



UNIT 3. NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN STORYTELLING

BENCHMARKS	
Common Core-State Standards-ELA/Literacy	CCRA.R.1 CCRA.SL.1
OR Social Sciences Academic Content	HS.60 HS.63

INTRODUCTION:

Native American Indian tribes traditionally used storytelling as a primary means of educating young people. Not only are stories experienced directly, but they also challenge the young imagination and respect the inner wisdom each child owns. Stories not only tell of a legend or occurrence of long ago but also give reference to many other things. The stories in this unit may tell of what is happening now and have hidden meaning in the words, characters, creatures, places, numbers, or all of the above. There could be morals or lessons to be learned. They are very colorful stories that are easy to remember and may be told over and over so as to stimulate our minds.

All these stories that have been orally passed down from generation to generation, were lessons passed down with a whole rainbow of purposes and meanings. When speaking of old stories that have been handed down from the elders, we must have respect for those stories and not change their meanings or ways of being told to our own preference, but to keep telling them as they were told to us.

This unit introduces storytelling as an effective way of involving young people in the deeper ideas of ecology. It shows the student the art, sophistication and meaning of storytelling with three readings. There are then nine wonderful stories to choose from, each story, in a different way, relates how Native American Indians view the Natural World.

OBJECTIVES:**For students to know and understand:**

- the art of storytelling and the importance of storytelling not only as it relates to Native American Indian cultures, but to all cultures.
- that for Native American Indian cultures there is no separation between humans, the animals, the natural world, and the spirit world; they are all one, all part of the sacred hoop which binds them together.
- the importance of the relationships between all living beings, such as salmon and coastal Native American Indians, and the rituals and stories surrounding them.
- that it is a traditional Native American belief that humans were put on earth to be caretakers of the land and of the animals. The belief that this is their sacred duty helps to explain why Native American Indians revere the land and adds to the reasons why the loss of their land was so devastating to them.
- that Native American Indians practiced sustainability and recognized they had a valuable food source in salmon and other animals and took measures to ensure these creatures would be available for generations in the future.

MATERIALS:

- STUDENT HANDOUT 3-1: Native American Indian Beliefs and Symbols as described by John Fire Lane Deer
- STUDENT HANDOUT 3-2: Native American Indian Storytelling
- STUDENT HANDOUT 3-3: Animals and Nature in Native American Indian Stories

Introductory Stories:

- STUDENT HANDOUT 3-4: Salmon Boy
- STUDENT HANDOUT 3-5: Salmon Story
- STUDENT HANDOUT 3-6: Coyote Stories
- STUDENT HANDOUT 3-7: Legend of the Lost Salmon

Advanced Stories:

- STUDENT HANDOUT 3-8: Navajo Deer Hunting Way
- STUDENT HANDOUT 3-9: Koyoda & How He Brought Salmon to the Columbia River
- STUDENT HANDOUT 3-10: It Is Important (poem)

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS:

- What purposes did storytelling serve in past generations of Native American Indian cultures?
- What purpose does storytelling serve in Native American Indian cultures today?
- What values are passed down in the stories?
- How do Native American Indian cultures regard the Natural World?

PROCEDURE:

1. *Mitakuye Oyasin* is a Lakota phrase meaning WE ARE ALL RELATED. Write this on the board to begin to get students to think about what a Native American Indian perspective might be, and/or to facilitate a brainstorm discussion. *Mitakuye Oyasin* captures an essence of the tribal perspective of the Lakota people. It reflects the understanding that Native American Indians are truly and profoundly connected to other living beings and the physical world. According to Gregory Cajete, "Tribal education is, at its essence, learning about life through participation and relationship in community, including not only people, but plants, animals, and the whole of Nature."
2. Explain to students (for all levels) that they are about to begin an exploration of Native American Indian beliefs and values as they're embodied in legends that have come down to us through many generations. Native American Indian cultures hold these same beliefs and values today. To facilitate further discussion about Native American Indian beliefs and symbols, read aloud or pass out STUDENT HANDOUT 3-1 in which these beliefs are described by John Fire Lame Deer, a holy man of the Lakota tribe.
3. Storytelling, a traditional educational form, presents an ecological paradigm of respectfulness. Through a seemingly simple story, complex ideas are brought forth. It is a way of immersing students in an experiential narrative that challenges their imagination. The following information gives you some background and methodology for facilitating storytelling.
4. Assign to students two essays, STUDENT HANDOUTS 3-2 and 3-3 (these are fairly high level reading, thus you may have to make adaptations depending on the students you are working with), either as homework or in-class silent reading. Instruct them to be prepared to discuss each essay. These essays are meant to give background information needed before getting into the art of storytelling.
5. Review the following text boxes, *Ideas for How to Facilitate Storytelling* and *Native American Teachings*, for your own background knowledge.
6. There are five introductory and three advanced stories. Read through the stories to decide which would be most appropriate for your students. Each story has questions to stimulate thought and discussion.

APPLIED STORYTELLING

(adapted from One With the Watershed by Tom Heidlebaugh)

Teachers have a technology that is thousands of years old called Storytelling. It helps us all learn how to be a part of life. Although all teachers use Story in their work, there may be little attention paid to the disciplines, practices, and applications behind the telling. Native Americans developed this special gift of Story into a participatory process that is still used in traditional cultures. It can be a basic tool for the classroom. Story gives teachers a powerful, interdisciplinary form that brings experience into context for children. Through Story, students efficiently retain what they learn and apply it more consciously to a variety of school activities. In Whole Language activities, Story is a basic tool. After all, *We all want to be a part of the story.*

The Four Posts to the Longhouse of Story are:

- I. **WE ARE ALL STORYTELLERS** – each and every one of us. Students need to know this. In telling the stories of their own lives, they need the appreciation, the sense of respect and responsibility that comes with storytelling. The skills required to tell a story well are fundamental to learning and basic to every person's development.
- II. **STORYTELLING SUSTAINS COMMUNITY** – The exchange that takes place in the storytelling experience is an essential ingredient to social connection. The inverse is also true. When we stop telling each other our stories, community goes away.
- III. **EACH STORY IS A LIVING BEING** – A teacher's work is to recognize how each student is a story, complex and wonderful, full of risk and potential. Our job is to help that story unfold. As the student finds the thread of his or her personal tale, he or she begins to know coherence in a confusing world. Story should be no more manipulated for ideology than a student should be against their story.
- IV. **STORYTELLING IS ABOUT LISTENING** – Performing is not as important as paying attention. Traditional elders always begin by teaching young people to listen to the heartbeat of the earth, the silence of their hearts. When students learn to listen, they feel they are part of the life they want so much more to live.

From these core principles, schools can build a story process into any area of learning. Environmental studies and writing are integrated in the support that Story provides. Applied Storytelling allows the teacher to turn the classroom, the school year and the very act of teaching into pieces of the great experience of being human.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. In UNIT 6, there is a Native American Fishing Rights Mock Treaty Negotiation Role-Play. This would be an excellent compliment to this unit.
2. A wonderful compliment to this unit is *The Chinook Trilogy* videos. They are three thirty-minute videos. All three videos are most suitable for high school level students. They are available as a set or individually. See the Bibliography section for descriptions of each video and how to obtain them.

