

The background of the book cover is a vibrant, painterly illustration of a natural landscape. In the foreground, an older man with grey hair, wearing a green jacket and blue jeans, stands on a grassy bank with his hand on the shoulder of a younger child in a red hoodie and blue jeans. They are both looking out over a large body of water. The water is a mix of light blue and green, with a dark, forested shoreline in the distance. Three birds are flying in the sky above the water. The overall style is soft and artistic, with visible brushstrokes and a rich color palette of greens, blues, and earthy tones.

**Maajii-Ojibwemowag**  
(They Begin to Speak Ojibwe)

# Giigoonyag

Stories of the Swimmers  
A Ningaabii'anong Book





**Binesikwe (Debi Williamson)**

**dedicates this dibaajimowin to:**

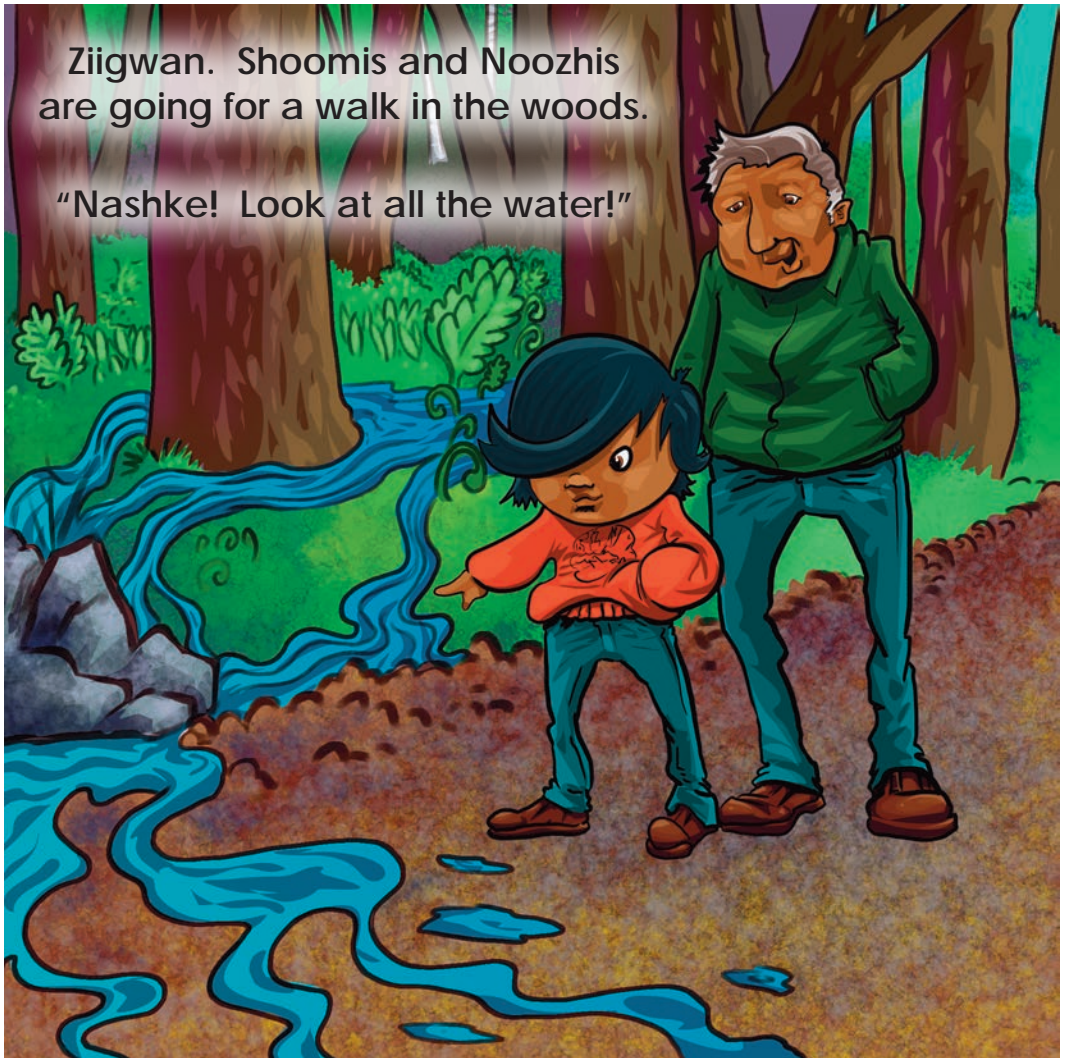
**Meshakwad**

**(Albert Churchill)**



Ziigwan. Shoomis and Noozhis  
are going for a walk in the woods.

