

One of my favorite quotes from *Tending Sweetgrass* is when Robin Wall Kimmerer says, "*In our family, when we stand with our hands on the handle of the sap bucket, we stand together with all our relatives, the maples, who give us this gift.*"(p. 155). This sticks with me because i love how she used personifications showing how people and nature are connected like family. I like how she calls the trees "relatives," because it makes me think of nature in a more caring way. It reminds me not take anything for granted but to value them just because I could not have them and other things I still don't have.

When Kimmerer talks about how much work it takes to turn maple sap into syrup, it made me think about how many shortcuts I use in my life. A big one for me is writing essays on the computer. Typing makes it way faster than handwriting every single page. If I had to write everything out by hand, my schoolwork would take a lot longer, and I'd probably have less time for other classes, sports, or just relaxing. Computers also help me find information quickly. I can look something up online in seconds, but without that, I'd have to go to the library, search for books, and flip through pages to find answers. That would take hours. If I didn't have the shortcut of using a computer, my whole schedule would be different. I would spend most of my time just writing or looking things up instead of learning, hanging out with friends, or doing other activities. Kimmerer's story about maple syrup reminds me that even though things feel easy for me, there's always hard work behind the things we enjoy.

If kids in public schools started the day with something like the Thanksgiving Address I believe it would make the classroom more respectful. It could remind students to appreciate the people and world around them. I know it can't happen as schools don't do anything spiritual because of kids parents all have different beliefs or religion

Compared to the Pledge of Allegiance, both are routines that teach values. The Pledge focuses on loyalty to the country, while the Thanksgiving Address focuses on being thankful for nature. This the kind of culture I wish I lived in on the one that values gratitude. Since we didn't have these practices now I feel these small daily practices couldve made a difference