

HOW CHIPMUNK GOT HER STRIPES

based on a Native American tale



A long, long time ago, chipmunks looked like small brown squirrels. However, one autumn evening changed the way chipmunks look forever. On this evening, Chipmunk dared to ask Bear to accomplish an impossible feat.

Bear stamped his big paws in the forest. He boasted, “I am the biggest and the strongest animal of the forest. I can do ANYTHING!”

Chipmunk asked, “Is that true?”

“Of course! I am Bear. I can do anything.”

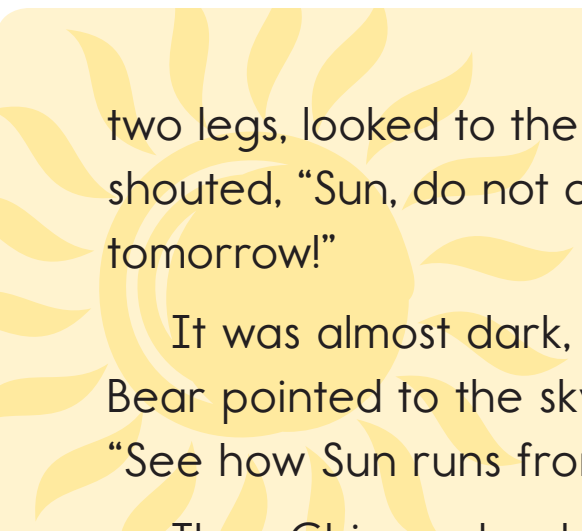
Chipmunk asked, “Can you keep the sun from rising?”

Bear said, “I have never tried, but I can do anything.”

Bear stood tall on

DID YOU KNOW?

Adult **black bears** can be 5–7 feet tall when they stand on two legs.



two legs, looked to the west, and shouted, “Sun, do not come up tomorrow!”

It was almost dark, so the sun set. Bear pointed to the sky and barked, “See how Sun runs from me!”

Then Chipmunk asked, “But will Sun rise in the morning?”

“No,” replied Bear.

Bear plopped down, looked east, and waited, for Sun always rose in the east. Then Bear thundered, “Sun will not rise.”

“Will too,” said Chipmunk.

“Sun will *not* rise,” Bear repeated.

“Will too,” Chipmunk replied. Bear and Chipmunk continued all night long.

After many hours, a small ray of light shot up over the east horizon.

Chipmunk shouted, “There is Sun!”

Bear did not believe it. “Sun will not rise.”

Then, Sun brightened the whole sky. Chipmunk teased Bear, singing on repeat, “Ha! Ha! I told you so!”

Whoosh! Down came Bear’s huge paw—trapping Chipmunk. Chipmunk saw how mad Bear was. She said, “Oh, Bear, I see you are mad. If you let me go, I will say ‘Sorry.’”

Bear lifted his paw and Chipmunk ran for her life. Bear swatted at Chipmunk and made three claw marks on her back. Chipmunk got to her home safely, but the three long stripes remained. And that is why today Chipmunk has three stripes.



Why Turtle's Shell Looks Cracked

based on an Indian tale



Many, many years ago, when animals talked to one another, there was a turtle who liked to talk... a lot. Turtle talked to everyone in her pond, and she commented on everything she saw. Two swans loved hearing Turtle.

One sizzling summer, there was no rain and the pond dried up. The swans decided to leave. One swan said, "Turtle, we must leave and find a new home. We are going to take off first thing in the morning."

"Oh, I wish I could go with you! If only I could fly," said Turtle.

"Maybe there is a way," said the other swan, thinking. "If we hold a stick in our beaks, then you could grab onto the stick. You will have to hold on tight while we fly."

“That would be wonderful!” exclaimed Turtle.

“Since you will have to grab the stick with your mouth,” said the first swan. “you will not be able to talk. If you utter even one word, you might fall. Can you stay quiet?”

Turtle nodded in agreement in order to prove she could stop talking.

The next morning, the two swans launched into the air with the turtle between them.

Turtle saw a splendid snow-covered mountain. She almost said something, but then remembered she had to bite the stick tightly.

