

My Journey Home

Family Connection

This week your child is reading *The Birchbark House*, a historical story that tells about an encounter a young Native American girl has with a bear family.

DAY
1

Vocabulary on the Go With your child, imagine that you have come across a bear cub while on a walk in the woods. Suddenly, the cub's mother appears. Try to use these words as you describe the scene together.

deserted reasoned upright bared

Now imagine that the mother bear begins to speak! Draw an illustration and write what the bear might say, using the words *astonished*, *nerve*, and *banish*.

CHALLENGE

DAY
2

Brothers and Sisters The actions of the main character in the story are influenced by her unhappiness with her older sister. With your child, think of some folktales or stories in which a character's actions are affected by a sibling. What message is the storyteller trying to give in each one? Compare and contrast the different lessons the characters learn in each example.

DAY
3

Sniffing Out Scents When the young girl in the story is pinned by a bear, she thinks of all the scents the bear might smell on her, and how the bear smells to her. Play a game with your child. Take turns closing your eyes and smelling different items from your refrigerator. Can you guess what the items are?

A Legend Read and discuss this Native American tale together.

Bear and Chipmunk

One day, Bear was lumbering through the forest, looking for food. As he lifted fallen tree limbs and heavy stones, he marveled to himself, "I am the strongest creature in the land. There is nothing I cannot do!"

A tiny voice chattered, "Oh, is that so? You are not so strong that you can stop the sun from rising!"

Bear looked down and saw a little chipmunk laughing at him. "I can do that! The sun is not stronger than me! I will show you tomorrow!"

Chipmunk laughed at Bear again, and ran to tell all the animals about Bear's foolishness.

Bear stayed awake all night. The next morning, the sun rose as always. Chipmunk squealed with delight! In a flash, Bear angrily pinned Chipmunk with his huge paw. Chipmunk escaped, but Bear's claws left three scars on Chipmunk's back.

From that day, chipmunks wear these signs to remind them why animals should not make fun of one another.



An Honored Creature Bears are revered by many Native American tribes. With your child, think about why this might be. Consider what bears are like, what they do, and how they behave. You can use the Internet or library books for help.



Book Links

- *The Birchbark House*, by Louise Erdrich
- *The Buffalo and the Indians*, by Dorothy Hinshaw Patent **CHALLENGE**



Internet Challenge In the story, Omatkayas enjoys a sweet maple candy. Help your child search the Internet for information about how maple syrup and maple syrup candy are made.

Home Letter

The Birchbark House Home Letter

Dear Family,

This week students will consider the question “How can traditions influence a person’s thoughts and feelings?” as they read the selections. Our main selection is a historical fiction selection. In **The Birchbark House**, Omakayas, a young Ojibwe girl, has an unexpected encounter with a mother bear and her cubs. Students will also read the informational text **Four Seasons of Food**, which tells how the seasons dictated what the Ojibwe hunted and planted.

This week’s...

Target Vocabulary: reasoned, margins, envy, upright, bared, spared, nerve, banish, astonished, deserted

Vocabulary Strategy: Reference materials

Comprehension Skill: Theme—examine characters’ qualities and motives to recognize the theme

Comprehension Strategy: Infer/predict—use text clues to figure out what the author means or what might happen in the future

Writing Focus: Opinion writing—response to literature

Activities to Do Together

Vocabulary

Use the **Target Vocabulary** to play a word game with your child. Take turns giving each other definition clue sentences to figure out the vocabulary word. For example, “We will make him leave town and tell him to never, ever come back.” The answer is *banish*.

What Is the Same?

Talk about some ways life for a child in 1847 would be different than it is for your child. Compare chores, free time, and dangers of life in general. Research first online or at a library, if needed.

When I Read About...

Discuss the last book or story your child read. Have your child draft a paragraph about the book, explaining what it was about and expressing his or her opinions about it. Then help your child revise the paragraph, correcting any spelling errors and adding or deleting details.



Go to the *eBook* to read and listen to this week’s selection.

