

ONEIDA CULTURAL HERITAGE



Tsi? Niyukwalihó·tΛ
Our Ways

Dedicated to all of the children past and present.

This workbook is for educational purposes for primary school level youth and community.

All the stories, history, and customs shared are condensed from much longer, more detailed versions.

Key components were shared to support foundational learning for our community. It is also to safeguard and protect culturally significant and sensitive teachings.

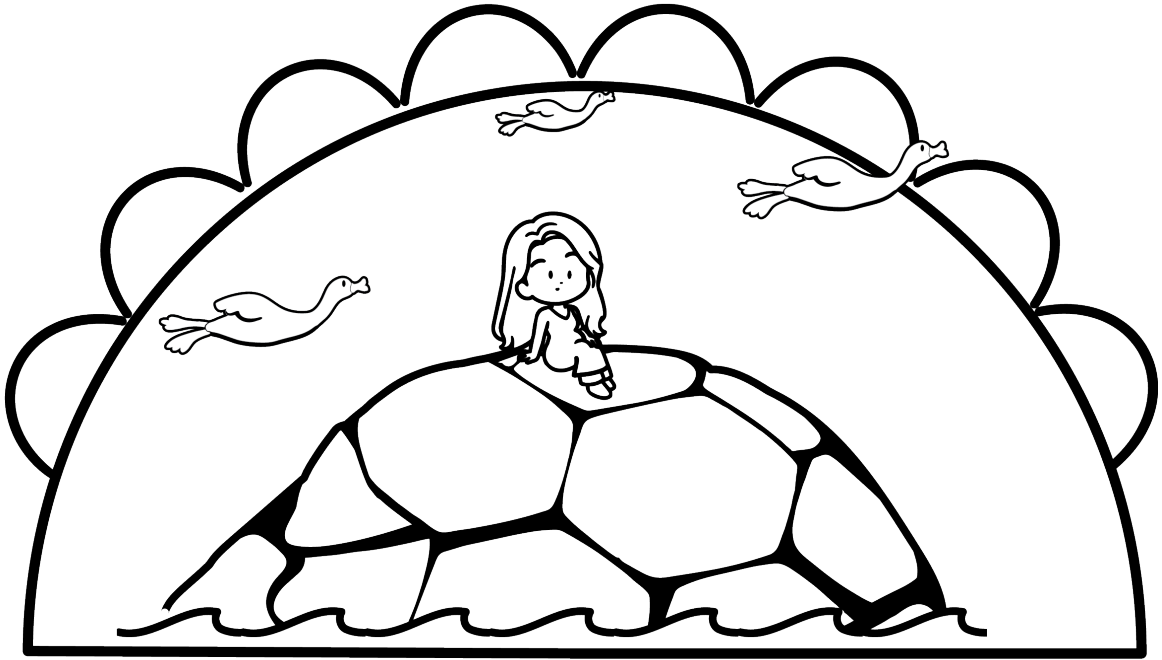
Our ways of life are fluid and ongoing; our traditions are meant to be passed through oral tradition, and in person from one generation to the next.

Recognizing our teachings with respect, it is made mention that the versions told in this book can vary from family to family as well as community and nations. We honor the way it has been passed down to each of us. It is with no intention misinform or misspell. All storytelling and cultural elements are shared with the intent of holding our traditions in the highest regard.

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The Oneida Creation Story



A long time ago before this land that we call Turtle Island existed there was the Sky World and the Water World. In the Water World were water animals. In the Sky World were the sky beings.

There was a Celestial Tree in the middle of the Sky World. The Celestial Tree provided anything that the sky beings needed to survive. There was only a in the Sky World and that was not to disrupt the tree.

A young man and young woman were married and expecting a baby. As the woman's tummy grew, she began having cravings that she knew would ensure the good health of their baby. One of her cravings was for a root from the tree. Her husband knew it was against the rules and did not want to dig up a root, but the baby needed it, so it was very important.

The man went to the tree when no one was around and began to dig up a root. As he dug the ground began to shake. He stopped digging so his wife continued and as she dug a hole began to form in the ground. She could see the Water World. The dirt began to break away beneath her feet and soon she fell through the hole. She grabbed onto roots hoping to stop falling but was too late, she fell.

The animals in the Water World saw her coming and decided to help. The water birds laced their wings together and flew up to catch her. A large turtle volunteered to have her land on its back. Later, the animals got soil for her to expand the land and plant the roots she brought. The Sky Woman was very thankful. She placed the soil and roots on the turtles back and it began to grow. Everything that the Sky Woman needed to live was provided.

Her baby was born. The Sky Woman told her daughter about all the things that the animals had done for her. She taught her daughter how to give thanks for the plants and animals. To this day we call this land Turtle Island, and we are continually thankful for all it continues to offer.

The Twins

Not long after Turtle Island had been created, the Skywoman birthed her daughter, and she grew in strength and gratitude for the natural world. Her mother taught her how to live in balance and give thanks for all the beings around her. As an adult, she met a partner and the two would eventually have twins. The father was not able to be around, and during childbirth, the twins began to argue and push to be first born, resulting in the passing of their mother.

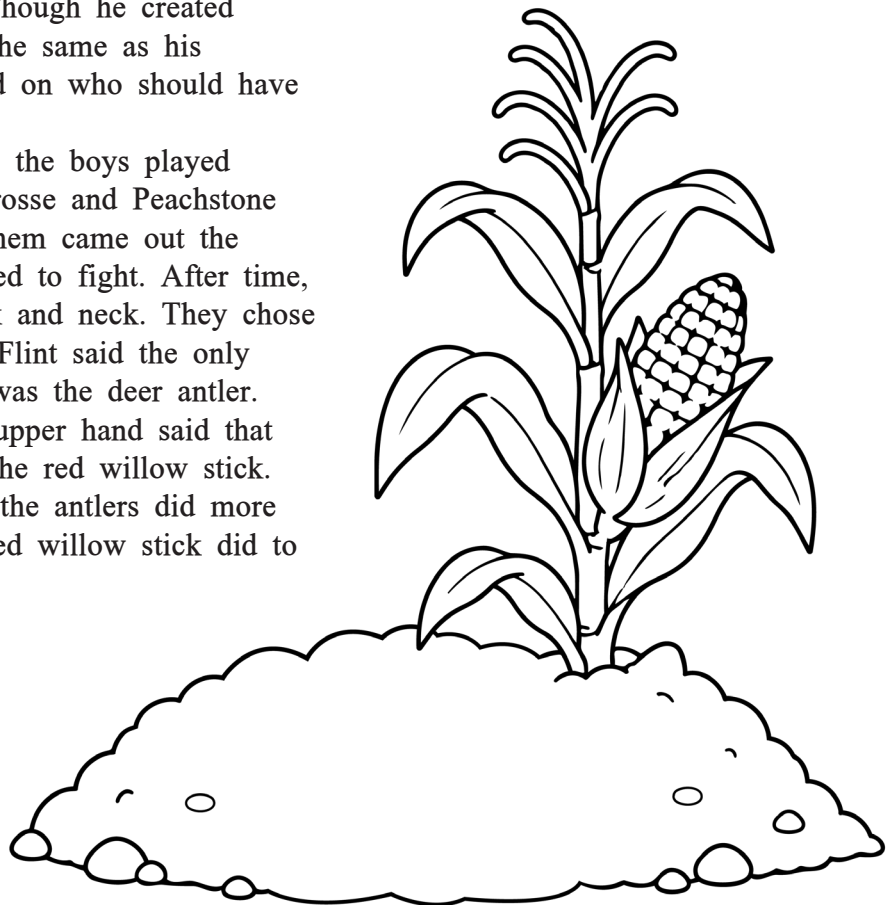
Two boys were born, one born the natural way, we call Sapling, one from his mother's side, we call him Flint. In moments the boys grew to the size of men. Their grandmother, Skywoman asked them what had happened to their mother. Flint, though he caused her death, blamed it on Sapling. In anger the grandmother coddled Flint, and left Sapling to raise himself.

Sapling's father returned and explained that he would not be able to be present all the time, but he would teach him how to create things to make life easier to live. All things created had to be in balance, with responsibility. First, he instructed his son to create a mound of soil around his mother's body. Joining the soil and the mother's body began the term mother earth. From her body grew corn, beans and squash, our three sisters. From her mind tobacco grew, which we use today to communicate with the Creator and the natural world. From her heart grew strawberries, which are the leader of the small plants and our medicine.

Sapling began creating plants and animals, each one of them balancing the natural ecosystem and having an important responsibility. When Flint saw that his brother had this ability, he wanted it too. Though he created things too, they were not the same as his brothers. The two disagreed on who should have the power to create.

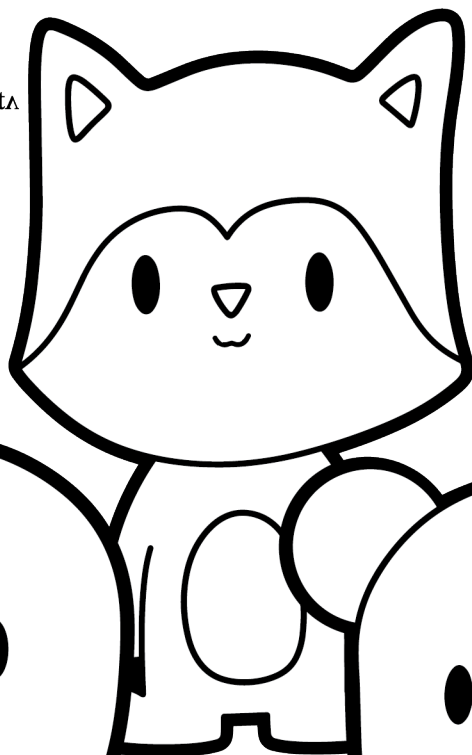
To solve this disagreement, the boys played several games, such as lacrosse and Peachstone game, but neither one of them came out the winner. Finally, they decided to fight. After time, the brothers were still neck and neck. They chose to use weapons. Boasting, Flint said the only thing that could hurt him was the deer antler. Sapling, lying to gain the upper hand said that he could only be hurt by the red willow stick. Sapling won the battle, as the antlers did more damage to Flint than the red willow stick did to Sapling.

Sapling chose not to finish his brother. He realized that all things live in balance, and even he and his brother are balanced, and they both have important responsibilities.

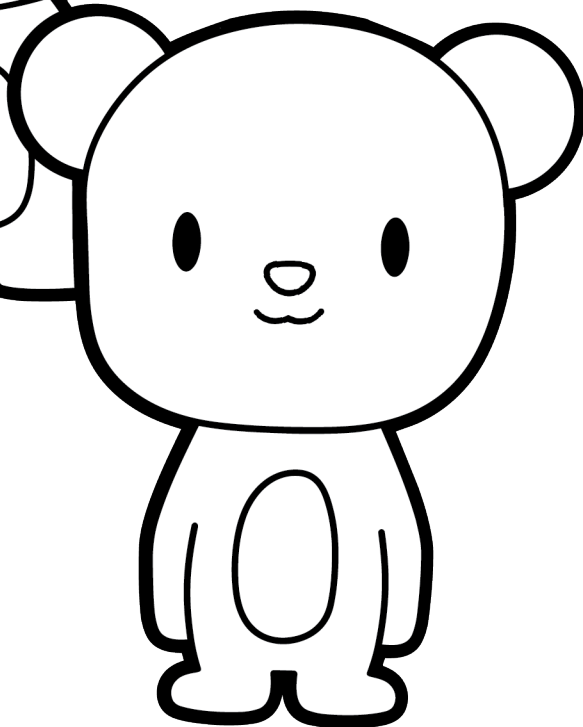


CLANS

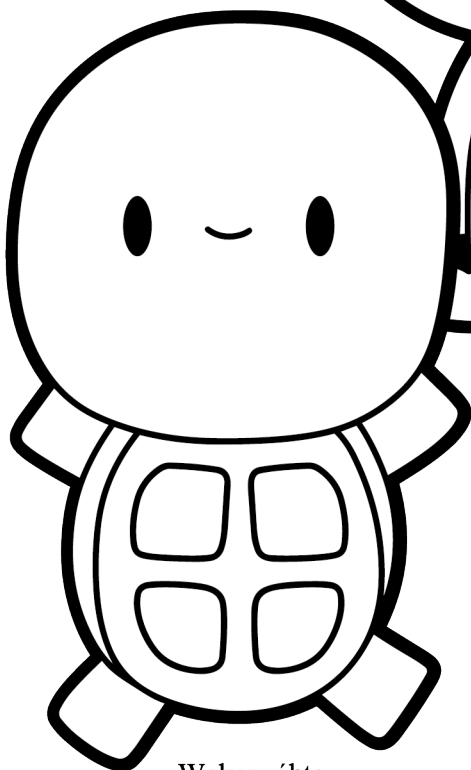
Wakkwáho
niwaki'talóhta



Wakeskle·wáke
niwaki'talóhta



Wakenyáhta
niwaki'talóhta



How Clans Came to Be

A long time ago, when there were not as many people as there are today, people in the Lotinuhsyu'ni communities were sometimes confused about who they were related to.

The elders began to worry because some young people did not always know that they were closely related to each other. The elders wanted to help everyone better understand their family connections better so people could make good choices and care for one another in the right way. The elders came together to talk about how to solve this problem. They held many meetings, but at first, they could not find an answer.

One day, a young man stood up to speak. He was usually very quiet, so everyone listened carefully. He shared an idea.

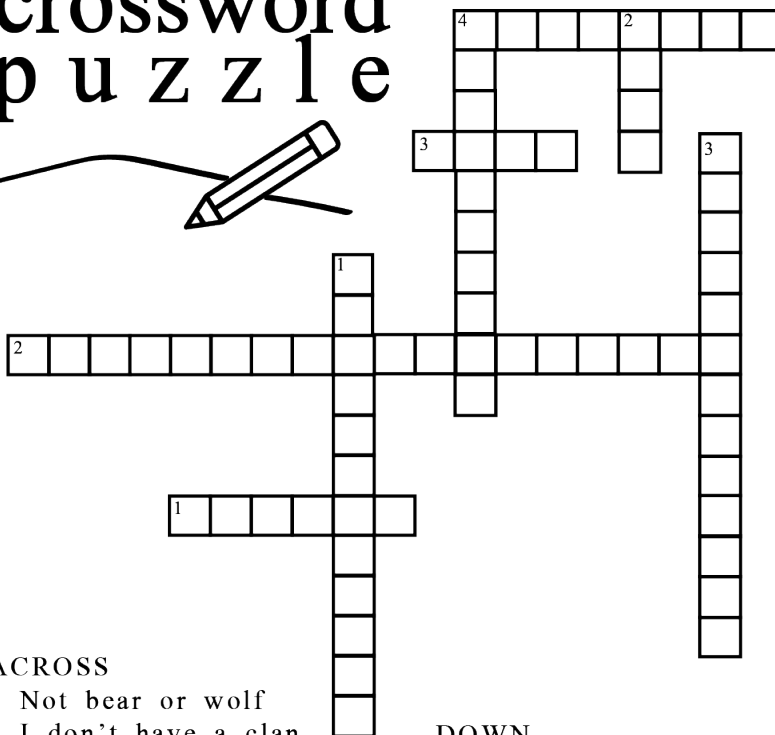
He told the elders to look at nature. He said that animals all have their own groups. Birds have different kinds, and each kind has its own way. Trees also grow in families, and each family is different.

