

Gimaama-akiiminaan gimiigwechiwendaamin



Thankful for our Mother Earth
Spearing through the ice activity booklet

Akwa'waa vocabulary

aagim (snowshoe)

aki (earth)

akwa'waa
(spearing through the ice)

anit (spear)

asaawe (perch)

asemaa (tobacco)

abiiinziikawaagan (coat)

biboon (winter)

bibooni-makizinan (winter boots)

boozhoo (greetings; hello)

dwaaw'ibaaan
(a hole made in the ice)

giigoonh (a fish)

giikaji (s/he is cold)

ginoozhe (northern pike)

gisinaa (it is cold)

jiichiibinaatig
(jigging stick for spearing
through the ice)

nindinawemaaganag
(my relatives)
Niizh (2)

maashkinoozhe (muskellunge)

miigwech (thank you)

mino-giizhigad (it is a good day)

mikwam (ice)

minjikaawanag (mittens)

mookomaan (knife)

namebin (sucker fish)

namegos (lake trout)

nimishoomis (my grandfather)

odaabaanaak (sled)

ogaa (walleye)

Ojibwemowin (Ojibwe language)

okeyaw* (decoy)

wiigob (inner bark of the basswood)

wiiwakwaan (hat)

zhingob (balsam)

zhingwaakwaandagoog
(pine boughs)

zoogipon (it snows)

**okeyo (variance)*

Boozhoo nindinawemaaganidog (greetings my relatives).
Mino-giizhigad (it is a good day)!

Nimishoomis (my grandfather) is always talking about this time of the year when the snow falls and the lakes are frozen. Anishinaabe harvest fish throughout the whole year especially through the ice.

Name the giigoonyag (fish)!

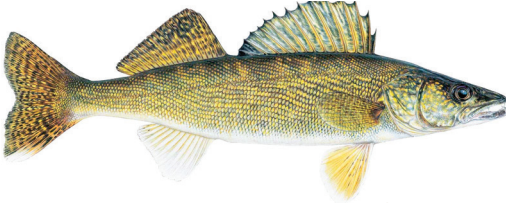
Draw a line from the fish to its Ojibwe name.



ogaa



ginoozhe



namebin



namegos



asaawe



maashkinoozhe

Our word for spearing through the ice is akwa'waa. My grandfather is very active. People say he seems like a much younger man, but his experience outdoors spans more than 60 years. As I sit and visit with Nimishoomis, he begins to talk about akwa'waawin.



As Nimishoomis speaks he grabs a chunk of wiigob (bass-wood). He chops it a few times with a hatchet and then begins to carve with his best mookomaan (knife). Pretty soon I can see a fish taking form. “When I was in my younger years, we would sit on the lake ice every morning. I would wake up early, make my asemaa (tobacco) offerings, and harvest the poles I would need.”



Nimishoomis (my grandpa) continues, “I would harvest some nice zhingwaakwaandagoog (pine boughs), zhingob (balsam) or whatever I could find. I would load all of my equipment on a little sled and snowshoe to the different spots on the lake that my father had taught me to go. Our word for snowshoe is aagim. Next I would chisel a large hole in the ice. This type of work always made me sweat.



Nimishoomis stops his story for a moment to cut out fins for the okeyaw (decoy) he is making. He has also notched out the belly of the wooden fish and has carved two eyeballs. He attaches the fins and begins to heat up a pot of lead pellets and scraps on the wood stove. If I didn't know any better, I'd say nimishoomis could make one of these with his eyes closed. His hands move swiftly but cautiously as he prepares the melting lead. His eyes flicker in the dimly lighted room and he continues his story.



“Having a family is a lot of work, but it’s one of the most rewarding things in life. We live to pass on our teachings to the next one and then we return to akiing (earth). I love fishing but when I had mouths to feed at home, we depended on those giigoonyag (fish). We were always taught that the foods that come naturally to us are good for us and will keep us healthy and strong. A day of harvesting is filled with exercise and hard work. It also makes you appreciate and respect everything that Anishinaabe have been given to survive. I would always think of these things as I would tie together my spearing shelter.”

