

Adventures On An Island

Developed by Members of the Shoalwater Bay Curriculum Committee

Geographic Area: Coastal Region

Vocabulary:	Dugout canoe	oystermen	tidied
	little neck clams	utensils	Chehalis River
	inland	underbrush	snipe
	abundant	annual migration	plover
	mongrel	succulent	grebes
	sloughs	spruce baskets	cormorants
	peninsula	leisurely	merganser
	mudflats	conifer tree	raucous
	sandspit	ambitious	brute
	vicious	species	portage
	seal bladder		

Reading Motivators: Use visual aids to give students exposure to life on the coast, show tidal pools, canoe types, seafood, etc.

Discuss types and preparation of wild or natural foods. What factors determine what grows in a certain area?

Discuss movies and stories which have island adventure (i.e., Swiss Family Robinson, Treasure Island, Robinson Crusoe, Gilligan's Island, Island of the Blue Dolphins, etc.).

Discussion Topics: Discuss the way people have adapted their food, clothing and shelter to the environment in which they live.

Trading flourished because of the annual food gathering expeditions of many tribes. Discuss what in the story suggests this.

Discuss these values presented in the story:

- a) disobedience to parents and the resultant feeling of guilt
- b) first impressions can sometimes be misleading

Follow-up Activities:

1. Illustrate the "giant" from the description in the story and display. Discuss characterization and ask students if the description was adequate to form a picture in their mind.
2. Involve students in the cooking and sampling of seafoods.
3. Organize a trading fair such as might have been held on the Columbia River before the coming of the white man.
4. Have students prepare models, dioramas, and shadow boxes of camps, canoes, etc.

5. Involve students in map skills. Refer to the vocabulary and discuss terms. Have students develop a relief map of this coastal area using scale and symbols.

Adventures on an Island

Narrator
John
Sam

Mother
Father
Pete

Narrator: On a sunny afternoon, many years ago, an Indian family landed their cedar dugout canoe on Long Island at the south end of Shoalwater Bay. They planned to stay on the island for several days to dig little-neck clams to trade upriver to the inland Indians.

Mother: John, you and Sam do not leave. You boys must help set up camp and unload the canoe. You can go play afterwards.

John: Oh, gee, Mother, we want to go explore.

Mother: You can do that later. First we must gather wood for the fire. We will need lots of it.

Narrator: The camp was set up and everything was in order. Father built a fire and Mother prepared a meal of dried salmon and fresh berries. After the meal it was too dark to go exploring. They just sat around the fire and talked and then went to bed.

Sam: John, I can hardly wait for tomorrow.

John: I can't either. There are so many things to explore on this island. (*Yawns*)

Narrator: As they dozed off they could hear the ocean surf rolling on the beach on the other side of the peninsula.

Early the next morning the entire family was up and busy.

Mother: John and Sam may explore the island after we finish the first batch of clams.

Sam: Oh, thank you, Mother.

John: Yeah, we can hardly wait! There's a lot to see!

- Sam:** Already I've noticed sandpipers in great flocks, kingfishers, blue jays and plovers. Of course there are always seagulls, ravens and crows.
- John:** I love to watch birds. In the fall there are so many ducks, geese and black brandt that the sky is black with them.
- Sam:** Birds must really love this bay.
- Narrator:** Just then the boys were startled by a great blue heron flying away, making a raucous noise of alarm.
- John:** That's a year-round resident, and he's angry with us for scaring him away from his fishing place.
- Narrator:** The boys then set to work gathering clams. (*Pause*) Soon the clams were dry and the boys pushed the little canoe into the water.
- Father:** Stay on the camp side of the island and don't go any further than the south end.
- John/Sam:** Okay, Father.
- Narrator:** The boys paddled off.
- Sam:** What's that over there?
- John:** It's a seal! It's gray. I think it's a young one.
- Narrator:** The boys paddled slowly and cautiously toward the seal, but when they were a canoe length away the round head with whiskers and no ears sank out of sight. It appeared again about fifty feet ahead of them. They paddled till they were close to the seal and it disappeared again. The seal played this game with the boys until they realized they were nearly to the cleared field at the island's end.
- Sam:** Look, John, isn't that an island over there?
- John:** Yes, it's Round Island. I've heard some of the older people talk of it. I've heard tales that it was a Chinook Indian burial ground. That's probably the reason Father doesn't want us to go any further.
- I'm curious! We could paddle to the island, walk completely around it, get into our canoe and be on our way home in a short time. The tide is almost high now and we have lots of water.

Sam: But, remember what Father said.

John: I know, but he didn't really warn us to stay away from Round Island. I think he just didn't want us to go too far away, and we have lots of time.

Sam: Well, I am kind of curious, too! Okay, let's go.

