

# Gimaama-akiiminaan gimiigwechiwendaamin



Thankful for our Mother Earth  
A kid's activity booklet

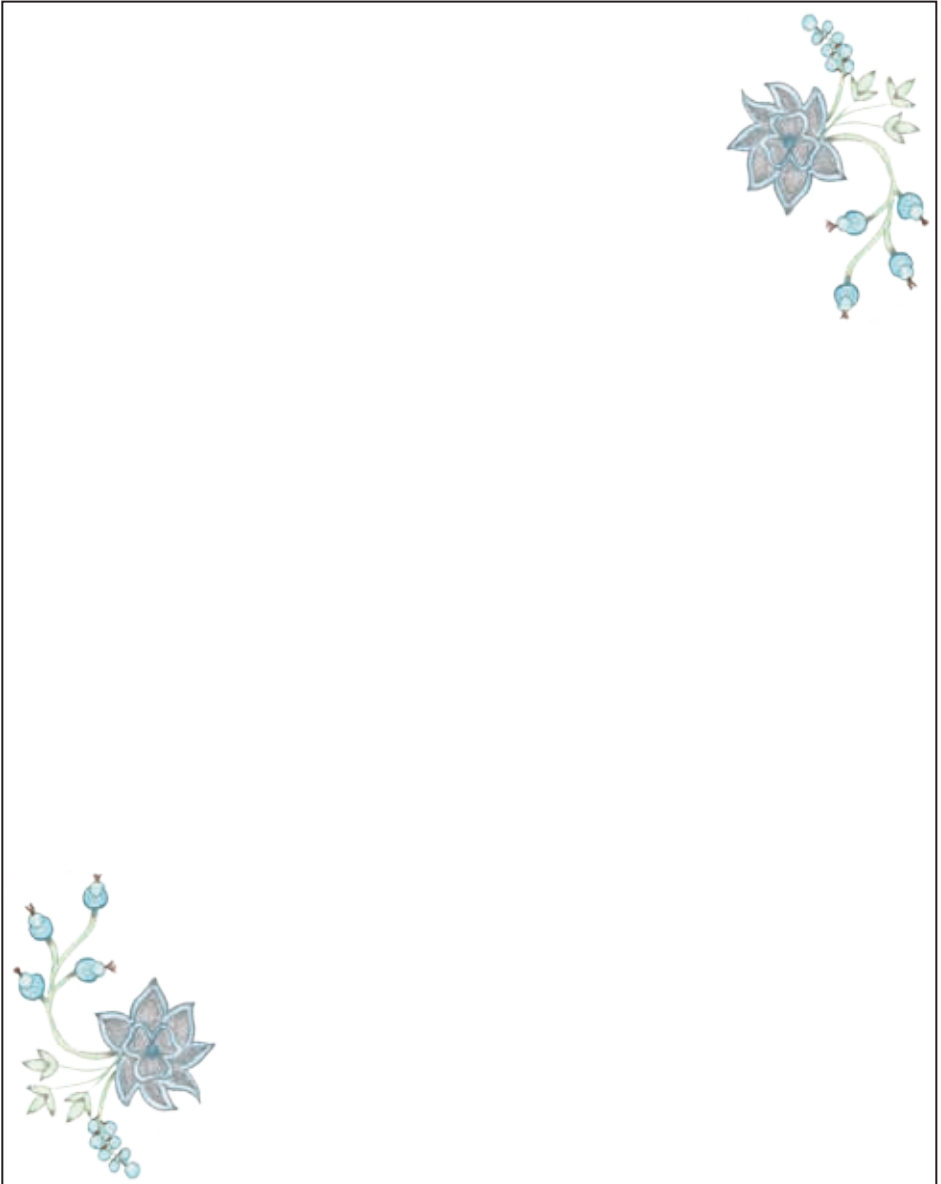
Boozhoo nindinawemaaganidog (Greetings my relatives). Mino-giizhigad (It is a good day)! Today is a perfect day for manoominike-win (wild ricing). Ingitiziimag (my parents) and nisayenh (my older brother) are excited for our little journey today. We will canoe across the zaaga'igan (lake) and find the manoomin (wild rice or food that grows on the water). We have been preparing for a few weeks by carving baw'a'iganaakoog (rice knockers), drying and sanding our gaandakii'iganaak (push pole) and cleaning up the jiimaan (canoes).



