

# Indian Education for All



## Model Teaching Unit

Language Arts - Grades 5-8

Text-based Inquiry Unit  
for

Louise Erdrich's

## *The Birchbark House*



# Text---based Inquiry Unit Grades 5 – 8 for Louise Erdrich’s The Birchbark House

Developed by Tammy Elser

Published by the Montana Office of Public Instruction

2012, Revised 2024

Cover Image --- Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Ojibwe family outside their dwelling, making miniature canoes, Lake Mille Lacs Reservation. Photograph Collection, Postcard ca. 1910. Location no. E97.33 r69. Negative no. 103538



---

# Text-based Inquiry Unit, Grades 5 – 8 for Louise Erdrich's The Birchbark House

---

Unit developed by Tammy Elser

## Unit Introduction

---

This literature focused unit is designed around the award-winning young adult novel, *The Birchbark House* by Louise Erdrich. It is intended to teach the Essential Understandings about Montana Tribes with an emphasis on the Anishinaabe (Chippewa or Ojibwe). Chippewa people found in Montana include the Little Shell and the people of the Rocky Boy's Reservation (shared with the Cree). Their story is unique, and this tribal group is very diverse --- having migrated over time and been forced to transform elements of their traditional lifestyle in response to a dynamic and changing natural resource base. As a result, Chippewa—or as they call themselves, Anishinaabe peoples—adapted to life-ways that ranged from birchbark and wild rice gathering to plains-style buffalo hunting cultures.

Through this unit, students are immersed in the life of a family as seen through the eyes of a seven-year-old girl and follow that family throughout a year of triumph and tragedy. Set on an island in Lake Superior in the year 1847, this work of historical fiction exposes students to a culture in the midst of change. Teachers of this unit will master a variety of instructional techniques, with emphasis on authentic literacy lessons that directly model comprehension skills, as well as practice rich inferential reading and interpretation of a brilliantly written book.

## Anchor Text

---

The Birchbark House by Louise Erdrich

## Support Texts or Media

---

*The Gift of the Bitterroot* by Johnny Arlee and edited by Antoine Sandoval

["Bear Aware,"](#) Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

[Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians](#), Montana Office of Public Instruction

[Historical Photos](#)

[Hunger Notes](#), World Hunger Education Service

Military communication from General Jeffrey Amherst to Colonel Henry Bouquet, undated

[Montana Indians: Their History and Location](#) from the Montana Office of Public Instruction

[Montana Stories of the Land](#) by Krys Holmes

Montana Tribal Histories: [Educators Resource Guide](#) and [Companion DVD](#) from the Montana Office of Public Instruction

["Ojibwa," Countries and Their Cultures](#) by Loriene Roy

The Sacred Harvest: Ojibway Wild Rice Gathering by Gordon Regguinti

*The Story of Grizzly Bear Looking Up*, edited by Jennifer Greene and illustrator by Antoine Sandoval

## Fast Facts

---

Genre	Historical Fiction
Suggested Grade Levels	5-8
Tribe(s)	Anishinaabe (Ojibwe or Chippewa)
Place	An Island in Lake Superior
Time	1847

## About the Author and Illustrator

---

Louise Erdrich is a novelist, poet, short story writer, essayist, and critic. She is the author of over thirteen novels as well as volumes of poetry, short stories, children's books, and a memoir. Her first novel published in 1985, *Love Medicine*, won the National Book Critics Circle Award and the Best First Fiction Award from the American Academy and Institute of Arts & Letters. Also, in 1985, she was awarded a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship. *The Last Report on the Miracles at Little No Horse* was a finalist for the National Book Award. *The Plague of Doves* won the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. For *The Birchbark House*, Erdrich won the Wordcraft Circle Writer of the Year (Prose --- Children's Literature) Award, among others.

Erdrich was born in 1954, in Little Falls, Minnesota and grew up in Wahpeton, North Dakota where her parents worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. She received an M.A. degree from Johns Hopkins University in 1979. Erdrich's fiction and poetry draws on her Chippewa heritage. She lives in Minnesota and is the owner of Birchbark Books, an independent bookstore.

For *The Birchbark House*, *The Game of Silence*, and *A Porcupine Year*—three books in what is currently a trilogy written for children and young adults—Erdrich is also the illustrator. Her pencil drawings provide a unique perspective into the “minds-eye” of the author, allowing the reader to see Omakayas and her family as imagined by Erdrich. Erdrich has planned seven books in this series of historical fiction, spanning one hundred years of history!

## Text Summary

---

*The Birchbark House* follows Omakayas (o-MA-kay-as), a seven-year-old girl, and her Anishinaabe family, through a year marked by challenge, tragedy, and triumph, as they work together to survive on their island home in Lake Superior. Set against the backdrop of encroaching white

settlement, missionaries, and the fur trade, *The Birchbark House* follows the pattern of the seasons. Starting in summer, Omakayas and her family move to their summer residence along the lake shore—a birchbark house. The days, and each season, are filled with activity focused on the gathering of seasonal foods—hunting, fishing, and harvesting. The bonds of family and community life are seen through the eyes of this special seven-year-old as she grows and changes taking on new responsibilities.



This novel moves in a circle, and much of the action is internal and reflective, as Omakayas matures. Themes of transformation, individual identity, and facing fear are prominent. It stands in stark contrast to most traditional adventure stories for children as the action is within, rather than without—or acting on the world. The story moves in-centrally (like a spiral moving inward), rather than ex-centrally (like a spiral moving outward.) For some students, the circular rather than linear plotline, and the internal nature of the change will feel unusual, even foreign. In addition, the classic theme of human beings vs. nature is different throughout the book. Human beings in *The Birchbark House* are a part of the natural world, not apart from it. Again, this is different than the world view presented in Western novels where human beings triumph over nature. The animal world is equal and parallel to the human world, and the interactions are rich and reciprocal. These cultural differences, actually differences in world view, are part of the magic and power of Erdrich’s writing and *The Birchbark House*. Enter another world. Enjoy!

## Materials

---

- Copies of *The Birchbark House*, one per student
- Chart paper
- Colored marker sets (1 per group)
- Other media (colored pencils, charcoal, pastels, watercolors etc.)
- Popsicle sticks (buy at craft stores), one per student with student’s name written on one end, placed name down in a can, mug, or jar to promote random calling as teacher checks for understanding.
- Tiny post-it flags in four colors, one pack per student is ideal (These can be reused.)
- Removable highlighting tape (Sometimes using this is too slow, causing comprehension to break down—so observe to see if it supports or fails to support individual students.)
- Highlighting markers in three colors (A set of three colors for each student in class is ideal.)
- [Images](#) for unit printed from the Appendices or PowerPoint slide shows located on Office of Public Instruction Indian Education for All website. One set of full page printed gray scale or black and white.
- A second set (2 to 4 copies) of images printed using handout view in PowerPoint slide show with six small slides per page, (again, gray scale or black and white). These can be cut apart and then used to group students in pairs or groups of four, while providing additional background knowledge throughout the unit. Images topically linked to the content support visualizing, historical understanding, culture, and diversity.

**Teacher Tip:** Consider collecting used books at low cost, and then allowing students to highlight in the text, as this allows you to see what they find important, confusing, or interesting as they read. Highlighting tape and post it flags are used to annotate when the books must last many years.

- PowerPoint slides of images available from the Office of Public Instruction Indian Education for All Unit website. These are used for whole class debriefing and can be projected. **Consider using PPT #1 Anishinaabe Images during extended writing times to encourage student’s immersion into the world of this story.**
- PC and PC projector
- Spiral notebooks, one per student, to be used daily throughout the unit for drafts, quick writes, summaries, brainstorming, and a variety of interactive writing to support student comprehension and allow the teacher to check continually for understanding.
- Scrap paper – some in colors, used for notes of clarification, admit and exit tickets, and signaling teacher during silent reading time.
- On-line timer tools (download) in two types, one used only for silent reading and writing time and the other used for group and partner processing and discussions of content and points from the text.
- Sections from [Dr. Lorlene Roy’s brief history of the Ojibwa](#).
- [Montana Indians Their History and Location](#) – “Little Shell History” and “Rocky Boy’s History”
- [Montana Reservation Map](#) (also available in Appendices)
- [Rocky Boy Reservation Tribal History Timeline](#). It is also found on *Montana Tribal Histories: Educators Resource Guide* Companion DVD.
- [Ojibwe migration map](#)
- Excerpts from The Birchbark House:
  - “The Girl From Spirit Island”
  - “Deydey’s Ghost Story”
  - “Grandma’s Story – Fishing the Dark Side of the Lake”
  - “Nanabozho and the Muskrat Make an Earth”
- Military communication from Lord Jeffery Amherst, located in appendices.
- *Montana Tribal Histories: Educators Resource Guide* and *Companion DVD*, pages 32 and 33 (This was also sent by OPI to school libraries.)
- Excerpts from [Montana Stories of the Land](#) regarding smallpox (also located in the appendices).
- Excerpt from *A People’s History of the United States – 1492 – Present*, by Howard Zinn regarding French-Indian War history and smallpox (also located in the appendices). Possible Zinn secondary source on Amherst and French and Indian War.
- [Information](#) regarding bear awareness.
- *The Story of Grizzly Bear Looking Up*, page 6, illustrated by Antoine Sandoval
- *The Gift of the Bitterroot* by Johnny Arlee and edited by Antoine Sandoval
- [Hunger Notes](#), by World Hunger Education Service

**Teacher Tip:** Use an hourglass to denote silent time and a time bomb for talking time and stay consistent throughout the school year. Follow your own rules regarding talk during reading and writing time. If one person is talking, no one is reading.

## Standards

---

Please see the OPI website for detailed information about [Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians](#) and [Montana Content Standards](#).

## Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians

1. There is great diversity among the twelve sovereign tribes of Montana in their languages, cultures, histories, and governments. Each tribe has a distinct and unique cultural heritage that contributes to modern Montana.
2. Just as there is great diversity among tribal nations, there is great diversity among individual American Indians as identity is developed, defined, and redefined by entities, organizations, and people. There is no generic American Indian.
3. The ideologies of Native traditional beliefs and spirituality persist into modern day life as tribal cultures, traditions, and languages are still practiced by many American Indian people and are incorporated into how tribes govern and manage their affairs. Additionally, each tribe has its own oral histories, which are as valid as written histories. These histories predate the “discovery” of North America.
6. History is a story most often related through the subjective experience of the teller. With the inclusion of more and varied voices, histories are being rediscovered and revised. History told from American Indian perspectives frequently conflicts with the stories mainstream historians tell.
7. American Indian tribal nations are inherent sovereign nations, and they possess sovereign powers, separate and independent from the federal and state governments. However, under the American legal system, the extent and breadth of self-governing powers are not the same for each tribe.

## English Language Arts and Literacy Standards

### Reading Standards for Literature (RL)

RL.5.6 RL.5.7, RL 5.9; RL 6.6, RL 6.7 RL 6.9; RL 7.6, RL 7.7, RL 7.9; RL 8.6, RL 8.7, RL 8.9

### Reading Standards for Informational Text (RI)

RI 6.4, RI 6.5, RI 6.6; RI 7.4, RI 7.5, RI 7.6; RI 8.4, RI 8.5, RI 8.6

## Social Studies Standards

SS.H.5.4, S SS.G.6-8.5, S.H.6-8.6

## Comprehensive List of Learning Targets Addressed Throughout Unit

Learning targets are written as “I statements” and ones to be emphasized in any daily lesson are intended to be shared with students up front—posted or projected in the classroom in advance of the lesson—and referred to by the teacher during demonstration, guided practice, or mini-lessons. Targets are intended to support meta-cognition and mastery on the part of students and important content integration for teachers.

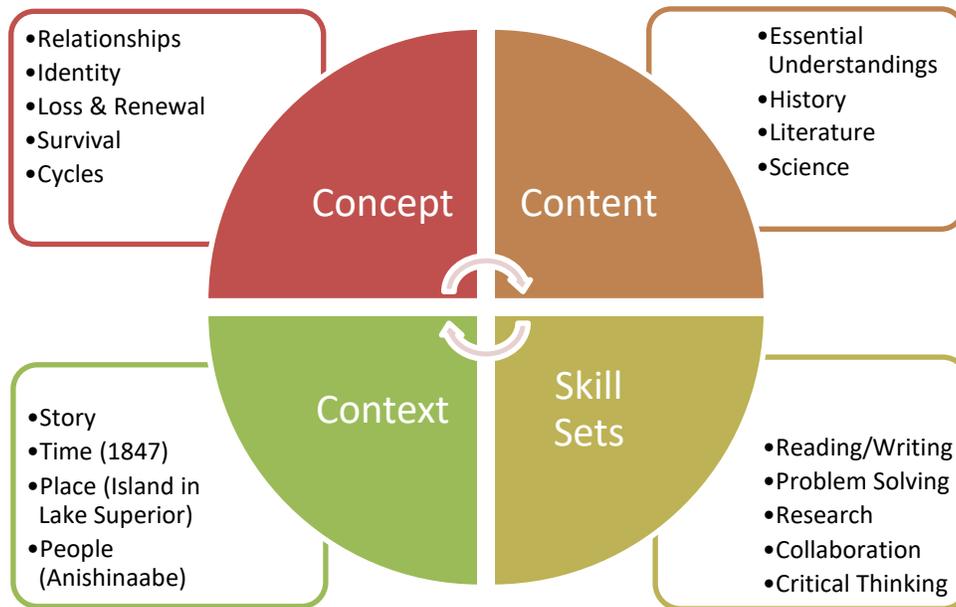
*To be effective, be selective.* While each day a large list of targets is possible, based on your emphasis, try to pick one from each of the following four domains. Be aware that even when a learning target is not explicitly taught or emphasized on a given day by the teacher, it is still being implicitly practiced and developed.

Targets are developed in each of four critical domains to support integration.

- **Content** Facts and information in a specific content area or domain. For this unit the *Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Tribes* are central to the content.
- **Skill Sets** Skills are developed and practiced as the unit unfolds. They are taught both explicitly in mini-lessons and demonstrations and implicitly as part of the way students are required to process content knowledge. Literacy (with emphasis on reading comprehension, critical literacy, and writing), speaking and listening skills, research skills, thinking skills, and technology skills are all developed and practiced throughout the unit. These are enduring and transferable.
- **Context** Story, time, place, and people are all contexts employed to support students developing deeper content knowledge and practicing essential skills. The context for this unit is the novel, *The Birchbark House*. Note the focus is not teaching the novel, but rather teaching the skills and essential understandings through—**or in the context**—of the novel. Knowledge of the elements of literature is always developed most effectively through deep inferential reading of a novel. The point is not to memorize the plot and story line of the novel, but rather to use the novel to contextualize content and practice literacy and thinking skills.
- **Concept** Big ideas that can be **generalized** to other settings, texts, or situations are concepts. These tend to be overarching and universal ideas or themes. As students become consciously aware of the concepts and big ideas addressed, they make powerful inferential connections to other content areas and other contexts. Identity, culture, survival, courage vs. fear, and relationships are some concepts explored in the unit.

Each domain represents unique instructional opportunities for learners. While all the learning targets are presented here for the entire month-long unit, selected sub-sets are presented with more specific context in the day-by-day plans that follow. Note that every day each of the four domains is addressed, some overtly, and others in more subtle ways. For additional information about the four domains and content integration, see *The Framework: A Practical Guide for Montana Teachers and Administrators Implementing Indian Education for All*.

Finally, teaching using complete works of great literature, specifically novels, has gone out of vogue over the past ten years. Some argue the time required to read longer texts and fully develop these units with lots of student discussion, debating interpretations, and reflective writing is better spent practicing skills to assure decoding accuracy, build fluency, and vocabulary. The argument is the whole is merely the sum of its parts, and teaching the parts is efficient and far less arduous for both the teacher and the students. Unfortunately, literacy developed through drills and worksheets is very different from the literacy developed in the context of complete and beautifully written stories. One stays at the lowest levels of literacy development and fails to promote intrinsic motivation to read independently. The other, as the comprehensive list of learning targets following suggests, does the opposite—practicing interpretive skills, critical literacy, writing, and connecting the dots across different content areas, world views and times, places, and peoples through a great story. Literacy is complex, multifaceted, and synergistic. It exercises the human brain like no other activity. There are no short cuts. The time spent is worth it.



### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I know the tribal names Chippewa and Ojibwe refer to the same people, some of whom call themselves the Anishinaabe. (EU1)
- I know that among the 12 tribal nations of Montana, two include Chippewa or Anishinaabe people, and they are located on the Rocky Boy’s Reservation and among the Little Shell, with headquarters located in Great Falls. (EU1)
- I know in Montana, beyond the Rocky Boy’s Reservation, Chippewa people were without a land base—hence the term “landless Indians” is used in relation to some Montana Chippewa or Anishinaabe. (EU1)
- I understand Montana Anishinaabe (Chippewa) peoples came from a culture that used birchbark, wild rice, maple sugar, fish, farming, hunting, and gathering for subsistence—all natural resources found abundantly in the Great Lakes and Minnesota lake lands.
- I understand Montana Anishinaabe (Chippewa) peoples adopted a lifestyle consistent with Plains tribes (particularly their rivals for land and territory, the Dakota) and shifted from a birchbark culture to a buffalo culture as they were forced farther and farther west. (EU5, EU2)
- I recognize the importance of stories and the oral traditions to Anishinaabe peoples to teach, entertain, and maintain traditions. (EU3)
- I know different types of stories are told by different people and have different protocols for their use. (EU3)
- I know that today, as well as historically, individuals within any group are unique in their identity which can range from assimilated to traditional. (EU2)
- I recognize the individual differences in Omakayas’ family, and the members of their village in all areas (political, religious, skills, vocation, lifeways). (EU2)
- I understand this work of historical fiction is told from the perspective of the author, and in spite of her extensive knowledge and research, will carry her point-of-view or subjective perspective on this time and place in Anishinaabe history. (EU6)

- I understand at this point in history the Anishinaabe people were increasingly pressured to move westward as their territory was encroached on by non-Indian settlers. (EU5)
- I understand as a people, and like all American Indian people, the Anishinaabe had rights to their land and lifestyle and the authority to act on those rights (aka to move, not move, fight, assimilate or not, etc.). This is known as inherent sovereignty. (EU7)

### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I ask questions and look for answers before I read, as I read, and after I read. (Questioning).
- I identify the main ideas of the text and the author’s message. (Determining Importance)
- I connect what I know about myself, others, or the world to understand what I read. (Making Connections, Activating Schema)
- I use context to define an unknown word when I get stuck. (Fix-Up Strategy)
- I reread to clarify meaning when I become confused or lose my train of thought. (Fix-Up Strategy)
- I use my questions and connections to increase my understanding of the text when I become confused. (Fix-Up Strategy)
- I slow down if the story stops making sense. (Fix-Up Strategy)
- I combine what I know with new information to understand the text. (Synthesizing)
- I create pictures in my mind as I read. (Visualizing)
- I read “between the lines” making logical predictions, guesses, and hunches I prove or disprove as I read. (Inferring)
- I draw on what I know already to support my understanding of the text and fill in gaps in my comprehension. (Inferring)
- I summarize what I have read in both speech and writing.
- I think about interpretations of a text and write/say what I think.
- I interpret what I have read in both speech and writing.
- I debate ambiguous material from a text in both speech and writing, drawing evidence from the text and sometimes connecting to other texts, or primary source materials, to support my point.
- I listen respectfully and attentively to the summarizations, interpretations, and debated points of others.
- I provide thoughtful feedback to others on their summaries, interpretations, or debate points drawing ideas from the text and other resources.
- I write descriptions of characters, settings, instructions, and other elements found in a text.
- I write a memoir or segment of my autobiography.
- I write a letter.
- I write a compare/contrast essay.
- I use standard conventions on all formal writing at the final draft stage of the writing process.
- I represent (show) what I know using graphics, drawings, or other media.
- I use other texts and sources of information to learn about a topic.
- I work cooperatively in small groups and with a partner.
- I work independently.
- I manage time to complete independent and group projects on time and fulfill important requirements.

## Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded in the Novel)

- I am aware of the importance of identity (knowing who you are) to human beings. (Identity)
- I understand culture plays a part in determining identity and relationships in human societies. (Culture, Identity, Relationships)
- I understand the roles we play (talents, skills, and responsibilities) are important to the overall wellbeing of a community. (Relationships, Culture, Identity)
- I recognize that in this story, as well as other stories, that roles, responsibilities, and relationships were keys to survival. (Survival)
- I recognize patterns of roles, relationships, identities, and cultures in other contexts or stories historically very different from the stories of the Anishinaabe. (Relationships, Culture, Identity, Patterns)

**Teacher Tip:** If you teach in a departmentalized setting, consider partnering with a social studies teacher teaching U.S. or Montana History. Partnering will enrich the students learning, allow for more time on important ideas, and possibly cut the time required to conduct this inquiry unit by a week, while allowing for even richer discussion, reading, writing, and thinking. If not departmentalized, then use this in both social studies and language arts instruction, affording more time to process.

## Context (Historical Fiction—*The Birchbark House*—Story, Time, Place, and People)

- I understand a story, like *The Birchbark House*, can transport me into a different time and place and some stories come from imagination alone and may be real (true to life) or fantastic (not true to life), while other stories take elements from actual historical events and blend these with imagined people.
- I understand stories that blend actual historical events with imagined people or circumstances are called Historical Fiction.
- I recognize the time in which a work of historical fiction is set will tell me a lot about the book and the historical events within it. In *The Birchbark House* the time is specific, 1847.
- I recognize the place in which a work of historical fiction is set will tell me a lot about the book, and the historical events within it. In *The Birchbark House* the place is specific and real, the community of La Pointe, Wisconsin, on the Island of Madeline in what is now known as Lake Superior.
- I recognize the people who a work of historical fiction is about determine the historical events within story and the perspectives and points of view from which the history is told. In *The Birchbark House* the people are specific, the Anishinaabe.
- I recognize some elements of culture, language, beliefs, and perspectives **may be** identified with other Anishinaabe people, now located in different parts of the country, including Montana's Rocky Boy's Reservation and the Little Shell.
- I recognize some elements of culture, language, beliefs, and perspectives **may not be** identified with other Anishinaabe people, now located in different parts of the country, including Montana's Rocky Boy's Reservation and the Little Shell, resulting from changes in natural resources and the accompanying lifeways associated with those resources. (For example, birchbark and wild rice are not features of historical or present-day Montana Chippewa cultures because they are not found in Montana.)

