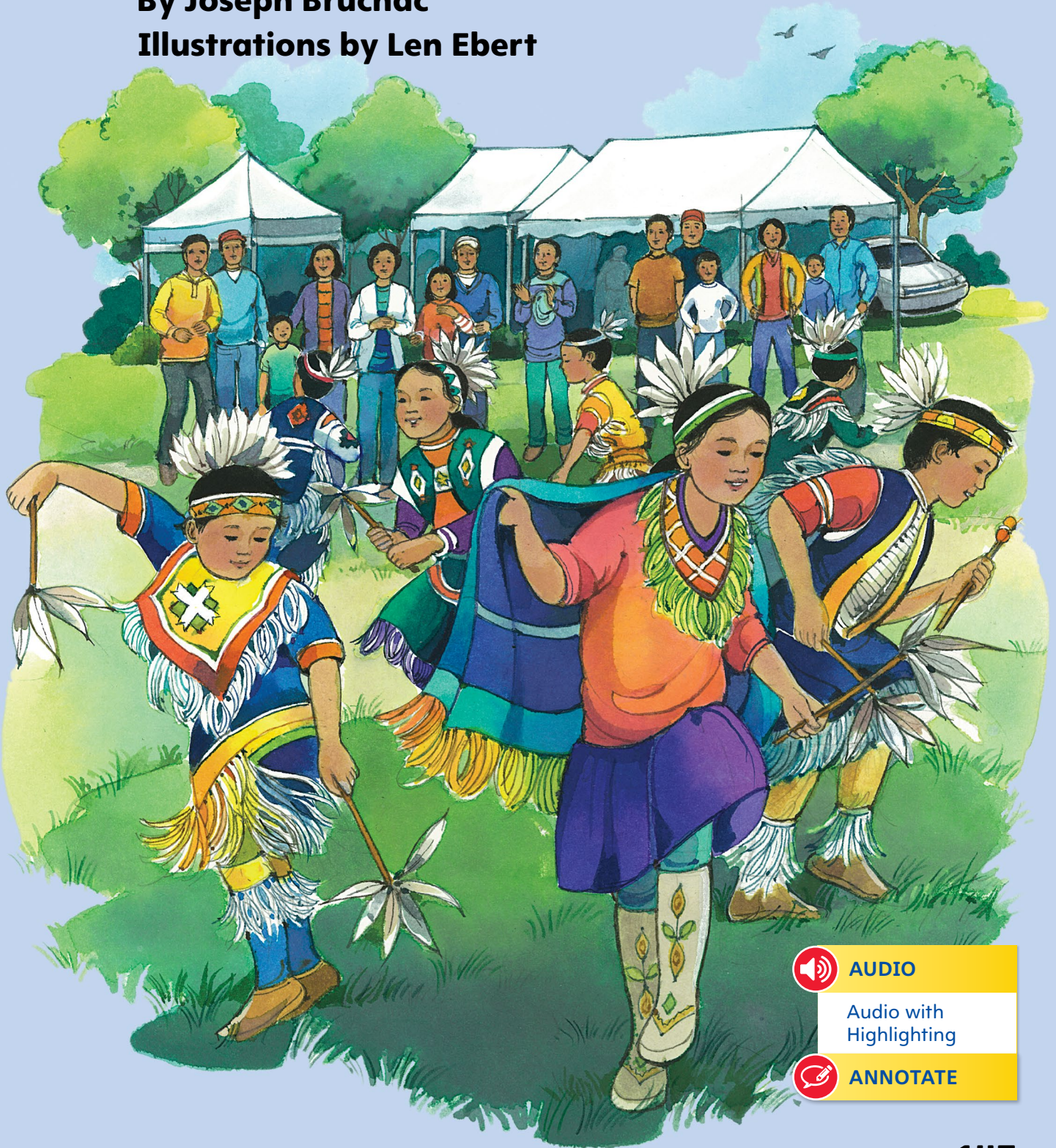


THE ABENAKI

By Joseph Bruchac

Illustrations by Len Ebert



AUDIO

Audio with
Highlighting



ANNOTATE

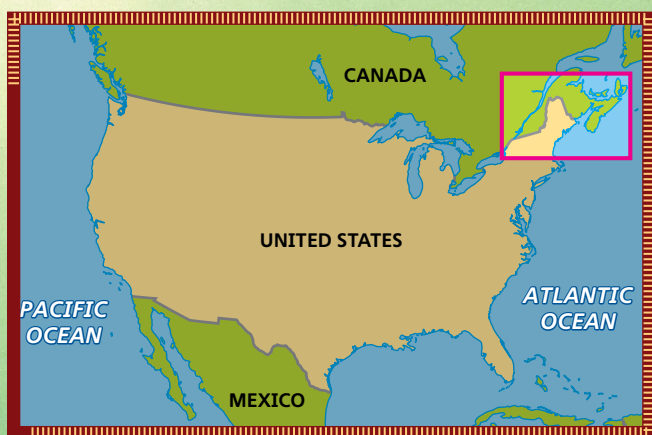


Discuss Author's Purpose

Underline words the author uses to tell the topic of this section.