***Birch bark winnowing basket.***

We also put together our wiigwaasi-makak (birch bark basket) for winnowing. We call these winnowing trays, or nooshkaachinaagan. A few weeks ago our community had a feast for manoomin and celebrated the beautiful life we receive from it. This is just another important thing that we do to prepare. We are all loaded up and ready to get some manoomin. We could sure use another winnowing tray. Can you draw a birch bark winnowing tray below?

## Draw your own winnowing tray!



We finally arrive at the spot to unload the jiimaan, and nindede (my father) makes us pick up garbage near the water that had been left by others. He said if we disrespect nimaamaa aki (mother earth), we might not have giigoonyag (fish) or manoomin or even nibi (water) for the years to come. He then has us take a pinch of asemaa (tobacco) and offer it to the Manidoog (Spirits). These are things that his father and grandfather have taught him to do.

We ask for a safe and plentiful harvest for ourselves and for our community. We will only take what we need, then let the manoomin rest until next year. Manoomin is something that we share with everyone and everything. Many bineshiinyag (birds) and other animals eat the seeds and help to spread the seeds throughout the lake.

We have always used canoes because it does the least damage to the manoomin. No motor boats are allowed in the manoomin because they could easily destroy a whole bed of rice.

## Match the Ojibwemowin to the English

Zaaga'igan

Canoe

Asemaa

My father

Jiimaan

Older brother

