

# Giving Thanks

## A RIF GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

**Themes:** American Indian Culture, Environment, Family Traditions

**Grade Level:** K to 5th grade

**Book Brief:** An American Indian celebration of Mother Earth.

**Author:**  
Chief Jake Swamp

**Illustrator:**  
Erwin Printup, Jr.



## TIME TO READ!

**Before reading, make connections:** What is your child thankful for? Where do those things come from?

**After reading, ask questions:**

- ◆ What are the “gifts of life”?
- ◆ Why is the author thankful for these gifts?
- ◆ Why do you think Earth is called Mother Earth?
- ◆ Can people live off of the land alone? Why or why not?

**While reading, look at the big picture:** Notice how all the plants and animals in the book are *connected*. Each one plays an important role in the circle of life.

## RELATED ACTIVITIES

### DELICATE EARTH HANGING

Materials: crayon shavings, wax paper, iron, paper towel, string, scissors

1. Lay wax paper on work surface. Draw circle on wax paper. Place different colors of crayon shavings in circle to represent Earth.
2. Place the ends of the string inside circle. Cover with another sheet of wax paper. Put paper towel on top.
3. With iron on low, apply heat until crayon shavings have melted. Cool completely. Use scissors to cut around circle (don't cut string). Remove wax paper from both sides.

Hang in a sunny window as a reminder of how gently to treat Mother Earth.

### MAPLE SYRUP CANDY

Ingredients: 1 cup maple syrup, 1/2 cup water, 1/2 cup walnuts (or other nut) and/or 1 cup dried fruit

In a deep pot, combine syrup and water. Cook over medium heat until blended and smooth. Drop nuts into mixture. Remove nuts with a slotted spoon and place on wax paper to cool. Repeat with fruit if desired. Let cool and enjoy!

### OUT AND ABOUT

Help keep Earth beautiful by picking up litter. Gather some friends and spend the day at a local park. While there, see how much trash you and your friends can pick up and throw away. Remember to wear protective gloves and wash your hands afterward!



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### OTHER BOOKS ABOUT AMERICAN INDIAN CULTURE

*Powwow's Coming*, Linda Boyden (2007), *A Boy Called Slow*, Joseph Bruchac (1998), *Coyote Places the Stars*, Harriet Peck Taylor (1997), *Saltypie*, Tim Tingle (2010), *Home to Medicine Mountain*, Chiori Santiago (2002).



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