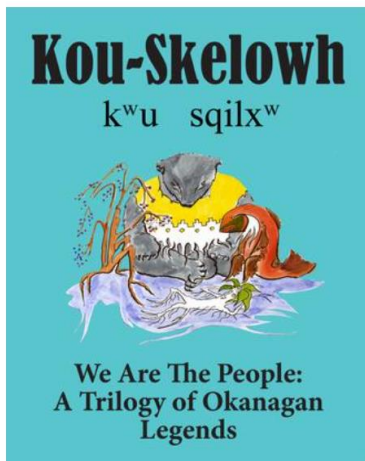




We Are the People: A Trilogy of Okanagan Legend

Adapted format to use in a shared script with students.

Story: How Names Were Given

Story Online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4LVdRmFvUc>

Characters:

Narrator

Coyote

Fox

Animal People Crowd

Great Spirit

Narrator:

A long time ago there were only Animal People on this earth. There were no human beings like you and me. It was a time when animals were like people. They could laugh and talk and play and lived just like you and I do.

One day, the Great Spirit called the Animal People together. They were told that there would be a great change on the earth, and there would be new People coming to live with the Animal People.

However, before they came, all of the Animal People would have to change. They would be given names and with each name, they would have a special job to do.

They were told to gather the next day for their name-giving. The Animal People were excited, and each hoped to get the most important name and the most important job.

Coyote was excited too. Most of the Animal People didn't like Coyote. They said he bragged too much about himself and pretended to know everything, even when he did not know very much. Coyote wanted to get a good name with an important job, so everyone would look up to him and praise him a lot.

Coyote bragged to anyone who would listen.

Coyote:

I will be the first one at the name-giving. I think I would like to be Grizzly Bear and a Chief of the animals. Maybe I would like to be Eagle and be Chief of the flying creatures, or maybe Salmon and be a Chief of all the things that live in the water.

Narrator:

Coyote's twin brother Fox happened to hear him. Fox knew what Coyote was like and was ashamed of his brother.

Fox:

Do not be too sure Brother, maybe no one will be allowed to choose their name. Maybe everyone will just have to take what is given.

Coyote:

That brother of mine always talks so smart. I'll show him this time!

Narrator:

Coyote was always trying to prove he was smarter than Fox. So, Coyote said to his brother...

Coyote:

You'll see. You'll have to be nice to me when I am Chief.

Fox:

Oh, go to sleep Coyote, or else you won't be up in time for the name-giving. You always sleep in.

Coyote:

Just for that, I'm going to stay awake all night, just to make sure I get there first. I'm not going to sleep at all!

Narrator:

He was still feeling very angry as he went to his tipi where his wife Mole was sitting by the door.

Coyote:

Mole, gather lots of wood. I'm going to sit up all night.

Narrator:

Mole did as she was told. Coyote built a big fire to keep himself awake, and there he sat. Before the night was half over, however, Coyote's eyes began to get heavier and heavier. He couldn't seem to keep them open.

Suddenly, he had an idea.

Coyote:

I'll prop my eyes open, that way I won't fall asleep. Gosh, I'm so smart.

Narrator:

So, he broke some little twigs and propped his eyes open. Then he sat back...

Coyote:

Hah! Now I'll be there first.

Narrator:

However, the Great Spirit had plans for Coyote, so he caused Coyote to go to sleep anyway, with his eyes wide open. Soon it was morning and time for all the Animal People to receive their names. Coyote slept and slept. The Animal People kept going by and looking at him.

Animal People Crowd:

What's wrong with Coyote's eyes, he just sits there with his eyes wide open.

Narrator:

Mole knew he was asleep, but she wouldn't wake him. She did not want him to become a great Chief because she loved him just the way he was.

Finally, Coyote woke up. He ran to the gathering place as fast as he could. No one was there but the Great Spirit Chief. Coyote thought he was the first one there.

Coyote:

I want to be named Chief of all the animals!

Narrator:

The Great Spirit slowly shook his head.

Great Spirit:

You are too late, Grizzly Bear left early this morning.

Coyote:

Well then, let me be Chief of all the flying things. Give me the name of Eagle.

Narrator:

Again, the Great Spirit shook his head.

Great Spirit:

No, Coyote, all the names have been given out, except for one. All the jobs have been handed out. All the plants, animals, birds, insects and things that live in the water have gone to their

special places to live and do their jobs. Only your name is left, Coyote. No one wanted to steal it from you.

Narrator:

At this Coyote was very unhappy. He sank down on his knees and hung his head.

Great Spirit:

Poor Coyote, I cannot let him feel so bad. Get up Coyote, I made you sleep late because I have a special job for you. I sent you to the land of dreams on purpose. I have lots of work for you to do before the People-To-Be come to live here.

Coyote:

Really!

Narrator:

Coyote jumped happily to his feet. The Great Spirit nodded.

Great Spirit:

In this world there are lots of things that will be harmful to the People-To-Be. The monsters that live here will destroy the People-To-Be. There will be many hardships for them. I will give you, Coyote, a special power to destroy these monsters. With your special power you will be able to change your shape into anything you wish. You will be able to imagine things and make them happen. This power is given to you to use wisely. It is given to you to help the People-To-Be.

Narrator:

Coyote had thought he was happy before, but when he heard these words, he was so excited that he ran around in circles, chasing his tail and yapping for joy. The Great Spirit shook his head and hid a smile as he watched Coyote frolic.

Great Spirit:

It is because of your foolish ways, however, that you will not always be careful.

Narrator:

The Great Spirit was warning Coyote.

Great Spirit:

You may be killed, therefore, your twin brother Fox, will accompany you and be near you always.

Fox will be given special powers to bring you back to life when you are killed. Even if all your bones are scattered all over, if one hair remains, Fox can step over it and bring you back to life. Go now and try and behave and do good. You are an important person now.

Narrator:

The Great Spirit said these things and then sent Coyote away.

The Great Spirit watched Coyote go. He knew how Coyote was. He knew that Coyote would not do a perfect job. He knew Coyote would make mistakes, and there would still be some hardships and sorrows for the People-To-Be. However, it was very important that everything on this earth be given a purpose.