Then he suggested that each family's eldest woman should pay close attention to what animal she sees the next morning.

The next day, each woman saw a different animal. These animals then became special symbols. Each animal represented a clan for that family.

And that is a short version of how the clans were created.

crossword p u z z l e

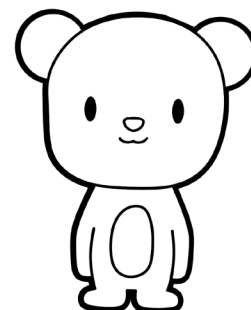
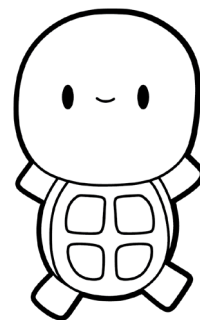
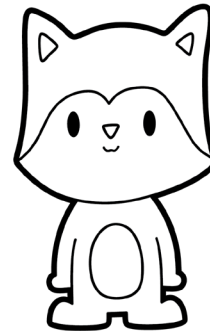


ACROSS

- 1 Not bear or wolf
- 2 I don't have a clan
- 3 Not turtle or wolf
- 4 Wolf Clan

DOWN

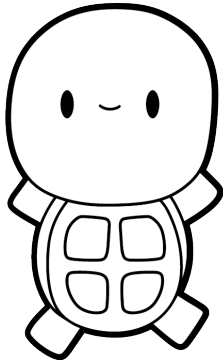
- 1 I'm Bear Clan
- 2 Not bear or turtle
- 3 What clan are you?
- 4 I'm Turtle Clan



Oh nisΛ?talóhtΛ

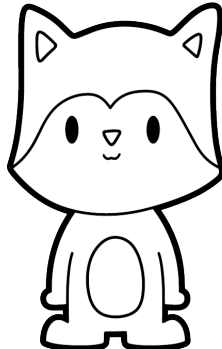
What is your clan

WakenyáhtΛ
niwaki?talóhtΛ



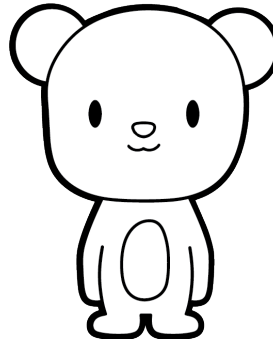
I'm Turtle clan

Wakkwáho
niwaki?talóhtΛ



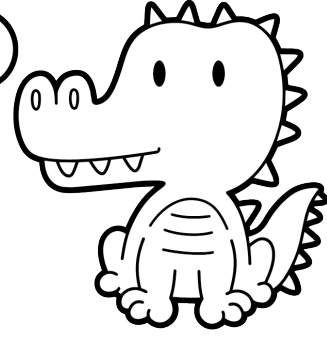
I'm Wolf clan

Wakeskle·wáke
niwaki?talóhtΛ



I'm Bear clan

Yah
te?waki?ta·láyΛ

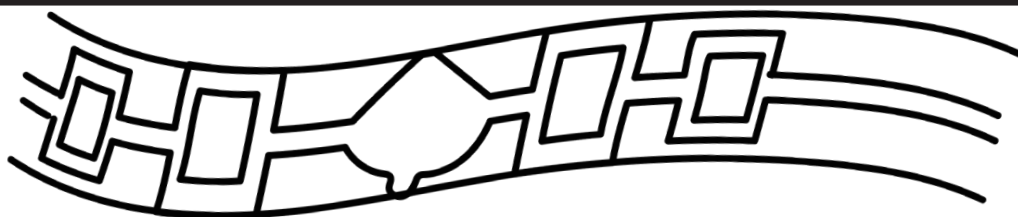


I don't have a clan

THREE CLANS WORD SEARCH

Z L A O ? U Λ W Y N A Y I ? K J B A O Y
H Q G E N N R U T U R T L E F F L N G A
Y O P E D ? U N • W I L V W P J B L N L
L A J T N Y U T S I A C C L O T Z N U L
I O H I Z C Λ I Y G U K B O C L Q I W A
T T L T I O O I W O O P E H E U F W B J
L J I H E W Q F A Λ N • Z N W U S A E ?
Λ W D Z A ? A S K ? C R K I Y W H K A H
Q A G J W H W Λ E U Y ? L S P A Y I R P
Λ L F N O W D A S E H W E Λ Q C H ? P S
Λ N R • F A U E K G D B U ? Y L E T N X
• E T U L K T Λ L I O U Q T S A W A Λ T
I L K • U K A J E I ? T A A D N F L J J
J C O H U W D U • A Z T F L Y O Y O Λ B
N D A W L A Z C W G Q ? A O J O C H Q C
G L C ? U H G H A Q O I Z • B A I T Λ Λ
U E B H T O P D K Q B Q Λ T L L C Λ J K
Q R Z Y Z Z S Y E L G Y J Λ E A N G F E
T U H O Q Z F O Y ? I Q C B O U Y T W •
S Λ • F Q C Y • R N C N N I C Z F Λ B O

Word Bank: oh nisΛ?talóhtΛ, niwaki?talóhtΛ, wolf, wakkwáho, clan,
wakenyáhtΛ, turtle, wakeskle·wáke, yah te?waki?ta·láyΛ, bear



The Great Peace

Long ago, the Lotinuhshyu'ni (people of the longhouse) people were fighting with each other. The fighting became very bad. The Creator saw what was happening and knew the people needed help.

The Creator sent a message about peace and how people should care for Mother Earth. He sent this message in a dream to a man called Two Rows of Teeth, also known as the Peacemaker. The Peacemaker was told to share this message of peace with the Lotinuhshyu'ni people.

The Peacemaker began his journey in the east and traveled west to share a message of peace. The first person he met was a woman who lived in a longhouse at the edge of the woods between groups that were fighting named Tsikúsase?. She lived in fear and always had poisoned food



ready for anyone who came by. Many warriors stopped at her home to eat and rest. She welcomed them and asked that they leave their weapons outside.

One day, "the Peacemaker" came to her door. He shared his idea for peace and asked her to stop poisoning the warriors. The woman said that hunger does not stop anger. She agreed to help by telling visitors about the Great Law of Peace.

From that day on, she shared the Peacemaker's message and helped think about how this new plan for peace could work. She believed in the message and helped spread it to bring change.

Along the way, he met a man named Hayé'wate?. Hayé'wate? was very sad because he had lost his wife and three daughters. The Peacemaker shared the Creator's message with Hayé'wate?, and Hayé'wate? agreed to help spread the message. Together, they traveled to many villages. The Mohawk people listened and agreed, and so did the Oneida, Cayuga, and Seneca people.

The Onondaga people were unsure and said they would only believe if the Peacemaker and Hiawatha could change the mind of a powerful and troubled man named Thatatá lho. After many difficult attempts, with the help of Tsikúsase? Thatatálho began thinking clearly and choose peace. Once this happened, the Onondaga people accepted the Great Law of Peace, and the Iroquois Confederacy was established.

THE IROQUOIS CONFEDERACY

The Iroquois Confederacy is made up of 50 Chiefs and Clan Mothers from the five nations. The Clan Mothers, Chiefs, and Faithkeepers all work together, and each person has an important job to help the people.

In 1716, the Tuscarora people were at the end of a very hard and violent war. To stay safe, they traveled north to Iroquois land and asked for help.

The Oneida people welcomed them and gave them shelter. Later, in 1722, the Tuscarora were officially accepted into the Iroquois Confederacy. This made them the sixth nation, and from that time on, they were known as the Six Nations.

In the late 1700s, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson visited the Iroquois chiefs. They were very impressed by how organized and fair the government was. The Iroquois Confederacy helped inspire how the United States government was created. What they learned, later helped shape the U.S. Constitution.

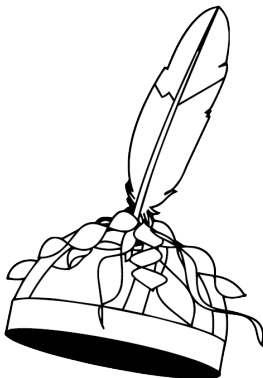
Lotinuhsyu·ní Kustó·słote

People of the Longhouse
Upright Feather

Men from the Lotinuhsyu·ní wear a kastówe? as part of their traditional attire. The headdress

is often constructed of a wood frame with bundles of barred turkey feathers and upright eagle feathers. The amount and placement of eagle feathers identifies the nation that the individual belongs to. Oneida

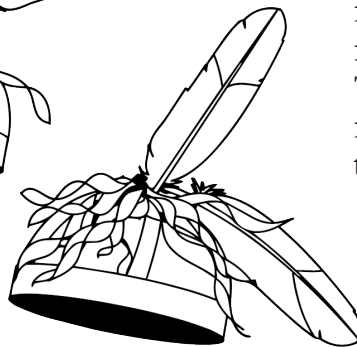
men wear two feathers up and one down like the image below



SENECA



CAYUGA



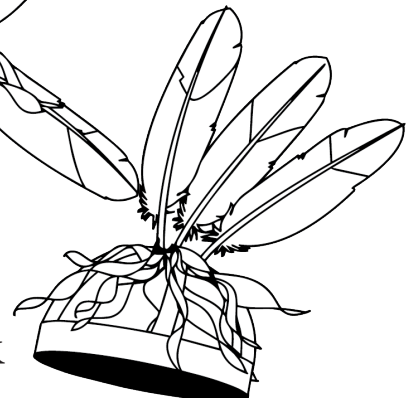
ONONDAGA



Men's Headdresses

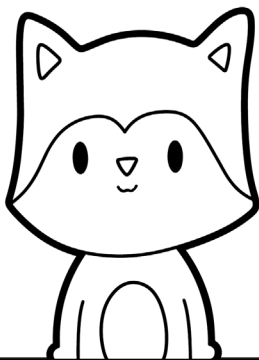
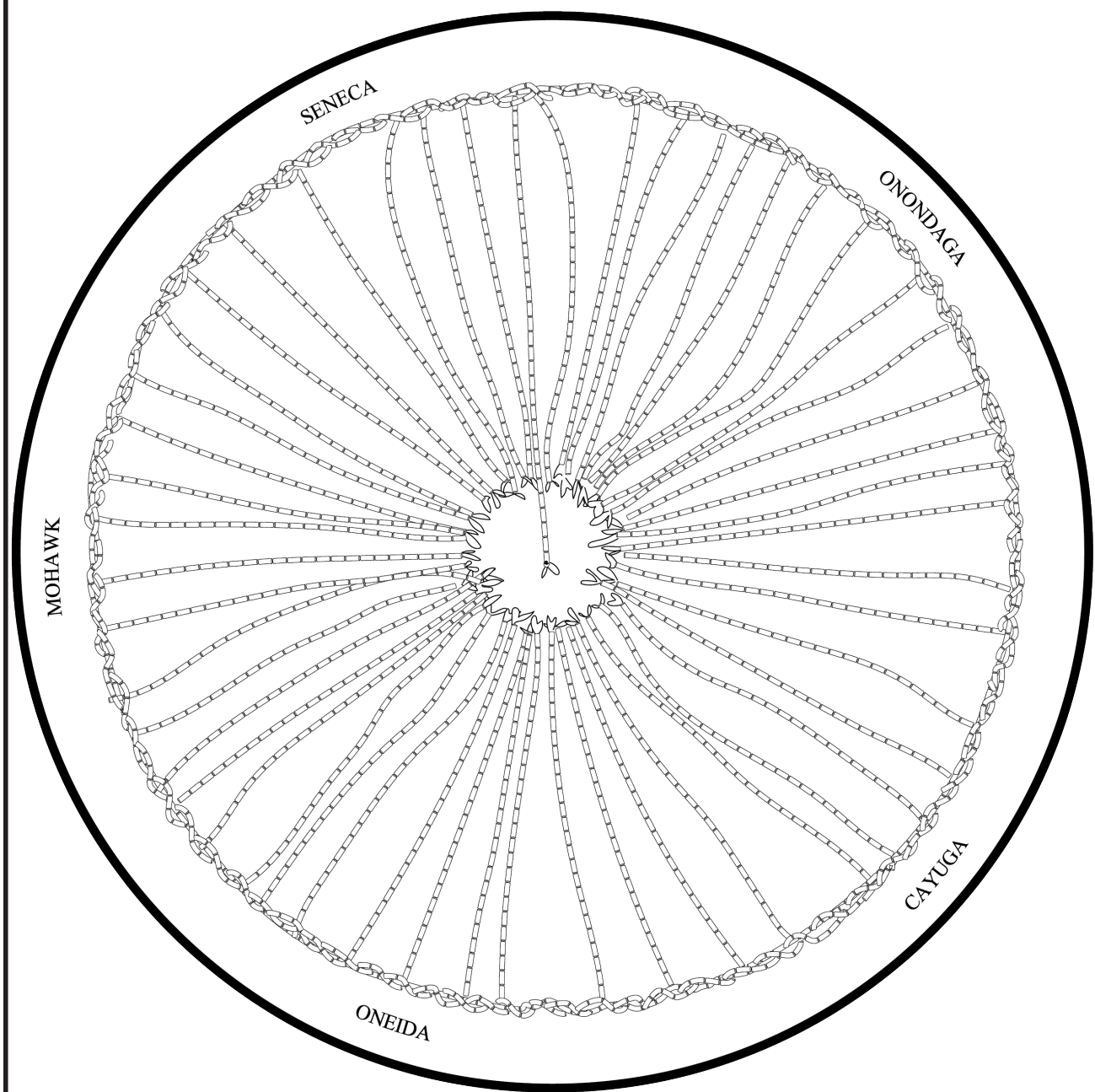


ONEIDA



MOHAWK

THE CIRCLE WAMPUM



The Circle Wampum represents all 50 chief titles and families. The circle symbolizes the interlocked arms of the men around the trunk of the tree of peace, the central fire of our confederacy. The long string symbolizes Thatatálho's title that belongs to all of the nations. Thatatálho is the one to call all the men together to council, and to keep the fire clean and undisturbed. The way it is woven represents the Chief titles banding together in a circle to uphold the tree of peace. Should that tree fall, they are all there to catch and support it.

Kalihwi·yó The Good Message

In the late 1700s, alcohol caused intergenerational trauma for the Haudenosaunee people. A Seneca chief named Handsome Lake was especially affected and had trouble doing his job as a leader. His health became very poor, and one day he collapsed and lay sick for several days.

