



THE LEGEND OF THE LADY SLIPPER

By Lise Lunge-Larsen and Margi Preus
Illustrated by Andrea Arroyo



AUDIO

Audio with
Highlighting



ANNOTATE



CLOSE READ

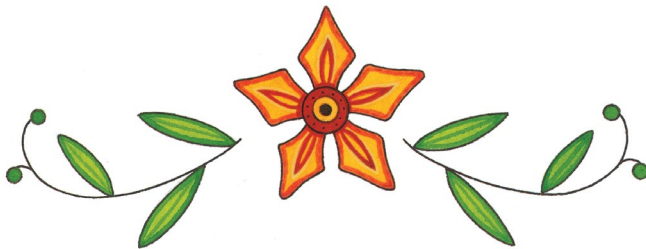


Discuss Author's Purpose

Underline the word that the author uses to show the story takes place at an unknown time in the past.

- 1 Once there was a young girl who lived with her mother and father, sister and brother, aunts and uncles, her many cousins, her grandfathers and grandmothers, and all of her people in a village among the whispering pines. Of all her family, her older brother was her favorite.

2 He was as strong as a bear, as fast as a rabbit, and as smart as a fox. Because of these traits, he was the messenger for the village. When he went on his journeys the little girl begged to go along with him, but all he would say was, “Maybe tomorrow.”



CLOSE READ



messenger someone who carries news or a message to someone else



3 Then one day a terrible disease struck. The little girl watched as, one by one, her people became ill. Her grandparents, her aunts and uncles, her sister, her mother. Even her father fell ill.



CLOSE READ

Discuss Author's Purpose

Underline words the author uses to show that the people in the story speak a language other than English.

- 4 A neighboring village had the *mash-ki-ki*, the healing herbs, they needed, but the journey was too dangerous to make in winter. It was too cold, the snow was too heavy, and between the villages lay a deep, dark lake covered with groaning ice. Such journeys were not made in *Gichi Manidoo Giizis*, the Great Spirit Moon.
- 5 Still, her brother said, yes, he would make the trip.





CLOSE READ 

Make Connections

Highlight words that show how the girl feels about her village.

- 6 But then even he became ill.
- 7 Now the little girl thought surely there was no one else to go, unless she herself were to make the journey. Maybe tomorrow, she thought. But looking at her brother, his face bright with fever, she knew she had to leave right away.

8 She found her *ma-ki-sins*, the beautifully beaded moccasins her mother had made out of deerskin, and tucked warm rabbit fur inside them. Then she slipped them on and stepped out into a raging storm.

CLOSE READ



moccasins soft leather shoes





Vocabulary in Context

You can sometimes figure out the meanings of unfamiliar words by reading words nearby.

Underline words in the text that help you understand the meaning of **plunging**.

- 9 Trees lashed about in the wind, rattling their branches. Falling snow stung her face. “*Mash-ka-wi-zin,*” it hissed, “Be strong.”
- 10 The girl bent her head and stalked like a bear into the storm. The snow tugged at her, but she charged through it, plunging into the wind.





11 All day she walked until, at dusk, she stood before the windswept lake. The slick ice lay as if asleep, silent. On the far shore the wigwams of the other village glowed warmly.

12 The little girl stepped out onto the frozen lake and the ice shuddered and woke. "*Da-daa-ta-biin,*" it rumbled, "Go quickly!"

13 So the girl ran like a rabbit, skittering and slipping.



CLOSE READ

Discuss Author's Purpose

Underline the words the author uses to show the girl is a hero to the people in the village.

admiration a feeling of great respect and approval

14 When she reached the other side, all the people rushed out to meet her. She told them her story, and when she finished, she saw their faces glowing with admiration.



15 Then an old woman swept her up and carried her into a lodge. She fed the little girl roasted venison and warm tea. She tucked her in with soft robes. The girl was almost asleep when she remembered the medicines.

16 “The *mash-ki-ki*,” she murmured.

medicines things used to make a sick person well





CLOSE READ

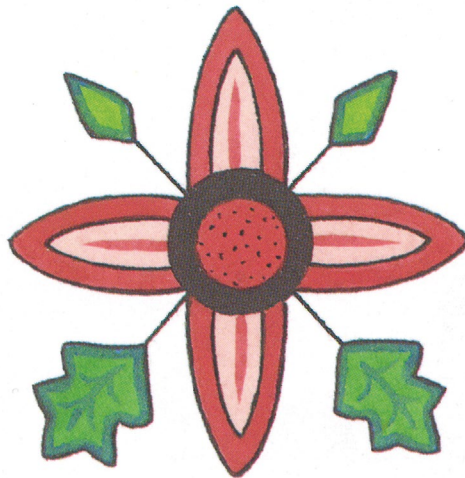


Make Connections

Highlight words that show the people in the girl's village are more important to her than her own safety.

- 17 “We will bring you and the *mash-ki-ki* to your people,” the old woman whispered. “Tomorrow. It is too dark and too cold to travel tonight.”
- 18 But when the little girl closed her eyes she saw the sad, pale faces of her family, her friends, and her brother, and she knew she must leave right away. She rose quietly, gathered up the medicine bundle, and crept out.

19 The storm had stopped. Now all was deep cold and silence, except the popping and cracking of the trees. Her eyes stung; she felt the frost gather on her cheeks. She pulled her robe tight and hurried across the lake.





