

Name _____

Homeroom _____

The Broken Blade
Chapters 1 & 2
(An Errant Stroke – Pierre's Plan)
(pp. 1 – 19)

Vocabulary

1. errant: _____
2. kindling: _____
3. resound: _____
4. madame: _____
5. hivernant: _____
6. voyageur: _____
7. brigade: _____
8. portage: _____
9. archrival: _____
10. wry: _____
11. chortle: _____
12. monsieur: _____
13. frockcoat: _____

VOYAGEURS

The Broken Blade

Chapters 1 & 2

1. What is the setting of the story? _____

2. Explain what happened to Pierre's father? _____

3. Explain Pierre's reaction to his father's accident? _____

4. What is Pierre's plan? _____

5. Why does Pierre feel he must follow through with his plan? _____

6. Describe how Bellegarde looks. What are your impressions of him? _____

7. Why does Pierre lie to Captain McKay? _____

8. How does Charbonneau help Pierre?

9. Describe Charbonneau's looks.

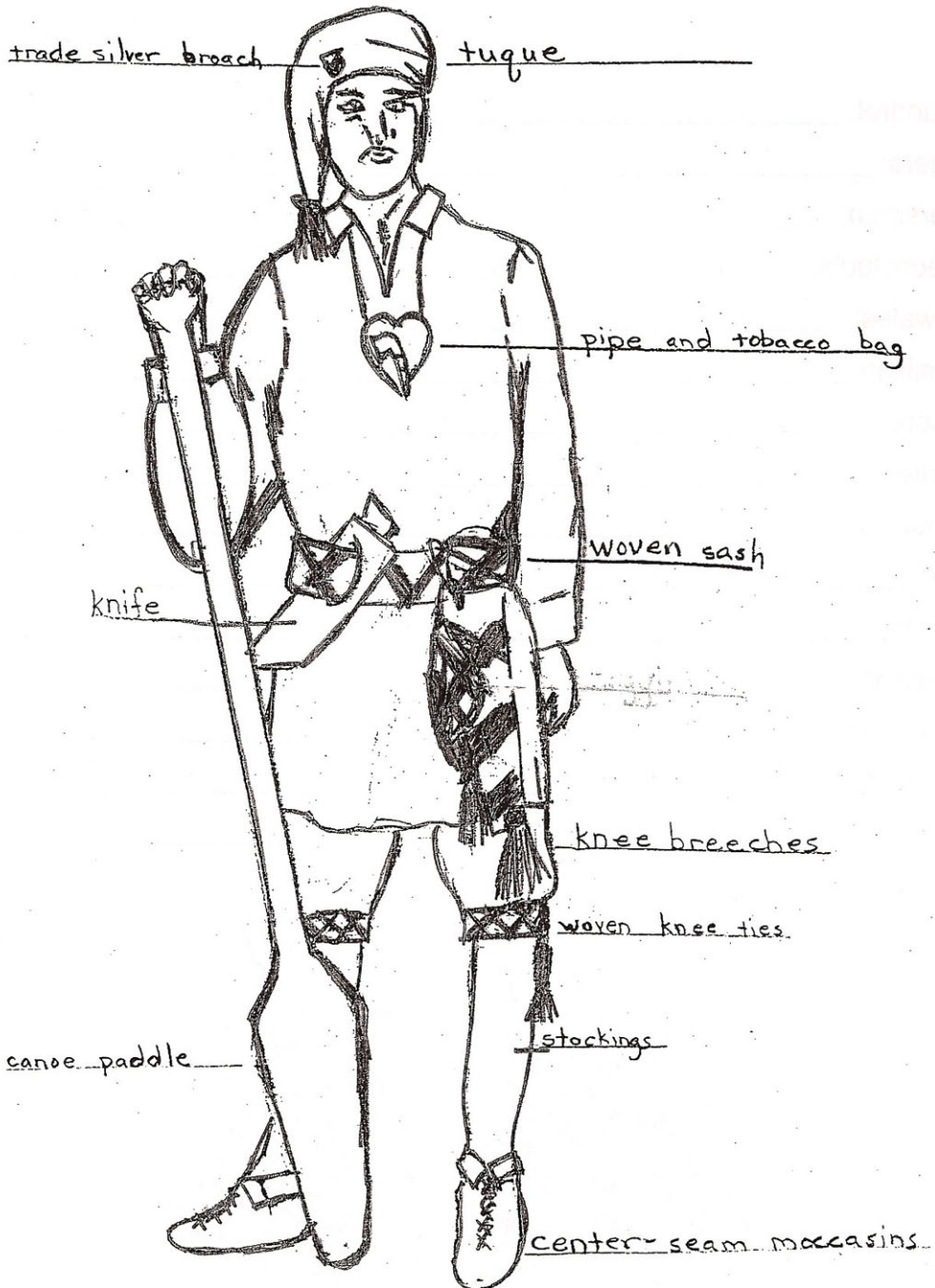
10. What are your impressions of him so far? _____

