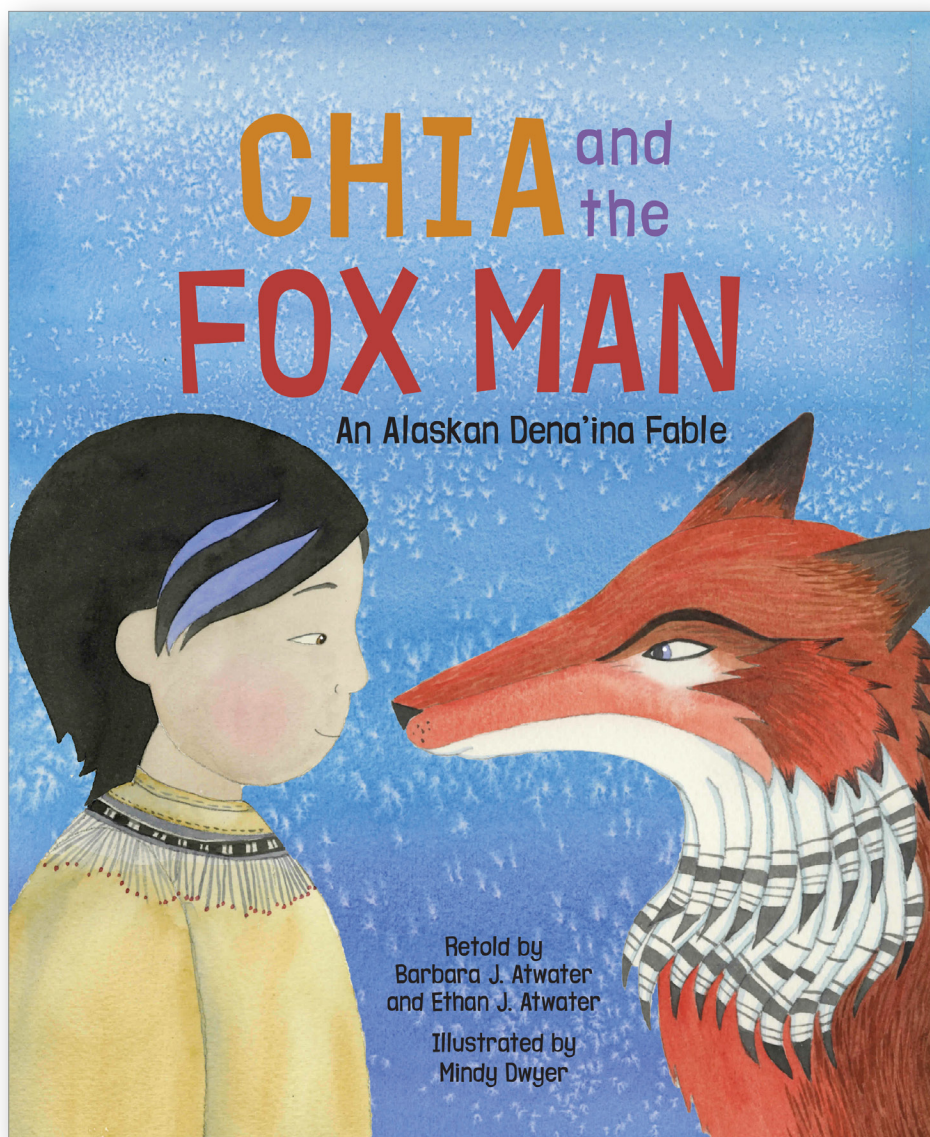


BOOK GUIDE FOR

Chia and the Fox Man

Retold by Barbara J. Atwater and Ethan J. Atwater
Illustrated by Mindy Dwyer



Fry Readability:
Lexile Measure: AD560L
Recommended for ages 5–7

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SUMMARY

From the same team that brought you *How Raven Got His Crooked Nose*, *Chia and the Fox Man* is a retelling of a traditional Alaskan fable from Dena'ina elder Walter Johnson.