## Authentic Literacy lesson Steps Overview

---

This unit is designed to support teachers by employing a classic and highly effective instructional strategy in the form of an authentic literacy lesson. For further information on the purpose, use, and potential academic power of the Authentic Literacy Lesson template, please refer to *Focus: Elevating the Essentials to Radically Improve Student Learning* by Mike Schmoker. In a nutshell, this template is designed to promote development of 21st century skills that include the *Seven Survival Skills* articulated by Dr. Tony Wagner in his groundbreaking book the *Global Achievement Gap*.

### Tony Wagner's Seven Survival Skills for Careers, College, & Citizenship in the 21st Century

1. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
2. Collaboration Across Networks and Leading by Influence
3. Agility and Adaptability
4. Initiative and Entrepreneurship
5. Effective Oral and Written Communication
6. Accessing and Analyzing Information
7. Curiosity and Imagination

(Wagner 2008, 14-38)

In this unit, extensive content knowledge is addressed in the context of a great work of historical fiction, while students practice all aspects of literacy (talk, read, and write) as well as critical literacy, critical thinking, and problem solving. They do this work independently, in pairs, small groups, and whole class discussions. The basic steps to the Authentic Literacy Lesson are employed as each of the 14 chapters of the novel are read by students, silently and in-class. These steps for the class periods or days 5-18 include the following:

- Students write or talk their way in, exploring what they know or think they know, to activate schema.
- Build background knowledge directly pre-teaching content or vocabulary **only as necessary** to support deeper comprehension.
- Establish purpose for reading – pose the big question and post it on the board along with the learning targets for this lesson. Refer to this periodically, connecting students to these goals.
- Model by reading aloud and thinking aloud while annotating text; demonstrate a single comprehension strategy. Connect your modeling to the learning targets and big question.
- Allow for several rounds of guided practice, as needed, with processing time between each to check for understanding.
- Allow independent practice while you monitor, or occasionally provide individual or small group support.
- Students write or talk their way out, summarizing and synthesizing what they now understand.

The class period pace, based on an estimate of 45 to 55 minutes in a single class period, along with a description of some of the strategies which might be employed during each segment are provided in the table following as a generic tool. This same structure with text specific variations is repeated in the day or class period plans for days 5-18 of the literature focus unit corresponding to each of the 14 chapters in the book. Note that each instructional segment involves reading, writing, and talking on the part of students and checking for and monitoring students understanding (to support re-teaching or explanation of confusing content) on the part of the teacher. Strategies to help students show what they know to support the teacher's formative assessment will be shared throughout the unit and are described in the assessment section, found at the end of the unit. Students read and discuss, on

average, 17 pages per day following this model; however, the typesetting and illustrations are generous, easing the reading.

### Authentic Literacy Lesson – Steps and Pacing Strategy

 <p>3-5 min</p>	<p><b>Write your way in.</b></p> <p>Allow about five minutes to have students conduct a quick write, an admit ticket, or a descriptive or persuasive paragraph related to the reading. This can serve several purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It activates background knowledge or schema leading to deeper comprehension.</li> <li>• It connects text to self, world, or other texts.</li> <li>• It practices the critical skill of writing on demand.</li> <li>• It ignites curiosity about text.</li> <li>• It serves as a “dip stick” for teachers to check for prior knowledge.</li> <li>• It may afford an opportunity to employ key vocabulary (both receptive and productive capacities).</li> </ul>
 <p>5 min</p>	<p><b>Build background knowledge; establish purpose for reading; pose the big question and post on the board.</b></p> <p>Depending on observed needs, take five minutes or less to orient students to the big ideas in the text to be read. Sometimes this includes reading a short segment to gain the flavor, or having students read a quick article or paragraph about the topic. Sometimes a concept map or graphic organizer is presented, and highly selective pre-teaching of critical vocabulary as required.</p>
 <p>5-10 min</p>	<p><b>Model, read-aloud, and think-aloud while annotating text and demonstrating comprehension strategies.</b></p> <p>Take the first few paragraphs or pages, project them using a document camera (note that Kindle or PC versions allow you to copy passages into a Word document and mark up using review tools). Comprehension strategies: making connections; visualizing; inferring; determining importance; and synthesizing.</p>
 <p>5-7 min</p>  <p>10-15 min</p>	<p><b>Guided practice while teacher checks for understanding.</b></p> <p>As students “have a go” reading a section of the text and annotating (this can be done with post-it flags that are removable and re-usable or using a double entry journal or other note taking tool), the teacher roves, occasionally posing questions to support deeper thinking or to guide students to clarify misunderstanding. At the end, for the last minute or so, pause and have students talk to a partner about what they now understand the text to be about. After sharing, call on random pairs to report out. Continue guided practice for at least one more segment to ensure students comprehend the text. Lengthen the reading time as your observations indicate students are confident and engaged in content.</p>

 10-15 min 	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <p>After two or even three sessions of guided practice with talking and checking for understanding by the teacher, students continue the reading independently. The teacher monitors for engagement (page turning and eye tracking) and any evidence of frustration. Use notes (write note, raise hand) to address student questions. Critical to the success of the reading segments in guided practice and independent practice is respecting silence during reading times. The goal is short bursts of total concentration punctuated by pair-share and whole group report out or student’s written summary reflection on content in some type of structured note taking. At the close of independent practice session, refocus students on the purpose established for the reading or the big question to be answered. Calling randomly, ask students to answer the big question. Conduct a discussion or debate. Use line ups or other group strategies to expose differences in interpretation. Require students to justify their interpretation by showing evidence from the text.</p>
 3-5 min	<p><b>Write your way out.</b></p> <p>Ask students “Now what do you know?” and have them write what they now understand, predict what will happen next, or reflect on text to self, text to text, or text to world connections. This can be captured in a journal or learning log which the students quick write from the opening. Have them draw a line to distinguish pre-reading reflection from post reading reflection. Synthesizing and summarizing in their own words are also great strategies. Up the ante over time having students write these in different forms (paragraph, letter, persuasive essay, etc.). Have students occasionally share this writing with each other in small groups or use the following day to build background and re-engage with text prior to reading. If rich discussion has taken all in class writing time, assign them the question as an exit ticket. Allow a few minutes the next day for them to clarify or capture their thoughts as required.</p>

Finally, note this guidance is **suggested. This is not a script.** As reading progresses and monitoring indicates students are reading and comprehending the text, then some guided practice, modeling, and building background is reduced and on some days may not be conducted at all. Success determines how much support is necessary. These elements are intended to be a scaffold, but if implemented rigidly, without regard for individual needs, this scaffold will feel more like a shackle.

When students become deeply engaged in discussion or debate—celebrate! These rare moments are of greater value than the exit ticket you planned, which can always be captured the next day. Work hard to get them all that engaged, and when it happens, allow it to take precedence. Be careful! It is easy to miss the bell and end up with 20 tardy and excitedly debating students. At that moment, you have created readers and thinkers for life.

## Day by Day Plans – Overview

Day	Lesson Segment	Protocols or Assignments
1	Before Reading—Activate Prior Knowledge	Writer’s Workshop, Memoir—“When I Was 7”
2	Before Reading—Activate Prior Knowledge	Writer’s Workshop, Memoir—“When I Was 7”
3	Before Reading—Build Background,	Building Background Knowledge Workshop
4	Before Reading—Build Background,	Building Background Knowledge Workshop
5	During Reading—Chapter 1, Visualizing, EU1	Authentic Literacy Lesson (A.L.L.), Description
6	During Reading—Chapter 2, Questions, EU2,	A.L.L., Omakayas Revisited
7	During Reading—Chapter 3, Inferring, EU3,	A.L.L., Omakayas Revisited
8	During Reading—Chapter 4, Predicting, EU3	A.L.L., Circle Anchor Chart Summary
9	During Reading—Chapter 5, Visualizing,	A.L.L., Expert Team Protocol, Histories
10	During Reading—Chapter 6, Predicting EU3,	A.L.L., <i>The Sacred Harvest</i>
11	During Reading—Chapter 7, EU3, 2	A.L.L.
12	During Reading—Chapter 8, EU3, 2	A.L.L., Circle Anchor Chart Summary
13	During Reading—Chapter 9, EU3, 2	A.L.L.
14	During Reading—Chapter 10, Connecting	A.L.L.
15	During Reading—Chapter 11, Synthesizing	A.L.L., Circle Anchor Chart, <i>Grizzly Bear Looking</i>
16	During Reading—Chapter 12, Compare EU3,	A.L.L., <i>Gift of the Bitterroot</i>
17	During Reading—Chapter 13, EU2	A.L.L.
18	During Reading—Chapter 14, Predict, EU2, 3	A.L.L., Finish Circle Anchor Chart
19	After Reading—Synthesis, Text to Self	Writer’s Workshop, Compare / Contrast Essay
20	After Reading—Synthesis, Text to Self	Writer’s Workshop, Compare / Contrast Essay

### Days One and Two—Before Reading—“When I Was Seven”—Write Your Way In

#### Learning Targets Day One and Two

#### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I write a memoir of myself at age 7 or 8.
- I conduct research on my life at age 7 by examining family photos, talking to a family member, or looking at old documents (school papers, etc.) to support my memory.
- I reflect on my life, likes, dislikes, activities, attitudes, and responsibilities in developing my memoir.
- I interview others to gain more details.
- I develop my writing with important details resulting from my research.
- I publish my memoir to share with my family.

#### Steps

1. At the opening of class, project the following questions on the board and invite students to generate a list in response to these questions.
  - What were you like when you were 7 or 8 years old?
  - Where did you live?
  - What did you do?

**Teacher Tip:** If you can, consider timing Day One for a Thursday or Friday allowing a weekend for students to conduct interviews with a family member or gather photos or other memorabilia. In addition, make the due date for this important assignment Day Five or Six of the unit, allowing lots of time for writing, revising, editing, and publishing.

- What did you look like?
  - Who were your friends?
  - What were your favorite things?
  - What were your least favorite things?
  - What chores were yours to do?
  - Did you have pets? Siblings?
  - What did you do for fun?
  - What was a typical day like?
2. Next, with their lists in hand to support memory of details, invite students to take ten minutes to begin writing a memoir of their lives as seven- or eight-year-olds.
  3. Use the following quick write protocol to capture this first draft.
    - Set writing timer for 5-10 minutes. Use protocol for quick-writes.
    - Write quickly and do not stop.
    - You already have details in your list, now is the time to begin to tell your story.
    - This is your life story. Be honest.
    - Go! Create urgency. Allow five to ten minutes for the quick write.
  4. As students write, so do you, on the exact same topic.
  5. When the timer goes off, have students take time to share their ideas with a partner.
    - What parts are most interesting?
    - What are least interesting?
    - Can they remember anything unique they did back then?
    - Are memories clear and specific or vague?
  6. After their sharing, pull the class together while you share yours. When I do this, I tell them I have a confession to make, that I had help, and because I knew we would write these this week, I found a picture. (If you have one, now produce and share a photo of yourself at about age seven.)
  7. Prepare two pieces in advance for modeling. One is a list of stuff you did, who you liked, favorite foods, colors, etc. The second is a piece about something you did or that happened to you. The first is a list of facts and the second is a specific story of an event. In mine, it is the day I cut my foot, we did not have a car, and our kind neighbor—now in his eighties—took my mom and me to the emergency room to get stitches. Write your list and story, or at least think about them in advance. Be prepared to project them and share.
  8. Take about five to ten minutes to show students the difference between the pieces. Then ask them to think about a story they will continue to develop (funny, scary, sad, or happy) that captures who they were when they were seven. Tell them the list of items in their first brainstorm will make great supporting details.
  9. Allow the rest of the class period for drafting.

**Teacher Tip:** One key to getting students to automatically follow directions and engage as readers and writers is to model the behavior. If you do it yourself, in exactly the way you want students to address an assignment, they will as well.

10. Assign the following homework for over a weekend.
  - Talk to a parent, sibling, or best friend from the time about what you were like and any special things—or even better, daily things the family did.
  - Ask if there are any photos, and if so, borrow them for a day or so.
  - Look for first person material or primary sources. Are there news clippings from the fair, programs from performances, letters from family or did you keep a diary? If so, gather, read, and think. What story of your seven-year-old life captures who you were?
  - If you cannot remove an item, or something is fragile, take notes or even a picture and bring these to school on Monday.
11. Monday and throughout the week, allow for the stages of the writing process. Draft, revise (after sharing with a peer), edit, and finally publish.
12. You may want to spend extra time on these as the published pieces are often keepsakes. They would make great Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, or Grandparent’s Day gifts.

Reserve a copy of the stories after publication to be used for juxtaposition in the final writing exercise comparing their own life stories to that of Omakayas.

## Days Three and Four—Before Reading—Building Background Knowledge Workshop

### Learning Targets Days Three and Four

#### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I know the tribal names Chippewa and Ojibwe refer to the same people, some of whom call themselves the Anishinaabe. (EU1)
- I know that among the 12 tribal nations of Montana, two include Chippewa or Anishinaabe people, and they are located on the Rocky Boy’s Reservation and among the Little Shell, a tribe headquartered in Great Falls, MT. (EU1)
- I know in Montana, beyond the Rocky Boy’s Reservation, Chippewa people were without a land base—hence the term “landless Indians” is used in relation to some Montana Chippewa or Anishinaabe. (EU1)
- I understand Montana Anishinaabe (Chippewa) peoples came from a culture that used birchbark, wild rice, maple sugar, fish, farming, hunting, and gathering for subsistence—all natural resources found abundantly in the Great Lakes and Minnesota lake lands.
- I understand Montana Anishinaabe (Chippewa) peoples adopted a lifestyle consistent with Plains tribes (particularly their rivals for land and territory, the Dakota) and shifted from a birchbark culture to a buffalo culture as they were forced farther and farther west. (EU5, EU2)

#### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I ask questions and look for answers before I read, as I read, and after I read. (Questioning)
- I connect what I know about myself, other books, or the world to understand what I read. (Making Connections, Activating Schema)
- I combine what I know with new information to understand the text. (Synthesizing)
- I read “between the lines” making logical predictions, guesses, and hunches I prove or disprove as I read. (Inferring)
- I draw on what I know already to support my understanding of the text and fill in gaps in my comprehension. (Inferring)

- I summarize what I have read in both speech and writing.
- I listen respectfully and attentively to the ideas of others.
- I provide thoughtful feedback to others on their summaries, interpretations, or debate points, drawing ideas from the text and other resources.
- I represent (show) what I know using graphics, drawings, or other media.
- I use other texts and sources of information to learn about a topic.
- I work cooperatively in small groups and with a partner.

### Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded in the Novel)

- I recognize and use patterns of information found in various texts to more deeply understand the connections between them.

### Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)

- I recognize some elements of culture, language, beliefs, and perspectives **may be** identified with other Anishinaabe people, now located in different parts of the country, including Montana’s Rocky Boy’s Reservation and the Little Shell.
- I recognize some elements of culture, language, beliefs, and perspectives **may not be** identified with other Anishinaabe people, now located in different parts of the country, including Montana’s Rocky Boy’s Reservation and the Little Shell, resulting in changes from natural resources and the accompanying life ways associated with those resources. (For example, birchbark, wild rice, and maple sugar are not features of historical or contemporary Montana Chippewa cultures because they are not found in Montana.)

## Steps

### Preparation

1. Determine groups of four in advance based on personalities and reading levels.
2. Use PowerPoint #1 Mystery Photographs (in Appendices – Mystery Photographs, images 1-6).
3. Print or photocopy photos, one photo for each group.
4. To assign students to groups and have them experience these assignments randomly, write the names of group members on the back of their assigned photo, separated widely on the page from each other.
5. Using an exacto knife or scissors, cut the photos into pieces from the back side so a student’s name appears on each piece, jigsaw puzzle style.
6. Mix up and place photos, picture down, names up, randomly on a table.
7. Have chart paper, paper, markers, and tape ready.

**Teacher Tip:** A Building Background workshop is a powerful way to begin an in-depth study of a topic. It can also be used to introduce a literature study unit of any kind. It quickly generates curiosity and interest as students activate and build background knowledge. It demonstrates the importance of social construction of meaning as students work together to understand difficult text and new concepts. In addition, extensive use of content area (informative) texts and other media forms are promoted, adding to students understanding of various genres, forms, and methods of representing data. Many thanks to Mary Jo Swartley of Paragon Education Network for sharing her take on this valuable instructional protocol.

### Starting the Lesson

8. Direct students to go to the table with the **photo puzzle pieces**, find their name, and reconstruct their photo. To do so, they will have to mingle and locate their group members matching their puzzle pieces. Time this activity to keep them on task, musical chairs style.
9. Once students know their group assignments, have them move to an assigned table or rearrange the room to accommodate group seating.
10. Give each group a large piece of chart paper and have them assemble and tape their photo together, keeping it separate from the chart paper.
11. Next, individually in notebooks, have students examine the photo assigned to their group.
12. Based on a close examination, ask students to write what they see. The idea is to paint a picture in the mind of a reader that would allow them to select this picture from a line up accurately.
13. Have them draw a line under this first observation.
14. Next, tell students everything they experience, read, or view today will be in some way related. Their task is to read and view in order to connect the dots between seemingly unrelated content.
15. Continue with a **mystery piece**. Pass out a copy of the primary source communication from Jeffery Amherst (available in the appendices). Do not tell students anything about the text.
16. Allow five minutes and have them decode (some of this is letter by letter) the message in this difficult-to-read, hand-written communication.
17. Debrief, decoding the text, writing what they say on the board (groups discuss to come to consensus).
18. Once the message is correct or close to correct, allow students a few minutes in groups to discuss.
  - What does this note mean?
  - Who do you think wrote this note?
  - When do you think it was written? Why?
  - What type of communication do you think this is?
19. After discussion, have them write a short reflection in their journals regarding their hunches or predictions about the primary source.
20. Next, have groups capture their ideas on the chart paper, by beginning a graphic organizer, web, list or drawing related to the photo and primary source. This is in one color marker.
21. When they are done, allow students five minutes to read the passage *The Girl from Spirit Island* having students flag every time something puzzles them.
22. After reading, students discuss and try to solve or propose ideas about the puzzling elements.

**Teacher Tip:** Note the Amherst primary source document contains content potentially troubling to less mature students. Carefully consider its use with the unique characteristics of your students in mind. An alternate mystery piece would be a photocopy of the illustration from page 6 of *The Story of Grizzly Bear Looking Up* (Family in Mourning). (Permission granted for this use.) This book has been sent by OPI to all elementary libraries.

23. Now, in a new color marker, have the group add another layer of information, ideas, and connections to the chart paper with ideas generated from *The Girl from Spirit Island*.
24. Next, provide students with a packet of different articles or images each printed on different colored paper. These should vary in length and level of difficulty. (List follows) This set includes two articles or documents per student, but one will do for younger students or lower level readers. Some article/image masters are found in the Appendices; some, you will need to download from the Internet.
  - Download from *Countries and Their Cultures*. “Ojibwa” by Lorlene Roy:
    - Section 1 (Overview, History, Migration to the Great Lakes, First Contact with Europeans)
    - Section 2 (Traditional Culture)
    - Section 3 (Relations with Non-Native Americans, Acculturation and Assimilation, Transformation of Culture)
  - Located in the Appendices:
    - Rocky Boy’s Reservation from Montana Indians: Their History and Location
    - Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa from Montana Indians: Their History and Location
    - Reservations Map from Montana Indians: Their History and Location
    - Excerpts from Montana Stories of the Land
    - Excerpt from A People’s History of the United States – 1492 --- Present
  - Sent by OPI to school libraries:
    - Montana Tribal Histories: Educators Resource Guide and Companion DVD, page 32
25. Each member of the group reads one or two of the articles, text coding for new information with an “N” and indicate questions with a “?”.
26. After ten minutes, each member shares new knowledge and group adds to the chart in third color.
27. Debrief by having each group share their anchor chart with their findings as to how these materials are connected and the details that connect them.
28. Finally, have students take out original thoughts in their journals or notebooks and, under the line, write what they now know and understand about the topic(s).
29. Posters can be hung in the room and students can add new material or ideas on post-it notes (or pose questions, make, or confirm predictions, etc.) throughout the unit.
30. Jig saw articles, mystery pieces and other media will be brought back for different purposes during or at the end of the unit as a form of repeated reading, leading to greater mastery of the content and concepts under development.

## Day Five—During Reading—Chapter 1: The Birchbark House

### Summary Chapter 1

It is summer, and Omakayas (o-MA-kay-as), or Little Frog, is moving from the village of La Pointe on the Island of the Golden-Breasted Wood Pecker on Lake Superior to her family’s summer home, a birchbark house. A seven-year-old, Omakayas helps her grandmother Nokomis build a house from birchbark. She listens as Nokomis prays for forgiveness from the spirit of the tree, and watches as

she finds the right spot to start, makes the first cuts, and peels the bark in long sheets. For a girl of only seven, Omakayas already has many responsibilities and is learning skills needed to help her family survive. Her family includes Deydey, her father who is often gone as he works as a trapper; Grandmother Nokomis; Mama; beautiful older sister Angeline; annoying younger brother Pinch; and beloved baby Neewo.

After a stormy night during which Omakayas is awakened by the frightening noise of an approaching thunderstorm, Omakayas finds herself in the morning faced with her most hated task of scraping a smelly moose hide being prepared for tanning. She tries to sneak away but is caught by her sister Angeline—shamed and angered. In the end, Mama sends her on an errand fetching her scissors from Old Tallow. Omakayas thinks she has dodged the nasty job.

### Essential Understandings Chapter 1

We are introduced to Essential Understanding 1 (Anishinaabe people), Essential Understanding 2 (Omakayas – a unique seven-year-old) and Essential Understanding 3 (birchbark culture among the great lakes Anishinaabe in 1847). Day to day life, seasonal tasks, relationships with family and Omakayas’ relationship to Nokomis are all explored as we come to know this little girl. Students will be surprised by how much work she is expected to do, and the ways that even at the age of seven she contributes to the wellbeing of her family. Students may make self to text connections if they have finished or are near finished with their memoirs, “When I was Seven.” This is a great springboard for discussion and juxtaposition.