Over the mountain, Turtle saw a new lake. Its size and beauty were breathtaking. Turtle opened her

mouth to say, “Amazing!” and she fell to the ground. *Ker-splooosh!*

Turtle hit the ground with a big thud. The swans spotted Turtle and flew down to help her onto her feet. They asked, “Are you all right?”

“I am sore, but I think I will be just fine,” said Turtle.

“What happened to your back?” asked one of the swans.

Turtle turned to look at her back and saw a mosaic of a shell. “I guess it cracked all over when I landed.”

And even to this day, that’s why the turtle’s shell looks cracked.

DID YOU KNOW?

Turtles can be found in waters all over the world, on every continent except Antarctica.



Why the Sea Is Salty

based on a Danish tale



A long time ago, in a village by the sea, a young man named Hans set out to see the world by ship. His grandmother had a special gift for him.

Grandmother explained, “This magic grinder will make whatever you need. If you need a hat, just say, ‘Grind a hat,’ and soon a hat will appear.”

“Thank you, Grandmother. This is a very special gift,” said Hans.

“Listen up, because this is important,” instructed Grandmother. “You must tell the grinder to stop. Use these exact words: ‘Grinder, I have enough,’ and the grinder will stop.”

Hans took along a few belongings, careful to hide the grinder among his things. When he reached the port, Hans found work on the biggest ship.

DID YOU KNOW?

Danish people are from the country of **Denmark**. No matter where you are in Denmark, you are close to the sea.

Once the ship was at sea, the crew treated Hans terribly, but Hans seemed content. The crew wanted to know why.

Late one night, the crew spied on Hans and saw him with the grinder. They saw the grinder make Hans a hearty meal, so they ran to tell the captain about it.

The next day, the captain said to Hans, "I want to buy that grinder of yours today."

"It's a special gift just for me and I will not sell it," said Hans. Then the captain ordered his men to throw Hans overboard and take the grinder. Following orders, the men threw Hans into the sea.

The crew huddled around their new treasure. "Our ship needs some

salt, so ask the grinder to make salt," demanded the captain.

One crewmember said, "Grind salt." The grinder came to life and made salt. The men were pleased, for soon they had all the salt they needed or ever wanted.

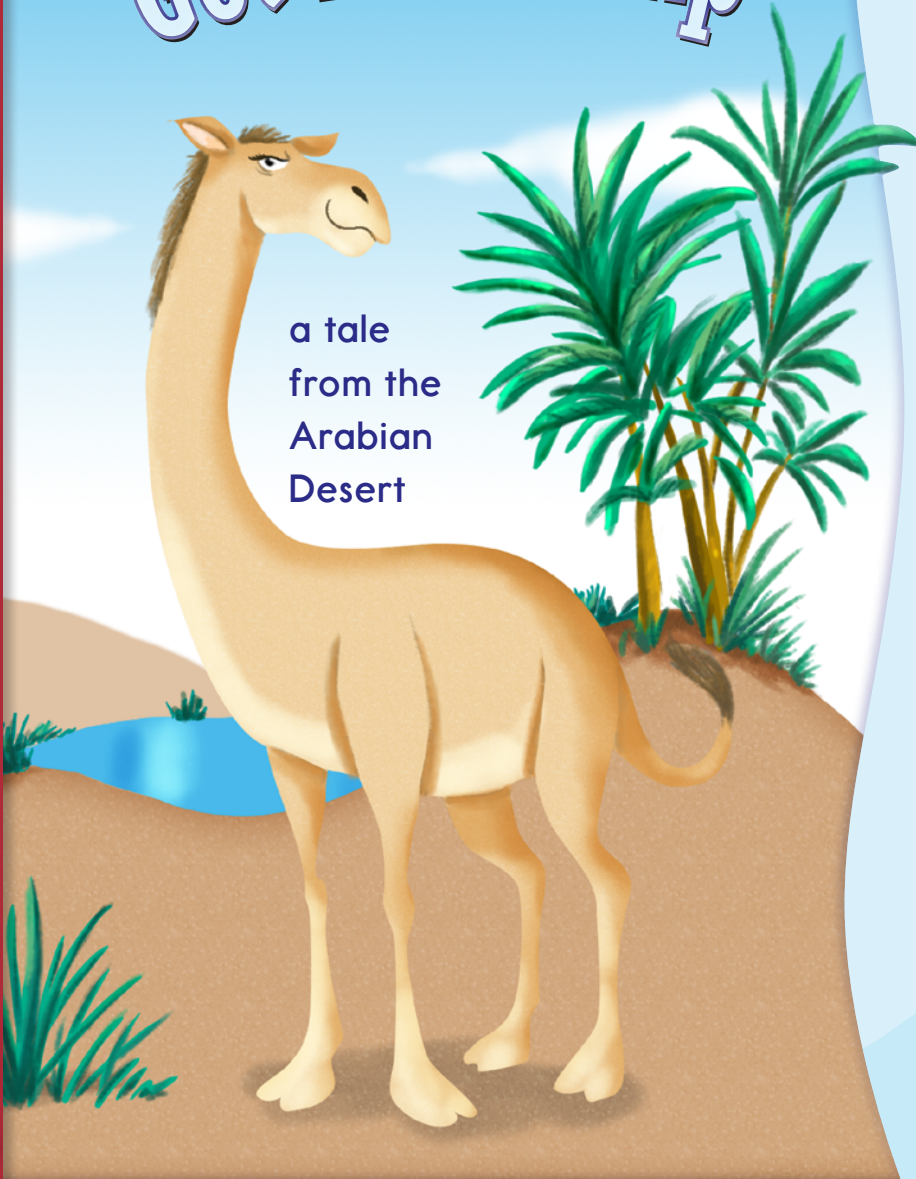
Unfortunately, they did not know how to stop the grinder. So the grinder kept making salt. The captain said, "Throw that grinder overboard before it sinks us all!"

