



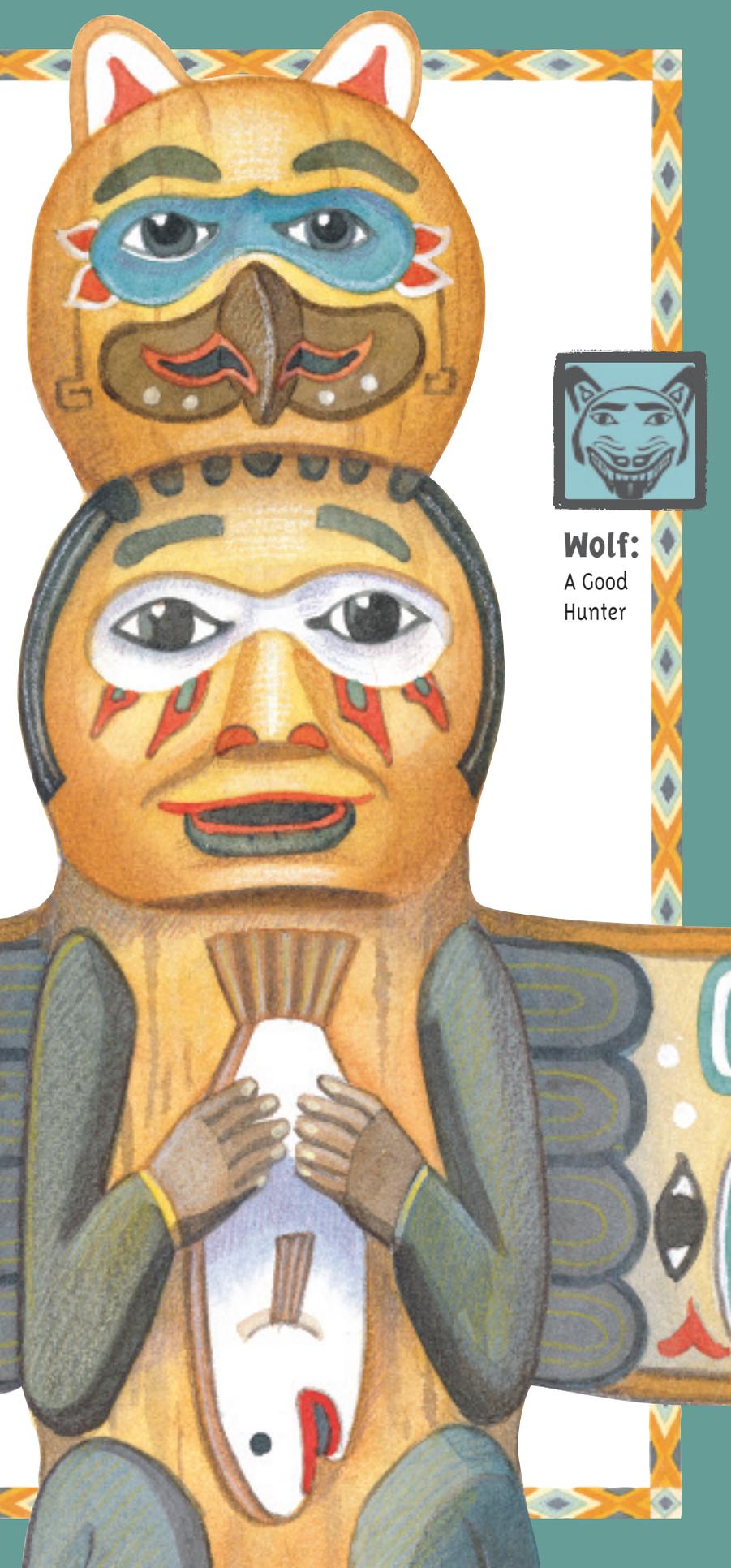
# ALASKA Symbols & Stories

**W**hen you look at a totem pole, what do you see? Most of us see colorful animals or scary monsters. But to Southeastern Alaska Natives, each totem pole also tells a story. These stories are told through symbols which represent things

important to the family who had the totem pole carved.

Since seafood has always been a big part of life in Alaska, many totem poles feature symbols of fish. Salmon, for example, represented joy and abundance. Other common symbols

include birds, animals and humanlike spirits. Natives also used symbols in masks created for ceremonies and festivals. Simple symbols, written in the sand, were also used as a form of communication and a way to teach stories and legends to children.



