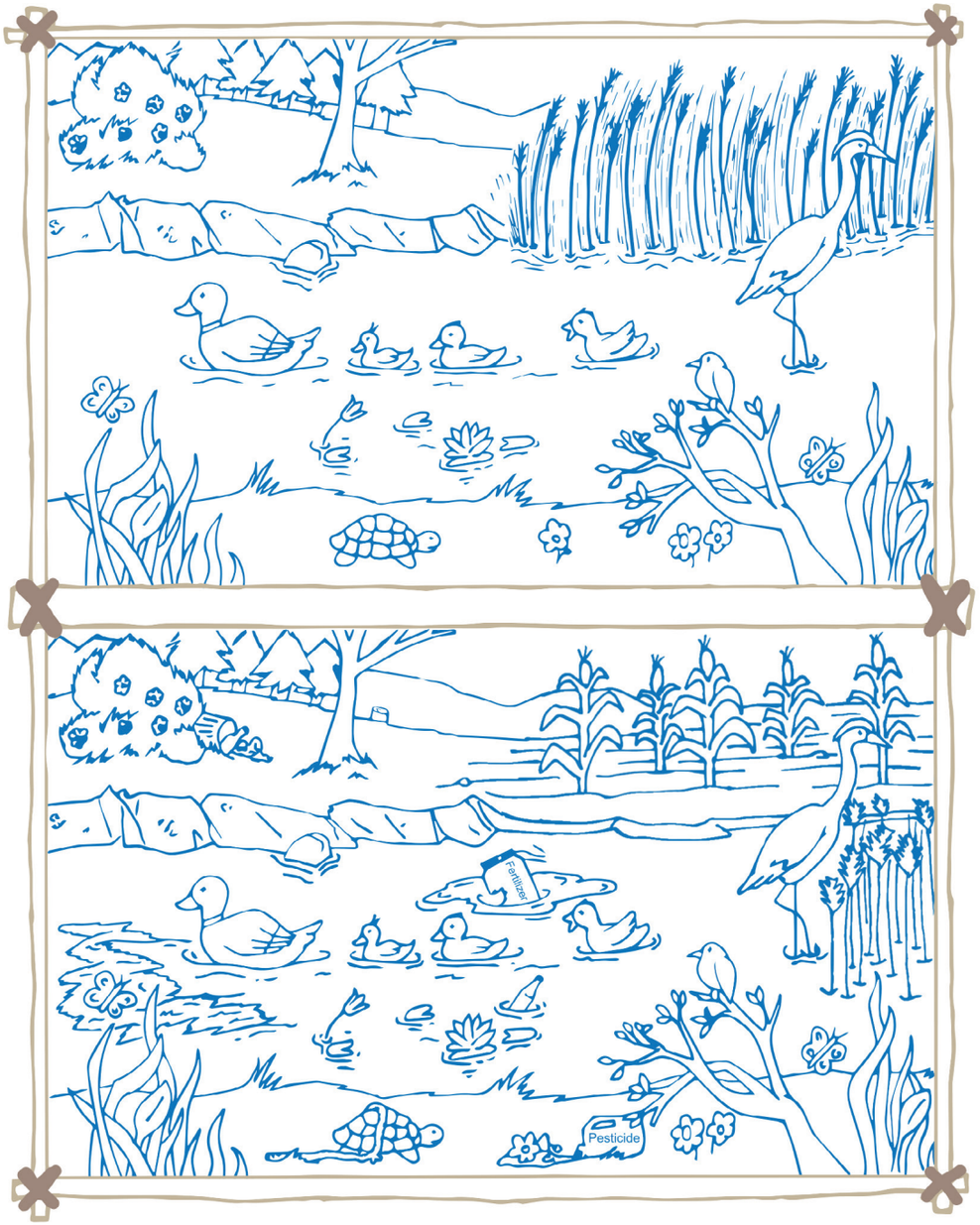
After helping the Dragonflies remove the invasive species in the wetland, the two finally approached the wild rice camp at the edge of the Saginaw Bay. Waas-kone and No-din were greeted by their family. They hopped into canoes, with their knockers and long sticks in hand. They pushed their canoes past the hanging Manoomin, and with a sweeping motion they brought the rice into their canoe.

