

Using Plants to Tell Time

Name & Number: _____

Plants were very important to the indigenous people of Michigan. **Indigenous** means the first people who lived in a place. Native Americans did not use watches, calendars or iPhones to tell time like we do today. They had to rely on their natural **environment**, which they learned about from their **ancestors**, which are family members from long, long ago. Long ago, these people had to pay attention how the animals acted during different parts of the day and year. They also knew how plants grew during different times of the year.



Can you think of something that has been passed down from your ancestors? Discuss as a class what this could mean and list examples below.



The moon was also used as their calendar, to know how long a month was and each month had a special name. Native Americans did not use words like June or September. The Indians from the Anishinaabemowin Nation, one of the first groups in the Great Lakes region, called the full moon in June the “odemine geezis”, which meant strawberry moon. It was called this because this was the time of the year when the strawberries were ripe and ready to harvest. In Minnesota, August was called the “wild rice moon” because, you guessed it, this was the time to harvest the wild rice that grew in the area. Can you guess what May was called? The “_____ moon” because these began to bloom. Plants helped these people keep track of time.

