

Stories and Myths



Goals: Students will become familiar with the importance of stories to the Grand Ronde Tribe.

Oregon Common Core Standards:

- 6-8.RH.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- 8.RI.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- 8.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequence.

Objectives:

- Students will be able to recognize what the story of Coyote and Grizzly is about.
- Students will be able to write their own myth.

LESSON PLAN

Unit: Grand Ronde Tribal History

Lesson Title: Stories

Rational: Stories play an important role in Native American culture. Stories are used to explain the creation of life and earth, and teach lessons. Traditional stories were told by the Elders and they were repeated again and again with the exact words. That is how the stories were passed on from generation to generation.

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Materials Needed:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| ✓ Coyote and Grizzly story | ✓ Indian Legends of the Pacific Northwest (optional) |
| ✓ Vocabulary sheet | ✓ Pencils |
| ✓ iPads | ✓ Journal |
| ✓ Read aloud | ✓ Coyote in Love by Mindy Dwyer (optional) |
| ✓ Creating Your Own Myth sheet | |
| ✓ Self-assessment | |

Time: 1-2 days

Anticipatory Set: Ask students what a myth is. Myths are traditional stories relating to the early history of people. They explain a natural phenomenon and usually involve supernatural beings or events.

Or- Introduce this lesson by reading Coyote in Love to the class. This book will give students an example of what how a place/landmark came to be.



LESSON PLAN

➤ **Lesson Steps:**

1. Read the read aloud to students explaining the importance of storytelling to the tribes of Grand Ronde.
2. Once students have an understanding of the role of storytelling in Native communities, allow students to listen to the Grand Ronde story Coyote and Grizzly. Discuss the story afterwards. Explain to the students that this is a creation story. Creation stories explain how a place was formed or how something or someone came to be.
3. Allow for students to listen to Coyote and Turkey Buzzard on the Chinuk Wawa app.
4. Students can also read through *Indian Legends of the Pacific Northwest* by Ella E. Clark to find stories. *Coyote Was Going There* by Jarold Ramsey is also a good resource for students to read more stories and myths.
5. Once students have explored native myths explain to students they will now get the opportunity to write their own myth.
6. Hand out the vocabulary sheet, along with the Creating Your Own Myth sheet that will give directions to students.
7. Have students take out their journals or a piece of notebook paper to write their myths.
8. Allow enough time for students to write their myths.
9. Once students have finished writing, have students read their myths aloud.
10. Have students complete the self-assessment sheet at the end of the lesson.

Differentiation: Students can work with a partner to write a myth. This lesson can be spread across several days depending on the amount of time you have to dedicate to the lesson and the writing piece. Also, students can get into groups of 5 to tell their myths.

Early Finisher Activity: If students finish early they may add drawings to their stories or go back and revise their story.

Assessment:

	Yes	No	Notes
Student was able to write and complete a myth.			
Student was able to complete the self-assessment regarding their myth.			

Notes/Other: Coyote in Love is another story to help lead into the writing assignment of writing your own myth.



LESSON PLAN

Attachments:

- ✓ Coyote and Grizzly story
- ✓ Vocabulary sheet
- ✓ Read aloud
- ✓ Creating your own myth sheet
- ✓ Self-assessment





Vocabulary

Stories

Elder

Stories

Traditions/Traditional

Myth

Definitions:

Elder- Tribal member(s) of older age valued for his or her wisdom.

Stories- messages given to share to teach others the proper way to live – a way to share history and culture and pass down traditions of the tribe, historical accounts of what occurred in tribal history.

Traditions/Traditional- a way of life, parts of the culture, that are passed down to each generation.

Myth- traditional stories relating to the early history of people. They explain natural phenomenon's and usually involve supernatural beings or events.

NATIVE AMERICAN STORIES

Long ago our Native language was not written down. It was passed down orally from generation to generation. Traditionally, stories were told in the winter when we were indoors most of the day. It was considered bad luck to tell stories outside of winter time. During the other seasons we were busy hunting and gathering to prepare for winter, so there was no time to sit and tell stories. Traditional stories were told by Elders and they were repeated again and again with the exact words. That is how the stories were passed on from generation to generation.

Each tribe may have their own stories depending on the history of their tribe. A lot of the stories were told in order to teach a lesson about the proper way to live or conduct yourself. For example: you might have a story about a child not listening to their Elders and then something happening to that child as a consequence. But stories were also told to share history and culture and as a way to pass down the traditions of the tribe. These stories also help strengthen the community and provide tribes with a common understanding of the world around them. Stories were also told to explain how something or someone was formed or came about. These stories are called creation myths. These stories help us understand how our ancestors saw and understood the world around them.

Many stories include super natural beings and/or natural phenomena. Animals play a significant role in Native American stories. Each animal signifies a specific trait.

Today, stories still play an important role in Native communities. The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde is continually working to record oral histories and stories from Elders so we can continue to keep that part of our culture alive and pass it onto many generations to come.

COYOTE AND GRIZZLY

A Molalla dictation. Told by Stephen Savage to Albert Gatschet, Grand Ronde Reservation 1877



Now I'm going to tell you a myth.

You should pay careful attention to what I say.

There was Coyote. He is piling up the earth and stone to make the Big Mountain (Mt. Hood).

The Grizzly comes. He says to Coyote, "Where will you be going?"

Then Coyote says, "I will go on yonder inland."

Then Grizzly says, "What will you be doing there?"

Coyote says, "I will make the world."

"WHO told you to do that? We'd best fight it out!"
Grizzly says.

Then Coyote says, "No! We should swallow something."