Who are the Abenaki people?

- The Abenaki (ah'-buh-nah-kee) are a group of Native Americans. Their homeland is the northeast. Native Americans were the first people to inhabit North America. They lived there for thousands of years before people from Europe arrived. The Abenaki people lived in Western New England. Many Abenaki still live there today. Some Abenaki also live in parts of Quebec, Canada.



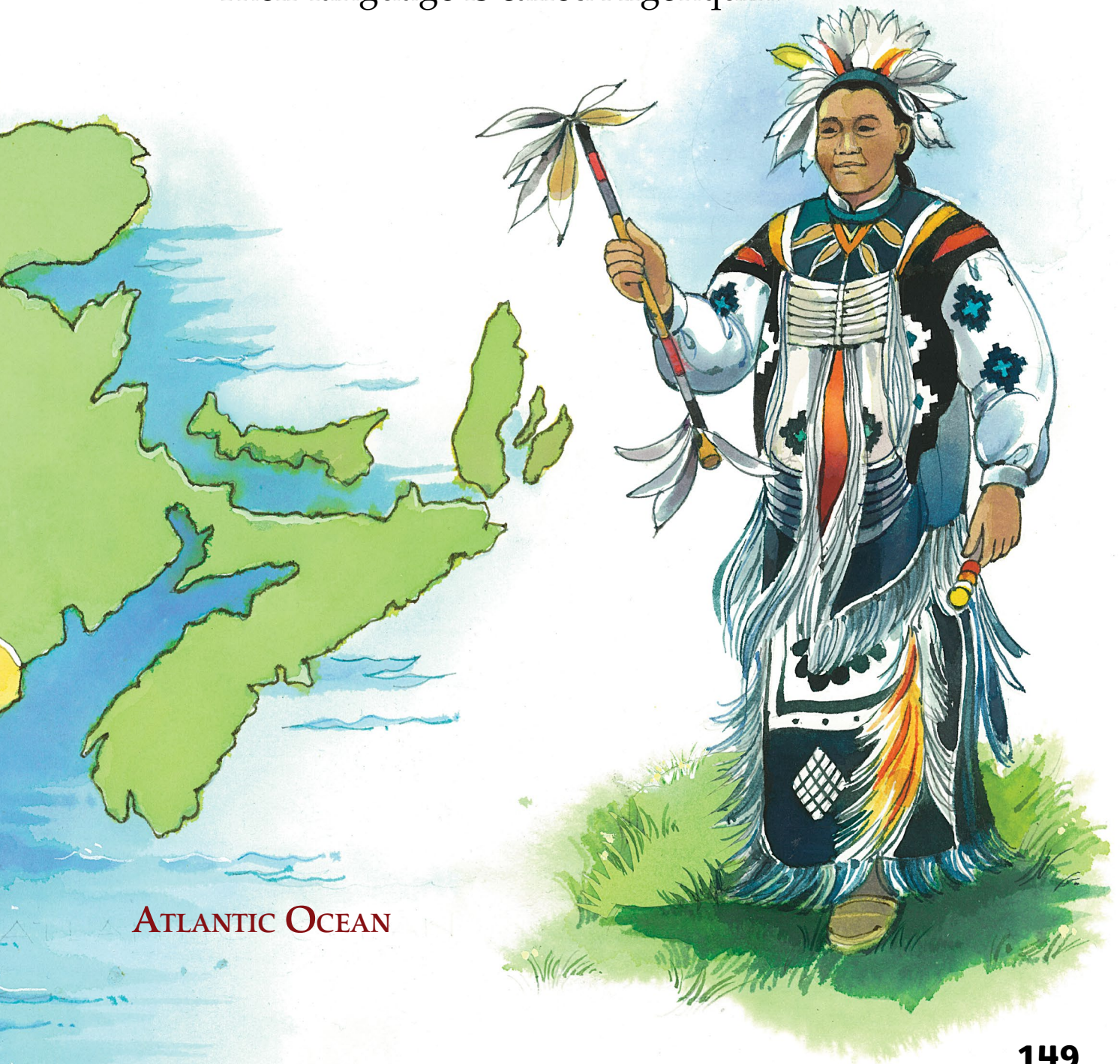
CANADA

ABENAKI
HOMELANDS

UNITED
STATES

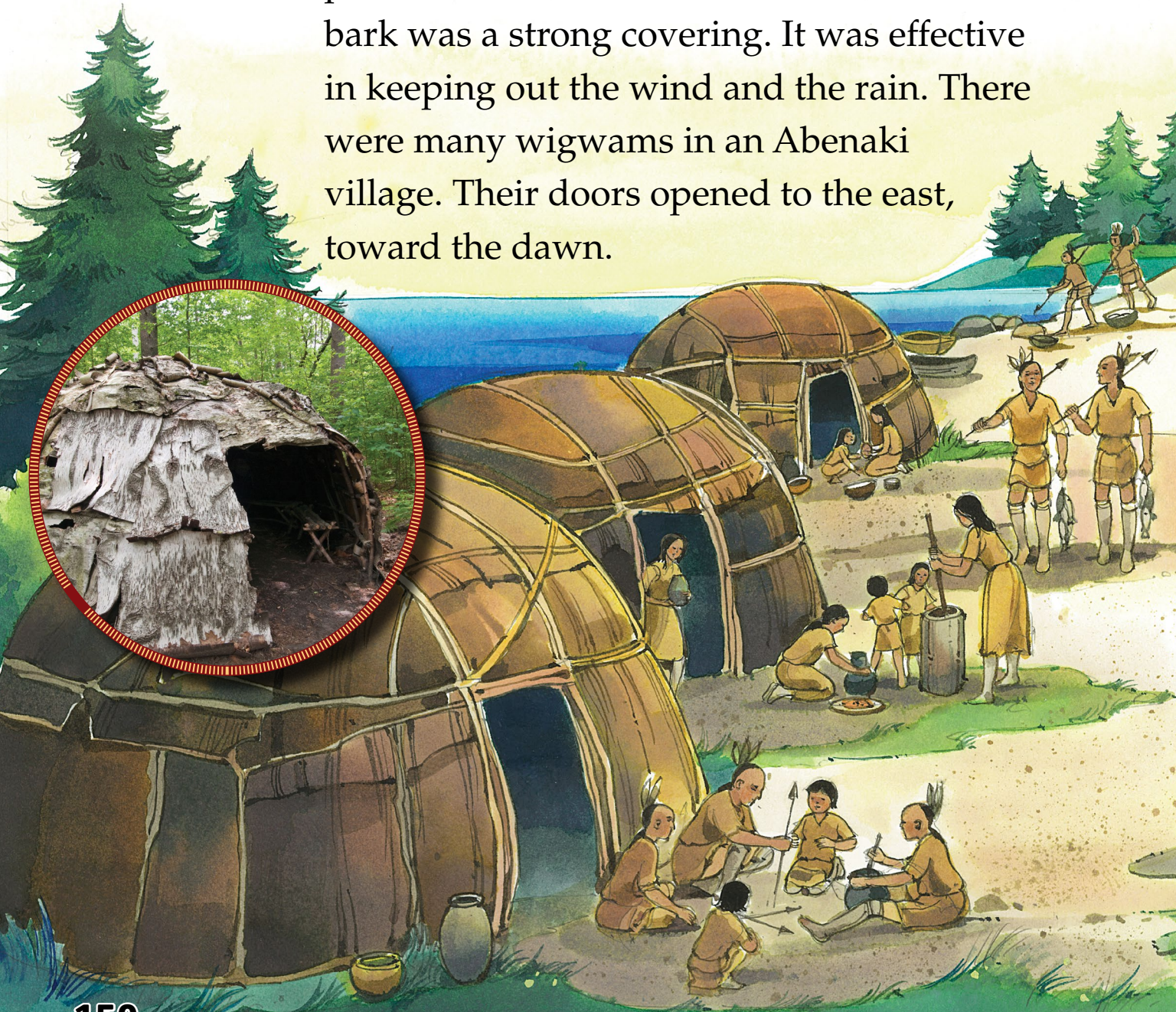
2 Abenaki means “Dawn Land Place.”

Dawn is the time of day when the sun rises. The sun comes up in the east. The Abenaki homelands are in the east. Their name means that they live in the east, where the sun rises. The Abenaki speak their own language. Their language is called Algonquin.