While he was unconscious, the Creator sent four messengers to speak to him. They told him how he and his people had moved away from the right path and what they needed to do to live in a good way again. When Handsome Lake woke up, he was given special medicine. This medicine helped him stop wanting alcohol and helped him grow stronger. After this experience, Handsome Lake began to heal and guide his people back toward a better life.

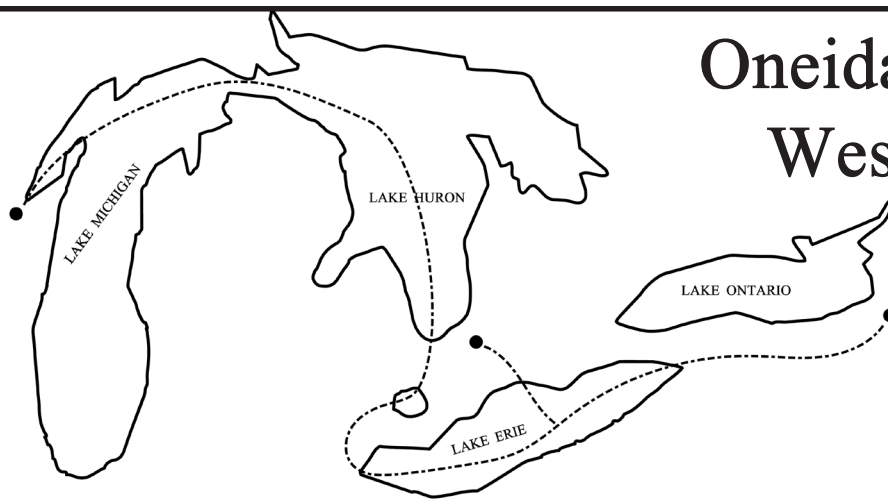
One of the messengers told Handsome Lake that he was not chosen because he was better than others. The Creator cares about everyone the same. Another messenger explained that special ceremonies, like the Great Feather Dance, help lift the people's spirits. Drinking strawberry juice would also help them heal and feel strong again. Handsome Lake shared these messages with the people, telling them what the Creator wanted them to know so they could live in a better way. The messengers shared more teachings about behaviors that do not please the Creator.

Handsome Lake traveled throughout Haudenosaunee land to share these teachings, which were called the Good Message. This message came from the Creator's helpers. Some people believed the message, and others did not.

After Handsome Lake passed away, other people continued sharing the Good Message. Over time, it was written down in English. The message continues to support Haudenosaunee traditions and the Great Law of Peace. The Good Message is also known as the Code of Handsome Lake. Each year, Kalihwi·yó Ceremony is held in longhouse communities to remember these teachings and to thank the Creator for guiding the people to live in a good way.



Oneida's Travel West in 1822



Oneidas have a history of long-distance travel with trade routes, friendships, and families throughout Turtle Island. Our homelands span far throughout the Northeastern Coast. Settlers preyed on these homelands and devised inhumane ways to claim it as their own. Federal and State governments, land companies, and religious groups all wanted to profit.

In the early 1800s, the Ogden Land Company, the U.S. War Department and Missionary Eleazor Williams teamed to push Oneida people to move west so their land could be taken. Pressure from three entities, with their minds on financial gain, Oneida people were pressured to leave their home.

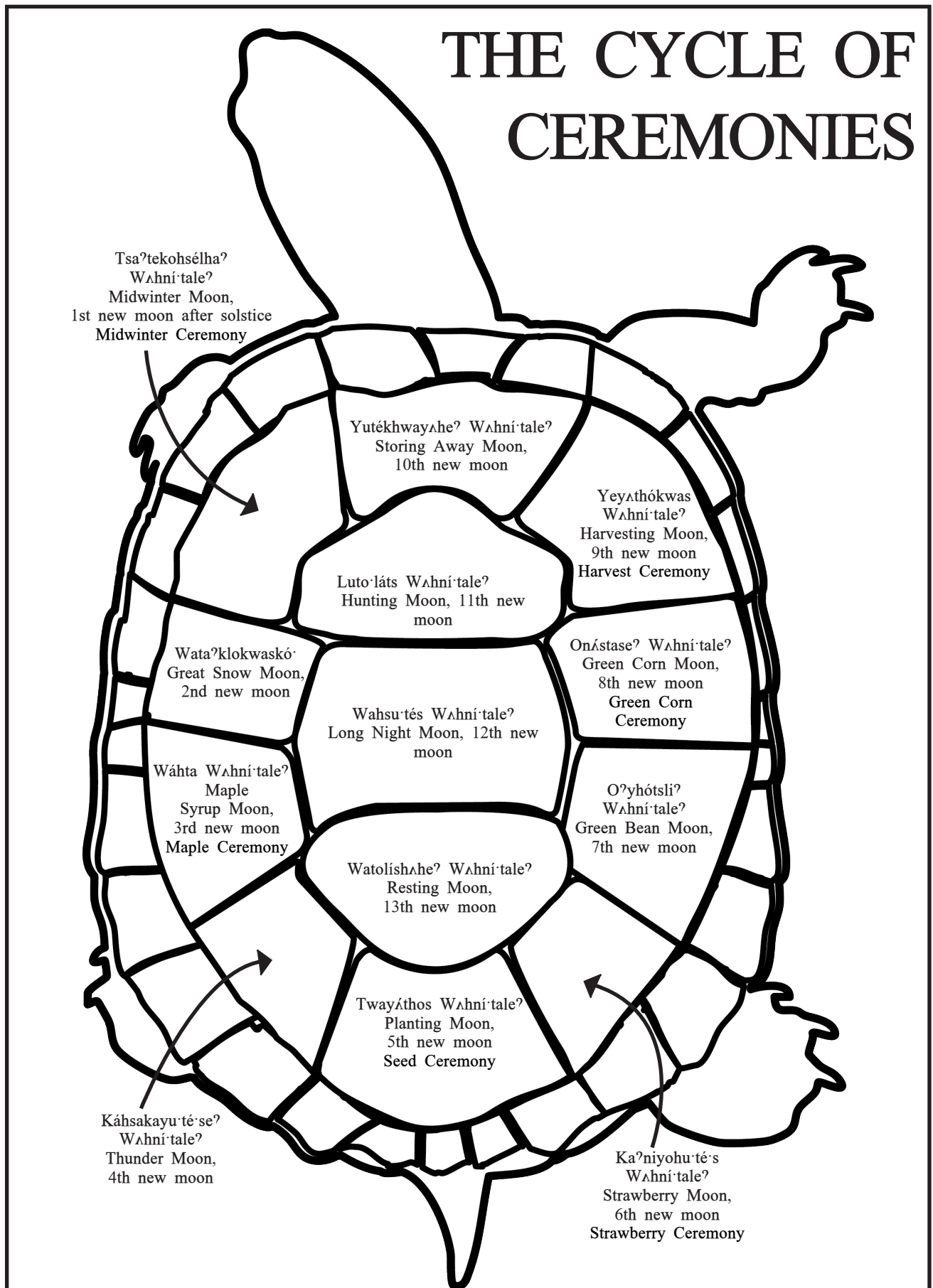
The U.S. government and New York State used many tactics to take Oneida land urging groups of Oneidas to move west. After the American Revolution, the government promised to protect Oneidas and the land. However, the United States government burned the majority of Oneida homes, gardens and hunting areas to the ground. There were about 5.5 million acres of land, but this was taken away through devastation and illegal treaties. By the early 1900s, only about 32 acres remained.

Eleazer Williams brough groups of Oneida's, Seneca's, Onondaga, Stockbridge and Munsees, to meet with groups of Menominee and Ho chunk. While the Menominee and Ho-Chunk were at war with the French in the Mackinac region, they looked forward to establishing an alliance with the Lotinuhshu:ní Confederacy. Land use rights of five million acres was negotiated with Menominee and Ho chunk. State and Federal officials disagreed with the agreement. After many revisions, and the Buffalo Creek Treaty, a reservation was established with about 65,400 acres. Even then, settlers followed this move, hoping to gain some of the land for themselves.

Our ancestors had different ideas about moving west and expanding lands that we call our home. The lands, forests, animals, fish, and medicines that we depend on were being depleted. There was no easy decision, leaders believed that moving was the best way to protect the people and future generations, while others strongly opposed leaving the land.

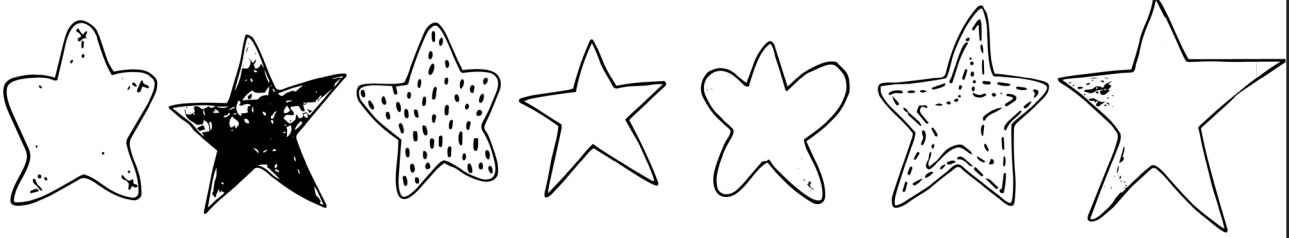
Wisconsin was not the only place that Oneida's expanded to. There is also a large group in Canada, and Oneida's residing across all of Turtle Island.

THE CYCLE OF CEREMONIES



The Seven Dancers

A constellation that reminds us it is time for Midwinter Ceremony



This is one variation of the 7 Dancers story. You may hear other versions, but this does not mean that one is better, and doesn't take away from the validity of how any of them are told.

Long after the Ukwehu·wé (original people) had received their original instructions. Some of the people had settled near lake kanyatal·yó and were making a life for themselves. Even though the Creator taught us to live in graditude and reciprocity, the humans had forgotten, and cared only for themselves. None of the ceremonies were celebrated, or any of the songs of thankfulness sung.

There were eight children who would always play together. At night, they would sneak away from their homes and meet in the woods to visit around a fire they built. One boy was considered the leader and he would sing and drum while the others sang along and danced. It made them happy, and you could say it also made all of creation happy. Every day they looked forward to when they would gather.

One evening, the leader said that they should hold a feast. They could dance and sing together, then share delicious food. They all agreed. Each of them were going to bring something different like a potluck. One boy would bring venison, one corn soup, another green corn and so on.

Excited, they all went home and asked their mothers for some food to share. One by one the families were critical, saying reasons why they were not going to contribute. The food was just for their family, there was not enough to share, and said that it was a stupid idea. The boys felt sad that their families would not share and that they had to return with no food.

The boys returned to the meeting place in the woods dispirited by their lack of food and parental support. When they all shared what had happened, they were encouraged by the leader. He said, "Don't let their ungenerous ways be too heavy on your hearts. They will see that we will still dance and sing anyway, louder and stronger than we have before."

Assembled around, the leader began to sing a very powerful song. He instructed the rest of the boys to look up and not to look down as they danced using all their energy. High-spirited and filled with good energy, they felt their feet lift off the ground as they began to float into the sky. Hearing the music, the families of the boys gathered below them, calling to the children. One grandmother begged for her grandson to stop and return home. He looked down to see his grandmother's sad gaze, and instantly, the boy turned into a shooting star. The other seven boys rose higher and higher, eventually becoming just specks in the sky. These sparkling, lively lights, we call the 7 dancers, tehúhtkwa?.

When we see the seven dancers in the sky we know it is time for our Mid-Winter ceremony. Shooting stars remind us of the story of the 7 dancers, tehúhtkwa?.

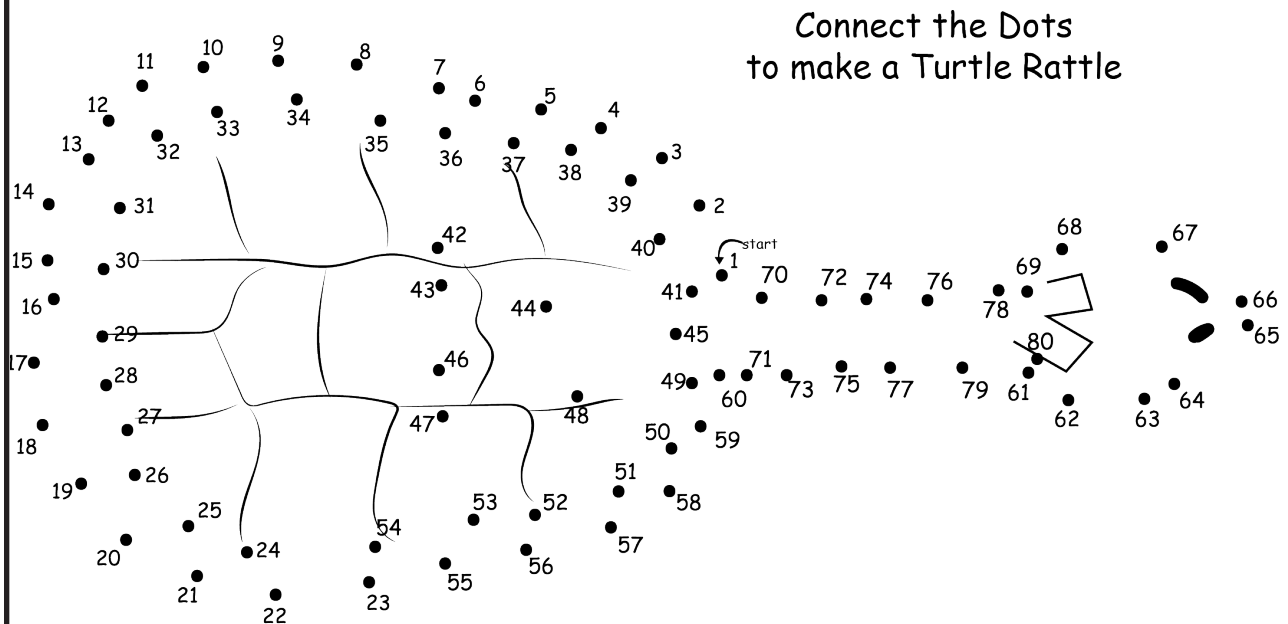
Tsaʔtekohsélha

Midwinter Ceremony

During the beginning of midwinter, the Faithkeepers gather to determine the timing of the new moon, which marks the start of the new year. From there they count five sleeps, and on the sixth day, a series of ceremonies commence.

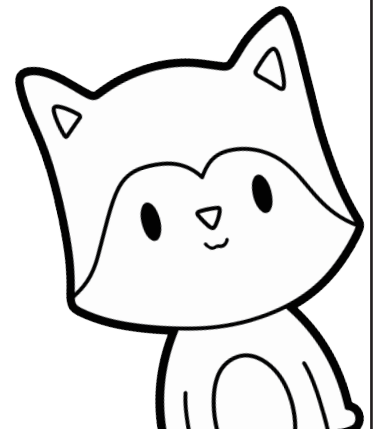
Day 1: The Great Feather Dance

This day features three dances, each with its own significance. The first dance is performed for the titleholders to give thanks for their ability to fulfill their responsibilities. The second dance is for the community, expressing gratitude for its continued ability to uphold the ceremonies given by the Creator. The third dance is a universal thanksgiving to the Creator, acknowledging the ongoing cycle of creation and the preservation of life on earth.



