

Long ago, people made up stories to explain things that happened in nature.

In this text you will:

- read ***The Legend of Yakwawiak*** by Joseph Bruchac, which explains why an animal that lived long ago is no longer living.
- learn new vocabulary
- practice using a new verb tense called present perfect when speaking and writing
- write about an issue important to you

1. Think about what you know

Make a list of natural events you would like explained. For example, you may wonder: Why does it thunder? Why do leaves change colors? What causes earthquakes?

Use these frames to help write your ideas.

I wonder why _____.

I wonder what _____.

I want to know what _____.

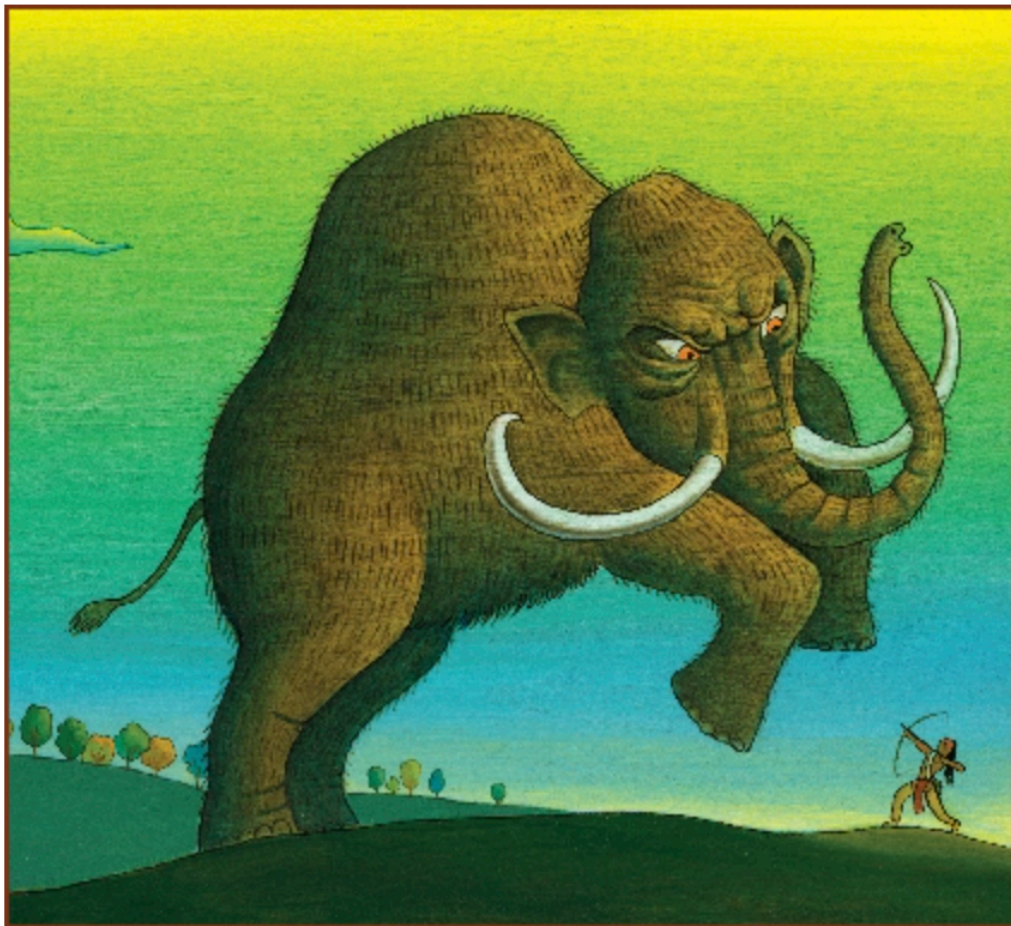
Write your ideas.

2. Read

The Legend of the Yakwawiak

by Joseph and James Bruchac

illustrated by Stefano Vitale



Of all the **creatures** that walked the earth on four legs, the Yakwawiak were the largest. The earth shook under their feet, and the other animals ran from them, for these **monsters** were **bad-tempered** and unfriendly. The **human** beings had been given permission by Kitselemukong, the Great Mystery, to hunt the animals for food. But they too were afraid of the Yakwawiak.

The skin and the hair of the Yakwawiak were so thick that no arrow could **pierce** them. The **two great tusks** of these monsters were as sharp as spears, and their long noses were like great snakes. The Yakwawiak **hurled** down the trees and muddied the springs.