The Birchbark House

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. storage | 22. cooperative |
| 2. olive | 23. beverage |
| 3. service | 24. heritage |
| 4. relative | 25. apprentice |
| 5. cabbage | |
| 6. courage | |
| 7. native | |
| 8. passage | |
| 9. voyage | |
| 10. knowledge | |
| 11. image | |
| 12. creative | |
| 13. average | |
| 14. justice | |
| 15. detective | |
| 16. postage | |
| 17. cowardice | |
| 18. adjective | |
| 19. village | |
| 20. language | |
| 21. prejudice | |

Name _____ Date _____

The Birchbark House
Vocabulary Word Cards

reasoned

spared

margins

nerve

envy

banish

upright

astonished

bared

deserted

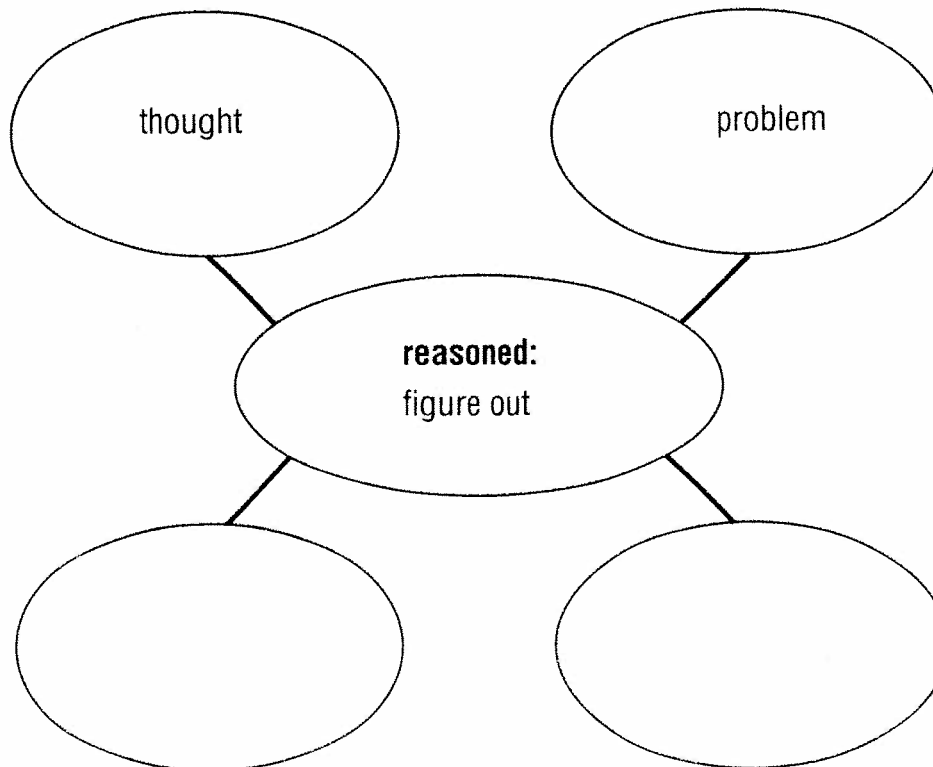
Meet the Ojibwa
Target Vocabulary

Target Vocabulary

Fill in the outer circles of the Web with words that relate to the Target Vocabulary word. Use one of the words from the outer circles in a sentence with the Target Vocabulary word. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, make Webs and write sentences for each of the remaining Target Vocabulary words.

Vocabulary

reasoned	margins	envy
upright	bared	spared
nerve	banish	astonished
deserted		



Sentence:

Name _____

Date _____

Reference Materials

The Birchbark House
Vocabulary Strategies:
Reference Materials

Fill in the blank with a word from the box to complete each sentence.

dictionary thesaurus glossary

1. To find the meaning of a word, you would look in the _____
2. A _____ defines words used in a book.
3. A _____ includes synonyms and antonyms.
4. A _____ can tell you what part of speech a word is.
5. A _____ might also include the pronunciation for each word.

Reference Materials

The Birchbark HouseVocabulary Strategies:
Reference Materials

On the lines below, write a definition for each underlined word.
Then pronounce each word aloud to a partner and discuss the
meanings of the words. Work together to use the words in sentences.
Use a dictionary to complete your work.

1. resourceful

2. instinct

3. gentle

4. risky

5. immobile

Reference Materials

The Birchbark House

Vocabulary Strategies:
Reference Materials

Read the definitions in the box below. Then write TRUE or FALSE next to each statement.

A **dictionary** tells you the definition of a word and how it is pronounced and spelled. It also tells you what part of speech the word is: noun, verb, adjective, or adverb.

A **thesaurus** tells you synonyms and antonyms for a word.

A **glossary** defines a word used in a book. Glossaries are usually found in the back of the book.

1. A dictionary includes a list of antonyms. _____

2. You would use a thesaurus to find synonyms.

3. A glossary only defines words used in a certain book.

4. Definitions are found in a thesaurus. _____

5. A dictionary includes parts of speech. _____