Ideas for How to Facilitate Storytelling

(Refer to STUDENT HANDOUT 3-2 for further descriptions of storytelling methods)

- Form a story circle when reading aloud.
- Use a story stick to facilitate students telling stories of their own. Perhaps use a word or a phrase to get them going.
- Use the “storyteller’s bag” method to facilitate storytelling.
- Use the “Ho-Hey” method to involve listeners.
- Have a storytelling contest. Give the best dramatic storyteller/performer special privileges or prizes.

Native American Indian Teachings

(Based on Cedar Tree Teachings of Elders of the Pacific Northwest Tribes and the text Look to the Mountain by Dr. Gregory Cajete of Santa Clara Pueblo)

This is a brief outline of deep principles upheld by many traditional cultures that are transferable to contemporary society. The terms used by Western ecologists are also indicated.

1. SEVENTH GENERATION THINKING – Considers our responsibilities in terms of both our future and our past. We honor our ancestors back at least seven generations when we make an important decision that affects our society. This means we take their way, which worked well for so long, into account when we plan a new road or teaching process. It doesn’t mean we can’t change but that we change carefully.

We honor our descendants not only because they carry the future but also because we will be their ancestors and we are responsible for how they will live. This means we leave wetlands and regenerate deforested slopes so our great-great-great-great grandchildren thank us for our decisions. This is called “integrated equity” by ecologists.

2. LISTENING IS PARTICIPATING – Paying attention is considered the beginning of all knowledge. Traditional teachers will point out to children that the Creator gave us two ears but only one mouth, so we listen at least twice as much as we talk. We are taught to consider that everything has wisdom and that if we learn the skills of listening we can hear the voices of the animals and plants and mountains. Ecologists call this “sensory integration”.

3. WE ARE A GIFT TO EACH OTHER – In a consumer society the goal is to acquire more than is needed. In a society based on sharing, the individual is aware of their responsibility, giving in equal value to what is received. This can be as simple as keeping toxic chemicals out of local waters or as difficult as asking the basic questions of mutual interdependence.
4. WE ARE ALL ON A JOURNEY TOGETHER – We grow and change in much the same way other living beings do. This link to life both supports us and challenges us. If we learn where we are meant to go from other living beings we also learn how to behave in this interspecies adaptation.
5. WITH CAREFUL WORK WE CAN RESTORE OURSELVES TO BALANCE – Much of Native American Indian environmental activity is ceremonial. This is conscious community action that acknowledges the basic harmony of the natural world and the unique ability human beings have to get out of balance with that existence. The two steps are to recognize when we are not connected and then restore ourselves to stability.

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UNIT 3. NATIVE AMERICAN STORYTELLING

STUDENT HANDOUTS

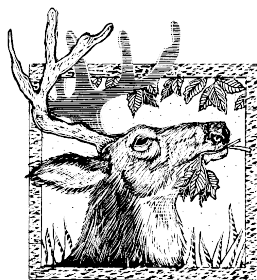
3-1	<i>Native American Beliefs and Symbols</i>
3-2	<i>Native American Storytelling</i>
3-2	<i>Animals and Nature in Native American Stories</i>
3-4	<i>Salmon Boy</i>
3-5	<i>Salmon Story</i>
3-6	<i>Coyote Stories</i>
3-7	<i>Legend of the Lost Salmon</i>
3-8	<i>Navajo Deer Hunting Way</i>
3-9	<i>Koyoda & How He Brought Salmon to the Columbia River</i>
3-10	<i>It Is Important (poem)</i>

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-1



Native American Beliefs and Symbols as described by John Fire Lame Deer, a holy man of the Lakota Tribe:

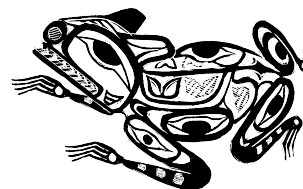
What do you see here, my friend? Just an ordinary old cooking pot, black with soot and full of dents...It doesn't seem to have a message, that old pot, and I guess you don't give it a thought. Except the soup smells good and reminds you that you are hungry....



But I'm an Indian. I think about ordinary, common things like this pot. The bubbling water comes from the rain cloud. It represents the sky. The fire come from the sun, which warms us all – men, animals, trees. The meat stands for the four-legged creatures, our animal brothers, who gave of themselves so that we should live. The stream is living breath. It was water; now it goes up to the sky, becomes a cloud again. These things are sacred. Looking at that pot full of good soup, I am thinking how, in this simple manner, Wakan Tanka takes care of me. We Sioux spend a lot of time thinking about everyday things, which in our mind are mixed up with the spiritual. We see in the world around us many symbols that teach us the meaning of life....



We Indians live in a world of symbols and images where the spiritual and the commonplace are one. To you symbols are just words, spoken or written in a book. To us they are part of nature, part of ourselves – the earth, the sun, the wind and the rain, stones, trees, animals, even little insects like ants and grasshoppers. We try to understand them not with the head, but with the heart, and we need no more than a hint to give us the meaning.



STUDENT HANDOUT 3-2

Native American Indian Storytelling

All cultures seek to answer the basic questions of where we humans came from and why we're here on earth. Their answers take the form of philosophies, religions, legends, mythology, and in Native American Indian cultures, storytelling is a dominant means for understanding.

Humans are storytelling animals. Through story we explain and come to understand ourselves. Story—in creative combination with encounter, experience, image making, ritual, play, imagination, dream, and modeling, forms the basic foundation of all human learning and teaching.

One of the primary learning techniques of Native American Indian Tradition is the Story Circle. There are actually many hundreds of ways to use the circle, from everyone telling a long traditional story, to passing a story stick in silence from one person to the next. The circle is a metaphor for the larger circle of the world and the process of using the circle signifies our role in the cycle of life.

Native American storytelling is a communal experience. It brings people together to share a past that is still alive. The events in the stories, though they may seem fantastic and unlikely, can also be experienced as a type of reality. Stories may show us important things about the world we live in and teach us ways to behave in that everyday world.

The value placed on stories in Native American Indian culture is described by Chris Landon in “American Indian Baseline Essays”:

The thousands of years of American Indian Experience on this Turtle Island, this Mother Earth, is the heartbeat that pulses through the arteries and veins of our stories. American Indian stories are our understanding of the universe, the Creator, all the beings with whom we share life, and the events that happened and happen in the course of our collective experience of life...They are...stories, the telling of which links our living culture to that of our ancestors. The stories themselves can be, and are thought of as, living beings, full of mystery, wisdom, and power, capable of evolving along with the People, and deserving respect for their own sake...They are alive, they are our lives, and we are uniquely human because of their uniqueness.

In the Northwest, stories and myths are traditionally part of the sacred winter season and for practical and spiritual reasons are not to be repeated at any other time. During the rest of the year only quoting from the stories is allowed. Seeing a coyote, one might say something the Coyote of the stories would characteristically say, such as “I’m hungry.” To tell myths outside of winter might bring rattlesnakes or other misfortune.

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-2

Stories themselves are not merely spoken, but shared as dramatic performances, often told by an elder person who might be invited to come to a house for several nights and be presented with gifts. Against the enclosed light of a smoldering fire, the narrator might develop a story using different voices for the various characters, highlighting their characteristic turns of expression, underlining foolishness and pathos with tone of voice, imparting emphasis with gestures. One or more of the audience might be expected to respond at intervals, perhaps after every verse, with the equivalent of “yes” or “indeed”. If all response were to cease, it would be time to end the story for the night.