Gaandakii'iganaak

Lake

Nisayenh

Birch bark basket

Manoomin

Winnowing tray

Nindede

Tobacco

Wiigwaasi-makak

Push pole

Nooshkaachinaagan

Wild rice

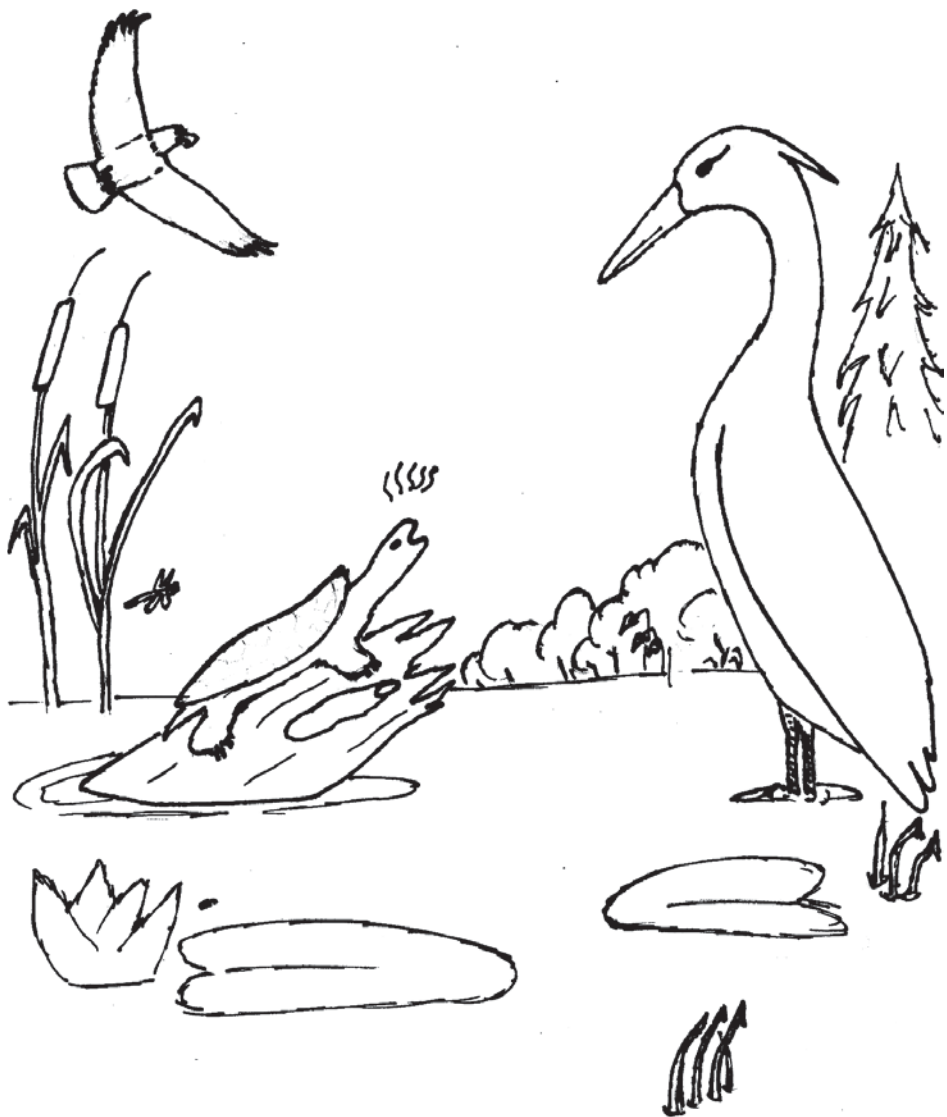


***Offering asemaa (tobacco) is very important before we begin harvesting. We give thanks to the spirits and ask for a safe journey.***



We hop in our jiimaan. Giniw, my older brother, and I are in one and nindede and nimaamaa are in the other. Giniw is really patient and good to me. I hurry because I want to bring in more manoomin than ingitiziimag! I paddle until my arms are sore. When I stop to take a break, I hear and see so many different kinds of bineshiinyag. Giniw steers us into a rice bed and pulls up a strange plant by the roots. He holds it up and shows me. He tells me this is hurting the manoomin and when I see them I need to pull them out and respectfully ask them to leave. He calls it purple loosestrife. There are also some kinds of invasive cattails that grow in the rice beds that compete with manoomin and do not belong here.





*You may see these relatives when ricing—migizi, mikinaak, zhashagi.  
Give them their color.*

Manoomin provides food and habitat for many different kinds of binesiinyag and awesiinyag (animals). Relationships exist between manoomin and everything that lives near it. Some birds help to spread seeds, while others keep insects in balance. Manoomin ripens around the same time that many birds begin to migrate. It provides nourishment to those that will be traveling far distances and the ones that will stay for the winter.