The men threw the grinder into the ocean. It sunk to the sea floor and continued making salt. And that is why today the sea is salty!



How the Camel Got His Hump

a tale
from the
Arabian
Desert



There was much work to be done when the earth was nearly new. In the desert, the animals started to help Farmer with all the work.

Dog helped Farmer fetch and carry sticks. Horse and Ox helped Farmer plow the fields. However, Camel liked to be idle. Instead, while Dog, Horse, and Ox worked, Camel ate grass, drank water, and looked at his reflection at the water's edge.

On the first day, Dog suggested, "You could help me carry sticks."

Camel replied, "Humph."

On the second day, Horse suggested Camel carry Farmer into the fields.

Camel replied, "Humph."

On the third day, Ox suggested Camel help plow the field.

Camel replied, “Humph.”

After the third day, Farmer told Dog, Horse, and Ox that they would need to work overtime to make up for Camel not working. The three animals gathered together. “It’s not fair that Camel doesn’t work at all and now we have to work more!”

Suddenly, Desert Spirit appeared to the animals. He remembered Camel and knew that Camel was lazy. “I will take care of this,” said Desert Spirit.

Desert Spirit found Camel looking at his reflection—admiring his beautiful back. Desert Spirit called to Camel, “I hear you are not doing your share of the work. Why not? The world is new and there is much to do.”

“Humph,” said Camel.

Desert Spirit explained, “Because of your laziness, Dog, Ox, and Horse did your share of the work.”

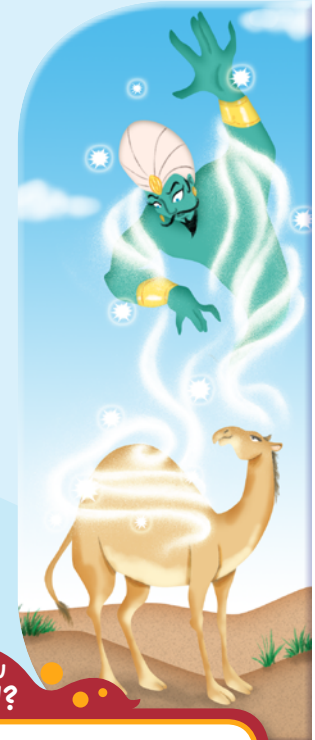
“Humph,” said Camel, as he continued to look at his reflection.

“Don’t say that again!” roared Desert Spirit.

“Humph,” said Camel. As soon as Camel uttered the word, Desert Spirit caused a hump to grow on his back.

“Now you have a ‘humph’ to carry. You will be able to work for three days without eating or drinking. That will make up for the days you missed.”

And that’s why today the camel has a hump.



DID YOU KNOW?

