

Traditional Stories from the Cherokee Nation

Why the Owl Has a Spotted Coat

PART 1 OF 2

The owl had a girl friend that he loved very much and the time had come for him to meet her parents. Now owl knew he was not the best looking creature on this earth and didn't want anyone to see his face. He thought and thought of a way to hide his face from her parents because he was afraid they might not let him marry her if they saw how ugly he really was.



The time came when he was to meet her parents, on this very important evening he had a plan. As he came into the house he stood in the shadows, just outside the reach of the fire's light. As the evening progressed he seemed to relax just a bit but he never came out of the shadows.

Reporter's Notebook:



Pretend that you are a newspaper reporter trying to find out why the owl has spots. Write a headline:

Choose an activity:

- What do you think the brothers' are planning?
- On another sheet of paper, write your own ending then compare it to next week's ending in Part 2.

When the evening had ended and owl left for the night, both parents began to express their favoritism of the owl. They even remarked what a wonderful husband he would make for the young lady. They did have one question and that was why did he not come into the firelight. As the daughter and parents began to talk about the owl the question seemed to drift from their minds and on to different subjects. In the shadows of the room stood her two, very mischievous, brothers. They, too, wondered why the owl stood in the shadows and came up with a plan to find out why.

PART 2 NEXT WEEK...

Arkansas Education Standards: Oral & Visual Communications: Speaking, Listening & Media Literacy; Writing.4-7; Reading.8-11



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PART 2 OF 2

The next day both boys went to gather wood for the fire without being told. The mother was very surprised because she usually had to tell them to do something at least three times before they would do it. They gathered enough wood to burn for three nights, this did seem strange to the mother and she wondered what they were up to. She soon forgot her thought as she wondered if the nice owl was coming to see her daughter tonight.

That night the owl came to court her daughter and the two brothers were waiting. The owl moved to the shadows as he did the night before and began to eat his supper. As the mother called for the boys to get more wood for the fire the boys rushed outside and grabbed two armloads of wood and began to throw them into the fire. Now this wood was not just ordinary oak or hickory, it also had wild sumac mixed in, so when the sumac began to burn it would pop, crackle, and throw sparks. This is just what the boys wanted the fire to do so they could see what the owl was hiding in the shadows.

As the fire began to burn, the sparks flew and the wood crackled. The owl raised his wing to shield his face and turned his back. As he did this sparks landed on his back and burned black spots on his beautiful coat of feathers. That is why today the owl has a spotted coat.

He did marry the young lady and she was able to teach him that all creatures are beautiful in CREATOR'S eyes.

**Reporter's
Notebook:**



**Write a news story
from the owl's point
of view.**

THE END

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