

Masai and I

Unit Study & Lapbook



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Social Studies:

History: Ancestors

The little girl from whose perspective the story is written feels a certain kinship with the Masai people as she learns about their culture in school. She knows that her ancestors were from Africa. Ask your child, "If you were to feel a tingle of kinship with a group of people who would it be with?" This could lead to a discussion about where their ancestors are from.

→ Complete My Ancestors Layer Book

Geography:

Africa is a continent that consists of over 50 different countries each with many different tribes having their own unique cultures (Swaziland is an exception; it being a small one-tribe one language group nation; however even within this country there are tribes from neighboring countries that have settled there). The northern third of the continent is home to the Sahara Desert, the largest and hottest desert in the world.

→ Masai live in Tanzania and Kenya. Label those two countries on the map provided. If, desired, have your student label more.

African Culture:

Contrast the differences in village life in Africa compared to US city life, for example:

1. Homes:

Mud and stick huts are clustered together for extended family to live together in homesteads, cooking by open fire, lack of refrigeration, furniture, windows and beds (sleep on mats)

2. Mode of Transportation:

It would not be unusual to walk a mile or several miles to get to water, get to a

store etc.

Note: You should, however, point out that just as in the U. S. rural and urban areas vary, so there are cities in Africa that are much more modernized where people do live in concrete style homes or apartments with furniture and beds and where people get around by cars and buses.

3. Tribal Life:

The Masai is just one tribe of hundreds in Africa; each tribe has its own language and unique culture. Notice in the book the distinctive dress of the Masai people- including loose cloth and large beaded necklaces and hoop earrings (even the men); the Masai people wear a lot of red clothing which stands for power.

4. Resourcefulness:

Growing up in Africa, children learn to be resourceful at an early age; Instead of going to the store to get sweets, children in rural Africa will look to nature to find something sweet such as honey from a beehive, sugar cane from the field or fruit (like guava or mango) from a fruit tree.

5. Toys:

Many of the toys in Africa would be more simple and made with available resources (tin cans, wire, sticks etc.).

The Mancala game originated in Africa but has been adapted and played around the world. Traditionally, it would be carved from wood and small stones would be used as the playing pieces. The game can be played with marbles, small stones, shells, beans etc. Consider trying Mancala this week.

In spite of all these differences, there are commonalities between the two cultures: love of family, respect, participation in household chores, and self-care.

Masai

Many different kinds of people live in Africa; they have different ways of life, different customs, different languages, different foods they eat. Masai (also spelled Maasai) is one tribe of people who can be found in Kenya and Tanzania.

The Masai are a warrior tribe typically pictured wearing a red cloth and holding a spear. They live in villages consisting of 8 to 15 huts which the women are

responsible for building. The frame is built of branches and then a plaster mixture of twigs, grass, and cow dung is applied to the frame. When the mixture dries, it is very strong (comparable to our cement). It takes a woman about 7 months to complete the task of building one hut.

Inside the hut, the only openings are the doorway and a small hole in the roof or wall which allows the smoke from a fire to escape. They use dried cow dung for fuel to keep the fire going to cook and keep them warm during the rainy season. The only furnishings inside are beds of woven branches cushioned with dry grasses and animal skins.

Women and girls are also expected to milk the cows and fetch water. Their time is also filled with beadwork; they decorate animal hides with beads in addition to making arm and leg bracelets. They also pick gourds and clean them. Then the gourds are decorated with leather and beads. They use the gourds to store milk, water, honey and cornmeal. Masai do not kill animals for food but will eat them if they die naturally.

In order for the village to be protected from wild elephants, lions, and cheetahs, the men use thorny branches (comparable to our barbed wire) to build fences. At night, Masai bring their domestic animals (cows, goats, etc.) inside the fence so they will be protected as well.

The men's primary job is to care for the cattle which they believe God has entrusted to them. Their wealth is measured by the number of cattle they own.

As young Masai boys reach the age of 15 they participate in coming of age ceremonies which include many rites and rituals. Several Masai warriors will live together in one hut until they have passed on to manhood (5-7 years). Then they will marry and bring their wives and raise their families in the same hut. People of the same age usually live in the same kraal. The elderly will all live together but teach traditions and skills to the youth; they also lead celebrations and ceremonies.

Masai speak many languages including the Maa language as well as Swahili and English.

→ Complete Masai Tab Book

Language Arts

Point of View-

Ask your child who is telling the story? This story is told in the 1st person by the African-American girl holding the African artifact in the first illustration; she uses her imagination to consider what it would be like to grow up in Africa.

→ Complete Point of View Book

Vocabulary -

kraal (pronounced crawl): an enclosure for domestic animals in Africa

kinship: relationship

tingle: to feel a pricking or thrilling sensation

cowhide: the hide (skin) of a cow or leather made from it

gourd: an inedible fruit with a hard-rind; the shell may be used for carrying water

sod: top layer of soil

slender: slim, thin

graceful: attractive; moving with ease

glide: to move smoothly and effortlessly

lope (along): moving in an easy manner

→ Complete Vocabulary Book

Adjectives: The first part of the book uses adjectives to describe the Masai people (tall and proud). What words would you use to describe them? (hardworking, strong, etc.).

→ Complete the Adjectives Mini-book

Go-along book for learning about adjectives: *Many Luscious Lollipops* by Ruth Heller

Science

Animal Kingdom-African Animals:

Animals mentioned in the book include: cattle, zebras, ostriches, giraffes. Determine which animals are unique to Africa. (zebras, giraffes, ostriches) Which are found in other parts of the world as well as Africa? (cattle, fireflies, bees).

Another animal shown in the illustrations is the guinea fowl. It's in the "running and leaping" picture.

