



A short story tells a story to the reader but is not an entire book such as a novel. It is usually fiction or creative non-fiction. It can be one page to ten pages... but is not a really long story such as a novel that can be 30 to 300 pages! This is a short story taken from *Of Trees and Their Wisdom*, by Albert Dumont.

Biography of the Author: Here is a short story by Algonquin author, Albert Dumont. He is from Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg which is a First Nations reserve 130 km. north of Ottawa. He is the father of two daughters and grandfather of one. He has written several books and greeting cards and also has done writing circles in community venues such as schools, prisons, and Indigenous run centers.

Part A. - Read this story and underline all words that you do not know. Use a dictionary to write a list of these words with a good definition. Do this on lined paper.

Part B - Circle each compound word.

Part C - Read it through and answer the questions that follow.

The Sap is Sweet but the Syrup is Sweeter

① There lived long ago, a young woman whose heart was full of respect for all things place on her homeland by Great Spirit. ② She was a woman gifted with extraordinary wisdom and was blessed also, with a soothing voice. ③ A voice so calm and reassuring that even the birds ceased in their songs to revel in hers. ④ She was smart in her chores and especially talented at preparing game the hunters had brought in for feasting.

⑤ Now, there lived in her village, two handsome young men who sought to take her hand in marriage. ⑥ The young woman was fond of both of them and knew she would take one of the two as her life's partner but the choice would be a difficult one to make. ⑦ She said to her grandfather, "Which one should I chose?" ⑧ The old man answered, " The sap is sweet but the syrup is sweeter." ⑨ She knew right away what he meant. ⑩ She chose as her husband the young man who was more patient and loving than the other suitor. ⑪ The one who was gentle by nature but fiercely protective of the great traditions of their people. ⑫ She chose as



her husband the one who was equally charming, attentive and respectful of the oldest as he was of the youngest in the community. ⑬ The one who had given the name “Ininatig” which means Maple.

Part 3 - Questions about this short story- Please answer in your own words.

1. Who is the **author**?

2. What **First Nation** is he from?

3. What is the **title** of this short story?

4. What are the three **characters** in this story:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

5. What do you think **Great Spirit (Kitchi Manitou** in Algonquin) refers to?

6. Why did birds stop their songs when around the young woman in the story?

7. Using the internet, look up what type of **game**, hunters might hunt for in Algonquin territory (the area between Ottawa, Montreal, North Bay, Timmins, Temiskaming

8. What difficult choice did the young woman have to make?



9. What advice did the grandfather give her?

10. What was her final decision?

11. What does **Ininatig** mean?

12. What is the setting for this story? (place and time it is set in)

Part Four – Reading the story and analysing pronoun use:

Note: two sentences do not have pronouns: ⑧ & ⑬

Sentence Number	First pronoun in the sentence	Who does the pronoun refer to?	Is it a subjective, objective, possessive or reflective pronoun?
①	her	the young woman	possessive
②			
③			
④			
⑤			
⑥			
⑦			
⑨			
⑩			
⑫			

Part Five: Your opinion: Do you think following her grandfather’s advice was a good idea for the young woman to do? Why/Why not?