What was life like long ago for the Abenaki?

- 3 Long ago, Abenaki people lived in small communities. They called their houses wigwams. *Wigwam* means “house.” A wigwam was made of thin bent wooden poles. The Abenaki covered the skinny poles with the bark of birch trees. Birch bark was a strong covering. It was effective in keeping out the wind and the rain. There were many wigwams in an Abenaki village. Their doors opened to the east, toward the dawn.



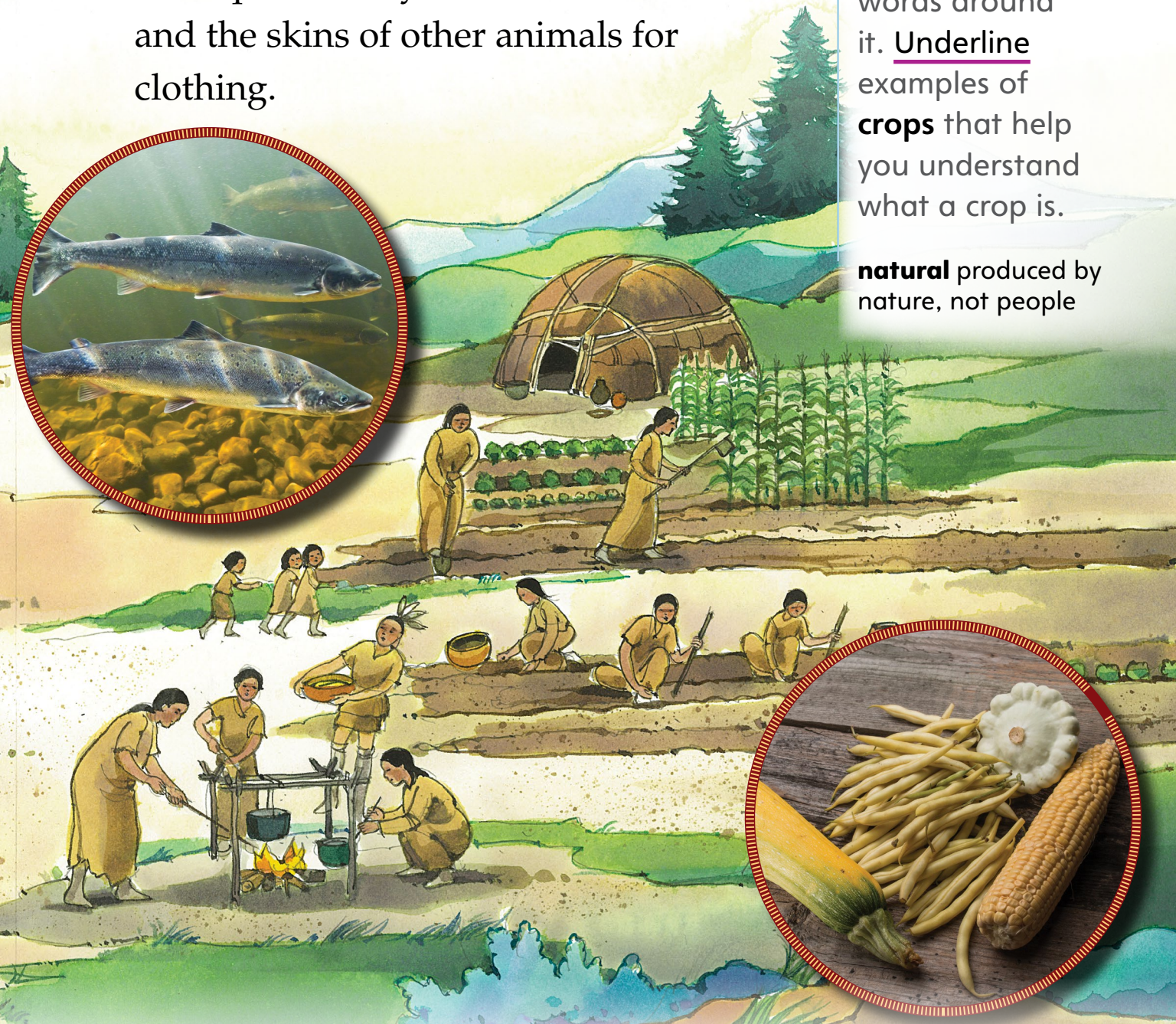


4 The Abenaki were hunters, fishers, and farmers. They survived by using the natural resources around their homes. They fished in the ocean, rivers, and lakes. They hunted in the thick forests. They grew crops such as corn, beans, and squash. They also used deerskins and the skins of other animals for clothing.