CLOSE READ



Make Connections

Highlight the text that tells you what the lights are called in English. Have you heard of this before?

20 Blue and green lights flickered in the sky. She knew the lights were the spirits of the dead, gaily dressed, rising and falling in the steps of a dance. *Jii-ba-yag-nii-mi-wag*, her people called them, the northern lights.

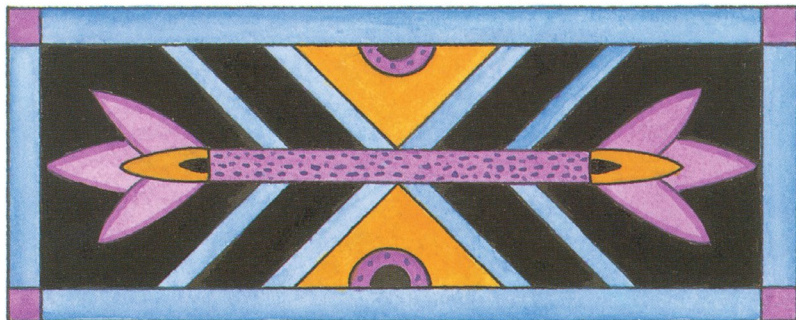


21 What if someone from her family or one of her people were to join them because she had been so slow? She left the lake and quickened her pace, keeping her eyes on the lights in the sky.



- 22 Suddenly, the snow collapsed around her and she was buried up to her arms. She kicked and punched at the snow. That was no use. She churned her little legs as fast as she could, as if to run out of the snow. That only dug her in deeper.
- 23 Above her the dancing spirits leapt and spun. Maybe she would be the next one among them, she thought. She fell back, exhausted.

exhausted very
tired





24 “*Nib-waa-kaan!*” the snow around her whispered, “Be wise!” Yes, she must be smart like the fox who *thinks* his way around the trap.

25 She lay back to think and felt the snow relax its grip. She lay further back and it let go a little more. Slowly, she wriggled and turned, paddled and swam her way out of the snow.

26 “Ho-whah!” she sang out. Her feet were free!

CLOSE READ 

**Discuss
Author’s
Purpose**

Underline the text that shows who gives the girl advice.

27 But then, "*Gaa-wiin!* Oh, no!" she cried. Her feet were bare and cold. Her moccasins were gone, buried deep in the drift. She dug in the snow, but it was too soft and loose. She wiped her nose on her sleeve and continued on barefoot.





28 With the very first step, icy crystals cut into her flesh and her feet began to bleed. In every footprint bright red drops of blood mingled with the white snow. Still, she stumbled ahead until dawn, when she reached the edge of her village. There she called out before sinking into the snow.

CLOSE READ



Make Connections

Highlight the text that shows what the girl does to get the medicine to the people in her village. What does that help you understand about the girl?



CLOSE READ

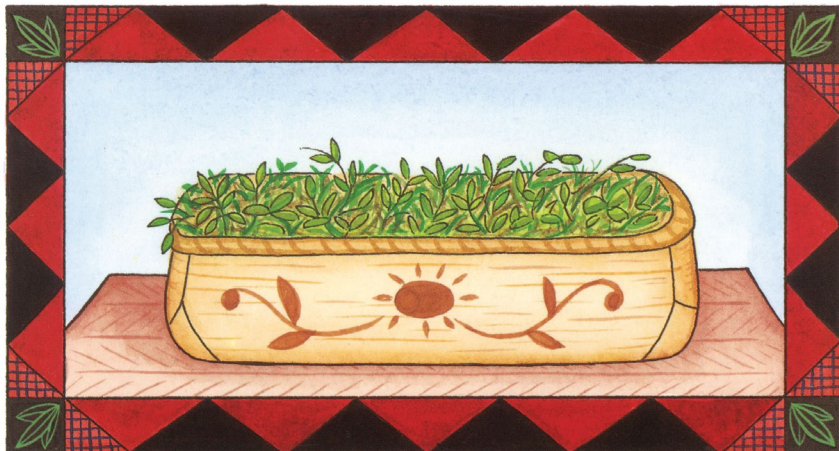


Make Connections

Highlight the text that shows how the people from the village feel about the girl.

29 The people from her village—even some of the sick ones—ran out when they heard her cry. They carried her back to her lodge and wrapped her swollen and bleeding feet in thick, warm deerskins.

30 Because of the *mash-ki-ki*, the people were healed. The little girl remained weak for a long, long time, but soon after the snow melted, she too recovered.





CLOSE READ



Discuss Author's Purpose

Underline the text that shows what the girl and her brother find when they search for her moccasins.

- 31 When the forest turned green, she and her brother went to search for her lost moccasins. What they found there filled them with wonder.
- 32 On the very spot where she had lost her moccasins and wherever she had stepped with her bleeding feet, beautiful new flowers grew. They were pink and white and shaped just like the little moccasins the girl had worn on her journey.



33 The Ojibwe people named the new flower *ma-ki-sin waa-big-waan*, which means the moccasin flower. Today it is also called the lady slipper. The people gave the little girl her name, too, “*Wah-Oh-Nay*,” or “Little Flower,” because although she was as strong as a bear, fast as a rabbit, and smart as a fox, she was also as lovely and rare as a wild spring flower.

Fluency

Practice reading with fluency. Read aloud paragraphs 14–19 several times with a partner. Read the dialogue with feeling, or prosody. Read in a different voice for the old woman and the little girl to show their points of view.

