

Why The Seagull Cries

A folktale from Southeastern Alaska and Northwestern British Columbia

Recommended Key Stage: KS1

Synopsis

When the world was new, all the animals were given gifts to share with others. But Seagull coveted his gift of light and cause all sorts of trouble for the other animals. Until one day, Raven decides to play a trick on Seagull and get him to share the light once and for all.

Part 1: Share the Story

Show the children a map of the world and highlight North America. Show the journey from North America to the UK and explain that stories can travel world.

Listen to the audio story **Why the Seagull Cries** told by Chris Smith

Part 2: Discuss the story

Use the questions below to begin a discussion about the story

Questions

- What did you think of the story?
- What do you know about Seagull's character? What did you think of him?
- How did you feel when Raven played the trick?
- Is it ever okay to play tricks?
- Imagine you have been given a special gift - it's in your pocket right now. Can you describe it?
- Should Seagull have shared the sun? Why/why not?
- Have a mini debate or a philosophical discussion - Do you always have to share?

Part 3: Play the Story

Activities	
Story Walk - Students stand in their own space around the room. - Tell the story slowly using Resource A - As you tell it, the students use the space to mime it while staying in their space. The animals each receiving their gifts, Seagull hiding his away, Raven tricking Seagull, Seagull crying, etc. - Try doing this with no sounds, just expressions.	Conscience Alley - Imagine you are Seagull in the beginning of the story, when he receives his special gift. You have an important decision to make – should you share your gift? Or should you keep it for yourself? - Discuss both sides of the argument in pairs and share back some ideas. Now everyone should have an idea. - Create a pathway, with the children standing in two lines parallel with each other. Nominate a child to act as the Seagull (or an adult to begin with). The Seagull will walk through the pathway, with children on either side. One side of the path will try to convince them to share their gift with others, while the other side will try to convince them to keep it for themselves. Encourage the children to give reasons for their opinion. - By the end of the path, the Seagull will take in all the arguments and come to a decision. This decision can be different from the outcome of the story - that could make for an interesting discussion!

Part 4: Story Stimulus

Activities	
Creative Challenge: Choose an animal and design their special gift. Think carefully about why your animal would be given that gift – is it because of where they live? E.g. a creature that swims might be given a lake, or a forest creature might be given tall trees. Draw or record your animal and gift in some way and describe the following: • Where does your animal live? • What are they good at? • What is their gift? • Why were they given it? • How will it help other animals? • Will they share their gift or keep it for themselves? Why?	Solutions (or becoming a trickster!) • What if Raven's trick didn't work? Would he try something else, or would he find a different animal to help? In groups or pairs, the children come up with a new way to spread light around the world. Raven used a prickly thorn in Seagull's foot to trick him into using the light. Is there another way to do this? Is there a way that doesn't hurt Seagull? Would a different animal have a different skill that they could use that doesn't involve a trick? • Once they have decided their new story, they can act it out. Children may wish to create props or use fabric for costumes or can use their imaginations! • What does the rest of the class think of their trick? Did it solve the problem? What did you like about the trick?

Part 5: Taking it Further

Similar Stories (Trickster stories): Fox and the Crow (Europe) How Firouz Tricked the Elephant King (India) Mousedeer and Tiger (Indonesia) Fox and Tiger (China) Panther and Rabbit (Cameroon) Wider Curriculum Links KS1 PSHE • about what is kind and unkind behaviour, and how this can affect others • how to talk about and share their opinions on things that matter to them • about how to treat themselves and others with respect; how to be polite and courteous
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Resource A

Story Walk

Why The Seagull Cries Step-By-Step

- It is the beginning of the world
- Choose an animal to be
- You've been given a gift. (Deer was given the forests; fish was given the water and bird was given the sky).
- Show how much you love your gift.
- Act out sharing it with all the other animals in the world.
- Now be Seagull
- You have a box.
- Peep inside!
- It's full of bright light!
- Keep the light in a box, hidden under your wing.
- Show how important you feel – puff out your chest!
- The other animals ask you to share the light so that they could see all the beautiful things in the world, but you refuse.
- You step on a sharp thorn – OW!
- You reluctantly open the box, just a tiny bit.
- You open the box a little more... And a little more, and a little more...
- The light is too strong, you can't see anything.
- Raven knocked the box from your wing.
- Oh no! Give a squawk of frustration.