Vocabulary in Context

Sometimes you can figure out an unfamiliar word by looking for examples in the words around it. Underline examples of **crops** that help you understand what a crop is.

natural produced by nature, not people





society a group of people living together

traditions beliefs, stories, and ways of living passed down from parents to children

What is life like for the Abenaki today?

- 5 Today, Abenaki people are part of American society. They dress and work like other Americans. They no longer live in wigwams. They choose to live in modern homes. They live in towns and cities mostly in New England and Canada. Although the Abenaki live like many other Americans today, they keep their culture and traditions alive.





What customs from long ago are still important to the Abenaki?

- 6 The Abenaki still follow many of the same ways of life from long ago. They wear traditional clothing at festivals and big celebrations called powwows. Three traditional customs continue to be important to the Abenaki.
- 7 Storytelling—to teach children
- 8 Plants—to aid healing
- 9 Traditional songs—to give thanks

Make Connections

Highlight words that show traditional customs that are important to the Abenaki today. Connect to another text. Which of these customs helps the villagers in *The Legend of the Lady Slipper*?



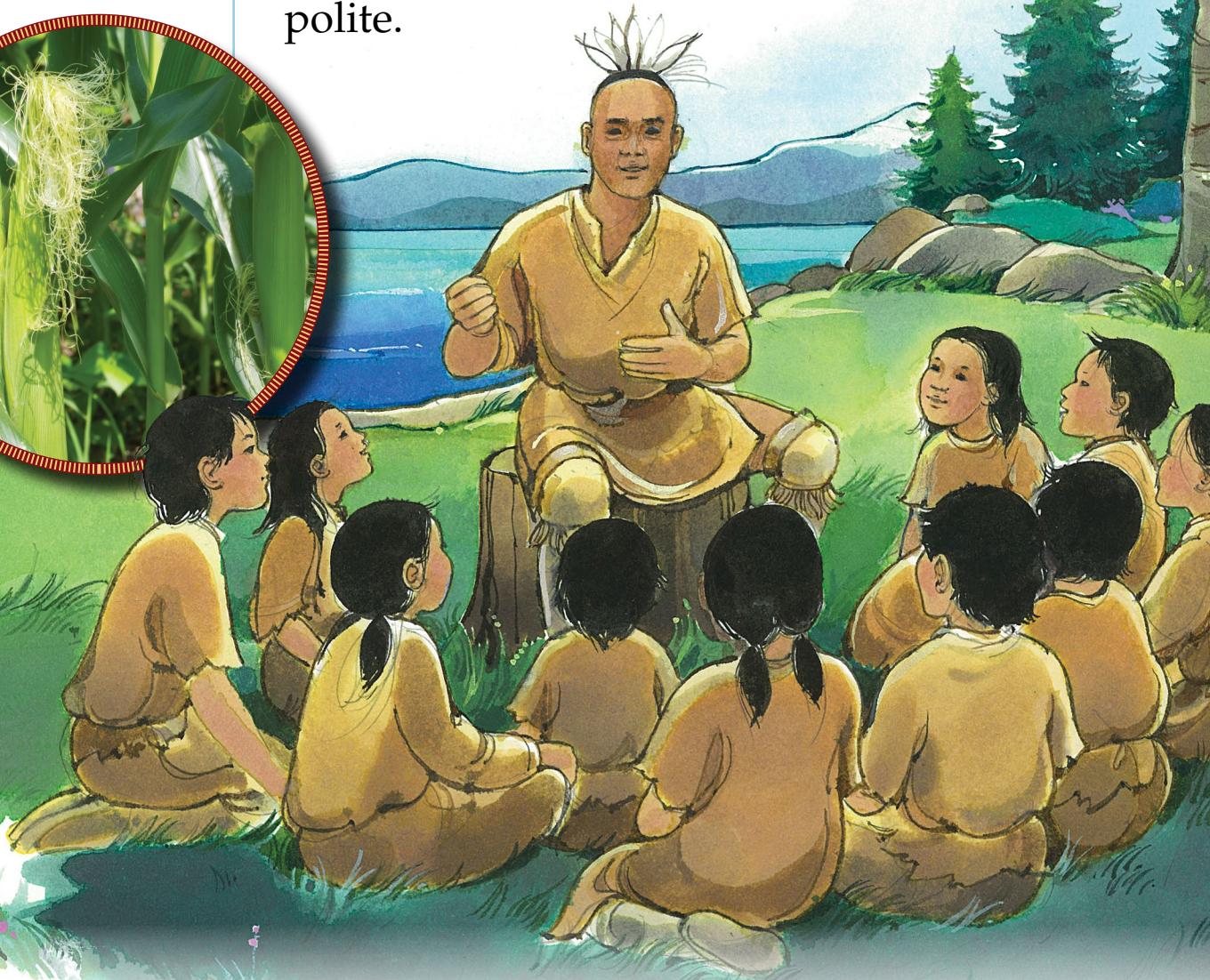


Make Connections

Highlight words that tell how the first corn plant comes about.