### Learning Targets Chapter 1

#### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I know that today, as well as historically, individuals within any group are unique in their identity which can range from assimilated to traditional. (EU2)
- I recognize the individual differences in Omakayas’ family and the members of their village in all areas (political, religious, skills, vocation, lifeways). (EU2)

#### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I use an historical photograph as a source of information to learn about a topic and support visualization.
- I create pictures in my mind as I read. (Visualizing)
- I summarize what I have read in both speech and writing.
- I write a description of Omakayas.
- I work cooperatively in small groups and with a partner.

#### Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded in the Novel)

- I understand the roles we play (talents, skills, responsibilities) are important to the overall wellbeing of a community. (Relationships, Culture, Identity)

#### Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)

- I understand stories that blend actual historical events with imagined people or circumstances are called Historical Fiction.

- I recognize the time, place, and people in which a work of historical fiction is set will tell me a lot about the book and the historical events within it.

## Vocabulary Chapter 1

awl dappled fragrant hummock namesake nimble swales

### Day Five—Authentic Literacy Lesson—Chapter 1

 <p>3-5 min</p>	<p><b>Write your way in.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project historic photo of birchbark house under construction. Post image and question before class.</li> <li>2. Ask: What is this photo about?</li> <li>3. Students have two-three minutes (timer, quick-write rules) to write an explanation for the photo.</li> <li>4. Pair-share with seat buddy what you think the image is about.</li> <li>5. After sharing, call randomly on students to share what they think.</li> <li>6. Record ideas on board and honor all responses.</li> </ol>
 <p>5-7 min</p>	<p><b>Build Background knowledge; establish purpose for reading; pose the big question and post on the board.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seat in groups of four, pass out books, one each.</li> <li>2. Teach students how to review text assigning each group to one of the following: author and back cover; title page; content and acknowledgements; language notes and glossary; prologue.</li> <li>3. Allow one-two minutes for independent exploration, then another two-three for groups to talk.</li> <li>4. Groups conduct quick (one minute or less) reports out to the class regarding content and purpose of assigned text feature.</li> <li>5. Pose question to guide reading: Who is Omakayas?</li> </ol>
 <p>5-10 min</p>	<p><b>Model, read-aloud, and think-aloud while annotating text and demonstrating comprehension strategies.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduce comprehension strategy “visualizing by talking to students about the “movie” that plays in your head as you read.</li> <li>2. Direct students to learning target on visualization.</li> <li>3. Have students close eyes, listen intently.</li> <li>4. Read pages 5-6, pause for discussion.</li> <li>5. Call on <b>random</b> students to share, not volunteers.</li> <li>6. Ask: (Student Name), what did you see in your mind’s eye? How about you, (Student Name)? And, (Student Name), what did you see?</li> <li>7. Share with students what you pictured in your head.</li> <li>8. Continue reading pages six-nine and repeat discussion of visualization.</li> <li>9. Remind students of the learning target and ask them to practice picturing the story in their mind’s eye as they read.</li> </ol>

 5-7 min	<p><b>Guided practice while teacher checks for understanding.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Remind students of question: Who is Omakayas?</li> <li>2. Have students read pages 12-14.</li> <li>3. Pause to discuss storm and check for understanding.</li> <li>4. What just happened? (pair-share or group)</li> <li>5. Is Omakayas afraid? (whole group)</li> <li>6. Call on <b>random</b> students to share, not volunteers.</li> <li>7. Now have students read pages 14-16.</li> <li>8. Pause to discuss and check for understanding.</li> <li>9. Is Omakayas lazy? (discuss in groups, report out opinions)</li> <li>10. How does she respond to getting caught by Angeline?</li> <li>11. How does she feel? How do you know?</li> </ol>
 10-15 min  	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If comprehension, based on observation, flag system, and discussion seems strong, cut loose for independent practice.</li> <li>2. Have students read pages 16-18.</li> <li>3. Have them post a bright post-it on the corner of their desk when done. (Monitor for reading speed.)</li> <li>4. Invite early finishers to go back and reread elements, but ask them not to read ahead.</li> <li>5. Use a paperclip or flag to mark the stopping point.</li> <li>6. When all done, discuss: Who is Omakayas?</li> <li>7. Call <b>randomly</b> and post responses on the board.</li> </ol>
 3-5 min	<p><b>Write your way out.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students individually write a single paragraph description of Omakayas in their notebooks.</li> <li>2. Require at least five details.</li> <li>3. Use a timer to create urgency, maintain focus.</li> <li>4. Include what she looks like, personality traits, temperament, likes and dislikes, etc.</li> <li>5. Be sure students can prove the details they include by returning to the text.</li> </ol>

## Day Six—During Reading—Chapter 2: Old Tallow

### Summary Chapter 2

Old Tallow, as described at the beginning of chapter two, “was so isolated by the force and strangeness of her personality that she could have been surrounded by a huge dark forest. She had never had any children, and each of her three husbands had slunk off in turn during the night, never to be seen again.” (p. 19) In spite of this, Old Tallow holds Omakayas and her family in respect. Living with a pack of angry and sometimes vicious dogs, Omakayas must approach Old Tallow’s house with care. Old Tallow gives Omakayas both the scissors and a piece of maple sugar candy. On her way home, Omakayas debates what to do with the candy—and much like any seven-year-old, decides to keep it for herself. She thinks about her hurt and anger at being laughed at by Angeline. It becomes clear Omakayas longs for her sister’s love and respect. As she reflects, her walk is interrupted by a pair of bear cubs, the first of several encounters. At first afraid, she later goes against what she has been taught, to stay away from cubs as a Mama bear is surely nearby. She offers them berries and they overcome their wariness of her. She imagines the

respect Angeline will have of her if she returns with her new friends. At that point, Omakayas finds herself pinned to the ground by an angry Mama bear. Omakayas realizes her only hope of surviving is to remain still and apologize to the Mama bear. The bear realizes Omakayas will not hurt her cubs and lets her go. Omakayas feels the loss of her new “brothers,” and something has changed.

## Essential Understandings Chapter 2

Essential Understandings two and three are powerfully demonstrated in the nature of the visit with Old Tallow and respect Omakayas shows her, her guilty justification over not sharing the maple sugar treat, and, especially, the encounter with the bears. We see Omakayas’ training and respect for elders—even when she is fearful or wary, in how she addresses Old Tallow. We see the child battle against her cultural values when faced with the candy dilemma. Finally, against cultural norms and the teaching of Mama and Nokomis to stay away from bears, who can be dangerous, (this is a form of respect given to bears) she turns two cubs first into playmates and then brothers. The encounter and communication with the mother bear is a pivotal moment. Culturally, this relationship has significance and is unusual but highly valued.

## Learning Targets Chapter 2

### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I know tribal names Chippewa and Ojibwe refer to the same people, who call themselves the Anishinaabe. (EU1)
- I recognize the individual differences in Omakayas’ family and the members of their village. (EU2)

### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I ask questions and look for answers before I read, as I read, and after I read. (Questioning)
- I read “between the lines” making logical predictions, guesses, and hunches I prove or disprove as I read. (Inferring)
- I revise my written description of Omakayas based on new information found in the text.

### Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded in the Novel)

- I understand culture plays a part in determining identity and relationships in human societies.

### Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)

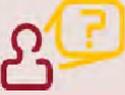
- I understand stories that blend actual historical events with imagined people or circumstances are called Historical Fiction.
- I recognize the time, place, and people in which this work of historical fiction is set.

## Vocabulary Chapter 2

abruptly    cringing    disdain    intimidate    isolated    launch    rangy    runt    warily

Day Six—Authentic Literacy Lesson—Chapter 2: Old Tallow

 <p>3-5 min</p>	<p><b>Write your way in.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students go back to their notebooks and reread their descriptions of Omakayas to jog their memories.</li> <li>2. Ask: What happened so far in the story?</li> <li>3. Students have two-three minutes (timer, quick-write rules) to write what they recall, reengaging.</li> <li>4. Pair-share with seat buddy responses.</li> <li>5. After sharing, call randomly on pairs of students to share what they wrote and remember.</li> <li>6. Restate as they share and extend, asking questions to elicit more details.</li> </ol>
 <p>5 min</p>	<p><b>Build background knowledge; establish purpose for reading; pose the big question and post on the board.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide whole class mini-lesson on genre, with emphasis on historical fiction (see genre table in appendix).</li> <li>2. Ask students in pairs or groups to determine the time, place, and people that make up the context or setting for <i>The Birchbark House</i>.</li> <li>3. Allow three-four minutes for groups to search the book, talk, and write their findings on post-its that will go on the board under labels: Time, Place, People.</li> <li>4. Debrief by confirming, extending, or rejecting each post-it under each label (whole class).</li> <li>5. For example: A group might say “Chippewa” under people. Respond “Yes.” Then extend, noting that Ojibwe, and their name for themselves, Anishinaabe are different names for the same people. (EU1)</li> <li>6. Pose questions to guide reading: Who is Old Tallow? What more do we know about Omakayas?</li> </ol>
 <p>5-10 min</p>	<p><b>Model, read-aloud, and think-aloud while annotating text and demonstrating comprehension strategies.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduce comprehension strategies “questioning” and “inferring” by talking to students about how you constantly ask questions in your head as you read, and then make predictions (guess or hunch), seeking answers as you continue.</li> <li>2. Direct students to learning target on questioning.</li> <li>3. Read pages 19-20, pausing on 19 to ask aloud “I wonder why is Old Tallow so strange.”</li> <li>4. Invite students to make predictions, calling on <b>random</b> students to share, not volunteers.</li> <li>5. Ask: <u>(Student Name)</u>, why do you think she is so strange? How about you, <u>(Student Name)</u>? And, <u>(Student Name)</u>, why do you think?</li> <li>6. Note their predictions on the board.</li> <li>7. On page 20 ask aloud, “I wonder why Old Tallow treats Omakayas differently. Why does she like and help care for her family?”</li> <li>8. Repeat the process of making and recording predictions.</li> <li>9. Share one of your hunches with students.</li> </ol>

 <p>5-7 min</p> 	<p><b>Guided practice while teacher checks for understanding.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Remind students of question: Who is Old Tallow?</li> <li>2. Have students read pages 21-24, flagging (yellow = ?; red = confused).</li> <li>3. Pause to discuss Tallow’s interaction with Omakayas and check for understanding.</li> <li>4. What just happened? (pair-share or group)</li> <li>5. Is Omakayas afraid? If so, of what? (whole group)</li> <li>6. Call on <b>random</b> students to share, not volunteers.</li> <li>7. Remind students of question: What more do we know about Omakayas?</li> <li>8. Now have students read pages 24-26 looking for her feelings.</li> <li>9. Pause to ask students to note Omakayas’ emotions from the bottom of page 24 to the top of page 26.</li> <li>10. Have them list feeling words in notebooks, discuss in groups, report out opinions.</li> <li>11. Reread aloud and think aloud page 24 to the top of 26, noting feelings.</li> </ol>
 <p>10-15 min</p> 	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If comprehension based on observation, flag system, and discussion seems strong, cut loose for independent practice.</li> <li>2. Have students read pages 26-32.</li> <li>3. Have them post a bright post-it on the corner of their desk when done (monitoring for reading speed).</li> <li>4. Invite early finishers to go back and revise descriptions of Omakayas to include new insights.</li> <li>5. Use a paperclip or flag to mark the stopping point.</li> <li>6. When all done, discuss: Who is Old Tallow? What more do we know about Omakayas?</li> <li>7. Call <b>randomly</b> and post responses in two columns (Tallow and Omakayas) on the board.</li> </ol>
 <p>3-5 min</p>	<p><b>Write your way out.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students revise and extend their description of Omakays, including changes they think may result from her encounter.</li> <li>2. Require at least four details that speak to her feelings.</li> <li>3. Use a timer to create urgency, maintain focus.</li> <li>4. Be sure students can prove the details they include by returning to the text.</li> </ol>

## Day Seven—During Reading—Chapter 3: The Return

### Summary Chapter 3

Out of character, Omakayas tackles the job of scraping the moose hide, taking over for Angeline. As she scrapes, she thinks about the disturbing incident with the bear and comes to believe they somehow communicated. A dizzy spell, which accompanies special awareness, leads her to believe the bears are indeed related to her like brothers. Time flies as she thinks and scrapes, and before she knows it, she has finished the hide to a level usually done by adult women, earning praise from Mama and Nokomis. Both women are becoming aware she may have special gifts, and Mama even thinks it may be time for her to seek her guardian spirit.

Later, Omakayas is allowed to care for Neewo, and against her mother’s instructions, she removes a crying Neewo from his cradle board. He is immediately happier, and they play together. Eventually, however, she puts him back in the cradle board giving him what is left of the maple

sugar she got from Old Tallow. When Mama returns, she is unaware Omakayas disobeyed her. Omakayas has a special bond with the baby Neewo.

As the chapter ends, Omakayas wakes in the night, suddenly aware Deydey has returned home. Deydey's presence makes her feel safe and happy, and she falls back to sleep.

### Essential Understandings Chapter 3

The first manifestations of Omakayas transformation are becoming obvious to Mama, Nokomis, and the reader. She takes on a difficult job like an adult. There are lessons to be learned about traditional education of children throughout the novel, and the pride Mama, Nokomis, and Deydey express in Omakayas doing a hard, unpleasant job well, and without complaint indicates her maturity, growing into a new role important to her family. Skills are traditionally developed by watching adults work and then mimicking that work in play, and as adults see children are ready, they pass on responsibilities for some of this work. In addition, there is foreshadowing of Omakayas' special gifts and the growing awareness a spirit quest is in her near future. Essential Understandings two and three are present in the content of this chapter.

### Learning Targets Chapter 3

#### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I recognize the individual differences in Omakayas' family and the members of their village in all areas (political, religious, skills, vocation, lifeways). (EU2)
- I understand some cultural protocols for naming children among the Anishinaabe people. (EU3)

#### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I ask questions and look for answers before I read, as I read, and after I read. (Questioning)
- I read "between the lines" making logical predictions which I prove or disprove as I read. (Inferring)
- I write descriptions of characters found in a text.

#### Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded in the Novel)

- I understand culture plays a part in determining identity and relationships in human societies. (Culture, Identity, Relationships)

#### Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)

- I understand a story, like *The Birchbark House*, can transport me into a different time and place and some stories come from imagination alone and may be real (true to life) or fantastic (not true to life), while other stories take elements from actual historical events and blend these with imagined people.

### Vocabulary Chapter 3

convince indignation irritate keenly peculiar presence respect

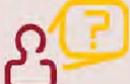
### Teacher's Notes Chapter 3

- Every lesson includes a few (5 to 8) vocabulary words taken from the chapter. It is likely students can get the gist of the meaning from the context of the story. This guess and go

strategy is one you want to encourage. Do not waste valuable reading time drilling or pre-teaching these words as student will not remember them in the long run. Vocabulary is developed by repeated exposure to words in the context of reading. Hunch definitions are often all it takes to comprehend the text. This is a life skill.

- Internet link for #2 & 3 “Build background knowledge. . . , “Bear Aware.”

### Day Seven—Authentic Literacy lesson—Chapter 3: The Return

 <p>3-5 min</p>	<p><b>Write your way in.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In notebooks, students write: What happened between Omakayas and the bears? Is it important?</li> <li>2. Students have three minutes (timer, quick-write rules) to write what they recall, reengaging.</li> <li>3. Pair-share with seat buddy responses to questions about the bear encounter.</li> <li>4. After sharing, call randomly on pairs of students to share what they wrote and remember.</li> <li>5. Restate as they share and extend, asking questions to elicit more details.</li> </ol>
 <p>5 min</p>	<p><b>Build background knowledge; establish purpose for reading; pose the big question and post on the board.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seat students in groups.</li> <li>2. Gather library books about bears and make internet stations available to each group.</li> <li>3. Conduct a five-ten-minute information flood about bears, living in bear country, and how to respond if you encounter bears.</li> <li>4. Group report out.</li> <li>5. Now, whole class, discuss and analyze Omakayas’ response to the bears.</li> <li>6. What did she do right? What did she do wrong? What is unique—even unprecedented about her experience?</li> <li>7. Pose guiding question: What has happened to Omakayas?</li> </ol>
 <p>5-10 min</p>	<p><b>Model, read-aloud, and think-aloud while annotating text and demonstrating comprehension strategies.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue modeling comprehension strategies “questioning” and “predicting.”</li> <li>2. Direct students to learning targets.</li> <li>3. Model annotation flagging (yellow = ?; red = confused).</li> <li>4. Read pages 33-37, pausing periodically to ask questions and have students make predictions.</li> <li>5. Invite students to make predictions, calling on random students to share, not volunteers.</li> <li>6. Note their predictions on the board.</li> <li>7. Share one of your hunches with students, but be careful not to give away too much.</li> <li>8. Discuss question: What has happened to Omakayas?</li> </ol>
 <p>5-7 min</p> 	<p><b>Guided practice while teacher checks for understanding.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students read pages 37-38, flagging (yellow = ?; red = confused).</li> <li>2. Pause asking students in pairs to discuss sibling relationships (difference, Neewo and Pinch).</li> <li>3. Have students read pages 38-40.</li> <li>4. Pause asking “What do we know now about Anishinaabe culture?”</li> <li>5. Call on random students to share, not volunteers.</li> <li>6. Record their responses, clarifying misconceptions.</li> <li>7. Now have students read pages 40-46.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Pause and have students quick write what this incident tells them about Omakayas' relationship to Neewo.</li> <li>9. Have them discuss in small groups after writing.</li> <li>10. Rove as they discuss, asking questions, looking for evidence of comprehension and confusion (if any).</li> </ol>
 <p>10-15 min</p> 	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If comprehension based on observation, flag system, and discussion seems strong, cut loose for independent practice.</li> <li>2. Have students read pages 46-50.</li> <li>3. Have them post a bright post-it on the corner of their desk when done (monitoring for reading speed).</li> <li>4. Invite early finishers to go back and revise descriptions of Omakayas to include new insights.</li> <li>5. Use a paperclip or flag to mark the stopping point in advance.</li> <li>6. Discuss: How has Omakayas changed?</li> </ol>
 <p>3-5 min</p>	<p><b>Write your way out.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students revise and extend their description of Omakayas, including changes they see in her feelings and behaviors.</li> <li>2. Require at least four details that speak to her change.</li> <li>3. Use a timer to create urgency, maintain focus.</li> <li>4. Be sure students can prove the details they include by returning to the text.</li> </ol>

## Day Eight—During Reading—Chapter 4: Andeg

### Summary Chapter 4

The dynamics of the family change with Deydey's return. It is almost as if the labors of their summer are under inspection from Deydey serious gaze. He is a strong man, respected and also can be stern.

Deydey discovers the family's corn crop under attack by greedy crows and turns to Omakayas and Angeline to become human scare crows and protect the crop. Walking to the fields, the girls encounter a deer who is given the name One Horn because of his lack of a set of paired antlers. The deer steps out onto the path in front of them, looks at them kindly, and disappears. In the end, they not only scare the crows, but capture a number of them that are destined to become dinner for the family. As each is killed Omakayas whispers the words she has heard her Grandmother use, "Forgive us, forgive us, we have need, we have need." One smaller bird is spared, and Omakayas takes the wounded bird home. It is with pride that their father praises the girls as hunters. After their supper and by way of reward, Deydey shares a ghost story and distributes gifts to the family, including a handmade metal scraper for Omakayas in honor of the fine work she did on the hide. It is a gift she feels guilty for disliking. The chapter closes with Deydey's makasin moving on its own, and the entire family laughing, is introduced to Andeg—the crow.

### Essential Understandings Chapter 4

The relationship between the girls, One Horn and the battle with the crows over the corn is explored in this chapter, along with roles related to skills (hunting and hide tanning) that are made

evident in the praise and gifts distributed by Deydey. In addition, the oral tradition and awareness that there are different types of story told by different people who have authority to tell them and serving different purposes is an important element that comes forward as Deydey tells a ghost story, primarily to entertain, but also with a warning (not to go to forbidden places.) This is the first of three stories in the oral tradition, each very different and serving very different purposes and told with different intent by the Anishinaabe. Some stories are personal—held by an individual or within a family (Nokomis story of meeting her Great-grandmother’s spirit) others are collective and part of a sacred tradition and also a teaching tradition (the creation story with Muskrat) and still others are for entertainment and perhaps teaching, like Deydey’s ghost story. This is a great opportunity to begin discussion of the oral tradition and importance of stories. (EU3)

#### Learning Targets Chapter 4

##### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I recognize the importance of stories and the oral traditions to Anishinaabe peoples to teach, entertain, and maintain traditions. (EU3)
- I know different types of stories are told by different people and have different protocols for their use. (EU3)

##### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I read “between the lines” making logical predictions, guesses and hunches I prove or disprove as I read. (Inferring)
- I write predictions I later prove or disprove during reading.

##### Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded the Novel)

- I understand the roles we play (talents, skills, responsibilities) are important to the overall well-being of a community. (Relationships, Culture, Identity)

##### Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)

- I recognize some elements of culture, language, beliefs, and perspectives **may be** identified with other Anishinaabe people, now located in different parts of the country, including Montana’s Rocky Boy’s Reservation and the Little Shell.

#### Vocabulary Chapter 4

annoyance    barbed    twine    momentous    mound    sensation

#### Teacher’s Notes Chapter 4

The following lesson structure places the elements of the authentic literacy lesson in a new order to accommodate the story within a story structure of the chapter. As a result, building background knowledge is associated with the introduction to Deydey’s story and the oral tradition. (EU3) Writing your way in, modeling and guided practice are all associated with the first part of the chapter, pages 51-60.