Encourage your student to learn more about giraffes or zebras and to choose one of the animal tab books to complete for the lapbook.

Your student may also want to research honeyguides. A mini-book is provided for your student to record what he or she learns.

Red Clay:

Much of Africa is covered with red clay; As the story notes, this clay is sometimes mixed with fat and used on the skin and in the hair; also used for the walls and floors of huts, making pots, etc.

Health: Water Sources -

Water is essential to life; Discuss what we need water for: drinking, cooking, washing ourselves, dishes, clothing, feeding to livestock, irrigating crops; In parts of Africa and especially at various times of drought water can be scarce; In rural areas, running water is not common and water sources could include: rivers, springs, catchment systems for rain water, bore holes (deep hole, similar to a well, but smaller in diameter with water pipes to carry the water out); Children learn from an early age to balance large buckets or gourds of water on their heads. Get on your swimsuits and try carrying buckets of water on your head, African style!

→Complete Ways We Use Water Petal Book

Math

Directions

North, South, East, West

Locate these areas of Africa on the map and note that several countries make up each area of this vast continent; the Masai people are from East Africa (mostly living on the border between Tanzania and Kenya)

Draw a compass rose inside the mini-book provided.

Distance

How long is three miles? Think of a landmark in your area that is about three miles away in order to better visualize the distance; it would take close to one hour to walk each way. If you have the opportunity, get out and hike a three-mile hike.

Counting in Swahili

Learn to count in a new language. Use the mini-book provided.

Art

Method:

A note from the artist at the start of the book (after title page) states her method as being "oil and color pencil on paper." The first illustration in the classroom shows this method clearly and your child could attempt this art style.

Viewpoint-

In most cases, the illustrations spread across double pages, with one side illustrating life in the US city, contrasted on the opposite page with life in rural Africa. The artist does this in such a way that the illustrations are blended across the page. Enjoy each of the illustrations that accomplishes this unique style. For example, note especially the page where the girl opens her apartment door into what looks like the African homestead; the page where the girl is walking down the street to the store is drawn in such a way that the tree's shadow appears to be

formed by the tree that the African children are searching for honey in. Likewise, in the page about the animals/pets it appears the little girl is looking at the elephant. On the page where the girl is preparing for her grandmother's celebration when she looks in the mirror she sees a reflection of the Masai girl.

Details:

Notice the artifacts in the classroom (Masai necklace, a gourd), Africa on the map on the wall of the classroom, the differing shoes on the title page which are mentioned in the text, as well as the way the letters of title page are decorated in an African art style

Supplemental Books and Resources:

A is for Africa by Ifeoma Onyefulu; this book was written from a perspective and illustrations from Nigeria (West Africa) but the author cites that the goal of the book is to represent common African values of “warm family ties, traditional family life, and hospitality.” It has some great photos.

