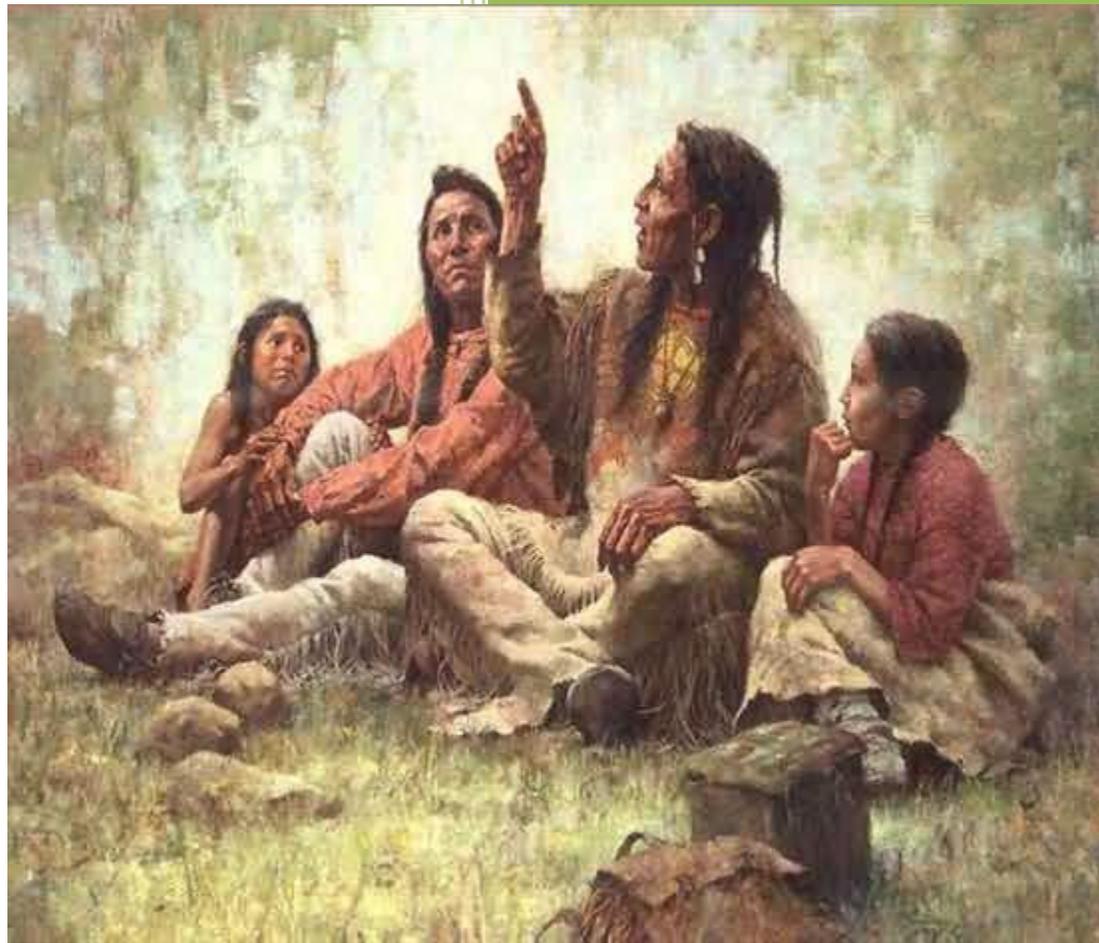


5th
Grade

Native American Creation Stories



5th Grade

CREATION STORY

An Iroquois Legend

In the beginning, the world was not as we know it now. It was a water world inhabited only by animals and creatures of the air who could survive without land.

Up above, the Sky World was quite different. Human-type beings lived there with infinite types of plants and animals to enjoy.

In the Sky World, there was a Tree of Life that was very special to the people of the Sky World. They knew that it grew at the entrance to the world below and forbade anyone to tamper with the Tree. One woman who was soon to give birth was curious about the Tree and convinced her brother to uproot the Tree.

Beneath the Tree was a great hole. The woman peered from the edge into the hole and suddenly fell off the edge. As she was falling she grasped at the edge and clutched in her hand some of the earth from the Sky World. As she fell, the birds of the world below were disturbed and alerted to her distress. The birds responded and gathered a great many of their kind to break her fall and cradle her to the back of a great sea turtle. The creatures of the water believed that she needed land to live on, so they set about to collect some for her. They dove to the great depths of the world's oceans to gather earth to make her a place to live. Many of the animals tried to gather the earth from the ocean floor, only the muskrat was successful. With only a small bit of earth brought onto turtle's back from his small paws, Turtle Island began to grow.

The Sky Woman soon gave birth to a daughter on Turtle Island. The daughter grew fast. There were no man-beings on Turtle Island, but a being known as the West Wind married the daughter of Sky Woman.

Soon the daughter of Sky Woman gave birth to Twins. One was born the natural way, and he was called the Right-Handed Twin. The other was born in a way that caused the death of the mother. He was called the Left-Handed Twin. When their mother died, their grandmother, Sky Woman, placed the fistful of earth that she grasped from the edge of the Sky World, and placed it on her daughter's grave. The earth carried special seeds from the Sky World that were nourished by the earth over her daughter. So from the body of her daughter came the Sacred Tobacco, Strawberry and Sweetgrass. We call these Kionhekwa. The Life Givers.