John: In case Father might disapprove, let's just keep it a secret, Sam.

Narrator: They had never been on an island such as this. It was perfectly round and covered with brushy woods. The boys had no plans of going into the brush.

Sam: If this is an old burial ground, there must be old canoes containing bones.

John: Probably, but it's too nice a day to be scared.

Narrator: The boys began to explore. As they rounded more of the island they saw the stern end of a canoe in the water. The front of it was up on the beach.

The boys froze in their tracks. There stood one of the largest, fiercest looking Indians they had ever seen! (He was dressed only in a cedar bark loin cloth. Nothing covered his huge chest, which had several ugly scars the full length of it.) His face was scarred and it appeared one eye was missing, but the other one glared at them fiercely. The boys could feel their hearts pounding wildly in their chests. He had a knife in one hand and a chunk of dried meat in the other. All at once, the brute moved toward them, uttering a sound in a strange language. When he opened his mouth, they saw several teeth were missing.

When the giant moved, the boys turned and ran faster than they had ever run before. They did not feel the rocks under their bare feet. They reached the canoe, pushed off the beach and paddled farther out before they dared look back. They just sat there, catching their breath.

Sam: Boy, that was a close call!

John: I don't know if he was human or not! Did you see the knife he had! Are we ever lucky we got out of there - fast!
Let's go home. I've seen enough for one day!

Father: I didn't expect you home so early.

- Sam:** We got hungry and decided to come back sooner. (*Boys sit down and start eating*)
- Mother:** Hungry! You two boys are eating enough clams to last most people two days!
- Father:** Well, paddling a canoe is sometimes hard work.
- Narrator:** The boys did not talk much. They were still shaken from their experience on the little island. But they did not dare tell their parents about Round Island. Their father might become angry and not allow them to explore anymore.
- Narrator:** The boys then helped with the clams all afternoon. When the tide was coming in, Father noticed someone coming in a canoe.
- Sam:** (*Quietly whispers*) John! That's the awful man from Round Island!
- John:** Mother, may we go into the woods and cut sticks for drying clams?
- Mother:** We have enough, but if you want to cut more, you may.
- Narrator:** Sam and John went quickly into the woods. Instead of cutting sticks they peered out of the woods and saw that the big man was beaching his canoe at their camp.
- Sam:** Oh, what does he want?
- John:** I don't know, but I want to stay right here.
- Narrator:** They saw Father wade out and help pull the canoe onto the beach. The big man got out of his canoe and he and Father talked. The boys were too far away to hear them. Mother put more clams away, looking at the visitor from time to time. Father and the man talked for an hour and they smoked some tobacco. Father and the man shook hands and the man got into his canoe and paddled away from the island to the north. When he was far down the bay the boys cut a handful of sticks and came out of the woods.
- Mother:** You've been gone for over an hour and that is all the sticks you've cut? I just don't understand you boys sometimes.
- Father:** Let's put things in order and load our canoe. We are going to the ocean beach to get some whale blubber from a whale that was beached just a couple of days ago.

John: How did you find this out, Father?

Father: Pete, the fur trapper from Grays Harbor told me. Some Indians at the portage between Shoalwater Bay and the Columbia River told him. News travels fast when there is a beached whale. Why did you boys go into the woods when Pete stopped here? You missed an interesting fellow. He has traveled to many places on the coast.

Sam: He kind of scared me.

Father: Well, in spite of his appearance, he is a good man. He has a mysterious background. This is only the second time I have talked to him, but I have heard much about him.

Mother: Why is he scarred and crippled?

Father: People say he moved down to Grays Harbor from his tribe on Vancouver Island, way north of us. One night slave hunters attacked his village. Pete fought savagely along with his tribesmen and killed most of the attackers, and the rest of them left in their canoes. Several people in the village were killed, among them Pete's wife and child. Pete was clubbed and cut so badly he nearly died. When he recovered, he moved down to Grays Harbor and began trapping. It's a lonely life, but that's the way he chooses to live now.

He had been to Chinook on the Columbia. He sold some furs there, then he crossed the portage and stayed on Round Island two nights. Now he is on his way home.

Narrator: Not much more was said about the strange visitor and since it was getting dark the family got ready for bed. While lying looking up at the stars the boys whispered to each other.

Sam: Do you think Father knows that we disobeyed him and went to Round Island?

John: I don't know but we will tell him tomorrow.

Sam: Yes, I think we should. Somehow, after hearing about Pete, I do not fear him anymore.

John: No, I even feel sorry for him. He probably has been a sad and lonely man all these years after what happened. We should not have judged him so quickly.

Sam: (*Yawns*) I guess we learned a couple of things today.

John: Yeah, I guess so.

Narrator: Soon both boys were sound asleep.