Another common means of involving the listeners is the use of a response word. Whenever the storyteller says “Ho?” the people listening all have to say “Hey!” It is a method that has been used for years in storytelling. Stories are usually told at night around a fire during the cold months of the year. Everyone knows how drowsy you can get around a nighttime fire and no storyteller wants to tell a tale to people who are not awake.

In traditional settings, a storyteller is not speaking to an audience, but instead engages people in the tale. If a storyteller asks a question, he or she expects an answer. If there is a song within a story, that song will be known by or taught to the people. To Native American Indian people, stories are among the greatest gifts which human beings have been given. The way the storytellers are regarded by their people shows this.

Because Native American Indian cultures have an understanding of this powerful role of story and its cross-generational value, people of all ages gather around when a story is told. Storytelling in Native American Indian cultures is not “just for children”. In fact, stories are so powerful that they are treated with a special respect. Many stories, in fact, may be told only by certain people at specific times.

Because certain men and women show more storytelling ability than others, there are sometimes specific individuals who act as “professional” storytellers. Among the Iroquois, these people have the title of Hage’ota, “a story person or storyteller.” These people traditionally traveled from lodge to lodge during the storytelling seasons.

Basic Native American environmental themes like sustainability and biodiversity, as well as a process with which watersheds and salmon can be understood, are at the heart of the stories you will be reading. When people recognize their relationship with the rest of the natural world, they feel empowered to learn. “The care of the rivers,” an elder said, “begins in the human heart.”



STUDENT HANDOUT 3-2

Adapted from:

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One With The Watershed: A Story Based Curriculum For Primary Environmental Education; presented by the Tribal Communities of the Northwest, the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission and the Seattle Aquarium; written by Tom Hedlebaugh.

Keepers of the Earth Teacher's Guide; by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac; 1988; Fulcrum Publishing; Golden, Colorado.

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-3

Animals and Nature in Native American Indian Stories

People have always had a strong desire to understand the world around them, from small children repeatedly asking “but why is it that way?” to students gazing through microscopes and telescopes, and astronauts traveling to distant stars.



Native American Indians have innumerable stories to explain everything from “Why the Owl Has Big Eyes” and “How to Scare a Bear” to “Coyote Places the Stars” and “Daughter of the Sun.”

In Native American Indian belief systems, animals were created before humans and were the ones who went on to create the stars and plants and humans. For this reason animals are often referred to in stories as our “elder relatives” and our teachers – when an animal speaks to a human being, it is wise to pay attention, listen, and learn.

The animal people in the stories of the Pacific Northwest Native American Indians were giants. Mosquito, Spider, and Ant were larger than our cows. Salmon, Eagle, Beaver, Fox, Coyote, and others had the characteristics of today’s animals, yet they could reason, talk and do many things that neither animals nor people can do now. The animal people in the tribal tales lived exactly as the Indians themselves lived later. When telling the stories in English, Native Americans today refer to these animal persons simply as “the people.”

Animal relationships are expressed through ceremonial rituals that focus on their ability to connect humans with the universal order. The world and animal renewal ceremonies, traditionally practiced by all tribes, express the human responsibility to preserve, protect, and perpetuate all life. In the Northwest, the salmon ceremonies reflect this responsibility:

The salmon ceremony is observed everywhere along the Northwest coast. For the Huroc and others it symbolizes a renewal of the world’s creation. Many groups also hold ceremonies for the first fish taken or other species- the first deer, the first berries, or even the first acorn in the southern regions.

The salmon (or first four salmon) receive the most elaborate rites, though this varies from place to place. Usually the salmon are laid with their heads pointing upstream on a newly woven mat or cedar board, often under a special shelter and sprinkled with down feathers of birds. A formal speech or prayer of welcome is intoned as in this particular example:

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-3

Old friends, thank you that we meet alive. We have lived until this time when you came this year. Now we pray you, supernatural ones, o protect us from danger, that nothing evil may happen to us when we eat you, supernatural ones, for that is the reason why you have come here, that we may catch you for food. We know that only your bodies are dead here, but your souls come to watch over us when we are going to eat what you have given us to eat now.

The salmon are offered fresh water symbolically after their long journey through the salt sea. The first salmon are then cooked and divided in small pieces among all the people present at a communion. The celebration, often seven days in length, traditionally includes feasting, gift-giving, torch-bearing processions, dancing and singing. During all these past ceremonies of welcome, countless salmon were allowed to pass upstream to the spawning grounds, and thus historically the ritual actually helped to assure the continuation of the salmon runs.

Guided by these principles, Native American Indian people acknowledge that all living and non-living entities of Nature have important inherent meaning. Central to the spirituality of Native American Indians is the belief that all things and all beings are interconnected. This is symbolized by the circle or hoop, because anything that affects one part of the circle affects all the others. Based on this understanding, Native Americans symbolically recognize their relationship to plants, animals, stones, trees, mountains, rivers, lakes, streams, and a host of other living entities. Through seeking, making, sharing, and celebrating these natural relationships, they have come to perceive themselves as living in a sea of relationships.



In the minds of many Europeans, Native American Indians have never been understood by European culture for who they are; peoples who, in a variety of ways and with all their hearts and beings, try to establish a strong, direct relationship with natural life. They understand Nature as the essence of the Great Mystery, which guides and breathes life into all things. For Native American people, the land is full of spirit, full of life energy. Everything—a rock, a tree, a plant, a mountain, an animal, a bird, an insect—has its unique expression of life and way of the Spirit.



STUDENT HANDOUT 3-3



Since we are all part of the same whole, say Native American Indians, we can communicate directly with other parts of creation- nature, animals, the spirit world, and we can all help each other. If humans ask the assistance of plants and animals in a respectful and honoring way, they will respond by serving as messengers or by offering themselves up as food or for use in healing. In return, there are times when humans can help plants and animals. Similarly, if we help another person in need, they will be grateful and eager to reciprocate.

To further explain their deep reverence for each other and for nature, the Native American Indians feel that humans and nature are a precious gift from the Creator. Therefore, by caring for each other and by using nature in a way that protects rather than depletes it, we show our appreciation for the gift and, we ensure our own well being and survival. This is why balance and harmony among all beings must be maintained.

Ella Clark, in Indian Legends of the Pacific Northwest, explains this special relationship between Native Americans and animals and nature.



"To the Indian in his native state," said Martin Sampson, an Indian grandfather of the Puget Sound region, "Everything had life or spirit; the earth, the rocks, trees, ferns, as well as birds and animals, even the hail which fell from the sky had a spirit and a language and song of its own and might be an inspiration to a warrior."

Each wind was the breath of some being who lived far away in the direction from which the wind blows. To each the Indians gave a name, and every sign, whistle, moan, or roar of thunder, the growth of plants, the changed position of the stars – all were caused by the spirits living in them. The spirits of nature control nature, the Indians believed, just as the spirits that live in human bodies control human actions.

Whether the spirits were regarded as good or evil depended, chiefly, on how they treated the Indian. He tried to win their favor and protection, therefore, and to avoid their wrath. If angered, the spirits of the mountains would cause a storm or avalanche or perhaps a volcanic eruption. The spirits living in the rapids of the Columbia River and in the dark pools along its banks might seize the canoe of the man who had angered them. Some spirits, always evil, hid in caves and in caverns below the earth, but roamed forth from time to time to do their wickedness.