Let’s learn Ojibwemowin (Ojibwe language)

Circle the Ojibwe word that is spelled correctly. Cross out the misspelled word. *Hint: Look back at akwa’waa vocabulary words on page niizh.*

1. akki

aki

2. aagim

aaginn

3. anitt

anit

4. biboon

biboo

5. okeyaw

okeyw

6. akwa’waa

akwe’waa

7. nimishoomis

nimisoo

8. giigoonyag

giiggoonyag

9. esemaa

asemaa

10. maino giizhigod

mino-giizhigad

In a quick motion, Nimishoomis grabs the pot of liquid metal and pours it into the belly of the lifeless decoy. He pours with such precision one could tell he had done this hundreds of times.



As we wait for the lead to harden, he recalls building many spearing shelters. “It’s almost like a different world when you lay out the balsam boughs and cover your shelter with tarps. You lay down and you can see all the way to the bottom of the lake and watch the giigoonyag interact with each other. It’s a humbling reminder that we are just another part of creation. We are no better or no worse than the four legged, or the winged, or the ones that swim.”



Biboon Word Search!

I I O B A Z O O G I P O N W
I A K W A ' W A A N B M A N
D W A I I G I I K A J I G K
W O D A A B A A N A A K W W
G I I K A J A K N I N K I A
D W I I B G A B I A I I I W
G M A W K I A I A N B N W N
I I N B A I B B D I D D A A
G O I A G K I O ' I N I K A
I I W O K ' W A O I A Z W O
S N O A A W A A K N A G A N
I Z A A M W A W A I G I A A
N A W W D A K ' A A I S N W
A D A I D M I K W A M I I J
A A O A O K A A S I I A A B

