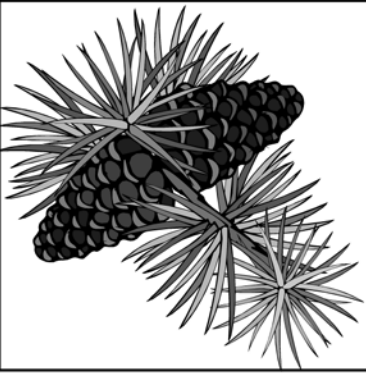

The Medicine Man

Wenonah waited for me on the path to the lake every day after our first meeting. I was so happy to have found a friend my own age and I looked forward to our daily encounters. Although at first we couldn't speak each other's language, it didn't mean that we couldn't communicate with each other. Using simple hand gestures and much finger pointing, over the weeks that followed I gradually started to learn a number of words in the Mohawk language and Wenonah, who was a very quick learner, was soon able to speak English in simple sentences.



It was on our way to the lake to fetch water one day that I stumbled and fell, dropping my wooden pail. Wenonah thought that I had simply lost my footing on the slippery, snow-covered surface of the path and she gave a little laugh at my carelessness. "Not graceful like deer in the forest," she said with a smile on her face. Her smile disappeared quickly however when I did not pick myself up right away.

It was only with her help that I finally managed to get to my feet, but walking became more and more difficult for me. I felt exhausted. Every muscle in my body ached and my head hurt so much that I had to lie down on the path and rest a while longer. I could see that Wenonah was becoming concerned about my condition.

"You stay," she ordered and then she ran off down the path. In a few minutes she returned with her father and grandfather following closely behind. When it was plain to see that I was not going to be able to stand and walk, Wenonah's father bent down and picked me up. He was a big man and it was not much of an effort for him to carry me back to my house.

There was a look of concern on my father's face as he opened the door and motioned for Wenonah's father to place me on the bed next to the small window at the far end of our shanty. "Sarah fall, she sick," said Wenonah. My mother helped me take off my winter coat along with my boots, hat and scarf and it was only then that she noticed the bruises on my legs. "How long have you had these bruises, Sarah?" she asked.

"Well I noticed them a few weeks ago, but I thought nothing of them. It's not serious is it Mother?"

"I should say it is," was her reply, "I think you may have scurvy."

I had no idea what scurvy was, but when I saw the tears in my mother's eyes, I began to realize how serious my situation was; and apparently, it was obvious to Wenonah's grandfather, a medicine man, how sick I was. He wasted no time on words or explanations. He quickly left our house and was back in just a few minutes carrying a few handfuls of pine needles and bark. He took an iron pot from the hearth and filled it with water and placed it over the fire. When the pot started to boil he closed his eyes, said a few words which I didn't understand and placed the pine needles and pine bark into the pot. A few minutes later he poured the liquid into a cup and handed it to my mother, motioning for her to put the cup to my lips so that I could drink the foul smelling tea.

My father raced to my side and stopped my mother from giving me the drink. "We don't



know what that will do to her," he said to my mother. "It could kill her."

"I don't know what this is," replied my mother, "but I do know that if we don't do something, Sarah will most certainly die of scurvy. Have faith in these people William, let her take the drink."

A few days later I was up and around and feeling like my old self. The tea had worked and my family and I were grateful once again for the help we received from our new friends.

Follow Up Activities

1. Give three reasons why Wenonah became concerned about Sarah when they were walking to the lake.

2. Explain how Wenonah's grandfather helped Sarah.

3. Tell how Sarah and Wenonah were able to communicate with each other.

4. Would you like to have a friend like Wenonah? Explain your answer.

Unscramble the following words from the story.

5. HEFTC _____ 6. RATEW _____ 7. DACHE _____



8. Listed below are eight sentences which tell about things that happened in the story. These sentences are not in the correct order. Study the sentences, then write them down carefully, one on each line, in the order in which they happened in the story.

- (a) Sarah's mother began to cry.
- (b) The tea made Sarah better.
- (c) Wenonah and Sarah met on the path to the lake every day.
- (d) Wenonah brought her father and grandfather to help Sarah.
- (e) Sarah's mother thought Sarah had scurvy.
- (f) Wenonah's grandfather made a bitter tea for Sarah to drink.
- (g) One day Sarah fell on the path and couldn't get home.
- (h) Wenonah learned to speak a little English.

A noun is a word that names a person, place or a thing. **Nurse** is a noun because it names a person. **School** is a noun because it names a place. **Chair** is a noun because it names a thing. Study the sentences below and circle every noun you see in them. The first one is done for you.

9. The (girls) met on the (path) to the (lake) every (day).

10. One day Sarah fell and dropped her pail.

11. Sarah could not walk home because every muscle in her body ached.

12. Wenonah ran to get her father and grandfather to help Sarah get home.

13. A bitter tea made Sarah well again.

14. The word "exhausted" is used in the story. List two things that would make you feel exhausted. The answer has been started for you.

I get exhausted when



15. Find the following sentence in the story and explain what it means. "He wasted no time on words or explanations." _____

16. If you were asked to choose another title for the story *The Medicine Man*, which one of the following would you choose? Circle it and explain why you think it would be the best choice. (a) Learning a New Language (b) Powerful Medicine (c) Falling in the Forest (d) Helpful Friends

17. Why do you think that Sarah's father was so worried about letting her drink the tea that Wenonah's grandfather made for her?

18. In the story, Sarah's mother thinks that Sarah has scurvy. Explain what scurvy is. You may use a dictionary if necessary to help you with your explanation.

19. In the story, we are told that Wenonah's grandfather is a medicine man. Explain what a medicine man is. You may use a dictionary if necessary to help you with your explanation.