The Broken Blade
Chapters 3 & 4
(Adieu – Departure pp. 20 – 35)

1. scoundrel: _____
2. ladders: _____
3. steersman: _____
4. breechclouts: _____
5. gunwales: _____
6. vermillion: _____
7. unison: _____
8. exertion: _____
9. monotony: _____
10. hull: _____
11. stern: _____
12. cascade: _____
13. impulsive: _____
14. catapult: _____
15. adieu: _____



Voyager



The Broken Blade

Chapters 3 & 4

1. What was Pierre's father's reaction when seeing Pierre's engagement papers?

2. What was his mother's reaction? _____

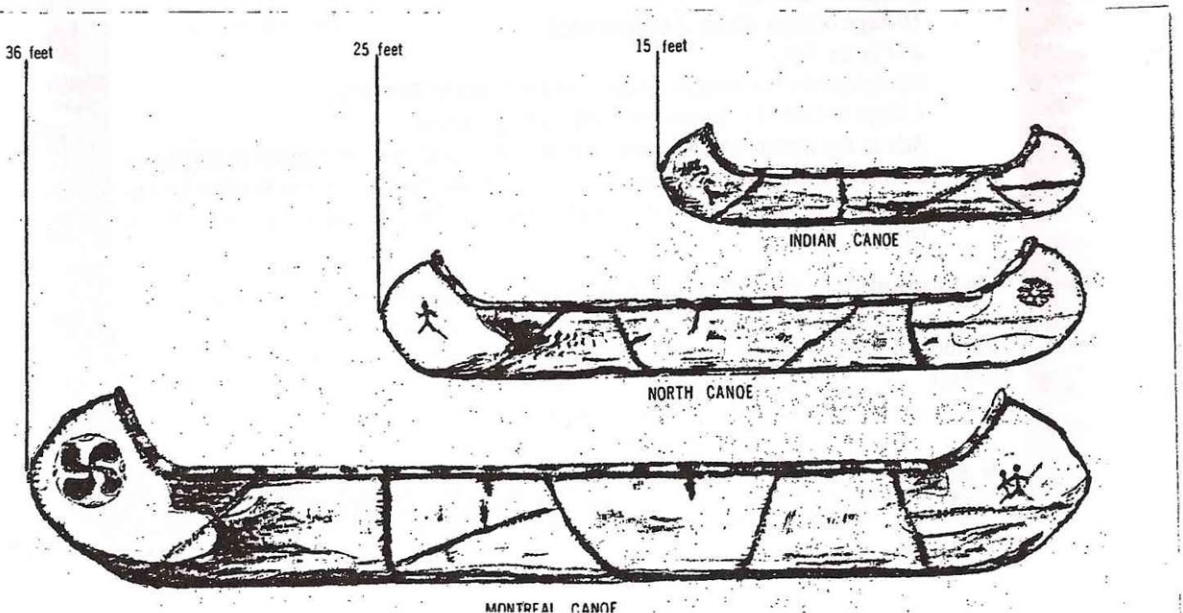
3. What advise did Pierre's father give him? _____