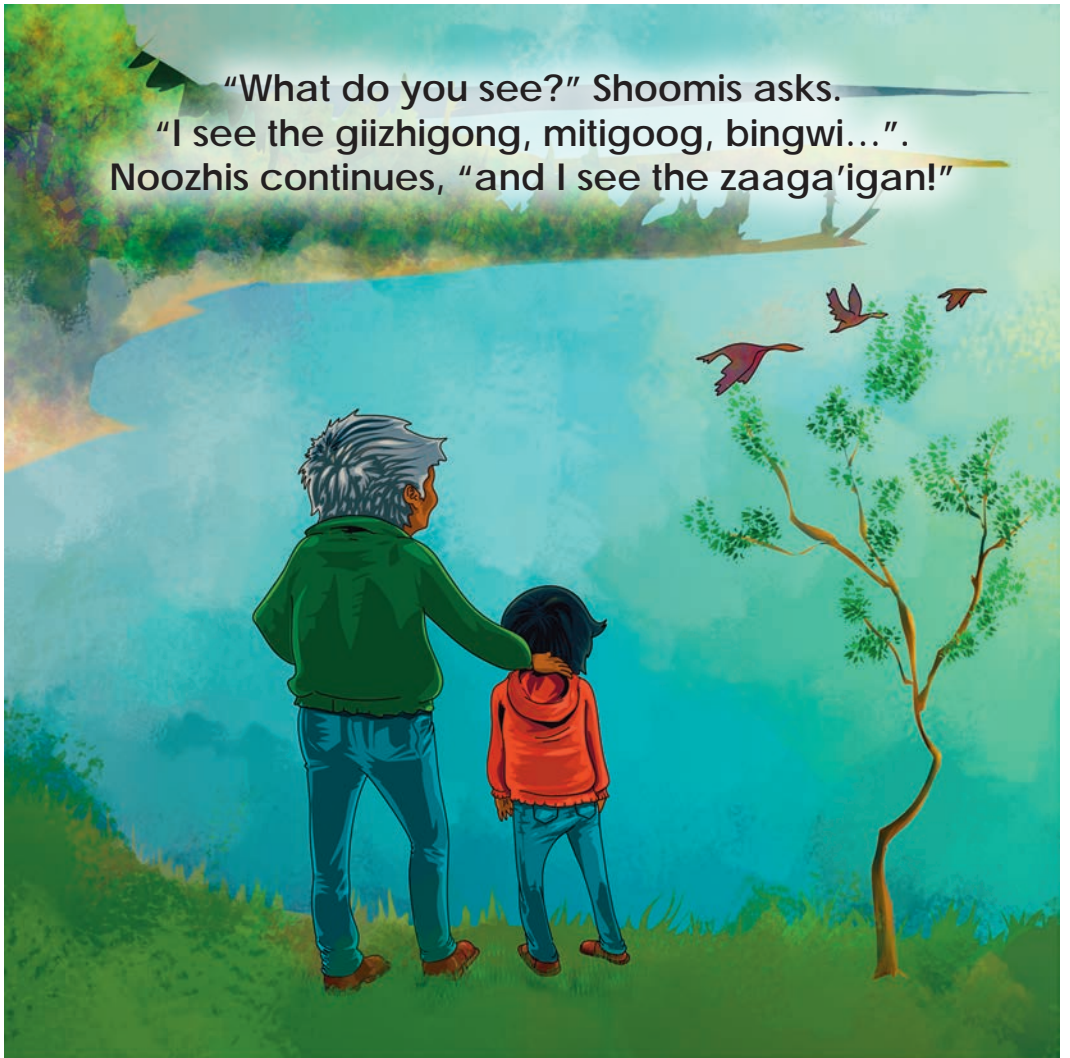
“Nashke! Look at all the water!”