# Match the birds to their pictures



**Asiginaak**  
(Photo by Greg Lasley/VIREO)

Western Grebe

Red-Wing  
Blackbird



**Maang**  
(Photo by Garth McLroy/VIREO)

Canada Goose



**Ozaawibinesiinh**  
(Photo by Greg Lasley/VIREO)

Loon

Mallard



**Ininishib**  
(Photo by Rob Curtis/VIREO)

Common  
Yellowthroat



**Nika**  
(Photo by Rob Curtis/VIREO)

Great Blue Heron

Bald Eagle



**Zhingibis**  
(Photo by Greg Lasley/VIREO)



**Migizi**  
(Photo by Brian K. Wheeler/VIREO)

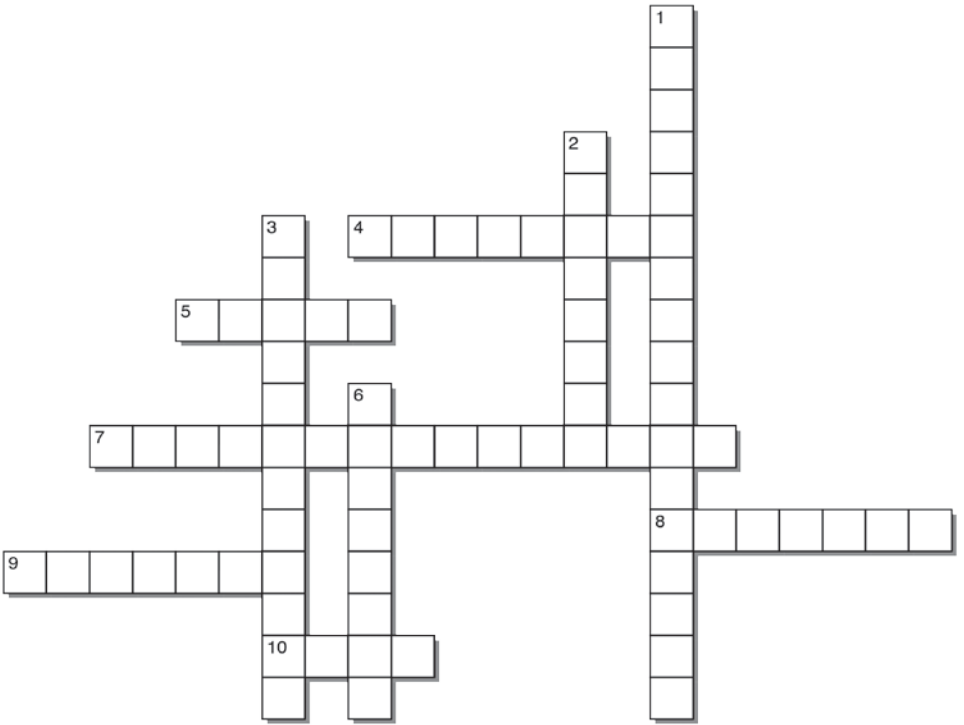


**Zhashagi**  
(Photo by Andrea Westmoreland/  
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Finally we arrive at a nice patch of manoomin. Nimaamaa and nindede paddle to their favorite spot and Giniw stands up in the canoe and says, “Giinitam, bawa’an!” (Your turn to knock) and begins to use the push pole. He pushes us through the thick patches, and I begin bending the rice stalks over the canoe and gently tapping the tops so that grains of manoomin fall into our canoe.

## Complete the crossword puzzle!



### Across

- 4) A piece of equipment used to push the canoe through the rice.
  - 5) My older brother's name.
  - 7) What is a wiigwaasi-makak?
  - 8) What is asemaa?
  - 9) Ojibwe word for canoe.
  - 10) Ojibwe word for kettle.
- (page 14)