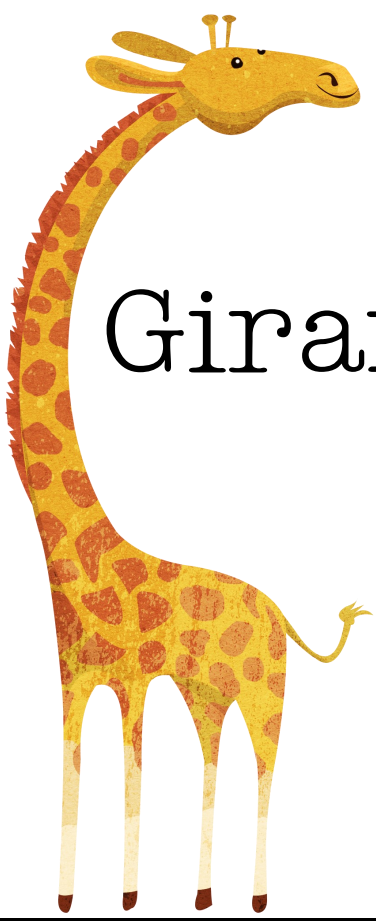
Galimoto by Karen Lynn Williams

Elizabethi's Doll by Stephanie Stuve-Bodeen


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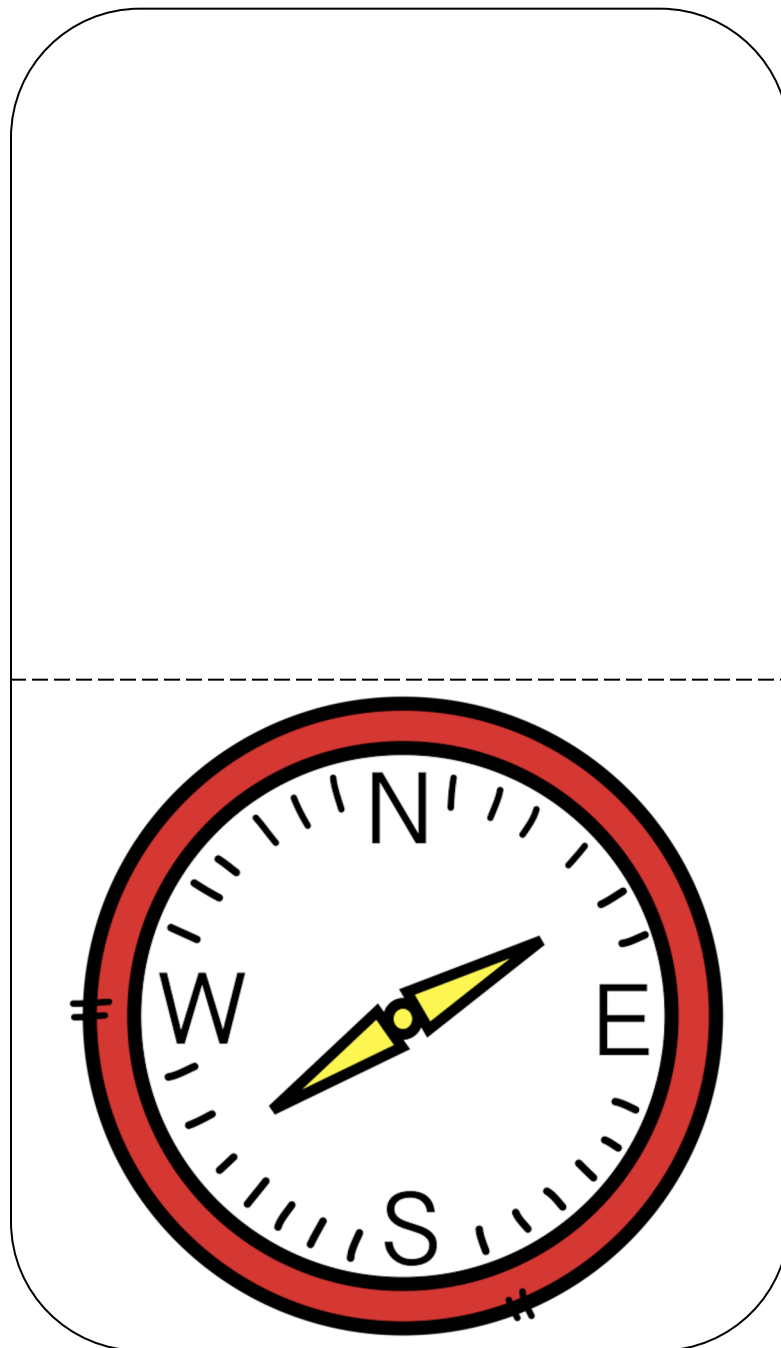
Directions: Cut on solid black lines. Stack pages together with cover on top and staple on left side.

	Habitat	 <h1 data-bbox="933 409 1404 514">Giraffes</h1>	
	Diet		Anatomy

Directions: Cut on solid black lines. Stack pages together with cover on top and staple on left side.

	<div>Habitat</div>	<div>Zebra</div> <div></div>	
	<div>Diet</div>		<div>Anatomy</div>

Directions: Cut on solid black line. Fold on dotted line. Let your student draw and label a compass rose on the inside of the book.





Directions: You are looking at the inside of the book. Write one way we use water on each petal. Cut shape out as one piece. Fold flaps in using the dotted lines as your guide. Tuck the last flap under so that book will stay closed.

Cut book out as one piece. Fold small strip down. Add tiny bits of glue to each side of the small strip to form a pocket. Fold book in half. Note: "Counting in Swahili" should be on the cover of your book. Cut out number cards on solid black lines. Store number cards inside the book. Have your child look at the card and tell you (in Swahili) how many animals are on the card.