Chia comes from a village that is going through a difficult time. Every day he along with everyone else works hard, but the village does not have enough food and he goes to bed hungry. One night a storm keeps waking him. Chia senses something strange is going on and ventures out into the storm where he encounters the legendary Fox Man. Chia learns from the Fox Man how important it is to do the right thing, especially when it's hard, and in doing so the Fox Man helps the village.



About the Authors

Barbara J. Atwater is the daughter of George and Dolly (Foss) Jacko and was raised in the village of Pedro Bay, Alaska. Her great uncle, respected Dena'ina elder Walter Johnson, told her many Dena'ina fables that she felt needed to be shared. Barbara has retired from teaching but continues to educate people about the Dena'ina culture.



Ethan J. Atwater is Barbara's son and was also raised in Pedro Bay. As a lover of stories, he enjoyed listening to his great, great uncle's fables and learning about the Dena'ina people and his culture in this way. Ethan lives in Anchorage, where he works at a local bookstore.



About the Illustrator

Mindy Dwyer is the author and illustrator of several Alaska-inspired books, including *How Raven Got His Crooked Nose*. Her favorite stories have always been the fairy tales, where a kind of magic still dances in the shadows from an ancient world.

PRE-READING DISCUSSION

- This story is retold by mother and son Barbara J. Atwater and Ethan J. Atwater. How is a story “retold” by someone different from it being “written” by someone? What hints does that tell you about what kind of story Chia and the Fox Man is?
- Define the terms “fable”, “legend”, and “myth.” Think about some fables, legends, or myths you know already, either from books and movies or from your family.
- Look at the cover of the book. Who do you think the two main characters are? What do their physical characteristics tell you about who they are?

POST-READING DISCUSSION

- Some pages have some small words at the bottom. What language are these words in? What do each of the words mean?
- In the beginning of the book, Chia says that things in the village were not good. What are some reasons for why Chia says this?
- What is hunger, and why do you think villages like Chia’s suffer from hunger? Do people today suffer from hunger?
- Chia is an orphan. What does it mean to be an orphan? Are there children today who are orphans?
- Chia has chores to do in the village, even though he is young. What is the purpose of chores? What are Chia’s chores? Do you have any chores you do at home?
- In the middle of the night, Chia wakes up and goes outside because he senses something strange going on. What does Chia discover? What does Chia do to make the storm stop?
- After Chia steals the duguli, the Fox Man appears in Chia’s dreams. Can you find all the instances the Fox Man’s face is in the background?
- Chia realizes that taking the duguli from the Fox Man was wrong. Do you think it was hard for him to admit this? How does Chia make up for his mistake?
- How does the Fox Man help the village? Look for clues to how Chia’s life improves.
- At the end of the book, it says, “Doing the right thing isn’t always easy. But doing the right thing is always best.” Can you think of a time when you took a shortcut to something that ended up making things worse? What should you have done instead?

SOCIAL HISTORY

- The Dena'ina people are a Native people who live in the southern part of Alaska. Look at the "More About Alaskan Dena'ina Stories" note at the back of the book and summarize a few points about who the Dena'ina people are and the stories they tell.
- What are some things you didn't know before about the Dena'ina people? How does the story of Chia share the Dena'ina culture?
- The authors were told this story from their Uncle Walter, a respected Dena'ina elder. How does passing stories down through family generations contribute to cultural history? What do these stories reveal or tell us?
- Do you know of any stories your family or an older person has passed down or shared with you? Tell the story. What does this story teach or reveal to us?



MAKE A DRINKING TUBE

On page 26 and 28, Chia is wearing his drinking tube. This was an important utensil made from a hollowed-out bone and fastened to a piece of decorated leather that hung around the neck. The Dena'ina were known for their beautiful graphic designs they put on their clothing and utensils and tools. One could tell the family and/or clan a person was from by the design and pattern they wore.

