

Two Kettles

A Reading A-Z Level V Leveled Book

Word Count: 2,199

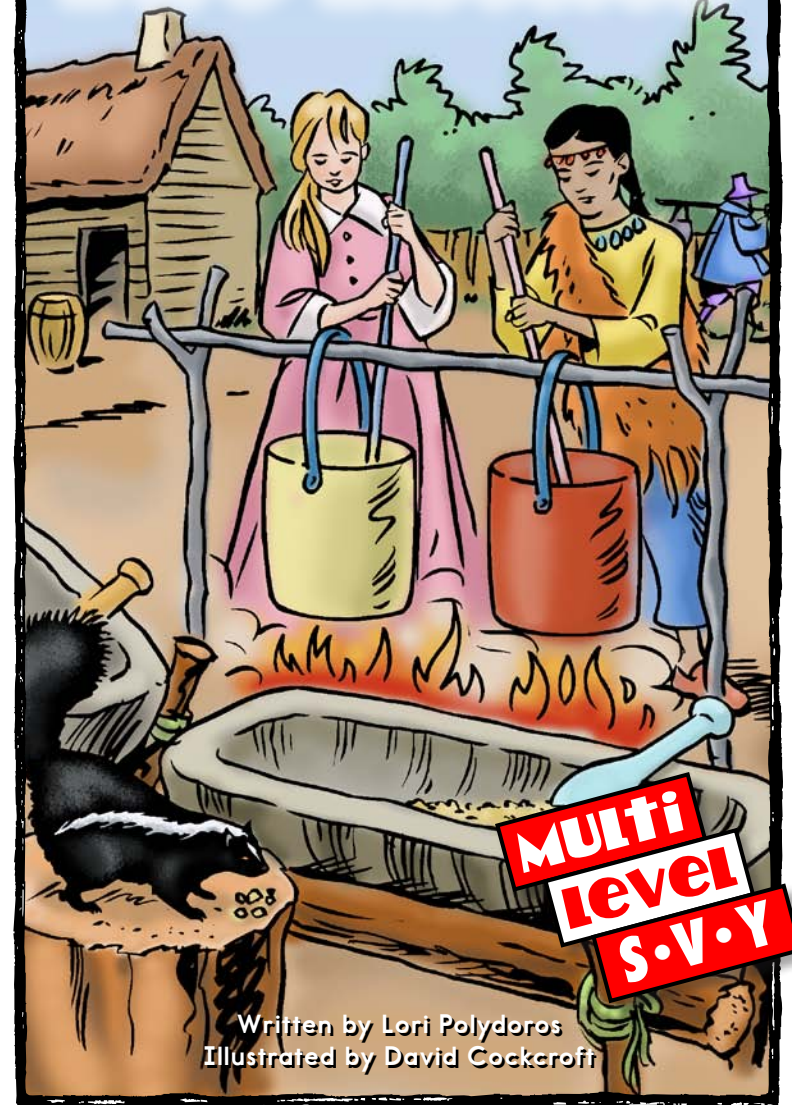


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Written by Lori Polydoros
Illustrated by David Cockcroft

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Correlation

LEVEL V

Fountas & Pinnell	Q
Reading Recovery	40
DRA	40



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Ellinor’s Surprise

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! The **muskets** fired near Plymouth Plantation. Ellinor stopped her work and ran outside to the garden. “Father, why is Captain Standish training soldiers so early?”

“The men are hunting for the feast we will share together!” her father answered as he picked a ripe orange **pompion**.

Ellinor’s face showed surprise. “What do you speak of?”

The new governor of the English colony, William Bradford, joined Ellinor and her father, saying, “This will be a fit celebration for a good harvest!”



“Sister, don’t you know?” Ellinor’s little brother said. “The men have gone **fowling** for our first feast!” Then he and their little sister ran off with the pompion.

