

Little Mud-Face

An American Indian Cinderella Tale

retold by Dina McClellan

Long ago, a hunter and his three daughters lived near a lake. Oldest Sister and Middle Sister were mean to their little sister. They made her do all the work.

The little sister had to cook and clean. She carried heavy sticks for the fire. Her face and arms were always dirty. People called her Little Mud-Face.



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READ & RESPOND

Literary Elements

When and where does this story take place?



Across the lake was the wigwam of Strong Wind and his sister, Bright Eyes. Bright Eyes loved her brother very much. She could see and hear him. Most other people could not.

One day, Bright Eyes came to the village. “Strong Wind and I are looking for someone to join our happy family,” she said. “Only someone who tells the truth may live with us.”

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READ & RESPOND

Literary Elements

Why does Bright Eyes come to the village?

Oldest Sister put on her best clothes. She found Bright Eyes by the lake.

“Strong Wind is out fishing,” said Bright Eyes. “Can you see him in his canoe?”

“Of course I can,” said Oldest Sister.

“What is his bowstring made of?” Bright Eyes asked.

“The hide of a deer,” said Oldest Sister.

“Go home now,” said Bright Eyes.



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READ & RESPOND

Literary Elements

Why does Bright Eyes tell Oldest Sister to go home?

The next day Middle Sister set off. She, too, found Bright Eyes by the lake.

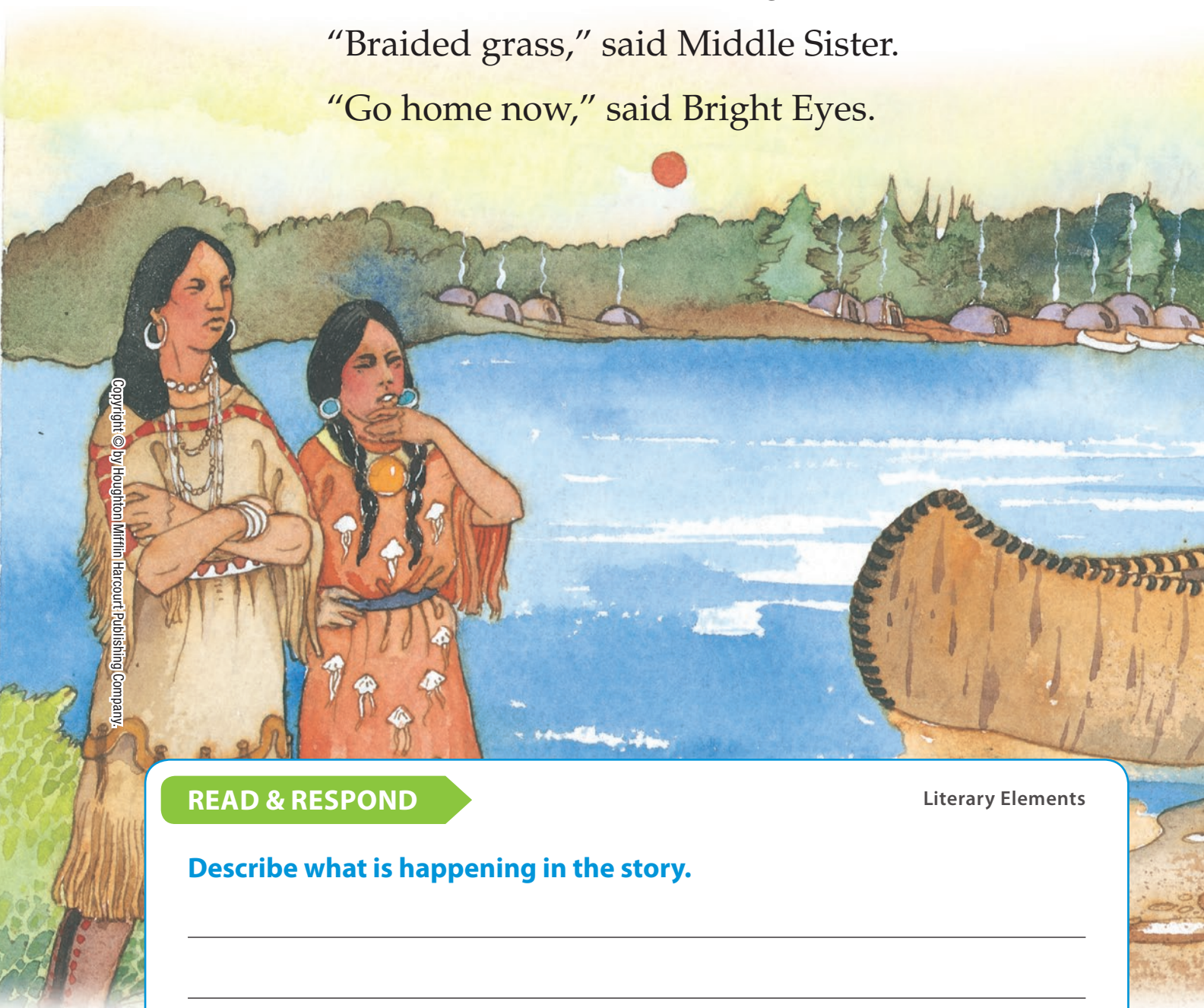
“Do you see my brother near his canoe?”

“Of course,” said Middle Sister.

“Then what is his bowstring made of?”

“Braided grass,” said Middle Sister.

“Go home now,” said Bright Eyes.



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READ & RESPOND

Literary Elements

Describe what is happening in the story.

The next day Little Mud-Face told her sisters that she would find Bright Eyes and Strong Wind. She would show them that she spoke the truth. Her sisters burst out laughing. Little Mud-Face didn't care.

She started walking around the lake. The land was rugged. Little Mud-Face climbed steep hills. She walked without pausing to catch her breath.



READ & RESPOND

Literary Elements

What is the mood at this point in the story?



At last Little Mud-Face reached the lake. The water was covered with mist. Bright Eyes was waiting for her.

“Can you see my brother?” she asked.

“Oh, yes,” said Little Mud-Face. “How special he is! He has a bowstring made from a rainbow!”



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Literary Elements

What do you finally learn about Strong Wind?



“You are right, Little Mud-Face,” said Bright Eyes. “Only now you will be Rainbow Star.” She led the girl to her wigwam. She cleaned her face and gave her a beautiful robe to wear.

Then Strong Wind came in. He looked at Rainbow Star fondly. “Someone who tells the truth will always be able to see the truth,” he said. “From now on, you will be part of our family.”



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READ & RESPOND

Literary Elements

How is the problem resolved?

Reread and Respond



1 How is Little Mud-Face different from her sisters?

Hint

Look on pages 100, 101, 103, and 104.

2 How do you know that Little Mud-Face wants very much to show Bright Eyes and Strong Wind that she tells the truth?

Hint

Look on page 102.

3 What is the theme of the story?

Hint

Reread the story to help you.