The Right and Left-Handed Twins were endowed with special creative powers. The Right-Handed Twin created gentle hills, beautiful smelling flowers, quiet brooks, butterflies and numerous creatures, plants and earth formations. His brother the Left-Handed Twin made snakes, thorns on rose bushes, thunder and lightning and other more disturbing attributes of today's world. Together, they created man and his many attributes. The Right-Handed Twin believed in diplomacy and conflict resolution. The Left-Handed Twin believed in conflict as resolution. They were very different, but all that they created is an integral part of this Earth's Creation.

Their Grandmother, Sky Woman, now came to the end of her life. When she died, the Twins fought over her body and pulled it apart, throwing her head into the sky. As part of the Sky World, there her head remained to shine upon the world as Grandmother Moon. The Twins could not live together without fighting. They agreed to dwell in different realms of the earth. The Right-Handed Twin continued to live in the daylight and the Left-Handed Twin became a dweller of the night. Both of them continue their special duties to their Mother the Earth.

END





Native American Myths of Creation

Apache Myth 1

In the beginning was only Tepeu and Gucumatz (Feathered Serpent). These two sat together and thought, and whatever they thought came into being. They thought Earth, and there it was. They thought mountains, and so there were. They thought trees, and sky, and animals etc, and each came into being. But none of these things could praise them, so they formed more advanced beings of clay. But these beings fell apart when they got wet, so they made beings out of wood, but they proved unsatisfactory and caused trouble on the earth. The gods sent a great flood to wipe out these beings, so that they could start over. With the help of Mountain Lion, Coyote, Parrot, and Crow they fashioned four new beings. These four beings performed well and are the ancestors of the Quiché In the beginning was only Tepeu and Gucumatz (Feathered Serpent).



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In the beginning there was only darkness. Suddenly a small bearded man, the One Who Lives Above, appeared rubbing his eyes as if just awakened. The man, the Creator, rubbed his hands together and there appeared a little girl, Girl-Without-

Parents. The creator rubbed his face with his hands and there stood the Sun-God. Again Creator rubbed his sweaty brow and from his hands dropped Small-boy. Now there were four gods. Then he created Tarantula, Big Dipper, Wind, Lightning-Maker and Lightning-Rumbler. All four gods shook hands so that their sweat mixed together. Then Creator rubbed his palms together from which fell a small round, brown ball. They took turns kicking it and with each kick the ball grew larger. Creator told Wind to go inside the ball and blow it up. Then Tarantula spun a black cord which he attached to the ball and went to the east pulling as hard as he could.

He repeated this exercise with a blue cord to the south, a yellow cord to the west and a white cord to the north. When he was done the brown ball had become the earth. The Creator again rubbed his hands and there appeared Hummingbird. "Fly all over this earth," said Creator to Hummingbird, "and tell us what you see." When he returned Hummingbird reported that there was water on the west side. But the earth rolled and bounced, so Creator made four giant posts one each black, blue, yellow and white and had Wind place them at the four cardinal points of the earth. The earth was now still. The creation of the people, animals, birds, trees, etc takes place hereafter.

end

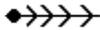
Apache

Myth 2

In the beginning nothing existed, only darkness was everywhere. Suddenly from the darkness emerged a thin disc, one side yellow and the other side white, appearing suspended in midair. Within the disc sat a small bearded man, Creator, the One Who Lives Above. When he looked into the endless darkness, light appeared above. He looked down and it became a sea of light. To the east, he created yellow streaks of dawn. To the west, tints of many colors appeared everywhere. There were also clouds of different colours. He also created three other gods: a little girl, a Sun-God and a small boy.

Then he created celestial phenomena, the winds, the tarantula, and the earth from the sweat of the four gods mixed together in the Creator's palms, from a small round, brown ball, not much larger than a bean. The world was expanded to its current size by the gods kicking the small brown ball until it expanded. Creator told Wind to go inside the ball and to blow it up.

The tarantula, the trickster character, spun a black cord and, attaching it to the ball, crawled away fast to the east, pulling on the cord with all his strength. Tarantula repeated with a blue cord to the south, a yellow cord to the west, and a white cord to the north. With mighty pulls in each direction, the brown ball stretched to immeasurable size--it became the earth! No hills, mountains, or rivers were visible; only smooth, treeless, brown plains appeared. Then the Creator created the rest of the beings and features of the Earth.



Chelan

Long, long ago, the Creator, the Great Chief Above, made the world. Then he made the animals and the birds and gave them their names -- Coyote, Grizzly Bear, Deer, Fox, Eagle, the four Wolf Brothers, Magpie, Bluejay, Hummingbird, and all the others. When he had finished his work, the Creator called the animal people to him. "I am going to leave you," he said. "But I will come back. When I come again, I will make human beings. They will be in charge of you." The Great Chief returned to his home in the sky, and the animal people scattered to all parts of the world.

After twelve moons, the animal people gathered to meet the Creator as he had directed. Some of them had complaints. Bluejay, Meadowlark, and Coyote did not like their names. Each of them asked to be some other creature. "No," said the Creator. "I have given you your names. There is no change. My word is law.

"Because you have tried to change my law, I will not make the human being this time. Because you have disobeyed me, you have soiled what I brought with me. I planned to change it into a human being. Instead, I will put it in water to be washed for many moons and many snows, until it is clean again."

