

Oral Reading

The Birchbark Canoe

Name: _____

Date: _____

Building Birchbark Canoes

Birchbark canoes were easy to build. Canoe builders started by pulling a sheet of bark from a birch tree. They used spruce roots like thread to stitch the sheets of birchbark together. Some parts were made of wood from cedar and ash trees. The canoes were made waterproof with spruce gum, or resin. Then they were decorated. Sometimes the painted patterns were “good signs,” meant to keep the canoe and the paddlers safe.

Canoes today are made of many materials, but they still look like the birchbark canoes of long ago. Many people are still interested in the old ways. They build and paddle birchbark canoes just as people did long ago.

Halting

Careful

Confident

Fluent

Expressive