

The Lung Squad Goes on a Field Trip!

Come with Elder George to learn about his cultural use of tobacco!

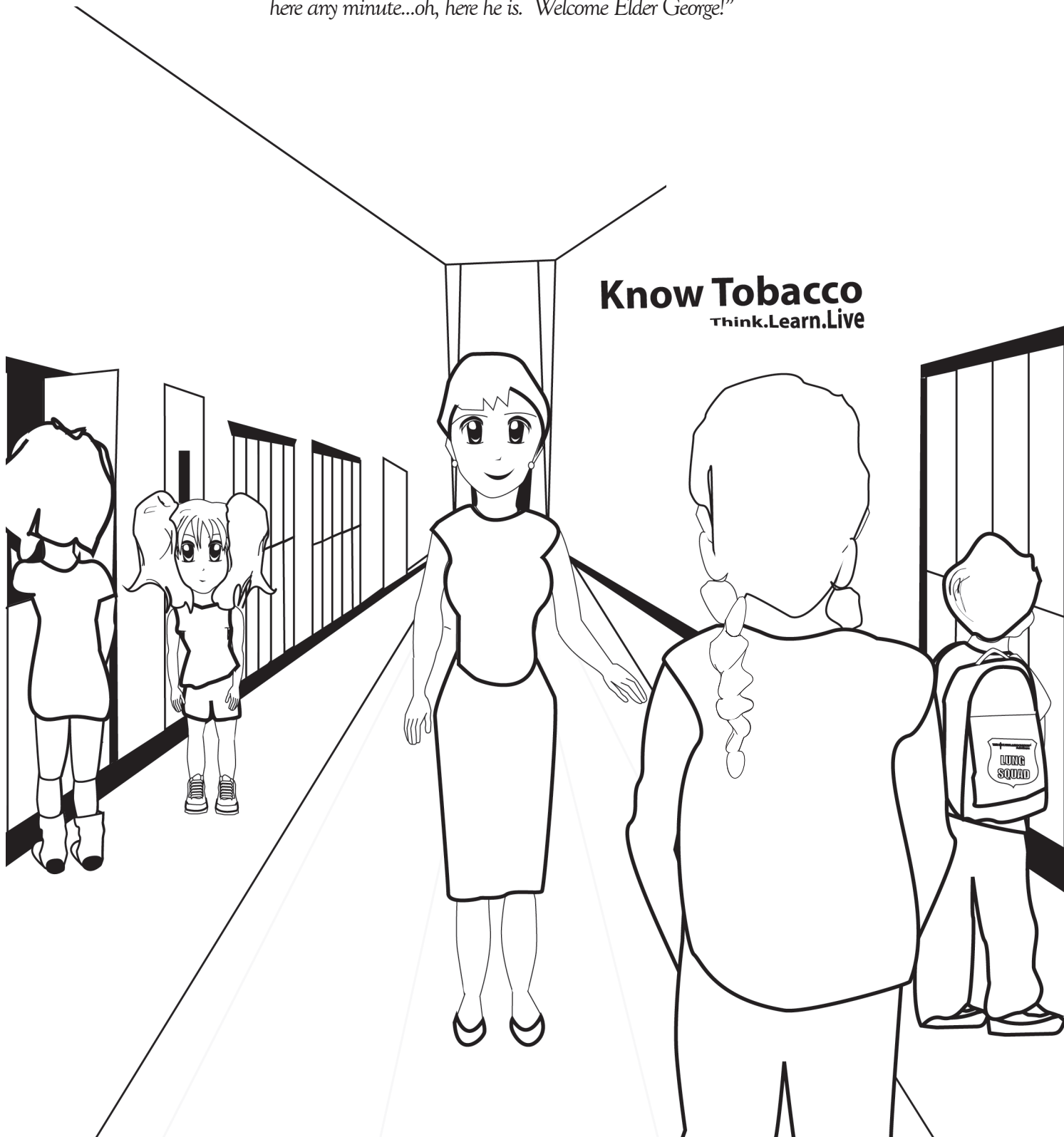




“*Buzz...buzz,*” rang the school bell as another day of school was beginning. The Lung Squad kids, Jade, Jordan and Brie ran to meet each other by the tall pine tree on the front lawn of the schoolyard. “*Hey, what is Elder George doing here today?*” asked Brie, as she watched him enter the school. “*I’m not sure, but we better get to class!*” yelled Jade!

