

NEW WORDS:
 reflection
 thirsty
 gophers
 rimrock
 realized

COYOTE AND THE COUGAR

Coyote the Trickster

Developed by the Burns Paiute Reservation

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA: Plateau Region

STORY TYPE(S): Natural Phenomena/Indian Values

Summary:

While Coyote was asleep Cougar reshaped his nose. Coyote retaliated by giving Cougar a round flat nose. Both animals attempted to kill the other but were unsuccessful. Finally, both Cougar and Coyote realized how silly they had acted and decided to be friends.

This story offers an explanation of why cougars and coyotes look as they do. More importantly, however, it shows how easy it is to get into a pattern of petty behavior, a sort of tit for tat. The idea of always having to “get even” when one feels wronged, blinds one’s good judgment. Because neither animal can get the best of the other they learned to coexist.

Teacher Guided Activities:



1. Ask students to identify instances when they felt like “getting even” with someone. What are the results of such behavior? Do we really feel better once we know someone else has been hurt?

Discuss alternatives for such behavior. What else can be done in a given situation?



2. Coyote and Cougar had to learn to get along. All animals, birds and insects have learned how to get along in order to survive. Each is dependent upon another for something.

Have students collect as many pictures of animals and birds as they can. Make a chart using the pictures. Use a large piece of paper for the chart like the one below.

| Name (picture) | Feeds on Plants | Feeds on other Animals | Independent | ? |
|----------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------|---|
| Eagle | No | Yes | No | |

For all the animals you have listed, how many are **independent** (can live by themselves, not having to feed on plants or animals)?



3. Take a walk and ask students to list all the animals and birds which they see living in the same area. When they return from the walk ask each to describe the area in which the animals are living.

Student Activity Card(s):
See Puppets and Stuff Card (20A-20B).

The ideas for puppets will work well with all or any of the stories. Spend time going over the puppet ideas with your whole class.