A camel’s **hump** is made of fat and is not full of water as many people believe.

How Beetles Got Their Beautiful Coats

based on
a Brazilian tale

A long, long time ago, deep in the rainforest of South America, Beetle inched slowly along the ground. Rat spotted Beetle and snickered at how slowly he was moving.

“Hey, Beetle, you move so slowly with your six legs. I can run lightning-fast and I have only four legs!” called Rat. Then Rat ran back and forth, showing off his running skills.

“My legs are the paddles to a swift boat,” boasted Rat.

“You sure seem proud of your speed,” replied Beetle.

“Don’t you wish you could run fast like me?” taunted Rat. Beetle kept trudging along the forest floor silently.

A beautiful green and gold parrot

Some **beetles'** **shells** are so beautiful, they are made into jewelry.

overheard Rat teasing Beetle. Parrot asked, "Rat, I think it might be interesting if you and Beetle race."

"Why would I want to race Beetle?" asked Rat. "It would hardly be much of a contest. What would I possibly have to gain?"

"What if I give the winner a bright-colored coat?" Parrot countered. "You both have dull, plain coats, so that might be a nice prize."

Parrot sat on a branch far away from Rat and Beetle and called out, "The first one to reach me wins." Rat lined up next to Beetle, and Parrot yelled, "Go!"

Rat rocketed across the forest floor in a blur. When he reached Parrot, Rat could hardly believe his eyes.



Beetle was sitting next to Parrot! Rat asked Beetle, "How did you get here so fast?"

Beetle replied, "I flew. It's faster than running, you know."

"I didn't know you could fly!"

Parrot declared Beetle the winner and told Rat, "You never know when someone may have a hidden ability."

"What color do you want your coat?" Parrot asked Beetle.

"I would like a coat the same color as you, Parrot!" said Beetle. Parrot made him a beautiful, hard-shelled green and gold coat.

Even to this day, beetles have a beautiful green and gold shell, and rats have a dull, gray coat.