Day Eight—Authentic Literacy Lesson—Chapter 4: Andeg

 <p>3-5 min</p>	<p><b>Write your way in.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. From your memory of what happened last, write a prediction of what will happen next. Does life change? How?</li> <li>2. Students have three minutes (timer, quick-write rules) to write a prediction in future tense: What will happen next.</li> <li>3. Pair-share with seat buddy your prediction.</li> <li>4. After sharing, call <b>randomly</b> on pairs of students to share difference and similarities in their predictions.</li> <li>5. Note the similarity or diversity of predictions.</li> <li>6. Pose guiding question: Is my prediction accurate?</li> </ol>
 <p>5-10 min</p>	<p><b>Model, read-aloud, and think aloud while annotating text and demonstrating comprehension strategies.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue modeling comprehension strategy inferring (predicting).</li> <li>2. Direct students to learning targets.</li> <li>3. Read aloud pages 51-52. Ask students to cross check.</li> <li>4. Which predictions came true, partially true, or proved to be false?</li> <li>5. Now have students write a new prediction guessing what they think will happen next.</li> </ol>
 <p>5-7 min</p>	<p><b>Guided practice while teacher checks for understanding.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students read pages 54-57, flagging (yellow = ?; red = confused).</li> <li>2. Pause, call on <b>random</b> students to share whether their predictions were proved or disproved.</li> <li>3. Ask the class, “What will happen next?”</li> <li>4. Record their responses on the board.</li> <li>5. Now have students read pages 57-60.</li> <li>6. Ask, “Were there any surprises?”</li> <li>7. Discuss whole group how the crows were caught and used.</li> <li>8. Note Omakayas’ apology to the birds.</li> </ol>
 <p>5 min</p>	<p><b>Build background knowledge; establish purpose for reading; pose the big question and post on the board.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss the oral tradition.</li> <li>2. Read the top of page 61 to the students.</li> <li>3. Ask, “What are the differences between Nokamis’ stories and this one by Deydey?”</li> <li>4. Can they think of different types of stories in their family? Brainstorm story types (connect to genres).</li> <li>5. Depending upon your group, dim lights while you read aloud by flashlight “Deydey’s Ghost Story.”</li> <li>6. Practice to see if you can make it scary.</li> <li>7. When done, discuss the purpose of this story and how the children responded to it. In present day, how do kids entertain themselves? Would this story work today.</li> </ol>
 <p>10-15 min</p>	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students read pages 67-70.</li> <li>2. Discuss: How does Omokayas feel about her gift? How are her feelings different from what she shows on the outside?</li> </ol>



3-5 min

### Write your way out.

1. Seat students in groups.
2. Provide each a large piece of chart paper.
3. Have groups plan and begin a large circle chart, graphically summarizing the events in each of the four seasons. They now can summarize summer.
4. This circle chart will ultimately capture key events in the novel and the seasonal round practiced by the Anishinaabe in the Great Lakes region at that time, 1847.

## Day Nine—During Reading—Chapter 5: Fishtail’s Pipe

### Summary Chapter 5

The fall arrives, and preparation for winter intensifies. There are hides to be tanned, food to be stored, and clothing sewn. The last journey of the trappers before the hard freeze will take Deydey away once again. Andeg becomes a constant companion to Omakayas. One day, Omakayas and Angeline hide and listen as Deydey visits with two friends. With Deydey are Albert LaPautre, a man filled with his own importance and often baffled by the meaning of his dreams, and Fishtail, an intelligent and proud man who is the holder of a beautifully carved pipe. The men smoke tobacco, tease Albert about another of his strange dreams, and then fall into serious conversation. Concerns are growing about the increasing presence of white men in the area, and their impact on the village and life of the Anishinaabe. Moving west, to the land of the spirits, is becoming a real possibility. Fishtail exclaims, “‘Not until they have it all,’ . . . ‘All of our lands. Our wild-rice beds, hunting grounds, fishing streams, gardens. Not even when we are gone and they have the bones of our loved ones will they be pleased.’” Deydey compares their greed to that of children. Lively conversation ends with a long and ominous silence.

### Essential Understandings Chapter 5

In this chapter the world of the children gives way to the concerns and worries of the adults, particularly the men who see more of the world resulting from their travels and work in the fur trade. Essential understandings three (culture), four (treaties), and five (federal policies), and an opportunity to introduce and discuss essential understanding seven (sovereignty) are present in the chapter as the men discuss what to them is the insatiable greed of the white men and their penchant for removing everything from the land and giving the land nothing in return. In addition, Erdrich provides an artful character sketch comparing and contrasting Fishtail (a friend of Deydey who embodies traditional values and cultural ways and who is a pipe carrier) to Albert LaPautre, an individual who is more assimilated, but fancies himself as bestowed with powerful medicine in form of dreams. (EU2, identity)

### Learning Targets Chapter 5

#### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I know that among the 12 tribal nations of Montana, two include Chippewa or Anishinaabe people, and they are located on the Rocky Boy’s Reservation and among the Little Shell, with headquarters located in Great Falls. (EU1)
- I know in Montana, beyond the Rocky Boy’s Reservation, Chippewa people were without a land base—hence the term “landless Indians” is used in relation to some Montana Chippewa or Anishinaabe. (EU1)

- I understand Montana Anishinaabe (Chippewa) peoples came from a culture that used birchbark, wild rice, maple sugar, fish, farming, hunting, and gathering for subsistence—all natural resources found abundantly in the Great Lakes and Minnesota lake lands.
- I understand Montana Anishinaabe (Chippewa) peoples adopted a lifestyle consistent with Plains tribes (particularly their rivals for land and territory, the Dakota) and shifted from a birchbark culture to a buffalo culture as they were forced farther and farther west. (EU5, EU2)
- I understand at this time in history, the Anishinaabe people were increasingly pressured to move westward as their territory was encroached on by non-Indian settlers. (EU5)
- I know that today, as well as historically, individuals within any group are unique in their identity which can range from assimilated to traditional. (EU2)

*Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)*

- I read “between the lines” making logical predictions, guesses and hunches I prove or disprove as I read. (Inferring)
- I think about interpretations of a text and write/say what I think.

*Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded in the Novel)*

- I understand culture plays a part in determining identity and relationships in human societies. (Culture, Identity, Relationships)

*Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)*

- I recognize the time, place, and people in which a work of historical fiction is set will tell me a lot about the book and the historical events within it.
- I recognize some elements of culture, language, beliefs, and perspectives **may be or may not be** identified with other Anishinaabe people, now located in different parts of the country, including Montana’s Rocky Boy’s Reservation and the Little Shell.

**Vocabulary Chapter 5**

comfortable harsh medicine repaired vision wove

**Teacher’s Notes Chapter 5**

The pattern of the authentic literacy lesson varies based on the chapter contents. Also, as reading progresses, you want to be watching students to see when to release more responsibility.

**Day Nine—Authentic Literacy Lesson—Chapter 5: Fishtail’s Pipe**

 <p>3-5 min</p>	<p><b>Write your way in.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seat students in groups of four.</li> <li>2. Project this quote from the chapter: “Not until they have it all’. . . ‘All of our lands. Our wild-rice beds, hunting grounds, fishing streams, gardens. Not even when we are gone and they have the bones of our loved ones will they be pleased.”</li> <li>3. Have individuals write what they think these words are about.</li> <li>4. After the quick write, have them discuss for five minutes and share ideas with the entire class.</li> </ol>
--	---

 <p>25 min</p>	<p><b>Build background knowledge; establish purpose for reading; pose the big question and post on the board.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seat students in five groups of about four students each, to be expert teams.</li> <li>2. Assign each group one of the following five articles: Sections 1, 2, or 3 from Roy’s history or Rocky Boy’s or Little Shell articles (see days 3-4, #24 and #30).</li> <li>3. Provide a hard copy of the assigned article for each group member, along with highlighters, chart paper, and markers.</li> <li>4. Conduct a ten minute silent reading session asking students to flag new information in the article.</li> <li>5. After individual reading, have groups discuss the articles and develop a chart to share with the class on their findings.</li> <li>6. Groups report out.</li> <li>7. Ask, how do you think the article you read could be related to the quote?</li> </ol>
 <p>5-10 min</p>	<p><b>Model, read-aloud, and think-aloud while annotating text and demonstrating comprehension strategies.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Model comprehension strategy “visualizing.”</li> <li>2. Direct students to learning targets.</li> <li>3. Read pages 73-75.</li> <li>4. Make a Venn diagram on board labeling on part “Albert” and the other “Fishtail.”</li> <li>5. Have students generate details on each for the Venn.</li> <li>6. Discuss portrayals of these characters from page 75. Who is more traditional? How can you tell?</li> <li>7. Have students take sides.</li> <li>8. Conduct a debate in two stages based on information known currently and then again after they finish the chapter.</li> <li>9. Listen carefully for students’ interpretations and justifications of their opinions.</li> </ol>
 <p>10-15 min</p>	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students read pages 76-81 flagging (blue = important; green = funny; yellow = ?; red = confused).</li> <li>2. Examine their annotations. What did they determine was important? Funny?</li> <li>3. Have students discuss, comparing parts with historical reference and comic elements.</li> <li>4. Rove as they discuss, asking questions, looking for evidence of comprehension and confusion.</li> </ol>

## Day Ten—During Reading—Chapter 6: Pinch

### Summary Chapter 6

Mama trusts Pinch to guard her harvest of berries, which are spread out to dry in the sun. Greedy Pinch cannot resist, and then blames Andeg. In a fit of rage Mama throws a stick at the crow, who flies off, never to trust her again. She sends Omakayas after him and is about to go as well, when Pinch complains of a stomachache. Purple fingers and lips are the final signs Pinch has lied. He will, "[endure] the consequences of [his] greed," in Mama’s words. She leaves him to find Omakayas, who, to Mama’s horror, is being approached by two young bears. Omakayas speaks to them as friends, and Mama is amazed when the bears' mother strolls by the girl and her bear

brothers without paying any attention. Meanwhile, Andeg returns to camp, and helps the family by ridding the cabin of mice.

Finally, it is time to travel to harvest wild rice. During the long canoe journey, Pinch will not stop trying to pull a tail feather from Andeg. All tell him repeatedly to stop, so often in fact that the crow learns the word and squawks, "Gaygo, Pinch!" The rice harvest camp is a place to play with cousins, and one special cousin becomes "sister" to Omakayas—Two Strike Girl. Together they harvest rice, weave mats from the rice stalks, and "dancing the rice," stomp the grains to get the husks off the kernels. The harvest is lean.

### Essential Understandings Chapter 6

The value, manifest in culture and necessary for survival, of self-control is evident. Pinch loses it, and greedily eats the berries. Mama loses it, and to her shame, angrily strikes out at Andeg. For loss of control, there are natural consequences; a stomachache for Pinch and loss of Andeg's valued company and trust for Mama. Mama becomes aware for the first time of Omakayas' relationship to the bear family. Traditions, including wild-ricing, are part of the culture in present day Minnesota among the Anishinaabe. The connected text *The Sacred Harvest* is included in this lesson to help students understand the continued importance of wild rice and how it is harvested today as in the past. (EU2, EU3)

### Learning Targets Chapter 6

#### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I recognize the individual differences in Omakayas' family and the members of their village in all areas (political, religious, skills, vocation, lifeways). (EU2)

#### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I make predictions I prove or disprove as I read.
- I interpret what I have read in both speech and writing.
- I use other texts and sources of information to learn about a topic.

#### Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded in the Novel)

- I understand culture plays a part in determining identity and relationships in human societies. (Culture, Identity, Relationships)

#### Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)

- I understand stories that blend actual historical events with imagined people or circumstances are called Historical Fiction.

### Vocabulary Chapter 6

chokecherries intensity suspicious threatening wary

Day Ten—Authentic Literacy Lesson—Chapter 6: Pinch

 <p>3-5 min</p>	<p><b>Write your way in.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tell students: Chapter 6 is titled “Pinch.” In an admit ticket, what do you think a chapter with that title will be about?</li> <li>2. Students have two-three minutes (time, quick-write rules) to write a prediction based on what they know about Pinch.</li> <li>3. Have students share what they think.</li> <li>4. Record ideas on board and honor all responses.</li> </ol>
 <p>5 min</p>	<p><b>Build background knowledge; establish purpose for reading; pose the big question and post on the board.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Whole class, ask students: What do we mean when we say someone has “self-control?”</li> <li>2. Call <b>randomly</b> asking students what they think.</li> <li>3. Would self-control have been valued given what you know about life in Omakayas family or in an Anishinaabe community? Why? Or why not?</li> <li>4. Have students go back into the chapters read so far and skim to locate examples of self-control.</li> <li>5. See how many they can find and list them (Omakayas with the bear; Omakayas with Angeline preparing the moose hide; scaring, catching, and prepping the crows; etc.).</li> <li>6. Pose question to guide reading: Who loses self-control? How? What are the consequences? Who exhibits self-control?</li> </ol>
 <p>5-10 min</p>	<p><b>Model, read-aloud, and think aloud while annotating text and demonstrating comprehension strategies.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue working comprehension strategy “inferring” and make predictions.</li> <li>2. Direct students to learning target on inferring.</li> <li>3. Remind students of their admit ticket regarding a chapter titled “Pinch.”</li> <li>4. Read aloud pages 82-83, stopping mid-page.</li> <li>5. Think aloud: When the paragraph ends “Big Pinch was left alone.” I think I am being set up somehow, and so is Pinch.</li> <li>6. Share your prediction and ask students theirs.</li> </ol>
 <p>5-7 min</p> 	<p><b>Guided practice while teacher checks for understanding.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students read pages 83-85.</li> <li>2. Pause and check for understanding.</li> <li>3. What just happened? (pair-share or group)</li> <li>4. How does Pinch try to cover up what he did?</li> <li>5. Call on <b>random</b> students to share, not volunteers.</li> <li>6. Now have students read pages 85-88.</li> <li>7. Pause to discuss and check for understanding.</li> <li>8. What is Pinch’s punishment?</li> <li>9. Call on <b>random</b> students to share, not volunteers.</li> <li>10. Do a final segment and discuss what Mama saw, pages 88-90.</li> </ol>

 <p>10-15 min</p> 	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students read pages 90-98.</li> <li>2. Use flags. This time use blue to point out details connected to ricing.</li> <li>3. Use a paperclip or flag to mark the stopping point at the end of the chapter.</li> <li>4. Project historical photos of ricing and parching rice, PPT #2 Wild Rice.</li> <li>5. Place students in small groups to discuss images, making guesses as to the purpose of some of the activities based on book descriptions and images.</li> <li>6. Close by sharing (read aloud) selections from <i>The Sacred Harvest</i> (optional, check with your librarian) and/or view PPT #2 Wild Rice.</li> </ol>
--	---

## Day Eleven—During Reading—Chapter 7: The Move

### Summary Chapter 7

Deydey departs on another trapping expedition. Food is being buried with care in a cache, (a covered pit in the ground) behind the winter cabin. The food stock is important, and Nokomis blesses the food and asks protection of the family with prayers and offering of tobacco. Finally, the last night is spent in the birchbark house and the family moves into town for the winter. Mama and Nokomis have both observed enough to have a sense of Omakayas' gift. Nokomis starts asking Omakayas if the medicines she gathers and carefully tends and administers to family ever "speak to her." Omakayas says "no" but later admits to being able to communicate with her bear friends. Nokomis instructs her to listen to the bears with care. It is a cold night, and Omakayas wakes in the dark, cold. Winter has arrived.

### Essential Understandings Chapter 7

The ongoing transformation of Omakayas continues as she matures. Again, individual identity (EU2) is the central focus, along with essential understanding three (culture) as the reciprocal relationships with all elements of the natural world are exposed as a manifestation of culture. Specific gifts are bestowed by nature or the spirit world and not simply assumed by individuals. In this world there is communication between animal people, plant people, and human beings and each is given equal importance as part of a circle.

There is no hierarchy. It is not humans over nature, or, like war, humans vs. nature—which are such common literary themes that they are often repeated even in relation to this book with such a uniquely different and distinctly Anishinaabe world view. It is instead humans as a part of nature. Themes of relationship, connection, and communication are present.

### Learning Targets Chapter 7

#### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I understand the traditional culture of the Anishinaabe changed with each new season. (EU3)
- I recognize the individual differences in Omakayas' family and the members of their village in all areas (political, religious, skills, vocation, lifeways). (EU2)

#### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I combine what I know with new information to understand the text. (Synthesizing)
- I create pictures in my mind as I read. (Visualizing)

- I draw on what I know already to support my understanding of the text and fill in gaps in my comprehension. (Inferring)
- I interpret what I have read in both speech and writing.

Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded in the Novel)

- I understand culture plays a part in determining identity and relationships in human societies. (Culture, Identity, Relationships)
- I recognize that in this story, as well as other stories, that roles, responsibilities, and relationships were keys to survival. (Survival)

Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)

- I recognize the time place and people in which a work of historical fiction is set will tell me a lot about the book and the historical events within it. In *The Birchbark House*, the time is specific, 1847.

Vocabulary Chapter 7

agility   caulking   ferocity   interior   parched   scarce   sheaves

Day Eleven—Authentic Literacy Lesson—Chapter 7: The Move

 <p>3-5 min</p>	<p><b>Write your way in.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask, “How many of you have moved from one home to another? If you have, what were the hardest parts? What were the good parts about moving?”</li> <li>2. Students have three minutes (time, quick-write rules) to write what they recall or imagine.</li> <li>3. Have students share in small groups their own experiences or feelings about moving.</li> <li>4. Ask, how many times Omakayas moved? What is different and what is the same about the way in which her family moved compared to what a child might experience today? (She knows she will return. Friends are moving too.)</li> </ol>
 <p>5 min</p>	<p><b>Build background knowledge; establish purpose for reading; pose the big question and post on the board.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seat students in groups.</li> <li>2. Distribute Roy article title “Cuisine,” one per student.</li> <li>3. Allow several minutes for students to read the historical selection, highlighting for food ways that are also featured in the novel.</li> <li>4. Ask: Why so much emphasis on food?</li> <li>5. Allow groups to discuss the role of foods and food sources in the life of the Anishinaabe.</li> <li>6. How does the collection of food impact or even define culture.</li> </ol>

 <p>5-7 min</p> 	<p><b>Guided practice while teacher checks for understanding.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students read pages 99-100.</li> <li>2. In notebooks, have them list the foods that are stored for the winter.</li> <li>3. Discuss how much food might be required to get a family of seven through an entire winter.</li> <li>4. How does the gathering and preparation of food define the role(s) of each family member?</li> </ol>
 <p>5-10 min</p>	<p><b>Model, read-aloud, and think-aloud while annotating text and demonstrating comprehension strategies.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read aloud pages 101-102 (Nokomis prayer).</li> <li>2. Ask students, what does Nokomis ask? What does she do? What does this passage tell us about the beliefs and traditions of the Anishinaabe?</li> <li>3. Record their responses, clarifying misconceptions.</li> <li>4. Rove as they discuss, asking questions, looking for evidence of comprehension and confusion.</li> </ol>
 <p>10-15 min</p> 	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If comprehension based on observation, flag system, and discussion seems strong, cut loose for independent practice.</li> <li>2. Have students read pages 102-106.</li> <li>3. Use a paperclip or flag to mark the stopping point in advance.</li> <li>4. Throughout the book, and clearly in the last part of this chapter, Mama and Nokomis notice things about Omakayas. What do they see? Discuss.</li> </ol>
 <p>3-5 min</p>	<p><b>Write your way out.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students once again revise and extend their description of Omakayas, including changes they see in her feelings and behaviors.</li> <li>2. Require at least four details that speak to her change.</li> <li>3. Use a timer to create urgency, maintain focus.</li> <li>4. Be sure students can prove the details they include by returning to the text.</li> </ol>

## Day Twelve—During Reading—Chapter 8: First Snow

### Summary Chapter 8

Life in town is new, and the morning after their arrival they wake to fresh snow. Omakayas and Angeline walk into town, eager to find old friends. There is the dance lodge and a Catholic mission school. Angeline is curious about what goes on at the church and school for the white children, but she has been warned by Nokomis not to spend too much time with them. Approaching the school, they are surprised to see Fishtail coming out carrying a book. Teasing each other, they finally ask what he was doing, and he tells them, “I went to the priest’s school. To learn to read the chimookoman’s tracks. That way they can’t cheat us with the treaties.” In the snowy months, Angeline’s best friend Ten Snow, Fishtail’s wife, sews a new dress for Angeline anticipating the winter dances. The beautiful young woman is now attracting young men. Meanwhile, Old Tallow, who often shares her hunting kills with the family, returns from a hunting trip with a pair of fat

beavers. The fur will be traded and the meat will be cooked. During this visit, Omakayas comes to understand Tallow looks at her with affection, “like her dogs.” When the meat from the beavers is finally roasted, Tallow eats two full bowls. Greedy Pinch is asking for a second when Deydey arrives in time for his favorite meal. At night, the children and Nokomis sleep in the attic. As Nokomis talks in her sleep, Omakayas listens to the dreams of her Grandmother’s remembering.

### Essential Understandings Chapter 8

The role of the mission school was one of conversion and assimilation, however here, Fishtail is using the school to learn the skills necessary to interpret and defend the treaties between the Anishinaabe and the white man’s government. A tiny episode, this knowledge has huge historical implications. In this chapter, discussion points around essential understandings four (Treaties and Reservations) and five (federal policy periods-Colonization and Treaty) can be added to essential understandings one, two, and three.

### Learning Targets Chapter 8

#### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I understand the traditional culture of the Anishinaabe changed with each new season. (EU3)
- I recognize the individual differences in Omakayas’ family and the members of their village in all areas (political, religious, skills, vocation, lifeways). (EU2)
- I infer from Fishtail’s reason for learning to read that the Anishinaabe were entering into treaties at the time this story took place, and that promises in those early treaties had been broken. (EU4, 5)

#### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I connect what I know about myself, other books, or the world to understand what I read. (Making Connections)
- I create pictures in my mind as I read. (Visualizing)
- I read “between the lines” making logical predictions, guesses and hunches I prove or disprove as I read. (Inferring)

#### Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded in the Novel)

- I understand culture plays a part in determining identity and relationships in human societies. (Culture, Identity, Relationships)

#### Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)

- I recognize the time, place, and people in which a work of historical fiction is set will tell me a lot about the book and also the historical events within it.

### Vocabulary Chapter 8

Assimilate    evidence    fragrance    frenzy    intricate  
mysterious    particular    remarkable    syncretism

## Teacher’s Notes Chapter 8

Students will let you know when they need greater levels of independence in the reading process. Watch carefully to see who is frustrated by the pace of instruction. Note it can be too fast, making struggling readers feel anxious and subsequently reducing their comprehension, or too slow, making very proficient readers feel frustration because they want to keep reading! You do not want students at either end to disengage, so structure accommodations into the lesson. Use independent reflection tools, and the post-it flags, to allow a group of jackrabbits to move ahead. Let them know they cannot disclose to others the surprises in the story, and, as a result, they may not be able to participate in some class discussions.