4. What might be foreshadowed in Pierre's dream? _____

5. Describe the scene on shore as the voyageurs begin their journey. _____

6. Who was prized as voyageurs? Why? _____

7. What place marked the official beginning of the trip? _____





What's in a Fur Trade Canoe

Jon Sage

Visitors often ask what was carried in a birch-bark canoe and how much weight could be transported in a typical fur trade canoe. While the cargos in the canoes varied depending upon the needs and requests of each interior post, an excerpt from the journal of Alexander Henry the Younger in 1800 provides us with a list of goods carried in a North canoe leaving Fort Charlotte on July 20:

... I found every thing in readiness for our departure, and early this morning, gave out to each Canoe their respective loading which consisted of Twenty-Eight packages per Canoe...namely

5 Bales Merchandize – 90 pounds each

1 Bale Canal Tobacco

1 Bale kettles

1 Case Guns

1 Case Iron Works

2 rolls new Twist Tobacco

2 Bags Leaden Balls

1 Bag leaden Shot

1 Bag Flour

1 Keg Sugar

2 Kegs Gunpowder

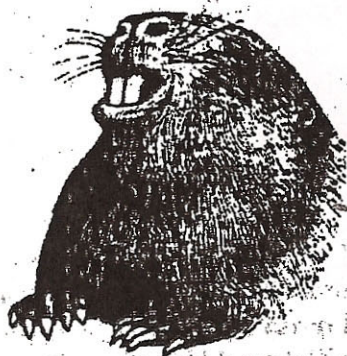
10 Kegs of High Wines, 9 Gallons each

28 Pieces Total

Equippage for the Voyage: Provisions for 4 Men to Red River,

4 Bags of Corn, 1½ bushels in Each, ½ Keg Grease.

Add to the above, about 4 packages of 90 lbs. Each private property belonging to the men, consisting of Clothing, Tobacco etc., for themselves and families for the year, so that, when all hands are embarked, the Canoes generally are sunk to the Gunnell.



The normal carrying capacity of a North canoe was approximately 3,000 lbs., or 1½ tons of cargo. North canoes were generally 24 to 26 feet long. Additional items may have included a sponge, rope, an oil cloth or piece of canvas, a couple of long poles, and extra sheets of birch bark, pitch, and spruce root which could be used for making repairs.

The Broken Blade

Chapters 5 – 6 – 7

1. Describe the scene at the evening meal. _____

Include Biloit's manner of eating. _____

2. Describe how the voyageurs enjoyed their evening leisure time. _____

3. Describe what happened on Massacre Island. _____

4. What trick did the voyageurs play on Pierre? _____

5. What advice does Charbonneau give Pierre? _____

What advice does La Londe give him? _____

6. What present is given to Pierre? _____

Why do you think La Londe gave it to him? _____

The Broken Blade

Chapters 5 – 6 – 7

(Massacre Island – First Light – The long Sault pp. 36 – 62)

1. calloused: _____
2. lye: _____
3. leisure: _____
4. frantic: _____
5. pummel: _____
6. dram: _____
7. sever: _____
8. tumpline: _____
9. doffed: _____
10. flotsam: _____
11. devoured: _____
12. sheath: _____
13. carcass: _____
14. benefactor: _____
15. monsieur: _____



The Broken Blade

Chapter 8 – 9 – 10

(Night of the Kettle Dance – A Long Day's Paddle – The Confluence of the Mattawa)

(pp. 63 – 91)

1. shoal: _____
2. pork-eaters: _____
3. singe: _____
4. entrails: _____
5. hivernant: _____
6. cavort: _____
7. venison: _____
8. prevail: _____
9. savage: _____
10. tentative: _____
11. confluence: _____



Clay Pipe

The Broken Blade

Chapters 8 – 9 – 10

1. List the ingredients Bellegarde used for "Duck Soup". _____

2. Describe the 'kettle dance'. _____

3. Where does Pierre sleep? Why do you think he sleeps there? _____

4. Why did the voyageurs keep their hair long and keep their shirts on throughout the hot journey? _____

5. List at least five incidences that show La Londe's concern for Pierre. _____

6. The killing of the deer was described as "... witnessing a murder in a church."
Explain what this means to you. _____



The Broken Blade

Chapters 11 – 12 –13

(The French River – A Broken Blade – La Cloche Rock)