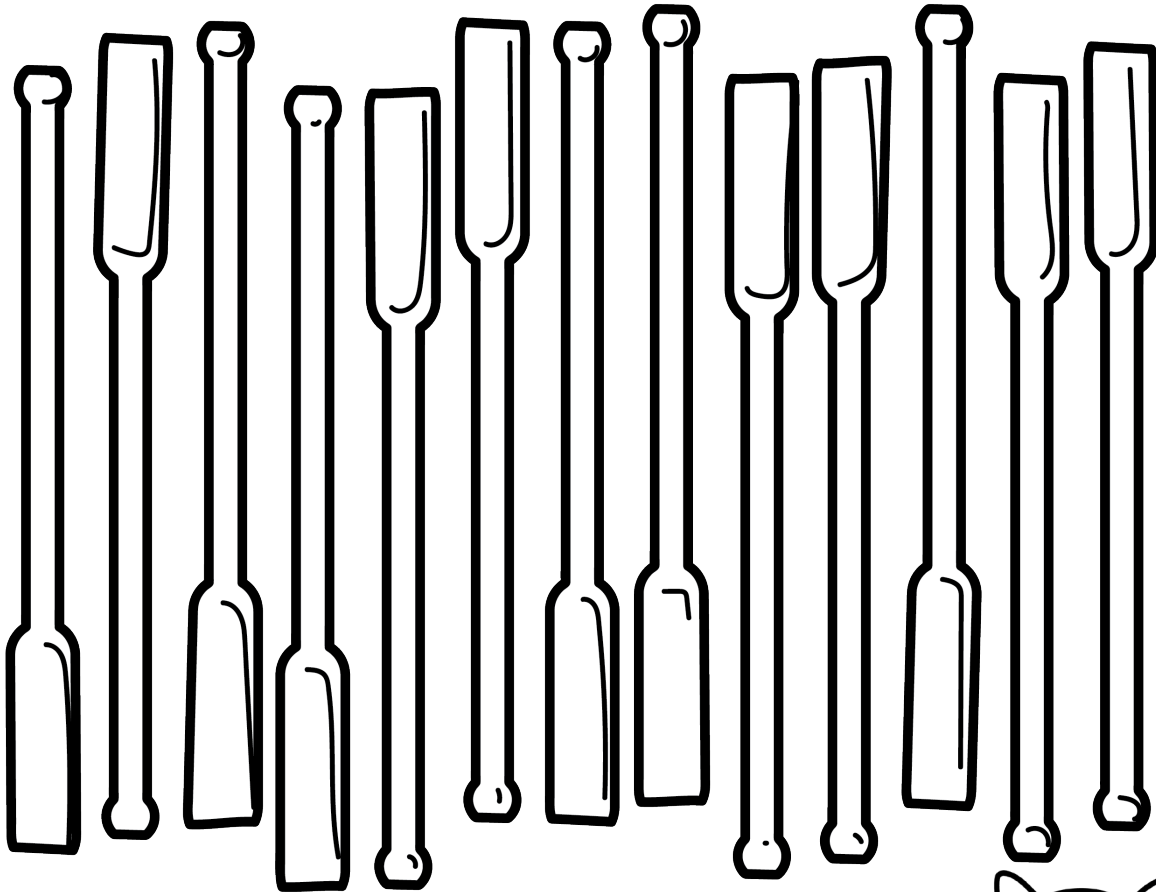
THE TURTLE RATTLE

The kanyáhta astawá'sliʔ or Turtle Rattle is the only rattle we use to sing Feather Dance. The turtle is significant because it is the being that allowed Skywomen to build Turtle Island on its back. The turtle's back plates represent the moons and the days of the month. Making a rattle is only done when needed. The rattle maker locates a turtle and gives tobacco offering words of thanks and intention. When it is harvested it is done in the most humane way. The rattle is filled with yo-hyohts (seeds of the American Bladder Nut).



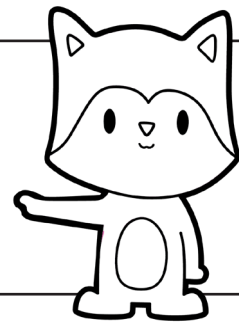
Day 2: The Stirring of Ashes

This ceremony involves using wooden paddles crafted from various types of trees. Participants select a speaker and a singer from each side of the Longhouse. The ceremony begins with the opening for stirring the ashes, symbolizing renewal. Participants pass paddles back and forth, starting with the title holders and then the community members, accompanied by singing. The purpose of stirring the ashes is to renew the earth for the



PADDLES FOR STIRRING ASHES

During $\Delta twa^?k\Delta hlaw\Delta li$ (stirring the ashes), we use the paddles to stir the ashes. It represents starting new. There is one paddle for each type of tree that grows in our area. The act of creating and using the paddles gives thanks to the different trees.



upcoming year and to honor all of creation.

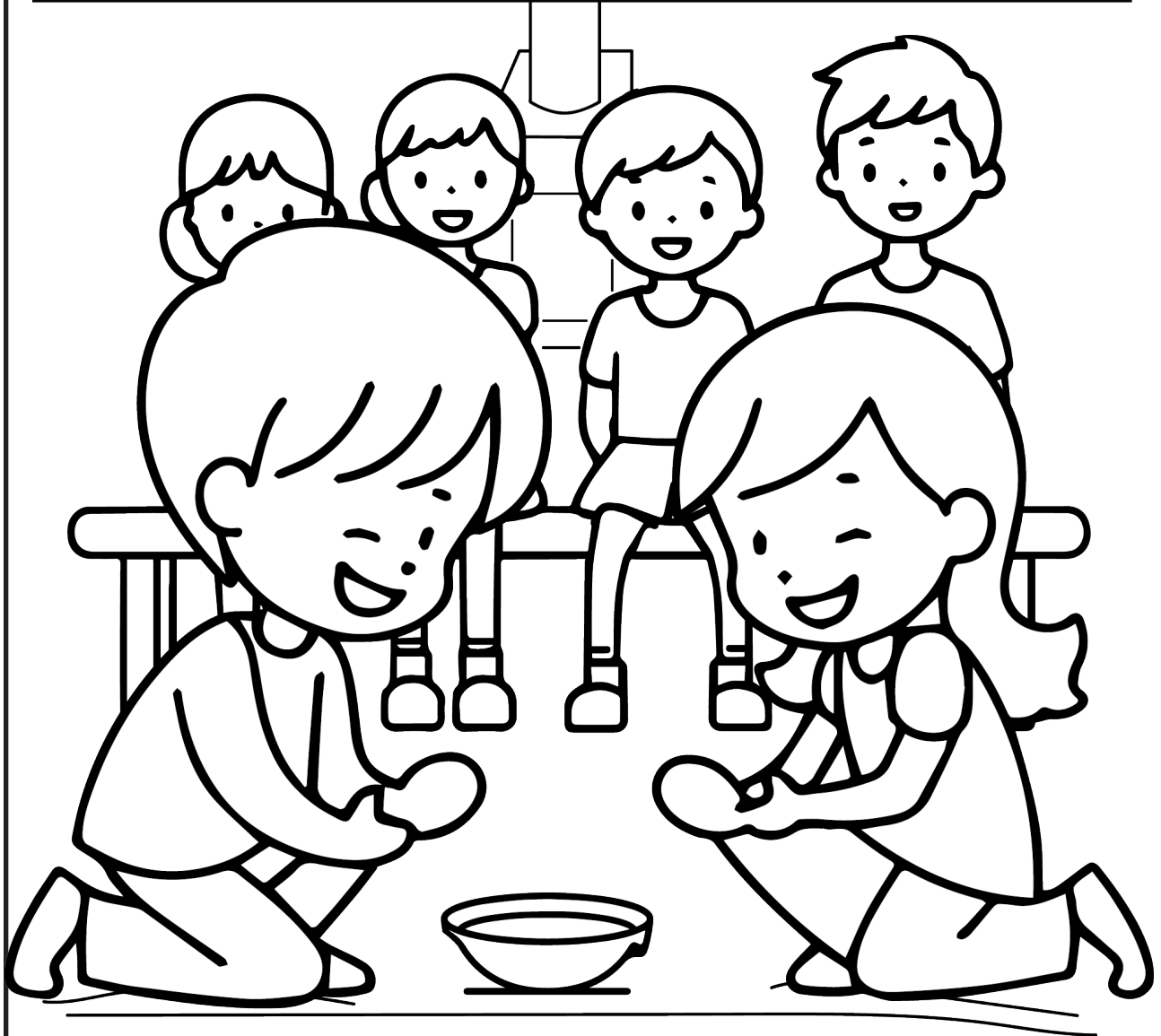
Day 3: Tobacco Burning, Hatuwah, and Drum Dance

On this day, several important rituals take place. First, tobacco is collected from representatives on each side of the Longhouse, followed by a speech on behalf of the community. Next, the Hatuwah, which are men's chants or personal songs to the Creator, are performed. This is also the day when children can receive their Ukwewuwehnéha (the real people) names, or when those awaiting confirmation of their names are witnessed by the community. The day concludes with the drum dance, involving four roles: a singer, a speaker, a lead dancer, and a person with a strong voice. Additionally, a pail of blackberry medicine is prepared.



PEACH STONE GAME

Kayátowa'ná, (strike the bowl) or The Peachstone Game was first played by the twin brothers Flint and Sapling. Together they represent balance. The game was played to determine who would be the creator of everything. Today we play the game during Harvest, Midwinter and Seed Ceremonies to entertain the Creator.



Day 4: The Peach Stone Game

After the ceremonies, runners from both sides are chosen to collect items early the next morning to be used in the game, which include four main objects: white wampum, Indian outfit, turtle rattle, and lacrosse stick. Certain items are prohibited, such as anything solid black, solid red, shiny objects, or anything you would throw away or has no value to you. The game uses 101 beans as counters, with one bean representing the Creator's decision on which side of the Longhouse will win. Two players from each side are chosen, one to hold the beans and another to set them down. Following the game, a Feather dance, an Old Women's dance, and a Bean dance are performed to conclude the day's ceremonies.

Hoyan

A special Oneida
New Year Tradition



Midwinter Word Search

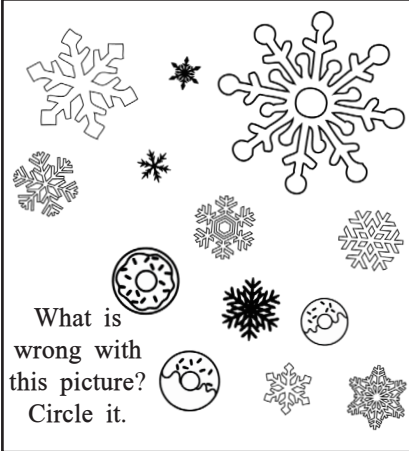
H I G F A D I B Q D W A J Z D M P B
I Q N H E C W G C A P S S O Y X E L
V T L A I A I I P L X C T H M O A S
Z G X H M H T N W Y O D W I E S C X
T R L O O E O H X O F S O B R S H B
R O F A D Y S P E K M I I N J D S N
O W B D F L A K E R Q E F N U N T U
D J W A M B O N H N D R N E G T O O
M R L N C Y E H V I I R C J A E N C
J L Q C Z C B A F X E N U D L S E K
C F W E V G O J N E W L G M Z O T V
X N B G B C H A N T K F O I R V H X

PEACHSTONE
TOBACCO
OPENING
FEATHER

CLOSING
ASHES
CHANT
DANCE

NAMES
WOMEN
FEAST
HOYAN

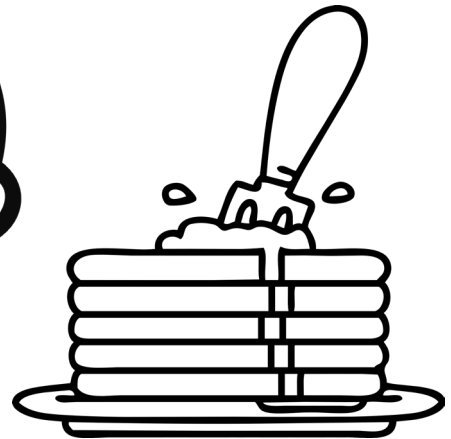
DONUT
STIR
DRUM
BEAN



What is Hoyan?

Hoyan is a word in the Oneida language that means “another.” People say hoyan to celebrate the start of another new year. On New Year’s Day, children and families take a bag or pillowcase and go from house to house shouting “Hoyan!” to greet their neighbors and share good wishes. In return, they receive treats like donuts, fruit, or other goodies. Some families keep this tradition alive. Many adults spend New Year’s Eve baking fresh donuts for the visitors. Sometimes, people also make other deserts like sweet cookies covered in glaze to share.

This tradition may have been influenced by the Dutch. A long time ago, the Lotinuhsyu’ní made their first European treaty with the Dutch, who also celebrate the new year with donuts in some places.

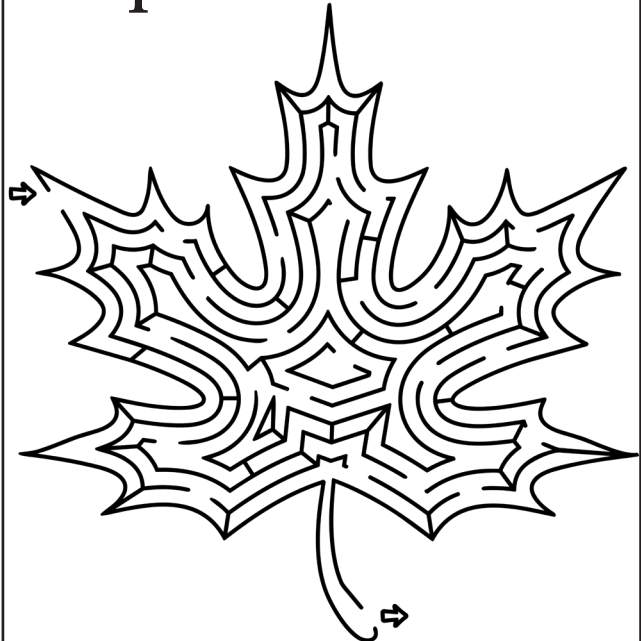


Maple Time: Is it time to tap the trees? What does that all entail? Have we heard the thunders? Do you know how to identify a maple tree? Do you have all the tools? Why do we do a tobacco burning? Where and how do you tap? How much sap makes a gallon of syrup? When is the maple thanksgiving ceremony held? What are the health benefits of our syrup?