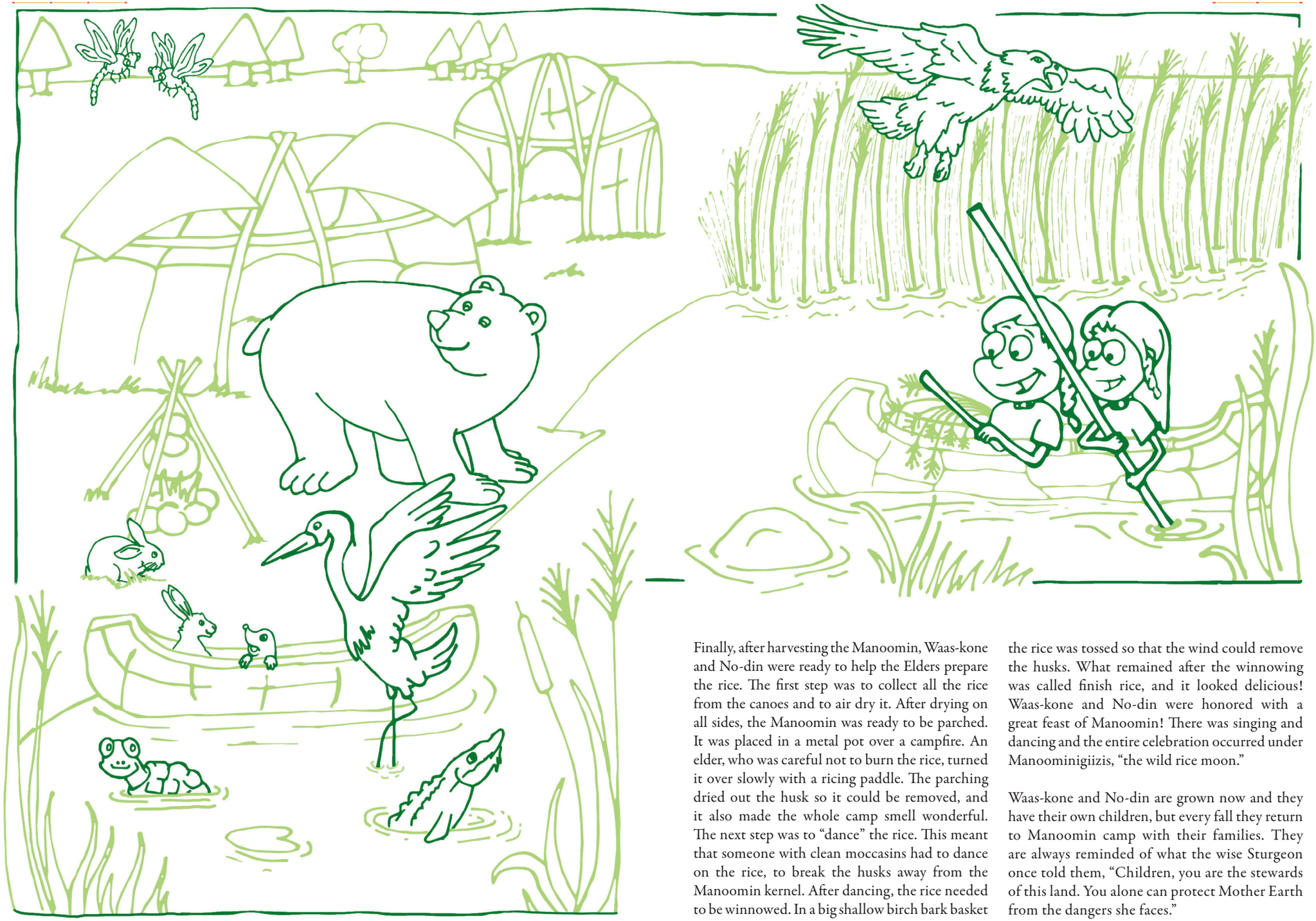
While looking down into the water of the Bay, Waas-kone and No-din were surprised by a large dinosaur-looking fish. The great Sturgeon approached the canoes, peeked its head out of the water, and in its deep and wise voice said, "Children, you are the stewards of this land. You alone can protect Mother Earth from the dangers she faces. Along the trail you have helped many of our creatures. I need your help one last time. This water has bonded your people with Mother Earth for centuries. If we aren't careful, human activities can hurt her. We need you to continue watching over Mother Earth. You have proven yourself on this journey, now it's your job to teach others to respect Mother Earth."

