

ELA Common Core Content Standards:

Reading Standards for Literature 1, 2, 3, 7
 Reading Standards for Foundational Skills 1,
 Writing Standards 2
 Speaking and Listening Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
 Language Standards 1, 2, 6

Estimated duration: 45 min.

Optional Karuk Language: 45 min., with
 suggestions for follow-up lesson activities

World Language Content Standards: The optional activities, lesson plan and materials found in the **Araráhíh – Karuk Language** supplements align with *Stage I: Content, Communication, Cultures, Structures, and Settings* categories adopted by the California State Dept. of Education.

Goal: Students will develop knowledge and understanding of traditional Karuk land-related values and special relationships to land that form the foundation for cultural identity and sense of place on earth. The story of the Tan Oak Acorn will introduce students to the characteristics of a traditional Karuk origin story. It will also help them recognize the different types of acorns found in our region, their identifying features, about why local tribes prefer to eat the tan oak acorn discussed in Lesson 3.

Teacher Background: The Karuk way of life is known to us through origin stories that have been told and re-told, heard and re-heard for countless generations. Listening to the stories together, we again re-imagine “the times before” human existence, “when the animals, plants, rocks were people.” These First People are called the **ikxaréeyav**¹ (or often in English, “Spirit People”). The stories are dramatic retellings of the ancient actions and interactions of these First Peoples. The Karuk, like most indigenous peoples, traditionally only tell stories when it is cold enough for snow to be in the high mountains. Please respect this tribal code.

These First People understood their responsibility to figure out how the yet-to-come humans should live.² Hearing the stories, we learn that they fulfilled that responsibility through repeated sequences of contemplation, discussion, inspiration, and both collaborative and random experimentation. As human re-hearers, we inherit the same ancient responsibilities of the First People, each of us in our own way trying to figure out “how people should be living.” We also inherit their time-proven methods of proceeding as well.

¹ Pronounced something like “ik- ha-RAY-yav” with the “h” in the second syllable gargled like the Spanish “j” and the final “v” sounding something between the English pronunciation of “v” and “w.” Please refer to the Karuk Pronunciation Guide.

² This figuring of the **ikxaréeyavs** has been called “laying down the world.”

Rehearing the stories, the lives of the First People function as thought-templates for the listeners, as examples (both good and bad) of how to think about our place and our conduct in the world. Káruk multi-species storytelling provides us with a shared imagined background for understanding complex relationships between ourselves and the many other creatures with which we still live today.

Origin Stories usually carry a great deal of cultural weight, sometimes melodramatically so. But many of the stories bear that weight lightly with the help of ironic humor.

The survival and flourishing of American Indian Peoples depends on their ability to know, retain, make use of, and pass on their special connections with their homelands. Traditions, origin stories, and prayers that provide a sense of tribal uniqueness and identity originate in special places, from land-related incidents or from natural gifts of the land. Additionally, Tribal nations were, and to differing extents, still are supported and sustained by their lands.

Theme/Big Idea:	We All Take Care of Each Other
Big Questions:	Who are we? Where are we? How did we get here?
Vocabulary:	humanity, humans, scornful, prepare, project, lobe
Karuk Vocabulary:	ikxaréeyav (Spirit or First People), chími (fine, alright), kéevriik (old woman), uknîi (invocation of an origin story), kupánnakanakana (closing of an origin story), pakéevriik , and chufnîivkach .

Materials:

Special item for discussion circle, e.g. acorn, tree leaf (included in Kindergarten Realia Set)

New Caps, illustration by Bari Talley (included)

Story of Tan Oak Acorn, by Lisa Hillman, combining versions told by Phoebe Maddux, Phoebe's mother, and Mary Ike between 1928 and 1930 (included)

Vocabulary Black Line Master (included)

Acorn Maidens, worksheet (included)

Story of Tan Oak Acorn, sequencing worksheets (included)

Optional Materials: Araráhih – Karuk Language. Integrated Lesson Plan includes:

chufnîivkach, photo (included here, and in the Culture Cards Box)

pakéevriik, photo (included here, and in the Culture Cards Box)

chufnivkachpíkva, the Fly Story (included, and sound file included in Kindergarten DVD)

Preparation: Write the following sentence on the board: "i like story." Copy worksheets for each student, if needed, and **Vocabulary** Black Line Master for document reader. Prepare to display the New Caps Illustration to the entire class while reading aloud.