You will note in the literacy lesson below that guided practice and modeling have been cut from this short chapter. Again, the purpose is to increase time spent in independent practice engaging with the text. This lesson template is not a script. The purpose is to increase reading comprehension and be able to release more and more responsibility to the students.

### Day Twelve—Authentic Literacy lesson—Chapter 8: First Snow

 <p>3-5 min.</p>	<p><b>Write your way in.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Write a description of a “first snow” or big snow you remember. How did it make you feel? What did you do?</li> <li>2. How does this change in season change the way you live?</li> <li>3. Use a timer tool and create urgency. Write quickly and do not stop. Include as many descriptive details as you can.</li> </ol>
 <p>5 min.</p>	<p><b>Build background knowledge; establish purpose for reading; pose the big question and post on the board.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take five minutes to define and discuss with students three new and complex terms.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Assimilation</b> – The process whereby a minority group gradually adopts the customs and attitudes of the prevailing culture.</li> <li><b>Cultural syncretism</b> – Fusion of differing systems of belief, as in philosophy or religion.</li> <li><b>Acculturation</b> – The adoption of the behavior patterns of the surrounding culture.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. As students read, have them look for the ways Anishinaabe culture is changing – or blending in elements of culture from white traders and missionaries.</li> </ol>
 <p>10-15 min</p>	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students read the entire chapter independently, pages 107-117.</li> <li>2. When all are done, ask students in groups to discuss why Fishtail has gone to the priest’s school.</li> <li>3. What role do you imagine literacy or lack of literacy might play for American Indians during the treaty period? <u>and/or</u></li> <li>4. Discuss assimilation, acculturation, or cultural syncretism.</li> <li>5. How have the Anishinaabe changed?</li> <li>6. Have the Anishinaabe impacted the cultures of the non-Indian trappers, traders, and missionaries?</li> <li>7. Debate – Is assimilation a “good” thing or “bad” thing? What do you think?</li> </ol>



3-5 min.

**Write your way out.**

1. Seat students in their groups.
2. Return the circle charts started earlier.
3. Have groups continue the development of their circle charts, graphically summarizing the events in each of the four seasons. They now can summarize fall.

## Day Thirteen—During Reading—Chapter 9: The Blue Ferns

### Summary Chapter 9

The men, Deydey's friends, gather often at the cabin for visits. The talk of moving west to escape the white settlers continues. They know winter is truly upon them when Old Tallow dawns her special and ancient coat of many hides and fabrics. The girls and women also gather, and Ten Snow spends many hours with Angeline doing beadwork. Ten Snow is skilled and crafts a specially beaded bandolier bag for her husband, Fishtail, decorated in an intricate pattern of spring ferns beaded in blue. "The beads were so perfect and the repeated pattern so compelling that the ferns seemed to move like little waves." Ten Snow, seeing Omakayas' desperation to join in their activity, creates a small beadwork kit as a present. This is compensation for Angeline's teasing remarks about "Little Frog" unable to sit still. Omakayas is thrilled and after much thought decides to use her kit to make a pair of winter makasins for Neewo. She quickly becomes frustrated her beadwork is not perfect, but Angeline changes her tune, encouraging her little sister to stick with the project.

During a quiet time with Pinch outside, Nokomis tells Omakayas and the other women a story of the dark side of the lake and her mysterious encounter with the spirit of her long dead grandmother, an encounter that ends with the spirit being reunited with her beloved husband (Nokomis' grandfather) and the two of them disappearing forever. The love story brings some of the women to tears, but scares Omakayas. The mood lightens when Mama begins joking.

### Essential Understandings Chapter 9

Throughout the chapter we learn more about the changes brought by winter and the activities that filled the winter cabin (EU3, culture.) Visitors are constant and the families always extend generosity to those who come, including sharing from their stores of food. (EU3, culture) The continual talk of pressure to move, and pending treaty negotiations is a part of the adult world and Omakayas is aware. (EU4, treaties; EU5, policy periods) The end of this chapter is a story—a personal one, told by Nokomis about the reuniting of her grandparents in death, and the dead returning (Grandmother) on the dark side of the lake. The oral tradition, and different roles of different types of stories in addition to unique perspective in the novel of the dead living a parallel life—present, yet just out of our sight, are important themes that also carry the cultural values and perspectives of Omakayas' family and people. (EU3, culture) The book and this chapter are steeped in symbolism and metaphor. Some to explore include Old Tallow's coat, Fishtail's pipe, Deydey's rifle, the bag Ten Snow makes for Fishtail, the bear family, Old Tallow's dogs, and each food which takes on a life of its own in the gathering and preparation and preservation of it. Explore with students what each of these, and so many others, might symbolize?

## Learning Targets Chapter 9

### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I know different types of stories are told by different people and have different protocols for their use. (EU3)
- I recognize the individual differences in Omakayas' family and the members of their village in all areas (political, religious, skills, vocation, lifeways). (EU2)
- I understand that at this time in history, the Anishinaabe people were increasingly pressured to move westward as their territory was encroached on by non-Indian settlers. (EU5)

### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I combine what I know with new information to understand the text. (Synthesizing)
- I interpret what I have read, making connections between literal objects and possible symbolic meanings of these objects or elements in the text.
- I debate my interpretations, comparing to those of others in my class and use evidence from the text and sometimes connecting to other texts, or primary source materials, to support my points.

### Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded in the Novel)

- I understand culture plays a part in determining identity and relationships in human societies. (Culture, Identity, Relationships)

### Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)

- I understand a story, like *The Birchbark House*, can transport me into a different time and place and some stories come from imagination alone and may be real (true to life) or fantastic (not true to life) while other stories take elements from actual historical events and blend these with imagined people.

## Vocabulary Chapter 9

bandolier bolting calicos clay gloating gumbo inevitable vigilance

## Day Thirteen—Authentic Literacy Lesson—Chapter 9: The Blue Ferns

 <p>3-5 min.</p>	<p><b>Write your way in.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Quick write – Based on what you know, what is a symbol? What makes something symbolic?</li><li>2. Allow three minutes or so for writing.</li></ol>
 <p>5 min.</p>	<p><b>Build background knowledge; establish purpose for reading; pose the big question and post on the board.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Share definitions in pairs or groups of four, discussing.</li><li>2. Have groups brainstorm possible symbols present in what they have already read.</li><li>3. Examples include: birchbark house; Tallow's dogs; maple sugar; bear family; hide scraper.</li><li>4. Post group ideas on chart paper to share.</li></ol>

 <p>5-10 min.</p>	<p><b>Model, read-aloud, and think-aloud while annotating text and demonstrating comprehension strategies.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Post learning target on interpretation and reference.</li> <li>2. Read aloud pages 121 to mid-page 124.</li> <li>3. As you read, pause to share what connections (or possible symbolic interpretations) come to mind.</li> <li>4. Annotate with blue flags objects that may have symbolic meanings and importance. The following may be included: the cabin; chinking; Deydey’s things and guns; Tallow’s coat.</li> <li>5. Conduct a think aloud with your symbolic interpretation of each of these as you demonstrate interpretation.</li> </ol>
 <p>5-7 min.</p>	<p><b>Guided practice while teacher checks for understanding.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Now have students read pages 124-126.</li> <li>2. When they reach the end of the description of the bag Ten Snow has made for Fishtail, have them pause and write a short explanation of what it symbolizes in the story. (Note that Ten Snow discusses this.)</li> <li>3. Call on <b>random</b> students to share interpretations.</li> <li>4. Now have them read pages 126-128.</li> <li>5. Ask the class, “What does Ten Snow’s gift symbolize to Omakayas?”</li> <li>6. Have them tell their partner, then call <b>randomly</b> on pairs.</li> </ol>
 <p>10-15 min</p>	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students continue reading independently, pages 128-134, stopping before Grandma’s Story.</li> <li>2. Pause to ask: “Why do you think Grandma waited to tell this story until Pinch was away?”</li> <li>3. Discuss briefly, entertaining different interpretations.</li> </ol>
 <p>5-10 min.</p>	<p><b>Model, read-aloud, and think-aloud while annotating text and demonstrating comprehension strategies.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read aloud for the class the entire story of “Fishing the Dark Side of the Lake.”</li> <li>2. Do not interrupt the story but wait to discuss afterwards.</li> <li>3. Whole class, discuss symbolic meanings and interpretations of the story. What does the dark side of the lake represent? What is the nature of the love between Nokomis’ grandparents as represented in her story? What kind of story is this?</li> </ol>

## Day Fourteen—During Reading—Chapter 10: The Visitor

### Summary Chapter 10

Angeline dons the beautiful dress made by Ten Snow for a community dance, one of the highlights of their winter lives in the village. The mood is joyful when an exhausted white voyageur enters the dance lodge. He is invited to sit by the fire at the dance and is welcomed into the home of a family to spend the night. During the night, the stranger dies. In terror, the community realizes the man had smallpox. They burn everything he touched, but the unrelenting smallpox spreads from home to home in the village. Omakayas’ family is stricken, and one at a time, they enter the cabin not to return, with only Nokomis to tend to them. Eventually, Omakayas realizes Neewo, who she has been tending to alone, is also very sick. Without a thought to her own safety, she

leaves the isolation of the temporary birchbark shelter and joins her sickened family. She becomes instrumental to their survival, as she, like Nokomis, does not contract the disease.

Slowly, her family recovers. Neewo, however, grows sicker. He eventually dies in Omakayas' arms. Ten Snow has also died in the outbreak. Angeline, who is scarred for life by the smallpox, has now lost her baby brother and her best friend. Fishtail is so grief stricken he tries to kill himself. Omakayas, exhausted and bereft, refuses to get out of bed. Finally, only Old Tallow, who forces the child to eat soup and tends to her like her own child, is the only one who can bring Omakayas back to life. She finally feels the sun on her face but remains joyless.

### Essential Understandings Chapter 10

The entire village is endangered resulting from their welcoming of the exhausted white stranger; however, the culture of generosity that permeates their lives is so strong it is likely not welcoming the stranger would not be acceptable. (EU3, culture) A point for a lively debate would be to ask students, given what they know about Omakayas' people, what would they have done if they had known before welcoming him that the stranger had smallpox? Coping with death and loss, healing the sick and overcoming debilitating fear and grief are all themes. What was culturally a time of great celebration and joy became one of sorrow and a struggle to survive. Essential understandings two (identity) and three (culture) are featured prominently in the chapter. An historical note: while each tribal group is unique, with their own histories, cultures, origins, and distinct languages, there are historical events – including pandemic diseases and federal policy periods (removal, relocation, and forced assimilation (boarding schools]) – all tribes experienced. These are worthy of studying as elements of what is learned can be generalized to other tribal groups and compared and contrasted as they each experience these uniquely through the veil of their own culture.

### Learning Targets Chapter 10

#### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I recognize the individual differences in Omakayas' family and the members of their village in all areas (political, religious, skills, vocation, lifeways). (EU2)
- I understand this work of historical fiction is told from the perspective of the author, and in spite of her extensive knowledge and research, will carry her point-of-view or subjective perspective on this time and place in Anishinaabe history. (EU6)

#### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I connect what I know about myself, other books, or the world to understand what I read. (Making Connections, Activating Schema)
- I combine what I know with new information to understand the text. (Synthesizing)
- I write a letter.

#### Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded in the Novel)

- I understand culture plays a part in determining identity and relationships in human societies. (Culture, Identity, Relationships)
- I understand the roles we play (talents, skills, responsibilities) are important to the overall well-being of a community. (Relationships, Culture, Identity)

### Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)

- I understand stories that blend actual historical events with imagined people or circumstances are called Historical Fiction.

### Vocabulary Chapter 10

Bleak kindled oblivion partake stupor taut tentative

### Teacher’s Note Chapter 10 – Gradual Release of Responsibility

At this point, your observations of your students as they read and talk about what they read; your examination of the many admit or exit tickets, character descriptions, predictions and interpretations stored in their notebooks; and your examination of the annotations or colored flags they have used to text code as they read should inform you regarding individual student’s comprehension of the book. Hopefully, red flags indicating confusion are now few and far between. In addition, you should have a good feeling for the reading speed and pace of individuals. Note speed is meaningless here, comprehension is everything. No student should feel compelled to read faster than can deeply understand and connect to the text. Now is the phase in the reading of this book when you as a teacher need to practice gradual release of responsibility, and greater independence in the reading process, to the students. Here are a few suggestions for this process.

- Strictly enforce silence in the classroom during the blocks of time you intend for silent sustained reading (aka independent practice). If one person (teacher included) is talking, no one is actually reading. Use timer tools for managing both time and talk. Excluding writing, there is no better use of class time than reading.
- Use tools for reflection to help students synthesize the content of their independent reading, but from this point, allow them to self-pace. To do this place post-it flags as stop markers at the end of specific sections where you want them to reflect (or write what they now understand). These “pause markers” are set up in the first two minutes of class, along with a stopping point (if you select) indicating when they are done for the day. Eventually, even these go away.
- Do not interrupt reading. Students need to sustain concentration and go into the world of the book.
- Put follow-up writing activity directions on slips of paper, and pass to students as they finish, one by one.
- This chapter is the emotional climax of the book, and it may impact students uniquely. Be watchful.

### Day Fourteen—Authentic Literacy Lesson—Chapter 10: The Visitor

 <p>3-5 min.</p>	<p><b>Write your way in.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Using the quick write strategy, have students write their predictions about what will happen in this chapter based on the previous chapter.</li><li>2. What do they think? What evidence in the book supports their hunches?</li><li>3. What activities are Omakayas and Angeline anticipating?</li></ol>
---	---

 10-15 min	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Start students off by reading aloud pages 140 to top of 142.</li> <li>2. Place quiet reminder on your door and the board.</li> <li>3. Have students read the rest of the chapter silently and independently.</li> </ol>
 3-5 min.	<p><b>Write your way out.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As you see students finish, rove the room and pass out the writing activity.</li> <li>2. Write a letter to Omakayas.</li> <li>3. If she were a real person, how would you comfort her? What might you say? How could you help?</li> </ol>

## Day Fifteen—During Reading—Chapter 11: Hunger

### Summary Chapter 11

Weakened by smallpox, no one has the energy to hunt. Food is being purchased on credit from the local shop owner, a common means of keeping Anishinaabe fur traders indentured. To purchase more food, or ease the growing debit, Deydey cooks up a scheme to gamble at chess in an effort to erase debt and buy food. He wins, and things get better for a while. Soon, the hunger has returned with a vengeance. At the same time, Nokomis is hoping for Omakayas to go on her spiritual quest for a dream or vision. Her face is painted with charcoal, and for a period, she fasts. Finally, after several tries, the bear spirit woman comes to her. Nokomis instructs Omakayas to honor the bear spirit woman, who will always look over her. Nokomis tells the traditional stories of creation and the contribution of the smallest and most vulnerable creature—the Muskrat.

Andeg again helps the family, this time by discovering a squirrel’s cache of nuts—a find that staves off starvation. Omakayas, determined like Muskrat and inspired by Andeg, ventures out seeking food, only to be attacked by one of Old Tallow’s dogs. The dog, having had many chances and having committed an unforgivable offense, is killed by Old Tallow as Omakayas protests.

In a dream, Nokomis sees the deer One Horn, who offers himself as food for the starving family. She instructs Deydey where to go and how to spiritually prepare. He follows the instruction and successfully brings down One Horn. Prayers are offered for the deer’s sacrifice.

The memory of One Horn standing gentle and fearless at the edge of the corn field leads Omakayas to wonder if he understood he would one day save her family. She decides to honor his memory. The family is saved finally from the depth of their sadness by Pinch, who manages to become the one to return laughter to the home. Accidentally setting his pants of fire, he ends up stuck in a water bucket. Pinch goes from whiny and needy, to the family’s comic relief, returning laughter. "The great deer had saved their bodies, and Pinch's absurd jump had saved their souls."

### Essential Understandings Chapter 11

In chapter 4, the relationship to One Horn was established in a mysterious encounter between One Horn and the girls as they were on their way to protect the corn field. In this chapter, that relationship comes to its conclusion. Students will come to understand in this chapter why so many elements of life and culture center around the gathering of and preservation of food. Essential Understanding three (culture) is the primary essential understanding addressed. In addition, further exploration of identity occurs, as Omakayas fasts seeking her spirit guardian,

Tallow blames all white settlers for the smallpox and death of Neewo and teases Deydey about his half white, half Anishinaabe heritage. (EU2, individual identity.) The theme of facing fears—Omakayas facing her grief, Tallow’s yellow dog, and possible starvation—is also present.

### Learning Targets Chapter 11

#### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I recognize the importance of stories and the oral traditions to Anishinaabe peoples to teach, entertain, and maintain traditions. (EU3)
- I know different types of stories are told by different people and have different protocols for their use. (EU3)
- I recognize the individual differences in Omakayas’ famil, and the members of their village in all areas (political, religious, skills, vocation, lifeways). (EU2)

#### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I connect what I know about me, other books, or the world to understand what I read. (Making Connections)
- I combine what I know with new information to understand the text. (Synthesizing)
- I interpret what I have read in both speech and writing.
- I represent (show) what I know using graphics, drawings, or other media.

#### Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded in the Novel)

- I recognize in this story, as well as other stories, that roles, responsibilities, and relationships were keys to survival. (Survival)

### Vocabulary Chapter 11

Bitter determined intrigue particularly physically recovering vicious

### Teacher’s Notes on Chapter 11

The lesson that follows is designed to process the events of Chapter 10, placing them in context and also to introduce an exploration of hunger for Chapter 11. Ideally, the Tea Party activity and reading and discussion of *Grizzly Bear Looking Up* would occur on the same day as the reading of Chapter 10, but after the reading. The language and emotion connected to that chapter are so powerful that you do not want to distract from the reading with too much talk. Consider this activity a follow-up that could be done in another period, maybe a social studies or a US or Montana history course.

### Day Fifteen—Authentic Literacy Lesson—Chapter 11: Hunger

 <p>15 min.</p>	<p><b>Build background knowledge; make connections.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct a “tea party.”</li> <li>2. Take the article from <i>Montana Stories of the Land</i> on smallpox and a photocopy of pages 32-33 from <i>Montana Tribal Histories: Educators Resource Guide</i> and cut them apart making strips with just one paragraph on each. Pass these out so each student has one.</li> <li>3. Have students read their slips of paper several times.</li> <li>4. Students write interpretations of their passages answering essentially, “What does this mean?”</li> </ol>
--	--

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Next, have students get up and mingle, reading to different partners their paragraphs and sharing their interpretations. They also hear the paragraphs of others. Allow at least five or six rounds to expose students to as much of the non-fiction texts as possible.</li> <li>Discuss the common history of smallpox.</li> </ol>
 5-10 min.	<p><b>Model, read-aloud, and think-aloud while annotating text and demonstrating comprehension strategies.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read the picture book <i>The Story of Grizzly Bear Looking Up</i> aloud to the class.</li> <li>Create a Venn diagram on the board labeling first circle <i>Grizzly Bear Looking Up</i> and the second Omakayas.</li> <li>Introduce the concepts of compare and contrast.</li> <li>Call <b>randomly</b> on students to elicit details about each, similarities in the middle and unique elements to the side.</li> <li>What patterns emerge? How can this Salish story based on a historical reference be so like Omakayas' experience? Ask students, "What do you think?"</li> </ol>
 10-15 min	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assign all chapter 11 to be read independently.</li> <li>Ask students to stop reading at the end of the chapter.</li> </ol>
 5 min.	<p><b>Build background knowledge; make connections.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using internet, PC, and projector, go to site for World Hunger Education.</li> <li>Direct a discussion on hunger in the world.</li> <li>Examine statistics on hunger; discuss malnutrition.</li> <li>Close with quick write, describing how you feel when hungry. Provide as many details as you can.</li> <li>Call <b>randomly</b> on students. Ask: (Student Name), how did you feel? How about you, (Student Name)? And, (Student Name), did hunger change your behavior? How?</li> </ol>
 3-5 min.	<p><b>Write your way out.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seat students in their groups.</li> <li>Return the circle charts started earlier.</li> <li>Have groups continue the development of their circle charts, graphically summarizing the events in each of the four seasons. They now can summarize winter.</li> </ol>

## Day Sixteen—During Reading—Chapter 12: Maple Sugar Time

### Summary Chapter 12

The winter of starvation ends with the breakup of the ice on the lake. Fishing improves and they prepare for maple sugar harvest. Angeline teaches the rest of the family how to read and write the white man's language, learned at the Catholic mission school. The family moves to the maple sugar camp, where the trees are tapped for sap, and then the sap boiled down into a sweet syrup. Omakayas continues to miss Neewo intensely and often thinks she is the only one who still cries over the loss of the tiny baby. In a quiet moment alone, unable to cry, she feels Neewo's presence with her and has another visit from her two bear cub friends. Following instruction from Nokomis, she honors the bears, warning them of danger from white men and Tallow. She asks for their wisdom and help. As she returns, the plants begin speaking to her in "strange voices" she can hear but does not yet understand. Upon return, she shares this disturbing phenomenon with Nokomis,

who is not surprised. Omakayas has been chosen to be a healer like her grandmother, and her training begins.

Her first patient is Pinch, who comes upon a deer carcass and then plants arrows in it intending to lie – claiming it as his kill. As he returns to the maple sugar camp and the community celebration to boast of his fake first kill, he is burned by hot maple syrup, and Omakayas is the one who tends to the burn. Pinch later, and for the first time, elects not to lie after the painful incident. Omakayas earns her Grandmother’s praise for how she tended to the wound and her use of the plant medicines to dress it. Omakayas experiences satisfaction and pride from healing.

### Essential Understandings Chapter 12

The theme of the Anishinaabe relationship to nature—as a part of and not apart from the natural world they nurture and that in turn nurtures them—continues. Omakayas’ family continues its seasonal cycle of harvest and traditional celebrations in the larger community at the end of a hard and tragic winter. [Maple syrup is still harvested and spring celebrated in Anishinaabe communities located in maple country.] Omakayas continues her inward journey of transformation. Essential understandings two (individual identity) and three are manifest throughout the chapter, as even Pinch begins to change and mature, and Omakayas takes on her healer role for the first time.

