

Giving Thanks

A RIF GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

Themes: American Indian Culture, Environment, Family Traditions

Grade Level: K to 5th grade

Book Brief: An American Indian celebration of Mother Earth.

Author: Chief Jake Swamp

Illustrator: Erwin Printup, Jr.

Content Connections: Social Studies, Science, Math



TIME TO READ!

BEFORE WE READ, LET'S LOOK AT...

The Cover: Have students make predictions about the

text based on the front cover illustrations and the title. This book is subtitled, "A Native American Good Morning Message." What does that mean? What is a good morning message?

The Pictures: For younger children, take a picture walk. Ask what they notice about the illustrations. What plants and animals do they see? Where does the story take place?

Prior Knowledge: Tell students this is a message of peace and appreciation for Mother Earth and all her

plants and animals. This message is spoken at ceremonies and gatherings held by the Six Nations. The Six Nations, also known as the Iroquois, are from upstate New York and Canada. Show students a map of where this American Indian tribe originates.

Vocabulary: force, bare, sustainers, herbs, dew

Purpose for Reading: Choose the purpose that best fits your class. Younger students: "As we read, think about some things you are thankful for. Where do they come from?" Older students can practice inferring: "As we read today, think about why the Iroquois use family terms to represent the natural elements in our world and why each term might have been chosen."

WHILE WE READ

MONITORING COMPREHENSION

- ◆ Why is it an honor to be a human being? What does that mean?
- ◆ If we started every morning giving thanks, how would it affect our day?

- ◆ What represents the four winds? What does this mean to you?
- ◆ What are the "gifts of life"?
- ◆ What is the sequence of thanksgiving?

LET'S THINK ABOUT

Our Purpose: Revisit the purpose: "What are some things you are thankful for and where do they come from?" or "How do the familial labels for natural elements reflect the Iroquois's way of thinking about the universe?"

Extending Our Thinking: Ask these open-ended questions: "What did you notice about the Iroquois culture?" "Who is responsible for Earth being healthy? How?" "How did this message affect your attitude about the environment?" "Besides the examples in this book, can you think of other inanimate objects (objects that are not living, like a table or a car) that we personify?"

NOTE TO EDUCATORS

- ◆ Extension Activities for Educators also available.
- ◆ Vocabulary Scaffolding Sheet also available.



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