

**NEW WORDS:**  
disappeared  
wondered  
figure

## **NOSY COYOTE**

### **Coyote the Trickster**

**Developed by the Burns Paiute Reservation**  
**GEOGRAPHICAL AREA: Plateau Region**  
**STORY TYPE(S): Indian Values**

#### **Summary:**

Wolf mystifies Coyote by being able to command his camp to set itself up. Coyote's curiosity caused him to spy on the camp. From that moment on the command no longer worked.

Coyote spoiled everything by being nosy. It is not necessary to know everything. The mystery of life is part of its true beauty. Too often people try to be in control rather than accept things as they are naturally.

Indian people were awed by the mystery of their natural world and showed respect daily for the gifts it gave them.

#### **Teacher Guided Activities:**



1. Generate discussion about the idea of **not knowing**. When is it good to **not** know something? Does knowing there is or is not a Santa Claus or Easter bunny help or hinder how one feels? Does one have to know **how** a plant grows in order for it to grow?

Some people believe that people have no business tampering with nature (i.e., seeding clouds to create rain, cloning, using insecticides or killing off large populations of animals because they eat crops or livestock more valuable to people). What arguments can be raised pro and con on some of these issues?



2. Sometimes knowing certain information is a privilege. Many tribes have maintained their culture because only privileged members know certain information.

One must earn the right to know these secrets. What character in the story was privileged? Why? To help students appreciate the idea of **not** knowing something try the Gift Giving card activities.

#### **Student Activity Card(s):**

**See Gift Giving Card (21A-21B, 21C-21D).**

There are two cards for this activity.

Sometime before Christmas all the students' names should be put in a hat, basket or bowl, and each student may draw from it one name (not their own). Each student will then be a "Secret Santa" to the person whose name they have drawn. Each day until your class Christmas party, or as often as each individual chooses, each student must try to give something special to that person without letting the individual know. Students may need additional help from you or a friend. It must be someone who can keep a secret so the identity is protected. The additional activities are only suggestions. Other suggestions are listed on the Gift Giving Activity Card.

Suggestions for Secret Santa ideas are on the following page which you may want to duplicate.

Let the students reveal who the Secret Santa has been. If their partner has not guessed them then they have been a good Secret Santa. Recall how Coyote spoiled some good things that happened to him because he was nosy.

Discuss the good feeling of having done something for someone else. Describe the good feeling of having something done for you.

Many of these activities could be geared towards other holidays such as Valentine's Day or Easter.



## NOSY COYOTE

- 1** Leave a cookie or some fruit inside the desk with a ribbon and a tag signed, “Your Secret Santa.”
- 2** Make a Christmas decoration. It could be a stocking or a paper chain, or something that could be hung on the tree.
- 3** Get a cutting from a house plant and put it in a jar of water to root. Wrap the roots in a wet paper towel. Place it in a small plastic bag and tie a ribbon around it. Put it in water when you get to school. Leave it on the person’s desk perhaps with instructions on how to take care of it.
- 4** Make a Christmas card using a shape which looks like the season. Write an original poem on it.
- 5** Find a neat rock, plant or something else you might want to give.

- 6** Clean up your person's desk, sharpen pencils, scrub the table top and leave the area looking bright and clean. Perhaps you could take care of some little chore without letting your partner know.
- 7** Make a special December calendar for the person to help count the days until Christmas.
- 8** Make a mobile or a large hanging ornament using Christmas or winter-time scenes (snowflakes, snowmen, sleds or sleighs, birds, fruit or other holiday themes). Stained glass effects can be made by using colored tissue and black construction paper for outlining. This project will not be so time consuming if the shapes are kept to a manageable size and remain simple.
- 9** Make a book. Write and illustrate an original Christmas story. Don't forget to title it and make a page showing that the author is "Your Secret Santa."