**Wolf:**  
A Good Hunter



**Bear:**  
A Respected Elder



**Whale:**  
Strength



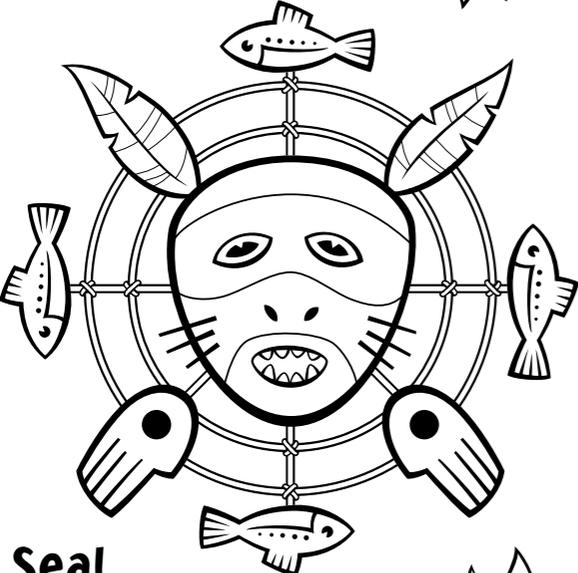
**Eagle:**  
Power and Pride

# Make Your Own Mask

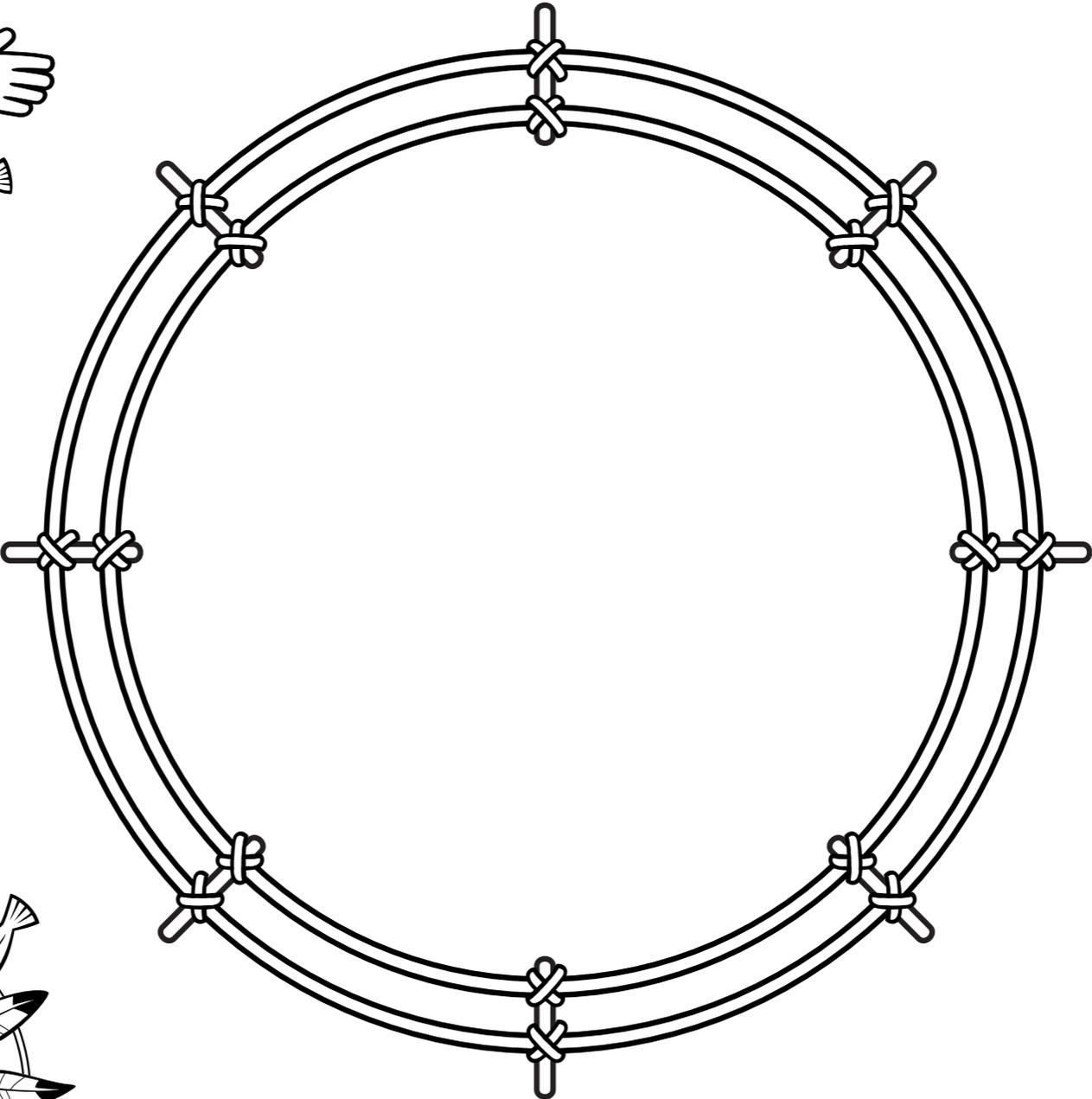
**Polar Bear**



**Seal**



**Walrus**



Native masks featured symbols of fish and animals that were important in their lives. If you were to design your own mask, what symbols would you use?

## Symbol Search

Instead of words, some Natives used symbols written in the sand. Can you match the symbols to the words they stand for?

- Girl 
- Boy 
- Big Fish 
- Bear 
- Ocean 
- River 



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