(pp. 83 –102)

1. impromptu: _____
2. traverse: _____
3. dégradé: _____
4. backpaddle: _____
5. backwater: _____
6. doomsayer: _____
7. squall: _____
8. basalt: _____
9. premonition: _____



The Broken Blade

Chapter 11 – 12 – 13

1. What tragedy occurs in chapter 11? _____

2. What does chapter 12's title, "The Broken Blade" symbolize? _____

3. Why do you suppose the author, William Durbin, choose chapter 12's title for the title of his book? _____

4. How does the crew react to La Londe's death? _____

5. What do you think is meant by this statement from chapter 12 "... The big lakes don't like to give up their dead." ? _____

6. How does Pierre react to La Londe's death? _____

7. What changes do you see occurring in Pierre? _____

8. What premonition does Charbonneau make in chapter 13? _____

9. Why do you think Beloit keeps "picking" on Pierre? _____



"I could carry, paddle, walk, or sing with any man I ever saw.
I have been for twenty years a canoeman.
No portage was ever too tough for me!
Fifty songs could I sing.
And I have saved the lives of ten voyageur.
I've had six wives and twelve running dogs.
I spent all my money in pleasure,
But you know, were I young again,
I should live my life the same way over,
For there is no life as happy as the life of a voyageur."

The Broken Blade
Chapters 14 – 15 –16
(Huron's Revenge – Dégradé – Prettying Up)
(pp. 103 –118)

1. dire: _____
2. cascade: _____
3. shroud: _____
4. broaching: _____
5. plight: _____
6. foundering: _____
7. loath: _____
8. sprucing: _____
9. conscientious: _____
10. rendezvous: _____



Portaging

The Broken Blade

Chapter 14 – 15 –16

1. In many of the chapters thus far, Pierre has reoccurring flashbacks and nightmares. Why do you think they are included in the story? _____

2. What revenge does Lake Superior take? _____

3. What does Captain McKay decide to do? _____

4. The crew is forced to stay on the island for another day. What effect does this have on the men? _____

5. Describe the encounter between Beloit and La Petite. _____

6. How do Beloit and La Petite react to each other after the fight? _____

7. List at least five things the men do to prepare themselves before landing at Grand Portage. _____

8. Explain how Pierre finally gets Beloit to call him by his rightful name. _____

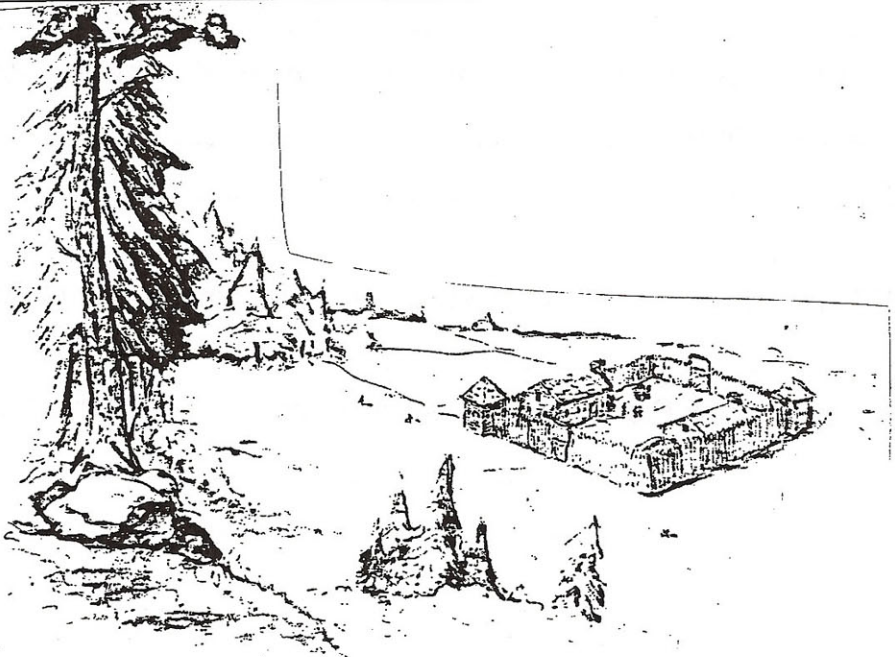
9. Do you think Pierre's actions were correct? Why or Why not? _____