Oneida Maple Tradition

When the warm winds once again begin to circulate, we will hear the return of our Grandfathers the Thunders from their long winter absence. That's the natural sign or occurrence that has to happen before we can go out and tap the maple trees. The lightning stimulates the root system of the maple trees which purifies the sap as it once again begins to flow up the tree to its extremities. Before we can go out and tap, we are to do a tobacco burning to extend our greetings, thankfulness and love to the maple trees that they are still fulfilling their responsibilities. As Ukwehu-we people, this is the way that we express our highest regard to the maple tree and honor them. This tobacco burning ceremony is usually done around the first part of March, and each camp in the community will do their own. It all depends on the weather as to when it will be done. We have to wait until we hear the Thunders!

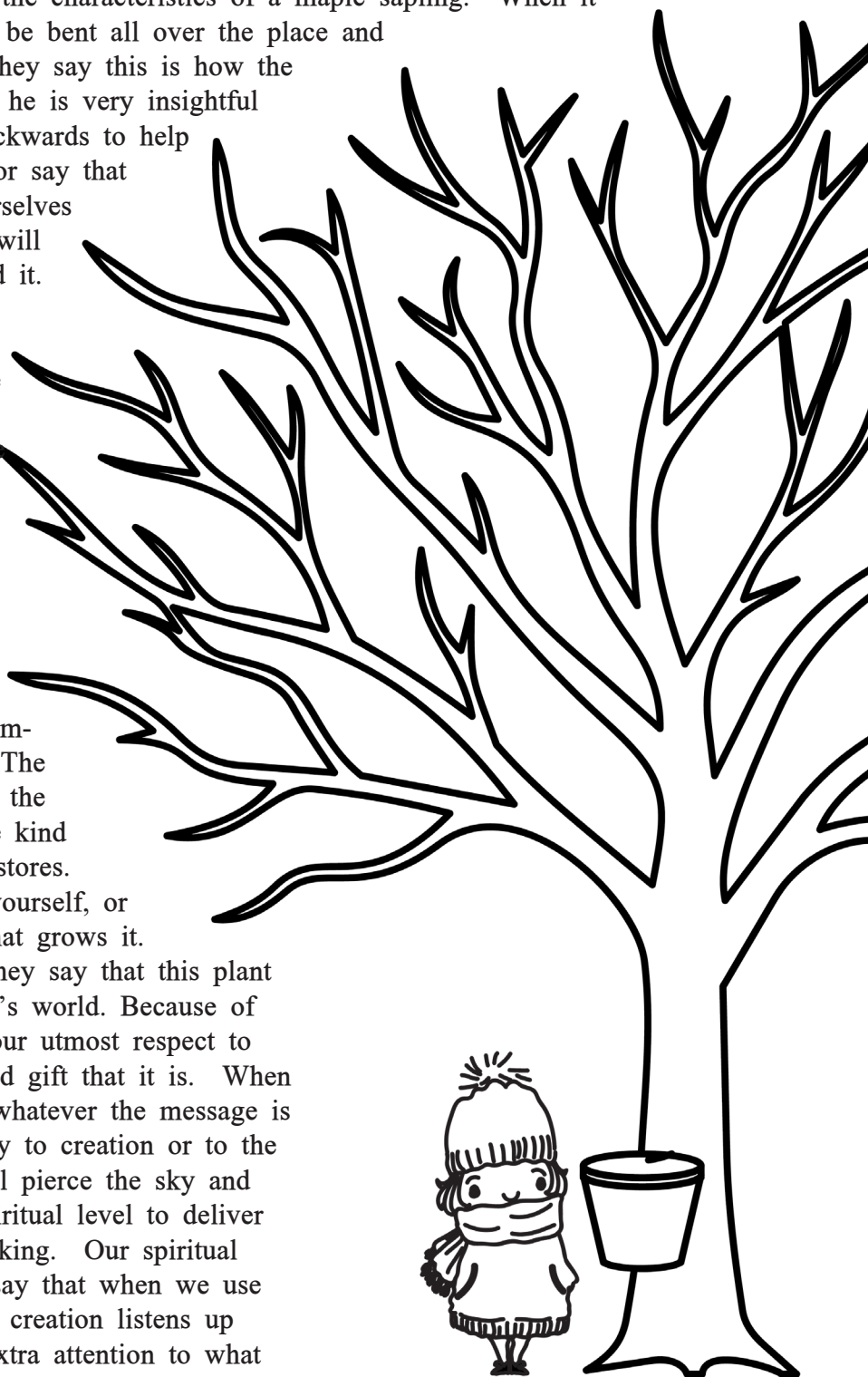
Maple Leaf Maze



Maple leaves have five points. See if you can draw a line from the leaf point to the end of the stem.

THE MAPLE TREE

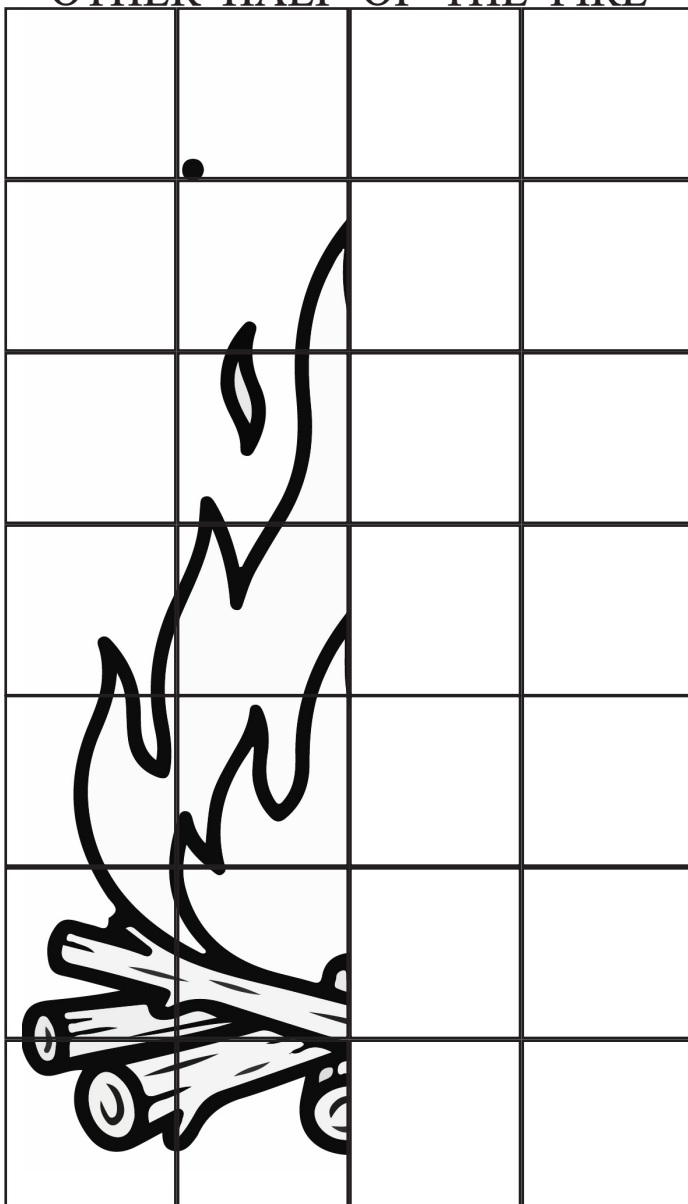
We look to the maple tree as the leader of all of the trees. They are the first trees to wake up from the long winter. Historically this is where we've always gotten our sugar. From the sap we can also make candy, syrup and taffy. In our creation story the Creator said that "Maple Sapling" will be the name that all of creation will call him. The reason has to do with the characteristics of a maple sapling. When it is really young, it can be bent all over the place and it won't break. And they say this is how the Creator's mind is, that he is very insightful and will bend over backwards to help us. Whatever we do or say that may be harmful to ourselves or others, the Creator will understand why we did it. For the tobacco burning, a small fire is built near a maple tree where your camp is going to be. Everyone contributes a pinch of the sacred tobacco and a person is asked to speak on behalf of all the people who have gathered. Our indigenous language is the means in which we communicate to creation. The tobacco that we use is the old sacred tobacco, the kind that you can't buy in stores. You have to grow it yourself, or barter with someone that grows it. In our creation story they say that this plant came from the Creator's world. Because of that, we are to show our utmost respect to this plant for the sacred gift that it is. When we burn the tobacco, whatever the message is that we want to convey to creation or to the Creator, the smoke will pierce the sky and is the conduit on a spiritual level to deliver the message we are asking. Our spiritual elders from long ago say that when we use our sacred tobacco, all creation listens up right away and pays extra attention to what is being said.



The Tobacco Burning

The words in the tobacco burning ask all of creation for a safe time while the people are in the woods working. The children are instructed not to wander too far away from camp lest someone will get hurt. The animals, winds, moon, sun and stars are all asked not to be afraid of us, and for their cooperation so that we will have beautiful days during the harvesting. We ask for permission to allow us to come into their home so we may harvest the sap. The four sacred beings who are our protectors are asked to watch over the people so nobody gets hurt. Lastly, the Creator is asked to ensure that no great harm comes to those harvesting the sap. Thus all of creation is acknowledged. Then the people can go out and set up their sugar camps and tap the maple trees.

USE THE GRID TO DRAW THE
OTHER HALF OF THE FIRE



Word Unscramble

Can you unscramble the words to match vocabulary in the passage above?

eafs

salnami

onom

rtssa

opepel

aempl

usgra

Tapping a tree

Maple is the leader of all of the trees and wakes up in the early spring to share its sap. Before we begin tapping the tree, it is essential that we offer the tree tobacco and give thanks that it is continuing its responsibilities. We set our intentions with the tree and gain permission to tap.

Next we find a good spot to tap where the wood is healthy, and we can reach the spout. It is recommended to tap on the south side, since it receives most of the sunlight, and to make the hole above a large root or below a large branch. Using a drill, make a hole in the tree that is 5/8" wide and about 2.5-3" deep. Insert the tap into the hole and tap it gently with a hammer. Set up your bucket or bag and you are good to go. Make sure to check your tree daily to avoid overflow. The sap is our medicine, and we don't want to waste it. When the tree begins to bud or the weather is no longer freezing at night, it is time to pull the taps. Happy tapping!



Maple Thanksgiving

Né· ka'i·kál wahnislá·té
Now on this day
Waknehela·tú tsi? she·kú wa?katkátho?
wa?kahnekínikane? wáhta?
I give thanks that still I am able
to see sap has flowed of the maple.

Né· tsi? nikatstahsló·ta né·
ayukwanúhkwa?t akáhake.
Now kind of energy and power it
will be our medicine it will be.

Tsi? she·kú kato·kál akáhake.
That yet it continues it will be.

Né· wakli?wá·neke? tsyóhslat
awahkwata·sé· né· tsá·kate akya?ta·láke.
I wish for one year it will come
around the same I will be a part of it.

Ta· tho niyohtúhak yukwa?nikúhla?
Now this shall be our minds.

Wáhta? Twanehela·tú·

Maple we thank it

Once the camps are all done harvesting the sap and everything is cleaned up, a day is picked by the Faithkeepers to give thanks for what the people have been able to harvest. The Faithkeepers are responsible for insuring that all our ceremonies are being conducted throughout the year.

For the maple ceremony, the sap is used as a medicine for everyone to drink and to give our personal thanks to the maple tree. Two Great Feather dances are done. The Great Feather dance is one of the four sacred ceremonies that the Creator had sent here through a messenger as a way through dance and song to honor elements of the natural world as well as the Creator. The first Great Feather dance is to honor the maple tree and the second is to honor the Creator for providing us with the sustenance of life. The sap drink is passed out in between the Feather dances.

In doing these ceremonies we are fulfilling our responsibility to creation by honoring the many different life forces throughout the year that we depend upon to live. This is what our ancestors have been doing since the beginning of time when they were instructed how to give back to creation. It's the same thing as when we extend a helping hand to someone in need. It not only makes that person feel appreciation for what we did, we also feel gratified for our act of kindness; it's reciprocal. Creation senses this same care giving.

The Creator wanted us to always have a respectful relationship with everything in creation.

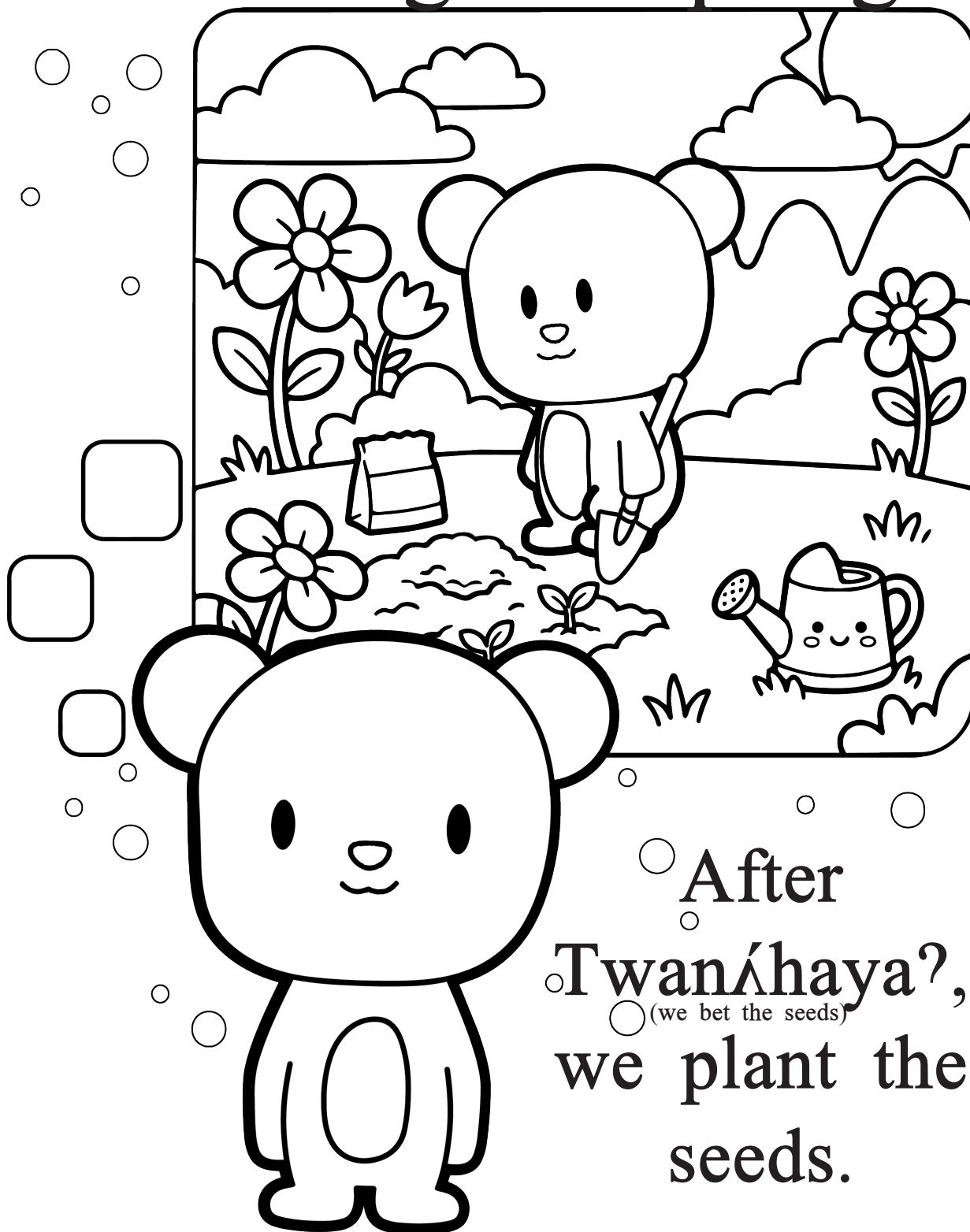
This is a lifelong commitment and challenge that we make daily while we're here on our mother the earth. If we listen to our spirit that's telling us all the time what we need to do, we will be fulfilling our responsibility to ourselves and creation. These acts lead us to inner peace.