Discussion Circle: Tell students that today we will continue learning about who we are and where we came from. Explain that we often learn about ourselves through stories: parents or relations may talk about something you did when you were a baby; your guardians may talk about a flood or fire that happened close to home long ago. These are some of the ways that we learn about ourselves, but we

also learn from traditional stories. Ask: “If you agree that stories help us learn, say, ‘[hãã](#)’ or ‘yes’!”

Daily Language Practice

Have students correct the following sentence: i like story

Preparing to read: Tell students that now’s the proper time to tell origin stories. They will hear a version of a traditional Karuk story called the Story of Tan Oak Acorn. Tell them that all traditional stories are told just a little bit differently, depending on the storyteller and on the context, but they are only told during the cold months when one can see snow on the high mountain tops.

The story they will hear is called a creation story, which is a very old story that helps explain why things are the way they are. Creation stories are passed down from our elders and it is important to learn these stories so that the students can pass them on to their own children and grandchildren one day.

Let students know that when you finish reading the story, you will all talk about the sequence of events, which is to decide what happened first in the story, what happened second, next, and so on until the end of the story.

Vocabulary and **Phonics Activities:** Please refer to the **Sound Game: Best Practices Vocabulary Direct Instruction Procedure** (included in Lesson Binder) to guide the following vocabulary building activities.

Vocabulary: Explicitly teach this vocabulary. Project the Vocabulary Worksheet with a document reader for the class to see. With a pointer, read from left to right and prompt the students to guess what the vocabulary word is that is written in bold. Ask them to guess what the word means, and correct them if needed.

humanity – (n.) people considered as a group; the human race.

humans – (n.) people

scornful – (adj.) showing disrespect toward (someone or something)

prepare – (v.) to get ready

project – (v.) to stick out

Reading/Listening Activity: Explain to the students that the story you are going to read to them now is an adaptation from three versions of the same story. Two were told in 1929 in the Karuk Language by Phoebe Maddux to J.P. Harrington. Harrington wrote down Phoebe’s Káruk words, and then Phoebe translated each story into English for him. The third version was told by Mary Ike in 1939, to a man named E.W. Gifford. Whether or not Mary Ike used her Káruk language first is unknown.

Display the **New Caps** illustration and read “The Acorn Maidens” aloud to the class in English, pointing to the pictures of the acorns as they come up in the story: 1) black oak acorn, 2) tan oak acorn, 3) white oak acorn, and 4) live oak acorn (Caution: the maidens are not illustrated in this order. From left to right, they are white, live, black, and tan oak maidens).

Comprehension:

Ask students what they think about the story. Encourage students to raise their hands before speaking, and tell them that you will pass the special item (e.g. acorn or leaf) to the student whose turn it is to speak.

Ask them what they thought about the way White Oak and Live Oak acorns acted. Describe this behavior as being “scornful.” Ask them the following questions to gauge their comprehension:

- Why these acorns were scornful of the other acorns?
- Do you think this is a good way to behave?
- What do you think about the way tan oak acorn acted?
- How would you feel if someone laughed at the way you completed a project or assignment?
- What were the consequences were for the acorns’ behavior?

Examples responses:

- Tan oak acorn – has a rough cap but is the favorite of the people because it tastes the best.
- Live oak acorn – has a beautiful cap, but it’s hard to pound and makes a black, bitter soup.
- Black oak acorn – has a long and funny looking cap and doesn’t taste quite as good as Tan Oak Acorn (extra information: it is the acorn of choice for the Shasta and many other California Indians and is used by the local tribes to make bread).
- White oak acorn – has a nice cap and but no one likes to eat it much (extra information: is the earliest acorn to ripen. Although it is hard to grind up, people used to eat it when they were very hungry after a long winter).

Comprehension Focus: Sequence of Events: Tell students that now they will have to recall the story, and you will ask questions about the sequence of events. This is important so that they will remember how to retell the story one day.

