

NEW WORDS :

attention
ignored
suffocated
digging sacks
lice
suspected
crane

THE BEARS AND THE DEER

Stories From Burns

Developed by the Burns-Paiute Tribe

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA: Plateau Region

STORY TYPE(S): Indian Values

Summary:

A mother bear killed a mother deer and tried to deceive the fawns. Realizing that they were being tricked, the fawns killed the bear's cubs by playing a game with them. When the bear returned, she chased the fawns as far as a pine tree and eventually fell asleep. The fawns jumped out of the pine tree and ran to the river where a crane helped them across. The crane warned the fawns to be wary of persons walking silently in the woods.

The mother bear pursued the fawns to the river and also enlisted the aid of the crane. The crane agreed but told the bear to remain still. After stopping midstream the bear tapped on the knee of the crane. This caused the bear to fall into the river thus saving the fawns.

This is a value type story from the pre-contact period. Deceitful behavior was paid in kind. Wrong deeds were punished. This story also shows how the bear cubs were goaded into foolish competition with the fawns. Not all games even in fun are necessarily safe. Judgment should be used before deciding to play.

Teacher Guided Activities:



1. This story offers an opportunity to discuss accident prevention. (Was it wise to play a game in the smoke hole? Discuss other dangerous areas such as refrigerators, old cars, junk yards, etc.)

Begin an accident prevention unit that might include fire safety, hunting safety, playground safety, etc. Students could then prepare accident prevention posters or murals. Students may want to take them around to other classes and give short reports.

Ask students to write about what they might do at home in case of fire. What would they do? Where would they go? Whom would they call?



2. Discuss the warning of the crane. Why was it made? Ask students to discuss techniques in hunting. Which are most effective and why?

Perhaps they can write a story of a hunting or camping trip and list the precautionary things they did.

Student Activity Card(s):

See Earth, Sky, Water Activity Cards (4A-4B, 4C-4D).

This card asks students to notice that not only do animals share their environment with each other, as the bears and deer did, but with people as well. Problems may develop when one group tries to take advantage of the other.

Since there are several ideas for the game you may want to try one on animals one day and the other on the different tribes another.