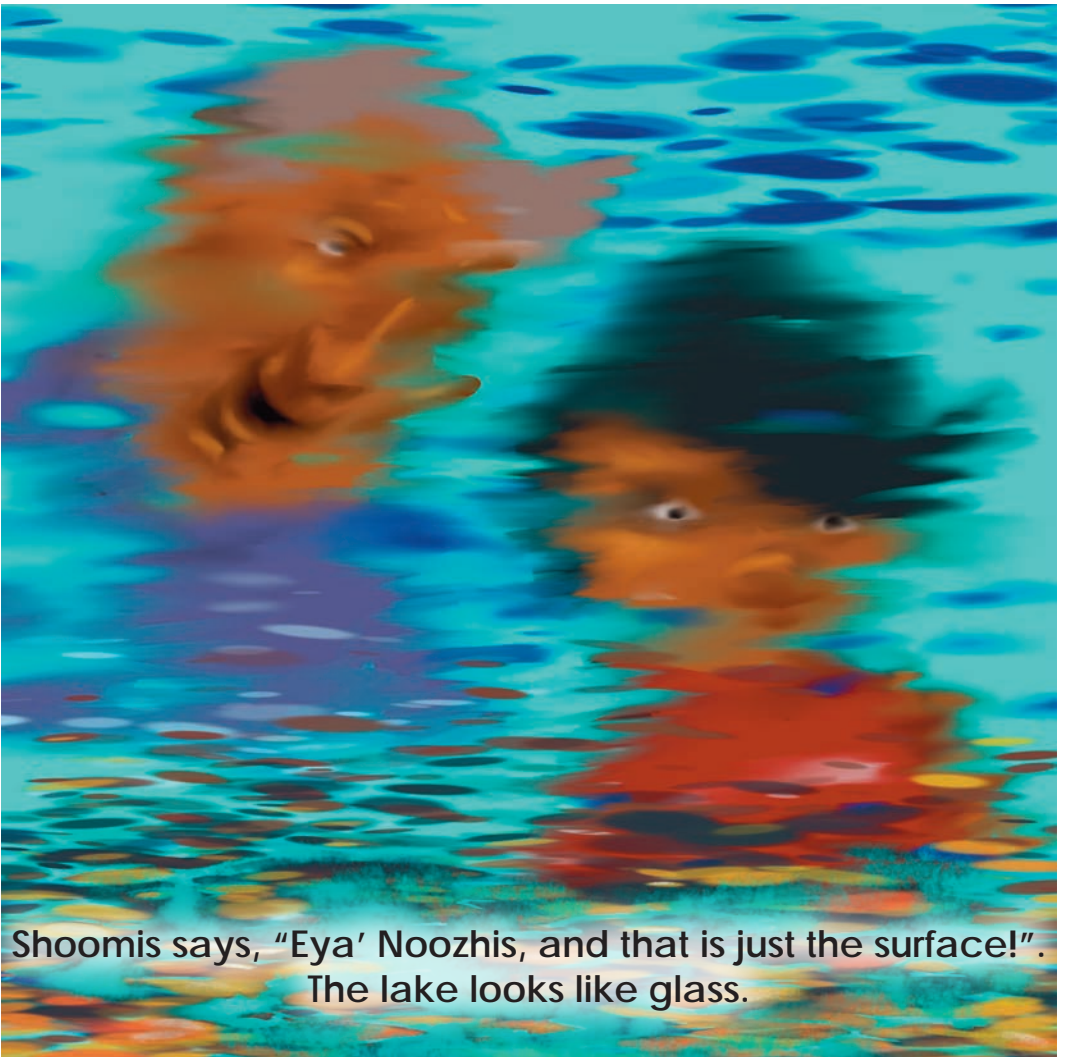


"What do you see?" Shoomis asks.

"I see the giizhigong, mitigoog, bingwi...".

Noozhis continues, "and I see the zaaga'igan!"





Shoomis says, "Eya' Noozhis, and that is just the surface!".  
The lake looks like glass.



Underneath the water, giigoonyag are swimming.

"Can we go out on the lake, Shoomis?" Noozhis asks.  
"Eya! Ambe omaa!" Shoomis says.



**"Akawe asemaa, then let's paddle out in our jiimaan!"  
Shoomis tells Noozhis.**



It was a beautiful day out on the lake. Waaseyaamagad.  
Noozhis notices the fish swimming near the surface.