Grizzly says, "No we should fight together."

Coyote says, "Well, how about if we WOLF-DOWN STONES."

"WOLF-DOWN! We'll wolf-down stones!" says Grizzly.

Then Coyote says, "These stones we swallow; they should be red-hot!"

"Absolutely so, but how many?" says Grizzly.

They Coyote says, "We will swallow five. First you swallow, then ME, I will swallow."

"OK" Grizzly says.



Then Grizzly put hot stones in his mouth; then he swallowed five, then he quit swallowing.

Then he says to Coyote, "Now you!"

"OK," says Coyote.

Then Coyote puts strawberries in his mouth. Then he swallows. He only swallows strawberries. He was just fooling Grizzly. Then he swallowed five.

Then he says to Grizzly, "Now all of those stones there, you had better wolf-down all of them!"

"OK," says Grizzly.

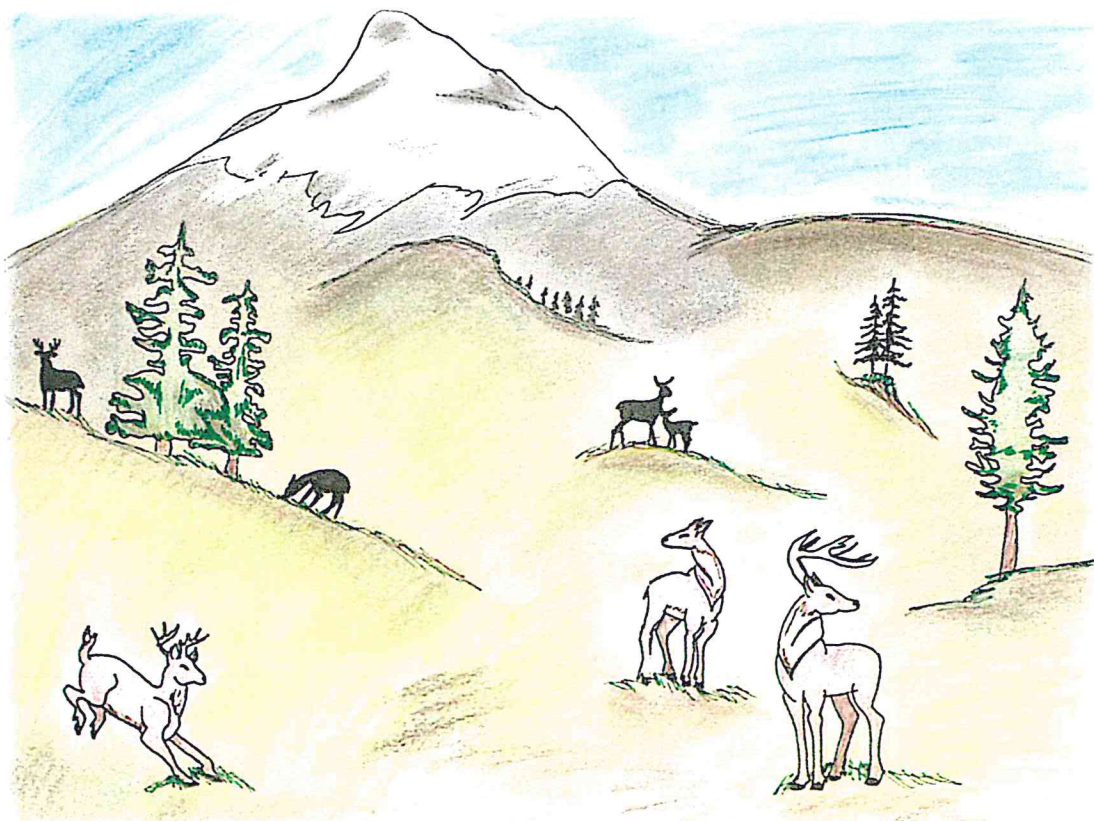
Then Grizzly swallowed all the hot stones, a LOT of hot stones. Then the very life was burnt out of him. Then he died.

Then Coyote thinks, "What should I do now? I'll go. I'll never come back this way. This land will live on."

Then he took the Grizzly, he skinned him, and cut his body up into pieces. He gathered up all the pieces. He threw them around everywhere.

Then he threw the heart of Grizzly to the Molalla country.

Then he said, "These people here, they will be real hunters, they won't be a poor worthless sort of people. They will go get game. That will be their way in the world to come."



CREATING YOUR OWN MYTH

Now that you have listened to and read some Native American stories, you have the opportunity to write your own myth. You will write a **one page** myth that will include **at least one animal** character. Since oral stories are a tradition in Native cultures you will be asked to read your myth aloud. Lastly, **don't forget to use your imagination and have fun with it!**

Choose from the following ideas:

- Write a story explaining how a certain area or land mark came to be.
- Write a story that includes both animals and humans. Allow for the story to go in a direction where the animal is offering advice to the human/s to help the human/s learn a lesson or to gain trait such as courage or determination etc.
- Some Native myths explain natural phenomenon in the world, such as where lightening comes from, why the wind blows, why frogs croak, etc. Create a myth explaining a natural phenomenon.
- The earth and nature play a vital role in Native American culture. The story, *Coyote and Grizzly*, tells a story of how the Molalla people came to be. Create a story, incorporating how the Earth or Mother Nature played a role in how people came to be.



Name _____

Self-Assessment

1. What did you learn about Native American storytelling and myths?
2. Did you find a favorite myth? If so, what was it?
3. What is the moral lesson in your myth?
4. List the characters in your myth.
5. Explain the role that animals play in your myth.