Then he took something from his right side and put it in the river. It swam, and the Creator named it Beaver. "Now I will give you another law," said the Great Chief Above.

"The one of you who keeps strong and good will take Beaver from the water some day and make it into a human being. I will tell you now what to do. Divide Beaver into twelve parts. Take each part to a different place and breathe into it your own breath. Wake it up. It will be a human being with your breath. Give it half of your power and tell it what to do. Today I am giving my power to one of you. He will have it as long as he is good." When the Creator had finished speaking, all the creatures started for their homes -- all except Coyote. The Great Chief had a special word for Coyote.

"You are to be head of all the creatures, Coyote. You are a power just like me now, and I will help you do your work. Soon the creatures and all the other things I have made will become bad. They will fight and will eat each other. It is your duty to keep them as peaceful as you can. "When you have finished your work, we will meet again, in this land toward the east. If you have been good, if you tell the truth

and obey me, you can make the human being from Beaver. If you have done wrong, someone else will make him." Then the Creator went away.

It happened as the Creator had foretold. Everywhere the things he had created did wrong. The mountains swallowed the creatures. The winds blew them away. Coyote stopped the mountains, stopped the winds, and rescued the creatures. One winter, after North Wind had killed many people, Coyote made a law for him: "Hereafter you can kill only those who make fun of you."

Everywhere Coyote went, he made the world better for the animal people and better for the human beings yet to be created. When he had finished his work, he knew that it was time to meet the Creator again. Coyote thought that he had been good, that he would be the one to make the first human being. But he was mistaken. He thought that he had as much power as the Creator. So he tried, a second time, to change the laws of the Great Chief Above.

"Some other creature will make the human being," the Creator told Coyote. "I shall take you out into the ocean and give you a place to stay for all time." So Coyote walked far out across the water to an island. There the Creator stood waiting for him, beside the house he had made. Inside the house on the west side stood a black suit of clothes. On the other side hung a white suit. "Coyote, you are to wear this black suit for six months," said the Creator. "Then the weather will be cold and dreary. Take off the black suit and wear the white suit. Then there will be summer, and everything will grow. I will give you my power not to grow old. You will live here forever and forever."

Coyote stayed there, out in the ocean, and the four Wolf brothers took his place as the head of all the animal people. Youngest Wolf Brother was strong and good and clever. Oldest Wolf Brother was worthless. So the Creator gave Youngest Brother the power to take Beaver from the water. One morning Oldest Wolf Brother said to Youngest Brother, "I want you to kill Beaver. I want his tooth for a knife."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Second and Third Brothers. "Beaver is too strong for Youngest Brother." But Youngest Wolf said to his brothers, "Make four spears. For Oldest Brother, make a spear with four forks. For me, make a spear with one fork. Make a two-forked spear and a three-forked spear for yourselves. I will try my best to get Beaver, so that we can kill him."

All the animal persons had seen Beaver and his home. They knew where he lived. They knew what a big creature he was. His family of young beavers lived with him. The animal persons were afraid that Youngest Wolf Brother would fail to

capture Beaver and would fail to make the human being. Second and Third Wolf Brothers also were afraid. "I fear we will lose Youngest Brother," they said to each other. But they made the four spears he had asked for.

At dusk, the Wolf brothers tore down the dam at the beavers' home, and all the little beavers ran out. About midnight, the larger beavers ran out. They were so many, and they made so much noise, that they sounded like thunder. Then Big Beaver ran out, the one the Creator had put into the water to become clean.

"Let's quit!" said Oldest Wolf Brother, for he was afraid. "Let's not try to kill him."

"No!" said Youngest Brother. "I will not stop."

Oldest Wolf Brother fell down. Third Brother fell down. Second Brother fell down. Lightning flashed. The beavers still sounded like thunder. Youngest Brother took the four-forked spear and tried to strike Big Beaver with it. It broke. He used the three-forked spear. It broke. He used the two-forked spear. It broke. Then he took his own one-forked spear. It did not break. It pierced the skin of Big Beaver and stayed there. Out of the lake, down the creek, and down Big River, Beaver swam, dragging Youngest Brother after it.

Youngest Wolf called to his brothers, "You stay here. If I do not return with Beaver in three days, you will know that I am dead." Three days later, all the animal persons gathered on a level place at the foot of the mountain. Soon they saw Youngest Brother coming. He had killed Beaver and was carrying it. "You remember that the Creator told us to cut it into twelve pieces," said Youngest Brother to the animal people. But he could divide it into only eleven pieces.

Then he gave directions. "Fox, you are a good runner. Hummingbird and Horsefly, you can fly fast. Take this piece of Beaver flesh over to that place and wake it up. Give it your breath." Youngest Brother gave other pieces to other animal people and told them where to go. They took the liver to Clearwater River, and it became the Nez Perce Indians. They took the heart across the mountains, and it became the Methow Indians. Other parts became the Spokane people, the Lake people, the Flathead people. Each of the eleven pieces became a different tribe.

"There have to be twelve tribes," said Youngest Brother. "Maybe the Creator thinks that we should use the blood for the last one. Take the blood across the Shining Mountains and wake it up over there. It will become the Blackfeet. They will always look for blood."