Maple Ceremony Agenda:

- Kanehelatúksla Thanksgiving Address/Opening
- On each side of the house the speakers will ask if any family has had misfortune/this will also be mentioned.
- "Inform the minds" - the agenda/what will happen today. The singers and dancers will also be selected from each side. We are encouraged by the speakers to be mindful why we are here today - to give thanks to the maple and that it continues to be a medicine for the people.
- Ohstowa'kó· - Great Feather Dance/Thanks to the maples.
- Speaker will thank all the people for their participation.
- 2 men are selected to pass the maple drink. One bucket for the men, one for the women. As the maple drink is passed out, people may stand and offer their personal words of thanksgiving.
- Ohstowa'kó· - Great Feather Dance/Thanks to the Creator
- Acknowledgment of what has been accomplished.
- Takwanuhwela·tú· - Closing
- Feast

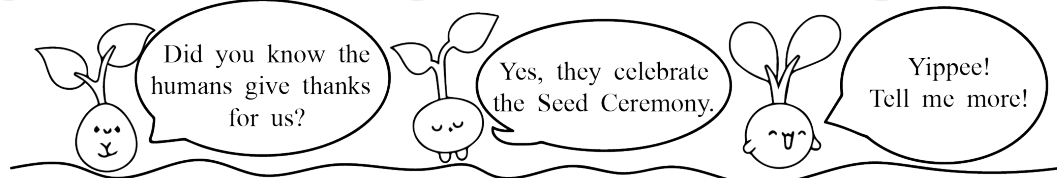


Thinking of Spring



After
Twanáhaya?,
(we bet the seeds)
we plant the
seeds.

SEED CEREMONY



The Seed Ceremony is to give thanks to the seeds whose power provides food for the people.

Twanáhayá?

We bet the seeds

Seed Ceremony Agenda



- Kanehelatúksla - Thanksgiving Address - Opening
- An overview of the days event will be given
- One man will be selected to collect seeds from the women. One man is selected to collect seeds from the men.
- One woman is selected to keep score. One man is selected to keep score.
- During Seed Ceremony there are 50 counter beads. One woman is selected to hold the beans. One man is selected to hold the beans.
- The two men who collected the seeds match them up. A bundle of a man's seeds, are matched up with a similar sized women's bundle.
- Kayátowa'ná - the Peachstone game begins with men versus women.
- The two men who collected the seeds will chose who's going to play first and thereafter)
- The game is won by the team that collects all of the beans. The speaker will announce the winner and then give the introduction for Ohstowa'kó - the Great Feather Dance.
- One round of Ohstowa'kó is sung and everyone dances.
- The story of the Three Sisters - áhsá na'tekutáhnú-téle? is told.
- The Kunukwehnéha né Olánaka'yú-se? (Old Women's Songs) are sung by the men and all the women dance.
- Singers sing the Osahé-ta? aotilá-ná, Bean Dance. Everyone dances.
- A speaker stands to say the Closing - Takwanuhwela-tú.
- We have a feast. Everyone sets out their plates and each family distributes their dish in a counterclockwise direction around the longhouse. Each clan brings a pot of corn soup that is set near the fire for everyone to help themselves and enjoy.

The Game of PeachStone

As told in our Creation Story, the peach stone game was played between Sapling and Flint. It is a game that existed before life on earth. Today, it is played during various ceremonies in the longhouse as part of our traditional responsibilities. The following is the story of how peachstone came to the people on earth.

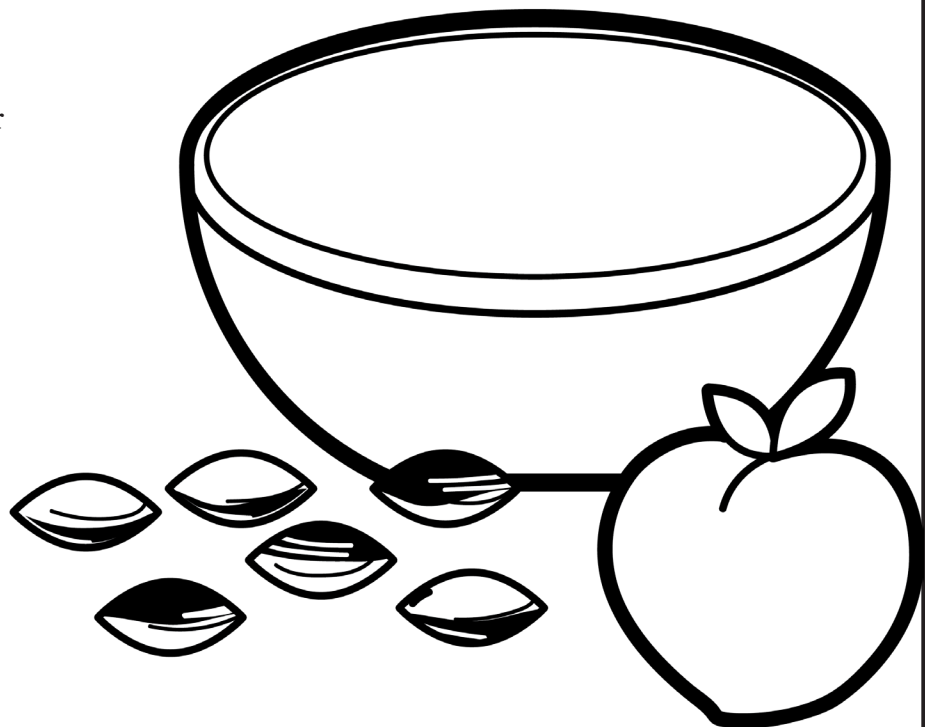
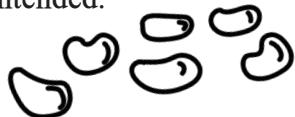
The fatherless boy returned from across the water, as he had promised many years before. He took 6 peach pits from his clothes. One side of the peach pit was dark, while the other was light.

He informed his loyal friends, who had waited many years for his return and the people that this was a game that belonged to the Creator. "When the Creator originally sent me here to you, he had intended there be Four matters to which the people shall use to give thanks. The Four matters are the Great Feather Dance, Men's Chant, Drum Dance and Peach Stone Game. The Creator intended for the people to be happy. He hoped that as the people moved about the earth, that their minds remained thankful and peaceful."

"This game of peachstone is the last of the Four matters. I shall leave it on earth for your people to participate and entertain not only yourselves but the Creator and all his creation. When this game is going on, you should have a good mind when you are around the game. The Creator will hear happiness in the voices and see it in their faces and then the Creator will truly know that the people are thankful and peaceful.

The outcome of the game is really unimportant.

What is important is the laughing and cheering, the pure enjoyment of the game and how it makes you feel. For that is what the Creator intended."

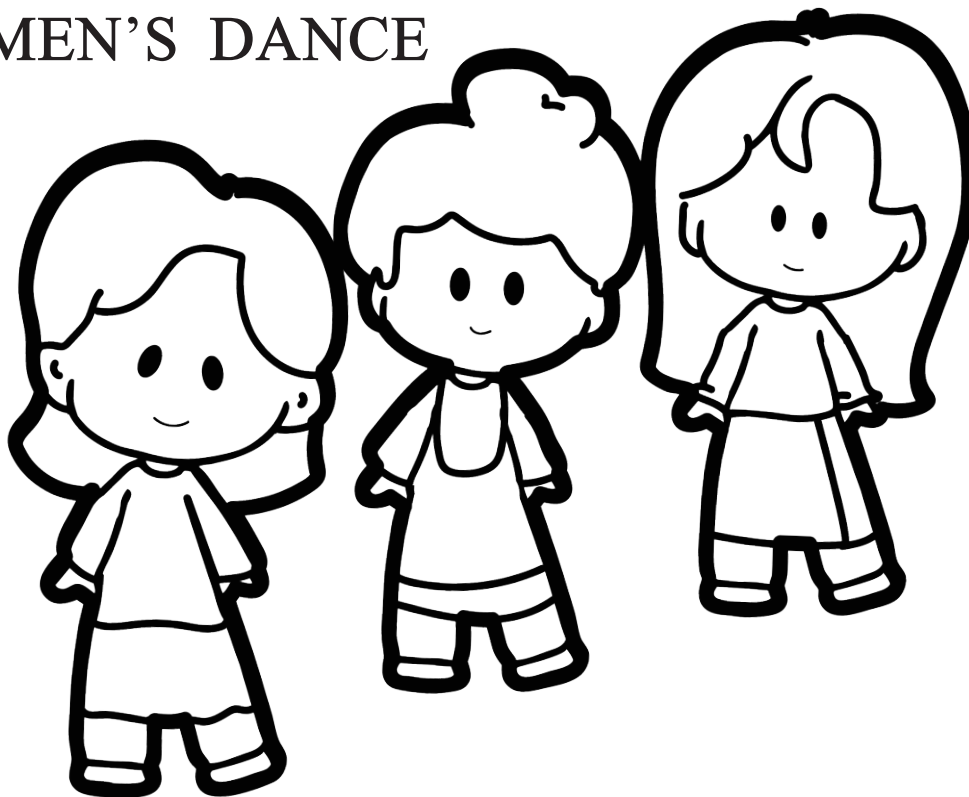


Game Play

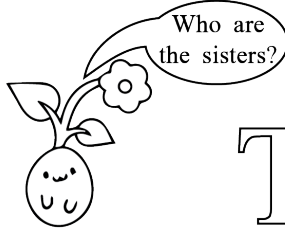
Peach stone is played three times during the year, once at Mid-Winter, Seed and at Harvest ceremonies. During Seed ceremony 50 beans are used. During Mid-Winter and Harvest ceremonies 101 beans are used. The one additional bean is used to make the total 101 is for the Creator and he will decide which way the game will go and how long. We understand that when he sees the people enjoying themselves, he will allow it to continue another day.

During Midwinter and harvest the game starts by the last two people who played at the last ceremony. The house is divided with the turtles and bears on one side and the wolves on the other. During Seed Ceremony the Peach Stone Game is played and seeds are used to bet. The men play against the women. Fifty beans are used as counters. The game is started with a man who was chosen to yell, signifying all creation to come close. Each player receives six beans. The player shakes the bowl and tries to get a combination of 5 and 1 or 6 of the same color. When the player loses their six beans they are out and a new person from that team sits down and gets another six beans. The winner, remains in the game with the same amount of beans. The game is won when one side of the house has all of the beans. After the game is over, the story of the Three Sisters is told, the Great Feather Dance is done to commemorate the purpose of this ceremony. The Women's Dance and the Bean Dance are then done.

WOMEN'S DANCE

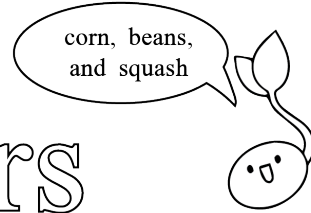


Kunukwehnéha Olanaka'yúhse? (Old women's Dance) is to give thanks to the women and mother earth because they are the ones that bring life into the world. This is the dance that they refer to when Skywomen came down from the sky and landed on turtles' back. The song is sung by the men while playing cow horn rattles and a water drum. Only the women dance. This is a dance to honor the female side of life.



The Story of the

Three Sisters



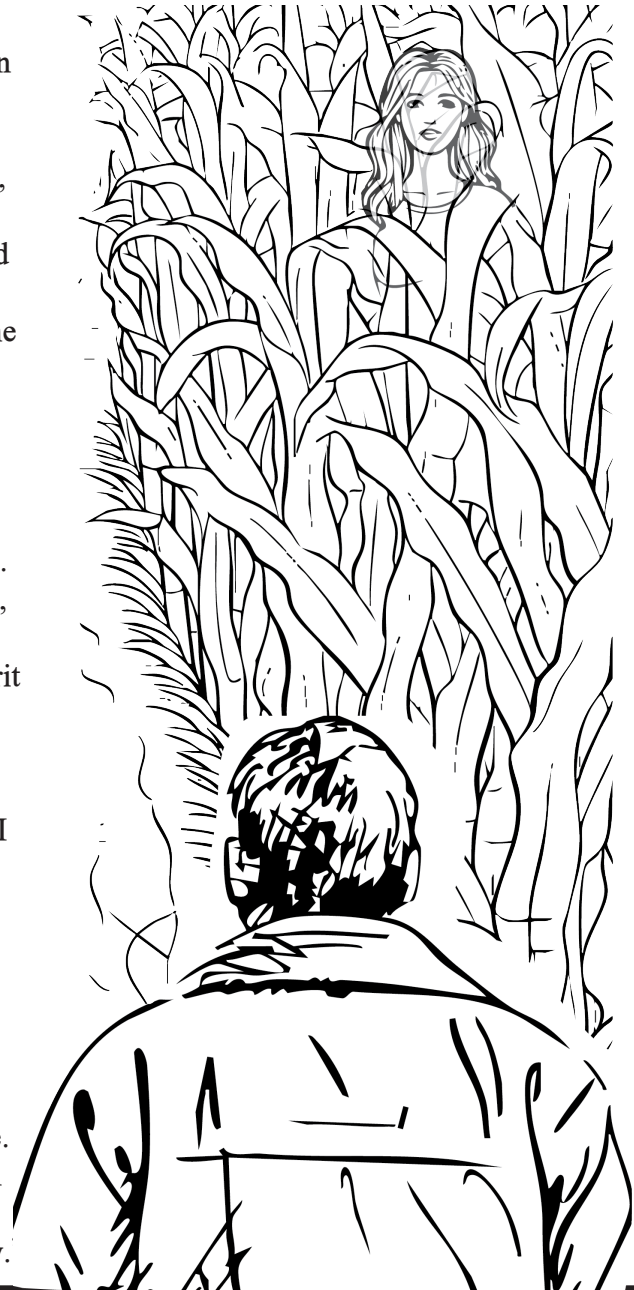
Handsome Lake was still at Cornplanter's village, we call it Tyonuhsaté'ka. When he woke up he went outside and noticed how bright it was. Because everything was so bright, he thought it might be the day that he would return to the sky world. He got dressed and put on his best outfit. Returning to his porch and looking out into the land, he gazed upon his field and considered who would look after his crops. Thinking that he may not have another chance to set foot on this earth, he began to walk through the corn field.