They **trampled** everything underfoot as they went about the land. They crushed the humans and the animals under their feet, and the people had to hide in caves to escape them. Those great monsters did not remember the words of Kitselemukong, who said that all beings on earth should live together. The Yakwawiak had no respect for any other living thing.

creature - an animal

monster - an animal that scares people because of how it looks or acts

human - having the traits or characteristics of people

bad-tempered - mean

pierce- cut through

two great tusks-



hurled - threw

trampled- stepped on

At last, one man **could take it no longer**. This man, whose name was Two Hawks Flying, left the caves where all the people were hiding from the great monsters. He climbed to the top of the highest mountain. He made a fire and prayed to the Creator. He placed tobacco on the **glowing** coals.

As the smoke rose up into the sky, he spoke his words to Kitselemukong. "Great Mystery," Two Hawks Flying said, "you are the one who made all things. You are the one who said that we should all live together and respect each other. But the Yakwawiak have forgotten your words. They wish to kill all of the other beings in the world. Help us, Creator, or we will all be **destroyed**."

Kitselemukong **saw that** this could not continue and decided to **take pity on** the people.

A great light appeared in front of Two Hawks Flying.

"Hear me," said a voice from within that light, which was Kitselemukong. "I will help you. Call all of the people and the animals together. Have them **gather** here at dawn."

"I will do as you say," said Two Hawks Flying.

Then he went to speak to the people and all of the other animals.

could take it no longer- decided to do something about the problem

glowing- hot

destroy- to ruin or make useless



saw that- knew, realized

take pity on- help

gather- to come together in a group

“Kitselemukong has told me that all of us must come together in **council**,” Two Hawks Flying said.

Everyone who heard him, both the humans and the animals, knew that his words were true, and they began to gather.

The wolf and the bear, the moose and the mountain lion, the lynx and the wolverine, the elk and deer and all of the other animals, including many whose names are now forgotten, came together. The human beings came from their hiding places in the caves and joined them. They all gathered on the mountaintop where Two Hawks Flying had prayed.

“You must **drive the Yakwawiak from the land**,” the voice of Kitselemukong said from within that great glowing light. “They have forgotten to respect other beings. Now you must all join together and **make war on** them.”

So the people and all of the animals began to make war on the Yakwawiak. Side by side, they marched together toward the Yakwawiak, but the Yakwawiak were waiting. The earth shook under their feet as they **charged**, and the fight began.

council - a meeting to discuss actions

drive the Yakwawiak from the land- make the Yakwawiak leave the places you live

make war on- fight

charged- ran toward each other



Kitselemukong watched from the top of the highest mountain as they fought. It was a hard **battle**, for the Yakwawiak were strong. The Yakwawiak tried to **crush** the animals and people beneath their huge feet. They stabbed them with their sharp tusks and threw them up into the air with their trunks. The piercing sound of their screams as they fought was terrible to hear. Even when they were wounded and bleeding, the huge monsters continued to fight.

battle- a fight between people or armies

powerful - strong

crush- flatten, kill

heart - middle, center

All through that long day, the fight went back and forth. It went from the edge of the great salt water to the wide river that flows through the **heart** of the land. Many of the bravest animals, those who were almost as large and **powerful** as the Yakwawiak, were killed. The giant bear and the great wolf fell, and the huge beaver fell in battle. Only their bones buried in the earth show that they ever lived. Many of the people and the other animals were also killed in the fight, but they still fought bravely. One of the bravest was Two Hawks Flying.



The air was filled with the terrible screams of the Yakwawiak as they fought. Mountains were pushed over and valleys **gouged out** by the monsters as they fought. The earth sank down and became **marshy** as it was trampled under the feet of the huge creatures. Blood soaked into the ground.

But Two Hawks Flying saw that the Yakwawiak were too powerful. The human beings and the animals could not defeat them alone.

“Great One,” he shouted, “you must help us now.”

gouged out- dug into the ground; made

marshy- wet and muddy

So Kitselemukong began to hurl down lightning from the top of the highest mountain. Each time a bolt of lightning struck, one of the Yakwawiak was killed. Finally, only the largest of the terrible monsters remained. He was so large that the other monsters seemed small in comparison. It seemed that nothing could defeat him. Each time a lightning bolt was hurled at him, he knocked it away with his tusks. But this one **Yakwawi** had been wounded many times, and he was growing weaker. At last he turned and began to run. He ran toward the cold north land, where no trees grow and there is always ice and snow. Some tried to follow him, but Two Hawks Flying called them back.

“No,” he said. “That one is the last of his kind. He will no longer bother us.”

Some say that the Yakwawi is still hiding there to this day. You may hear his awful cry in the howl of the north wind. Sometimes, it is said, a lone hunter **may chance upon** the Yakwawi in that far northern land. If that hunter has not been a good man, if he has killed animals needlessly and not shared with others, such a hunter never returns to his people.