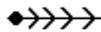
When an animal person woke the piece of Beaver flesh and breathed into it, he told the new human being what to do and what to eat. "Here are roots," and the animal people pointed to camas and kouse and to bitterroot, "You will dig them, cook them, and save them to eat in the winter.

"Here are the berries that will ripen in the summer. You will eat them and you will dry them for use in winter." The animal people pointed to chokecherry trees, to serviceberry bushes, and to huckleberry bushes.

"There are salmon in all the rivers. You will cook them and eat them when they come up the streams. And you will dry them to eat in the winter."

When all the tribes had been created, the animal people said to them "Some of you new people should go up Lake Chelan. Go up to the middle of the lake and look at the cliff beside the water. There you will see pictures on the rock. From the pictures you will learn how to make the things you will need."

The Creator had painted the pictures there, with red paint. From the beginning until long after the white people came, the Indians went to Lake Chelan and looked at the paintings. They saw pictures of bows and arrows and of salmon traps. From the paintings of the Creator they knew how to make the things they needed for getting their food.



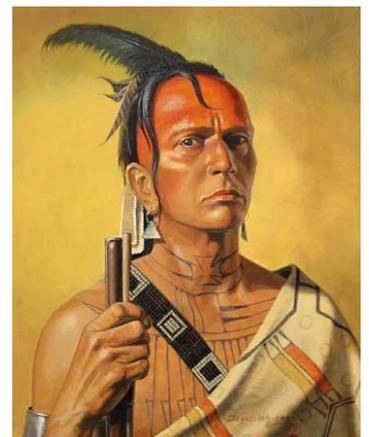
Cherokee

Myth 1

Long, long ago, a great island floated in a giant ocean. This island hung from four thick ropes from the sky, which was solid rock. There were no peoples and it was always dark. The animals could not see so they got the sun and put it in a path that took it across the island from east to west each day. The animals and plants were told by the Great Spirit to stay awake for seven days and seven nights but most could not and slept. Those plants that did stay awake, such as the pine and cedar and those few others were rewarded by being allowed to remain green all year. All the others were made to lose their leaves each winter. Those animals that did stay awake, such as the owl and the mountain lion and those few others were rewarded with the ability to go about in the dark. Then the people appeared.

Myth 2

In the beginning, there was just water. All the animals lived above it and the sky was overcrowded. They were all curious about what was beneath the water and one day Dayuni'si, the water beetle, volunteered to explore it. He explored the surface but could not find any solid ground. He explored below the surface to the bottom and all he found was mud which he brought back to the surface. After collecting the mud, it began to grow in size and spread outwards until it became the Earth as we know it. After all this had happened, one of the animals attached this new land to the sky with four strings. The land was still too wet so they sent the great buzzard from Galun'lati to prepare it for them. The buzzard flew down and by the time that he reached the Cherokee land he was so tired that his wings began to hit the ground. Wherever they hit the ground a mountain or valley formed. The animals then decided that it was too dark, so they made the sun and put it on the path in which it still runs today.



Myth 3

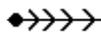
Long ago, before there were any people, the world was young and water covered everything. The earth was a great island floating above the seas, suspended by four rawhide ropes representing the four sacred directions. It hung down from the crystal sky. There were no people, but the animals lived in a home above the rainbow. Needing space, they sent Water Beetle to search for room under the seas. Water Beetle dove deep and brought up mud that spread quickly, turning into land that was flat and too soft and wet for the animals to live on.

Grandfather Buzzard was sent to see if the land had hardened. When he flew over the earth, he found the mud had become solid; he flapped in for a closer look. The wind from his wings created valleys and mountains, and that is why the Cherokee territory has so many mountains today.

As the earth stiffened, the animals came down from the rainbow. It was still dark. They needed light, so they pulled the sun out from behind the rainbow, but it was too bright and hot. A solution was urgently needed. The shamans were told to place the sun higher in the sky. A path was made for it to travel--from east to west--so that all inhabitants could share in the light.

The plants were placed upon the earth. The Creator told the plants and animals to stay awake for seven days and seven nights. Only a few animals managed to do so, including the owls and mountain lions, and they were rewarded with the power to see in the dark. Among the plants, only the cedars, spruces, and pines remained awake. The Creator told these plants that they would keep their hair during the winter, while the other plants would lose theirs.

People were created last. The women were able to have babies every seven days. They reproduced so quickly that the Creator feared the world would soon become too crowded. So after that the women could have only one child per year, and it has been that way ever since.

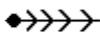


Chinook



Talapas (Creator) gave life to the surface of the Earth. It grew in abundance. Later, he placed the animal forms of all the Totem Spirits on the surface of the Earth Mother, and they prospered. Talapas then instructed T'soona (Thunderbird) to carry these special eggs from the other place, and place them on the top of Kaheese, a mountain near the Yakaitl-Wimakl (Columbia River). T'soona did so.

The Old Giantess, not wanting these special eggs to hatch, began to break the eggs. The vengeful Spirit Bird swiftly swooped down from Otelagh (the sun) and pursued the Old Giantess, and consumed her with fire, in revenge for her injustice. Soon the remaining eggs became the T'sinuk (Chinook).