AAGIM

AKWA'WAA

BIBOON

DWAA'IBAAN

GIKAJI

GISINAA

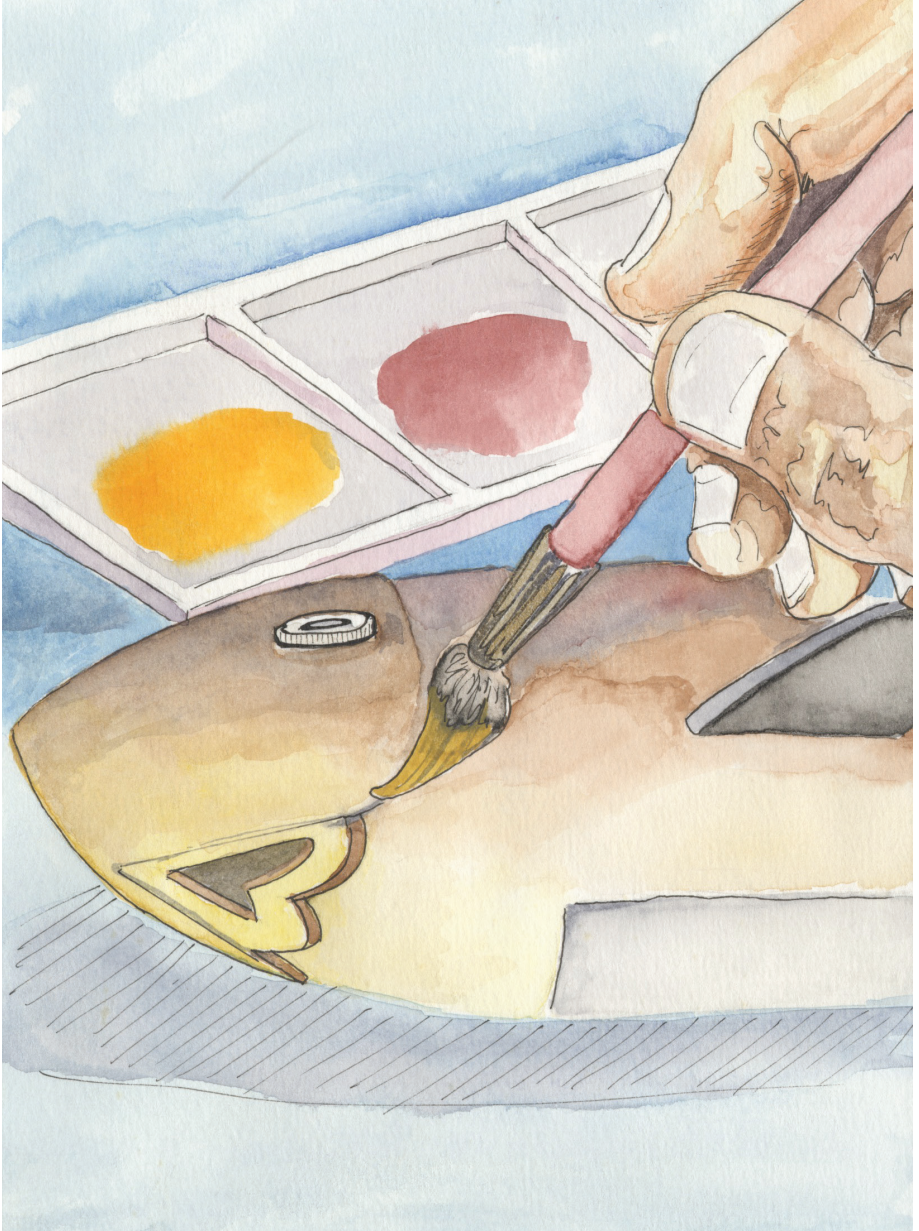
MIKWAM

ODAABAANAAK

WIIWAKWAAN

ZOOGIPON

I watch as the decoy, that was once a living tree, takes life again as it's painted with earth tone colors. It looks so real it could fool the best of fishermen. Nimishoomis has old wrinkly hands but they work better than ever. He paints swiftly but also pays attention to the small details. This one will be a namebin (sucker) he tells me.

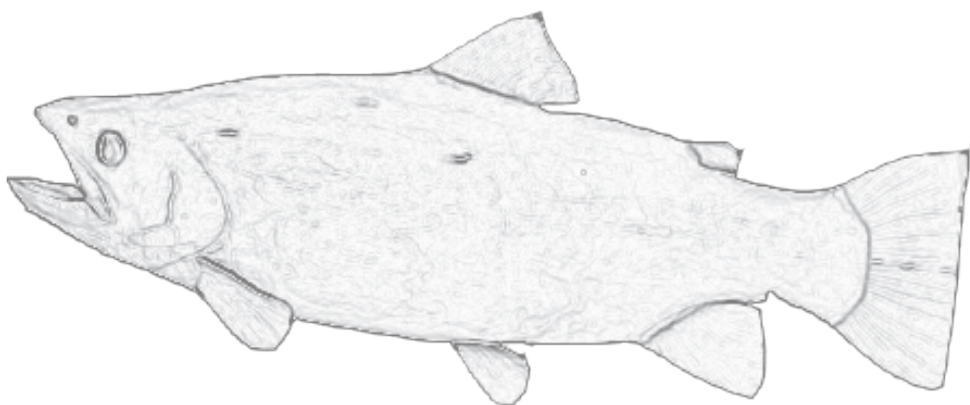


Namegos (lake trout)



Give the namegos okeyaw (decoy) some color

Here is an example of a decoy that is already decorated. Use your imagination and give the decoy below some color.



As we wait for the paint to dry, nimishoomis continues. “I would spend a lot of time on the mikwam (ice) and in my shelters. Sometimes I would be in there for hours before seeing a single fish, and other times I would only be there for a few minutes. My family really liked to eat maashkinoozheg (muskel-lunge) and ginoozhe (northern pike) and those giigoonyag are always drawn to these decoys. I wish more people would harvest fish like this because it teaches a lot of patience. It also teaches respect for everything in creation.



We hold the namebin decoy over a small flame to secure the eye hook and to give it a dark smoky finish. He pulls out some nylon fishing line and a small stick and begins to carve and remember. “Adrenaline fills your body when a fish comes swimming through.” The decoys swim as if they are an injured fish and it naturally attracts large predators. “Sometimes a maash-kinoozhe would swim through and grab my decoy and I’d never see it again.”



Nimishoomis smiles as he looks up from his carving. “The feeling of love and gratitude for that giigoonh is overpowering. Knowing that he is there to help feed your family during a tough biboon (winter) is powerful. Everyone knows that we are only given a split second to harvest this fish, but time seems to stand still in these moments. Within that moment I would always whisper ‘miigwech’ to that giigoonh and in one quick motion I would thrust my anit (spear) to the bottom of the lake.

