THE INDIAN READING SERIES: Stories and Legends of the Northwest is a collection of authentic material cooperatively developed by Indian people from twelve reservations. Development activities are guided by a Policy Board which represents the Indian community of the Pacific Northwest. The Pacific Northwest Indian Reading and Language Development Program Policy Board members are:

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Pat Learns About Wild Peppermint
Level II Book 5

Developed by the Blackfeet Indians
Written by Joan Kennerly, Carmen Marceau, Doris Old Person, June Tatsey
Illustrated by Melvin Tailfeathers
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Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
*Pat Learns About Wild Peppermint* is a story about the use of wild peppermint among the Blackfeet Indians in Montana. Although wild peppermint isn't used as extensively as in earlier times, it is still used by some of our Blackfeet Indian people. Wild peppermint is used as a beverage, as flavoring for foods and in some instances as a medication.

Wild peppermint is usually found in meadows, along rivers, river bottoms, swampy areas or lake areas. It is picked in summer or early fall. It is a green, leafy plant varying in length from approximately eight to twelve inches. When in bloom, it has small, purple blossoms. However, no one should attempt to pick wild peppermint unless they are shown what it really is by someone who knows the plant.
Pat is a little girl.
She lives with her grandmother and grandfather.
They live on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation in Montana.
One day her grandma said,
“T’m going to the meadow where Grandpa
is cutting hay.
Would you like to come with me?”

“Oh, yes!” said Pat.
Grandma and Pat began to walk toward the meadow in Big Badger Valley.
"We will eat lunch with Grandpa. Then we will go pick wild peppermint," said Grandma.

"What is wild peppermint?" asked Pat.

"Just wait, my girl, and I will tell you about wild peppermint. And I will show you how it is used."
Grandma, Grandpa and Pat ate a nice lunch.
Pat felt very happy.
When they were finished Grandma said,
"We will go now, my girl, and look for wild peppermint."
"Where will we look for wild peppermint?" asked Pat.

"It grows near water, usually by a stream or river," said Grandma.
"It grows in meadows."
"Wild peppermint is about eight to twelve inches tall," said Grandma.
"It has green leaves.
It sometimes has little purple flowers.
It smells good."
They continued to walk along the stream in Big Badger Valley.
'Hm-m-m, Grandma, it smells good here,” said Pat.

“We are getting close to wild peppermint,” said Grandma.
“And now I see it.”
"The best time to pick wild peppermint is in the late spring or early fall," said Grandma. And they began to pick the wild peppermint.
Grandma and Pat had fun picking the wild peppermint. After they were done, they went back home to prepare it for use during the winter.
"Grandma, what are you going to do now?" asked Pat.

"We are going to tie string around the wild peppermint," said Grandma.
"We will hang the wild peppermint up to dry.
We will use it this winter.
Some of it we will use now."
"What will you use the wild peppermint for?" asked Pat.
"Grandpa will use it for some of his Indian religious ceremonies."
I will use it for medicine when you are sick.
“I will also boil some fat
and put the wild peppermint in it.
The wild peppermint will flavor the boiled fat.
It will taste delicious to eat with meat.”
"I will make wild peppermint tea to drink with our meal. I will mix water and wild peppermint together to drink."
"My little girl, I want you to remember what I have shown you. Someday Grandma will be gone from you. When the Great Spirit calls me, I will leave you," said Grandma.
"Oh, Grandma! I'm so lucky to have you," cried Pat.

"And I'm so lucky to have you, my girl," replied Grandma.
"You must go to sleep now.
I will wake you up when Grandpa comes home."
"Have a nice sleep now. It has been a good day."
JOAN BULLSHOE KENNERLY

Mrs. Kennerly has twenty years of teaching experience in the Blackfeet and Northern Cheyenne public school systems and was the first runner-up for the 1972 Montana Teacher of the Year. She received her B.A. in education from Northern Montana College and her M.A. in education from Arizona State University. She was responsible for establishing Native American Day for the State, and was appointed by the Governor of Montana to serve on the Commission on Post Secondary Education. She also was the Chairperson of House Joint Resolution 60, which established the Master Plan for Indian Education for the State of Montana. She has two children.

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Mrs. Tatsey is a Blackfeet Indian with sixteen years' experience in teaching grades one through eight and preschool in the public school system on the Blackfeet Reservation. She received her B.S. in education from Northern Montana College and her M.A. in guidance and counseling from the University of South Dakota and the University of Montana. She was the reading supervisor and is now vice-principal at K W Bergen Elementary School in Browning, on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation.

CARMEN BULLSHOE MARCEAU

Mrs. Marceau is a Blackfeet Indian with eighteen years teaching experience. She has had nine years' experience in guidance and counseling on the Blackfeet Reservation and is principal of Browning Elementary School. She received her B.S. in education from Northern Montana College and her M.A. in guidance and counseling from the University of South Dakota and the University of Montana.

DORIS BULLSHOE OLD PERSON

Mrs. Old Person has eighteen years experience teaching in the Blackfeet Public School System. She has specialized in remedial reading and has been Head Start Director-Supervisor for BEA Title I and Director of the Native Song and Dance Program. She received her B.A. from Northern Montana College and her M.A. in education from Arizona State University. She has five children.

MEVIN TAILFEATHERS

Mr. Tailfeathers is a self-taught artist who has lived on the Blackfeet Reservation all his life. His grandmother was a Blackfeet medicine woman. Mr. Tailfeathers prefers to do pen and ink sketches of Blackfeet life although he sometimes works with ceramic figurines.
Booklets available in the Level II sequence are listed below. Numbers refer to the planned sequence of use in the Teacher's Manual. Materials developed by these tribes and others in the Northwest are included in the Levels I and III sequences.

1 End of Summer
   Crow Tribal Historical and Cultural Commission

2 Thunder and the Mosquito
   Muckleshoot Tribe

3 Why the Codfish Has a Red Face
   Skokomish Tribe

4 How Wildcat and Coyote Tricked Each Other
   Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall Reservation

5 Pat Learns About Wild Peppermint
   Blackfeet Tribe

6 Picture Writing
   The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon

7 Grandma Rides in the Parade
   Crow Tribal Historical and Cultural Commission

8 The Bob-Tailed Coyote
   Northern Cheyenne Tribe

9 The Great Flood
   Skokomish Tribe

10 The Rainbow
    The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon

11 The Time the Whale Came to Jackson's Bay
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12 Coyote and the Man Who Sits On Top
    Salish Cultural Committee of The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation

13 The Crow
    Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation

14 Tepee, Sun and Time
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15 Water Story
    Crow Tribal Historical and Cultural Commission

16 How Birds Learned to Fly
    The Fourteen Confederated Tribes from the Yakima Nation

17 Napi and the Bullberries
    Blackfeet Tribe

18 How Cottontail Lost His Tail
    The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon

19 Being Indian Is
    The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon

20 Why Animals and Man Can No Longer Talk to One Another
    The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon

For order information and prices of the above booklets and the Teacher's Manual, contact the publisher:

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