Naa-da-mo Ne-mi (Help the Sturgeon)

Keep an eye out for human activities that impact natural ecosystems.

Circle the differences between the two images below. Can you find all *Zhaangswi (9)* differences? Which ecosystem is healthy, and which needs our help to heal?





Finally, after harvesting the Manoomin, Waas-kone and No-din were ready to help the Elders prepare the rice. The first step was to collect all the rice from the canoes and to air dry it. After drying on all sides, the Manoomin was ready to be parched. It was placed in a metal pot over a campfire. An elder, who was careful not to burn the rice, turned it over slowly with a ricing paddle. The parching dried out the husk so it could be removed, and it also made the whole camp smell wonderful. The next step was to "dance" the rice. This meant that someone with clean moccasins had to dance on the rice, to break the husks away from the Manoomin kernel. After dancing, the rice needed to be winnowed. In a big shallow birch bark basket the rice was tossed so that the wind could remove the husks. What remained after the winnowing was called finish rice, and it looked delicious! Waas-kone and No-din were honored with a great feast of Manoomin! There was singing and dancing and the entire celebration occurred under Manoominigiizis, "the wild rice moon."

Waas-kone and No-din are grown now and they have their own children, but every fall they return to Manoomin camp with their families. They are always reminded of what the wise Sturgeon once told them, "Children, you are the stewards of this land. You alone can protect Mother Earth from the dangers she faces."

Mti-gwa-ki Kid-wi-nan Pii Ma-noo-mi-ni-keng

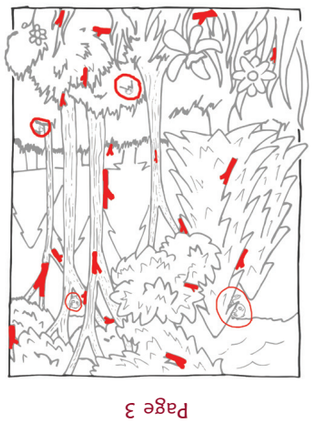
Forest Vocabulary during Wild Rice Harvest

Mtig-min (Acorn)
We-siinh-ik (Animals)
Mi-gi-zi (Bald Eagle)
Na-gek (Bark)
Wii-gwe-dong (Bay)
Wii-gwas (Birch)
Be-nesh-iinh-ik (Birds)
Wiis-gak (Black Ash tree)
Aazh-i-gan (Bridge)
Pak-yashk (Cattail)
Gii-zhik (Cedar tree)
Aki (Earth/ground)
Mii-gwan (Feather)
Gii-goonh (Fish)
Mti-gwa-ki (Forest/woods)
Gti-kan (Field)
Ki-niw (Golden Eagle)
Miish-koonhs (Grass)
Maa-noonhs (Ironwood)
Zaa-gaa-gan (Lake)
Naak-nashk (Rush/Bullrush)
Mii-gwech-wen-dam (Giving thanks)

Ni-na-tig (Maple tree)
Sa-si-waans (Nest)
Mtig-mish (Oak tree)
Goo-koo-koo (Owl)
Zhing-waak (Pine tree)
Zhing-waak-min (Pinecone)
Mshko-de (Prairie)
Zii-bi (River)
Jiib-kenh (Root)
Miin-kan (Seed)
Mti-goonhs-ak (Small trees)
Gne-big (Snake)
Mi-ki-naak (Snapping Turtle)
Tki-bi (Spring water)
Mzhkwaa-siing (Swamp)
Mii-kan (Trail/path)
Ne-taw-geng (Vegetables)
Nibiish (Water)
Wii-gaash-koonh-en (Weeds)
Bwe-yak (White Ash tree)
Noo-din (Wind)
Naang-we-gan (Wing)

