

## My Life



Don Heiny for Weekly Reader

*Nantai wears special Native American clothes at the powwow.*

First you hear the beat of the drum. Then the voices of the Quabbin Lake Singers all join in chorus. They sing in a language you probably have not heard before. It is a Native American language called Nipmuc.

The Quabbin Lake Singers are members of the Mann family. The group is made up of three brothers and their parents. They are Native Americans from the historical Nipmuc tribe in Massachusetts.

*Weekly Reader* saw the family perform at a **powwow** in Connecticut. A powwow is a Native American celebration.

## Culture Through Song

Eight-year-old Nantai (NAN-tigh) and his brothers, ages 7 and 9, are typical boys. They go to public school, play video games, and skateboard.

Every Saturday, the family practices drumming and singing. "The boys look forward to it," said their dad. "They love their drum."

Some of the songs they perform are very old. They also write their own songs.

During the summer and other school vacations, the family travels around the United States

and Canada. They perform their songs and share their **culture**. A person's culture is his or her way of life, ideas, and traditions.

"Not only are we having fun," said Nantai's father, "but we're keeping our culture alive."

## Some Facts about Native Americans!

Native Americans were the first people living in North America and South America. They have lived there for thousands of years.

- In the culture of many tribes, Earth is treated with respect. It is called Mother Earth.
- Women play a very important role in the culture of some Native American tribes. In many of the tribes, women have the final say on many important decisions.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What does Nantai like to do?

- A. play the drums
- B. play video games
- C. skateboard
- D. all of the above

2. Why does Nantai's dad probably want him to learn to sing and play traditional Nipmuc music?

- A. because the music is very hard to play
- B. because he wants his sons to know about their family's culture
- C. because the family earns a lot of money at concerts
- D. because he does not like modern music

3. What is an important role women have in many Native American tribes?

- A. They practice drumming and singing.
- B. They have the final say on important decisions.
- C. They perform at celebrations called powwows.
- D. They are treated with respect and called Mother Earth.

4. Why is "(NAN-tigh)" in parentheses?

- A. It is giving a definition.
- B. It should be read with a loud voice.
- C. It shows the reader how to pronounce the word.
- D. It is another language.

5. What is similar and what is different between you and Nantai?

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