They went into the school and threw their backpacks into their lockers.

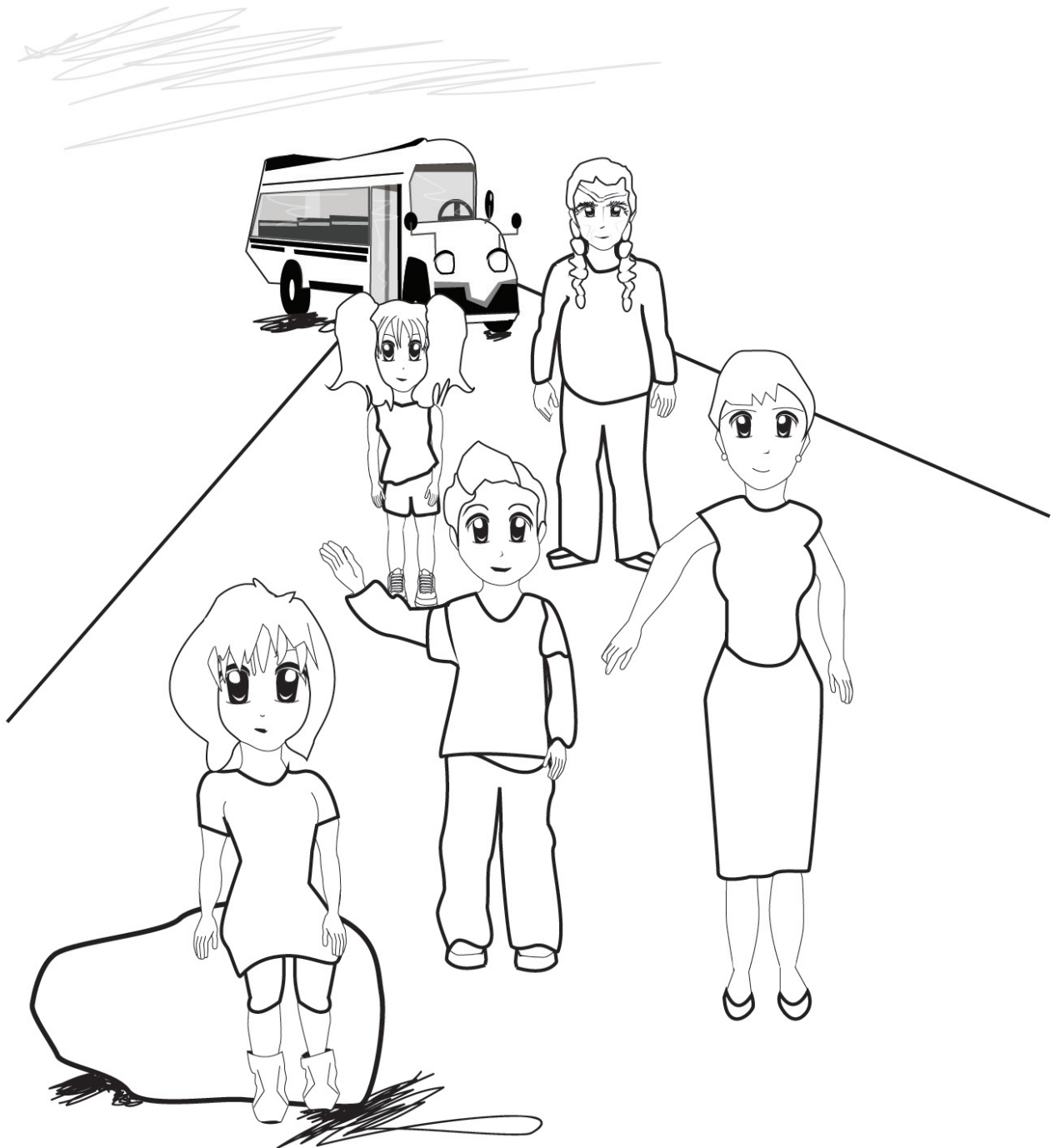
“Good morning Mrs. Woods,” said Brie. “Good morning to you, I have a special day planned for us today! I have asked Elder George to take us on a field trip. He should be here any minute...oh, here he is. Welcome Elder George!”