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-3

The spirit of the storm was visualized as a huge bird, known as Thunderbird. The flapping of its wings caused the sound of thunder; the flash of its eyes was the lightning. It lived in a cloud above the highest peak the tribe could see, or in a cave in the mountains...Indians near the coast believed that Thunderbird flew to the Pacific Ocean to get whales, which were its foods. Rain clouds and thunderstorms often followed it home from the ocean. The Indians feared Thunderbird and tried not to anger it.



STUDENT HANDOUT 3-4***Salmon Boy***
(Haida Tribe – Pacific Northwest)

(From Keepers of the Animals by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac)



Long ago, among the Haida people, there was a boy who showed no respect for the salmon. Though the salmon meant life for the people, he was not respectful of the one his people called Swimmer. His parents told him to show gratitude and behave properly, but he did not listen. When fishing he would step on the bodies of the salmon that were caught and after eating he carelessly threw the bones of the fish into the bushes. Others warned him that the spirits of the salmon were not pleased by such behavior, but he did not listen.



One day, his mother served him a meal of salmon. He looked at it with disgust. “This is moldy,” he said, though the meat was good. He threw it upon the ground. Then he went down to the river to swim with the other children. However, as he was swimming, a current caught him and pulled him away from the others. It swept him into the deepest water and he could not swim strongly enough to escape from it. He sank into the river and drowned.

There, deep in the river, the Salmon People took him with them. They were returning back to the ocean without their bodies. They had left their bodies behind for the humans and the animal people to use as food. The boy went with them, for he now belonged to the salmon.

When they reached their home in the ocean, they looked just like human beings. Their village there in the ocean looked much like his own home and he could hear the sound of children playing in the stream which flowed behind the village. Now the Salmon People began to teach him. He was hungry and they told him to go to the stream and catch one of their children, who were salmon swimming in the stream. However, he was told, he must be respectful and after eating return all of the bones and everything he did not intend to eat to the water. Then, he was told, their child would be able to come back to life. But if the bones were not returned to the water, that salmon child could not come back.

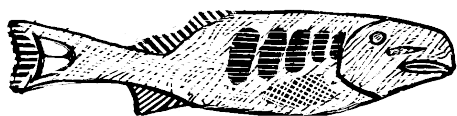
He did as he was told, but one day after he had eaten, when it came time for the children to come up to the village from the stream, he heard one of them crying. He went to see what was wrong. The child was limping because one of its feet was gone. Then the boy realized he had not thrown all of the fins back into the stream. He quickly found the one fin he had missed, threw it in and the child was healed.

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-4

After he had spent the winter with the Salmon People, it again was spring and time for them to return to the rivers. The boy swam with them, for he belonged to the Salmon People now. When they swam past his village, his own mother caught him in her net. When she pulled him from the water, even though he was in the shape of a salmon, she saw the copper necklace he was wearing. It was the same necklace she had given her son. She carried Salmon Boy carefully back home. She spoke to him and held him and gradually he began to shed his salmon skin. First his head emerged. Then, after eight days, he shed all of the skin and was a human again.

Salmon Boy taught the people all of the things he had learned. He was a healer now and helped them when they were sick. "I cannot stay with you long," he said, "you must remember what I teach you."

He remained with the people until the time came when the old salmon who had gone up stream and not been caught by the humans or the animal people came drifting back down toward the sea. As Salmon Boy stood by the water, he saw a huge old salmon floating down toward him. It was so worn by its journey that he could see through his sides. He recognized it as his own soul and he thrust his spear into it. As soon as he did so, he died.



Then the people of the village did as he had told them to do. They placed his body into the river. It circled four times and then sank, going back to his home in the ocean, back to the Salmon People.



Questions:

1. What do the salmon do when the young boy treats them disrespectfully? What would you have done?
2. Why do the salmon make the boy one of their own?
3. How is the young boy changed by his experience? What does he learn?
4. How can Salmon Boy die and come back to life so many times in this story?
5. What finally happens to Salmon Boy in the end?
6. Identify some circles and cycles revealed in the story. Why are they important? Why is it important for our relationship with nature to be practiced in circles?
7. What are some the cultural values passed down in this story?

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-5

A Salmon Story (Kwakiutl Tribe – Pacific Northwest)

(From Kwakiutl Legends as told to Pamela Whitaker by Chief James Wallas)

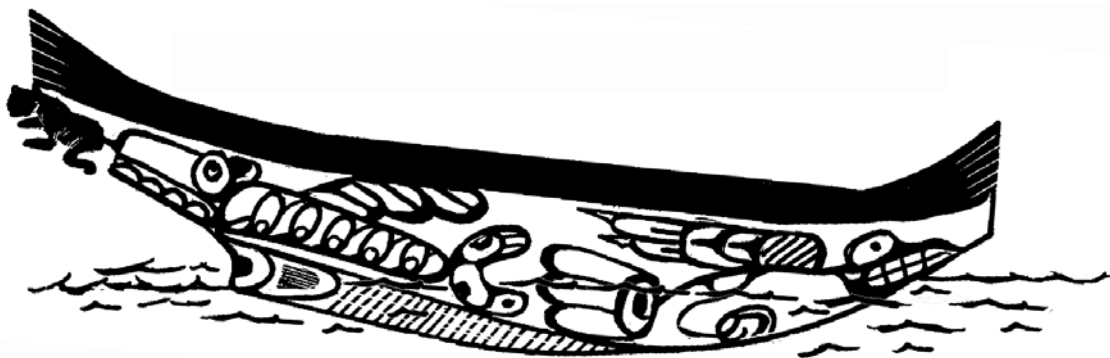


"We have come to meet alive, Swimmer. Do not feel wrong about what I have done to you, friend Swimmer, for that is the reason why you come that I may spear you, that I may eat you, Supernatural One, you, Long-Life-Giver, you, Swimmer. Now protect us, (me) and my wife, that we may keep well, that nothing may be difficult for us that we wish to get from you, Rich-Maker-Woman. Now call after you, your father, and your mother and uncles and aunts and elder brothers and sisters to come to me also, you, Swimmers, you Satiater," says he.

--A Kwakiutl Prayer to Salmon

When a man eats salmon by the river, he sings the salmon song. It is in the river, in the roasting, in the spearing, in the sharing, in the shoring, in the shaking, shining salmon. It is in the song, too.

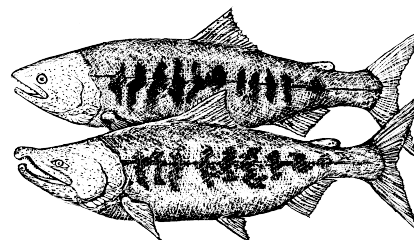
--Kwakiutl Poem



STUDENT HANDOUT 3-5

A powerful man, one who knew how to make plans, once lived at the top of a cliff on Nigei Island. He had a wonderful canoe. The canoe would become the size that he needed, either large enough to carry a hundred people or small enough to take just a few. He could dip his paddle into the water and say where he wanted to go, pull the paddle once, and the canoe would be there.