### Down

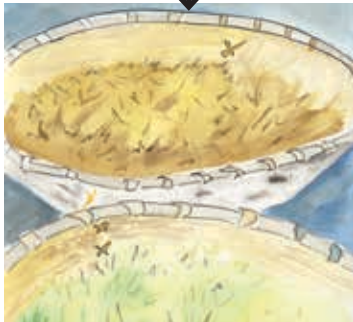
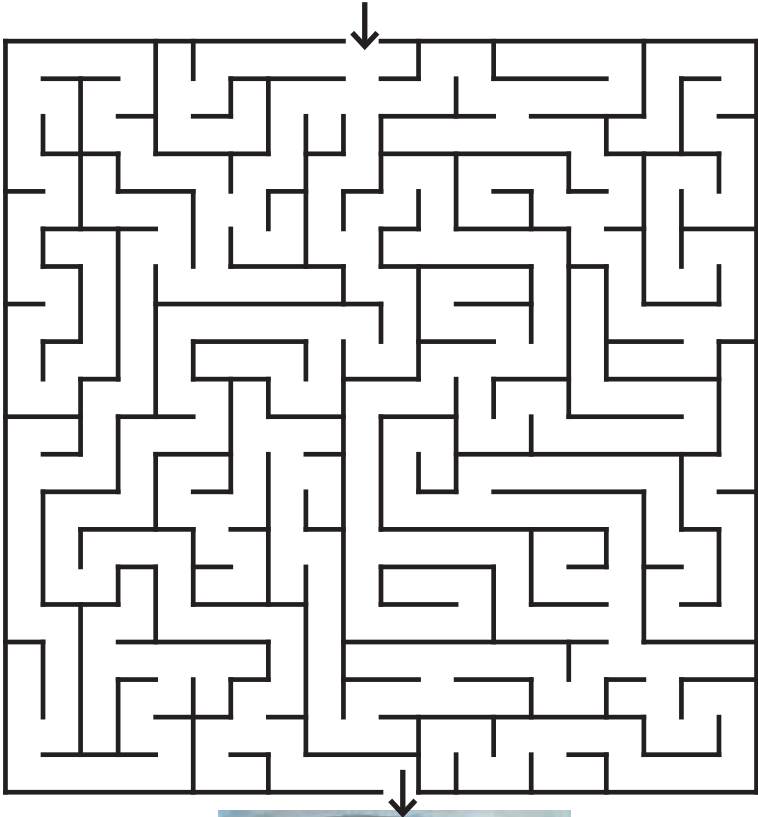
- 1) Invasive plant found in manoomin beds.
- 2) A piece of equipment used to knock rice.
- 3) Ojibwe word for birds.
- 6) Ojibwe word for wild rice.



***Sometimes the manoomin is really tall, and it can be hard to bend the stalks over the canoe. Every lake has its own unique manoomin. We don't use boat motors on this lake because it could harm the manoomin.***

I knock one more big pile of manoomin into the canoe, and it's time to go. All of the sudden Giniw discovers a big spider crawling up his arm and makes a swift movement in the jiimaan, swatting at the spider. In a blink of an eye the jiimaan tips, and we both fall into the water with all of our manoomin! We are both laughing as we get back into the jiimaan. Giniw isn't mad; he just smiles and tells me we helped to replant a bunch more manoomin for next year. Replanting is important! Guess ingitiziimag will bring home a lot more manoomin than us!!

**Find the manoomin at the end of the maze!**





*Many tribal communities participate in a different type of manoomin replanting. They call it “reseeding.” Sometimes manoomin doesn’t grow very well in areas that it once did. Reseeding crews will sprinkle manoomin seeds throughout these areas and watch them grow over the years.*





***Drying the manomin will help us to clean it by picking out sticks, bugs and especially the little rice worms.***

When nimaamaa returns with nindede, they laugh really hard and make jokes about us being clumsy. Good thing they were able to get some manomin. The day is still young. We are headed home to spread out the rice and dry it for a few days. Nindede always says, “Baasan oò manomin dabwaa banaadak!” (Dry out that rice before it spoils!)

Harvesting the manoomin is only half the work. In order to eat manoomin we need to do a few things to it first. Once the manoomin is fairly dry and cleaned, nookomis (grandmother) comes over to help process.

We start by parching everything we harvested. Today we use an akik (kettle) over the fire. We need to keep stirring the manoomin or else it will pop and burn. The parching process gets rid of moisture and loosens up the hull which allows us to preserve the manoomin for a longer period of time.



***Don't let the rice burn!***



***Parching manoomin.***



*Giniw puts on a pair of buckskin moccasins that are specially made for dancing the manoomin.*



In order to separate the husks from the grain, we dance on the manoomin. Nindede sets up a pair of brace poles and Giniw jumps into his special moccasins made only for dancing the rice. Wa! He's already breaking a sweat. The whole process is a lot of work. Nowadays with technology, machines can help with the different stages of the processing. When he finishes dancing, we winnow the manoomin with a basket. This will clean the husks out of the rice.