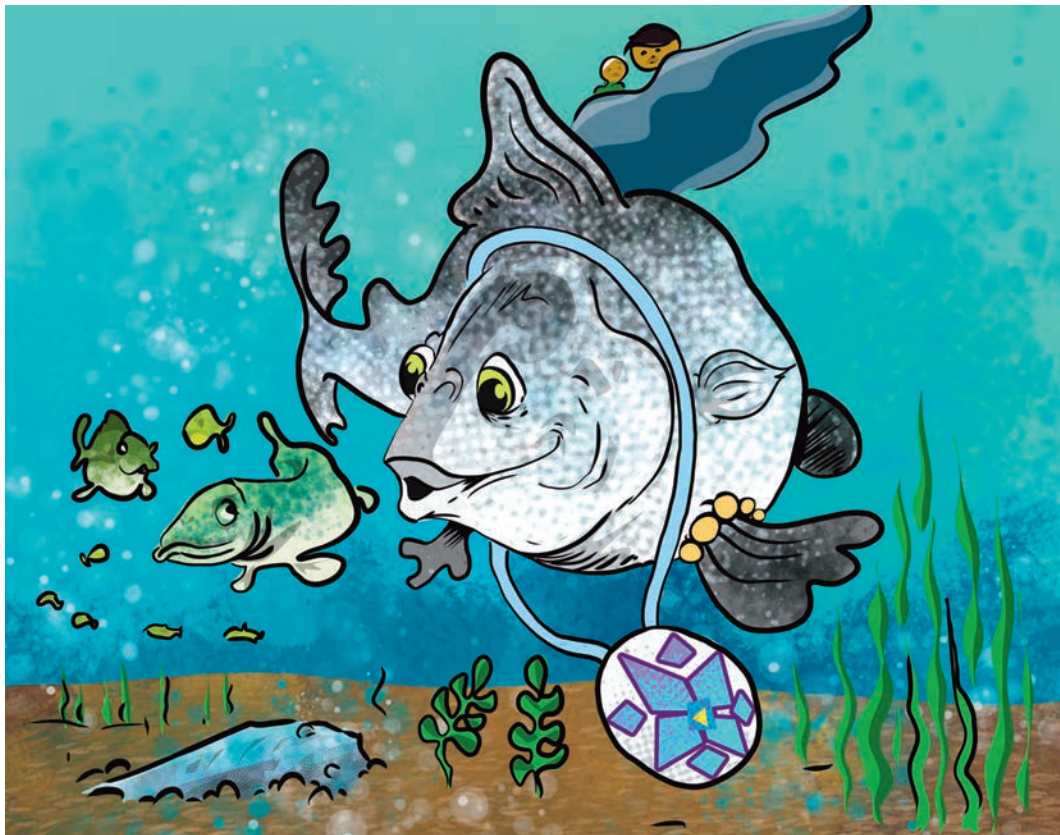


**"Nashke Shoomis! I can see giigoonyag!" Noozhis says.**



**"Eya' Noozhis.**

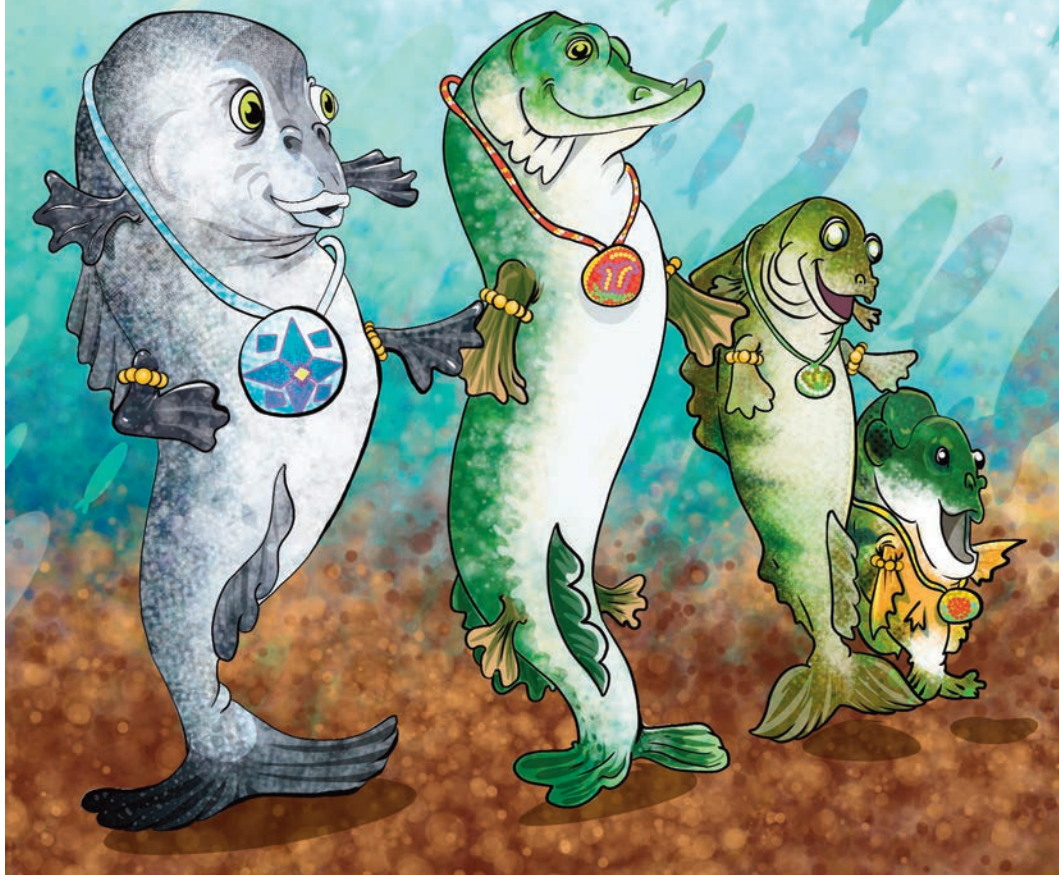
**In the spring, the ininiwag giigoonyag do a fish dance for the ikwewag giigoonyag".**