- What happened first? (The Spirit people told the acorn maidens to hurry and make their caps)
- Who finished their caps? (white and live oak)
- What did Black Oak Maiden do? (She put her cooking basket on her head)
- What did Tan Oak Maiden do? (She turned her unfinished cap inside out and wore it like that)
- Why did White and Live Oak Maidens laugh at the other maidens? (They laughed because the others looked silly, and perhaps they laughed scornfully because they felt superior for having completed the task well)
- What did Tan Oak Acorn Maiden wish for? (She wished she would be the best tasting acorn)
- Did her wish come true? (Yes!)

Activity: Students should color the pictures and put the pictures in the correct sequence. This can be stapled into a booklet that students can take home. They can also use this to remember how the story goes if you choose to have them practice telling the story themselves. This would be a great addition to a school-sponsored event!

Optional: Teach the appended **Araráhíh – Karuk Language** lesson.

New Caps

Illustration by Bari Gayle Morehead Talley



Story of Tan Oak Acorn

Adapted from versions told by
Phoebe Maddux, Phoebe's mother, and Mary Ike between 1928 and 1930

A long time ago, before humans were in this world, there were the First People. The First People are sometimes called Spirit People, since they were here before mankind came into existence. The acorns used to be First People, too, and one day the other First People told them that soon they were going to turn into different types of acorns. They said: "When you turn, you must be ready and have your caps prepared and looking very pretty." Oh, how the acorn maidens started to work! They began to weave their hats.

All of a sudden, the First People told them, "Hurry! It's time for you to leave now. Humanity is here."

"Oh!" some of them cried. Black Oak had not finished her cap yet, so she picked up the big bowl basket she used for cooking and put it on her head. Tan Oak hadn't finished her basket cap either – she hadn't trimmed off the projecting strands of root and beargrass from the inside of her cap. She thought, "What should I do?" She decided to turn it inside out and wear it with the strands sticking out on top.

Both White Oak Acorn and Live Oak Acorn had finished their caps: they were beautiful and all trimmed. These two laughed scornfully at the other two maidens, whose caps weren't nearly as nice as theirs. "Maybe we should leave you behind!" they teased.

Tan Oak Acorn became angry with them and jealous of their caps. When it was time to paint themselves before dropping down to humanity, Tan Oak Acorn could only bring herself to paint her face a little bit. Black Oak Acorn painted herself proudly with stripes.

The Tan Oak Acorn maiden prayed that humans would not use the other acorns much, and then thought to herself: "I wish that I be the good acorn soup, the kind humans appreciate the most – even though my cap is not neatly trimmed."