Chippewa - Ojibwe

Myth 1

In the beginning before there were people, before there were animals a lone woman lived in a cave. She lived on the roots and berries of the plants. One night a magical dog crept into her cave and stretched out on the her bed beside her. As the night grew long the dog began to change. His body became smooth and almost hairless. His limbs grew long and straight. His features changed into those of a handsome warrior. Nine months later the woman birthed a child. He was the first Chippewa male and through him came the Chippewa peoples.

Myth 2

When the Earth was young it had a family. The moon, or Grandmother and the sun, called Grandfather. The Earth was a woman - Mother Earth - because from her came all living things. Mother Earth was given four directions - East, South, West, and North, each with physical and spiritual powers. When Mother Earth was young Creator, or Gichi-Manidoo as Ojibwe people call him, filled her with beauty. He sent singers in the form of birds and swimmers in the water. He placed plants, trees, insects, crawlers and four-legged animals on the land. Gichi-Manidoo then blew into four parts of Mother Earth using the sacred megis shell. From the union of these four and his breath, two-leggeds or man, was born. Thus, man was the last form of life to be put on Earth. From this original man came the Anishinaabe - or The Original People.



The Great Serpent and the Flood

From Maine and Nova Scotia to the Rocky Mountains, Indians told stories about the Great Serpent. More than a century ago the serpent was considered to be "a genuine spirit of evil." Some version of the story of the Great Flood of long ago, as recounted here, is told around the world.



Nanabozho (Nuna-bozo, accented on bozo) was the hero of many stories told by the Chippewa Indians. At one time they lived on the shores of Lake Superior, in what are now the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin and the province of Ontario.

One day when Nanabozho returned to his lodge after a long journey, he missed his young cousin who lived with him. He called the cousin's name but heard no answer. Looking around on the sand for tracks, Nanabozho was startled by the trail of the Great Serpent. He then knew that his cousin had been seized by his enemy.

Nanabozho picked up his bow and arrows and followed the track of the serpent. He passed the great river, climbed mountains, and crossed over valleys until he came to the shores of a deep and gloomy lake. It is now called Manitou Lake, Spirit Lake, and also the Lake of Devils. The trail of the Great Serpent led to the edge of the water.

Nanabozho could see, at the bottom of the lake, the house of the Great Serpent. It was filled with evil spirits, who were his servants and his companions. Their forms were monstrous and terrible. Most of them, like their master, resembled spirits. In the centre of this horrible group was the Great Serpent himself, coiling his terrifying length around the cousin of Nanabozho.

The head of the Serpent was red as blood. His fierce eyes glowed like fire. His entire body was armed with hard and glistening scales of every color and shade. Looking down on these twisting spirits of evil, Nanabozho made up his mind that he would get revenge on them for the death of his cousin.

He said to the clouds, "Disappear!" And the clouds went out of sight.

"Winds, be still at once!" And the winds became still.

When the air over the lake of evil spirits had become stagnant, Nanabozho said to the sun, "Shine over the lake with all the fierceness you can. Make the water boil."

In these ways, thought Nanabozho, he would force the Great Serpent to seek the cool shade of the trees growing on the shores of the lake. There he would seize the enemy and get revenge.

After giving his orders, Nanabozho took his bow and arrows and placed himself near the spot where he thought the serpents would come to enjoy the shade. Then he changed himself into the broken stump of a withered tree.

The winds became still, the air stagnant, and the sun shot hot rays from a cloudless sky. In time, the water of the lake became troubled, and bubbles rose to the surface. The rays of the sun had penetrated to the home of the serpents. As the water bubbled and foamed, a serpent lifted his head above the center of the lake and gazed around the shores. Soon another serpent came to the surface. Both listened for the footsteps of Nanabozho, but they heard him nowhere.

"Nanabozho is sleeping," they said to one another. And then they plunged beneath the waters, which seemed to hiss as they closed over the evil spirits.

Not long after, the lake became more troubled. Its water boiled from its very depths, and the hot waves dashed wildly against the rocks on its banks. Soon the Great Serpent came slowly to the surface of the water and moved toward the shore. His blood-red crest glowed. The reflection from his scales was blinding--as blinding as the glitter of a sleet-covered forest beneath the winter sun. He was followed by all the evil spirits. So great was their number that they soon covered the shores of the lake.

When they saw the broken stump of the withered tree, they suspected that it might be one of the disguises of Nanabozho. They knew his cunning. One of the serpents approached the stump, wound his tail around it, and tried to drag it down into the lake. Nanabozho could hardly keep from crying aloud, for the tail of the monster prickled his sides. But he stood firm and was silent.

The evil spirits moved on. The Great Serpent glided into the forest and wound his many coils around the trees. His companions also found shade--all but one. One remained near the shore to listen for the footsteps of Nanabozho.

From the stump, Nanabozho watched until all the serpents were asleep and the guard was intently looking in another direction. Then he silently drew an arrow

from his quiver, placed it in his bow, and aimed it at the heart of the Great Serpent. It reached its mark. With a howl that shook the mountains and startled the wild beasts in their caves, the monster awoke. Followed by its terrified companions, which also were howling with rage and terror, the Great Serpent plunged into the water.

At the bottom of the lake there still lay the body of Nanabozho's cousin. In their fury the serpents tore it into a thousand pieces. His shredded lungs rose to the surface and covered the lake with whiteness.