Which decoy is different?

Three of the decoys are the same, cross out the decoy that is different from the others.



What have you learned?

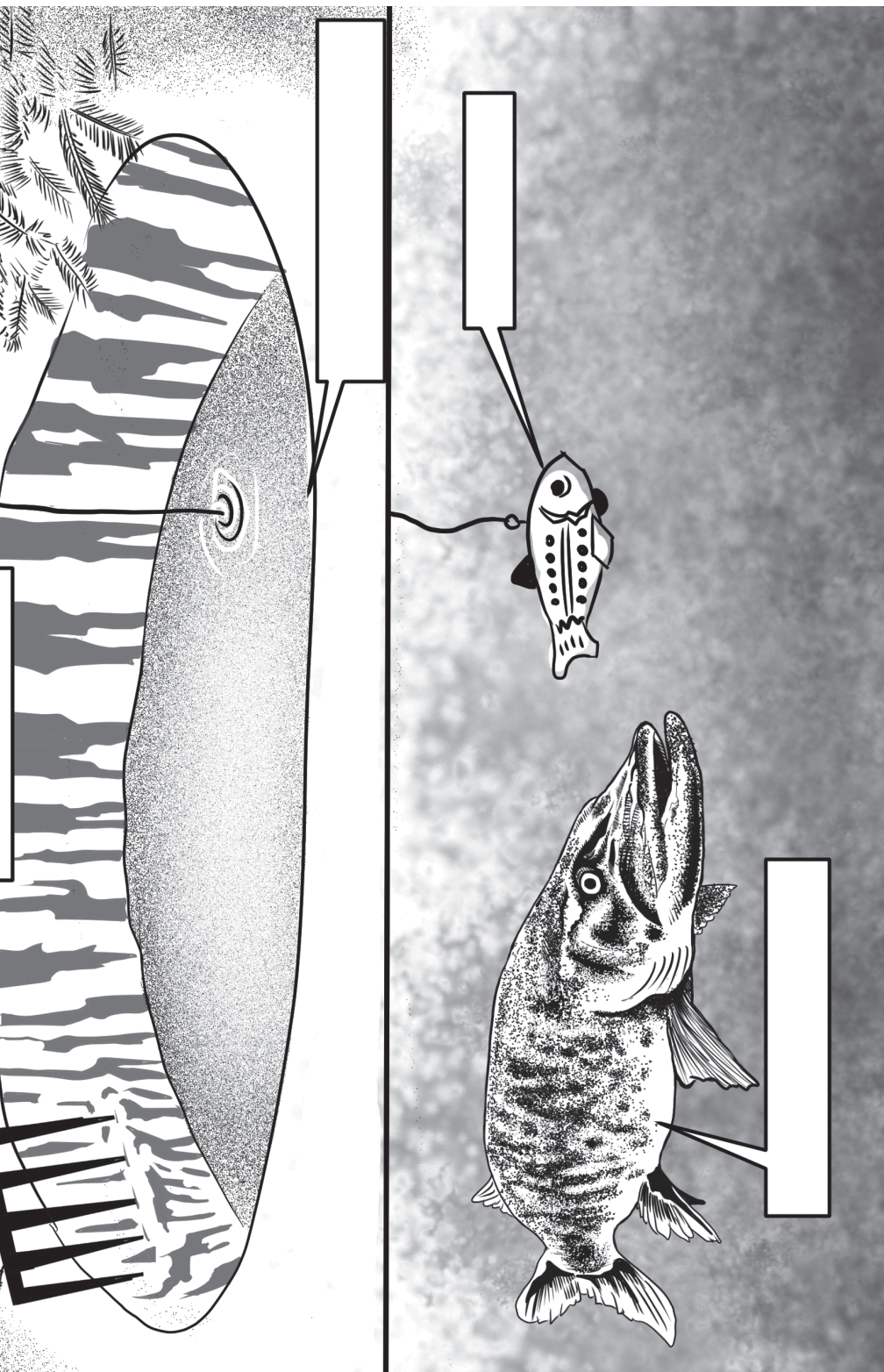
1. What does the Ojibwe word akwa'waa mean?