The Broken Blade

Chapters 17-18 -19

(Grand Portage – Mukwa's Wigwam – Rendezvous)
(pp. 119 –139)

1. stockade: _____
2. legendary: _____
3. thwarts: _____
4. gaudy: _____
5. venison: _____
6. contentment: _____
7. prime: _____
8. dumbfound: _____
9. hospitality: _____
10. cascade: _____
11. cavalier: _____
12. tether: _____
13. savor: _____



The Broken Blade

Chapter 17 – 18 –19

1. Explain why there were two camps; one for the pork-eaters and one for the hibernauts. _____

2. Describe Mukwa's style of clothing. _____

Why did he dress so gaudy? _____

3. Describe what the Indian women wore. _____

4. What was served at the banquet? _____

How did it compare to the meals the voyageurs ate? _____

5. How did Charbonneau trick Pierre into dancing? _____

6. "You're holding twenty plus in your hands." Explain what this statement means. _____

7. What is the best time for trapping beaver? Why? _____

8. What trade item caused the most trouble? Why? _____

9. Explain why Mukwa and Charbonneau are such good friends. _____

10. What do you think prevented La Londe from shooting the Sioux warrior?

11. What is the Indian name for Lake Superior? _____

12. What meat did Pierre eat at Mukwa's feast? _____

Why do you think the Indians ate that animal? _____

13. How does William Durbin portray the Indian? _____

The Broken Blade

Chapter 20 – 21 – 22

(Rabbaboo – Homeward Bound – The Last Portage)

(pp. 140 – 157)

1. scull: _____
2. biceps: _____
3. concoction: _____
4. rabbaboo: _____
5. pemmican: _____
6. rancid: _____
7. traverse: _____
8. anxiety: _____
9. turbulent: _____
10. pivot: _____



The Broken Blade

Chapter 20 –21 – 22

1. Who stays on as hibernauts? _____

What will they do as hibernauts? _____

2. Who might Pierre wish to see on a return trip? Why? _____

3. What plan or idea does Pierre have that might solve his future plans? _____

4. What is meant by this statement? "... cheated his own work by dreaming".

5. Why, at the end of chapter 20, was Pierre all of a sudden hungry for boiled corn? _____

6. Explain what the crew did when they approached the French River? _____

7. What happened to many of the rivers and stream since the crew began their voyage in May? _____

8. Why do you think Pierre did not warn Nolin of what he might expect? _____

The Broken Blade
Chapter 23
(The Woodpile pp 158 – 163)

1. Pierre's father says, "... you buried my boy and resurrected a man ..."

What does he mean? _____

2. How was Pierre changed from a boy to a man? (List three) _____

3. The Broken Blade might be referred to as a circle story. Explain why. _____



Pronunciation Guide for French and Ojibwe Names and Other Words

André Bellegarde	(On – DRAY Bell – GARD)
Jean Beloit	(ZHON Buh – LWA)
Jacques Charbonneau	(ZHAK Shar – bo – NO)
Pierre La Page	(Pee – AIR La PAHZH)
Joseph La Petite	(Zho – SEF La Pe – TEET)
hivernant	(ee – ver – NAN)
madame	(mah – DAM)
mademoiselle	(mah – mwa – ZELLE)
monsieur	(muh – see – YUR)
voyageur	(voy a – ZHUR)
Kennawah	(Key – NA – wah)
Mukwa	(Ma – KWA)
Ojibwe	(O – JI – bway)