Counting in Swahili

moja one

mbili two

tatu three

nne four

tano five

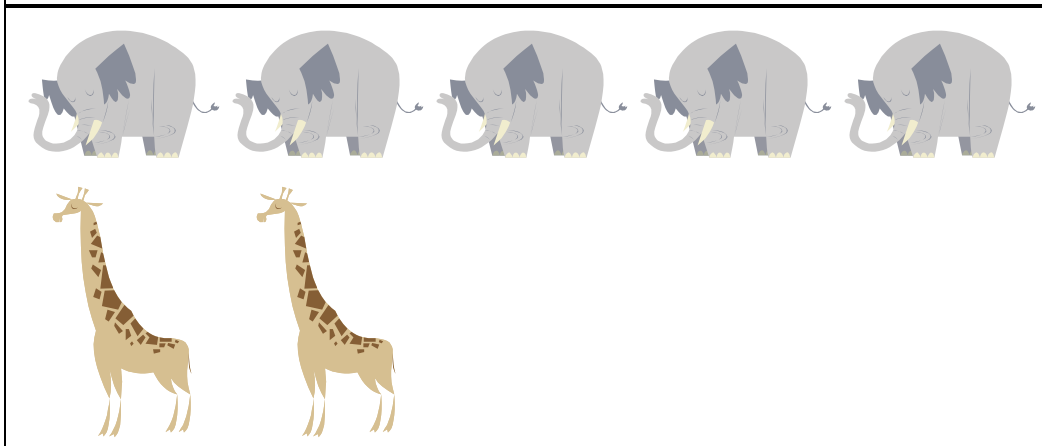
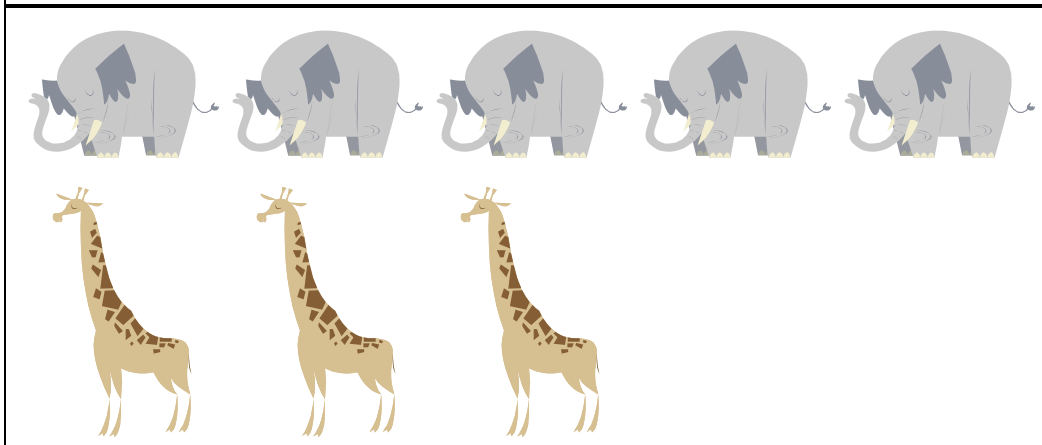
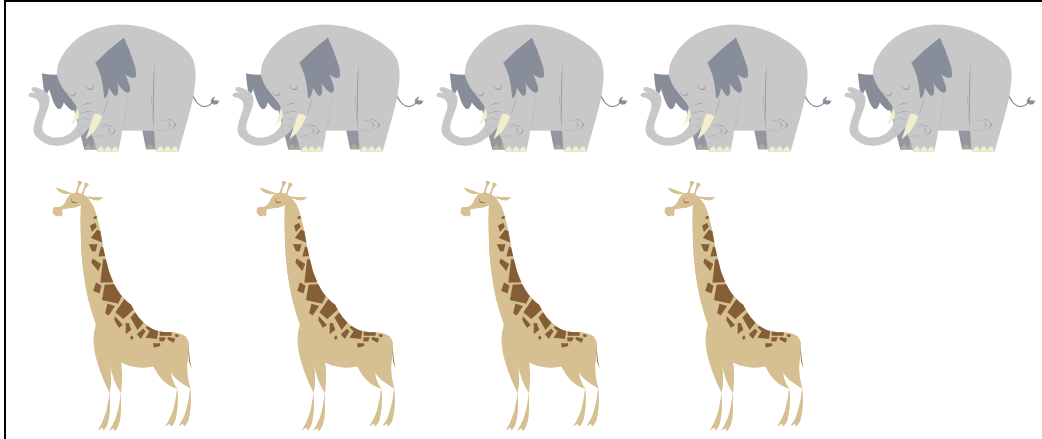
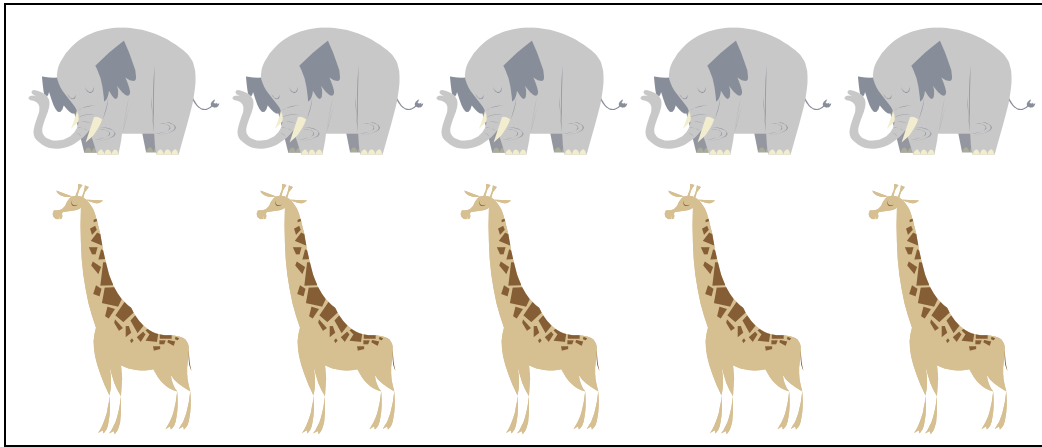
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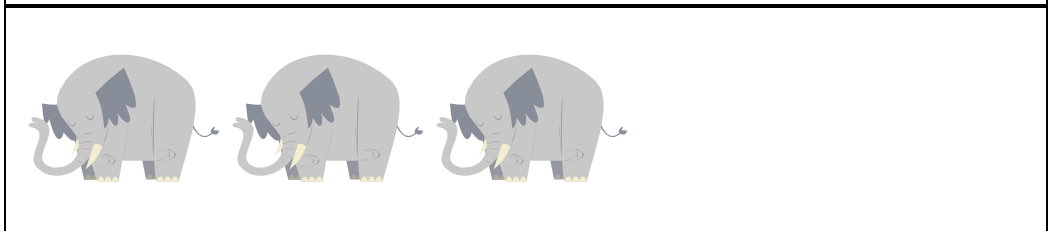
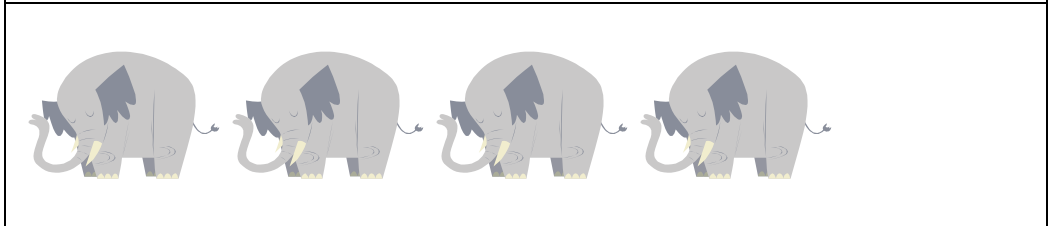
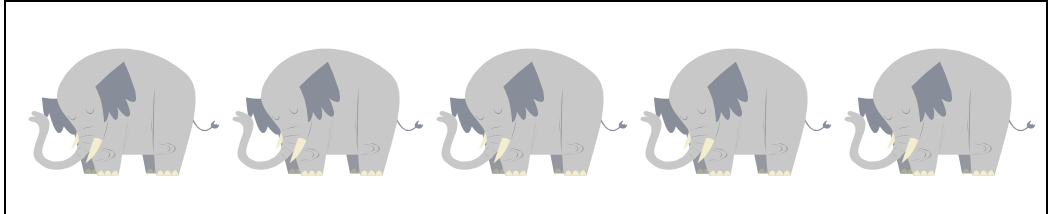
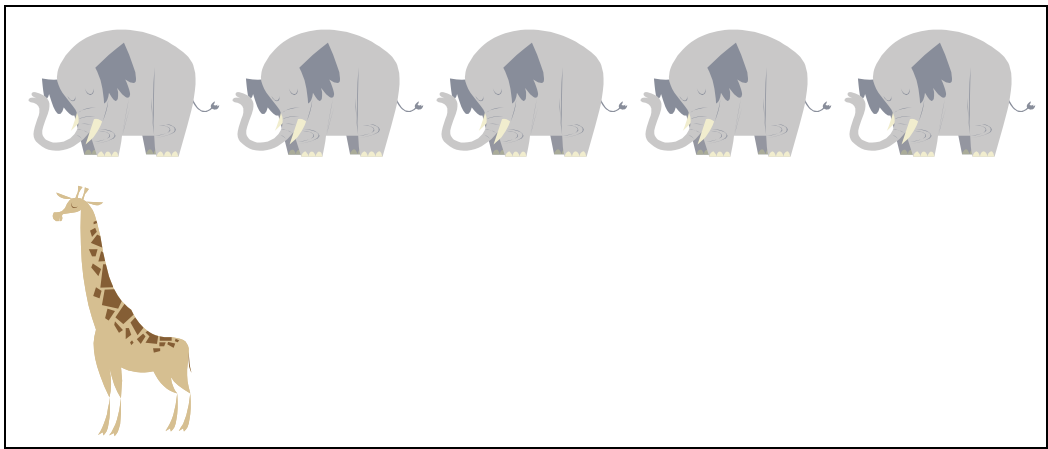
saba seven