The Great Serpent soon knew that he would die from his wound, but he and his companions were determined to destroy Nanabozho. They caused the water of the lake to swell upward and to pound against the shore with the sound of many thunders. Madly the flood rolled over the land, over the tracks of Nanabozho, carrying with it rocks and trees. High on the crest of the highest wave floated the wounded Great Serpent. His eyes glared around him, and his hot breath mingled with the hot breath of his many companions.

Nanabozho, fleeing before the angry waters, thought of his Indian children. He ran through their villages, shouting, "Run to the mountaintops! The Great Serpent is angry and is flooding the earth! Run! Run!"

The Indians caught up their children and found safety on the mountains. Nanabozho continued his flight along the base of the western hills and then up a high mountain beyond Lake Superior, far to the north. There he found many men and animals that had escaped from the flood that was already covering the valleys and plains and even the highest hills. Still the waters continued to rise. Soon all the mountains were under the flood, except the high one on which stood Nanabozho.

There he gathered together timber and made a raft. Upon it the men and women and animals with him placed themselves. Almost immediately the mountaintop disappeared from their view, and they floated along on the face of the waters. For many days they floated. At long last, the flood began to subside. Soon the people on the raft saw the trees on the tops of the mountains. Then they saw the mountains and hills, then the plains and the valleys.

When the water disappeared from the land, the people who survived learned that the Great Serpent was dead and that his companions had returned to the bottom of the lake of spirits. There they remain to this day. For fear of Nanabozho, they have never dared to come forth again. END



Choctaw

At the beginning there was a great mound. It was called Nanih Wiya. It was from this mound that the Creator fashioned the first of the people. These people crawled through a long, dark cave into daylight. They became the first Choctaw.



Comanche

"One day the Great Spirit collected swirls of dust from the four directions in order to create the Comanche people. These people formed from the earth had the strength of mighty storms. Unfortunately, a shape-shifting demon was also created and began to torment the people. The Great Spirit cast the demon into a bottomless pit. To seek revenge the demon took refuge in the fangs and stingers of poisonous creatures and continues to harm people every chance it gets."



Creek

The Creek believe that the world was originally entirely underwater. The only land was a hill, called Nunne Chaha, and on the hill was a house, wherein lived Esaugetuh Emissie ("master of breath"). He created humanity from the clay on the hill.

Iroquois

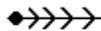
The Iroquois account of demiurge is that in the beginning there was no earth to live on, only a watery abyss, but up above, in the Great Blue, there was a community called the Sky World including a woman who dreamed dreams.

One night she dreamed about the tree that was the source of light. The dream frightened her, so she went and asked the men in the Sky World to pull up the tree. They dug around the trees roots to make space for more light, and the tree fell through the hole and disappeared. After that there was only darkness. Distraught, they pushed the woman through the hole as well. The woman would have been lost in the abyss had not a fish hawk come to her aid using his feathers to pillow her.

The fish hawk could not keep her up all on his own, so he asked for help to create some firm ground for the woman to rest upon. A helldiver went down to the bottom of the sea and brought back mud in his beak. He found a turtle, smeared the mud onto its back, and dove down again for more. Ducks also brought beaksful of the ocean floor and to spread over the turtle's shell.

The beavers helped build terrain, making the shell bigger. The birds and the animals built the continents until they had made the whole round earth, while the woman was safely sitting on the turtle's back. The turtle continues to hold the earth on its back.

After this, one of the Spirits of the Sky World came down and looked at the earth. As he traveled over it, he found it beautiful, and so he created people to live on it and gave them special skills; each tribe of the Iroquois nation was given special gifts to share with the rest of humanity.



Lakota Myth 1



The Lakota recount in their version of demiurge that the gods lived in the heavens and humans lived in an underworld without culture. Creation was initiated by Inktomi ("spider"), the trickster, who conspired to cause a rift in the heavens between the The Sun God Takushkanshan ("something that moves") and his wife, the Moon. Their separation marked the creation of time. Some of Inktomi's co-conspirators were exiled to the Earth where the gods of the four winds were scattered and created space.

To populate the Earth, Inktomi traveled to the underworld in the form of a wolf and met with humanity, telling them about a paradisaical world aboveground. Inktomi convinced a man named Tokahe ("the first") to travel to the surface for a brief visit. When Tokahe emerged through a cave (Wind Cave in the Black Hills), he found the world to be strikingly beautiful. Returning to the underworld, Tokahe persuaded other families to accompany him to the surface, but upon arrival they discovered that the Earth was full of hardship. Inktomi had by this time prevented humanity from returning below ground, so the families had no choice but to scatter and eke out their livelihoods.

End

LAKOTA

Myth 2

There was another world before this one. But the people of that world did not behave themselves. Displeased, the Creating Power set out to make a new world. He sang several songs to bring rain, which poured stronger with each song. As he sang the fourth song, the earth split apart and water gushed up through the many cracks, causing a flood. By the time the rain stopped, all of the people and nearly all of the animals had drowned. Only Kangi the crow survived.

Kangi pleaded with the Creating Power to make him a new place to rest. So the Creating Power decided the time had come to make his new world. From his huge pipe bag, which contained all types of animals and birds, the Creating Power selected four animals known for their ability to remain under water for a long time.