When we dig into the earth in the places where the battle raged long ago, we find the bones and the giant tusks of the Yakwawiak. Nothing else remains of them in the lands of the Lenape, the human beings.

But Kitselemukong left one other sign on the earth of that great battle. In the marshlands created by that long ago fight, there where the blood soaked into the earth, Kitselemukong made a new berry grow. Its skin is as red as the blood that was shed. It is the cranberry. When the people see it, they remember **the fate of** the Yakwawiak, those great creatures who had no respect for the rest of the creation.

Yakwawi- one Yakwawiak

may chance upon- might meet

the fate of -what happened to



The Mighty Mastodon

It's true: Yakwawiak really did roam North America more than 10,000 years ago. We know them today as the American mastodon. These huge animals were actually relatives of the modern elephant. Adult mastodon stood approximately ten feet tall. They weighed as much as eight tons. Their tusks were more than eight feet long!

Answer these questions using details from the text.

1. In your own words, describe the Yakwawiak. Why are they considered monsters?
2. Why does Two Hawks Flying ask Kitselemukong for help?
3. Why is the battle against the Yawawiak so difficult to win?
4. How are the Yakwawiak destroyed?
5. How does the story of the Yawawiak relate to the theme “Global Warnings”?
6. A legend is a story about the past. What clues tell you that the battle with the Yakwawiak took place long ago?
7. Do you think the decision to not destroy the last Yakwawiak was a good one? Explain your thinking.

3. Vocabulary

Choose 6 words from the text. Use the text, a dictionary, or computer to complete each word.

| | | |
|------------|--|----------------|
| Definition | | Picture |
| Sentence | | In my language |

| | | |
|------------|--|----------------|
| Definition | | Picture |
| Sentence | | In my language |

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| Sentence | In my language |

4. Grammar

Use Verbs in the Present Perfect Tense

- If you know when an action happened in the past, use a **past tense** verb.

| | |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| EXAMPLE | I helped last week. |
|----------------|----------------------------|

- If you're not sure when a past action happened, use a **verb** in the **present perfect tense**.

| | |
|----------------|---|
| EXAMPLE | Volunteers have helped people in the past. |
|----------------|---|

- You can also use the present perfect tense to show that an action began in the past and may still be happening now.

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| EXAMPLES | Mrs. Park and other volunteers have served many meals to the homeless. (And they are probably still serving meals.) |
| | Mrs. Park has served meals at the soup kitchen every Saturday. (And she is probably still serving meals on Saturdays.) |

- To form the present perfect, use the helping verb **have** or **has** plus the **past participle** of the main verb. For regular verbs, the past participle ends in **-ed**.

Verb Past Tense Past Participle

| | | |
|-------|--------|--------|
| help | helped | helped |
| serve | served | served |
| try | tried | tried |

Say each sentence. Choose and write the correct form of the verb.

1. Last year, Mr. Lopez (opened/has opened) a soup kitchen.
2. He (tried/has tried) opening a soup kitchen in our neighborhood for a long time.
3. People in the community (wanted/have wanted) to help the homeless for a while.
4. Many teens (babysat/have babysat) at neighbors' homes before.
5. Alexis (agreed/has agreed) to babysit one day a week.
6. She always (enjoyed/has enjoyed) the chance to help others.

Complete each sentence. Write the present perfect form of the verb in parentheses.

7. Since June, the village _____ food. (need)
8. The people _____ for rice and beans. (ask)
9. Those foods _____ them with good nutrition. (provide)
10. Each family _____ rice for a variety of meals. (use)
11. Often they _____ the beans in with the rice. (mix)

Complete each sentence. Use the past or present perfect form of the verb in parentheses, whichever is correct.

12. Staples like rice and beans _____ people survive. **(help)**
13. Villagers often _____ the dry foods for later. **(store)**
14. The people _____ all of the stored food two days ago. **(use)**
15. Yesterday, a truck _____ with more. **(arrive)**