nane eight

tisa nine

kumi ten





Why is it effective?

I
What point of view
is used in *Masai* and

1st person-

A point of view in which an "I" or "we" serves as the narrator of a piece of fiction.

OR

3rd person-

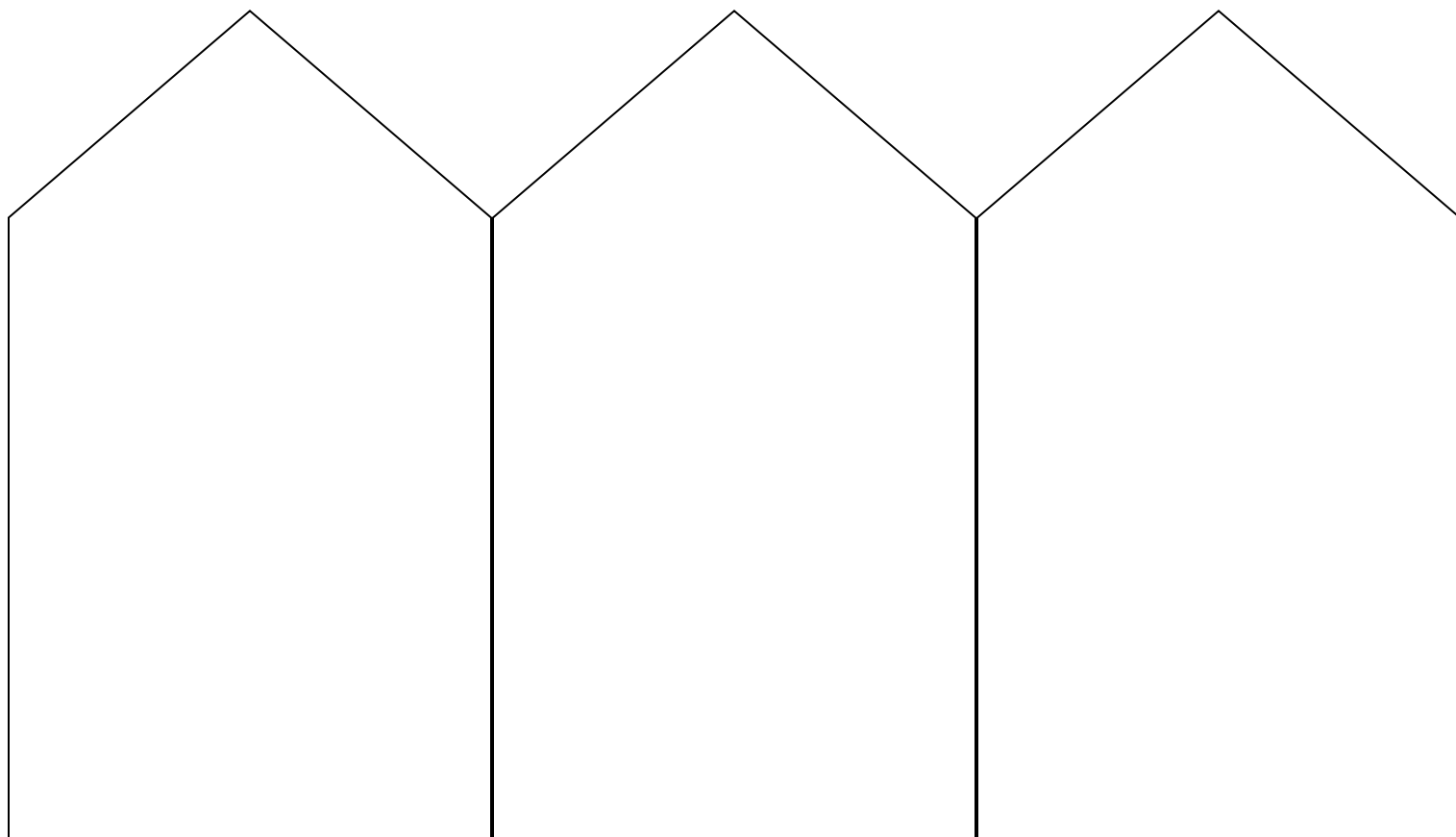
A method of storytelling in which a narrator tells the story using third person pronouns such as "he" or "she."