### Learning Targets Chapter 12

#### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I understand Montana Anishinaabe (Chippewa) peoples came from a culture that used birchbark, wild rice, maple sugar, fish, farming, hunting, and gathering for subsistence—all natural resources found abundantly in the Great Lakes and Minnesota lake lands.
- I know that today, as well as historically, individuals within any group are unique in their identity which can range from assimilated to traditional. (EU2)
- I recognize the individual differences in Omakayas’ family and the members of their village in all areas (political, religious, skills, vocation, lifeways). (EU2)

#### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I connect what I know about myself, other books, or the world to understand what I read. (Making Connections, Activating Schema)
- I combine what I know with new information to understand the text. (Synthesizing)
- I create pictures in my mind as I read. (Visualizing)
- I read “between the lines” making logical predictions, guesses, and hunches I prove or disprove as I read. (Inferring)

#### Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded the Novel)

- I understand the roles we play (talents, skills, responsibilities) are important to the overall well-being of a community. (Relationships, Culture, Identity)
- I recognize in this story, as well as other stories, that roles, responsibilities, and relationships were keys to survival. (Survival)

Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)

- I understand a story, like *The Birchbark House*, can transport me into a different time and place and some stories come from imagination alone and may be real (true to life) or fantastic (not true to life) while other stories take elements from actual historical events and blend these with imagined people.

Vocabulary Chapter 12

Anticipation etch incredible refrain swallow scrolls trough

Day Sixteen—Authentic Literacy Lesson—Chapter 12: Maple Sugar Time

 <p>5 min.</p>	<p><b>Build background knowledge; establish purpose for reading; pose the big question and post on the board.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project PPT #3 historical photos associated with food processing (wild rice, maple sugar, hunting, meat drying).</li> <li>2. Ask students what they know about traditional food harvesting techniques. Could anyone go out at any time of year and just gather things?</li> <li>3. Read aloud <i>The Gift of the Bitterroot</i> as told by Johnny Arlee.</li> <li>4. Take the extra minutes to read the information on the bitterroot and the Salish and Pend d’Oreille people.</li> <li>5. Now reference the Roy section on cuisine and the book <i>The Sacred Harvest</i> (optional if you have it).</li> <li>6. Ask students in groups of four to discuss the three harvests and what they now know. What is the same? What is different?</li> <li>7. How does the change in season impact the family?</li> <li>8. How does Omakayas change?</li> </ol>
 <p>5-10 min.</p>	<p><b>Model, read-aloud, and think-aloud while annotating text and demonstrating comprehension strategies.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Start students off by reading aloud the first few pages, 189-194, of the chapter.</li> <li>2. Remind them to read to learn about the seasonal changes impacting the family and the internal changes that are transforming Omakayas.</li> </ol>
 <p>10-15 min</p> 	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students read independently the rest of the chapter.</li> <li>2. When done, direct a discussion about the seasonal change for the family. Ask, what happens in spring?</li> <li>3. What is happening to Omakayas?</li> <li>4. Is anyone else changing? What do you think?</li> </ol>
 <p>3-5 min.</p>	<p><b>Write your way out.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have students once again revise and extend their description of Omakayas, including changes they see in her feelings and behaviors.</li> <li>2. Require at least four details that speak to her change.</li> <li>3. Use a timer to create urgency, maintain focus.</li> <li>4. Be sure students can prove the details they include by returning to the text.</li> </ol>

## Day Seventeen—During Reading—Chapter 13: One Horn’s Protection

### Summary Chapter 13

The sugar harvest is abundant, and the winter’s debts are paid off. Deydey buys each member of his family something special. Andeg begins “nesting,” bringing Omakayas twigs and pieces of bark as if she were another crow. One day, he hears a flock of crows and flies off to join them. Omakayas is saddened by his departure, realizing that despite their relationship, Andeg is still a crow. She realizes that like Andeg, she too “couldn’t help being just who she was, Omakayas, in this skin, in this place, in this time . . . no matter what, she wouldn’t ever be another person or really know the thoughts of anyone but her own self.” Fear and also peace accompany this realization.

### Essential Understandings Chapter 13

The theme of identity continues with the parallel Omakayas makes to her friend Andeg. This is a moment of personal awareness of identity; even though she does not yet know or fully understand her origins, she knows who she is and her special place in the world. One Horn also knew his role or place in the world, which was to look after and ultimately give his life for this family. These are important elements ripe for discussion and personal reflection (writing), and they clearly address essential understandings two and three. Culture impacts identity and roles of individuals within communities.

### Learning Targets Chapter 13

#### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I know that today, as well as historically, individuals within any group are unique in their identity which can range from assimilated to traditional. (EU2)
- I recognize the individual differences in Omakayas’ family and the members of their village in all areas (political, religious, skills, vocation, lifeways). (EU2)

#### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I read “between the lines” making logical predictions, guesses and hunches I prove or disprove as I read. (Inferring)
- I interpret what I have read in both speech and writing.

#### Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded in the Novel)

- I am aware of the importance of identity (knowing who you are) to human beings. (Identity)
- I understand culture plays a part in determining identity and relationships in human societies. (Culture, Identity, Relationships)

#### Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)

- I understand a story, like *The Birchbark House*, can transport me into a different time and place and some stories come from imagination alone and may be real (true to life) or fantastic (not true to life) while other stories take elements from actual historical events and blend these with imagined people.

### Vocabulary Chapter 13

bliss bound debt harsh indistinguishable

### Day Seventeen—Authentic Literacy Lesson—Chapter 13: One Horn’s Protection

 <p>3-5 min.</p>	<p><b>Write your way in.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What do you think might be One Horn’s Protection. What does this title mean?</li><li>2. Take a minute and write what you think.</li><li>3. Discuss in class after they have jotted their ideas.</li><li>4. How many predict the chapter will be about One Horn?</li><li>5. Any other ideas?</li><li>6. Note these on the board before reading.</li></ol>
 <p>10-15 min</p>	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Have students read the entire chapter pages 216-220 independently.</li><li>2. When all are done, discuss how Omakayas and Andeg are alike.</li></ol>
 <p>3-5 min.</p>	<p><b>Write your way out.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Project the following quotes from the chapter. “She couldn’t change that any more than she could change being who she was, Omakayas, who heard the voices of plants and went dizzy. Omakayas, who talked to bear boys and received their medicine. Omakayas, who missed her one brother and resented the other, who envied her sister. Omakayas, the Little Frog, whose first step was a hop. Omakayas who’d lost her friend.” P. 219 “Like Andeg, she couldn’t help being just who she was. Omakayas, in this skin, in this place, in this time. Nobody else. No matter what, she wouldn’t ever be another person or really know the thoughts of anyone but her own self.”</li><li>2. Does Omakayas know who she is?</li><li>3. Write what you think and then talk.</li><li>4. In what ways has Andeg helped her understand her place in the world?</li></ol>

### Day Eighteen—During Reading—Chapter 14: Full Circle

#### Summary Chapter 14

A new spring begins, and the family builds and moves into their summer home—the birchbark house. This time, the house feels different as Omakayas mourns those who have left – Neewo, Ten Snow, and now Andeg. Comic relief is introduced in the form of a visit from Albert LaPautre, who spins a tale about acquiring a new spirit helper during an attempt to steal traps from Old Tallow. In his story a talking crow called, “Gaygo!” telling him to stop! The entire family laughs as they recognize the unmistakable voice of Andeg! Albert leaves confused and hopeful the spirit will return. Later, Andeg returns to the family with the planting of their crops. Omakayas calls to him with joy, but he is now half wild and perches on Pinch who sees he is now a bit afraid of people. In a rare moment of generosity, Pinch passes the wary crow to Omakayas, a turning point in the tumultuous relationship between the siblings. Andeg is home.

After consulting with Nokomis, Old Tallow tells Omakayas the story of how she was found and where she came from. Finally, she understands why she was not stricken by smallpox, and in some way, that

she was sent to save her family from the disease. Omakayas remembers. "Omakayas could feel in her heart what it was like for that baby, for herself, all alone with the dead, with her mother, walking from those she loved as though walking stone to stone. Somehow, deep inside, she remembered." (pp. 236-37) And then she remembers the singing of the island's birds, the white-throated sparrows. "I remember their song," she says, "because their song was my comfort, my lullaby. They kept me alive." (p. 237) The circle of self-discovery or her journey to her individual identity is growing complete. "This was the first day of the journey on which she would find out the truth of her future, who she was . . . the birds, the whole earth, the expectant woods seemed to wait for her to understand something. She didn't know what. It didn't matter . . . those sweet, tiny, far-reaching notes were so brave." (p. 238) And finally, Neewo's spirit tells his sister he is all right, and he will always be there for her. Omakayas lies back, closes her eyes, and listens to the birds, "as the song of the white throated sparrow sank, again and again through the air like a shining needle, and sewed up her broken heart." (p. 239)

### Essential Understandings Chapter 14

There is a critical cultural value that comes into sharp focus in this final chapter—that of reciprocity. Each element comes full circle and each person, either human or animal, plays a role. When something is taken, something else is given. This theme is carried throughout the book and is particularly evident in earlier chapters in the instruction and behavior of Nokomis, who thanks and leaves offerings for the medicines she gathers and each food taken from the earth. Made manifest in this work of historical fiction, these values continue to be present today. A point for discussion for students is how reciprocity is made evident in the culture of the Anishinaabe and how this contrasts --- and actually directly conflicts – with Deydey and his friends' perception of the culture of greed found among the white settlers. This is a flash point related to more than one essential understanding. Notably, essential understandings two (identity), three (culture), and, more subtly, five (policy periods) are addressed. Essential understandings four (treaties) and seven (sovereignty) are connected to this text only through inference; as the treaty era progressed, and treaties were necessary land transaction agreements that assured (or attempted to assure) peace in the face of unrelenting greed for land (see Fishtail quote from Chapter 5, page 80). Treaties became the only means of assuring a level of reciprocity—that for something taken, something would be given in return. As history showed, what was given was never equal in value to what was taken. In Omakayas' life, as shown in the Chapter Full Circle, there is balance.

### Learning Targets Chapter 14

#### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I know that today, as well as historically, individuals within any group are unique in their identity which can range from assimilated to traditional. (EU2)
- I recognize the individual differences in Omakayas' family and the members of their village in all areas (political, religious, skills, vocation, lifeways). (EU2)

#### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I identify the main ideas of the text and the author's message. (Determining Importance)
- I connect what I know about myself, other books, or the world to understand what I read. I combine what I know with new information to understand the text. (Synthesizing)
- I create pictures in my mind as I read. (Visualizing)

- I think about interpretations of a text and write/say what I think.
- I work cooperatively in small groups and with a partner.

Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded in the Novel)

- I am aware of the importance of identity (knowing who you are) to human beings. (Identity)
- I understand culture plays a part in determining identity and relationships in human societies. (Culture, Identity, Relationships)
- I understand the roles we play (talents, skills, responsibilities) are important to the overall well-being of a community. (Relationships, Culture, Identity)

Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)

- I understand a story, like *The Birchbark House*, can transport me into a different time and place and some stories come from imagination alone and may be real (true to life) or fantastic (not true to life) while other stories take elements from actual historical events and blend these with imagined people.

Vocabulary Chapter 14

abrupt diversion guffaws harbored poised portentous

Day Eighteen—Authentic Literacy Lesson—Chapter 14: Full Circle

 <p>5-10 min.</p>	<p><b>Model, read-aloud, and think-aloud while annotating text and demonstrating comprehension strategies.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read aloud pages 221 to top of 226.</li> <li>2. As you read, model inferring, predicting what will happen and interpretation or analysis of character Albert LaPautre.</li> <li>3. How is LaPautre portrayed? What are we to think about him? How does his false sense of importance and belief in the significance of his dreams and spirit world interactions contrast with Nokomis? Or even young Omakayas? Work ethic? Honesty? Identity (trying to be someone he is not)?</li> </ol>
 <p>5-7 min.</p>	<p><b>Guided practice while teacher checks for understanding.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct one last session of guided practice, having students read from pages 226-229.</li> <li>2. What happens? What role does Pinch play?</li> <li>3. Have students discuss in small groups.</li> <li>4. Has Pinch changed? If so, how?</li> <li>5. What might this reunion mean, symbolize, in the chapter?</li> </ol>
 <p>10-15 min</p>	<p><b>Independent practice while teacher monitors or occasionally provides individual or small group support.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students read the last pages, 229-239 independently.</li> <li>2. Do not interrupt.</li> <li>3. When everyone is done, take a minute to read aloud the final pages from bottom of page 237.</li> <li>4. Ask, what do we now know about Omakayas?</li> <li>5. How does this final revelation from Old Tallow change or complete her?</li> <li>6. Allow students to discuss their impressions, what might they predict for Omakayas? Who will she become.</li> </ol>



3-5 min.

### Write your way out.

1. Seat students in their groups.
2. Return the circle charts started earlier.
3. Have groups continue the development of their circle charts, graphically summarizing the events in each of the four seasons. They now can summarize spring.

## Days Nineteen and Twenty—Write Your Way Out

### Learning Targets Days 19 and 20

#### Content (Essential Understandings)

- I know that today, as well as historically, individuals within any group are unique in their identity which can range from assimilated to traditional. (EU2)

#### Skill Sets (Reading Comprehension Strategies, Writing to Learn, Learning to Write)

- I connect what I know about myself, other books, or the world to understand what I read. (Making Connections, Activating Schema)
- I summarize what I have read in both speech and writing.
- I interpret what I have read in both speech and writing.
- I provide thoughtful feedback to others on their compare/contrast essays.
- I revise descriptions of characters found in a text.
- I revise a memoir or segment of my autobiography.
- I write a compare/contrast essay.
- I use standard conventions on all formal writing at the final draft stage of the writing process.
- I represent (show) what I know using graphics, drawings, or other media.
- I work independently.
- I manage time to complete this project on time and fulfill important requirements.

#### Concepts (Big Ideas and Themes Embedded the Novel)

- I am aware of the importance of identity (knowing who you are) to human beings. (Identity)
- I understand culture plays a part in determining identity and also relationships in human societies. (Culture, Identity, Relationships)
- I understand the roles we play, (talents, skills, and responsibilities) are important to the overall well-being of a community. (Relationships, Culture, Identity)

#### Context (Historical Fiction—The Birchbark House—Story, Time, Place, and People)

- I understand a story, like *The Birchbark House*, can transport me into a different time and place and some stories come from imagination alone and may be real (true to life) or fantastic (not true to life) while other stories take elements from actual historical events and blend these with imagined people.

### Steps

1. Inform students of the assignment. (Assignment and a supportive structure written as directions for students can be found on the next page. Please read these instructions with care before assigning and following these steps. Provide one copy per student in advance.)

2. Have students go back to the memoir they wrote at the beginning of the unit. This is the groundwork for the first topic which is “YOU!”
3. Have students reread their memoir and then share it with a writing partner.
4. Next, students need to gather their ideas connected to Omakayas and what about her changed and stayed the same during the novel. They have written four “add on” revision descriptions. Now they need to craft these into a final one, telling who she is and what she is like now (and perhaps a story or two as examples that show her growth). **Note: Consider using PPT #1 Anishinaabe Images during extended writing times to encourage immersion into the world of this story.**
5. When they have this in draft form, have them share with their writing partner.
6. Now they craft the sections on similarities and differences. Be sure they stay specific and support their contentions with evidence and examples from life and text.
7. Finally, craft the conclusion.
8. Share with writing partners and revise as needed in response to feedback. (Stay focused on content, organization, and development – not conventions at this stage. This is revision—or “re-visioning” the text—not editing or proof-reading.)
9. Share with teacher and revise as needed in response to feedback. (Stay focused on content, organization, and development – not conventions.)
10. Finally, have student proof-read—they do this step themselves—and then submit their fixed-up paper to a peer editor and teacher for support.
11. Once all errors have been found and fixed, conduct a final review and publish.
12. Have students share their pieces – volunteering to read them to the class as they choose.

### Student Instructions

The Assignment --- Compare and Contrast Yourself to Omakayas

You will write an essay comparing and contrasting yourself as a seven-year-old to Omakayas from *The Birchbark House*. Learning how to write a compare/contrast essay is important. It is key to writing well in high school English classes and is one of the most frequently assigned in college writing. For this assignment, you will introduce and discuss two topics in separate sections, essentially writing a compelling description of each topic to build your essay. Then you write a third section that juxtaposes (compares), first looking at similarities and then looking at differences. Finally, you write a conclusion which may discuss the root causes of the differences.

Introduction	Typically, this is a paragraph that begins with a hook which will lead to a thesis statement. In the case of this assignment, your hook could be an anecdote about you, or Omakayas, a generalization about seven-year-olds or “kids today” or a quote about identity from the book. Your goal is to craft this so the reader really wants to explore the similarities and differences between you and Omakayas.
All About You	Spinning from your memoir piece, write about three paragraphs all about you. Be specific and detailed and include a story that tells what kind of kid you were.
All About Omakayas	Using your notebook “quick writes” as drafts or notes on Omakayas, write about 3 paragraphs about her and how she has changed.
All About Similarities	In what ways are you alike? Think deeply here. Superficial things like appearance, gender, etc. all are good, but feelings, attitudes, experiences, these are better. Use examples from each of your lives (about 2 paragraphs).
All About Differences	Now, how are you different? (about 2 paragraphs)
Conclusion	Discuss causes or hypothesize about causes of the similarities and differences you uncover. Pull back to bring your original hook into the conclusion. Would you like to be more like Omakayas? How could she be more like you? What do you admire? What do you not admire? In what ways are you and she unique and why?

## Assessment

### Formative – Checking for Understanding

How do you know what students know and whether or not they comprehend what they read? Here is a discussion of some tools that allow you to monitor individual learners’ reading behaviors, comprehension and thinking regarding the big ideas in the novel. Also discussed are some tools that help you manage the pace of their reading and assure you are equitably holding every student accountable for reading, thinking, and writing or reflecting on content and the larger concepts presented in the text. The tools shown to the right, when used and monitored thoughtfully, can provide you a little window into the internal, and hence, invisible, thought process of the learner.



Figure 1: Here are some tools to support accountability and allow you to know when students understand the text or not.

## Silent Sustained Reading vs. Round-Robin Reading

Teachers frequently employ round-robin reading (students take turns reading sections of the book aloud, often moving up and down the rows in the classroom) out of concern that some students will not read the book (refusal), and others will not be able to read the book (lack of ability). They believe round robin reading guarantees even if a student will not or cannot read, all will get the gist of the story. This strategy assumes the novel or story is more important in the long run than students' motivation or ability to actually read and comprehend the text. Here is the argument against round-robin reading.

First, when students are round-robin reading, neither the students listening, nor the reader (whether a fluent reader or a struggling reader) are deeply engaged in listening to understand the story. Those reading are frequently so nervous (performance anxiety) they focus on calling words accurately, often remembering almost nothing of the section actually read. Listeners on the other hand are often ignoring the reader and attempting instead to rehearse the paragraph they believe they will be reading, or if they just finished, they are off the hook and simply disengage. Either way, they are not practicing or learning how to read and monitor their own comprehension, employing fix-up strategies as needed and consistently employing reading comprehension strategies to draw the deeper meaning from the text.

In place of round-robin reading, conduct silent sustained reading with requirements for students to annotate the text as they go. Check for understanding by asking questions or examining the students' reflections (writing) and annotations. Here we will discuss questioning strategies and random questioning. In later sections we will address use of temporary markers with a color coding you determine to help you know what students understand and the use of a writer's notebook to collect student reflections and processing of ideas from the book.

## Questions Are More Important Than Answers

An important strategy employed by teachers conducting guided inquiry is that of questioning. Asking the open-ended question that moves a learner to deeper thinking and nudges them in the direction of more thoughtful inquiry is an art that needs to be practiced. As you reflect on your own practice as a teacher, examine the ratio of open-ended questions that guide student thinking to statements of fact in lecture format. The more questions, the more the students are doing the important "heavy lifting" of learning. Their effort creates their ability. As a teacher, your most important instructional strategy to guide and support students thinking, and check for understanding, is simple questioning. Please note this need not be a time consuming. Often, it is enough to have students indicate "Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down, or Thumbs Sideways" whether the story is making sense. It is a simple ten second check in that helps you as a teacher know whether they are having success or not.

## Random Is Not Always Random

Research has shown teachers tend to call on the same sub-group of students over and over but perceive they have actually been equitable in their pattern of engaging students in discussions and questioning students to see what they understand. One way to avoid unconscious preferential treatment is to use tools to make calling on students consistently random. No one should be able to dodge engaging in learning or should endure being inadvertently overlooked as the same students volunteer or are called upon repeatedly. A simple can, jar, or mug with craft sticks (one per student) with the names written on one end solves this age-old problem, speeds the process, and avoids calling on the usual suspects over and over. This tool also builds a good pace for instruction. As it is used by teachers and all student contributions are responded to supportively by the teacher, students of all abilities will become increasingly willing to take risks.

When risk taking, they extend or stretch their thinking and response to include divergent ideas and deeper interpretations of the text. With a simple system in place, equity is assured, and because students see it is fair, they will not feel unfairly called on or ignored.

## Annotation --- One Key to Knowing What Students Know

Adult learners annotate any text they are studying in order to increase their comprehension and retention of complex material. Students rarely have the opportunity to do what adult learners do routinely. This is a consequence of use of expensive books that must last year after year. Selected informational text needs to be made available to students regularly in a form they can highlight, underline, and write in the margins. In addition, teachers need to model how to annotate text using a “think-aloud” approach.



Figure 2: Much like drawing straws, the use of the “craft stick in the can” supports equity and speeds up class discussions.

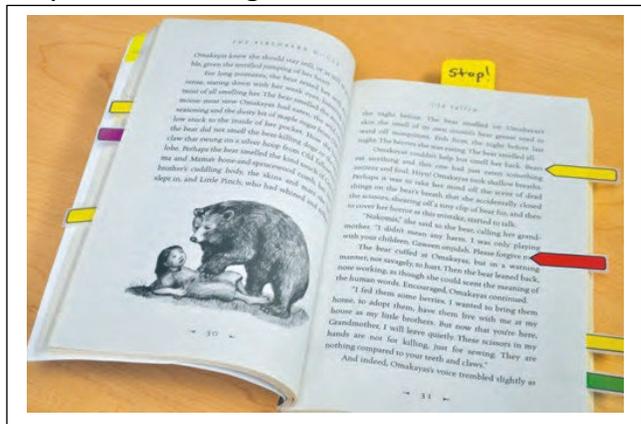


Figure 3: Post-it Flags allow students to quickly mark a point of confusion, a question, or a point of interest.