Many people resented the man who could make plans because he was different from themselves, so he lived alone with his family at the top of the cliff. On the rock face of the island, there was an opening through which he used to climb to escape his enemies. The opening led into a passageway and to the top of the cliff where there was a smaller hole to come out of. At the bottom of the embankment stood a pillar of stone and, farther down, another on which Planner's great canoe rested.



Planner had a son who was of the age to be married. He did not want his son to marry an ordinary girl. He wanted a union that would help provide food for his people, who were often hungry.

The powerful man had heard of a type of fish called "salmon" that dwelled at the other side of the world. He said to his people, who lived down below the cliff, "I want my son to marry the salmon girl who is far across the water. We will take my canoe and go to where the salmon are."

The people did not know where he was going but they all climbed into the great canoe. Planner headed toward the open sea and put this paddle in the water. "Take us where the salmon are," he said, and gave the paddle one strong pull. The canoe with all the people in it moved as fast as lightning across the water to the other side of the world.

At the edge of the water of the strange place were big bins teeming with fish of different kinds. "They must be the salmon of which we have heard," the people said to one another in wonder.

Planner asked to speak to the chief of the nearby village and was invited into his lodge. He discussed with the man the possibility of marriage between his son and the chief's daughter.

"We do not have salmon where we come from," Planner explained. "Sometimes our people are very hungry. If your daughter marries my son, we would like her to bring salmon with her."

The chief looked at Planner. He looked out at the magnificent canoe and replied, "Yes, my daughter may marry your son and she will bring salmon. But before you go you must stay for a feast. It will be many days before the salmon reach Vancouver Island. During the feast we will teach you how to cook and preserve fish."

So a great wedding feast that lasted four days was held. The planner and his people tried all the different kinds of salmon. They learned how to prepare it and how to tell one kind from another. They ate the mild flesh of the small, spotted Pink, and the redder meat of the large Coho. They tried speckled-sided Chum and were surprised at the size of the delicious Spring salmon.

"One Spring salmon will feed many," the people exclaimed to one another. But their favorite was the rich red meat of the slim, silvery-blue Sockeye.

The guests learned many ways to cook salmon. They were taught how to smoke it and dry it for the winter and how to barbecue it. When they were preparing the salmon, they were instructed to leave the head on the end of the backbone so that the salmon would come alive again.

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-5

“When you barbecue salmon over a fire, there is a hole that you put the stick through,” they were told. “Be careful that you don’t drop any bones of the salmon through that little hole or something will be missing when that salmon comes alive again—a fin or tail or something like that.”

“You may throw the bones of the salmon into the water or anywhere else and they will come back again the next year. But do not drop them through the hole where the barbecue stick goes.”

The chief of the village said to the planner, “When a child is born to our children who have just married, it will have a dance all its own—The Salmon Dance.” He did the dance to show him how it went. “When twins are born, they too will have this dance, for twins are children of the salmon.”

“There’s another thing you must remember,” added the chief. “When the salmon are coming up the river, no one should mourn. Even if someone dies at that time, do not allow your people to mourn or the salmon may cease to come up your river.”

After four days of feasting and learning, the people of Nigei Island climbed back in the wonderful canoe. The son of the planner and his bride, the salmon girl, were with them. The salmon followed the canoe across the ocean to the shore of Nigei Island.

Planner stood up in the canoe and said to the salmon, “This is where the planner lives.” The fish all spread out behind the canoe, jumping and splashing in the water. Each group was given a river of Vancouver Island in which to spawn.



Questions:

1. What was unique about the Planner and his canoe?
2. What type of girl did he want his son to marry?
3. Describe the four-day wedding feast. What did they learn?
4. What specific instructions were given on how to prepare and cook salmon? What would happen if these instructions were not followed?
5. What will the child of the two just married have all its own?
6. What is the significance of twins?
7. What should no one do when the salmon are coming up river? Why do you think this is?
8. What happened when the salmon reached the Pacific Northwest?
9. What do you think are the cultural values passed on in this story?
10. How did the relationship between Planner and his people change? Why did this occur?
11. How do you think the storyteller would involve the audience in this story?

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-6

Coyote Stories:
Coyote Takes Water from the Frog People
(from Columbia River: It's Future and You)
and
The Legend of Coyote
(told by Moses George, Colville Confederated Tribes)

***Coyote Takes Water from the Frog People***

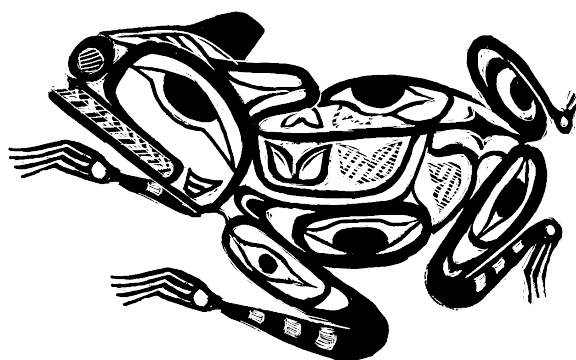
Coyote was out hunting when he found a dead deer. One of the deer's rib bones looked just like a big shell. Coyote picked it up and took it with him to see the Frog People. The Frog People had all the water. When anyone wanted any water to drink, to cook with, or to wash with, he or she had to get it from the Frog People.

Coyote said, "Hey, Frog People, I have a big shell. I want a big drink of water, and I want to drink it for a long time." "Give us that shell," said the Frog People, "and you can drink all you want." Coyote gave them the shell and began drinking. The water that Coyote drank was behind a large dam.

Coyote began drinking. He drank for a long time. Finally, one of the Frog People said, "Hey Coyote, you sure are drinking a lot of water there. What are you doing that for?" Coyote brought his head up out of the water. The Frog People wondered how Coyote could drink so much water. They thought Coyote might be trying to trick them.

All the time he had his head underwater, Coyote was digging. He was making a hole under the dam. When he was finished, he stood up and said, "That was a good drink, just what I needed." Then the dam collapsed and the water went out into the valley and made the creeks and rivers and waterfalls. The Frog People were very angry. "You have taken all the water, Coyote!" They cried. Coyote said, "It is not right that one group of people has all the water. Now it is where everyone can have it."

Now, anyone can go down to the river and swim or get water to drink or to cook with.



STUDENT HANDOUT 3-6

The Legend of Coyote

After Old-One, the Great Spirit and Creator, had made the earth and the ancient Indian people, he sent Coyote among them, because they were very much in need and were having a hard time. Coyote was told to kill the evil beings who preyed upon them and to teach them the best way of doing things. It was because of Coyote that the salmon were first brought to the Wenatchee River. First, he broke down the dam which five Beaver women had built in the lower Columbia. "It is not right," he said to them, "for you to keep the salmon penned up here. The people farther up the river are hungry."

Then he changed the Beaver women into sandpipers. "You shall forevermore be sandpipers," he said. "You shall always run by the water's edge. You shall never again have control over salmon."

By this time so many salmon had come up from the mouth of Big River that the water was dark with them. Coyote walked along the bank of the river, and the salmon followed him in the water. At all the villages, the Indian people were glad to see him and the fish he brought. Their hunger was over.

When he came to the Little White Salmon River, he stopped and taught the people how to make a fish trap. He twisted young twigs of hazel brush and hung the trap in the river. Then he showed the people how to dry fish and how to store it for winter use.