Moments in, he felt something grab his arm, and heard the soft voice of a woman, "we can hear your thoughts, and we want to go too". Scanning the area around him, there was no one there. Handsome Lake continued his walk, this time more observant when he felt the tug at his arm again, and a corn leaf that wrapped itself around his cuff. "I have been chosen to talk to you." Squinting, he looked at where the voice was coming from and he could see the silhouette of the Corn Spirit. She continued, saying, "My sisters and I will go with you when you leave here. The people are not respectful. After we are planted and the sun's heat helps us to grow, the people don't return. It is as if it doesn't matter if we grow or not, so we want to go with you."

Handsome Lake thought about what Corn Spirit was saying. Though he understood, he could not bring them along. "I hear what you are saying, but only Creator can decide when one may leave this earth. If I were to bring you, I would be doing a great wrong."

Corn Spirit, more insistent responded, "The adults drink and when they touch us it burns our flesh, the children trample us into the ground".

Handsome lake spoke, "If you were to go, people would suffer, the children would starve. All that Creator has placed here in the natural world is meant to help each other. You are very important, and this is why you must stay."

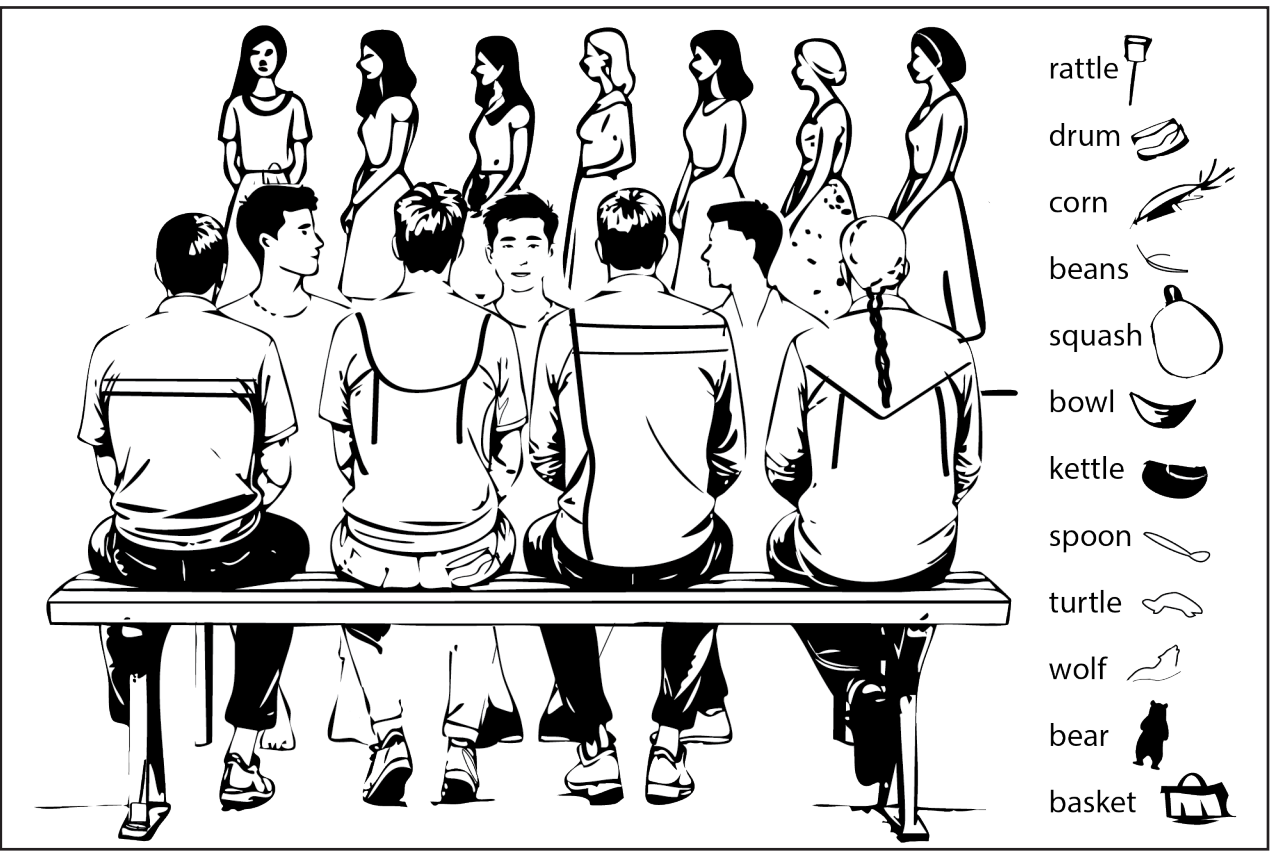


Corn Spirit considered what was said, "Then perhaps we will stay. You must take a message to the people. When your ceremonies are conducted, all the natural world draws in to hear the words of gratitude and encouragement, but we do not hear ours. We want to be included in your ceremonies. We are related to the women; they too create and sustain life. They are always concerned with feeding their families, and for it to be peaceful for their children. Your people should sing the Women's Song for us and for the women. This gesture will show gratitude and encourage us to have strong minds and fulfill our responsibilities. Then maybe we will stay."

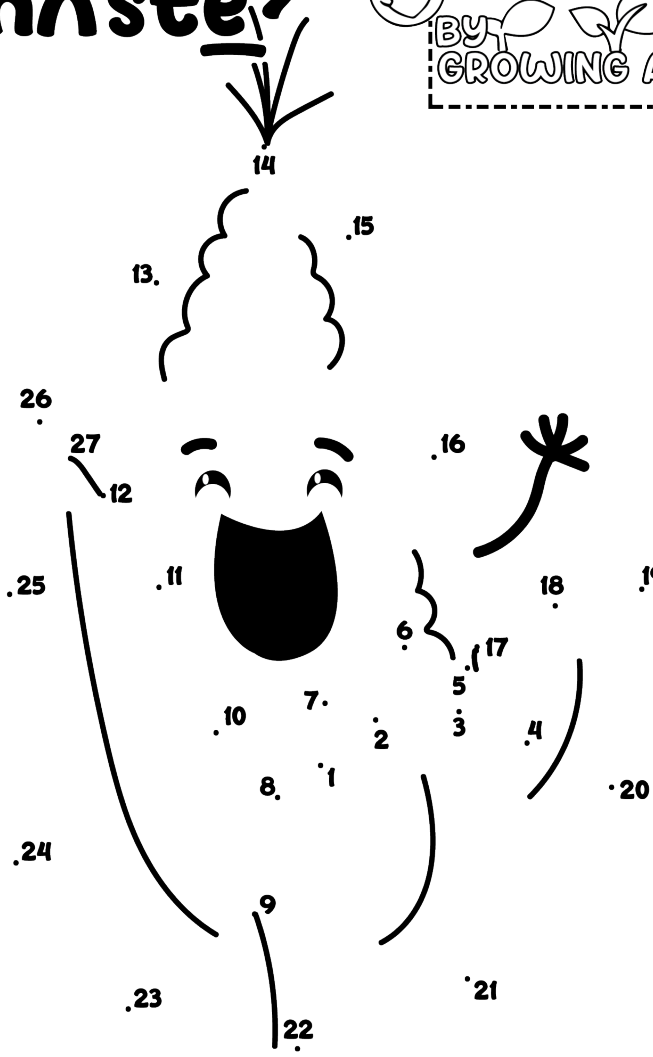
Handsome Lake accepted this message and indeed took it to the people. Today, the Three Sisters are included within our ceremonies, and we conduct the Women's Dance for them and all the women.



HIDDEN PICTURE SEARCH AND



Tesatnna?ke-laht
washe-ta's su-ni.
o·hñ'ste?



You write it
seed **ka·hñhe?**

seed

squash **onu?ùhsehli**

squash

beans **osahéhta?**

beans

corn **o·hñ'ste?**

corn

Word Scramble

Oh no! These words have been
scrambled. Can you unscramble them?

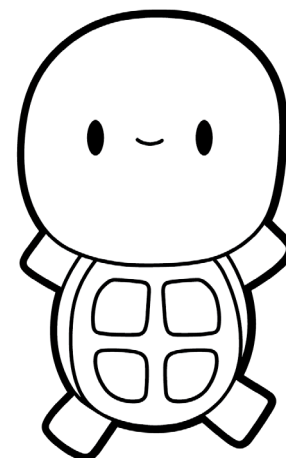
oencrcmy

edes

cande

uolenhsog

euagidtrt



Twahyahnekí·lha? Ka?niyohutés Awáhihte?

We're drinking the fruit juice the short plant the strawberry

Strawberry Ceremony

A long time ago, in our creation story, a woman named Sky Woman fell from the Sky World. As she was falling, she grabbed the roots of a wild strawberry plant. That's why wild strawberries are special, they come from the Sky World.

Wild strawberries are the first fruit to get ripe in the summer. When they are ready, usually in June or July, we have a special celebration called the Strawberry Ceremony. This ceremony was forgotten for a while, but it was brought back in the year 1799 by a man named Handsome Lake. Handsome Lake's story teaches us how important wild strawberries are. They help us survive, and we made a promise to always include them in our ceremonies.

When Handsome Lake was very sick from drinking alcohol, he was visited by three messengers from Sky World. He asked them to forgive him, and they did. They told him, "When the strawberries ripen, you will do this ceremony."

The four messengers directed him to have a ceremony when the first berries ripened. We

include wild strawberries in our ceremonies, and they continue to uphold their responsibilities to us. When a child sees them growing, they alert an adult, and the Faithkeepers set the date for Strawberry Ceremony.

Strawberry Ceremony Word Search

Directions: Find the words in the lists, then say why they are significant to strawberry ceremony.

E N K K U K S B O R L H H M G
C U F K E F E Z B U B A N X P
N J H D T S S I F J N O Z K M
A Y U L F P D K H D Z M L C D
D G H I O T N N S F S X E W R
Z Q J F C A K O S S N A M E S
D K O R H E M P T C E D H I R
Y P N T C E J R F A Y P Y H E
R E N I L W A B R I K Q I M J
Y F C A R W N O N G K W M N E
G A K E B D D C R O X R B Z E
H E N E X Q F U J O E E F C N
F K R B O H J L A D A W G M F
W R S C L J M P W V S P T K C
Y Y C K L T R A E H A E T T Z

STRAWBERRY CEREMONY AGENDA:

- Thanksgiving address
- Agenda is said
- Great Feather Dance
- Story of Handsome Lake
- A boy and girl are selected and hand out the strawberry drink.
- Great Feather Dance
- We put up the names.
- Acknowledgement
- Closing
- Feast.
- Faithkeepers meet to decide if we will host Kaliwiyo

drink
heart
strawberry

dance
Handsomelake
names
thankful

good
juice
tea



Naming

Since the beginning, when we were taught how to give thanks through the ceremonies given to us, we were also taught about the importance of names. Our names come from Creation and were inspired by the world around us. Many of the things we see and use became part of our naming traditions through our grandmothers, mothers, Clan Mothers, and female faithkeepers.

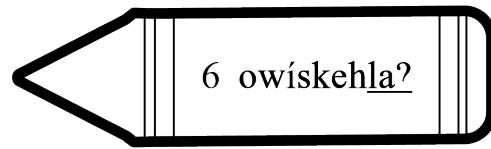
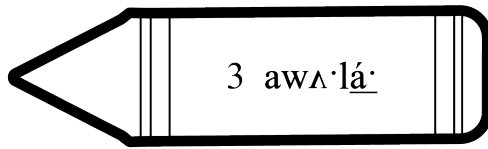
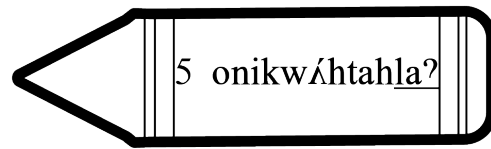
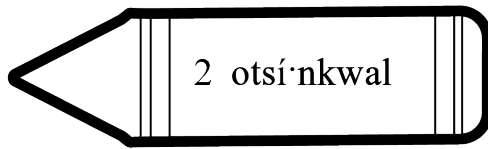
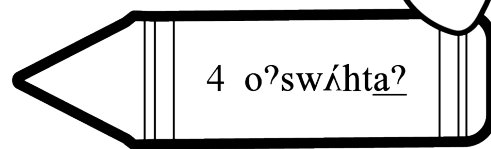
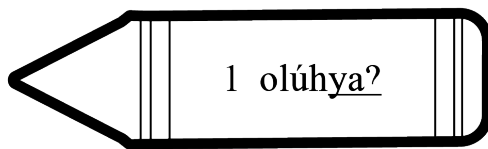
Names have always been connected to our clans and families. We were given names so that we could live in balance with both the natural world and the spiritual world. When someone is called to an important responsibility or ceremony, their name is asked for and spoken. If a person joins a medicine society, their name is also needed. The designee conducting the ceremony asks for the name of the person receiving the medicine because it helps the medicine work with its greatest strength for that individual. When a child is born, the mother or grandmother would ask their Clan Mother for a name. Our clans are our families, and we look within our clan for names that have been carried by our ancestors. Giving these names to our children helps keep their memory and teachings alive.

When a baby is born they are given a name. A man from the mothers side will conduct a speech to introduce the baby to all family members present and all of creation. Then the man will sing his personal song of thanks. Some people are unable to receive their name when they are born, but are able to receive one later in life by setting up a meeting time with their faithkeeper or a woman within their clan who gives names.

Names are elevated, or raised up so the whole nation can see it and hear it in a Naming Ceremony at the Longhouse. This ceremony is conducted during Midwinter, Strawberry and Harvest.