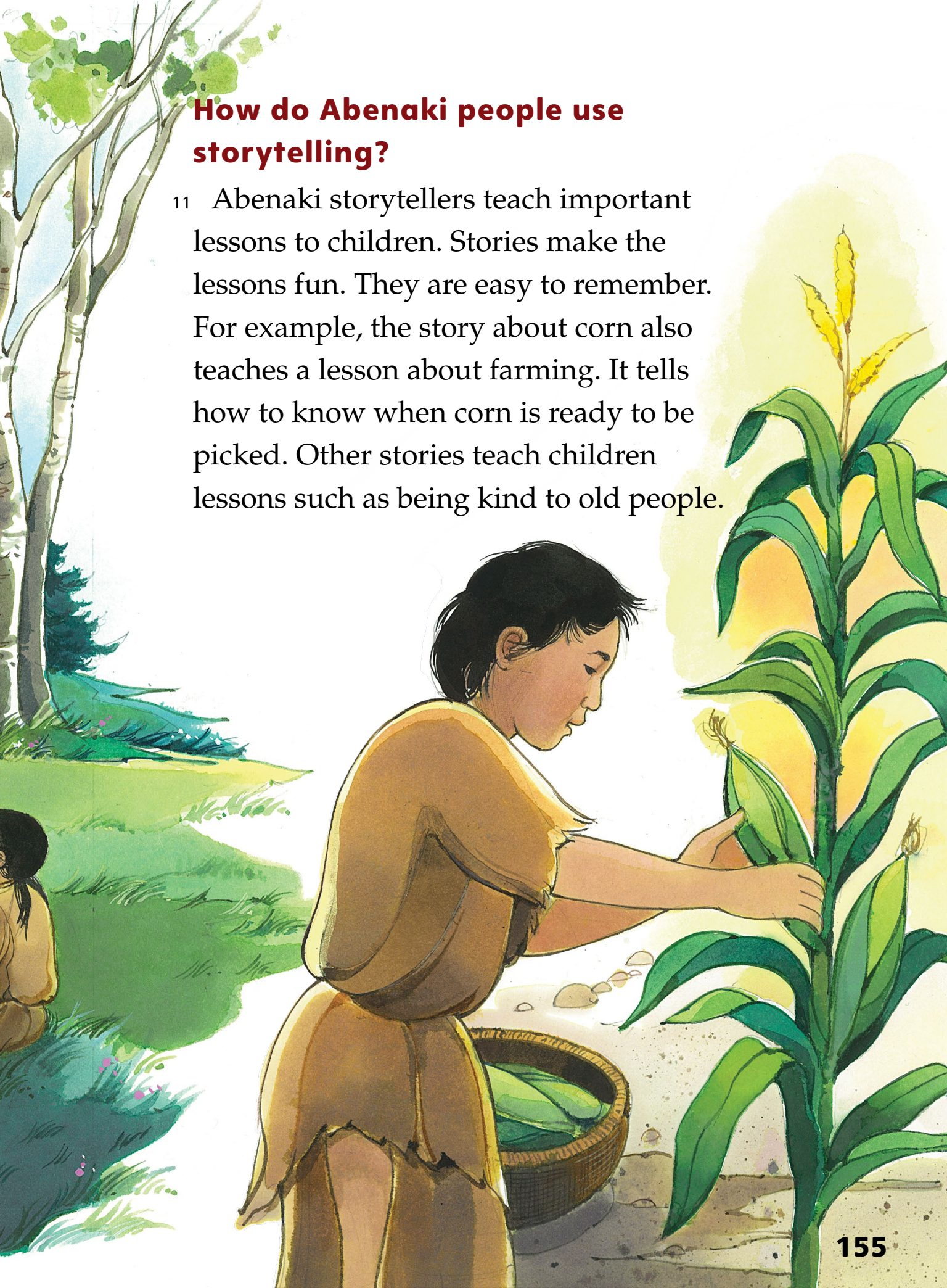
What are Abenaki stories about?