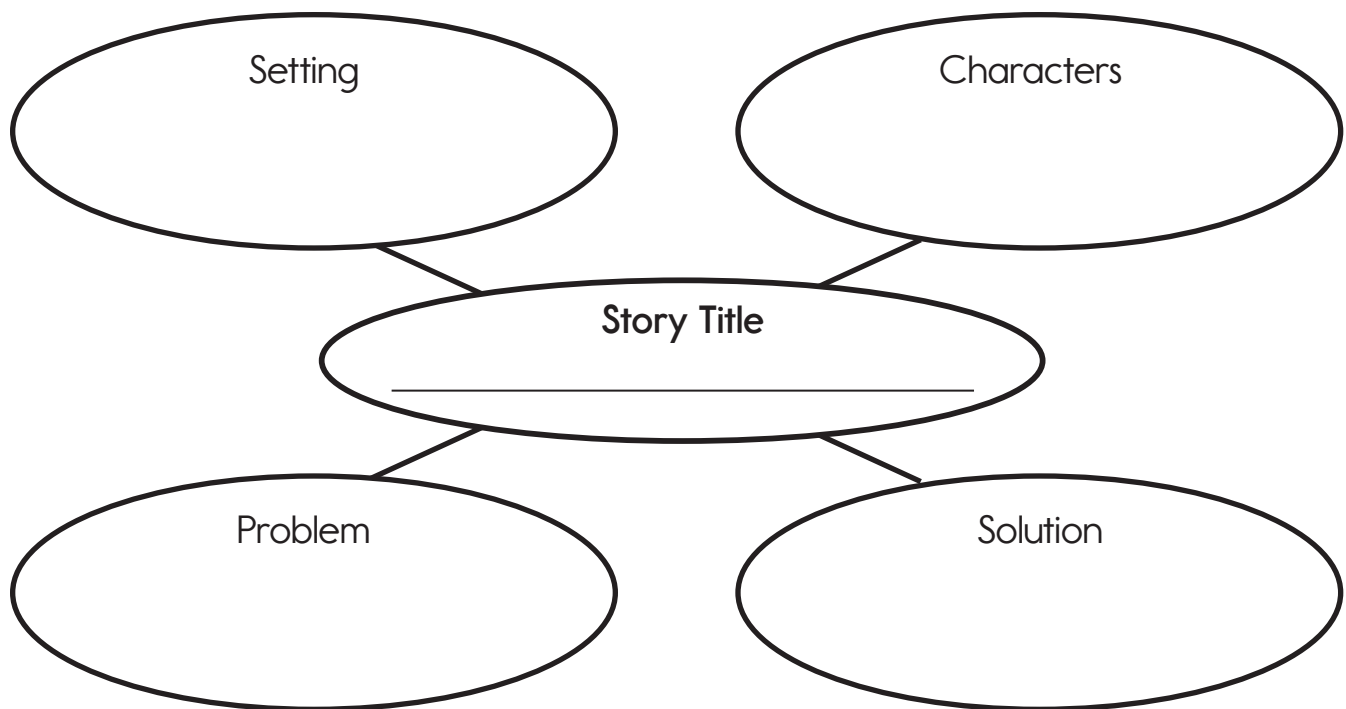
Name _____

 **Key Question**

What makes a story a pourquoi tale?

 **On Your Own**

1. Read the Key Question. Then read the story. Look for details in the story that help you answer the Key Question. Circle or underline these details.
2. Now look back at the story. Add the details you circled or underlined to the Story Web below.



3. Think about the Key Question. Write your answer to the Key Question using the details you found in the story you read.

 **My First Answer**

Name _____

Key Question

What makes a story a pourquoi tale?

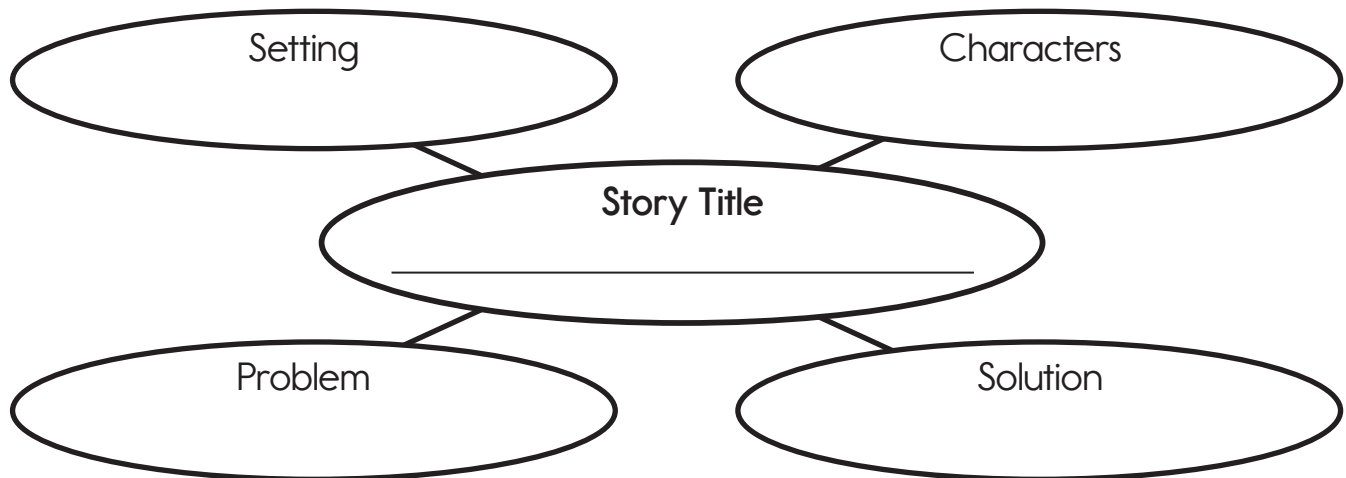
Share Your Ideas

Meet with your team. Talk about each story your team read.

1. Tell the team what happens in the story you read. Show your Story Web.
2. Look at the Story Webs your team made. Compare the details in each of your stories by looking at all the webs you made. Answer these questions together.
 - *How are the details in the stories different?*
 - *How are the details in the stories the same?*

Next, write the details that answer the Key Question on the web below.

Write only the details that are in every story your team read.



Answer the Key Question

Review the details on your team's Story Web. As a team, write an answer to the Key Question. Use the details from the stories to support your answer.

What makes a story a pourquoi tale?

Our Team's Answer