When he came to the bigger White Salmon River, he showed the people how to spear salmon. He made a spear from a young white fir tree and tipped the point with a sharp flint rock found along the Big River bank and caught the salmon with the pointed end of the spear. "This is how you should do it," said Coyote.

Wherever he stopped, he showed the people how to cook fish. They had always eaten it raw. He showed them how to broil salmon by holding it over the fire on sticks. Coyote put salmon in a hole, poured a little water over it, dropped hot stones into the pothole, and covered everything with green grass to hold the steam. Thus the salmon followed him. Often he came to a smaller stream flowing into Big River. Because the people along the Yakima and Wenatchee Rivers treated him kindly, Coyote sent the fish up their rivers and promised them that every spring the salmon would return. Where he was treated very kindly he made the river narrow in one spot. He made the two banks of the river almost meet, so that there would be a good place for catching salmon. This Salmon Place where we are gathered today is the place where he has always given us fish to meet all of our needs.



STUDENT HANDOUT 3-6

Questions:

In *Coyote Takes Water from the Frog People*,

1. Who had all the water?
2. What did Coyote exchange for water?
3. What was Coyote really doing, when he said he was drinking?

In *The Legend of Coyote*,

4. Why was Coyote sent to earth? What was his purpose?
5. What was the first thing Coyote did? What was his reason for doing this?
6. What did he do to the Beaver women? Why do you think he did this?
7. What many things did Coyote teach the Indian people?
8. Why did Coyote send fish up the Yakima and Wenatchee Rivers?
9. Why did he make narrow spots along certain parts of the rivers?

In both stories,

10. Why were the Frog People and Beaver women, seen as evil by Coyote?
11. What are the major themes and cultural values passed on in the Coyote stories? How do these themes and cultural values relate to water issues of today?



STUDENT HANDOUT 3-7

Legend of the Lost Salmon **(Yakima Tribe – Pacific Northwest)**

This is a Yakima Indian legend about the Red Salmon or Chinook and its disappearance. It dates back to ancient times when their Creator first provided salmon on the earth for the people.



The Creator taught the people how to care for the salmon, which was created especially for them. He said, “Do not neglect this food, pay close attention to how you care for it, and do not take more than you need.” He told them if they observed these rules, the salmon would multiply several times over as long as they lived.

At first the people diligently obeyed what they were told, and they lived happily with a bounty of fish. All along the river there were different bands of people living in their fishing villages, busy catching and drying their supply of salmon.

But after time, something strange happened. The people became careless and they neglected to follow the instructions made by the Creator. They became greedy. They did not take care of the salmon. They let it go to waste when they caught more than they needed for their families. They would not listen to the advice from those who were trying to follow the teachings. In time, the salmon disappeared.

When the salmon were no longer coming up the stream for the people to catch, everybody frantically searched the rivers, but all in vain. There was not one salmon left to be found. Soon they became hungry. Their little children were crying and the old people were forced to beg for food.

One day, while searching the river, they found a dead salmon lying on the bank of the river. They stared at it in disbelief. They began to cry out in shame. They pleaded to the Creator, “If we are given one more chance, we will do better.”

“If only we could awaken this salmon, other salmon might come up the stream,” one person said.

The people called a council and they talked about how they could give life back to the salmon. In the past, those with supernatural powers could revive a lifeless creature by stepping over it five times. The people tried this in order to revive the salmon. One by one they each stepped over the salmon five times, but to no avail.



STUDENT HANDOUT 3-7

There was a recluse named Old Man Rattlesnake. He never went anywhere, always staying off by himself. He was very ancient and the people referred to him as “Grandfather.” Someone said, “Let’s ask Grandfather to help us! He is wise and has special powers. Let him try to revive the salmon!” A messenger was sent.

“Oh Grandfather, would you come and help us revive the salmon. Everyone else has failed.” Old Man Rattlesnake listened and said, “What makes you think I am capable of reviving this lone salmon after everyone else has failed? I am an old man. How do you expect an old man to possess powers to do the impossible!” The messenger was saddened and responded, “You are our last hope. Please help us, Grandfather.” Finally

Old Man Rattlesnake agreed, “I will do my best.” He was so old it was very painful for him to move fast. He moved ever so slowly and it seemed like such a long way for one so old.

Meanwhile, as Grandfather slowly made his way, Coyote tried desperately, using all his wily skills to show the people he possessed supernatural powers. He was thinking to himself, “If I revive this salmon, I will be forever famous.” He stepped over it four times, and just as he was stepping over the fifth time, he pushed the salmon with the tip of his toe to make it appear as though it moved. He announced loudly, “Look my people. I made the salmon come to life. Did you see it move?” But the people were wise to the trickster ways of the Coyote, and paid him no attention.

Finally, Old Man Rattlesnake arrived. Painfully he crawled over the salmon four times. The fifth time something magical happened. Grandfather disappeared into the salmon and the salmon came back to life. Soon the salmon came back to the rivers.

The people learned their lesson well and took care to protect their salmon from then on passing on the lesson of the lost salmon to the next generations.

Today, when you catch a salmon, and you are preparing it for eating or preserving, if you break the spine you will find a membrane inside. This is Old Man Rattlesnake who gave life back to the salmon.



Questions:

1. What did the Creator warn the people about the salmon?
2. What happened after time?
3. What did the people find in the search for fish?
4. Why did they think they could revive this last salmon?
5. Who did the people turn to revive the salmon?
6. Who stepped in to try to prove he possessed supernatural powers? What was the result?
7. What finally happened when Old Man Rattlesnake stepped over the salmon for the fifth time?
8. What do you think are the values being passed on to young people in this story?
9. Do you think this story has meaning today? How?

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-8

The Navajo Deer Hunting Way

(From Look to the Mountain by Dr. Gregory Cajete)



There was a hunter who waited in ambush. Wind had told him, "This is where the tracks are. The deer will come marching through in single file." The hunter had four arrows: one was made from sheet lightning, one from zigzag lightning, one of sunlight roots, and one of rainbow.

Then the first deer, a large buck with many antlers, came. The hunter got ready to shoot the buck. His arrow was already in place. But just as he was ready to shoot, the deer transformed himself into a mountain mahogany bush, *tse esdaazii*. After a while, a mature man stood up from behind the bush. He stood up and said, "Do not shoot! We are your neighbors. These are the things that will be in the future, when human beings come into existence. This is the way you will eat us." And he told the hunter how to kill and eat the deer. So the hunter let the mature Deerman go for the price of his information. And the Deerman left.

Then a large doe, a shy doe, appeared behind the one who had left. The hunter was ready again to shoot the doe in the heart. But the doe turned into a cliffrose bush, *aweets aal*. A while later a young woman stood up from the bush. The woman said, "Do not shoot! We are your neighbors. In the future, when man has been created, men will live because of us. Men will use us to live on." So then, for the price of her information the hunter let the Doewoman go. And she left.

Then a young buck, a two pointer, came along. And the hunter got ready to shoot. But the deer transformed itself into a dead tree, *tsin bisga*. After a while, a young boy stood up from behind the dead tree and said, "In the future, after man has been created, if you talk about us in the wrong way we will cause trouble for you when you urinate, and we will trouble your eyes. We will also trouble your ears if we do not approve of what you say about us." And for the price of his information, the hunter let the young Deerman go.