Directions: Cut book out as one piece. Fold top flap down. Fold right side over so that "Point of View" is on the cover of your book. Cut out piece on dotted lines. Glue on the inside cover of the book. Lift the flap and answer questions.

Point of View



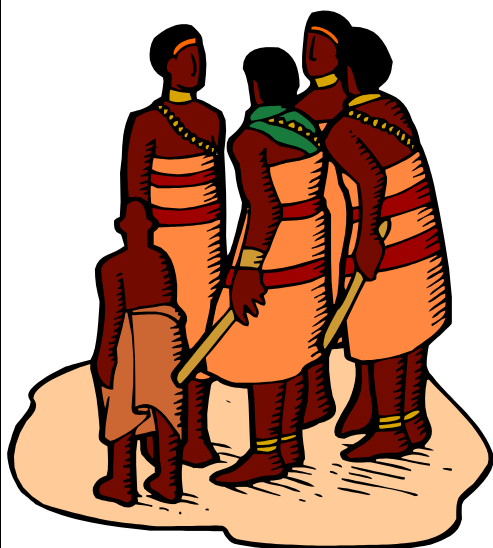
Directions: Cut out each piece. Let your student write an adjective (from the story or from his own thoughts) to describe Masai on each piece. Stack together with cover on top and secure with a brad.




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Adjectives



Directions: Cut on the solid lines. Write in definitions. Stack pages together with cover on top and staple on the left side.


<div data-bbox="324 363 795 686"><h1>My Book of New Words</h1></div> <div data-bbox="305 732 812 1050"></div>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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Map of Africa

Label the countries where the Masai people live: Tanzania and Kenya.

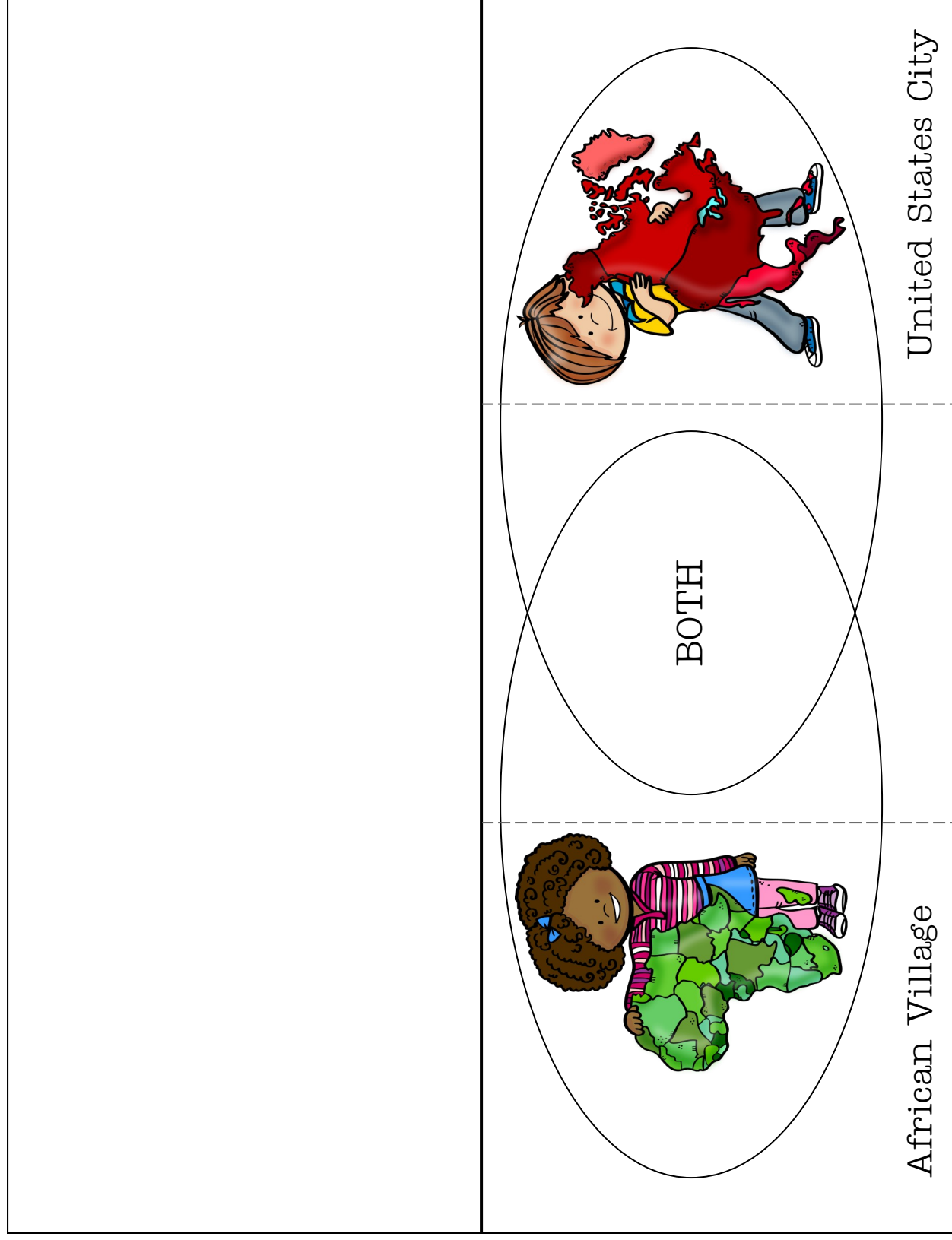


Cut the strips along the solid outer lines. If there is a rectangle piece in the right corner of the strip, cut it off as indicated (remove this area). Stack your strips in order with cover on top and staple where indicated.

