

NEW WORDS:

pokers
continued
angry
mounds
operate
operation
pouting

THE OTTER AND THE BEAVER

Warm Springs Animal Stories

Developed by the Confederated Tribes
of the Warm Springs Reservation

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA: Plateau Region

STORY TYPE(S): Natural Phenomena/Indian Values

Summary:

Otter and Beaver, who were both blind, used fire pokers to find their way around. Unknowingly, Eagle borrowed one from Beaver but does not tell him. Beaver became very angry when he discovered one of his pokers was missing. As restitution, Eagle operated on both Otter and Beaver's eyes. Because Beaver was so bitter and unforgiving his eyes were made smaller than Otter's.

This story not only offers an explanation of how two animals got the eyes they have but also offers an explanation of why people's eyes become smaller when they are angry. "When you are happy your eyes will shine and you can see forever. But when you are angry, your eyes are small and you can only see what you want to see."

It is better to forgive a friend, especially when he does not intentionally do something wrong. Anger often limits vision and makes us do foolish things which we regret later.

Teacher Guided Activities:



1. Discuss the story in terms of what happens when someone becomes angry. Who was hurt by Beaver's anger? Was Eagle hurt? Who else was hurt? Anger does more damage to the one who is angry than even to those it is vented upon. When can anger become dangerous? (in a car)



2. Have students role play the events in this story. Make students conscious of the change in facial features when angry.



3. Using the Firetalk card (1A-1B) have students tell about a time when they were very angry. Have them tell what happened, what they did, and what made them feel better. How could they have behaved differently?



4. Since this story does not have pictures, make a mural of what happens using student drawings. Discuss first the sequence of events.

Student Activity Card(s):
See Firetalk Activity Card (1C-1D).

Using the differences in Otter and Beaver's eyes, refer again to the word **unique**. Mention that even names help make individuals unique. Groups such as tribes are also unique and have different names, as well as languages. Use the second Firetalk card (1C-1D) to introduce the names and pronunciation of the tribes in the Northwest. Note for students the three geographical areas (Plateau, Plains, Coast) and introduce how the surrounding area might contribute to how a tribe would be unique from another.