To make your own drinking tube, you will need:

- bamboo drinking straw
- scissors
- ribbon
- markers, beads and glue, and other decorating materials

Directions for making your drinking tube:

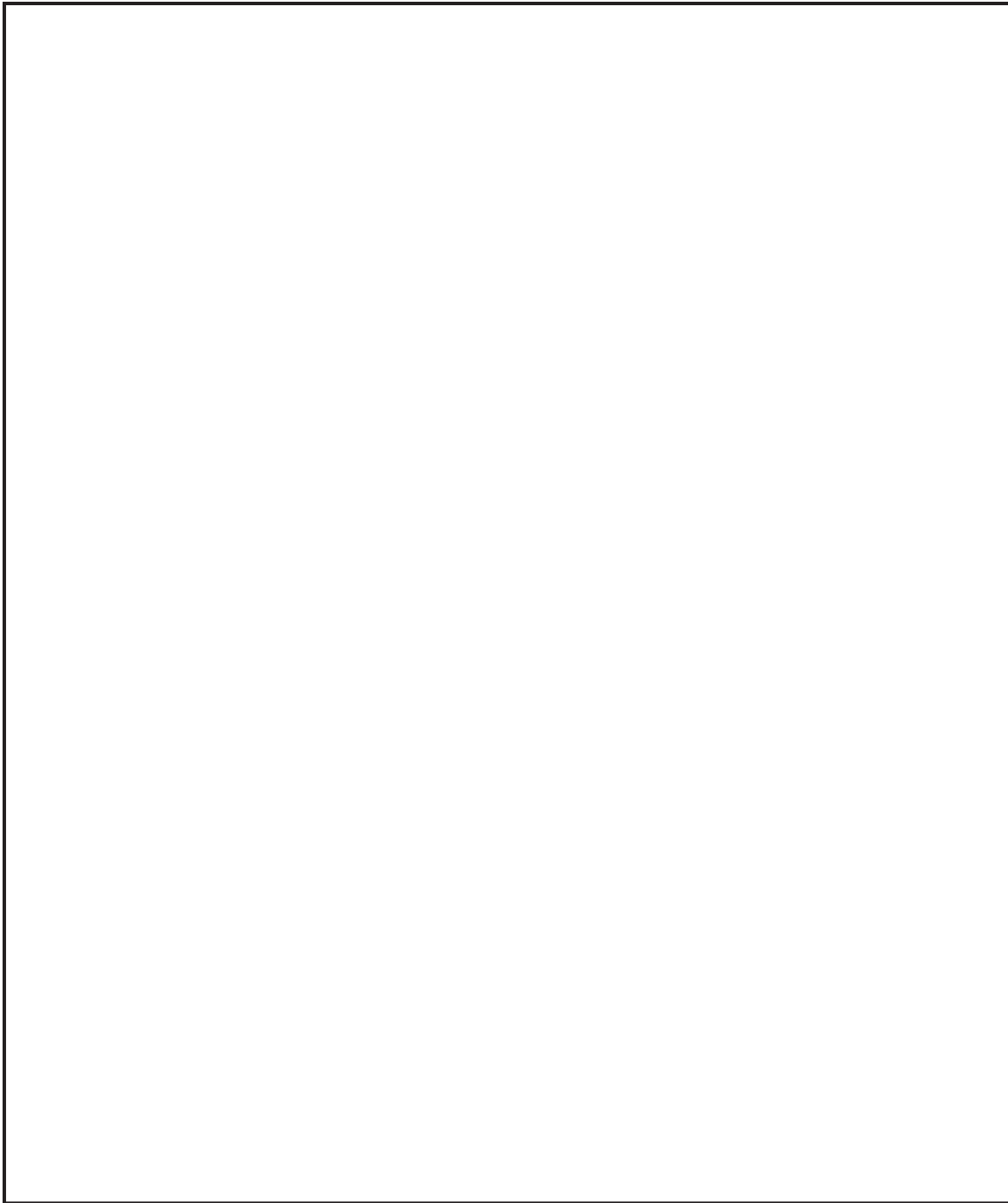
1. Cut the straw in half.
2. Cut a long piece of ribbon. Tie the ribbon around the straw and double-knot the ends together so that you can wear it around your neck.
3. Decorate the ribbon! Write your name on it and create your own special pattern to make it special.

To see some patterns and learn more about the Dena'ina utensils, tools, and clothing, visit <https://alaska.si.edu/>.