"Each giigoonh has his own dance move, just like at the powwow!" Shoomis tells Noozhis.

"Nashke! The adikameg leads and all the younger giigoonyag follow him."

**“He puts one fin out and shakes it,  
the other giigoonyag copy him.”**



**"The second giigoonh is ginoozhe."**



**"He puts one fin and one leg out and shakes it.  
The other giigoonyag copy him."**

**“The third fish is ogaa.”**



**“He puts one fin out with both feet and shakes them.  
The other giigoonyag copy him.”**

**“The last fish is agwadaashi.”**



**“He dances backwards and all the  
giigoonyag follow him,” Shoomis says.  
“This is the last dance move. Nitaa-niimiwag!”**



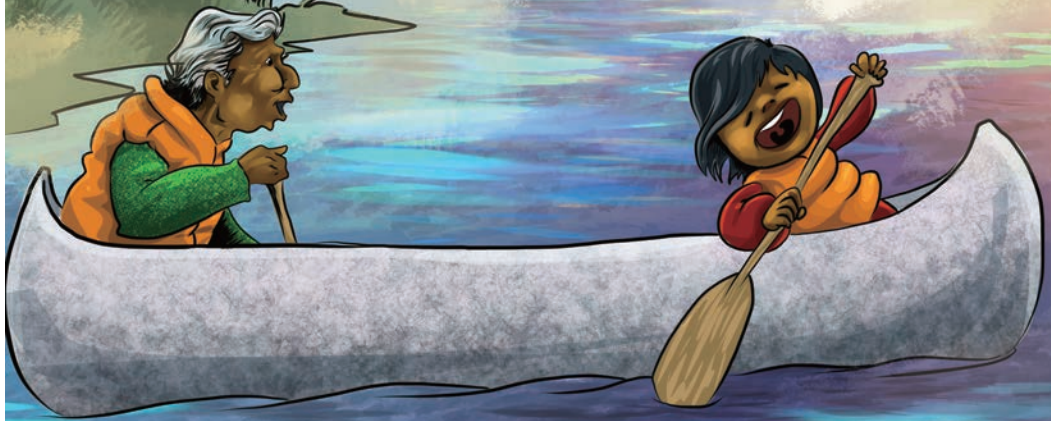
"They celebrate their way of life  
and home."





“All the ikwewag giigoonyag  
minawaanigoziwag with the dance.”

"Remember, Gichi-Manidoo  
made all the giigoonyag unique."



"Miigwech for teaching me, Shoomis!"



# Maajii-Ojibwemowag (They Begin to Speak Ojibwe)

Ningaabii'anong Book Set:  
Stories of the Swimmers



**Tribal Storyteller - Binesikwe (Debi Williamson)**  
~ Keweenaw Bay Indian Community



**Illustration and Layout - Niyyogizhig (Wesley Ballinger)**

~Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

**Elder/Speaker Consultant - Mezinaanakwad (Dennis White)**

~Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

**Intermedia Web Design and Layout- Melissa Maund Rasmussen**

**Project Director - Animikii Ikwe (LaTisha Coffin)**

~Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

<https://glifwc-inwe.com>





<https://glifwc-inwe.com>



This publication was funded through a grant from the Administration for Native Americans (ANA), ACF, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.