Jordan yelled out “What are you going to teach us about today, Elder George?” “Well, my son, I want to teach you about the traditional way I use tobacco. In my First Nations culture, tobacco is a sacred medicine and we are not supposed to smoke it. Smoking cigarettes is dangerous to our health and can hurt the people around us,” said Elder George. “There are many harmful chemicals and poisons in cigarettes and in smokeless tobacco. These harmful chemicals hurt our bodies and make us unhealthy.” “So, how do you use tobacco, Elder George?” asked Jordan. “Come on – I will show you kids how we use tobacco in my culture. We are going on a bus ride!”

They arrived at their destination and Mrs. Woods exclaimed, “*What a lovely day for a walk!*” They all followed Elder George off the bus and along the walking trail. After a few minutes, they ended up at the river. Elder George gave each of the kids a handful of dried tobacco leaves and began to tell them a story. “*What is this stuff?*” whispered Jordan.



“Do you see this lake? In my culture, we believe that all water was given to us as a gift from the Creator,” said Elder George. “The Creator made the land we stand on, the water we drink and the air we breathe. I also believe the Creator made everything in our world, even all of our ancestors and families. In my culture, we use tobacco to give thanks to the Creator for everything we have. We couldn’t live without water, as it helps keep our bodies healthy, So, it is important that we thank the Creator for water.



For those of you who wish to thank the Creator for water, take the dried tobacco leaves I have given you and sprinkle the tobacco onto the water. Take a private moment to do this. This is your time to reflect and give thanks.” Some of the students silently walked up to the water and sprinkled their tobacco onto the water to give thanks to the Creator. “Now,” said Elder George, “follow me back down the path and I will show you another way we use tobacco in my First Nations culture.”

“Do you young ones see all of these big trees?” asked Elder George.

“These trees were also a gift to us from the Creator. The leaves on the trees provide us with shade, clean air, and give a home to birds and other creatures. The tree branches give us wood to build our houses, boats and tools. What else do we use wood for?” “My family uses wood to make furniture for our house,” said Brie.

“We use recycled trees for paper so we can read books and learn!” said Jordan.





“That’s right,” said Elder George. “There are many different ways we use trees in our lives. For those of you who would like to thank the Creator for trees, take some tobacco and place it at the bottom of a tree to give thanks. It is important that we do not always just take what the Creator has given us – we must give back to the Creator, too. Now, let’s follow the path back to our bus so we can go back to school,” said Elder George.



When Elder George and the kids got back onto the bus, Elder George asked “Do you kids understand how I use tobacco in my First Nations culture now?” “Yes!” they all answered. “I am so glad that I learned how you use tobacco in your culture. Thank you, Elder George,” said Jordan. Brie exclaimed “I will never smoke cigarettes or use smokeless tobacco because it is not healthy for my body. In my culture tobacco is sacred and I will only use tobacco to thank the Creator;”. Jade shouted “I love field trips! Thank you, Elder George!”

The End!



In the story, Elder George gives thanks to the Creator for the water and trees. Demonstrate what you are appreciative for and why.
