

1

Read the story below.



The Seven Grandfather Teachings

There were Seven Grandfathers. The Creator gave them the responsibility to watch over the Earth's people. They saw that life was not good, so they sent a helper, the Oshkabaywis, to walk among the people. The spirit was to bring them someone they could teach how to live in harmony with Creation. The Oshkabaywis tried to find someone worthy six times but failed each time.

On the seventh journey to Earth, the Oshkabaywis travelled to each of the four directions. The spirit finally came to a village and heard about a baby boy. The Oshkabaywis realized the baby was the one he should take to the Seven Grandfathers, because his mind was innocent. The Oshkabaywis took the baby back. The Seven Grandfathers were happy with his choice. But, the baby was too weak to hear their message. So they told the Oshkabaywis to take him to see all of Creation. They said when he returned to them, he would be ready to understand and share their message with the rest of humankind.

It took seven years for the Oshkabaywis and the baby to visit all corners of Creation. When they returned, the baby was a little boy of seven years old with a sharp and curious mind. The Seven Grandfathers each gave the child a gift – a teaching – to share with the Earth's people. They asked the otter to help the little boy get back to Earth. Along the way, the otter and the boy met seven spirits. The spirits taught the boy that for each gift, there was an opposite. They told him he would have to be careful teaching humankind how to use the teachings correctly.

His journey took a long time. The boy grew into an adult, and by the time he reached his village, he was an old man. All the people gathered around him, and he told them of his journey to the Seven Grandfathers. Then he gave them the seven gifts. He explained the dangers that came with each gift, and how to use them properly. With these gifts, the people of Earth built up the strength to face life's hard tasks. They developed a balance to live in harmony with all of Creation.

Benton-Banai, Edward. *The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

2

Draw a line to match each animal to its corresponding Grandfather Teaching.



Eagle



Beaver



Turtle



Wolf



Bison



Bear



Raven

COURAGE

To do what is right even when it is hard. It is easy to turn away. It takes Courage to stand up against things that are not right. Courage is represented by the _____. The mother has the Courage to face her fears while protecting her cubs.

TRUTH

Speak only what you have lived, do not deceive yourself or others. Truth is sharing the teachings and following them to live a good life. Truth is represented by the _____ because it was here during the creation of Earth and carries all of the Teachings on its shell.

HONESTY

Be Honest in your words and actions. Be Honest with yourself and others. Speak from your heart and be true to your word. The _____ represents Honesty because it accepts itself for who it is and does not try to be like the other birds.

WISDOM

To be used for the good of all people. Wisdom is to cherish knowledge. Wisdom develops over time, which is why we should listen to our elders. The _____ represents Wisdom since it uses its sharp teeth wisely when building dams.

LOVE

To be given freely. When we Love, it comes back – it is mutual and reciprocal. To Love yourself and others means you will be at peace. Love is represented by the _____. It flies very high, closest to the Creator and carries Love everywhere it goes.

RESPECT

To get Respect you must give it. Respect grows when we get to know someone on a deeper level. All of Creation should be treated with Respect. The _____ represents Respect because it gives every piece of itself to help sustain human life through food, clothing and shelter.

HUMILITY

You are equal to others, not better. Humility is to live free of arrogance and to think of others first. We must show compassion to all of Creation. Humility is represented by the _____ since they live in packs and always work together for the greater good of the pack.

3

Answer the questions below about the story and what you learned about the Seven Grandfather Teachings in the matching game.



A

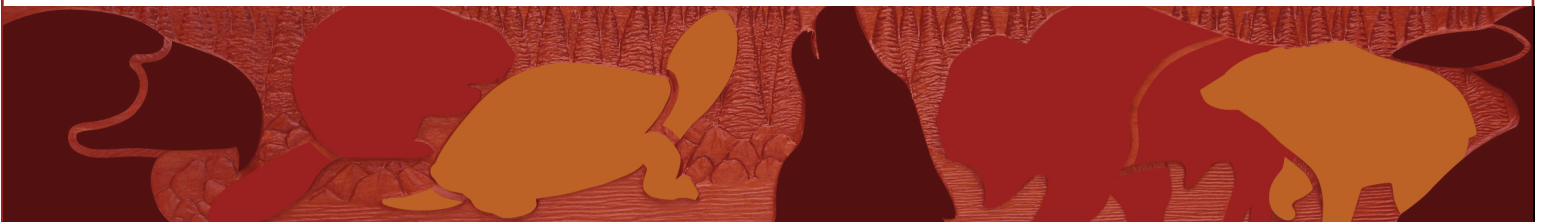
What did you learn from reading the story of the Seven Grandfather Teachings?

B

Why is it important to follow a set of guiding principles like the Teachings?

C

Which Grandfather Teaching do you think is the most important? Why?



4

Hands-on Activity - Prep



A

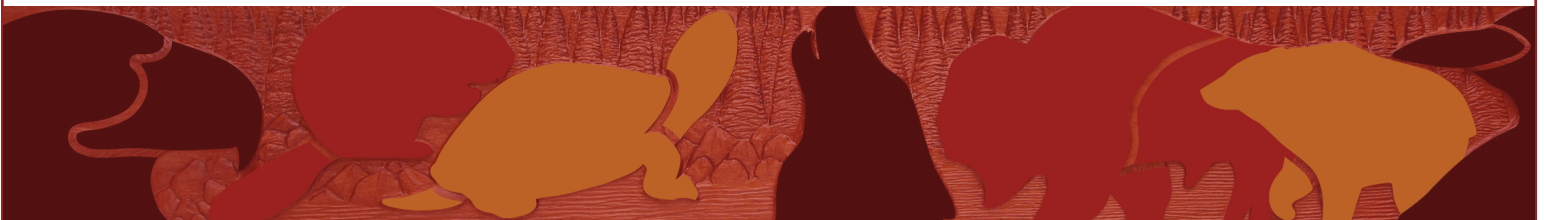
What are 2 animals that are common in the area where you live?

B

Do some research. What attributes or characteristics can you find about each animal?

C

Choose one of your animals. If that animal could teach us one thing about how to live a good life, what would it be?



5

Draw your animal!



Answer the questions below and include the answers in your drawing. When you are done, share your drawing with your class and explain what your animal can teach us about living a good life.

A

Where does your animal live?

B

What skills does your animal have?

C

What are 3 interesting facts about your animal?