“Is this true, father?” Ellinor’s heart pounded. There had not been much to celebrate over the past year. Ellinor and her family were a part of a group of 102 English colonists who sailed on the *Mayflower* to Plymouth Plantation in the winter of 1620.

“Yes, we will celebrate, even though we have suffered greatly,” he said.



Their first winter had been very hard on everyone. Only half of her village had lived until the spring. Her own mother had quickly died from disease. Luckily, a native man named Tisquantum, whom the colonists called *Squanto*, spoke English and agreed to live with them as a translator. He taught the people in Plymouth new ways to plant, hunt, fish, and store food. Without his help, Ellinor knew they would not have been able to live here.

Governor Bradford said, “Ellinor, there are now too few women left to prepare food for a feast. You are old enough and must join them to help.”

Ellinor nodded, but her heart was heavy with questions.

Little Deer's Worries

"Mother!" Little Deer called out as she pulled a piece of **sinew** (SIN-you) thread, made from deer tendon, through her long bone needle. Her pet skunk, Tiptoe, slept in her lap while she worked on a new moccasin.

"Mother, I need more **deerskin** for this . . . "

Tiptoe awoke, jumped from her lap, and ran out the door, with Little Deer right behind him. Hundreds of birds flew above, screeching loudly. Little Deer's mother walked up to her but stopped when she saw people walking out of their meeting place, the **longhouse**.



"Many shots were fired at the English village," Little Deer's mother said. "Our leader, Yellow Feather, meets with important leaders from nearby tribes."

Little Deer felt her stomach tighten. The English people should not live here. Her tribe, the Pokanoket (POH-kah-no-kit), was one of sixty-seven Wampanoag (wam-pa-NO-ag) nations. The "people of the first light" had fished the waters, planted crops, and hunted the animals in this area for thousands of years. Little Deer, like her elders, was taught to use the many resources of the land with respect in order to preserve them for the future.

"We do not know if the shots signal the Englishmen's preparation for war," Yellow Feather said. He hoped not, but Yellow Feather and the English had agreed to help each other in times of war. "We will talk with them to see if they need our help. Get ready. We leave soon."

A year ago, the English had arrived on Wampanoag land, building a village without asking permission. They knew little about living here and had few useful skills. They had depended on Tisquantum, a Patuxet Wampanoag, to teach them how to survive in this place.

Little Deer was angry at the English for taking Wampanoag land and bringing diseases. Thousands of her people had died. Plymouth Plantation had once been the village of Patuxet, before the entire village fell to the plague.

Now Little Deer felt as if a cloud had just darkened her world. There had not been a war in her village since she was small. Her people should not fight in the Englishmen's war. She ran down to the stream with Tiptoe, where she would let the water wash away her worry.



A Fit Feast

"Look! The Indians are coming here!" someone shouted.

From far down the hill, a very large group of Wampanoag men was walking toward Plymouth. Their leader, whom the English called Massasoit (MA-sa-soy-it), was in front. Ellinor shivered. She knew Governor Bradford had made peace with them, but still she worried. Ellinor did not understand the Wampanoag and their ways, or even how they dressed.



With Squanto as the translator, the governor welcomed Massasoit and his men.

“We heard many guns,” Squanto translated for Massasoit. “Do you prepare for war?”

“No,” the governor said. “There is no war. The men are hunting fowl for a feast. We celebrate a good harvest.”

Governor Bradford led Massasoit on a walk through the village. He pointed out the preparations being made. Governor Bradford said, “Please, would you and your people join us?”

Massasoit nodded, and Squanto said, “They will come. Yellow Feather will send men out to hunt deer for the feast. Others will bring the women and children from the village. They can help you prepare.”

“We are pleased,” said the governor. “Captain, tell everyone that King Massasoit and his people will celebrate with us.”

Ellinor’s heart dropped. So many more people! How would they cook enough food for them all?