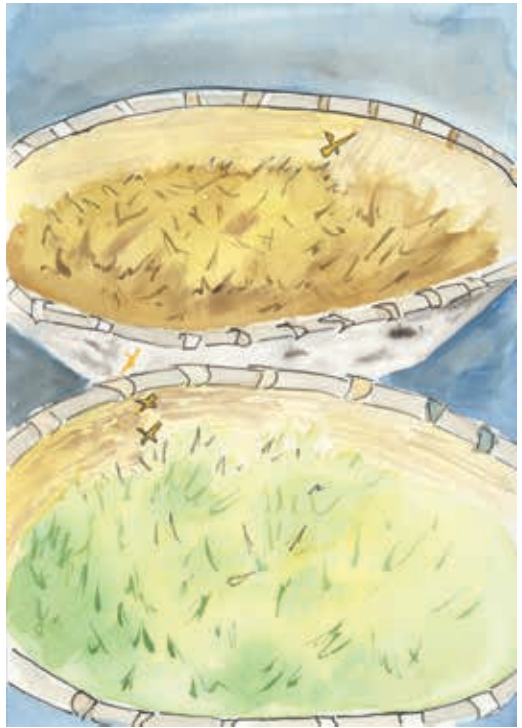




***When it's time to winnow the manoomin, I find a nice breezy area and turn the basket in quick motions to send off the husks. Can you circle all of the objects that don't belong in the lake?***



*This modern day machine blows the manomin husks out the top.*



*Unfinished rice is greenish. Finished manomin is brownish.*



*The thrashing machine has a small motor to rotate manomin.*

## Put the ricing process in the correct order (1-6)!

Parching manomin \_\_\_\_\_

Drying manomin \_\_\_\_\_

Winnowing manomin in a basket \_\_\_\_\_

Dancing on the manomin \_\_\_\_\_

Offering asemaa \_\_\_\_\_

Knocking rice \_\_\_\_\_

# Animal Tracks

During the ricing season, we see many tracks left by animals visiting the lake and crossing our path to the boat landing. Some of them look like the prints below. Can you write the name of each animal on the line below the Ojibwe name? Use all of the animal names from the box.



1) Amik

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2) Makwa

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3) Wazhashk

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4) Gaag

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5) Esiban

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6) Ma'iingan

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7) Waawaashkeshi

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8) Zhigaag

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Deer
Porcupine
Wolf
Beaver
Skunk
Muskrat
Raccoon
Bear



*Manoomin in the husk.*



*Manoomin with husk removed and ready to cook.*

## What have you learned?

- 1) When we harvest manoomin we don't use a motorboat we use a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2) We use a \_\_\_\_\_ to winnow the manoomin after dancing it.
- 3) Maang is the Ojibwe word for \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) My brother Giniw puts on \_\_\_\_\_ to dance the manoomin.
- 5) The Ojibwe word for snake is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6) Before we jump in the canoe we make an offering of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7) Manoomin can be found in a \_\_\_\_\_ or even a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8) After the manoomin is dry and clean, we \_\_\_\_\_ the manoomin in an akik.
- 9) We use a \_\_\_\_\_ to pull us through the manoomin beds.
- 10) Wazhashk is the Ojibwe word for a small furbearing animal called a \_\_\_\_\_.

