

Directions: Read the story and answer the questions that follow.

Mishosha

Adapted from a Chippewa Story

originally told by Frances Jenkins Olcott

- 1 *The Chippewa are one of the largest Native-American groups in North America. While they are often called Chippewa in the United States, they are often known as Ojibwe, especially in Canada. They once controlled a large part of the north-central United States and south-central Canada, near the Great Lakes, including all of what is now Michigan and northern Wisconsin.*



- 2 Two brothers, traveling through a great forest, came to the shores of a great lake. Seeing that his brother was terribly hungry, the elder brother strode into the lake to catch a fish, but a mysterious canoe passed by, fast as a bolt of lightning, and a hand pulled him aboard. There sat an old man, the magician Mishosha. "Grandfather," said the elder brother, "my younger brother sits, hungry, at the edge of the lake. Will you please return me there, or bring my brother with us?"
- 3 But Mishosha simply laughed, and the canoe flew through the air to an enchanted island, where the magician's two daughters waited. Calling to the eldest daughter, Mishosha said, "I have brought the young man who will be your husband."
- 4 But the elder brother heard the elder daughter whispering. "Our father has brought another victim under the guise of bringing me a husband," she said to her sister. "Surely, this young man will perish."
- 5 Soon, Mishosha came to him and said, "Come, young warrior, we shall venture to a secret island known only to me, where we will gather sea gull eggs." The elder brother suspected a trap; sure enough, when the magical canoe reached the island, Mishosha forced him out and called, "Long have you wanted a gift from me, gulls, and today I bring you this boy to devour!" And the canoe flew away, leaving the elder brother behind to face a horde of ravenous sea gulls.



- 6 But he was ready. He caught the first gull that approached, and called out, "Any gull that tries to devour me will lose its head." Having frightened the gulls, he demanded, "Carry me back to Mishosha's island."
- 7 Mishosha betrayed no surprise when the elder brother returned, saying instead, "Now, young warrior, we shall gather beautiful pebbles to decorate the hut you will share with my eldest daughter." Though he was wary, the elder brother climbed into the magical canoe once more and away they flew, coming to rest at another island. Mishosha forced the elder brother out, shouting, "Long have you desired a gift from me, fishes, and today I bring you this boy to devour!" And as the canoe flew away, the water became a cauldron, churning and boiling with voracious fish.
- 8 The elder brother strode fearlessly into the water. "Fish of the great lake," he called, "you were given to people by the Great Spirit. If you eat my flesh, you call plague and pestilence upon yourselves." Having silenced the snapping jaws of the fish, he commanded, "Bear me across the water, back to Mishosha's island."
- 9 Again, Mishosha showed no surprise, instead welcoming the elder brother with open arms and announcing that it was time they went to hunt fresh game for the wedding feast. When the magician went to prepare for the journey, his daughters appeared and warned the elder brother, "Our father means to slay you himself. You must defeat him so you can rescue your brother and free us from this island prison." Hearing Mishosha returning, the elder sister whispered hurriedly: "Magic makes our father almost invulnerable, but he has one weakness: his feet."
- 10 Armed with this knowledge, the elder brother again climbed into the magical canoe with Mishosha. Away they flew, finally reaching a forest where snow lay thick on the ground. Mishosha led the way through the snow until, at sunset, they arrived at a lodge where a fire burned. Taking off his moccasins, Mishosha said, "Young warrior, lay your moccasins down by the fire to dry." The elder brother did as Mishosha said and, making a bed, lay down and feigned sleep. The arrogant magician, certain none could match his cunning, relaxed and soon sank into a deep sleep, whereupon the elder brother rose stealthily and threw Mishosha's moccasins into the fire.
- 11 In the morning, Mishosha searched for his moccasins but found only ashes. "It is nothing," he insisted, unwilling to show weakness before his intended victim. And so they walked through the snow in search of game, but Mishosha began to falter. Gathering what strength he had left, and trying to sound as if he was unafraid, he said, "Perhaps we should return to the canoe." It took hours to reach the lake; the magician seemed to grow older as they walked, becoming more twisted and gnarled with each step. Finally, they came to the shore where the magical canoe waited, but Mishosha's feet sank into the soil like roots, and when he reached for the heavens his arms became branches. The old magician was transformed into an ancient sycamore.

- 12 The elder brother climbed into the canoe, which took its new master back to the shore where his younger brother still waited. They returned to Mishosha's island, and the magician's daughters called out in joy, "You have freed us from our father! Bear us from this accursed island, and we will be your brides." And so the four returned to the mainland, to lead lives of happiness and peace.

38 Which of these is the main conflict in the story?

- F Individual vs. self
- G Individual vs. society
- H Individual vs. nature
- J Individual vs. supernatural

39 What is the overall theme of the story?

- A Intelligence and courage will be rewarded.
- B Good must always triumph over evil.
- C Loyalty to family is the most important virtue.
- D Magic is very dangerous and must be taken seriously.

40 What tone does the dialogue between the elder brother and Mishosha create?

- F An exciting, adventurous tone
- G A formal, solemn tone
- H A warm, friendly tone
- J A humorous, playful tone

41 By acting as if nothing has happened each time the elder brother returns, Mishosha shows that he is —

- A forgetful
- B dangerous
- C deceitful
- D apologetic

42 Which event is the climax of the story?

- F Mishosha's daughters decide to marry the two young brothers.
- G The elder brother defeats the sea gulls and the fish.
- H The elder brother hears the elder daughter whisper to her sister.
- J Mishosha's daughters reveal his plans to kill the elder brother directly.



43 In paragraph 11, the word transformed means —

- A protected
- B helped
- C changed
- D enclosed

44 What is the main idea of the introduction in paragraph 1?

- F The same Native-American group has multiple names, as the people are called Chippewa in the United States and Ojibwe in Canada.
- G Michigan and northern Wisconsin both once belonged to the Chippewa.
- H The Chippewa are a large Native-American group who once held parts of what is now the central United States and Canada.
- J The Chippewa are one of the largest remaining Native-American groups.

45 Which phrase from the passage is a simile?

- A “. . .fast as a bolt of lightning. . .”
- B “. . .a horde of ravenous sea gulls. . .”
- C “. . .silenced the snapping jaws. . .”
- D “. . .sound as if he was unafraid. . .”

46 In paragraph 7, what is meant by the author’s statement that “the water became a cauldron, churning and boiling with voracious fish”?

- F Mishosha used magic to heat the water, so that the elder brother would be safe from the fish.
- G The fish were so numerous and so hungry that they made the waters shake and bubble.
- H The situation was enough to make the elder brother extremely angry.
- J A whirlpool formed in the water, sweeping the fish closer to the elder brother.

47 Which word from the story has a root word that means “able to be harmed”?

- A gnarled
- B invulnerable
- C accursed
- D enchanted

