

Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

Assessment 10: New-Read Assessment 1

Directions: Read the Nez Perce story “How Beaver Stole Fire from the Pines.” As you read, annotate for key story elements, including characters, setting, problem, attempts to solve the problem, and resolution. Then, complete Parts I and II.

Following is transcribed from the original translation from the Nez Perce, as published in The Journal of American Folk-Lore, Vol. IIL, Houghton Mifflin & Co., 1890.

How Beaver Stole Fire from the Pines (Nez Perce)

[1] Once, before there were any people in the world, the different animals and trees lived and moved about and talked together just like human beings. The pine trees had the secret of fire and guarded it jealously, so that no matter how cold it was, they alone could warm themselves. At length an unusually cold winter came and all the animals were in danger of freezing to death. But all their attempts to discover the pines’ secret were in vain¹, until Beaver at last hit upon a plan.

[2] At a certain place on Grande Ronde River in Idaho, the pines were about to hold a great council². They had built a large fire to warm themselves after bathing in the icy water, and sentinels³ were posted to prevent intruders from stealing their fire secret. But Beaver had hidden under the bank near the fire before the sentries⁴ had taken their places and when a live coal rolled down the bank, he seized it, hid it in his breast and ran away as fast as he could.

[3] The pines immediately raised a hue and cry⁵ and started after him. Whenever he was pressed, Beaver darted from side to side to dodge his pursuers, and when he had a good start, he kept a straight course. The Grande Ronde River preserves the direction Beaver took in his flight, and this is why it is tortuous⁶ in some parts of its course and straight in others.

1 in vain: to no purpose; without lasting effect

2 council: a group of people chosen to make decisions or give advice

3 sentinels: those that stand guard or watch

4 sentries: people who guard an entrance or keep watch against dangers

5 hue and cry: a public outcry of alarm, protest, or the like

6 tortuous: changing direction frequently; twisting, winding, or crooked, as a path

Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

[4] After running for a long time, the pines grew tired. So most of them halted in a body on the river banks, where they remain in great numbers to this day, forming a growth so dense that hunters can hardly get through. A few pines kept chasing Beaver, but they finally gave out one after another, and they remain scattered at intervals⁷ along the banks of the river in the places where they stopped.

[5] There was one cedar⁸ running in the forefront of the pines, and although he despaired of capturing Beaver, he said to the few trees who were still in the chase, “We can’t catch him, but I’ll go to the top of the hill yonder and see how far ahead he is.” So he ran to the top of the hill and saw Beaver just diving into Big Snake River where the Grande Ronde enters it. Further pursuit was out of the question. The cedar stood and watched Beaver dart across Big Snake River and give fire to some willows on the opposite bank, and re-cross farther on and give fire to the birches and so on to several other kinds of trees. Since then, all who have wanted fire have got it from these particular trees because they have fire in them and give it up readily when their wood is rubbed together in the ancient way.

[6] Cedar still stands alone on the tip of the hill where he stopped, near the junction of Grande Ronde and Big Snake rivers. He is very old, so old that his top is dead, but he still stands as a testament⁹ to the story’s truth. That the chase was a very long one is shown by the fact that there are no cedars within a hundred miles upstream from him. The old people point him out to the children as they pass by. “See,” they say, “here is old Cedar standing in the very spot where he stopped chasing Beaver.”

⁷ intervals: spaces between objects or measured points

⁸ cedar: an evergreen tree of the pine family

⁹ testament: a statement expressing belief

Name

DateClass

Part I: Complete the Story Map for the story “How Beaver Stole Fire from the Pines.” Describe the story’s main characters and setting (where and when the story takes place), and summarize the problem, attempts to solve the problem, and the story’s resolution, or how the problem is solved at the end of the story.

<div>Characters</div> <div>The main characters in the story include...</div>		<div>Setting</div> <div>The story takes place...(include where and when)</div>
<div>Problem</div> <div>The main problem in the story is that...</div>	<div>Attempts to Solve the Problem</div> <div>First...</div> <div>Next...</div> <div>Then...</div>	<div>Resolution</div> <div>The main problem in the story is resolved when...</div>

Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

Part II: Read each question carefully. Some questions have a “Part A” and a “Part B”; be sure to complete both parts. Some questions will ask you to choose one correct answer, while others will ask you to choose more than one correct answer. Refer back to the story “How Beaver Stole Fire from the Pines” as needed to help you answer the questions.

1. Which detail from the story **best** explains why the animals want to know the pines’ secret of fire?
- “moved about and talked together just like human beings”
 - “an unusually cold winter came”
 - “after bathing in the icy water”
 - “prevent intruders from stealing their fire secret”

2. Read these lines from the story.

But Beaver had hidden under the bank near the fire before the sentries had taken their places and when a live coal rolled down the bank, he seized it, hid it in his breast and ran away as fast as he could.

These details from the story show that Beaver is...

- angry at the pine trees.
 - friendly toward all living things.
 - nervous about the challenge he faces.
 - willing to take a risk to help others.
3. Part A: What happens after the pine trees chase Beaver for a long time?
- They stop and build a large fire to warm themselves.
 - They get tired and take root wherever they stop chasing Beaver.
 - They decide to share their secret of fire with different kinds of trees.
 - They decide to hold a council about how to protect their secret of fire.

Part B: According to the Nez Perce, what does the correct answer to Part A explain?

- why some trees do not lose their leaves but others do.
- why the Nez Perce continue to hold councils to solve problems.
- why particular trees can be used to create fire and others cannot.
- why the pine trees today are scattered along the banks of the river.

4. Read these lines from the story.

Since then, all who have wanted fire have got it from these particular trees because they have fire in them and give it up readily when their wood is rubbed together in the ancient way.

What does the phrase “these particular trees...have fire in them” mean?

- These trees do not burn in a fire.
 - These trees stay warm in the winter.
 - These trees can be used to start a fire.
 - These trees are the oldest in the area.
5. Part A: Which of the following describes a difference between Cedar and the other pine trees in the story?

- Cedar goes to the top of the hill to locate Beaver but the other pine trees do not follow him.
- Cedar gives up chasing Beaver while the other pine trees continue the chase across the Snake River.
- Cedar believes that the animals should have fire while the other pine trees want to keep it for themselves.
- Cedar decides to chase Beaver across the Snake River but the other pine trees tire and stop running.

Part B: This difference between Cedar and the other pines is important because it explains...

- why Cedar’s wood can be cut and rubbed together to create fire.
 - why Cedar is stronger and more durable than any other type of pine tree.
 - why Cedar grows so well near the Grande Ronde and Snake Rivers.
 - why Cedar stands alone on the top of the hill where the Grande Ronde and Snake Rivers meet
6. What does the story “How Beaver Stole Fire from the Pines” explain? (Choose two answers.)
- how beavers got their flat tails
 - how people were able to use trees to make fire
 - why animals today are unable to build fires
 - why certain trees and rivers are the way they are today
 - why pine trees burn better than birch and willow trees