10 Many Abenaki stories are about nature. These stories tell how the natural world came to be. One story tells how corn came to the Abenaki. In the story, a beautiful golden-haired woman helps the people. She becomes the first corn plant. Other stories tell about children. They show young people the importance of being respectful and polite.



How do Abenaki people use storytelling?

- 11 Abenaki storytellers teach important lessons to children. Stories make the lessons fun. They are easy to remember. For example, the story about corn also teaches a lesson about farming. It tells how to know when corn is ready to be picked. Other stories teach children lessons such as being kind to old people.

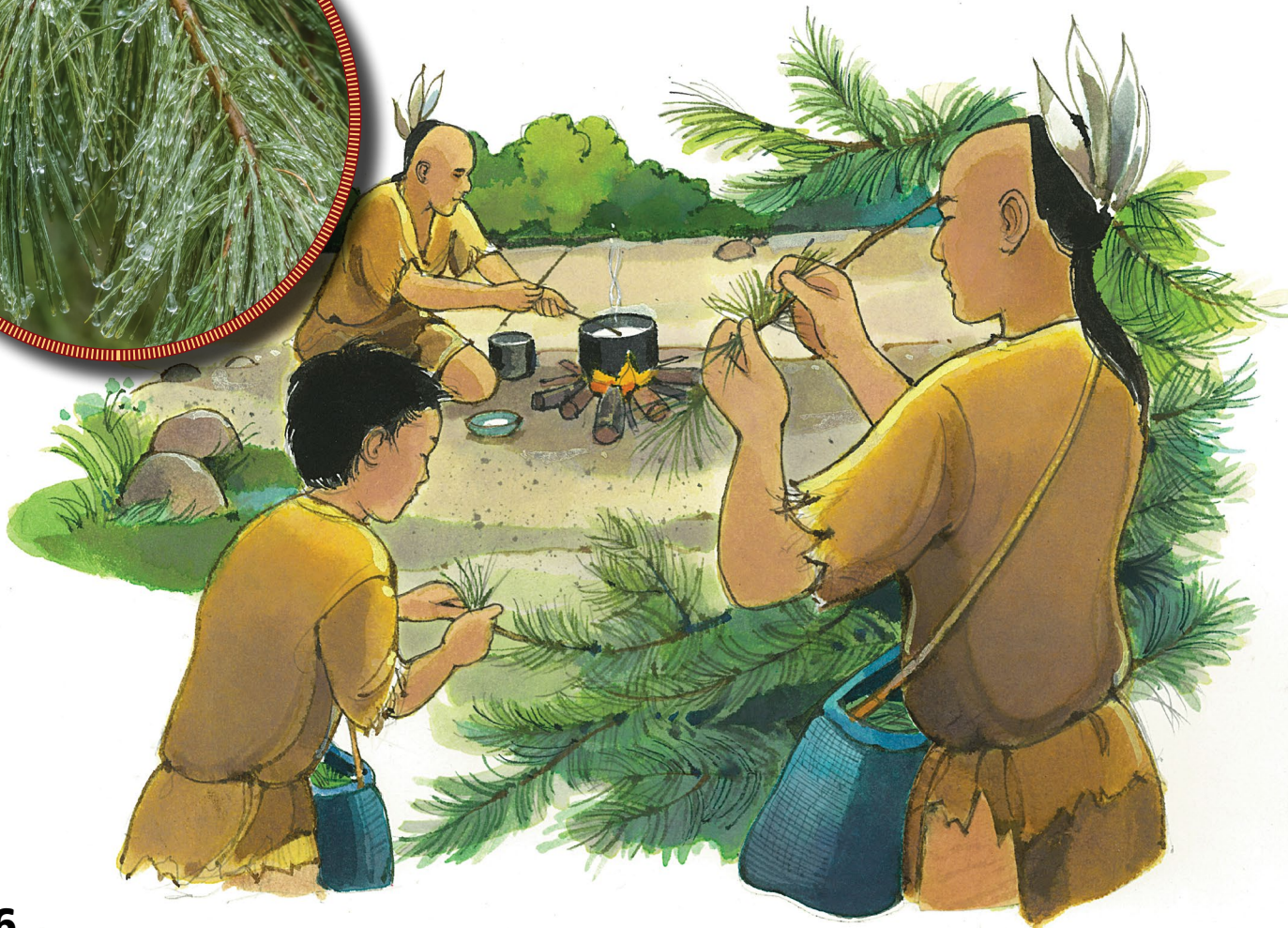




How do the Abenaki use medicine plants?