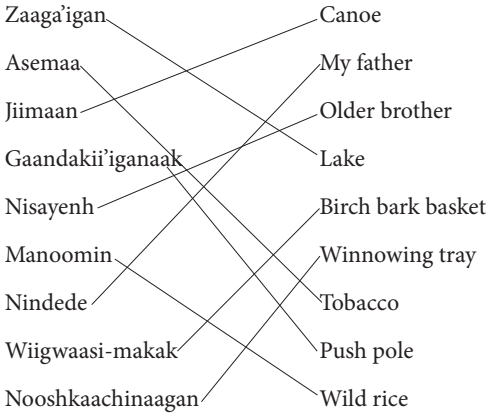


# Manoominikewin Vocabulary

Aki (Earth)	Miinikaan (Seed)
Amik (Beaver)	Mikinaak (Snapping turtle)
Asiginaak (Red-wing blackbird)	Nibi (Water)
Awesiinh (Animal)	Nika (Canada goose)
Bawa'iganaak (Rice knocker)	Nimaamaa (Mother)
Bineshiinh (Bird)	Nimisenh/Nishiime (Older sister/younger sister)
Esiban (Raccoon)	Nisayenh/Nishiime (Older brother/younger brother)
Gaag (Porcupine)	Noodin (Wind)
Gaandakii'an (Pole)	Nooshkaachinaagan (Winnowing tray)
Giigoonh (Fish)	Ogaa (Walleye)
Giizhig (Sky)	Ozaawibineshiinh (Common yellowthroat/yellow bird)
Giizhik (White cedar)	Waabashkiki (Swamp)
Giizis (Sun)	Wadiswan (Nest)
Ginebig (Snake)	Wazhashk (Muskrat)
Giniw (Golden eagle)	Waawaashkeshi (Deer)
Indede/imbaabaa (Father)	Wiigwaas (Birch bark)
Ingitiziim (Parent)	Wiigwaasi-makak (Birch bark basket)
Ininishib (Mallard)	Wiikwegamaa (Bay)
Jiimaan (Canoe)	Zaaga'igan (Lake)
Ma'iingan (Wolf)	Zhashagi (Blue heron)
Maang (Loon)	Zhigaag (Skunk)
Makwa (Bear)	Zhingibis (Western grebe)
Manoomin (Wild rice)	Ziibi (River)
Manoominikeshiinh (Rice bird)	
Manoominikewin (Wild ricing)	
Migizi (Bald eagle)	

# Puzzle Answers

## Page 4



## Page 8

- Asignaak—Red-wing blackbird  
 Ozaawibineshiinh—Common yellowthroat  
 Nika—Canada goose  
 Migizi—Eagle  
 Maang—Loon  
 Ininishib—Mallard  
 Zhingibis—Western grebe  
 Zhashagi—Great blue heron

## Page 9

### Across

- 4) Push pole
- 5) Giniw
- 7) Birch bark basket
- 8) Tobacco
- 9) Jiimaan
- 10) Akik

### Down

- 1) Purple loosestrife
- 2) Knockers
- 3) Bineshiinyag
- 6) Manoomin

## Page 17



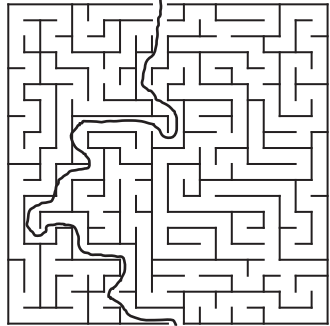
## Page 18

- Parching manoomin 4  
 Drying manoomin 3  
 Winnowing manoomin in a basket 6  
 Dancing on the manoomin 5  
 Offering asemaa 1  
 Knocking rice 2

## Page 19

- 1) Beaver
- 2) Bear
- 3) Muskrat
- 4) Porcupine
- 5) Raccoon
- 6) Wolf
- 7) Deer
- 8) Skunk

## Page 11



# Credits

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**We are thankful for the gift of manoomin  
as well as for the gifts from all our relatives  
in the natural world—the plants, the animals, those that  
swim, and those that fly. We must continue to respect  
and care for them in the best way we can.**



***Omakakii (frog) connect the dots.***

## Page 20

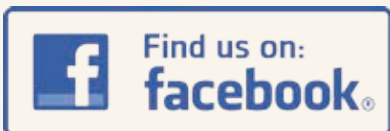
- 1) Canoe/Jiimaan
- 2) Winnowing tray/  
Nooshkaachinaagan/  
Wiigwaasi-makak
- 3) Loon
- 4) Moccasins
- 5) Ginebig
- 6) Asemaa
- 7) Lake/zaaga'igan  
River/ziibi
- 8) Parch
- 9) Push pole/  
Gaandakii'iganaak
- 10) Muskrat

**Giga-waabamin!**

**See you later!**



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