2. Grandpa uses a chunk of _____ to carve the decoy.
3. Offering _____ is very important before we begin harvesting.
4. What part of the decoy is notched out to add lead?

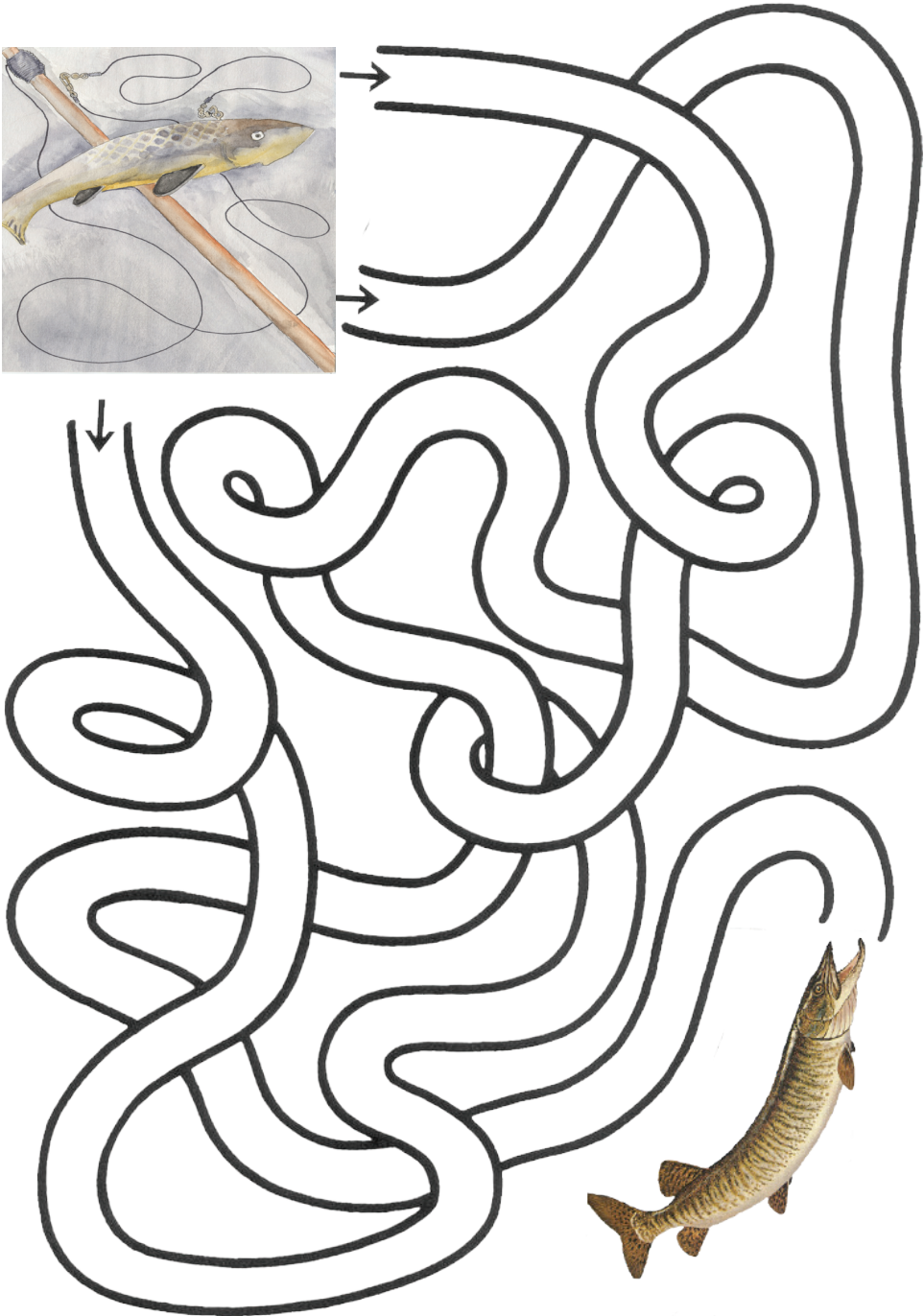
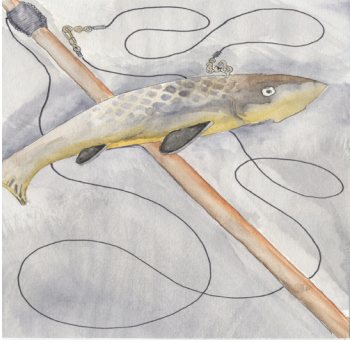
5. We were always taught that the foods that come naturally to us are good for us and will keep us _____ and _____.
6. _____ are put down around the hole at the bottom of the spearing shelter.
7. Decoys were once a living _____.
8. Harvesting fish by spearing through the ice takes _____.
9. The decoy is held over a small flame to secure the _____ and give it a dark smoky finish.
10. What is the Ojibwe word for spear? _____