He sent each in turn to retrieve a lump of mud from beneath the floodwaters. First the loon dove deep into the dark waters, but it was unable to reach the bottom. The otter, even with its strong webbed feet, also failed. Next, the beaver used its large flat tail to propel itself deep under the water, but it too brought nothing back. Finally, the Creating Power took the turtle from his pipe bag and urged it to bring back some mud.

Turtle stayed under the water for so long that everyone was sure it had drowned. Then, with a splash, the turtle broke the water's surface! Mud filled its feet and claws and the cracks between its upper and lower shells. Singing, the Creating Power shaped the mud in his hands and spread it on the water, where it was just big enough for himself and the crow. He then shook two long eagle wing feathers over the mud until earth spread wide and varied, overcoming the waters. Feeling sadness for the dry land, the Creating Power cried tears that became oceans, streams, and lakes. He named the new land Turtle Continent in honor of the turtle who provided the mud from which it was formed.

The Creating Power then took many animals and birds from his great pipe bag and spread them across the Earth. From red, white, black, and yellow earth, he made men and women. The Creating Power gave the people his sacred pipe and told them to live by it. He warned them about the fate of the people who came before them. He promised all would be well if all living things learned to live in harmony. But the world would be destroyed again if they made it bad and ugly. END

Navajo Myth 1

The Navajo creation story involves three underworlds where important events happened to shape the Fourth World where we now live.

The Navajo creation story involves three underworlds where important events happened to shape the Fourth World where we now live.

The Navajo were given the name Niihookaa Diyan DinE by their creators. It means 'Holy Earth People' or 'Lords of the Earth'. Navajos today simply call themselves "DinE", meaning "The People". The Tewa Indians were the first to call them "Navahu", which means "the large area of cultivated land". The Mexicans knew them as 'Apaches Du Nabahu' (Apaches of the Cultivated Fields), where 'Apache' (Enemy) was picked up from the Zuni Indian language. The "Apaches Du Nabahu" were known as a special group somewhat distinct from the rest of the Apaches. Alonso de Benavides changed the name to "Navaho" in a book written in 1630. The name the DinE officially use for themselves is "Navajo".

According to the DinE, they emerged from three previous underworlds into this, the fourth, or "Glittering World", through a magic reed. The first people from the other three worlds were not like the people of today. They were animals, insects or masked spirits as depicted in Navajo ceremonies. First Man ('AltsE Hastiin), and First Woman ('AltsE 'Asdz), were two of the beings from the First or Black World. First Man was made in the east from the meeting of the white and black clouds. First Woman was made in the west from the joining of the yellow and blue clouds. Spider Woman (Na ashjeiii' Asdz), who taught Navajo women how to weave, was also from the first world.

Once in the Glittering World, the first thing the people did was build a sweat house and sing the Blessing Song. Then they met in the first house (hogan) made exactly as Talking God (Haashchieeltiii) had prescribed. In this hogan, the people began to arrange their world, naming the four sacred mountains surrounding the land and designating the four sacred stones that would become the boundaries of their homeland. In actuality, these mountains do not contain the symbolic sacred stones.

The San Francisco Peaks (Dookioiosllld), represents the Abalone and Coral stones. It is located just north of Flagstaff, and is the Navajo's religious western boundary. Mt. Blanco (Tsisnaasjini'), in Colorado, represents the White Shell stone, and

represents the Navajo's religious eastern boundary. Mt. Taylor (Tsoodzil) east of Grants, New Mexico, represents the Turquoise stone, and represents the Navajo's religious southern boundary. Mt. Hesperus (DibE Nitsaa), in Colorado, represents the Black Jet stone, and represents the Navajo's religious northern boundary.

After setting the mountains down where they should go, the Navajo deities, or "Holy People", put the sun and the moon into the sky and were in the process of carefully placing the stars in an orderly way. But the Coyote, known as the trickster, grew impatient from the long deliberations being held, and seized the corner of the blanket where it lay and flung the remaining stars into the sky.

The Holy People continued to make the necessities of life, like clouds, trees and rain. Everything was as it should be when the evil monsters appeared and began to kill the new Earth People. But a miracle happened to save them, by the birth of Ever Changing Woman (Asdzaa Nadleehe) at Gobernador Knob (Chiuolilil), New Mexico.

Changing Woman grew up around El Huerfano Mesa (Dzil Naioodilii), in northern New Mexico. She married the Sun and bore two son, twins, and heroes to the Navajo people. They were known as "Monster Slayer" and "Child-Born-of-Water". The twins traveled to their father the Sun who gave them weapons of lighting bolts to fight the dreaded monsters. Every place the Hero Twins killed a monster it turned to stone.

An example of this is the lave flows near Mt. Taylor in New Mexico, believed to be the blood from the death of Ye'itsoh, or the 'Monster who Sucked in People'. All of the angular rock formations on the reservation, such as the immense Black Mesa (Dzil Yijiin), are seen as the turned-to-stone bodies of the monsters.

With all of the monsters dead, the Navajo deities, or 'Holy People', turned their attention to the making of the four original clans. Kiiyaa aanii, or Tall House People, was the first clan. They were made of yellow and white corn. Eventually other clans traveled to the area round the San Juan River, bring their important contributions to the tribe. Some were Paiutes who brought their beautiful baskets. Others were Pueblos who shared their farming and weaving skills. Still others were Utes and Apaches.

