

Storytelling in the Transmission of Goshute Culture

Summary

The student will be able to identify important elements of Goshute culture through their oral tradition.

Main Core Tie

Social Studies - 4th Grade

[Standard 2 Objective 1](#)

Additional Core Ties

Social Studies - 4th Grade

[Standard 1 Objective 3](#)

Time Frame

2 class periods of 30 minutes each

Materials

Teacher Materials

- [At a Glance: Coyote Stories and Goshute Tradition](#) (pdf)
- *Coyote and Frog*
claymation video (available for download online at www.UtahIndians.org)
Pia Toya--A Goshute Indian Legend (excerpts available online at www.UtahIndians.org)
- [The Tale of Pia Toya](#) (pdf)
Photo of the Deep Creek Mountain Range
Video: [We Shall Remain: The Goshute](#)

Student Materials

- [Coyote Eye-Juggler](#)" (pdf)
- [Worksheet](#) (pdf)

Background for Teachers

The Goshutes have a long, rich oral tradition, and Goshute storytellers are highly respected members of their tribe for their role in transmitting knowledge. Several Goshute tales that have been passed down through generations include the character Coyote, a trickster figure that appears in the oral traditions of many western tribes. This lesson includes three Goshute Coyote stories: Pia Toya, Coyote and Frog, and "Coyote Eye-Juggler." Through these tales, students will see how Goshute storytellers use Coyote stories to perpetuate Goshute language, culture, and ties to place.

Instructional Procedures

Prior to the lesson, explain the difference between written history, which is what many students grew up with, and oral history, which is what the Goshutes and other indigenous peoples relied on to perpetuate knowledge (see "oral history" entry in [Appendix A](#) (pdf)).

Read *Pia Toya--A Goshute Indian Legend* to the students. If you have access to the book, that is best. If not, you can make due with the excerpts on our website or the synopsis that is included in the teacher materials for this lesson. Pass out worksheets, and let students fill in the answers to the first set of questions. Talk through any questions they may have about Coyote and his "trickster" persona. Have students watch Coyote and Frog. Have them answer the next questions on their worksheet. Discuss the differences between Coyote's behavior and Frog's behavior.

Give each student a copy of "Coyote Eye-Juggler." Have them read silently and answer the next set of questions on their own. Gather the class back together to discuss Coyote's behavior. Was it what they expected based on the first story? What lessons about behavior does this story teach? Can knowing the lessons hidden in the stories of a group of people tell us something about those people? Discuss the Goshute lifestyle and why these stories would have been important and useful to the Goshutes. Have students finish the last set of questions on their worksheet.

Extensions

If you do not have internet access to download *Coyote and Frog*, just use *Pia Toya* and the oral history excerpt.

Give students an example of another value held by the Goshute people, and have them write a Coyote story that teaches that value. Some examples from *We Shall Remain: The Goshute* are respect for the land, meeting adversity with strength and determination, and respect for elders. Hand each student a piece of drawing paper and crayons and have him/her draw their own version of the Deep Creek Mountain Range.

Have students tell someone at home a Coyote story and have them sign a paper proving that they are practicing storytelling skills.

Have students write their own stories about the creation of a local geographic feature and share it with their families. Students could create an illustration to accompany the story.

Assessment Plan

Discussion participation

Worksheet

[End of Unit Assessment](#)

Bibliography

Defa, Dennis R. "The Goshute Indians of Utah." In *A History of Utah's American Indians*. Ed. Forrest S. Cuch. Salt Lake City: Utah Division of Indian Affairs and the Utah Division of State History, 2000.

Papanikolas, Zeese. *Trickster in the Land of Dreams*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995.

Pia Toya -- A Goshute Indian Legend: Retold and Illustrated by the Children and Teachers of the Ibapah Elementary School. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2000.

The University of Utah's [American West Center](#) (AWC) produced the curriculum materials in consultation with the [Utah Division of Indian Affairs](#), [Utah State Office of Education](#), [KUED 7](#), and the Goshute, Northwestern Band of the Shoshone, Southern Paiute, and Ute nations.

Authors

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