**Complete each sentence with a verb in the present perfect tense.
Choose words from the box.**

supply provide satisfy depend help search

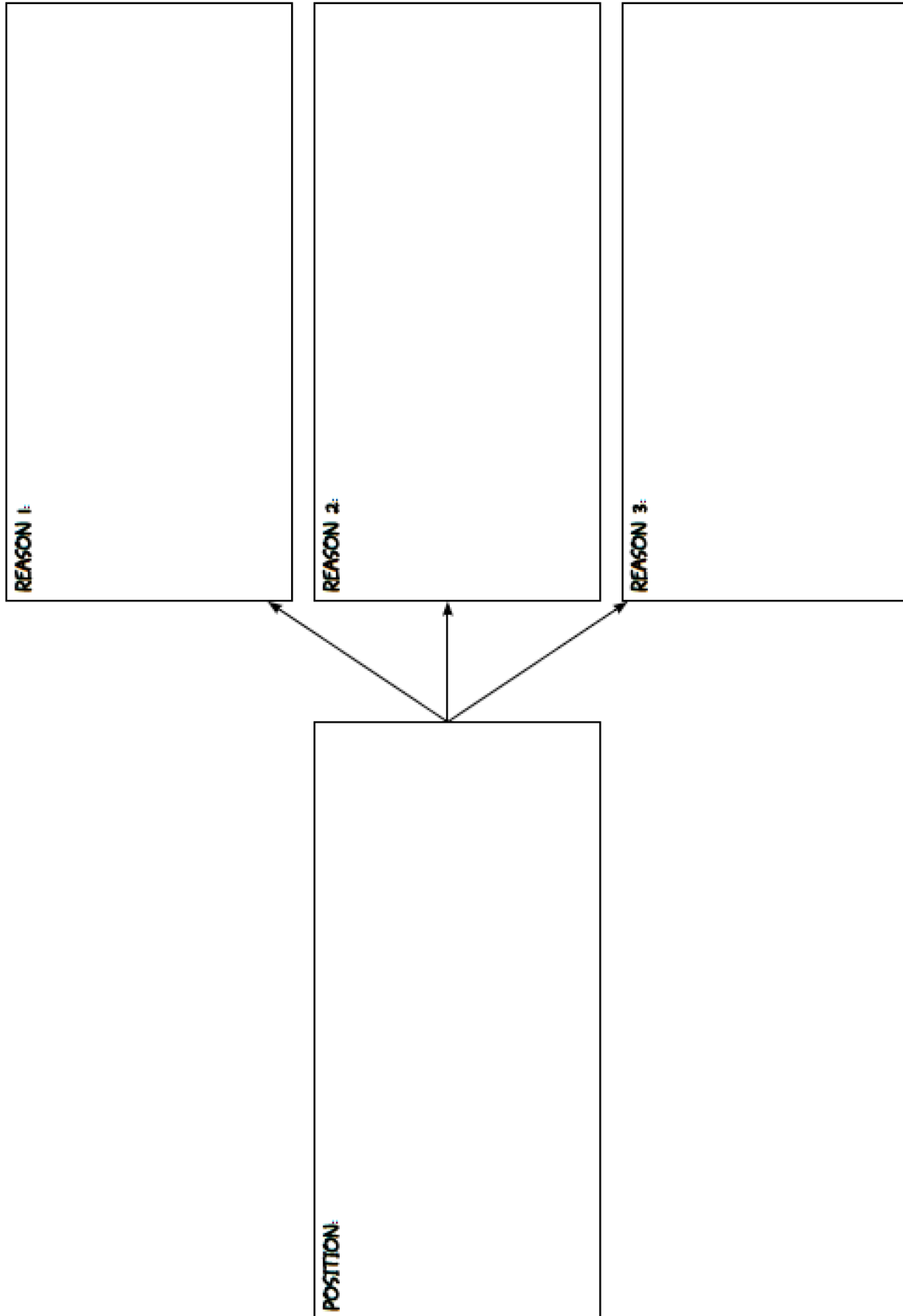
Basic, or staple, foods _____ people survive. These foods _____ the fats, protein, and carbohydrates people need. Rice, maize, and potatoes _____ carbohydrates. In some places, olive or coconut oil _____ the need for fats. Wherever possible, a villager _____ supply provide satisfy depend help search for a good place to fish. Many families _____ on the fish for their protein.

5. Writing: Plan a Persuasive Essay

Write down some issues that affect you or your community. Explain your position on each issue and what you. The first is an example. Write 2 more.

| Issues I Care About | Why I Care |
|-------------------------------|--|
| People are cutting down trees | I care because animals are losing their homes. |
| | |
| | |

Choose one issue. Organize your main supporting points. Use the graphic organizer to identify your main position and your supporting reasons.



6. Practice Reading and Speaking

Practice reading the text and what you wrote. Then read it to a parent or sibling. Check each when you are done.

| | ✓ To myself | ✓ To someone else |
|---|-------------|-------------------|
| I can tell what I wonder or what to know | | |
| I can read a page of <i>The Legend of Yakwawiak</i> out loud. | | |
| I can teach the vocabulary words I chose. | | |
| I can read sentences using past and present perfect verbs. | | |
| I can discuss details from my persuasive organizer. | | |