A Joint Task

Little Deer walked behind her mother, clinging tightly to Tiptoe as they entered the English village. “What do I have to celebrate with the English?” she muttered. She stopped to tighten the *quahog* clam shell jewelry her mother had woven in her long black hair.

Little Deer felt the eyes of the colonists watching her. The English *sachem*, or leader, greeted the women and children. His smile was like a large *quahog* shell, and Little Deer did not trust him.

Tisquantum and a fat Englishman stood next to a cooking **hearth** outside one of the square English log homes. A short, yellow-haired English girl was standing near them. The girl did not look up at Little Deer when they arrived.



“Welcome to Plymouth,” the large-smile man said in greeting.

“The women and children would like to help prepare the food,” Tisquantum said.

“That is good!” he said. “Ellinor . . .”

The yellow-haired girl looked up.

“I want you to be in charge of preparing the **samp**, the corn porridge.”

Tisquantum spoke next. “Little Deer, you have learned well from your mother in the ways of making *Nasump*. You will assist this girl, Ellinor.”

Little Deer stepped back slightly and shook her head.

“We are guests here,” Little Deer’s mother said. “You will do as you are asked.”

The fat man said, “Grind the corn here,” as he pointed at a long, hollowed-out log. “Then you may choose the ingredients for the samp.”

Ellinor stepped away from Little Deer and Tiptoe.

Little Deer did not look up.

Making *Nasump*

Ellinor poured a cup of dried corn kernels into the hollowed log and began to grind them into flour with a heavy stone pestle.

Little Deer did the same. Neither girl spoke or looked at one another.

The skunk that sat at Little Deer’s feet made Ellinor nervous. She was not used to being so close to wild animals.



Both girls ground the corn for many hours. Ellinor was most uncomfortable and tired. Part of it was the hard work—but part was because of her cooking partner. Ellinor added the new flour to the large supply of corn flour that had already been ground.

Two large kettles filled with water hung over the open hearth. As the water boiled, Ellinor scooped the corn flour and added it to one kettle. Little Deer added corn mixture to the other. Just then, Tiptoe brushed against Ellinor's leg.

"AHHH! Get away!" Ellinor screamed and dropped her cup. "It isn't proper for a wild animal to be near the food!"

Little Deer giggled and scooped Tiptoe into her arms.

Ellinor crossed her arms and walked away toward a small shed. She chose a large piece of salted pork from the meat kept cool inside the shed. Ellinor cut it into small pieces and added it to her kettle.

She began to place pork into the other pot, but Little Deer stopped her. She shook her head and said, "*Quahogs*." Immediately, Little Deer scooped up Tiptoe and ran down the hill toward the ocean.

Collecting *Quahogs*

Little Deer stopped at the stream that flowed near the village. Tiptoe popped out of her arms and began to explore the tall reeds that grew near the water.

The stream felt cool on Little Deer's feet. She hopped across the rocks with ease. Little Deer was searching for wild onions when she heard branches rustle.

The yellow-haired girl was standing by the stream. She motioned for Little Deer to come back to the village. Ignoring her, Little Deer continued pulling up onions and garlic.

The English girl stepped out onto a wet rock to walk over to Little Deer. She lost her balance and—*whoosh!*—she slipped into the water.

Little Deer giggled to see the yellow-haired girl completely soaked.

The yellow-haired girl stood up, looking angry, and squeezed the water out of her thick garments. She spoke harsh English words that Little Deer did not understand. Little Deer wondered why the girl wore so many layers of heavy clothing.



Little Deer stuffed the onions and garlic into her pouch and turned downstream toward the ocean. She could hear the English girl sloshing behind her.

The shoreline was rocky but it had a wide mudflat where *quahogs* could be found. Little Deer watched the mud for the small air holes that revealed where the clams hid.

The English girl stomped up next to her and stood with her hands on her hips.

Little Deer pulled three *quahogs* out of the mud and stuffed them into her netted bag. Daylight was fading, so Little Deer motioned for the girl to help.

