

NEW WORDS:

yawned
stretched
uncomfortable
seized
occasionally
companion
straddle
obtain
flint
scorching
encouraged
sweatlodge
revenge

COYOTE ARRANGES THE SEASONS

Developed by the Klamath Curriculum Committee

GEOGRAPHICAL AREA: Plateau Region

STORY TYPE(S): Natural Phenomena

Because the sun made everything too hot for Coyote, he tried to catch and destroy it. By showing the sun where their fathers had supposedly camped together, Coyote convinced the sun that their fathers had been good friends. Having gained the sun's trust, Coyote took a flint knife and cut off the sun's head so that he, himself, could take the sun's place in the sky.

Coyote realized that he did not like being the sun and replaced the sun's head. In order to give the sun time to rest periodically, Coyote established four seasons.

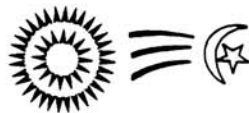
Winter, however, was not satisfied with his time allotment and challenged Summer and his four brothers to a wrestling match. Winter won, killing all of Summer's brothers. The earth became cold. One of the dead brothers had a son who became a strong young man. This son challenged Winter and his brothers to a wrestling match and won. He left the youngest brother alive. The two shared their times equally, half the year being summer, half the year being winter.

As usual, Coyote thought he could do a better job of controlling natural elements (in this case the sun) but soon tired of the responsibility. He did create a time for the sun to rest, realizing through his own experience what a tough job the sun really had. On the surface, others often appear to have things better off than we do, but if one examines more closely, one may find that there are disadvantages too.

The second half of the story focuses on the wisdom of Summer's new nephew. He spares the life of the youngest of Winter's brothers and in so doing creates a true seasonal balance. As in most Indian stories wrongdoers are repaid in kind. Winter's greed cost him his life.

Teacher Guided Activities:

1. This story has some implications for peoples' attempt to control and exploit their own environment, especially as it relates to energy. Compare the acts of Coyote in attempting to control the sun with human efforts to control the sun. The following are some questions that may be helpful.



- What do you think about Coyote wanting to control the sun? What were his reasons?
- When Coyote got the sun's powers, did he use them in a responsible fashion?
- In trying to arrange the seasons, a wrestling match left Winter and his brothers in control. What age of humankind, historically speaking, might have occurred during this time? Was it a time of balance in nature? Was it productive for the development of life?
- Has humankind made efforts to control or alter the powers of the sun? For what reasons?
- What price did Winter and Summer pay for their greed and desire to control the seasons?
- What price has human kind paid for the greed and desire to control the sun or seasons.



2. Discuss what solar energy is and what impact or alteration solar energy can have on one's lifestyle, community, reservation or nation. In some Indian communities this question of energy resources is of prime importance politically, economically and culturally.

Have students report on local issues involving energy and its impact. This would be an excellent opportunity to introduce careers in the energy area. Perhaps human or corporate resources might be available to visit your class.



2. Discuss this story comparing it to the story **How Summer Season Came**. Ask students to speculate how each story offers a different interpretation of the natural change of one season to another. Perhaps students could attempt their own version of a story about the change in seasons.

Student Activity Card(s):
See Echos of Time Activity Card (15A-15B).