

Legends and Tricksters

Week 20 • Tuesday • Stories That Explain the World

Reading Time

Native American nations told many kinds of stories. **Origin stories** explained how things began — how the world was made, why the seasons change, or how people learned to use fire.

Animal stories starred clever creatures. Many nations told tales of a **trickster** — a funny, clever character who plays tricks but often gets tricked himself! In many western nations the trickster was **Coyote**; in the Northwest it was often **Raven**, who in one famous story brings light to the dark world.

Trickster tales made people laugh — but they also taught lessons: don't be greedy, don't show off, think before you act. A story that makes you laugh AND makes you wiser? That's powerful storytelling!

Reading Questions

1. What do origin stories explain?

2. What is a trickster?

3. Name two famous trickster characters.

4. What lessons did trickster tales teach?

Vocabulary Grid

Write what each word means in your own words.

origin story

trickster

Coyote

Raven

wisdom

character

Fill in the Blanks

origin trickster Coyote Raven laugh lessons

1. _____ stories explain how things began.

2. A _____ plays clever tricks in stories.

3. In many western nations, the trickster was _____.

4. In the Northwest, _____ brought light to the world.

5. Trickster tales made people _____.

6. The stories also taught important _____.

True or False

Write T for true or F for false in each circle.

- ☐ Origin stories explain how things began.
- ☐ The trickster never gets tricked himself.
- ☐ Raven is a trickster from Northwest stories.
- ☐ Trickster tales were only sad and serious.
- ☐ Stories could be funny AND teach lessons.
- ☐ Coyote appears in many western nations' tales.

Think About It

1. Make up your own mini origin story: why do you think the moon changes shape? Be creative!

Draw a Trickster

Draw Coyote or Raven in the middle of a clever trick!

