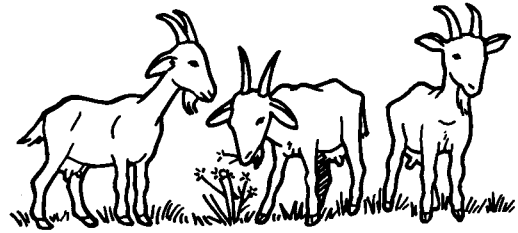


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Spring Migration

The sun had almost risen when Ainura finished milking the last of the family goats. She looked across the valley at the purple shadows of the distant mountains. Of all the spring campsites her family visited each year, this one had always been her favorite. She felt a little sad whenever they left it. The family was going to move the sheep and goats to new pastures that day. They would soon be busy packing gear and loading it onto the horses. During the spring and summer, Ainura's and the other nomadic families who lived in western Mongolia were always on the move, leading the herds from one field to another in search of fresh grass.



Ainura poured the creamy milk into leather saddlebags. The saddlebags would be put on the backs of the horses while the family traveled. The repeated bouncing motion of the trotting horses would turn the milk into butter. This work-saving idea was just one of the ways her family used their traveling lifestyle to their advantage.

After finishing with the milk, Ainura helped her mother take down the yurt. Yurts are tall, round tents with domed roofs. They are made out of the same kind of felt used to make hats. The felt is formed into large sheets that are tied onto a wooden frame to form the yurt walls and ceiling. Yurts don't have floors, because families build fires inside them to cook. A hole in the roof lets the smoke out. Their fire's ashes were still hot, so Ainura put the teakettle on to boil while they worked.

Ainura and her mother spent a few minutes carrying out the hanging saddlebags from inside the yurt. They didn't use dressers or trunks to store their things because those would be impossible to move. Instead, everything the family owned was stored in saddlebags, which could easily be carried from place to place. When they were in camp, they simply hung the bags on the walls inside the tent. Once they emptied the yurt, Ainura and her mother began untying the felt sheets and taking down the frame.

Ainura's family moved many times throughout the spring and summer, and each family member had many jobs to do on days when they changed camps. Her father and her younger brother, Batyr, were busy that morning rounding up the animals. She could hear Batyr making up songs as he worked. "My home is round my campfire, my country is the grass," he sang. It was a new song, but it expressed many of the old ideas and values of the nomads. Batyr knew this was Ainura's favorite valley, and he often made up songs about it to help her remember what it looked like when they traveled away.

"Ainura," her mother called to her, "can you finish packing the felt bundles? I need to start loading the horses." Ainura nodded and walked to where several large bags of wool were lying. She wet down small bundles of wool and wrapped them in blankets. This was one way they made felt. Normally, the family turned wet wool into felt by beating it for a long time. However, whenever they traveled, they dragged wet bundles of wool behind the horses with long ropes, which achieved the same result.

Her mother had lined up some horses, and Ainura started tying ropes to their packs for dragging the wool bundles. She looked up and saw her father and brother riding toward her with a few more horses. They were almost ready to start moving, but Ainura took a minute to walk to the remnants of the campfire and pour everyone a cup of tea. It would be another year before they returned here, and Ainura decided it was a good time for the family to stop for a moment and share her favorite view.

Spring Migration *(cont.)*

After reading the story, answer the questions. Circle the letter before each correct answer.

1. What does Ainura's brother mean when he says, "My home is round my campfire"?
 - a. He is glad that they have found a place to stay.
 - b. His job is to tend the fire to warm the family.
 - c. He is comfortable living in campsites.
 - d. He wants to build a home with a fireplace.

2. Which of these explains what the author means by "her family used their traveling lifestyle to their advantage"?
 - a. The family collects artifacts from all over Mongolia.
 - b. The family visits many attractions while traveling.
 - c. The family takes advantage of fellow nomadic travelers.
 - d. The family uses their nomadic lifestyle to make chores easier.

3. For this sentence, choose the word that shows that the animals graze in fields.
Ainura's family moves often so that their animals have _____ of fresh grass to eat.
 - a. pens
 - b. stables
 - c. arenas
 - d. pastures

4. Which of these statements about this nomadic family is true according to information in the story?
 - a. Drinking tea celebrates setting up a new camp.
 - b. The family stays in one place through the summer in order to plant crops.
 - c. The family's tents are made from animal hide.
 - d. The family uses horses to move their belongings from camp to camp.

5. Before Ainura takes down the frame of the yurt, she
 - a. hears her brother singing.
 - b. packs wool to be turned into felt.
 - c. loads up the horses with their belongings.
 - d. helps her mother untie the felt sheets covering the yurt.

6. What does it mean that the family was nomadic?
 - a. They raised goats.
 - b. They lived in the mountains.
 - c. They moved from place to place.
 - d. They liked to camp.