Then the little fawn appeared. The hunter was ready to shoot the fawn, but she turned into a lichen-spotted rock, *tse dlaad*. After a while, a young girl stood up from the rock and spoke: "In the future all this will happen if we approve, and whatever we shall disapprove shall be up to me. I am in charge of the other Deer People. If you talk badly about us, and if we disapprove of what you say, I am the one who will respond with killing you with what I am. If you hear the cry of my voice, you will know that trouble is in store for you. If you do not make use of us properly, even in times when we are numerous, you will not see us anymore. We are the four deer who have transformed themselves into different kinds of things. Into these four kinds of things we can transform ourselves. Moreover, we can assume the forms of all different kinds of plants. Then when

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-8

you look you will not see us. In the future only those of whom we approve shall eat the mighty deer. If when you hunt, you come across four deer, you will not kill all of them. You may kill three and leave one. But if you kill all of us, it is not good."

"These are the things that will bring you happiness. When you kill a deer, you will lay him with the head toward your house. You will cover the earth with plants or with branches of trees lengthwise, with the growing tips of the plants pointing the direction of the deer's head, toward your house. Then you will take us to your house and eat of us. You will place our bones under any of the things whose form we can assume. At these places you may put our bones. You will sprinkle the place with yellow pollen. Once, Twice. Then you lay the bones. And then you sprinkle yellow pollen on top of the bones. This is for protection of the game animals. In this manner they will live on; their bones can live again and live a last life."



Questions:

1. What were the four arrows the hunter had made from?
2. What did the large buck turn into? What did the mature man tell the hunter?
3. What did the shy large doe turn into? What did the young woman tell the hunter?
4. What did the young buck turn into? What did the young boy tell the hunter?
5. What did the little fawn turn into? What did the young girl tell the hunter?
6. If one kills a deer, how should one deal with the body?
7. What do you think is the purpose of this story-- entertainment, passing down of values, rituals, traditions? What are the themes and messages of this story?
8. Why do you think rituals surrounding hunting is so important to Native American Indians?
9. Explain the concept of sustainability, using this story.

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-9***Koyoda and How He Brought Salmon to the
Columbia River***
(Klickitat Tribe – Pacific Northwest)

(Adapted from Legends of the Klickitats)



Many years ago, before the Great Stone Bridge was destroyed, Koyoda, half-god and half-man, served the Creator by helping the people of the Earth. He gave the people mouths and taught them to eat. He also taught the people how to grow and prepare maize (corn) and other foods so they would have plenty to eat during the cold winter months. And he also gave the Law to the people so they would know how to be good and to live in peace with each other.

At a time when the two great snow mountains, Pa-toe (Mt. Adams) and Yi-East (Mt. Hood) were carrying out one of their terrible battles, they destroyed the great in-land sea. This happened when Loo-wit was still guarding the Great Stone Bridge. During this particular fierce quarrel between the mountains, the animals had been killed or fled in terror. The forests around the mountains were burned. The berries and the maize, which would have served for the people's winter food supply, was buried beneath the ash. Thoughts turned towards Koyoda, and the people sought him out. Since Koyoda had given the people mouths and taught them how to eat, surely, he would help them as they faced starvation. Messengers were sent to find Koyoda, but he had already heard of their hardship and was on his way to help.



Koyoda listened quietly as the leaders complained of their situation and blamed Koyoda. Why had he given them mouths to eat with? At first Koyoda was angry, for eating should be a blessing and they were cursing the person who had given the blessing. But it wasn't long before the leaders saw their error, and they asked Koyoda to forgive them for complaining and to help them. He told them, "Give me one of your best war-canoes and six of your best young men. There is no food here. The animals are gone and the maize and berries are buried under the ash. We must follow the river down to the old sea until your fish can be found. Then we will drive at least part of them back up the river."

The people quickly found the best of the remaining canoes and named six braves to join Koyoda on this journey down the great river Columbia. Taking a few small food supplies, which was willingly shared by the villagers, Koyoda and the six braves started on their quest. This was the first time anyone had gone down this great river. No one had any idea where it would lead after they passed under the Great Stone Bridge. Would

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-9

they be sucked down to the center of the Earth? What awaited them once they entered the great dark hole under the mountains?

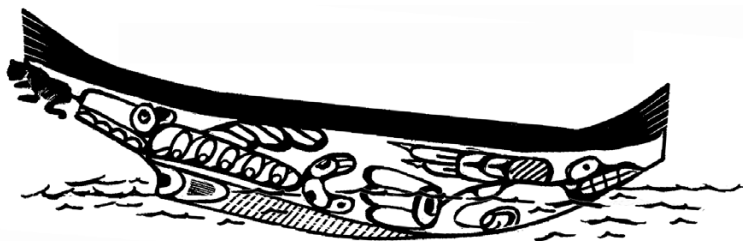
Although each man was terrified, they were determined to make the journey with Koyoda. At first the river flowed swiftly and smoothly. There were no sharp turns or rocks to create dangerous swirls in the river. Nothing seemed to disturb their progress.

As they reached the great tunnel under the bridge, darkness came upon them and they were frightened. The darkness seemed to surround them as they rounded that first bend. The noise of the rushing water was deafening. Suddenly the canoe rammed head on into a stone wall or an island in the middle of their path. As the canoe jerked violently, cold water splashed over the sides of the canoe and everyone was thrown overboard. The swirling water rushed over them. Gulping for their every breath, all except one managed to pull themselves to safety. The canoe was also saved, but the paddles and what little supplies they had taken from the village were lost.

Before leaving on this journey, Koyoda had carefully wrapped his fire flint and some cedar bark in buckskin and tied it in his hair. Carefully removing it, he was able to use it to start a small fire. The men found driftwood all around them, and before long a good fire was burning. As they warmed themselves, the braves mourned for their lost companion.

They knew they could not remain on the banks of the river for long, for the people back home would soon be starving. After finding pieces of driftwood that could be used for make- shift paddles, they climbed into the canoe and started on their way. Koyoda noticed a hole in the hull that had been made when the canoe first hit the obstruction in the river. But the hole was high enough, so that even with everyone in the canoe, their combined weight did not push the hole below the water level and they could stay afloat.

Because of the darkness, the party of braves and Koyoda decided to leave their fire burning on the banks so the light from the fire could help to guide their way. Suddenly in the dim of the light they saw a moving figure and realized it was their lost companion. He was clinging to a piece of driftwood, alongside a rock wall, at the edge of the river. A shout of joy filled the air as the braves paddled to rescue their brother. But as they pulled him to safety, their canoe settled deeper into the water, so that the water poured through the hole in the hull. They had no supplies and nothing to bail out the in- rushing water. Their canoe soon began to sink. Suddenly and unexpectedly, Koyoda jumped into the river. As half-god and half-man, Koyoda could take different forms and he became a great beaver. As a beaver, he took the canoe in tow, and gently guided them down the river. Before long they passed through the darkness and entered into bright sunlight and more quiet waters.