Students write reflecting, summarizing, making predictions, interpreting, and describing in relation to the text. Each piece of reflective writing provides a piece of data that helps the teacher understand what the student knows about the book and to monitor the students' comprehension and interpretation of the texts. Writing skills are important to practice on a daily basis from kindergarten all the way to high school. Writing captures and organizes thought in ways that support students becoming college and career ready.

Admit and exit tickets, simple single paragraph summaries, and descriptions and tools like the double entry journal or the four-part reflection form are all tools that can help you as a teacher see minute by minute what is going on in the head of the student. At the same time, these tools



Figure 7: My friend Anna uses this in structure to support students thinking about their changing understanding of a text as they read. It is a great tool to support guided practice.

employ writing to learn and also practice the writing skills themselves, especially when the teacher raises the stakes with simply quality and quantity requirements. Adding developmentally appropriate expectations like use of complete sentences, requiring quick writes to be in the form of a paragraph with at least three to five supporting details, or shifting formats (today a journal entry, tomorrow a letter) all build writing flexibility. The expectations are key. Do not count mechanics or conventions in the stew when you want ideas generated quickly. This type of writing is never graded, but can become rich fodder for longer more formal writing, as in the compare and contract essay that closes this unit. In this more formal writing, conventions are addressed as the piece moves all the way through the writing process

to publication. Daily writing that supports teaching and learning stays at the brainstorm and draft stage to support thinking and learning. Conventions grow automatic with daily practice.

### Monitoring and Managing Timing and Pace

So, what do you do with the jackrabbits— students who always seem to finish early or first, while others require more time. No matter what strategy you or your school employs in terms of ability grouping etc., someone will always be first, and someone else will always be last. It is not always an indicator of comprehension or depth of reading to be at either end of the spectrum. Occasionally, it may be important for you to have students stop at a single stopping point in order to process ideas in groups, pairs, or whole class and not have students who have read ahead give away key elements of the plot. In



Figure 8: A sample of clips used to stop, or clip away content you don't want them to read yet.

addition, teaching students questioning and prediction strategies and supporting them in proving or disproving their hunches is an important reading strategy to directly teach. For these purposes, I sometimes post stop signs using paper clips to block students from reading into the next chapter. These are put in place by the students at the start of the reading with teacher’s instructions.

There are also times, usually toward the end or when engaged in literature circles and independent reading, when I want students to progress at their own pace and manage their time and their own reading process—including meeting critical class deadlines. Both are important strategies, and both need to be employed.

### Summative Assessment

- Daily reflections, summaries, descriptions, and other quick writes
- Annotation of texts (anchor and supplemental) indicating thoughtful reading, pace etc.
- Group Circle Chart Graphic Organizer
- Writing Assignment Memoir “When I Was Seven”
- Compare/Contrast Essay Comparing Self at Seven to Omakayas

### Teacher Notes and Cautions

---

Be aware a child in your classroom may have experienced the loss of a sibling. As with any novel, strong emotions may emerge for individuals who empathize with the character or circumstances in the text. If thoughtfully handled by the teacher, this can be beneficial and therapeutic. As you observe students and they share their own life experiences, it is good to monitor. On rare occasion, a referral to the school counselor may be a good support based on individual needs. Note reading a text that includes a tragedy does not cause this trauma, but it may be the circumstance that helps a teacher become aware of individual loss and grief, and, as a consequence, enable the teacher and school counselor to provide support. This is one of the benefits of great literature as it connects us to our own lives through the safety of a third person vicarious experience.

### Extension Activities and Investigations

---

#### The Oral Tradition

Take the three very different stories from the oral tradition found in *The Birchbark House* and juxtapose to three different stories from other American Indian tribes. There are many to choose from. You could use the story of *Grizzly Bear Looking Up* and *The Gift of the Bitterroot*, which are introduced in this unit, or *Montana Indians: Their History and Location*, which includes origin stories from other tribes. *Grizzly Bear Looking Up* and *Montana Indians: Their History and Location* have been sent to school libraries by the Office of Public Instruction.

Do not be deceived by the simplicity of stories from the oral tradition. They transmit complex multigenerational knowledge of the natural world. These stories transmit elements of culture and values, demonstrating both how to live and behave, and sometimes how not to behave. The oral tradition carries the information (in the tradition of Western empiricism, it could be called “data”) from multi-generational observations of the natural world. Again, in the language of empiricism,

these observations might be considered “longitudinal data” on an unprecedented level. For the tribe that owns and tells a story, they always understood it to be so.

With six stories selected, go back to *The Birchbark House* and Erdrich’s explanations in the novel of the different story types. Have students read and compare. Be sure to follow tribally specific seasonal protocols for the reading and telling of various stories.

- “Deydey’s Ghost Story” (example of a personal story used in the book for entertainment.)
- “Grandma’s Story – Fishing the Dark Side of the Lake” (Example of a personal story of a sacred nature, told by the owner of the story, in this case Grandma.)
- “Nanabozho and the Muskrat Make an Earth” (Example of a traditional story, one shared as part of the oral tradition and filled with layered meanings teaching origins and also religious traditions and beliefs.) Note these must be treated with respect and used within the norms of the culture from which they come (see genre chart at the end of unit in appendices).

### The Series

*The Birchbark House* is the first book in what is now a trilogy but may become an epic series of seven books spanning nearly 100 years of history. Encourage independent reading or perhaps connect these high-quality works of historical fiction to another content area like social studies aligned to eras in U.S. History and Federal Policy Periods. *The Game of Silence* addresses the pressure placed on the Anishinaabe people and the fear and impact of displacement from their land base. *The Porcupine Year* is an odyssey finding Omakayas living in a new place, where danger comes from both the east and the west. This final book also deals with coming of age issues for Omakayas. A girls' literature circle could be a powerful way to read this book.

### Infectious Disease and Human Beings: A Comparative Multi-Disciplinary Investigation of Time, Place, and People Juxtaposing *The Birchbark House* to *Crispin: The Cross of Lead*

These two stories go a bit like this: an orphan of unknown origin goes on a journey to discover self. Protected and accompanied by Bear, the child faces unimaginable hardship, hunger, and loss as the People struggle with a devastating epidemic—a disease that has taken millions of lives. Based on two works of high quality and well researched historical fiction by two prolific and gifted authors, these two stories could not be more similar—or different as the case may be. Compare 1381 in bubonic plague ravaged, feudal Europe to 1847 in smallpox ravaged Anishinaabe territory along the Great Lake. Compare the Catholic world view to a tribal one, feudalism to tribalism and in-centric circular versus ex-centric linear plotlines. Study virology, how different diseases spread through and infect populations, epidemiology, paleo-epidemiology, and much more in this intensive science, social studies, math, and communication arts integrated investigation.

### The Science of Food: A Comparative Multi-Disciplinary Investigation of Food Ways and Lifestyles Juxtaposing *The Birchbark House*, *Two Old Women*, *Fast Food Nation*, and *Super Size Me*.

How many calories are in a pound of fat? What is the difference between calories burned driving through MacDonald’s versus gathering wild rice, berries, or hunting and fishing? How is food treated today compared to the past? What cultural norms were present in the past guiding food

collection, storage, sharing, and distribution? Is abundance healthy? This investigation may change the way students think about food and will certainly inform them of the connection between food sources and food ways and the lifestyles necessary to procure food and the overall health of people. Both feast and famine are on trial in this intensive science, social studies, math, and communication arts integrated investigation.

## Appendices

---

Pre/Post Reading Reflection Form

Four-Part Reflection Form

Double Journal Entry – Q & A

Double Journal Entry – Quote & Reflection

Literary Genres

Lord Jeffery Amherst note – Mystery Piece

Excerpts from Montana Stories of the Land

Excerpt from A People’s History of the United States 1492 – Present

PowerPoint Slide Shows of Archival Photos

#1, #2, #3, #4 – Accessible online and as individual photos printed in the Appendices.

- PowerPoint #1 – Mystery Photographs (list of captions precedes photos)
- PowerPoint #2 – Wild Rice (list of captions precedes photos)
- PowerPoint #3 – Food Ways (list of captions precedes photos)
- PowerPoint #4 – Anishinaabe Images

Rocky Boy’s Reservation – Background information

Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa – Background information

Montana Reservations Map

Excerpts from The Birchbark House (information regarding page numbers):

- “The Girl From Spirit Island”
- “Deydey’s Ghost Story”
- “Grandma’s Story – Fishing the Dark Side of the Lake”
- “Nanabozho and Muskrat Make an Earth”

Bibliography

## Pre/Post Reading Reflection Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Before Reading – Predict and Preview	After Reading – Reflect and Analyze
Based on the title, what do you think this is about?	What was it about?
What do you know, or think you know, about that?	Was what you knew or thought you knew accurate? Or, have you changed your thinking? Explain.
What questions do you have?  1.  2.  3.	Were your questions answered? How? If not, what new questions do you have resulting from your reading?  1.  2.  3.

## Four Part Reflection Form

<p>Before Reading – I think ...</p>	<p>Guided Practice Session 1 – Now I understand that ...</p>
<p>Guided practice Session 2 – Now I understand that ...</p>	<p>After Reading – So, I know, this chapter is about ...</p>

## Double Entry Journal – Q & A

Questions	Answers

## Double Entry Journal --- Quote and Reflection

Quote and Page #	This means to me...

## Literary Genres

Literary Genres		
Fiction	Fantasy	A story that is not considered traditional literature, which includes elements that are considered impossible such as magical creatures or superpowers. Imagination and make-believe are what this genre is all about.
	Science Fiction	A type of fantasy usually set in the future, often including science and technology themes (robots, time machines, etc.)
	Poetry	Poetry is verse written to create a response of thought and feeling from the reader. It often uses rhythm and rhyme to help convey its meaning.
	Mystery	A suspenseful story about a puzzling event that is not solved until the end of the story.
	Realistic Fiction	A story using made-up characters that could happen in real life.
	Traditional Literature	Stories passed down over many generations. These could include oral traditions, parables, folktales, legends, fables, fairy tales, tall tales, and myths. Many stories in this genre have historical significance and all have cultural significance to the group who own them. Depending on the beliefs of the group that continues to tell and use these stories, they are not always presented as fiction.
	Historical Fiction	A fictional story that takes place in a particular time period in the past. Often the setting is real, but some characters and details are made up in the author's imagination.
Non Fiction	Biography	The story of a real person's life written by another person.
	Autobiography	The story of a real person's life that is written by that person.
	Informational Text	Texts that provide facts about a variety of topics (sports, animals, science, history, careers, travel, geography, space, weather, etc.)

Lord Jeffery Amherst note – Mystery Piece

P.S.  
You will be well to try to communicate the  
Indians by means of the <sup>Indians</sup> <sup>at</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>place</sup> <sup>where</sup> <sup>you</sup> <sup>are</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>try</sup>  
Every other method that you may be able to  
think of. I should be very glad your  
Scheme for hunting them down by <sup>the</sup> <sup>use</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>fire</sup> <sup>arms</sup> <sup>could</sup> <sup>take</sup>  
Effect

That's what I said in at the great in <sup>the</sup> <sup>place</sup> <sup>where</sup> <sup>you</sup> <sup>are</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>try</sup>  
to think of that at present

## Lord Jeffery Amherst note

Source of material – The British Library, text found in Additional Ms. 21634, f.241. According to a British Library reference librarian, the text found in the Amherst note, which was part of communication with General Henry Bouquet, is not attached to a letter but seems to stand alone, on a separate sheet of paper. “It may be that it was originally sent as an enclosure.” Also, she reports that in the original housed at the British Library, there is no “P.S.” at the beginning of the paragraph.

### Text of Amherst note:

You will Do well to try to Inoculate the Indians by means of Blankets, as well as to Try Every other Method that can Serve to Extirpate this Execrable Race. I should be very glad your Scheme for Hunting them down by Dogs could take Effect, but England is at too great a Distance to think of that at Present.

NOTE: The troubling Amherst note, documents written by others, and related complex issues are still being researched. Associated Internet information is unreliable, at times. Nativeweb.org provides some [background information and links](#).

## Excerpts from *Montana Stories of the Land* by Krys Holmes.

Holmes, Kris. *Montana Stories of the Land*, Montana Historical Society, 2008.

Part 1, Chapter 3, “From Dog Days to Horse Warriors: Montana’s People – 1700- 1820.” pp. 44-45.

### **Diseases Sweep across the Continent**

Without even knowing it, the first immigrants carried European diseases like smallpox, cholera, and measles to the Americas. The indigenous (native to a particular land) people had never been exposed to these diseases before. Their bodies had no resistance to them. Smallpox was especially horrible: people suffered high fever, chills, and unbearable pain. It left terrible scars on those who survived. A person could catch it merely by touching the clothing or belongings of someone who had it. People infected one another before they even knew they were sick.

European diseases spread across the continent in waves, killing huge numbers of people. In some very populated areas, 90 percent of the Indian people may have died. Among smaller, more mobile (able to move) groups, death rates were lower. Some sources say more Indian people died from disease between 1500 and 1600 than would be born in the next 400 years.

What does it mean for a civilization to lose 50 to 90 percent of its people? If so many American Indians had not died so suddenly, the history of North America—and of Montana—might be very different.

These diseases upset the balance of power across the continent and changed the course of human history in the Americas. Survivors moved around and formed new communities in response to these enormous losses. Some tribes gained power over others simply by outnumbering them. These diseases had an enormous impact on the history of Montana tribes.

### **Our Hearts Were Low**

When at length it [smallpox] left us, and we moved about to find our people, it was no longer with the song and the dance; but with tears, shrieks, and howlings of despair for those who would never return to us. War was no longer thought of, and we had enough to do to hunt and make provisions for our families, for in our sickness we had consumed all our dried provisions . . . Our hearts were low and dejected, and we shall never be again the same people. —SAUKAMAPPEE, CREE, 1787

From [\*David Thompson’s Narrative of his Explorations in Western America, 1784-1812\*](#), Edited by J. B. Tyrrell, 1916. p. 337.

Part 2, Chapter 5, “Beaver, Bison, and Black Robes: Montana’s Fur Trade – 1800- 1860.” pp. 92-93.

### **Smallpox: Return of the Great Sorrow**

The fur trade brought more than trade goods to the Upper Missouri. It also brought new rounds of infection. Throughout the 1800s smallpox and other European diseases swept through Indian country. Whole bands died, sometimes leaving only one or two scarred and terrified survivors.

In 1837 the steamboat *St. Peter*, owned by the American Fur Company, barreled up the Missouri River. On board were a few men with smallpox. The traders tried to deliver supplies and pick up furs without infecting the Indians. Instead they brought disaster.

The *St. Peter* anchored at Fort Clark, near the Mandan villages of North Dakota, spreading smallpox to the Mandan, who had hosted so many explorers. "I keep no [account] of the dead, as they die so fast that it is impossible," wrote the head trader at Fort Clark, whose own son died in the epidemic. Barely 20 years after the Lewis and Clark Expedition, smallpox had killed almost all the Mandan Indians. Of 1,600 Mandan people, perhaps 200 survived.

The *St. Peter* continued on its journey upriver. At Fort Union it was met by hundreds of Assiniboine, who carried smallpox north into Canada. The *St. Peter* continued to Fort McKenzie, at the mouth of the Marias River. Here the fort's agent, Alexander Culbertson, urged the Blackfeet to stay away so they would not get infected. But the Blackfeet were suspicious of his strange warning. They insisted on boarding the boat to trade.

After they finished trading, Culbertson did not hear from the Blackfeet again. That fall he rode out to the Three Forks area to look for them. He found a large camp of tipis full of dead bodies, with only two people still alive. In the next few years, half of the Blackfeet people died of smallpox.

Some of the fur agents were able to get smallpox vaccinations (medicine that makes people immune to a disease) and to vaccinate some of their Indian partners against smallpox. Historians say that the smallpox vaccine shifted the balance of power on the Plains. Vaccines allowed some tribes—like the Sioux—to remain powerful at a time when the disease devastated other tribes.

There is no way to know how many Indian people died of smallpox during the epidemic of 1837–40. Some estimate 16,000 people or 40,000 people; some say it was as high as 150,000.

### **No Language Can Picture It**

No language can picture the scene of desolation . . . The tents are still standing on every hill, but no rising smoke announces the presence of human beings, and no sounds, but the croaking of the raven and the howling of the wolf interrupts the fearful silence.

From Hiram Martin Chittenden's *The American Fur Trade of the Far West*, 1902. pp. 622-623.

### **Alexander Culbertson Finds a Blackfoot Village Destroyed by Smallpox**

A few day's travel brought him in sight of a village of about sixty lodges. Not a soul was to be seen, and a funeral stillness rested upon it . . . Soon a stench was observed in the air, that increased as they advanced; and presently the scene with all its horror was before them. Hundreds of decaying forms of human beings, horses and dogs lay scattered everywhere among the lodges . . . Two old women, too feeble to travel, were the sole living occupants of the village.

Lieutenant James Bradley, who interviewed Alexander Culbertson in the 1870s. From *Contributions to the Historical Society of Montana*, Vol. 3. pp. 224-225.

## Excerpt from *A People's History of the United States 1492- Present* by Howard Zinn

Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States 1492-Present*, HarperCollins Publishers, Inc. 1980, 1995. p. 86.

When the British fought the French for North America in the Seven Years' War, the Indians fought on the side of the French. The French were traders but not occupiers of Indian lands, while the British clearly coveted their hunting grounds and living space. . . .

When that war ended in 1763, the French, ignoring their old allies, ceded to the British lands west of the Appalachians. The Indians therefore united to make war on the British western forts; this is called "Pontiac's Conspiracy" by the British, . . . Under orders from British General Jeffrey Amherst, the commander of Fort Pitt gave the attacking Indian chiefs, with whom he was negotiating, blankets from the smallpox hospital. It was a pioneering effort at what is now called biological warfare. An epidemic soon spread among the Indians.

Despite this, and the burning of villages, the British could not destroy the will of the Indians, who continued guerrilla war. A peace was made, with the British agreeing to establish a line at the Appalachians, beyond which settlements would not encroach on Indian territory. This was the Royal Proclamation of 1763, and it angered Americans (the original Virginia charter said its land went westward to the ocean). It helps to explain why most of the Indians fought for England during the Revolution. With their French allies, then their English allies, gone, the Indians faced a new land-coveting nation-alone.

[Note – It is not known, as yet, whether individuals and entire communities contracted smallpox by natural means, as epidemics and pandemics occurred in waves resulting from the introduction of diseases from Europe, or by intentional introduction of the pathogen. Historians know this course of action was seriously considered based on the primary source materials and it is thought by many that it was implemented.]

## Mystery Photographs PPT 1 Days 3-4

### PowerPoint 1 Mystery Photographs

Days 3 and 4 - Use to create puzzle pieces for grouping, analyzing, and building background to support visualization.

1. Title Slide, Mystery Photographs, Days 3-4
2. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Daniel Greysolon Sieur Dulhut at the Head of the Lakes – 1679. Painter: Francis Lee Jaques (1887-1969). Art Collection, Oil ca. 1922. Location No. AV1988.45.375. Negative no. 59030.
3. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Ojibwe family outside their dwelling, making miniature canoes, Lake Mille Lacs Reservation. Photograph Collection, Postcard ca. 1910. Location no. E97.33 r69. Negative no. 103538.
4. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. The Rival Companies Soliciting Trade A Hundred Years Ago. Art Collection, Engraving 1879. Location no. HD2.1 p5. Negative no. 1192.
5. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Repairing a birch bark canoe, Lake of the Woods. Photographer: Carl Gustave Linde. Photograph Collection ca. 1912. Location no. E97.35 m3. Negative no. 55174.
6. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Ojibwe family in front of their home. Photograph Collection ca. 1860. Location no. E97.31 r212. Negative no. 82908.
7. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Ojibwe dwellings erected at a large gathering near the “Old People’s Home” on the White Earth Reservation. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection ca. 1915. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 20. Negative no. 29613.

Wild Rice  
PPT #2 Day 10

[PowerPoint 2 Wild Rice Photographs](#)

Day 10. Use for closing lesson, in conjunction with *The Sacred Harvest*, if you have it, to show historical and contemporary rice gathering processes.

1. Title slide “Wild Rice Photographs”
2. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Wild rice harvest. Woman in boat tying wild rice stalks with basswood fiber. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph collection 1910-1918. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 27. Negative no. 55295.
3. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Wild rice harvest. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection 1910-1918. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 29. Negative no. 13141.
4. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Wild rice harvest. Woman parching wild rice. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection 1910-1918. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 35. Negative no. 13133.
5. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Wild rice harvest. Woman parching wild rice. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection 1910-1918. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 32. Negative no. 31997.

## Food Ways PPT 3, Day 16

### PowerPoint 3 Food Ways Photographs

Day 16. Use as opening and building background knowledge – images of food processing, rice and maple sugar gathering, hunting, meat drying.

1. Title Slide “Food Ways”
2. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Duck hunting from a canoe in a wild rice stand, Lake of the Woods. Photographer: Carl Gustave Linde. Photograph Collection 1913. Location no. E97.32F r11. Negative no. 10267-A.
3. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Wild rice harvest. Woman in boat tying wild rice stalks with basswood fiber. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection 1910-1918. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 27. Negative no. 55295.
4. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Wild rice harvest. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection 1910-1918. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 29. Negative no. 13141.
5. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Wild rice harvest. Woman parching wild rice. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection 1910-1918. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 35. Negative no. 13133.
6. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Collecting sap at a maple sugar camp, Mille Lacs Lake. Photographer: Monroe P. Killy (1910- ). Photograph Collection 1939. Location no. E97.32M p4. Negative no. 29834.
7. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Wild rice harvest. Woman parching wild rice. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection 1910-1918. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 32. Negative no. 31997.
8. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Chippewa Indians at a sugar camp, White Earth Reservation. Photograph Collection 1898. Location no. E97.32M r5. Negative no. 64064.
9. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Woman cooking maple sap at a sugar camp. Possibly on Mille Lacs Reservation. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection ca. 1915. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 67. Negative no. 18522.
10. Courtesy of Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Marquette University Libraries. Woman cooking over fire and drying meat on rack, 1942(?). Photographer Reverend John B. Tenny, S. S., 1890-1981. Location – Montana – Rocky Boy. Identifier no. 10859. Collection: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions; 09-1 28-16.