The English girl got down on her knees and began searching for air holes in the mud. She quickly pulled out *quahogs* as if she had done it often. Then a wave snuck up behind them, knocking them both over into the water. Little Deer almost smiled at their dunking and thought the English girl did as well.



Just then, a musket shot rang out nearby.

Tiptoe jumped at the sound and ran down the beach and up a rocky cliff. Little Deer called his name, but the skunk just climbed higher.

Both girls ran toward the cliff. Little Deer scrambled up the rock, the netted bag full of clams bouncing on her back.

Tiptoe huddled in a hole near the top. Little Deer climbed, one foot at a time until she had almost reached him. Then the rock beneath her foot gave way and there was nothing to grab onto! She slid down the side of the cliff, rocks and dirt tumbling down with her. She fell hard into the water and disappeared from sight.



Two Kettles

Ellinor hesitated for a moment and then ran out to the edge of the water. “Little Deer! Take my apron!”

Little Deer felt the cold ocean water pulling her down to where it was quiet and dark. A blurry yellow object splashed onto the water above her. Little Deer reached for it and then felt herself being pulled slowly to the shore.

Ellinor tugged as hard as she could. Little Deer was heavier than she looked. Ellinor pulled harder.

Little Deer saw the rocks and struggled to pull herself up as pain shot through her arm.

“Are you badly injured?” Ellinor squatted next to her.

Little Deer did not understand her words. When she sat up, Tiptoe leaped into her arms. She looked up, and Ellinor smiled. The English girl had saved her life!

Ellinor pointed up the hill. “We should return.” She held Little Deer’s arm and gently helped her stand up.

Little Deer looked into the girl's blue eyes and clasped her hand. "El-li-nor." She squeezed it tight.

The yellow-haired girl smiled. "You're welcome, Little Deer."

Little Deer turned back to the sea, sadly. "Quahogs," she muttered. "Quahogs."

"I'm sorry you lost them," Ellinor said. "But we still have the salted pork."

But even being bruised didn't change Little Deer's mind about doing things her way. Pointing ahead, she led Ellinor back up the stream to a grove of ash trees, where many late-growing blueberry bushes remained. Little Deer and Ellinor picked berries until the sun began to set.



That night, the girls finished the *Nasump*, or samp. They added blueberries to Little Deer's pot and the wild onion and garlic to Ellinor's. Each pot of corn porridge had a different taste, but both were praised as delicious.

Together, they served Governor Bradford and Massasoit at their tables inside the meetinghouse. By firelight, the girls ate and played games together, like Blind Man's Bluff and the ring-and-pin game.

BOOM! BOOM!
BOOM! Little Deer and Ellinor watched together as Captain Standish led his men in shooting exercises. Ellinor looked over as a silent tear fell from Little Deer's cheek.



"Friends," Ellinor said, squeezing Little Deer's hand.

Little Deer nodded and smiled.

They knew the quiet peace between their people might not last for long. But they also knew that the seeds of their friendship would continue to grow.



Glossary

- deerskin** (*n.*) the skin of deer used for making most Wampanoag clothes (p. 7)
- fowling** (*n.*) the hunting of birds for food (p. 5)
- hearth** (*n.*) an outdoor or indoor fireplace used for cooking, light, and warmth (p. 12)
- longhouse** (*n.*) a Wampanoag meetinghouse built with cedar saplings and covered with bark (p. 7)
- muskets** (*n.*) long-barreled firearms used by the English (p. 4)
- Nasump (samp)** (*n.*) thick porridge made with ground corn and cooked with meat, fruit, or vegetables (p. 13)
- pompion** (*n.*) a pumpkin (p. 4)
- quahog** (*n.*) a hard-shelled clam (p. 12)
- samp** (*n.*) (*see Nasump*) (p. 13)
- sinew** (*n.*) animal tendon (traditionally used as thread) (p. 7)