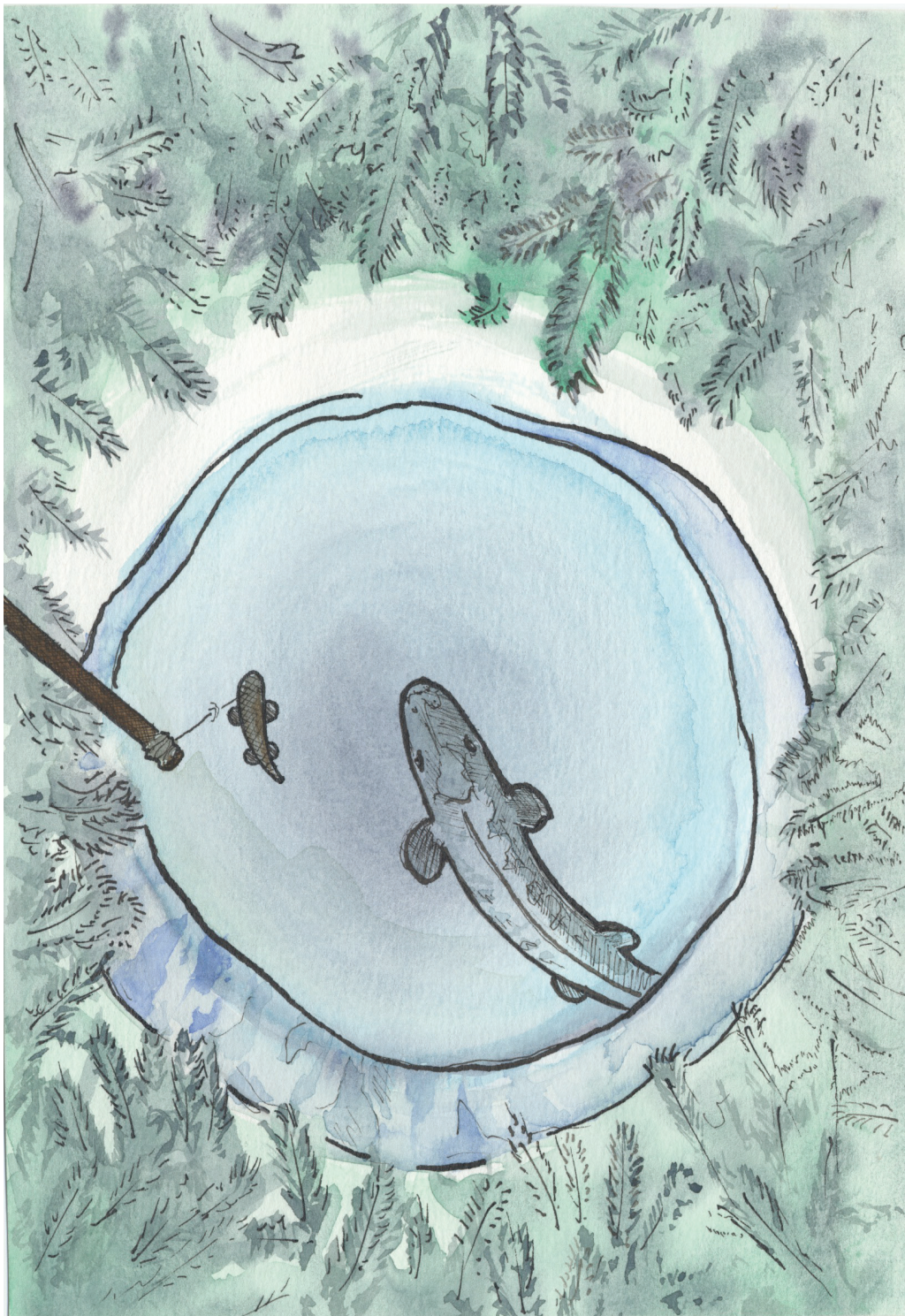
Write the Ojibwe word in the box for what is pictured.