## Anishinaabe Images PowerPoint #4

### PowerPoint 4 Anishinaabe Images

1. Title Slide – Anishinaabe Images
2. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Daniel Greysolon Sieur Dulhut at the Head of the Lakes – 1679. Painter: Francis Lee Jaques (1887-1969). Art Collection, Oil ca. 1922. Location No. AV1988.45.375. Negative no. 59030.
3. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Ojibwe family outside their dwelling, making miniature canoes, Lake Mille Lacs Reservation. Photograph Collection, Postcard ca. 1910. Location no. E97.33 r69. Negative no. 103538
4. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. The Rival Companies Soliciting Trade A Hundred Years Ago. Art Collection, Engraving 1879. Location no. HD2.1 p5. Negative no. 1192.
5. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Repairing a birch bark canoe, Lake of the Woods. Photographer: Carl Gustave Linde. Photograph Collection ca. 1912. Location no. E97.35 m3. Negative no. 55174.
6. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Ojibwe family in front of their home. Photograph Collection ca. 1860. Location no. E97.31 r212. Negative no. 82908.
7. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Ojibwe dwellings erected at a large gathering near the “Old People’s Home” on the White Earth Reservation. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection ca. 1915. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 20. Negative no. 29613.
8. Courtesy of Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Marquette University Libraries. Ojibwa men in traditional dress, n.d. Photographer Reverend Odoric Derenthal, O.F.M. Identifier: 10820. Collection: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions; 09-1 57-07.
9. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Duck hunting from a canoe in a wild rice stand, Lake of the Woods. Photographer: Carl Gustave Linde. Photograph Collection 1913. Location no. E97.32F r11. Negative no. 10267-A.
10. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Wild rice harvest. Woman in boat tying wild rice stalks with basswood fiber. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection 1910-1918. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 27. Negative no. 55295.
11. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Wild rice harvest. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection 1910-1918. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 29. Negative no. 13141.
12. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Wild rice harvest. Woman parching wild rice. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection 1910-1918. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 35. Negative no. 13133.

13. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Collecting sap at a maple sugar camp, Mille Lacs Lake. Photographer: Monroe P. Killy (1910-). Photograph Collection 1939. Location no. E97.32M p4. Negative no. 29834.
14. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Wild rice harvest. Woman parching wild rice. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection 1910-1918. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 32. Negative no. 31997.
15. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Chippewa Indians at a sugar camp, White Earth Reservation. Photograph Collection 1898. Location no. E97.32M r5. Negative no. 64064.
16. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Woman cooking maple sap at a sugar camp. Possibly on Mille Lacs Reservation. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection ca. 1915. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 67. Negative no. 18522.
17. Courtesy of Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Marquette University Libraries. Woman cooking over fire and drying meat on rack, 1942(?). Photographer Reverend John B. Tenny, S. S., 1890-1981. Location – Montana – Rocky Boy. Identifier no. 10859. Collection: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions; 09-1 28-16.
18. Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Marquette University Libraries. Two men and son in dance dress, 1922. Photographer Dennison Photo. Identifier no. 10822. Collection: Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions; 09-1 57-04.
19. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Indian family in a birch bark canoe, Lake of the Woods. Photographer: Carl Gustave Linde. Photograph Collection 1911. Location no. E97.35 m1. Negative no. 10370-A.
20. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Indian couple beaching their birchbark canoe at a northern Minnesota lake. Photograph Collection ca. 1910. Location no. E97.35 r59. Negative no. 13421.
21. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Men portaging a canoe. Photograph Collection ca.1880. Location no. HD2.42 p13. Negative no. 12914.
22. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Paddling. Art Collection 1886. Location no. HD2.42 p17. Negative no. 3273.
23. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Our bark canoe. Art Collection 1855. Location no. HD2.42 p19. Negative no. 1038.
24. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Ojibwe tepee covered with birch bark and cloth. Mille Lacs. Photographer: Frances Densmore (1867-1957). Photograph Collection ca. 1915. Location no. Reserve Album 96, page 10. Negative no. 22516.
25. Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society. Ojibwe Indians building wigwam at Mille Lacs Trading Post. Photograph Collection ca. 1920. Location no. E97.31 r114. Negative no. 35773.

## Rocky Boy's Reservation

*Montana Indians: Their History and Location*, Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2009. pp. 56-57.

### Location

The Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation is located in north central Montana, taking in portions of both Hill and Choteau counties. The reservation lies 90 miles south of the United States-Canadian border near the boundary separating the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The city of Havre (pop. 12,000) is located 26 miles to the north. U.S. Highway 87 between Havre and Great Falls intersects the reservation at Box Elder. Reservation roads total 216 miles with 62 providing well-paved, easy access to major points throughout the reservation. Airport facilities in Havre and Great Falls provide commercial airline services. Rail service, including Amtrak, is available in Havre on the main east/west line of the Burlington Northern Railroad; a south spur adjoins the reservation.

Mt. Baldy, Mt. Centennial and Haystack Mountain are the more prominent landmarks found within the boundaries of the reservation. All three maintain significance in one way or another for the Chippewa Cree. East Fork and Bonneau Dams are also popular recreational areas.

There is no town site on the reservation. The community of Rocky Boy is truly rural in every sense of the word. Rocky Boy's Agency is the hub of all reservation activity and serves as headquarters for the Chippewa Cree Tribe. The Rocky Boy Reservation is the smallest reservation in the state of Montana and the last to be established.

### Population

The reservation's unusual name comes from the leader of a band of Chippewa Indians. Translated from the Chippewa language it means Stone Child, but the original translation was lost and the name Rocky Boy evolved. The reservation was established by Executive Order in April of 1916, when Congress set aside 56,035 acres for the Chippewa and Cree Bands of Chief Rocky Boy. In 1947 the reservation was expanded by 45,523 acres, bringing it to nearly its current size. None of the land has been allotted, though some individual assignments have been made.

The ethnic origin of the residents of the Rocky Boy's Reservation has remained complex, with the reservation becoming home to a diverse group of Cree, Chippewa, Metis, and Assiniboine peoples. The Cree represent one of the largest Native American groups in North America. While primarily residing in Canada today, a group of Cree settled in northern Montana after the Riel Rebellion in 1885. Led by Little Bear, these Cree eventually, after some three decades, became associated with a band of landless Chippewa under the leadership of Stone Child or Rocky Boy.

The principal use of lands within the reservation is grazing and dryland farming. There is no substantial industry with the exception of a few small family-owned businesses. Although the reservation is isolated from larger metropolitan areas, community residents are avid participants in church; community and school related activities, such as basketball games. This extreme isolation also accounts for the rich cultural heritage continuing on the Rocky Boy's Reservation.

## Land

Rocky Boy's Reservation was established by Executive Order in 1916. Along with the passage of the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act, the Chippewa Cree Tribe had the opportunity to acquire the remaining land base, which consisted of area farm operations that had been abandoned during the depression era, thereby bringing the reservation land base to the current 122,259 surface acres. Rocky Boy's Reservation is unallotted and is held in trust for the entire tribe. The reservation's resource base consists of farm and range lands, minerals, timber stands, and the Bear Paw Mountains which sustain wild game, fish, waterfowl, and springs and creeks that converge to form seven major drainages.

The reservation has three distinct topographic zones including the Bear Paw Mountains in the southeastern portion, central rolling foothills and semi-arid plains in the north. The reservation is also split by Hill County covering the northeast and Choteau County covering the southwest portion of the reservation. Reservation topography is dissected, showing the Bear Paw Mountains, cutting steep-sloped valleys. Elevation on the reservation ranges from 2,500 on the plains to 6,916 feet on top of Baldy Mountain. The average annual precipitation ranges from 10 inches at the lower elevations to 20 plus inches at the higher elevations. Temperature extremes are commonly from 110 degrees to -35 degrees Fahrenheit. Winters are long and cold and the roads are narrow and treacherous, particularly in the winter months.

## Historical Background

Chippewa lived in bands on both sides of what now divides their aboriginal homelands, the Canadian border and the Great Lakes region. The Cree territory extended from eastern Canada into the Saskatchewan and Alberta provinces. The Tribes began their migrations in the 1700s and 1800s and by the early 1890s had united in a search for a permanent home --- a place where children could be brought up in peace, where their religion would be uninterrupted and flourish.

Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation was named after Ah-se-ne-win, or Chief Stone Man; "Rocky Boy" evolved from the non-Indian misinterpretation. The reservation was established through the persistent efforts of Chief Rocky Boy (Chippewa) and Chief Little Bear (Cree). The two chiefs and their followers, numbering 450 at the time, had sought refuge in sizable Montana towns, cities, and even other Montana Indian reservations including the Blackfeet, Flathead, and Fort Belknap Reservations.

Three non-Indians were instrumental in assisting Chief Rocky Boy and Little Bear's efforts: William Bole, editor of the Great Falls Tribune, Frank Linderman, and Charles Gibson, son of Montana Sen. Paris Gibson. Gibson also applied much political pressure in both Montana and Washington, D.C., and gained supporters for the establishment of a reservation on the Fort Assiniboine lands for Rocky Boy and Little Bear.

The first years on the reservation were difficult ones. There were few jobs and many people had to go off the reservation to find work. Those who stayed tried to garden, hunt, pick rock, and collect bones, wool, tin and other metals.

The population of the Rocky Boy's Reservation is about 5,000 with 3,750 of the residents being enrolled members of the Chippewa Cree Tribe. By the year 2045, the reservation population is expected to reach 16,000 people. The birth rate for the community is three times that of the national average and over 60 percent of the tribal membership is under 25 years of age. The reservation resident population is comprised from approximately 450 families. There are 675 homes located in 11 low income clustered housing sites and scattered housing sites throughout the 81,000 acres in the lower reservation elevations.

## Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa

*Montana Indians: Their History and Location*, Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2009. pp. 46-48.

### Location

The Little Shell Chippewa Tribe is without a reservation or land base and members live in various parts of Montana. There are population concentrations in Great Falls, Havre, Lewistown, Helena, Butte, Chinook, Hays, Wolf Point, Hamilton, and Billings, as well as numerous other small communities in the state. Because the tribe has been without a land base for over 100 years, many members and their descendants live outside of Montana. Many changes are expected during the next decade as federal recognition is implemented.

### Population

The name of the tribe is: “The Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana,” and it is often shortened to “Little Shell.” The name “Métis” (pronounced may-tee) is often used, meaning “middle people” or “mixed blood.” The term Métis or more correctly Métifs, was first used during the 18th and 19th centuries, but at that time it identified a specific Northwest society with its own culture and economic traditions, living in the areas of the Red River, the Saskatchewan River, Turtle Mountain, North Dakota, and the area of present-day Winnipeg and Pembina, North Dakota. A further discussion regarding this group is found in the subsequent section titled Ethnography and Historical Background.

The current population of enrolled tribal members in Montana is approximately 3,850 and that number has not changed much in recent years. The tribe maintains only a rented office with volunteer staff, but continues to struggle for federal recognition. The Métis number in the thousands in the United States and south central Canada, and there are many unenrolled Little Shell people in Montana. Exact population numbers are not available.

In the mid 1800s the tribe was numbered at several thousand in the Red River-Pembina region. At that time there was no formal enrollment procedure, no reservation and thus no documented population figure. After the 1892 renegotiation of the Treaty of 1863, (the infamous 10 cent treaty) many of the Métis, including the Band of Chippewa under Little Shell, were left without a land base or reservation, and many became nomadic.

### Ethnography and Historical Background

The lack of a reservation or land base has been a profound determinant of the fate and destiny of the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa—a defining part of their history.

The origins of the Métis date back to the late 17th century when the fur trade became a significant commercial endeavor. Before the establishment of the United States/Canada border in 1846, vast regions of the central and western parts of the continent in what are now known as Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, North Dakota, Montana, Idaho and Washington were unsettled, and under the chartered use of the Hudson’s Bay Company (Ruperts Land). Trapping and harvesting beaver pelts and other furs for return to Europe through eastern markets required the alliance and support of the native inhabitants of the areas west of the Great Lakes. Working

for Hudson's Bay Company and the competing Northwest Company, the trapping and trading was done largely by immigrant Irish, Scotch, and French (voyageurs) who formed liaisons with the northern tribes to trade for goods in exchange for the valuable animal pelts. Marriage "à la façon du pays" (according to local custom) was a basic part of the social interaction and liaison between the voyageurs and the local native inhabitants. Most of these unions involved Saulteaux (Ojibwa) and Cree women, although there were also many unions with the Chippewa, Blackfeet and Sarcee, the latter two living further west.

Thus, thousands of Métis or "mixed blood" people came to occupy the areas nearest the trading posts along with thousands of Chippewa and Cree. This population increased to many thousand and took root in the region of the Red River in what is now southern Manitoba, and northern Minnesota. In the early 19th century they called themselves "Métifs," "Bois-Brûlés," and "les gens libres" (the free people).

The early generations were of Indian mothers and immigrant European fathers – parents who usually did not even share a common language. The resulting language, called "Mitchif" today by the Little Shell and Turtle Mountain people, was a unique blend of Chippewa native language, French, Cree, and a little English. By 1840 they had become a distinct and independent group, unique in the world with cultural ties to both French voyageurs and other Chippewa bands, but they also identified with their full blood parents' communities.

They industriously trapped, hunted buffalo, and conducted trading business with the Hudson's Bay Company, transporting goods from the far west to the trade centers at Fort Benton, Battleford, Red River, Batoche and Pembina. Their numbers grew and the settlements increased in size, containing both full-blooded Chippewa and Métis. Many lived in Northwest Company camps further west in Montana and southern Alberta. In 1867, New Brunswick, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Ontario merged to form a British Dominion called Canada. In the late 1860s and early 1870s when colonization of Canada continued westward from Quebec, and the Hudson's Bay Company began to relinquish control of these vast territories, the Red River settlements occupied by the Métis were geographically annexed to Canada, although there was no political alignment to the newly formed dominion of Canada by the Métis people. The Métis and Chippewa people of the Red River settlements began resisting the colonization of what they perceived as their home territory and attempted to establish a sovereign nation in southern Canada to be known as "Assiniboia." Louis Riel, their chosen political leader and representative to parliament for purposes of establishing the Metis-Indian nation, was only partly successful. Ultimately the movement for independence from Canada was denied, and over the next two decades, two military rebellions by Riel and the Metis were put down, the last in 1885. Riel's military leader, Gabriel Dumont left for Montana. The execution of Louis Riel for treason marked the end of the Métis-Chippewa nation as they had conceived of it, and white settlers poured into the region.

A reservation in the Turtle Mountain Area had been set aside for the Chippewa and Métis who had taken up permanent residence in what is now North Dakota. The two principal chiefs of the tribe to be known as the Pembina Chippewa were Little Shell and Red Bear. Along with the United States government, these two chiefs were signators to the Treaty of 1863, which established a 10 million acre reservation. Many of the Chippewa and Métis engaged in agriculture and ranching on this reservation, while others continued to subsist on buffalo hunting and trading endeavors to

the west where they had migrated to insulate themselves from the westward expansion of white settlements, which accelerated after Manitoba was annexed to the Dominion of Canada in 1869.

In a manner similar to what happened on many reservations, white settlers continued to migrate onto the Indian lands on both sides of the 49th parallel, which had become the United States - Canadian border, and seeing no industry, they erected permanent buildings, businesses, fences and roads, until the federal government moved to renegotiate the treaty. Chief Little Shell (son of the signator to the 1863 treaty) refused to sign. The new agreement provided approximately a million dollars for the 10 million acres of land ceded under the 1892 document, which became known as the "Ten-Cent Treaty" in reference to the 10 cents per acre being offered. In the wake of Little Shell's refusal to sign the Ten Cent Treaty, and because many of the group were on a prolonged hunting expedition in Montana, tribal members were removed from the reservation list and federal recognition was lost. The resulting reservation was then less than 10 percent of its original size.

1892 was the beginning of a 120-year period of languishing as a tribe without a homeland and with little economic opportunity. Some took refuge in Montana; some migrated west to Alberta, in their traditional two-wheel "Red River Carts." Some allied with other tribes, and some joined the Turtle Mountain Chippewa to the south in what is now North Dakota. Many wandered and hunted as a means to avoid drifting into poverty, as white settlers took over their settlements, fields and crops. As the buffalo disappeared, their subsistence and their way of life crumbled. Without federal recognition, they were without legal standing as citizens, without a land on which to live, and unable to qualify as homesteaders. There were instances of Little Shell Chippewa being rounded up by the United States military and deported to Canada.

Facing starvation, many survived this era by salvaging buffalo bones and skulls from the prairie and selling them at trading posts to be shipped eastward to fertilize rose gardens in the east. Many could not read or write and had no access to education, taking jobs as servants and ranch hands for the very settlers who occupied their former homeland. Some integrated with other Indians on other reservations (French surnames are common on Montana Reservations). And some lived in wandering destitution or in hovels on the perimeter of white communities. Many were poverty stricken, and without health care, many died during the harsh northern winters.

But efforts to reestablish their status as federally recognized Indians continued. After the third Chief Little Shell died in 1904, Joseph Dussome became a popular leader among the tribe, dedicating his life to efforts in locating members, enrolling members, meeting with officials in Washing, D.C., and organizing the splintered tribe. In 1927 he was organizing under the name of the "Abandoned Band of Chippewa Indians." In 1934 he incorporated a group known as the "Landless Indians of Montana," and in that same year, under the Indian Reorganization Act, Congress offered land for a reservation for the Little Shell Tribe, but President Franklin Roosevelt vetoed the action, based on the tribe's lack of federal recognition. Dussome continued in his efforts to restore hope for the tribe, even as the nation suffered through the Depression. Dussome has come to exemplify hope to the people of the tribe and spirit – that same spirit that has shown itself in the tribe's relentless petitioning of the United States government for recognition – and the hope that one day they will be landless no longer. This hope became to be

realized in the year 2000, under provisions of a 1978 program that established criteria under which a tribe may petition the federal government for acknowledgement.

NOTE: The Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians received federal recognition December 20, 2019.



## Excerpts from *The Birchbark House*

Erdrich, Louise. *The Birchbark House*. Hyperion Books for Children, 1999

### The Girl from Spirit Island

Pages 1-2, entire section

### Deydey's Ghost Story --- from Neebin (Summer) chapter

Pages 61-67

This story is interspersed with narrative text. This does not need to be read. Text to be read is in italics. There are section markers delineating story and narrative. The narrative is in italics.

### Grandma's Story --- *Fishing the Dark Side of the Lake* – from Biboon (Winter) chapter

Pages 134-138 (top)

### Nanabozho and Muskrat Make an Earth – from Biboon (Winter) chapter

Pages 172-175 (top)

## Bibliography

---

Amherst, General Jeffrey. Military communication [enclosure] from General Jeffrey Amherst to Colonel Henry Bouquet. Undated. Additional Ms., 21634, f.241. British Library.

Arlee, Johnny. *The Gift of the Bitterroot*. Edited by Antoine Sandoval. Pablo, MT: Npustin Press, 2008.

Avi. *Crispin and the Cross of Lead*. New York, NY: Hyperion, 2002.

Banzhaf, John. *Super Size Me*. 2004. DVD. Sony Pictures.

Cajune, Julie. *Montana Tribal Histories: [Educators Resource Guide](#) and [Companion DVD](#)*. Helena, MT: Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2011. (Sent to school libraries and online)

Elser, Tammy. *[The Framework: A Practical Guide for Montana Teachers and Administrators Implementing Indian Education for All](#)*. Helena, MT: Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2010.

Erdrich, Louise. *The Birchbark House*. New York, New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 1999.

—. *The Game of Silence*. New York, New York: HarperCollins, 2005.

—. *The Porcupine Year*. New York, New York: HarperCollins, 2008.

[Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians](#). Helena, MT: Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2010, 2012. (Sent by OPI to school libraries and online)

Holmes, Krys. *[Montana: Stories of the Land](#)*. Helena, MT: Montana Historical Society Press, 2008.

["Hunger Notes,"](#) hosted by World Hunger Education Service, accessed January 30, 2024.

Kenner, Robert, Director. *Food, Inc.* Performed by Eric Schlosser. 2009.

[Letter Men: Brothers Fight for Ojibwe Language](#). National Public Radio Books: Fresh Air. April 28, 2008.

[Raynor Memorial Libraries](#). Marquette University. Milwaukee, WI.

[Minnesota Historical Society](#). St. Paul, MN.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. ["Bear Aware."](#)

[Montana Indians: Their History and Location](#). Helena, MT: Montana Office of Public Instruction, 2009. (Sent to school libraries and online [updated version])

["Jeffrey Amherst and Smallpox Blankets."](#) Native Web

[Ojibwe: WAASA-INAABIDAA "We Look In All Directions."](#) A six-part historical documentary series for public television featuring the history and culture of the Anishinaabe-Ojibwe people of the Great Lakes. Turtle Island Productions and ThinkVision Creative Media.

Regguinti, Gordon. *The Sacred Harvest: Ojibway Wild Rice Gathering*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 1992. (If available.)

Roy, Loriene. ["Ojibwa."](#) *Countries and Their Cultures*.

Salish Kootenai College. *The Story of Grizzly Bear Looking Up*. Edited by Jennifer Greene. Illustrator Antoine Sandoval. Pablo, Montana: Npustin Press, 2008.

Schlosser, Eric. *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*. New York, New York: Harper Perennial, 2002.

Schmoker, Mike. *Focus: Elevating the Essentials to Radically Improve Student Learning*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2011.

Treuer, Anton. *Ojibwe in Minnesota*. Saint Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2010.

—. *The Assassination of Hole in the Day*. Saint Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society, 2011.

Wagner, Tony. *The Global Achievement Gap*. New York, New York: Basic Books, 2008.

Wallis, Velma. *Two Old Women: An Alaska Legend of Betrayal, Courage and Survival*. New York, NY: Perennial, 1993.

Wiggins, Grant, and Jay McTighe. *Understanding by Design*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1998.

Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States 1492-Present*. Revised and Updated Edition. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc. 1980, 1995.