

Grade 7 Literacy
Week of October 26 – October 30

Lesson 1: Read About Nature

Introduction & Legends

Introduction

We all have opinions and perspectives. How are these shaped?

Our perspectives and opinions influence how we interact with our environment and each other. It is important we take the time to understand not only how our own perspectives have been formed and communicated, but also how those of others have been because:

- exploring and sharing multiple perspectives extends our thinking.
- our cultural identity shapes our perspectives.

Throughout this unit, we will take a look at nature and how we as humans interact with it. Indigenous Peoples have always been closely in tune with the environment. The foundation of their culture is very much linked to the environment and to respect for it. View the video below on the Indigenous world view vs. the Western world view on nature.



Indigenous World View vs. Western World View: <https://youtu.be/hsh-NcZyuil>

Preview

Get ready to learn by thinking about this:

How have your views about nature been shaped by your cultural traditions and upbringing?

What experiences have shaped who you are and how you interact with nature?

Overview of Lessons:

- 1. Read/view a variety of texts about nature.
- 2. Complete the activities in the reading guide and submit.
- 3. Complete a reading project.
- 4. Take a short test to show your understanding.
- 5. In the writer's workshop, you will go through the writing project to create your own persuasive essay.

Learning Targets

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- describe how understanding multiple perspectives shape our thinking.
- recognize the validity of First Peoples' oral tradition for a range of purposes.
- correctly punctuate and use conventions.
- respond and analyze different texts.
- take part in the writing process to plan, draft, and revise a persuasive piece of writing.

Legends and Stories

The Indigenous People of North America did not have scientific equipment to help them explain natural occurrences in their environment. Therefore, a story or legend would be told to help make sense of the world around them such as how the sun, moon, and stars came to be in the sky or how the salmon came to live in the river.

"Supernatural beings are prominent in many myths about the origin of places, animals, and other natural phenomena. [Nanabozho](#) is the "[trickster](#)" spirit and hero of [Ojibwa](#) mythology (part of the larger body of [Anishinaabe traditional beliefs](#)). [Glooscap](#), a giant gifted with supernatural powers, is the hero and "transformer" of the mythology of the [Wabanaki](#) peoples. Supernatural experiences by ordinary mortals are found in other myths. For example, the [Chippewa](#) have myths explaining the first corn and the first robin, triggered by a boy's [vision](#).^[9] Some myths explain the origins of sacred rituals or objects, such as [sweat lodges](#), [wampum](#), and the [sun dance](#).^[10] explain an occurrence."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_folklore



The Okotoks Erratic is the largest rock in the Foothills Erratic Train. The Blackfoot Legend of Napi and the Rock tells how the erratic broke in two. Read the legend of Napi and the Rock as it was told to Blackfoot elder Stan Knowlton by his elders and old chiefs when he was a young boy on the Piikani Reserve in Alberta. Napi is the supernatural trickster of the Blackfoot.

Read the legend on the next page, and complete the following activity.

The Legend of Napi and the Rock

by Laurie Hodges Humble

The Okotoks Erratic is the largest rock in the Foothills Erratic Train. The Blackfoot Legend of Napi and the Rock tells how the erratic broke in two.

This is the Native American legend of Napi and the Rock as it was told to Blackfoot elder Stan Knowlton by his elders and old chiefs when he was a young boy on the Piikani Reserve in Alberta. Napi is the supernatural trickster of the Blackfoot.

In this particular story everybody knew Napi had cheated someone out of the nice buffalo robe he was wearing as he trekked northward with his pal Coyote. Napi had played tricks on so many other creatures the Sun and the Wind thought that they would play a trick on him. The Sun shone very brightly making Napi hotter and sweatier and the robe heavier. When the robe got too heavy to wear Napi asked Coyote what he should do with it. "Why don't you give it to the Big Rock?" said Coyote. So that is what they agreed to do. They went over to the Rock, praised the Rock, and Napi made a gift of the robe to the Big Rock. No sooner had Napi and Coyote headed off again when the Wind started blowing very cold air. Napi began to think he should have kept his robe. He tells Coyote to run back and take the robe from the Rock. Coyote doesn't want to have anything to do with taking back the robe. So Napi goes back and tells the Rock that he has come for the robe. To which the Rock replies, "You gave the robe to me." Napi responds, "What are you going to do? You have always been here and are going to stay here. I am going to be on my way." Napi takes the robe and heads off again with Coyote reluctantly by his side. All of a sudden Coyote hears some noise and looks back and sees the Rock rolling after them. Coyote and Napi become quite startled at what is going on and the two of them start to run.

Napi and Coyote run past all the animals which Napi had played tricks on. Napi asks the animals to help him. The animals are quite amused to see Napi finally getting a taste of his own medicine and will not help. Coyote realizes the Rock is only chasing Napi and so he runs away from Napi. Napi runs along prairies, coulees and rivers, staying just ahead of the rolling Rock. Napi is getting very tired. Some swallows finally decided to help him. The swallows swoop down and start pecking off pieces of the Rock. Some stories even say they use their droppings to break the Rock apart. The swallows see Napi is getting too tired to run much longer. They swoop down on the Rock one more time and stop the Rock by breaking it in two. Napi was safe. The Rock still sits on the spot near Okotoks, Alberta where it broke in two.

There are different versions of this Blackfoot legend, including one that tells a story about bats breaking the rock in two, thus their now pushed in faces. Mr. Knowlton did not hear the bat version until he was older. When he asked his elders and the old chiefs about why there were different versions of the stories he was told that the stories were like grass. 'Grass looks like it has a lot of different leaves on it, but when you get to the bottom it's the meaning that is in the root. As long as you tell the story to the best of your ability, in the end it all comes out to mean the same thing.'

Reading for Information

In your own words explain how Napi caused the rock to break into two.