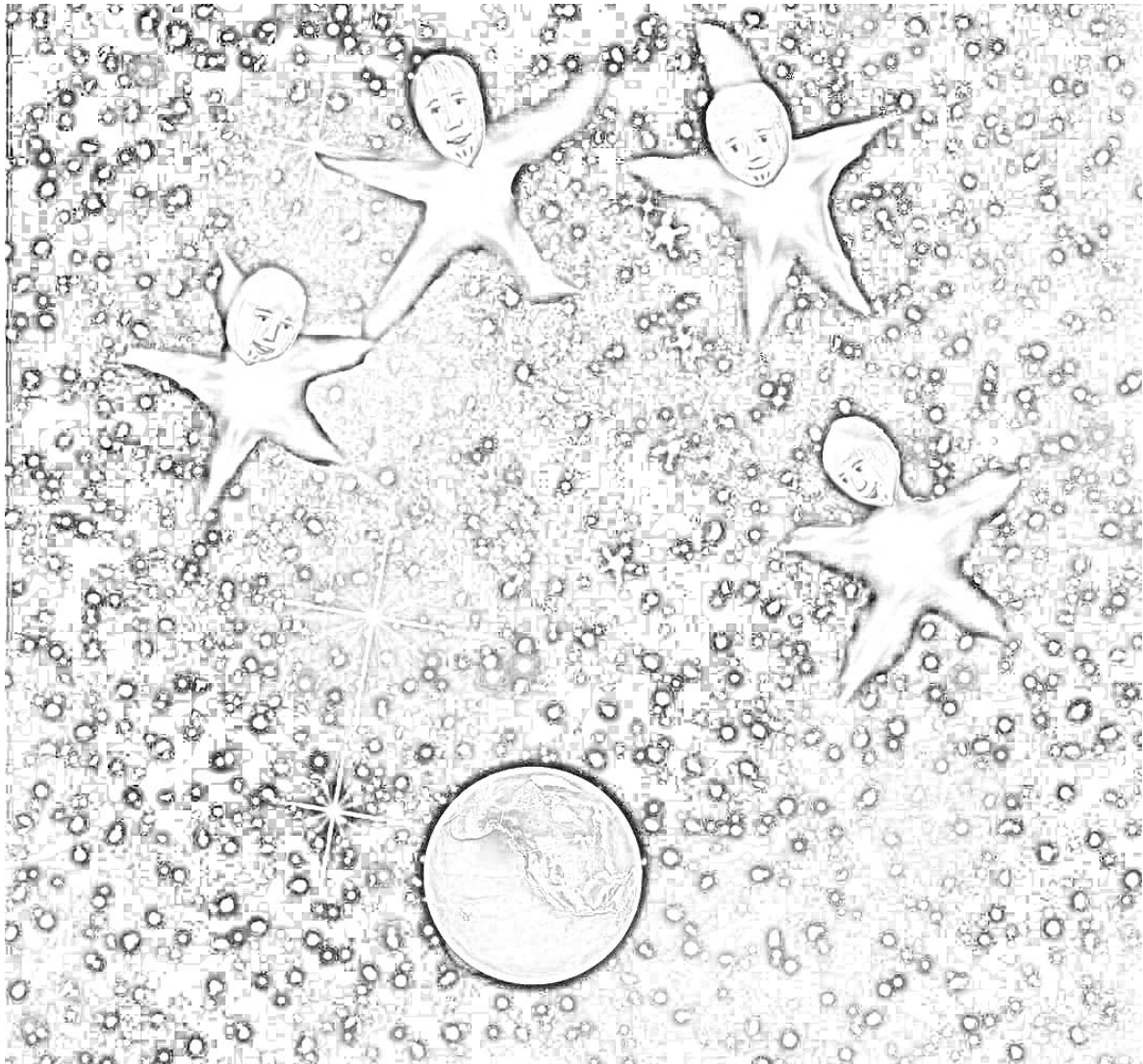
When it was time to leave, all of the acorn maidens turned their faces into their caps and tumbled down to the earth. This is what happened a long time ago, and to this day, people like to eat Tan Oak Acorns the most.

Wise words: Pick up the white-faced acorns and leave behind the ones with black faces or worm holes in them!

Name _____

Story of Oaks Sequencing Worksheets

The Spirit people told the acorn maidens to hurry and make their caps and get ready to go to earth.

