

NEW WORDS:

curse
taught
medicine
language
secrets

PET CROW

Sioux Stories and Legends

Developed by members of the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes
of the Fort Peck Reservation

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA: Plains Region

STORY TYPE(S): Natural Phenomena/Indian Values

Summary:

A great chief found a crow with a broken wing and took care of it. The chief taught the bird the language of his tribe and out of gratitude the bird spied on enemy tribes for the chief. The crow learned that an enemy medicine man had put a curse on the chief and during a storm the chief's tent was struck by lightning and he was killed. The crow was blackened by the smoke from the burned tepee which is yet another explanation of why the crow is colored black.

Within this story the Indian chief's thoughtful deed for the crow is repaid in kind. The good deeds and appreciation generated between humans and animals is never ending.

It should be pointed out here that although in this story a medicine man was the doer of evil, that is a stereotype. Most often the medicine man was a spiritual leader of the tribe who protected his people. He was an example of personal strength and wisdom and was to be revered by all.

Teacher Guided Activities:



1. Discuss the variety of ways in which man and animals communicate. There are many animal and insect communities which seem to transfer information (bees, porpoises, sea gulls, dogs, whales, etc.). Any one of these would make a good topic for group reports.



2. Ask students to retell or Firetalk a story about a person and animal they have seen on TV or in the movies. The story should emphasize the unique relationship which developed between man and animal.



3. Have students prepare a bulletin board on alternate forms of communication. Perhaps they can find magazine pictures to include.



4. Write and read a story about how you got to be friends with:

- a person that speaks a different language than you
- a deaf person
- a blind person

Student Activity Card(s):
See Talking Hands Card (11A-11B).

After students have tried working with the Talking Hands Card try this game using hand signals. Write simple sentences on strips of paper. Make them easy. Allow a member of one Four Winds group to give the hand signals for the sentence while members of one of the other groups tries to “read” the hand message.

- You may also want to introduce the international sign alphabet.
- Try giving some simple class instructions using hand signals.
- Refer students also to Pictograph Card.