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Introduction

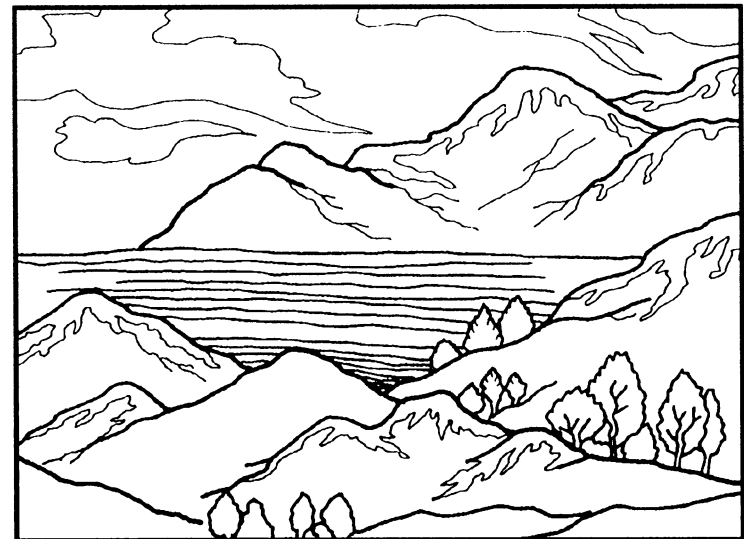
The stories in this book have been told in the oral tradition for a very long time by Native American storytellers. The myths and legends told by a group of people can be almost as important as the food they eat and the homes in which they live, for those stories tell who they are, from where they have come, and how they are to lead their lives. These stories often tell of great heroes or teach lessons. Some reveal the secrets of the universe, while others narrate the people's history. Many are full of humor. The stories in this book are told by many different groups of Native Americans, and they are still as interesting as when they were first told.

These myths and legends are equally ideal for children and adults. Their universal themes are of interest to people of all ages. They have been chosen for their appropriateness in many different settings: home, school, church, or clubroom.

To complement the stories, this book also contains at least one activity to go with each story. Most of the activities extend the meanings of the stories. Some activities invite the child to make a model or facsimile of a common Native American craft item, while others branch into topics that tie past to present-day concerns. These activities can be done using common materials, most of which may already be found in the home or classroom or which may be purchased from a craft shop.

The stories in this book are ideal for an adult to read and discuss with a child. This kind of activity helps the child succeed in school, reinforces the emotional bond between the parent and child, encourages the child's natural desire to learn, and tells the child that reading is an important way to spend one's time. In addition, working together to complete the accompanying activities will bring the stories into sharper focus for the child and add another element of fun to the reading.

Enjoy reading the stories, using the suggestions on page 5. You may find that some of these stories will become favorites to be read again and again. As a result, your family will want to find other stories and learn more about Native Americans.



Storytelling

The Native American storyteller tells the people's myths and legends not only with oral language but with body language, as well as sound and dramatic effects. A storyteller's sound effects can include the swishing of a bird's wings, the galloping of a horse, the blowing of the wind, and the fall of the rain.

The emotions of the characters in a story are expressed on the storyteller's face and heard in his or her voice. It is important that the children who are listening

understand and remember the stories since they contain the lore and wisdom of many generations. Later, when the children grow up and are able to repeat the stories in detail, they will continue the storytelling tradition and foster a better understanding of Native American peoples.

In addition to completing the activity that accompanies each story, the following steps can be used to make the stories more meaningful for the child or children.

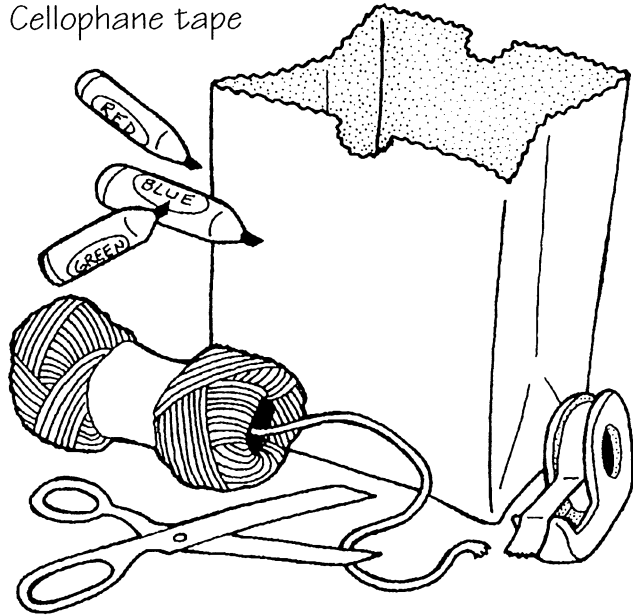


- Make the story come alive by reading it using dramatic effects. Change the level and pitch of your voice, and use different facial expressions for each character in the story.
- While reading the story, occasionally ask the child what will happen next.
- Occasionally stop during the story to discuss with the child the character(s) and what is happening.
- After reading the story, ask the child to retell it using his or her own words.
- Make sock or paper bag puppets to represent one or more characters in the story.
- Have the child tell the story to another adult, a sibling, or another child, using his or her own body language and dramatic effects.
- Have the child draw or paint a picture of an event or character in the story.
- Above all, express your own enthusiasm for the stories, showing that the stories are exciting and interesting to you.

Paper Bag Vest

MATERIALS

- Large brown paper grocery bag
- Scissors
- Crayons, paint and paintbrushes, or markers
- Yarn
- Cellophane tape

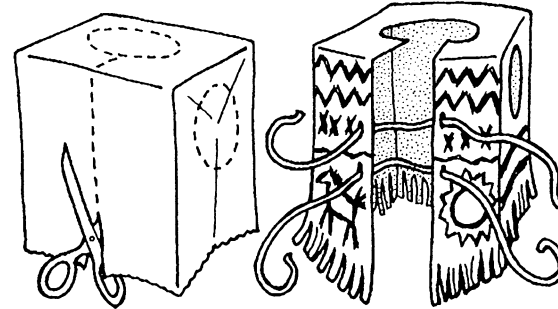


FOR YOUR INFORMATION

- Vests made from animal skins were worn in the Great Plains and the Northwest mountain areas by the Chippewa, Sioux, Crow, Cheyenne, and Blackfoot, as well as other tribes. Many of these vests were decorated with colorful designs using beads or dyed porcupine quills. The bottom of a vest was fringed to symbolize the rays of light that come from each person's spirit. Add beads, yarn, feathers, ribbons, shells, and/or colored pasta to decorate your vest.

LET'S DO IT!!

1. Open the paper bag. Draw circles where the neck and arms will go. Draw a line up the center of the bag for the opening in the front of the vest.
2. Cut the center line from the bottom of the bag to the neck circle. Reinforce each side of the cut line with cellophane tape.
3. Cut out the neck and arm circles.
4. Cut some fringe along the bottom. Then, decorate the vest with pictures and designs, using crayons, paints, or markers.
5. Carefully cut small holes at equal distances along each side of the opening in the front of the vest. Cut pieces of yarn to tie each set of holes.



Step 1

Step 4