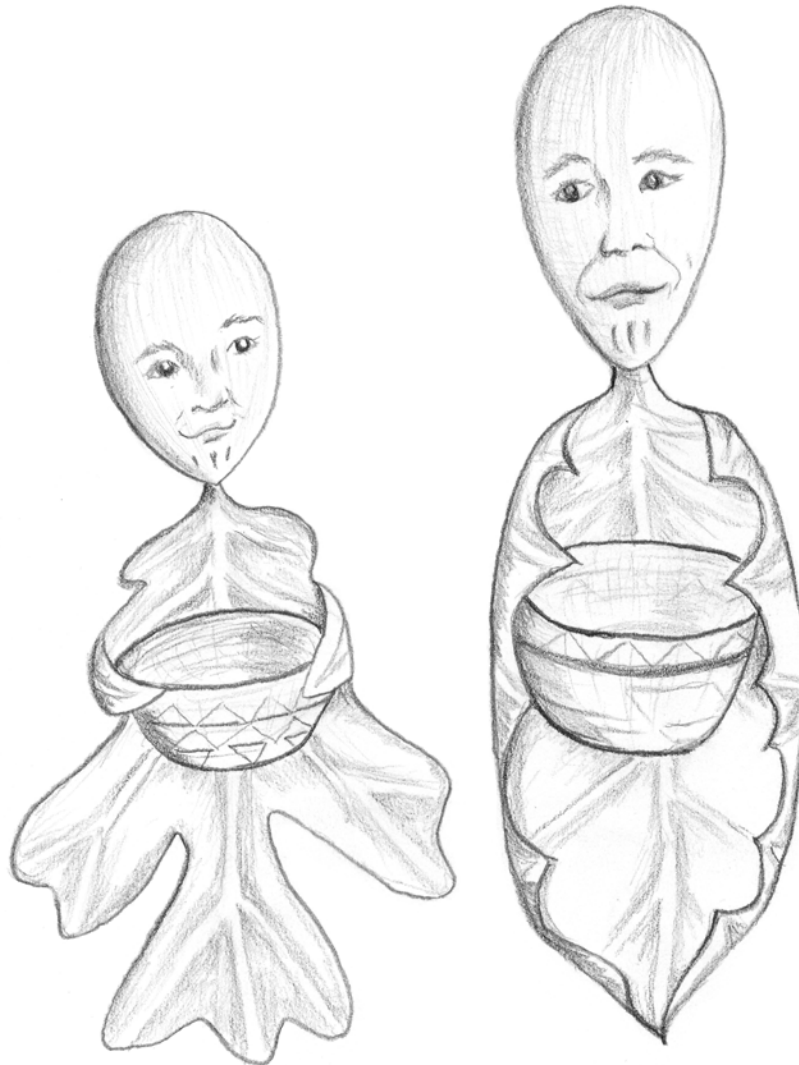


Hurry!

Name _____

Story of Oaks Sequencing Worksheets

Who finished their caps?



White and Live Oak
finished.

Name _____

Story of Tan Oak Acorns Sequencing Worksheets

What did Black Oak Maiden do?



She wore a cooking
basket.

Name _____

Story of Tan Oak Acorns Sequencing Worksheets

What did Tan Oak Maiden do?

