

NEW WORDS:

priest
prairies
buckskin
bathe
attention
scouts

MARY QUEEQUEESUE'S LOVE STORY

Developed by the Salish (Flathead) Cultural Committee of the Confederated Salish/Kootenai Tribes

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA: Plateau Region

STORY TYPE(S): Description of Culture

Summary:

Mary Queequesue lost her husband to another woman and was miserable. An old woman offered to help Mary regain her husband using a prescribed ritual and Indian medicine. The ritual worked and Mary's husband returned to live with Mary for many years.

Mary was desperate for her husband's return, so desperate that she resorted to the use of Indian medicine. If such steps are taken there are always payments to be made. One always respects an individual who responds to favors asked and is ultimately left with responsibilities to fulfill. These kinds of favors are not taken lightly by Indian people and sometimes they may produce serious consequences.

Teacher Guided Activities:



1. Explain to students **prior** to reading *Mary Queequesue's Love Story* that they will be reading a story written in non-traditional English or **Reservationese**. This story was not corrected for the sole purpose of sharing with students this non-traditional form of communication which is commonly used among many Indian people.

It should be noted that historically, English was a foreign language to Indian people, and for many tribes today it still is. (Review **Firetalk** Activity card, 2-C.)

Students should be encouraged to identify such differences of expression as, **Mary Queequesue was telling on herself about when . . .** or **Mary was still crying around**. Ask students if the expressions sound odd or unusual. They may be encouraged further to speculate on how such expressions may have been created. Students may be able to identify the meaning when the expressions are used.

A list of such phrases could be started somewhere in the room and added to periodically—including unique expressions that students may use regularly. It is interesting to explore how such language changes.

It should also be emphasized that these stories originated with the oral tradition, that process by which the stories of a people are formulated, communicated and preserved in language by word of mouth rather than in writing. To bring this out in this particular story have students create a play using the dialogue as is for the speaking parts. Ask students to decide if the conversation sounds true to life.



2. Discuss with students traditional ways of courtship and marriage among a local tribe.

Formerly, as Indian women aged, they needed more help to prepare hides and do other chores. In some tribes, several wives were acceptable, particularly as a woman grew older.

The first wife always had seniority over other wives. Cheyenne, Sioux and some other tribes had this practice.

Are any of the traditional ways still observed today? Examine the pros and cons of such traditions and note the great respect afforded Indian women. Refer to such articles as *The Art of Courtship Among the Oglala* found in the 1980 Spring issue of *American Indian Art* magazine.

Bring in examples of Indian flute music, often used in courtship.

Student Activity Card(s):

See Supernatural Helpers Activity Card (8A-8B).