



Biindigen! Amik Says Welcome

Discussion Guide by Nancy Cooper

About the Book

It's a special day for Amik the beaver and her little sister, Nishiime. Their cousins are coming to visit! Amik is excited, but Nishiime feels nervous about meeting new people, and when the cousins finally arrive, Nishiime disappears.

Lively, immersive illustrations show Amik and her cousins as they search the woods for Nishiime. Each creature they encounter, introduced to readers using their Anishinaabe names, reveals how beavers help the forest community. A fish thanks them for digging canals in the mud that they swim through. A deer thanks the beavers for cutting down trees so they can reach the tastiest leaves. None of the creatures have seen Nishiime, but keen-eyed kids will have spotted her hiding in the background throughout the story.

Eventually, Nishiime returns to the group, having overcome her shyness by learning an important lesson: despite being from different places, the beavers are all united by the ways they support the forest ecosystem. With the perfect blend of fact and fun, this salute to the industrious beaver is also an energetic celebration of Indigenous perspectives, languages, and diversity.



Written by Nancy Cooper and
illustrated by Joshua Mangeshig
Pawis-Steckley

Before Reading

- Have you ever seen a beaver lodge or a beaver dam? Can you guess what shape a beaver lodge is?
- Did you know that sometimes beavers have birds or other animals living with them in the lodge? What kind of animals do you think would live with beavers?
- Do you have any cousins? What do you do when you all get together?
- If you were going to visit your cousin, what gift would you bring?

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CURRICULUM LINKS

Language Arts: Reading
Science: Needs and Characteristics
of Living Things; Habitats
Social Studies: Indigenous Peoples

READING LEVELS

Grade: 3
Fountas & Pinnell: P
Lexile® Measure: AD 570L
COMMON CORE: RL.3, W.3,
SL.3, L.3



After Reading

- At the beginning of the book, Nishiime is excited and scared at the same time. She is excited that her cousins are coming to visit and scared because she hasn't met them before. Can you remember a time when you felt excited and scared?
- What are some ways you can help if someone you love is scared?
- Nishiime is good at hiding. Did you find all her hiding places?
- Amik takes her cousins all over the forest to visit the animals and fish that live there. Where would you take your cousins if they came to visit you?
- Did you know that the beaver's long front teeth never stop growing? That's why they are always chewing wood and bark. Do you have anything on your body that is always growing?
- What is fun about family gatherings?
- How many beavers are there in *Biindigen! Amik Says Welcome*? Did you count them all?
- If you could be any character in the book, which one would you be and why?
- Why are beavers so important? Can you guess two reasons?
- A very long time ago, beavers were huge! They were the same size as bears are today. What is the largest wild animal you have ever seen?

Activities

- Take a trip out to a park that has a pond.
 - What kinds of birds and animals do you see? Are there any beavers?
 - Are there any trees that have been cut down by a beaver?
 - Look for silvery minnows or fat black tadpoles in the shallow water.
 - If there is a beaver lodge or dam in the park, how do you think beavers have changed the landscape?
- What do you think the inside of a beaver lodge looks like? Using your imagination, get some paper and draw what you think the inside looks like.