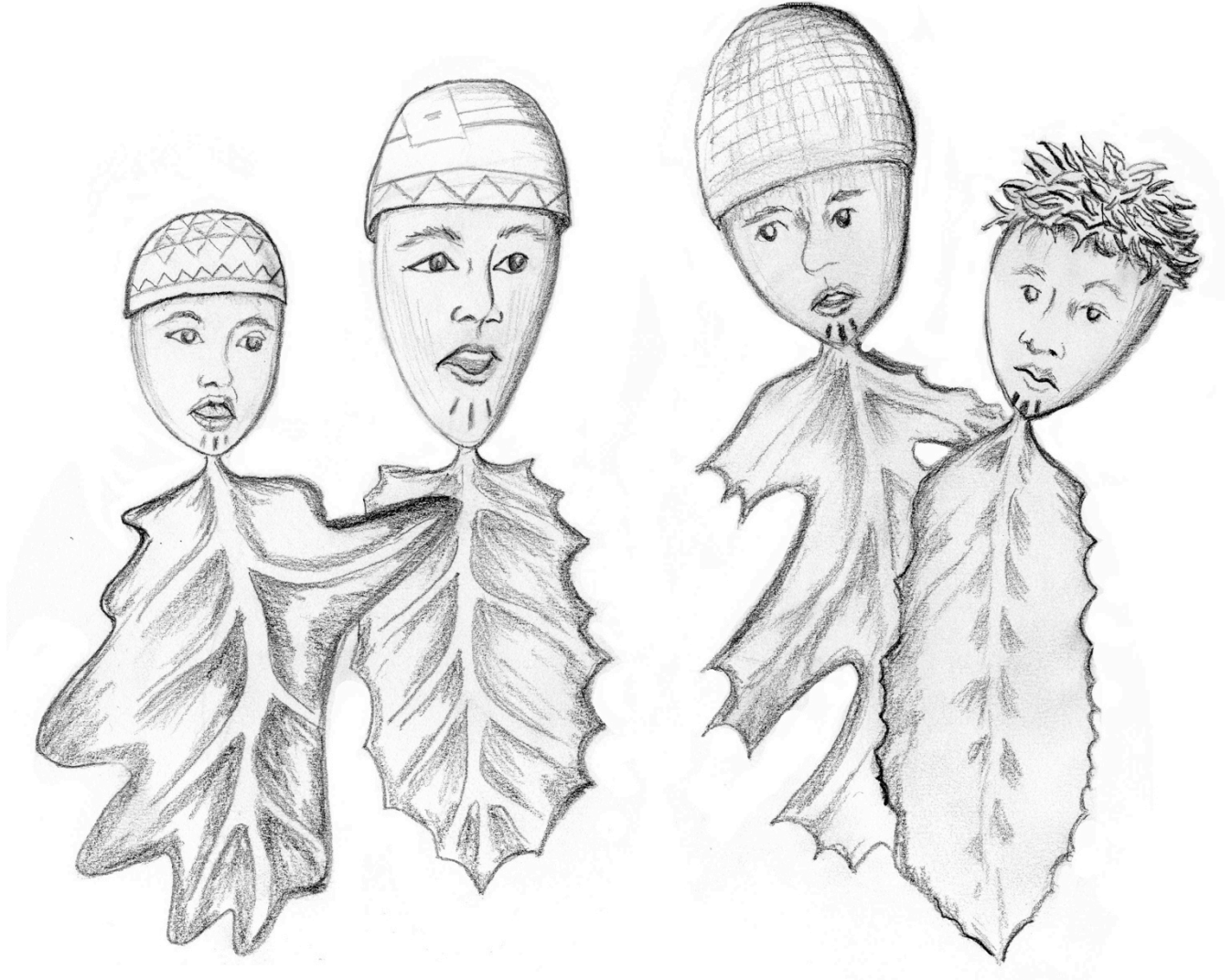


She turned her cap
inside out.

Name _____

Story of Tan Oak Acorns Sequencing Worksheets

How do White and Live Oak act?



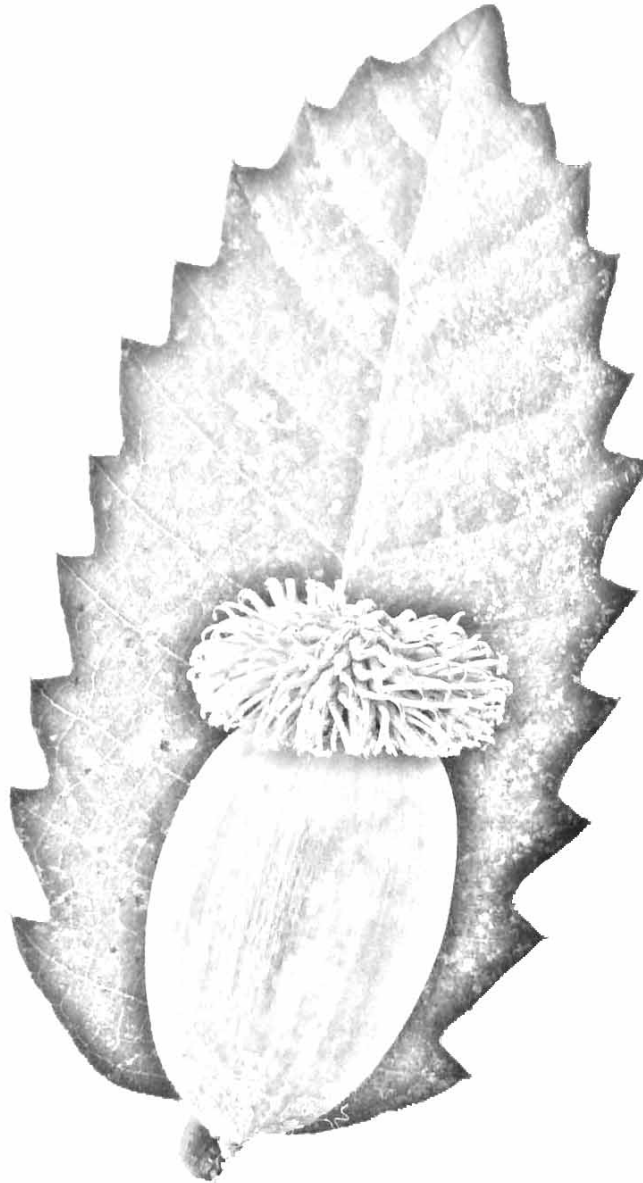
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They laughed scornfully.

Name _____

Story of Tan Oak Acorns Sequencing Worksheets

Does Tan Oak Acorn's Wish Come True?



