



KINGS LANDING

MAPLE

THE FIRST TASTE OF SPRING



Maple, the First Taste of Spring

The folks at Kings Landing mark the arrival of spring with a beloved maple event called Maple, the First Taste of Spring. This event takes place in early March to celebrate the 200+ year history of collecting maple sap in New Brunswick.

This lesson highlights the experience at Maple, the First Taste of Spring and offers a bit of history on the demonstrations. Children who complete the lesson can make two maple-themed crafts and bake delicious maple dumplings.

Enjoy!



The Sugar Bush & Encampment

The discovery of maple sap is thanks to the Indigenous people of what is now known as eastern Canada. Over 400 years ago, people from France settled around the mouth of the Saint John River. The Acadians, as they came to be called, traded with the Indigenous people and established a close relationship. They learned the benefits of tapping the maple trees and processed the sap into syrup and sugar.

About 350 years ago, a Swedish explorer noted that during his travels to what is now New Brunswick, the Indigenous people gave him “more than anything else gifts of large pieces of sugar which stood us well in hand on our trip into the wilderness.” The Indigenous people held the sugar in very high esteem.

From *Out of Old Nova Scotia Kitchens*: “It has been recorded that in the early seventeenth century the Mi’kmaq used maple sap as a means of quenching thirst. Legend says they discovered it oozing from wood they were burning in the spring of the year. After that they drained the sap from the trees and boiled it in tub by dropping hot stones into it. A lengthy process then - but even today the sap must be boiled down a great deal in order to remove the high percentage of water.”

Since then, people have continued to mark the coming of spring by maple syrup and sugar making. As soon as the sun began to melt the snow, the settlers went into the woods and collect and boil sap from maple trees. They would set up an encampment near the biggest cluster of maple trees. This spot was called the sugar bush. Farmers would take as many people as they could muster into the sugar bush because the processing of transforming sap into sugar is very hard work!

The very last task in the sugar bush was an exciting one. Candy was made by dashing the thickest maple syrup on snow where it instantly hardened into candy. The settlers called this candy a “long-lick.” Even though families worked so hard to get sugar everyone looked forward to this tasty treat as a reward for all their labour!



Encampment Colouring Page

On the next page, you will see a drawing of a maple sugar bush encampment. Add colour to the image using crayons, pencil crayons or watercolour paints. Admire your beautiful creation or turn it into a puzzle!

Here's how to turn your colouring page into a 25-piece puzzle:

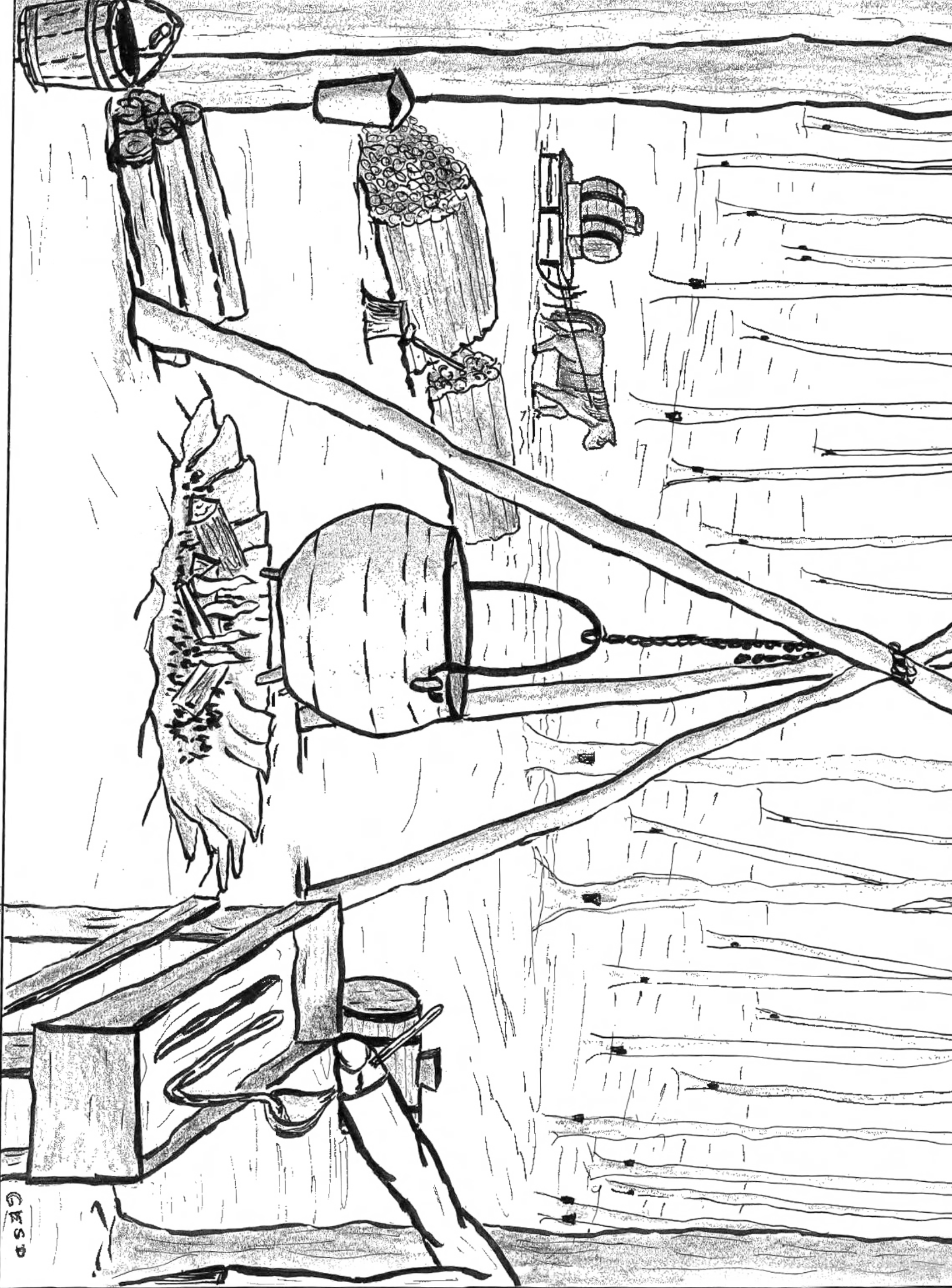
Materials:

- colouring page
- piece of cardboard (from a cereal box, delivery box, shoe box, etc.)
- pencil/pen/marker
- ruler
- glue
- scissors

Instructions:

1. Cut a piece of cardboard the same size as the colouring page (8.5 inches by 11 inches or 28 cm by 21.5 cm)
2. Draw grid lines on the piece of cardboard: the columns (lines up and down) should be 5.6 cm apart and the rows (lines from left to right) should be 4.3 cm apart.
3. Glue the blank side of the picture to blank side of the the cardboard. When finished, you should see your image on one side and the grid lines on the other side.
4. Once the glue is dry, cut along the grid lines, mix up the pieces, and your puzzle is ready!





Sap Bucket Thaumatrope

Colour the image on the next page and create the illusion of a bucket collecting sap on a maple tree by making a thaumatrope.