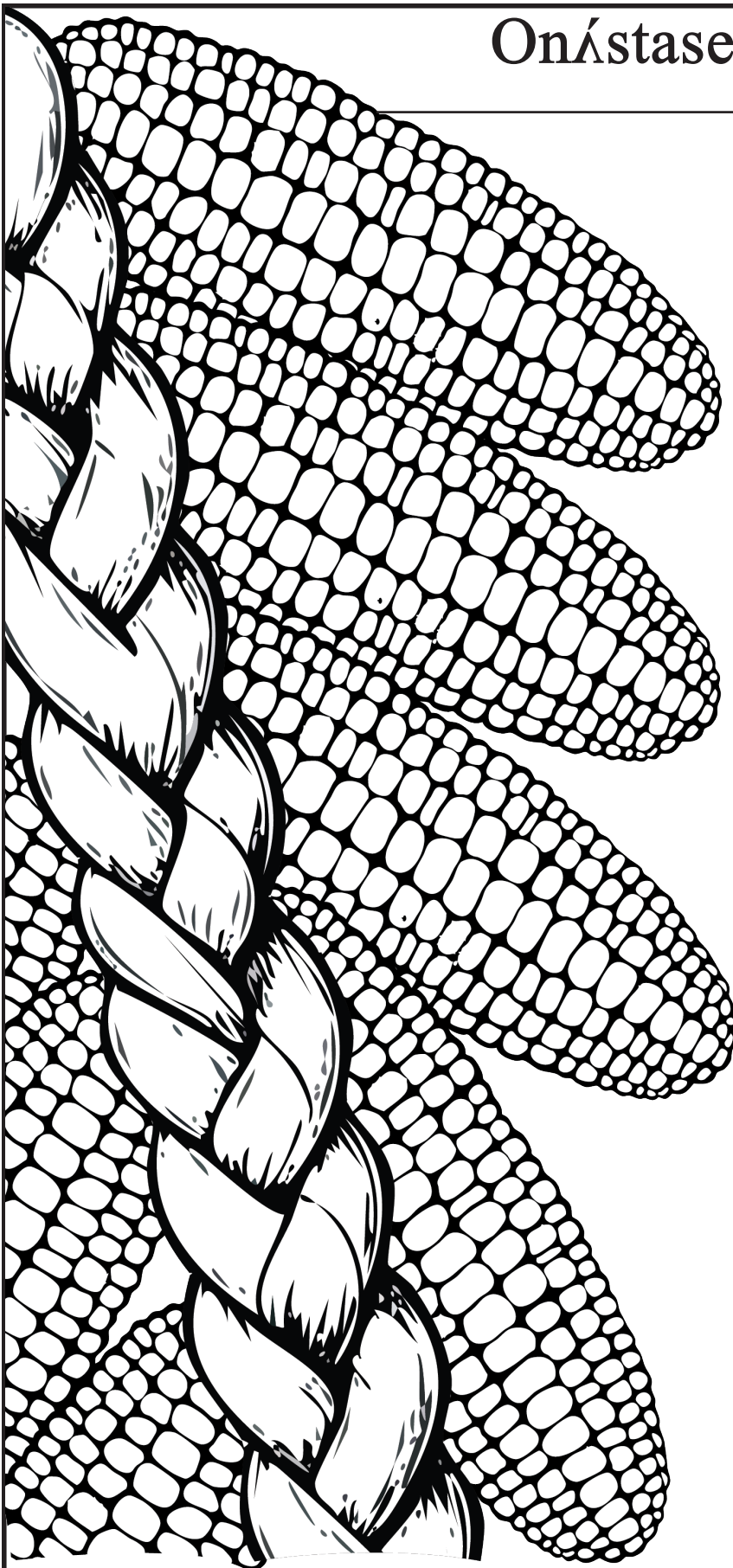
Sáhso Kaʔi·Ká Kayá·təle



Color the image using the correct colors. 1 is blue, 2 is yellow, 3 is green, 4 is black, 5 is red, 6 is white.

Onástase? Wehntale?

Green Corn Moon



Green Corn Ceremony is a one-day ceremony. Green Corn is in August when the white corn is at the milky stage and still sweet. The day is set when the people who grow corn notify the faith keepers that the corn is ready. The faith keepers will decide when a good time is to have the ceremony. They will also select a person from each of the clans (Turtle, Bear, and Wolf) to make a kettle of green corn soup.

The Green Corn Ceremony starts in the morning. It begins with the opening Thanksgiving. Two singers will be chosen to sing the Great Feather Dance. Lead dancers will be selected. The Great Feather Dance is done in honor of the corn, to give thanks that the corn has grown again and is still here for us to eat and use as medicine. Everyone is encouraged to dance the feather dance or to go around at least three times. If there is someone unable to dance, they sit by the singers. When the feather dance is over the story of the Three Sisters is told. Then the next dance will be the Old Women's Dance to honor the women. The next dance is the Bean Dance." "The feast confirms the Green Corn Ceremony, and it is followed by the closing thanksgiving address." As reported by Kalihwisaks

Oná'stase Ohneka'keli
Green Corn
Soup



lahnekakli?tslu·níhe?

he makes soup

Twakhwa?ló·loks

We are all gathering food

Harvest Ceremony

This is the time of year when the weather starts getting colder. The days are shorter, and the leaves change into beautiful fall colors. This is the time to harvest the crops that were cared for all summer.

Every year, the Oneida community has an event called the Husking Bee and Harvest Fest. It is a time for people to learn about the science behind the Three Sisters Garden—corn, beans, and squash—and have fun doing it.

This celebration is about giving thanks for the harvest. One of the highlights is harvesting and braiding our Oneida white corn.

From spring, when we plant our gardens, through green corn season, and finally to harvest, we are thankful for the food Mother Earth provides.

After the first frost, we hold ceremonies to show appreciation to all the natural beings that make this process possible.

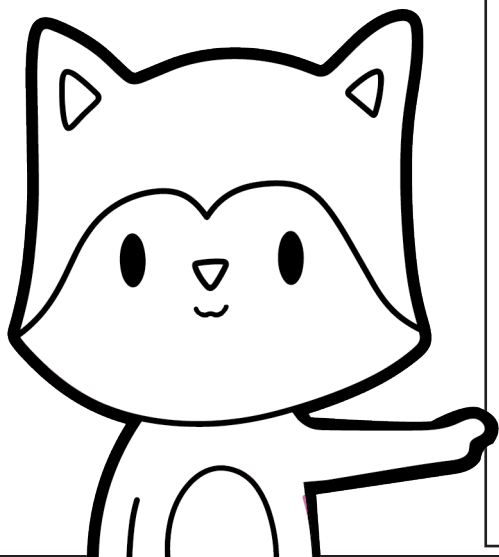
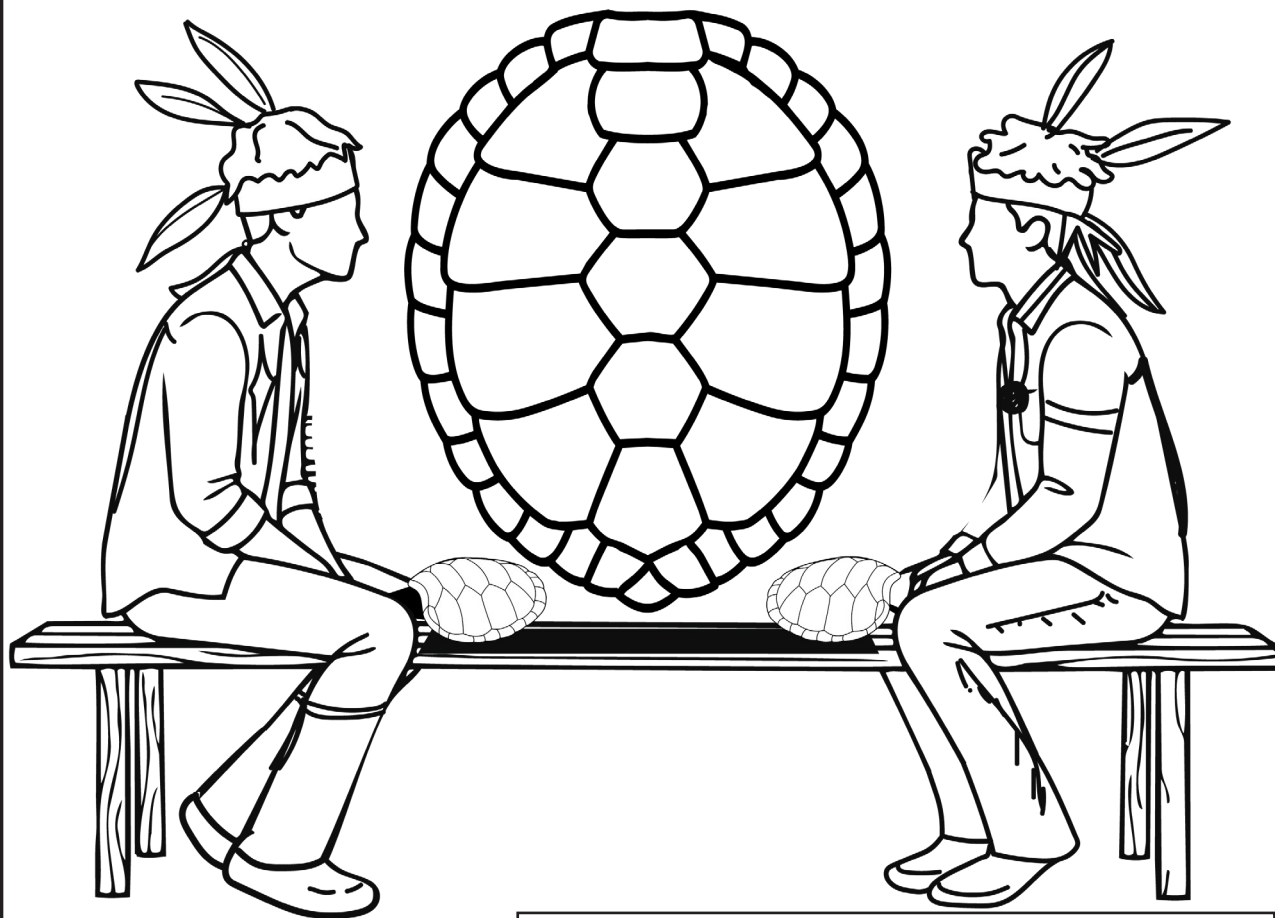
The Harvest Ceremony lasts for at least three days, assuming that the Peachstone Game lasts only one day. It is done to give thanks to everything that has provided us with a bountiful harvest and growing season.

HARVEST CEREMONY AGENDA

- The first day there are Three Great Feather Dances. The first one is for all of the title holders, the second is for the people, and the third is for the Creator.
- On the second day, the Tobacco Ceremony is the first thing done. Then the time for Men's Chant is opened. This is when our names are put through. The Friendship Medicine Society Ceremony can be done, and Faithkeepers can be raised up (appointed) at this time, also.
- Then the Water Drum Dance is done. A speaker is chosen to give the Thanksgiving during the dance for all of the cycles of life. The wild blackberry is used as medicine during this dance.
- On the third day the Peachstone Game is played with the Bear Clan and the Turtle Clan against the Wolf Clan. Items deemed appropriate to bet are wampum, turtle rattles, lacrosse sticks, or traditional clothing.
- A runner is chosen from each side of the house to go around early in the morning to collect what the people will be using to bet. The items collected from the Bear and Turtle Clans are matched up with items of equal value that are collected from the Wolf Clan. Whatever side of the house wins, they get back what they bet and what was matched up with it. Those who do not win receive their items back when they return to the skyworld.
- Then the Great Feather Dance, the Old Woman's Dance and the Bean Dance are sung.
- A speaker stands to say the Closing - Takwanuhwela:tú'.

Ohstowa?kó·

Feather Dance



The shells of large snapping turtles are used by certain Oneida singers during the Great Feather Dance and in healing ceremonies. Turtles hold deep significance for our people.

This tradition honors the turtle's sacred role in our creation story, which teaches that our land was formed on the back of a turtle.

The turtle's shell is symbolic:

- The 13 central plates represent the 13 moons of the lunar year.
- The 28 outer segments reflect the 28 days between each moon cycle.
- The turtle is one of the clans in each of the Confederacy Nations, further emphasizing its importance in our identity and way of life.

HARVEST

WORDSEARCH

F	R	I	E	N	D	S	J	B	L	P	I	C	K	R	W	T	Y
F	A	M	I	L	Y	G	M	E	D	I	L	P	V	P	I	R	F
R	T	S	G	R	J	A	W	A	I	U	E	O	N	U	N	Y	A
H	H	U	J	B	R	R	Y	N	F	N	A	T	U	M	S	C	L
F	A	L	S	O	A	D	I	S	E	Y	V	A	D	P	S	A	L
R	N	R	O	Q	Z	E	N	D	A	A	E	T	S	K	K	R	A
O	K	T	V	A	U	N	S	A	S	P	S	O	Q	I	Z	R	U
S	F	E	X	E	I	A	L	Z	T	P	X	E	B	N	U	O	T
T	U	F	Q	Z	S	M	S	Y	V	L	P	S	Y	O	D	T	U
J	L	M	W	P	P	T	Q	H	J	E	Y	A	I	Q	S	S	M
P	U	P	N	K	T	Q	M	V	S	S	J	D	W	Z	X	Q	N
T	B	G	F	A	M	J	T	U	V	S	C	O	R	N	C	L	N

Find the following words in the puzzle:

THANKFUL	SQUASH	BEANS	CORN	FRIENDS	AUTUMN
POTATOES	GARDEN	FROST	PICK	PUMPKIN	LEAVES
HARVEST	FAMILY	FEAST	FALL	CARROTS	APPLES

ONEIDA SPELLING SYSTEM

VOWELS:

Oneida has six vowel sounds. Unlike English each letter stands for one and only one sound. Here are the letters and the sounds they represent.

- “A” has the sound of the ‘a’ in ah or father
- “E” has the sound of the ‘e’ in egg or eight
- “I” has the sound of the ‘i’ in ski or machine
- “O” has the sound of the ‘o’ in hope or low

The remaining two vowels are nasalized. That means they are pronounced more through the nose than the usual English sounds. Roughly;

- “U” has the sound of the ‘un’ in tune
- “Λ” has the sound of the ‘on’ in son.

CONSONANTS:

Most of the consonants have the same sound as they usually do in English. This is true for: H, L, N, W, and Y

The letters “T”, and “K”, and “S” each have two pronunciations depending on the other sounds near them.

- “S” often has a sound halfway between the ‘s’ in sea and the z-like sound of the ‘s’ in was. When it comes between two vowels it always has the z-like sound and when it comes before or after ‘h’, then it has the sound of the ‘s’ in sea
- “T” normally has the sound of the ‘t’ in city, water, stove. Notice in those words ‘t’ sounds more like ‘d’. If a ‘k’, ‘h’, or ‘s’ follows then the ‘t’ has the usual English sound as in top.
- “K” normally has a g-like sound as in skill but if a ‘t’, ‘s’, or ‘h’ follows, it sounds like the usual English ‘k’ as in kid.

OTHER SYMBOLS USED IN WRITING ONEIDA:

- “ ʔ ” is used to represent a special consonant sound (called a glottal stop) that English doesn’t have. The sound is made by quickly stopping the flow of air in the throat, a kind of catch.
- “ ˈ ” this symbol is written above a vowel to indicate the stressed syllable in a word.
- “ ˙ ” this symbol is used after a vowel to indicate the vowel is lengthened or dragged out a bit. (Vowels marked with both the dot and the stress mark have a slightly falling tone.)
- “ _ ” underlined sounds are whispered and not said aloud.

This, then, is the Oneida alphabet used in this booklet.

A, E, H, I, K, L, N, O, S, T, U, W, Y, Λ, ʔ

Some special combinations are:

- “tsy” or “tsi” has the ‘j’ sound as in jam, or judge
- “tshy” or “tshi” has the ‘ch’ sound as in church
- “sy” has the ‘sh’ sound as in shoe or hush

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