12 Long ago, the Abenaki learned to use plants as medicine. Some forest plants, such as the pine tree, helped heal sickness. Today, the Abenaki still make tea from pine needles. The tea helps cure sore throats and colds. Abenaki people use medicine plants as well as modern medicines. In fact, many modern medicines, such as aspirin, come from plants.

cure get rid of sickness





How do the Abenaki give thanks through song?

13 Nature has given the people many gifts. These gifts include food, water, and medicine plants. The Abenaki are grateful for these gifts. So, the people sing to thank nature. One song is called the “Green Corn Song.” Every year when corn is ready to be harvested, or picked, the Abenaki sing this song. It gives thanks for the gift of corn.

Discuss Author's Purpose

Underline words the author used to explain how the Abenaki show they are grateful.



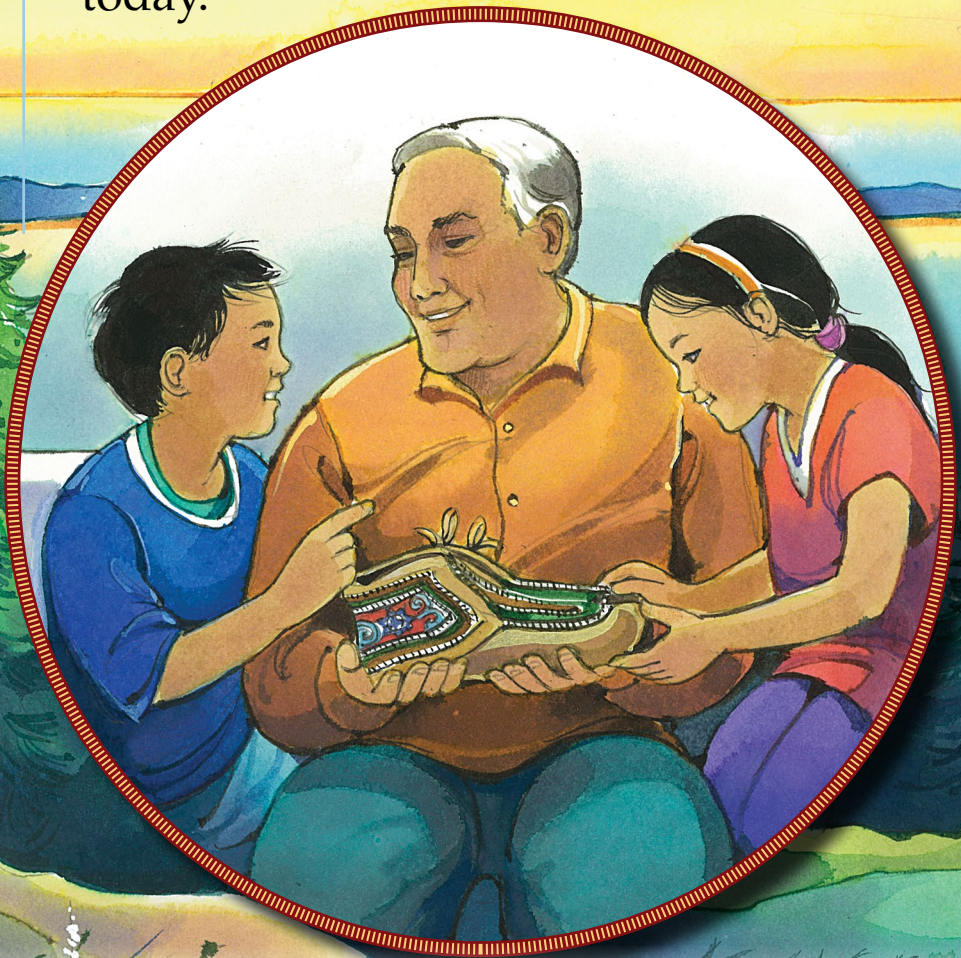


Discuss Author's Purpose

Underline words the author uses to tell the main idea of the text.

Why are the traditional ways of the Abenaki important to them today?

14 The Abenaki feel it is important to preserve their culture. That is why they still tell stories. It is why they use medicine plants and sing songs of thanks. These customs and traditions connect the Abenaki to the past. The Abenaki feel that knowing about the past helps them know about themselves today.





15 The Abenaki do not want to lose their traditions. Their culture teaches them how to behave. It teaches that it is good to be thankful. It teaches that it is good to respect nature and one's elders. Knowing their ways from long ago is a source of pride. These traditions help the Abenaki stay proud of their culture and their history.

respect show honor
to