		<h1>All About Masai</h1>	
Shelter		REMOVE THIS AREA (Cut away so you have just a tab left)	
Food		REMOVE THIS AREA	

		Men
Women	REMOVE THIS AREA	
	Elderly	REMOVE THIS

Directions: Cut out book as one piece. Fold in half on the black line. Unfold. Cut on the dotted lines to form three flaps.



Great Grandfather	Great Grandmother	Great Grandfather	Great Grandmother	Great Grandfather	Great Grandmother	Great Grandmother

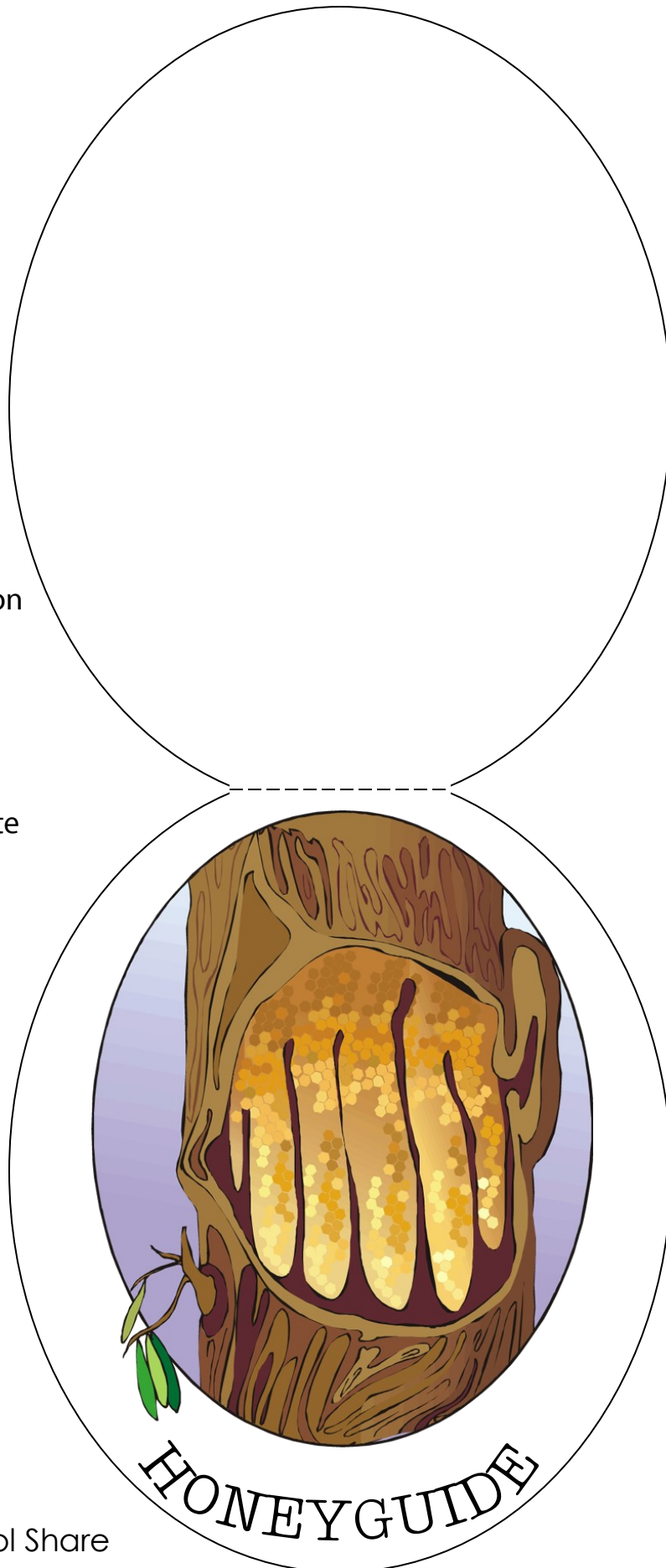
My Ancestors

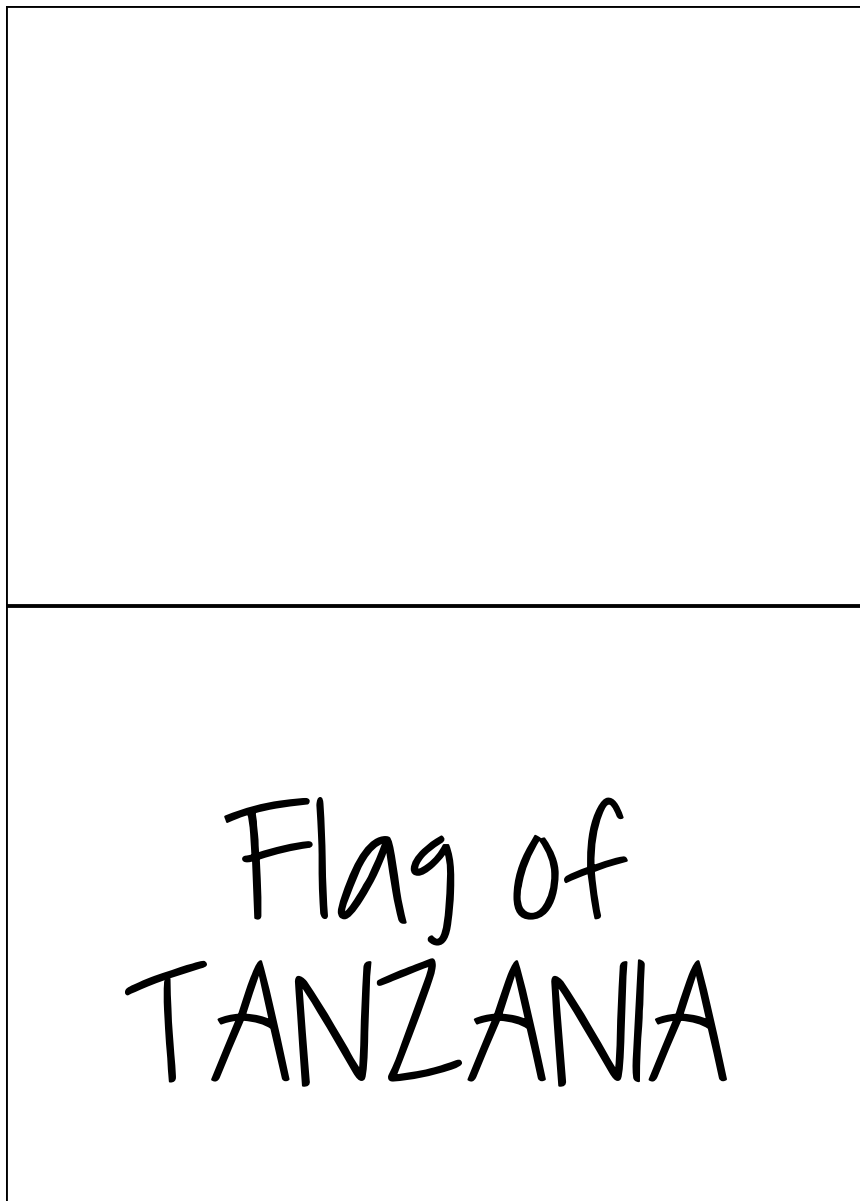
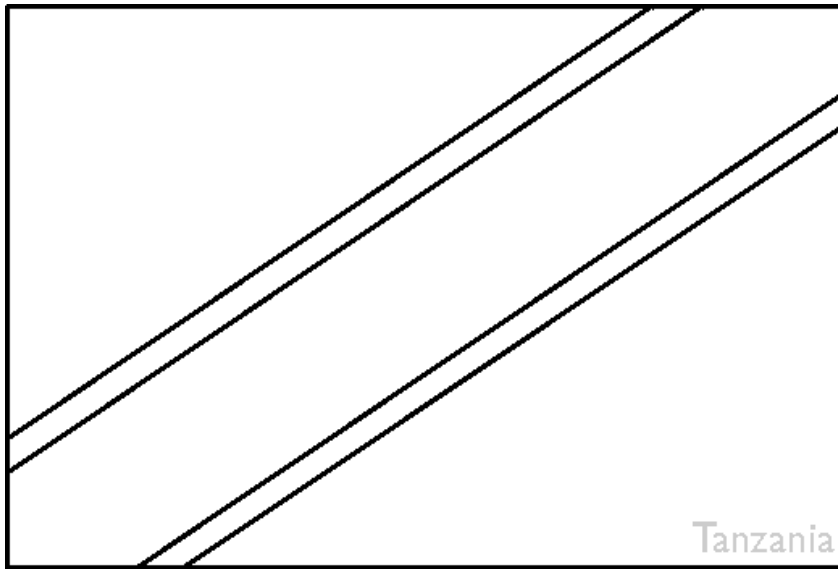