Yes, I am the best!



chufnîivkach



kéevriik

Araráhih: Karuk Language

Cultural Background: Explain to students that origin stories, or creation stories, are very special. Ask them if they know why (Possible answers: They tell us about who we are and what we should do. We are reminded of the time before humans came into existence, when the animals, plants, rocks, etc. were people; they are only told when you can see snow in the high country).

When students give a correct answer, nod enthusiastically with: “**Hǎǎ!**” Tell them that that means “yes” and ask them if they know what the Karuk word for “no” is. If they guess it wrong, shake your head sadly and say: “**puuhara.**” Let them know that that means “no.”

Tell them that most of the time, traditional storytellers begin with a word that means: “and so it is.” Ask them if they know what it is, and respond with “**hǎǎ**” or “**puuhara**” as above. (**uknîi**). Tell them that when a storyteller says this word, it signals that everyone should be quiet and not mess around: they should pay attention. To show respect, they should remain still until the storyteller says the closing word: **kupánnakanakana**.

Ask them if they like to hear stories. Tell them that most people do, and so when someone begs for a story when a storyteller doesn’t feel like telling one, they might tell a story like this one about **chufnîivkach**. Hold up the picture of a fly and repeat the word two more times, or until the students begin to repeat the word with you aloud.

Now they are going to hear that story that (*holding up the Cultural Card depicting old women*) the **kéevriik** tells. **Pakéevriik** means “the old woman.” Tell them that now they know a few of the words in the story, but some of the others they might not know. After they hear the closing word... (*pause, and try to get them to say **kupánnakanakana***), then they should guess how to translate the story.

Píkva: Tell the **chufnîivkachpíkva** (Fly Story) and act out using the two photos. The “mm...mm” sound should be like a loud in-sniffing sound. Only tell the Karuk version.

uknîi (invocation)

xás pakéevriik uppiip: “mm...mm.” Then the old woman says: “mm, mm.”

chufnîivkach xás ukxiipship. Then Fly flew up.

kupánnakanakana (closing)

You may need to repeat the story a few times before the students finally guess right, but until they do, only use **hǎǎ** or **puuhara**. Then you might tell them that this story means that when housefly was one of the First People, or **ikxaréeyav**, she suddenly gave two in-sniffings and then flew up when she was transformed into a fly. That time is often called the Great Transformation, when some of the First People turned into rocks, trees, fish, animals, stars and the moon. Some of them turned into humans, like us. That means we are all related – all the things on this earth and in the skies. When fly sniffed like that as she was transformed, that gave her the ability to be so quick now. She smells things so quickly because she did it that way.

Follow up Activities:

A. Have students try to retell the previously taught **Fly Story**. Next, tell a different version: New words here should only be introduced and not memorized: **hitíhaan** (always), **kaan** (there, as in a place elsewhere designated), **vookúphaanik** (s/he did it like this a long time ago, meaning during the time of creation. This word is morphed from vaa (adv. *so, in that way*), u- (pronoun prefix. *he/she/it*), kuphaa (v. *to do*), and –anik (suffix tense form. *anciently*).

chufnivkachpíkva

A Fly Story

uknîi. (Story-time invocation.)

hitíhaan vaa káan kun'áarahitih. They were always living there.

kári xás vookúphaanik chufnîivkach. And then Fly did this anciently.

hm! hm!

hm! hm!

xás úkxiipshur. Then s/he flies away.
(This is when Fly transformed from a person into her present embodiment.)

kupánnakanakana. (Closing of story-time.)

chufnîivkach vookúphaanik. Fly did this way anciently.

B. You might have them try a new story about **akraah** (eel) using the word **ikpúuhraa** (to swim up from downstream). Be sure that they know that since it isn't a traditional story, we shouldn't start and end as in the original Fly Story:

hitíhaan vaa káan kun'áarahitih. They were always living there.

kári xás ukúphaat akraah. And then Eel did this.

pahtnak (make sucking noise)

akraah xás ukpúuhraa. Then Eel swam upriver.

C. Play “**Pihnêefich uppiip**” (Coyote says, as in “Simon Says”) with actions such as rowing up from downriver, being hungry for bread, flying up, seeing something (e.g. you see an acorn!), etc.