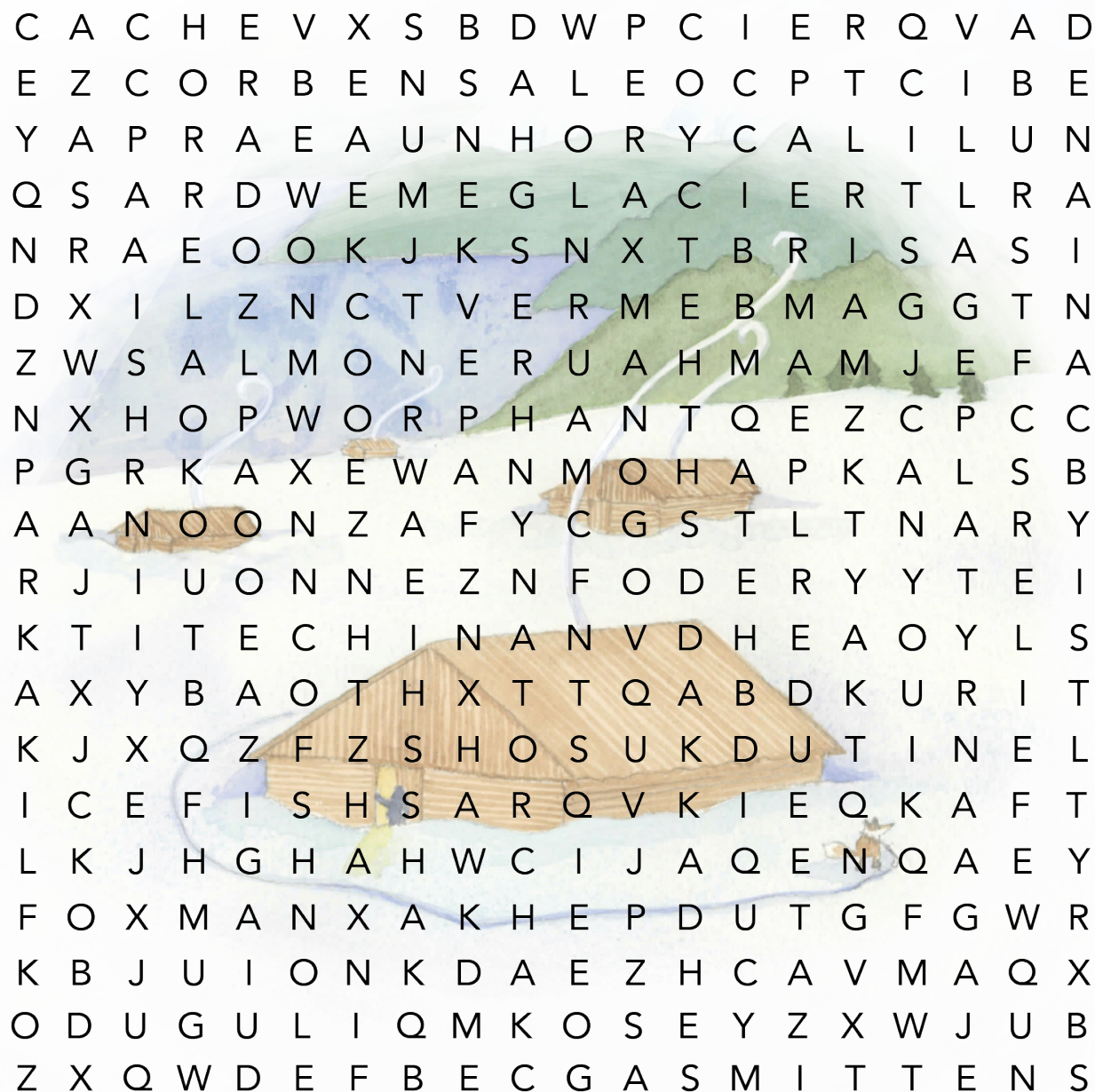


DRAW THE FOX MAN

Imagine you are Chia and you went out in the middle of the night and saw the Fox Man in the storm. What does the Fox Man look like? What is he doing? Draw your own interpretation of the Fox Man.



