

NEW WORDS:
burial
platform
lessons

OWL BOY

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): Indian Values

Summary:

Some parents, thinking their son had died, placed the boy upon a burial scaffold. After everyone had left, the baby awoke and was discovered by some owls. These owls decided to take care of the infant. Eventually, the boy returned to his real parents and tribe, and convinced everyone of who he was using pictures.

This story alludes to the close relationship which developed between Indian people and animals, but in a sense reaffirms the idea that each is happiest in his own realm with others of his own kind. Here is an instance in which owls took care of man. In the previous story a man cared for a bird. In these stories the closeness between man and animal is a natural and beautiful relationship.

Teacher Guided Activities:



1. Owl Boy had to communicate who he was using pictures because people could not understand his speech. Communication is not dependent solely upon words. Often strong messages are conveyed without anything being said.

Ask your students to list non-verbal communication systems including such things as hand signals or sign language, smoke signals, Morse code, Braille, writing and pictographs.

What do these systems have in common? Why are they effective? You might also discuss gesture and body language. How does this enhance what messages we try to convey?

How did the Owl Boy identify himself to his Indian people? How did Owl Boy communicate with the owls? Ask students if they have ever had a pet which they were close to. Perhaps some students could share their experiences. How many actually felt their pet understood what they told their pet?



2. Students may enjoy playing the following games which depend largely on non-verbal communication skills. Charades is another option which may work well in the Four Winds groups.

Put students' desks in a circle. Select one student to leave the room. Choose another student to be the **winker**. Ask the student outside to return to the room and stand in the middle of the circle. Say out loud, "The winker can start now." The winker may wink at any student. As each student receives the wink he must place his head down. The student in the middle must try to find out who the winker is.

Or try another non-verbal game: Have students hold hands. Hands must be on top of desks. Choose one student to be the **sender** of the message. Put the student from the hall in the middle of the circle. Say aloud, "Begin the Message." The sender squeezes one of the hands he is holding, and the message moves around the circle. The student in the middle tries to catch the message before it gets back to the sender.

Student Activity Card(s):
See Smoke Signals Card (12A-12B).