Puzzle Answers

Page 3



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Across
1. Compost
4. Reusable
8. Glass
9. Recycle
11. Litter
12. Reduce

Down
2. Paper
3. Plastic
5. Curbside
6. Waste
7. Chemicals
10. Cardboard

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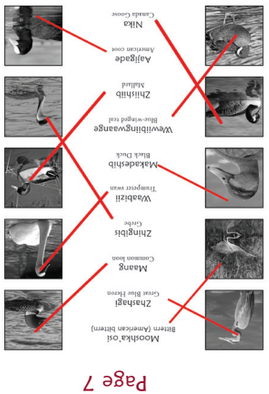

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(From Left to right, top to bottom)

- □ 1. Porcupin
- □ 2. Muskrat
- ☑ 3. Gray Wolf
- □ 4. Turkey
- ☑ 5. Coyote
- □ 6. Elk
- ☑ 7. Cougar
- ☑ 8. American Mink
- ☑ 9. Bobcat
- □ 10. Raccoon
- □ 11. Deer
- □ 12. Striped Skunk
- □ 13. Beaver
- ☑ 14. Badger
- ☑ 15. Red Fox

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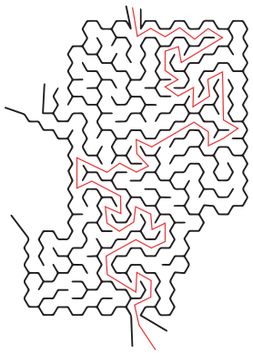

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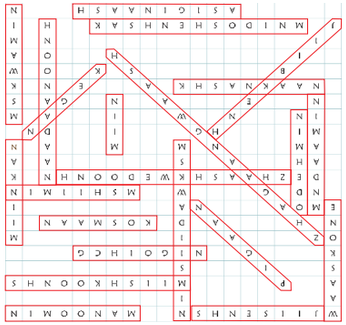

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1. Purple loosestrife
2. Non-native phragmites
3. Reed canary-grass
4. Narrow-leafed cat-tail
5. Eurasian water-milfoil
6. Giant hogweed
7. Autumn olive
8. Spotted knapweed
9. Climbing night shade
10. Garlic mustard
11. Multiflora rose
12. Glossy buckthorn

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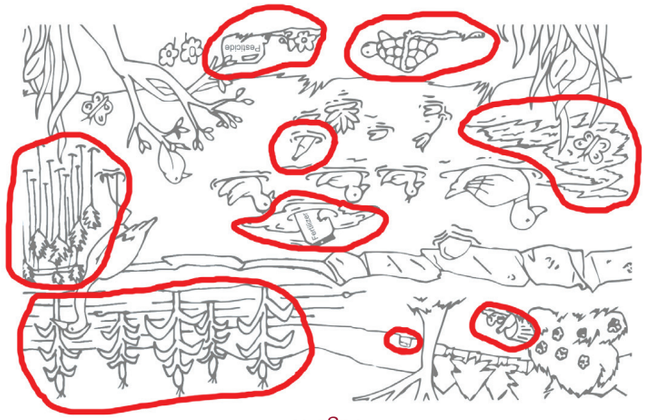

Manoomini-miikaans
THE WILD RICE ROAD

"Manoomini-miikaans - The Wild Rice Road" is an activity book developed by the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe with the purpose to unite two topics that have always been vital to the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe: a respect for our natural resources and a connection to Mother Earth through the Ojibwe language. The book is filled with fun games and activities for all ages, and it provides creative ways to teach about the Ojibwe language and the stewardship of Mother Earth. Our story follows two children on their way to the annual wild rice camp on the Saginaw Bay. During their journey they discover that many of Mother Earth's creatures need their help. Chi-miigwetch for reading, and we hope you enjoy!