

# Thanks to the Animals

Allen Sockabasin

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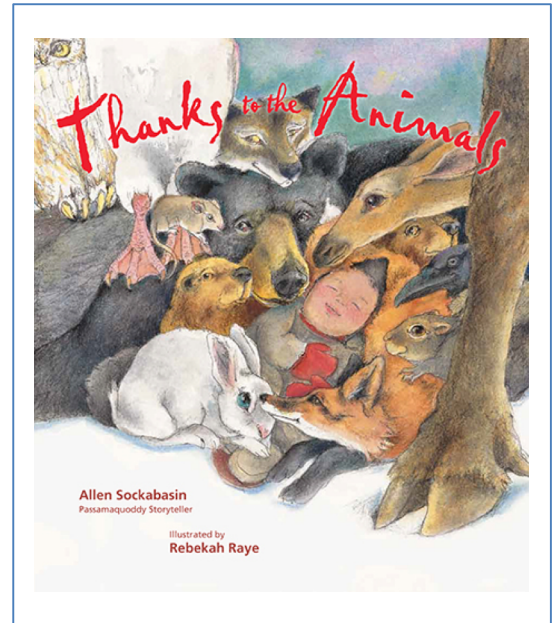
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9 x 10, 36 pages, color illustrations

Children/ Native American; PreK-Grade 3

## Summary

Little Zoo Sap and his family are moving from their summer home on the coast to their winter home in the deep woods. Unnoticed, the youngster tumbles off the end of the sled. Alone, cold, and frightened, Zoo Sap cries and attracts the forest animals. Beginning with beaver and ending with the great bald eagle, the animals rush to protect the baby and shelter him from the cold until his father returns.



*Thanks To the Animals* will lead to discussions about

- Giving "thanks" to others. Why it matters and ways to "give thanks".
- Animals of the forests of New England and the Canadian Maritimes.
- Storytelling traditions and customs in families.
- Wintertime activities.
- Language and its importance to families and cultures.
- Passamaquoddy (or all the Wabanaki) people today-who are they? Where are they?

## Before You Read

### Background

*Thanks To the Animals* can serve as a part of a curriculum that seeks to introduce elementary aged children to the traditions of Wabanaki tribes of northern New England and the Canadian Maritime provinces: the Abanaki, Penobscots, Passamaquoddy, Maliseets, and Micmacs. In particular, this story serves as a powerful introduction to

traditional Native American attitudes towards animals and the natural world, but it also shows a family working together, playing, worrying, and celebrating. In the Glossary teachers will find a Passamaquoddy pronunciation guide for the animals listed in the story. Listen to Allen read the story in Passamaquoddy on our website or scan the QR code in the back of the book.

### Access Prior Knowledge

- How does your family prepare for winter today?
- What kind of animals do you see around your home?

## After You Read

### Activity

#### Ball and Triangle Game—Make a traditional Native American toy

- Objectives: Learn how fun toys were made from "found" materials in the woods.
- Background: This toy was made from a stiff piece of birch bark cut into a triangular shape. It had a hole in the center just a little larger than a "ball" made of animal skin tied around some stuffing. The ball was attached to a string fastened to one corner of the triangle. To play the game, you hold the triangle by one corner, toss the ball in the air, and try to get it to fall through the hole.
- What Is Needed: Birch bark should be left on birch trees these days, but you can make this game out of a triangle of cardboard, some string, and a soft, small ball that you can tie the string around (so that it won't slip off).
- How to Do It:
  - Cut triangles from cardboard, about a foot long on each side.
  - You can decorate the cardboard with paint so that it looks like birch bark, or you can paint it with designs.
  - Cut a hole in the center of the triangle that is a little larger than the ball, and then cut a small hole in one corner to fasten the string to.
  - Fasten the other end of the string (about 15 inches long) to the ball.
- Next: Try the game! Take turns if you don't have one for each child.

#### More Activities:

- Create a map showing the Passamaquoddy homeland.
- Do a mural showing the animals in *Thanks To The Animals*.
- Practice saying the animal names in Passamaquoddy—you can listen to Allen Sockabasin reading the story aloud in Passamaquoddy using the QR code in the back of the book, and follow along with the words in the book.
- Do a play of *Thanks To The Animals*.

## For Further Discussion

- Why is preserving a language important to families and cultures?
- What kind of measures can be taken in your community to spread the importance of indigenous languages?

## For Further Reading

**A Caribou Alphabet by Mary Beth Owens (Tilbury House, 1988)**

**Kunu's Basket by Lee DeCora (Tilbury House, 2011)**

**Remember Me: Tomah Joseph's Gift to Franklin Roosevelt (Tilbury House, 2015)**

**Thanks to the Animals by Allen Sockabasin (Tilbury house, 2005)**

**Unsettled Past, Unsettled Future: The Story of Maine Indians by Neil Rolde (Tilbury House, 2004)**

**An Upriver Passamaquoddy by Allen Sockagasin (Passamaquoddy) (Tilbury House, 2007)** Allen describes growing up on his reservation in Maine. For young adults / adults.

## Internet Resources

### **Maine Indian Tribes and Languages**

Site lists tribes of Maine with geographical and historical information

<http://www.native-languages.org/maine.htm>

### **Native American Rights Fund**

Site for the organization that has provided legal assistance to Indian tribes, organizations, and individuals nationwide

<http://www.narf.org>