WORD SEARCH



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Cache
Chin'an
Dena'ina

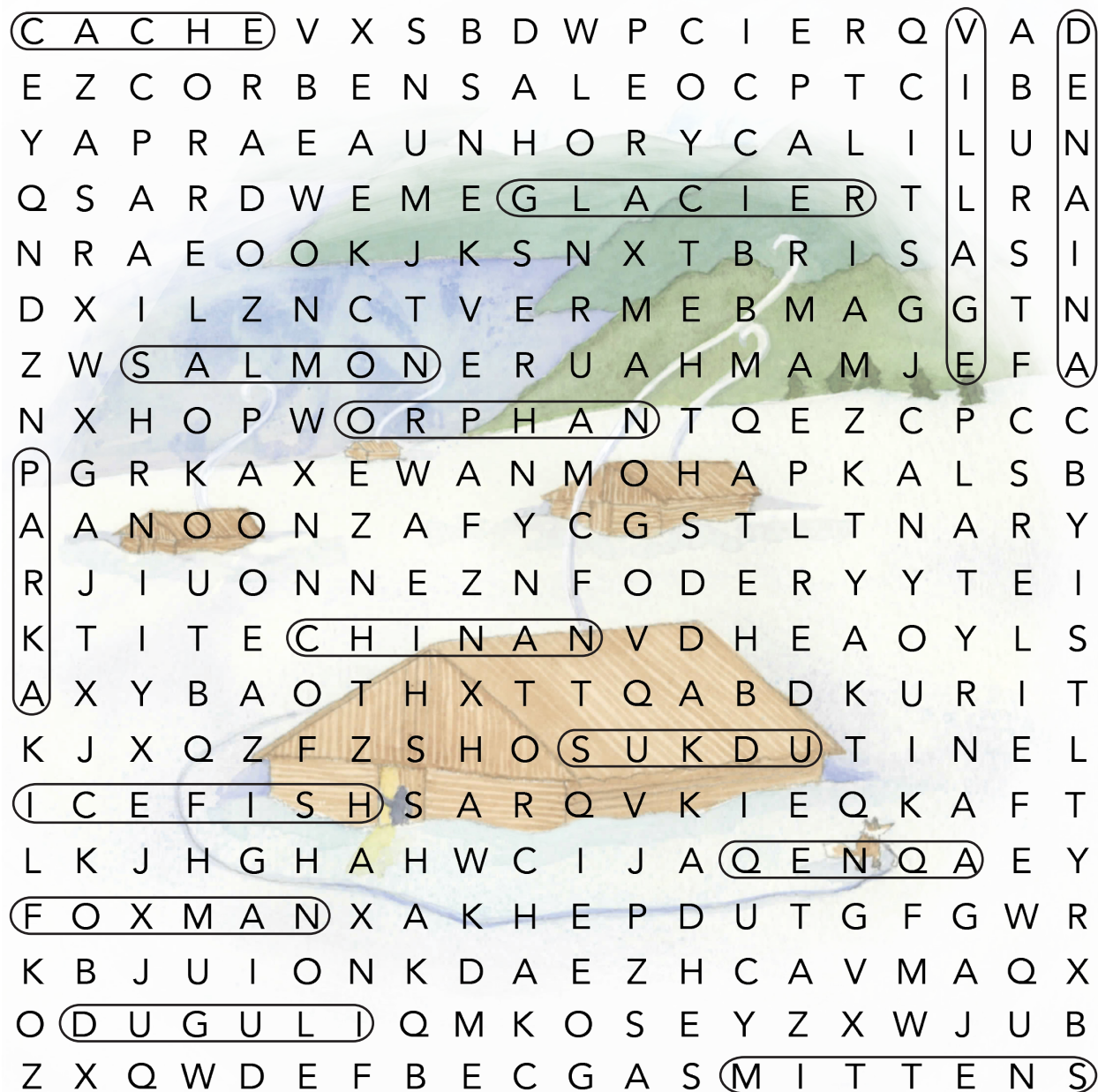
Duguli
Fox Man
Glacier

Ice Fish
Mittens
Orphan

Parka
Qenq'a
Salmon

Sukdu
Village

WORD SEARCH ANSWER KEY



Cache
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