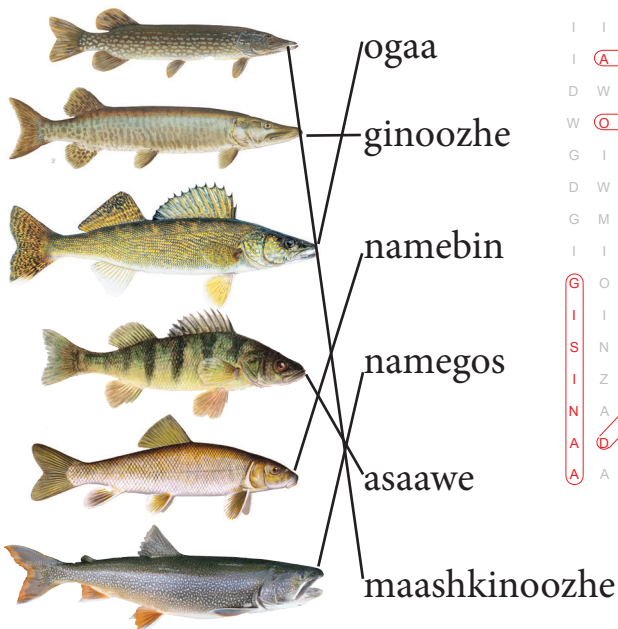
Which line will catch the musky?



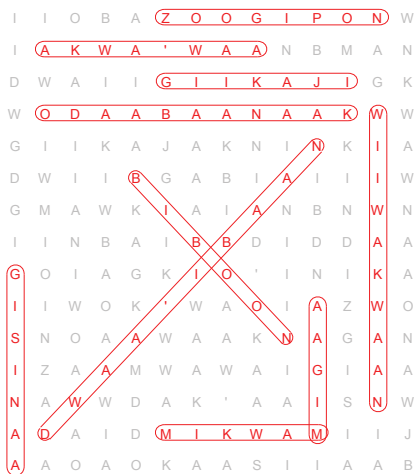


Puzzle Answers

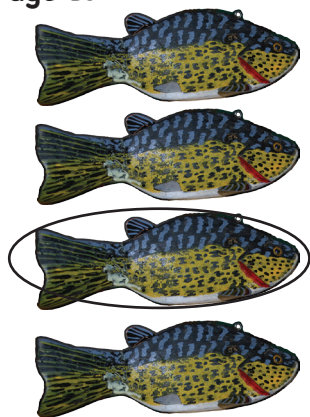
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1. akki
 2. aagim
 3. anitt
 4. biboo
 5. okeyaw
 6. akwa'waa
 7. nimishoo
 8. giigoonyag
 9. esemaa
 10. maino giizhigod
1. aki
 2. aagimm
 3. anit
 4. biboon
 5. okeyw
 6. akwe'waa
 7. nimisoo
 8. giigoonyag
 9. asemaa
 10. miino giizhigad

Pages 18-19

- anit (spear)
- babiinzikawaagan (coat)
- jiichiibinaatig (jigging stick for spearing through the ice)
- zhingwaakwaandagoog (pine boughs)
- ginoozhe (northern pike)
- okeyaw or okeyo (decoy)

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The middle line catches the musky.

Niishtana-ashi-niizh (22)

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1. spearing through the ice.
2. wiigob
3. asemaa
4. belly
5. healthy, strong
6. balsam boughs
7. tree
8. patience
9. eye hook
10. anit



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Giga-waabamin!

See you later!



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