STUDENT HANDOUT 3-9

But as their eyes became accustomed to the light, they were shocked at what lay before them. Everywhere the land was devastated. It was worse than their own land. In addition to the destruction caused by the fire, ash, and lava, the waters of the great in-land sea had hurled through the mountains and destroyed everything before it. In all directions, everything was flooded. Silence overcame the group as they looked in horror at the site before them. Koyoda, in the form of a beaver, was still guiding their direction, and after spotting a small island pushed them to shore. Thoughts of food soon broke the silent trance and as they reached shore the braves gathered wood as Koyoda changed back into a man and caught a few nice fish that had been lost to the great destruction on this side of the bridge.

After regaining their strength from the hearty meal, they found a balsam tree and gathered some pitch to repair the hole in their canoe. Soon they were on their way and Koyoda felt certain they had found the lost fish. But he had no idea how to get them back through the mountain.

Just as dusk began overshadowing the day, the party sighted another small island. A small stream of smoke was rising upwards to the clouds, and they were certain they would find another camp. But it was too late to investigate that night, so they wrapped themselves in their blankets and lay down in the bottom of the canoe to sleep.

But while they slept, the waters continued to flow and pushed them past the channel of the Willamette. They continued to drift. Suddenly, as they awakened from their night's sleep, there was a deafening roar from the waters as they tumbled through the channel between the hills. Caught in the pull of the current, the braves could do nothing but try to keep their canoe upright. But it was to no avail. The canoe overturned and all were once again thrown into the swirling rumbling waters. This time, there was no island, for they were on the bar at the mouth of the great river and entering the ocean. Instantly, Koyoda changed himself into a beaver and gathered his companions. They rode on his back to the safety of a sandy beach. The beach extended as far as the eye could see. In one direction was the great river they had just traveled down in search of the lost fish. It carried the waters from their own sea. In the other direction, they saw a number of faint smoke columns spiraling to the clouds. Surely this meant a large village, and perhaps this village had plenty of food.

During their last overturn, the canoe was damaged beyond repair, so they decided to walk to the village. They had never before seen the roar of ocean waves as they rolled upon the beach. After a short time, they wondered if they had angered the God of this great water, because the waves began to roll in from the sea and seemingly drive them further towards the bank. Before long, they found themselves climbing the rocky cliffs to avoid being showered with the spray of salty waves. The young men cried out to Koyoda, and he succeeded in casting a spell on the waves, and they once again began to recede back into the ocean.

As they walked along the moist sand, they noticed dead fish all around them. These were the fish from their own homeland. They also found parts of canoes, pieces of wigwams and other relics from their own homes that had been carried away by the great river.

Upon reaching the village, they were ushered into the presence of the chief, who ended up being an acquaintance of Koyoda. Koyoda had once saved his life from an enormous bear. After embracing, the chieftain ordered a feast of salmon and venison. Koyoda and the chieftain talked late into the night, and Koyoda told him how they journeyed down the river to find the lost fish.

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-9

At early dawn, Koyoda rose to greet the light of a new day. His friend led the party to the seashore and pointed toward the horizon. Everywhere there were dead fish. "There are your fish," said the chieftain. "See the seagulls? They are feasting upon their dead carcasses. Your fish were carried down to here by the great flood. They could not live in our salty water. I have an idea. Take some of our great white birds, the Klickitats, and with them, drive the salmon back up the new river over which you came. The salmon can live in fresh water, for that is where they are born."

Koyoda thought this was an excellent plan. The next morning, he called together his party to start the journey back to their village. He called the great white birds and the dogs of the sea and asked for their help. They were delighted with his offer and a new adventure. They gathered a great host of salmon and began to drive them into the river. Koyoda and his companions followed behind the seagulls and the sea dogs in a new canoe, given to him by the chieftain of the ocean village. All along the journey, you could hear the cry of the gulls as they called out, "Klick-tat, klick-tat."

As the party reached the country beyond the Great Stone Bridge, some of the gulls liked it so well, they begged Koyoda to let them stay there always. So Koyoda, with his enchanted power, changed them into people and they settled at the base of Pa- toe, whose name was changed to Klick-tat, in honor of the gulls. Each year, the seagulls, brothers from the sea, follow the salmon to Klickitat country and visit their distant family members.

When Koyoda's party reached the village, the salmon had already found their way through the mountains. All the people were well fed and were preparing salmon for the winter food supply. The Great Spirit instructed Koyoda and his friends the gulls and the sea dogs, to drive the salmon up the river twice each year for six years. Afterwards, the salmon would learn the way themselves and return of their own accord. And that is how the salmon were brought to the Columbia River. Thereafter, the people along the river always had plenty of salmon to eat. The mountains were at peace, and Loo-wit guarded the Great Stone Bridge.



STUDENT HANDOUT 3-9

Questions:

1. Who was Koyoda and what was his role?
2. What do you think was happening in the “terrible battles” between Pa-toe (Mt. Adams) and Yi-East (Mt. Hood)? What happened to the land and the animals during their battle?
3. Why did the people think that Koyoda would help them?
4. What was Koyoda’s plan for returning food to the people?
5. Why were the people so worried about travelling down the great river?
6. Describe the first mishap on their adventure on the great river.
7. Why did the canoe begin to sink? What did Koyoda do to guide them down the river?
8. Describe what happened as they slept in their canoe. Where did they end up? What did the spirals of smoke mean to them?
9. What sorts of things did they find on the beach?
10. Why did the fish die in the ocean?
11. Who help Koyoda bring the fish up river?
12. What happened to the sea gulls when they made it past the Great Stone Bridge?
How did Koyoda accommodate them?
13. What did the Great Spirit instruct Koyoda?
14. What do you think is the purpose of this story? Does this story give one an understanding of life, culture, history, or geology? How? Is this a story for entertainment, meaning, transference of culture, tradition or ritual to younger generations?

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-10

It is Important By Gail Tremblay

(from Dancing on the Rim)



*On dark nights, when thoughts fly like nightbirds
looking for prey, it is important to remember
to bless with names every creature
that comes to mind; to sing a thankful song and hold
the magic of the whole creation close to heart,
to watch light dance and know the sacred is alive.*

*On dark nights, when owls watch, their eyes
gleaming in the black expanse of starless sky,
it is important to gather the medicine bones,
the eagle feathers, the tobacco bundles, the braided
sweetgrass, the cedar, and the sage, and pray
the world will heal and breath feed the plants
that care for the nations keeping the circle whole.*

*On dark nights, when those who think only of themselves
conjure over stones and sing spells to feed their wills
it is important to give gifts and to love everything
that shows itself as good. It is time to turn
to the Great Mystery and know the Grandfathers have
mercy on us that we may help the people to survive.*

*On dark nights, when confusion makes those who envy
hate and curse the winds, face the four directions
and mumble names, it is important to stand
and see that our only work is to give what others
need, that everything that touches us is a holy
gift to teach us we are loved. When sun rises
and light surrounds life making blessings grow,
it is important to praise its coming, and exhale
letting all we hold inside our lungs travel east
and mix its power with the air; it is important to praise
dawn's power breathing in and know we live in good
relation to all creation and sing what must be sung.*

STUDENT HANDOUT 3-10

Questions:

According to the author,

1. What is it important to remember? Why?
2. What is it important to gather? Why?
3. What is it important to give? Why? What is one trying to counteract?
4. What is it important to stand and see? Why?
5. What is it important to praise? Why?
6. Why does the author refer to dark nights throughout the poem? What do think are the dark nights?
7. What are the major themes of this poem with regard to the environment and conservation?

