

# Sweet and Sappy

**A**round the middle of March, days begin to warm up, but the nights are still frosty in the northeastern regions of North America. This change in the weather causes the sap in maple trees to start moving.

tree to redirect some of that sap out of the tree to be collected.

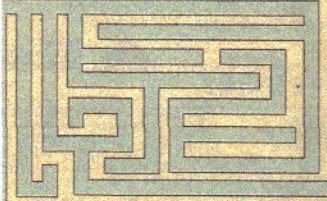
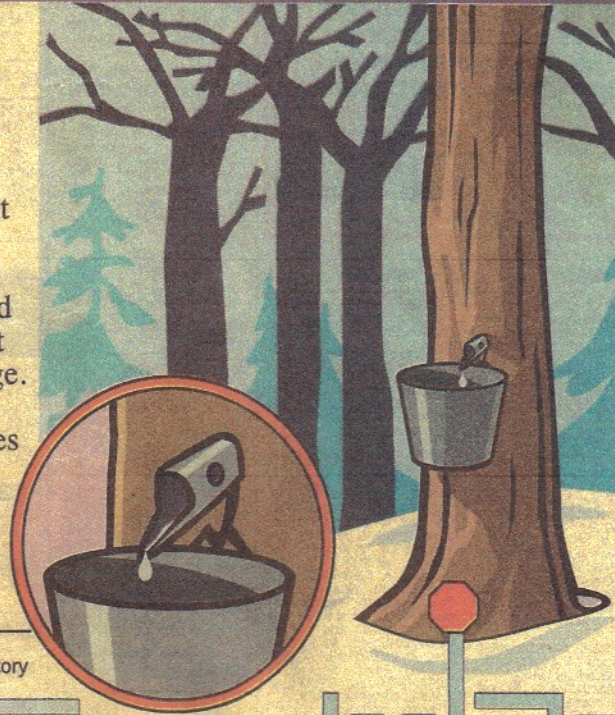
**T**he sap is thin, barely sweet and as colorless as spring water. It isn't ready for pancakes at this stage.

When the sap begins to move, small tubes are drilled into the maple

*Drilling a hole into a tree to capture the sap is called "tapping." This does no permanent harm to the tree. Only about 10% of the sap is collected each year.*

Boiling the sap causes much of the water to evaporate, leaving behind the thick, sweet syrup enjoyed on pancakes.

**Standards Link:** Reading Comprehension: Read expository text to locate information.



## Red Squirrel Harvests Maple Sugar

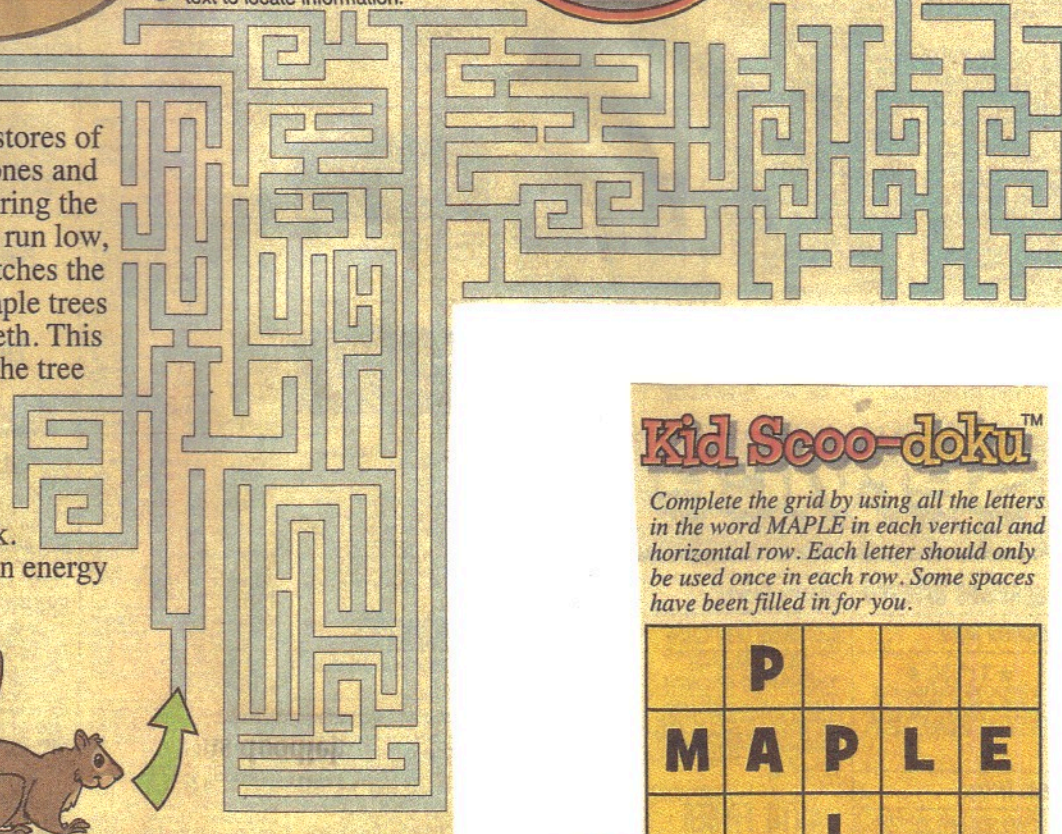
**W**hen its stores of pinecones and nuts gathered during the summer and fall run low, the squirrel scratches the bark of sugar maple trees with its sharp teeth. This allows some of the tree sap to drain out.

The sap's water evaporates in the winter sunlight, but the sap leaves a sugary trace on the bark. The squirrel returns to lick it, and gets an energy boost in an otherwise lean time of year.

It is thought that the Native Americans learned about the sweet maple sap by watching the squirrels.



**Standards Link:** Life Science: Students know that an organism's patterns of behavior relate to the nature of that organism's environment.



## Kid Scoo-doku™

Complete the grid by using all the letters in the word MAPLE in each vertical and horizontal row. Each letter should only be used once in each row. Some spaces have been filled in for you.

	P			
M	A	P	L	E
		L		
				M

**Standards Link:** Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written directions.



Why did the boy pour maple syrup on his pillow?

ANSWER: He wanted sweet dreams.