Father	Mother

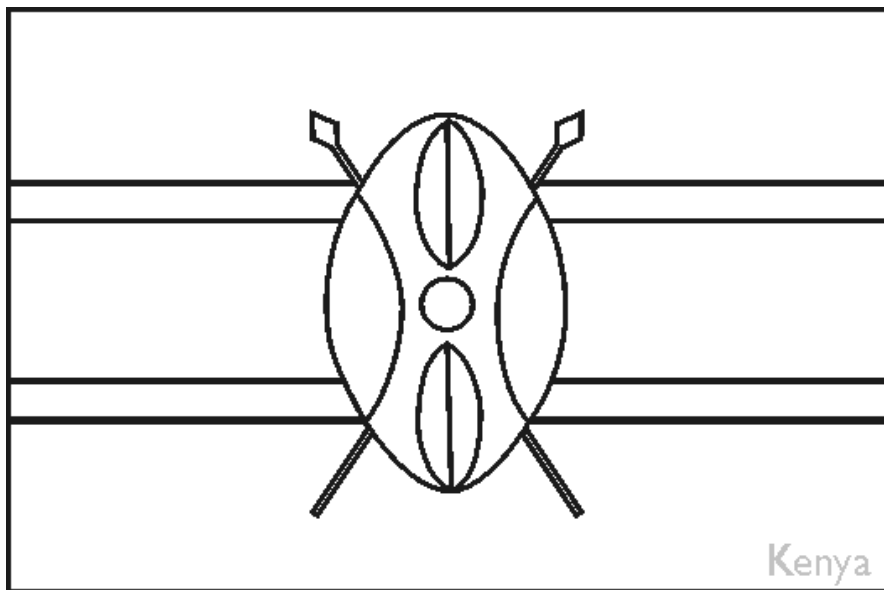
Grandfather	Grandmother	Grandfather	Grandmother

Directions: Cut out each rectangle (four total) on the bold black lines. Cut on dotted lines to form flaps. Stack pages together (smallest to largest) and staple at the top of the book. Write information (as desired) on each flap).

Directions: Cut book on solid lines. Fold on dotted. Let your student research to find out about Honeyguides and write about them on the inside of the book.







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