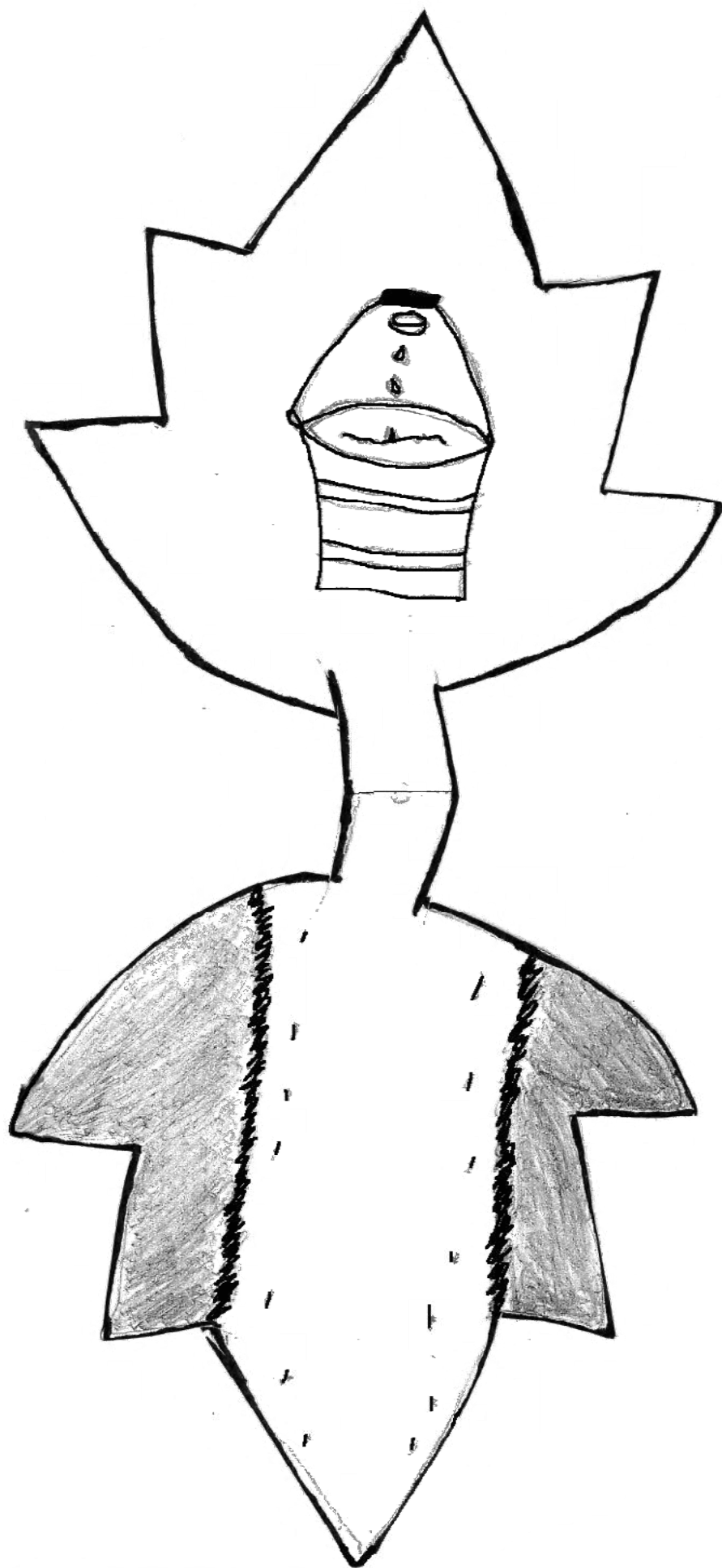
Materials:

- leaf image (on the next page)
- colouring utensils (crayons, pencil crayons, watercolour paints, etc.)
- scissors
- wooden skewers
- glue

Instructions:

1. Colour the image on the leaf.
2. Cut out the leaf.
3. Poke a small hole in the middle of the small line between both leaves.
4. Fold the leaves along this line so the blank sides are facing each other.
5. Stick the skewer through the small hole.
6. Glue the backs of the leaves together with the skewer inside and let it dry.
7. Spin the skewer between your hands to create the illusion!





Baking with Maple Syrup

Maple syrup is a natural sweetener that is often used in baking and cooking. This Maple Dumplings recipe from *Out of Old Nova Scotia Kitchens* was a popular treat during Kings Landing's Maple, the First Taste of Spring event. Here's how to make it at home.

Maple Syrup Dumplings

Ingredients:

- 2 cups pastry flour
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 3/4 cups milk
- 2 cups maple syrup
- 2 cups boiling water

Directions:

Sift together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Cut in the butter and add the milk to make a soft dough. In a saucepan, bring the maple syrup and water to a boil. Drop dumplings into the syrup, cover and cook about 20 minutes. Serve hot.



 MAPLE SYRUP DUMPLINGS 

2 cups pastry flour	3/4 cups milk
4 teaspoons baking powder	2 cups maple syrup
1 teaspoon salt	2 cups boiling water
2 tablespoons butter	

Sift together the flour, baking powder, and salt. Cut in the butter and add the milk to make a soft dough. In a saucepan, bring the maple syrup and water to a boil. Drop dumplings into the syrup, cover and cook about 20 minutes. Serve hot.

[Click here for source information.](#)