For her husband, the 'Sun', to visit her every evening, Changing Woman went to live in the western sea on an island made of rock crystal. Her home was made of the four sacred stones: Abalone, White Shell, Turquoise, and Black Jet. During the day she became lonely and decided to make her own people. She made four clans

from the flakes of her skin. These were known as the Near Water People, Mud People, Salt Water People, and Bitter Water People. When these newly formed clans heard that there were humans to the east who shared their heritage, they wanted to go meet them.

Changing Woman gave her permission for them to travel from the western sea to the San Francisco Peaks. They then traveled through the Hopi mesas where they left porcupine, still commonly found there today. Then they traveled toward the Chuska Mountains and on to Mt. Taylor. Finally, the people arrived at Dinétah, the Diné traditional homeland, and joined the other clans already living there. Dinétah is located in the many canyons that drain the San Juan River about 30 miles east of Farmington, New Mexico.

Navajo - Myth 2

Holy Supreme Wind being created by the mists of lights arose through the darkness to animate and bring purpose to the myriad Holy People, supernatural and sacred in the different three lower worlds. All these things were spiritually created in the time before the earth existed and the physical aspect of man did not exist yet, but the spiritual did.

In the first world the insect people started fighting with one another and were instructed by the Holy People to depart.

They journeyed to the second world and lived for a time in peace. Eventually they fought with each other and were instructed to depart.

In the third world the same thing happens again as they are forced to journey to the fourth world.

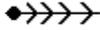
In the fourth world, they found the Hopi living there and succeeded in not fighting with one another or their neighbors, and their bodies were transformed from the insect forms to human forms.

First man and First woman physically appear in the narrative here by being formed from ears of white and yellow corn, but they were also created back in the beginning. There is a separation of male and female humans because each did not appreciate the contributions of the other, and this laid the ground work for the appearance of the Monsters that would start to kill off the people in the next world.

Coyote, the trickster, also appears and steals the baby of water monster, who brings a great flood in the third world which primarily forces the humans as well as Holy People to journey to the surface of the fifth world through a hollow reed. Some things are left behind and some things are brought to help the people re-create the world each time they entered a new one. Death and the Monsters are born into this world as is Changing Woman who gives birth to the Hero Twins, called "Monster Slayer" and "Child of the Waters" who had many adventures in which they helped to rid the world of much evil.

Earth Surface People, mortals, were created in the fourth world, and the gods gave them ceremonies, which are still practiced today.

END



Potawatomi

Anishnabe found himself alone on earth. The Creator told him to give everything a name, and he did this, accompanied by a wolf. He discovered that only he, among the many species, was alone, without a mate, and he was lonely.



He traveled to the Great Lakes and while searching, heard a beautiful song coming across the water. The woman's voice was singing that she was making a home for him. He fell in love with the voice and the song. In the days that followed, he learned how to cross the water and finally came to a lodge facing west. There lived a beautiful woman and her father, the Firekeeper.

This was the first union - Anishabe and the Firekeeper's Daughter. It determined the roles of men and women in marriage. They had four sons, who when they were grown traveled to the four directions of the earth. The son who traveled north had a hard journey, but learned that the melting snow cleansed Mother Earth. Because of the snow, the color for North is white. This son married the daughter of the Spirit of the North and was given sweet grass, the first gift of Mother Earth. It is kept in a braid like a mother's hair.

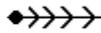
The second son traveled east, into the yellow of the rising sun. He learned that fire is the essence of life and gained in knowledge of the Creator. He married the daughter of the Spirit of the East, and was given tobacco to use in prayer, to communicate with the Creator.

The third son went south, which is the woman's direction from which comes seeds and other things that give life. Red, the color of life's blood, is the color for south. He married the Spirit of the South's daughter and was given the gift of cedar, which is used to cleanse and purify the home and prepare for food.

The fourth son went West, toward the mountains. Marrying the Spirit of the West's daughter, he was given sage and learned that the setting sun represents the circle of

life and its cycle. The color for West is black, for the dark time, and the sage, a strong purifier, is to keep illness away.

Smoke from the cedar and sage is fanned upward with an eagle feather because the eagle once saved the Indian people when the Creator would have destroyed them. The eagle told the Creator there were faithful people on earth, and was sent out each morning to see if the smoke still rose from the lodges of those good people. Fanning the smoke with the eagle feather symbolizes the eagle delivering the message to the Creator that his people are still there and still believe.



Seminole Indians

Myth 1

The Seminole recount that when the Creator, the Grandfather of all things, created the earth, he made all animals and birds and put them in a large shell. When the earth was ready, he set the shell along the backbone (mountains) of the earth. "When the timing is right," he told the animals, "the shell will open and you will all crawl out. Someone or something will crack the shell and you must all take your respective places on the face the earth." The Creator then sealed up the shell and left, hoping the Panther (his favorite animal) would be first to emerge.

Time passed, and nothing happened. Alongside the shell stood a great tree. As time passed, the tree grew so large that its roots started encircling the shell. Eventually a root cracked the shell. The Wind started enlarged the crack and reached down to help the Panther take its place on earth. Next to crawl out was the Bird. The Bird had picked and picked around the hole, and, when the time was right, stepped outside the shell. Bird took flight immediately. After that, other animals emerged in different sequences: Bear, Deer, Snake, Frog, Otter. There were thousands of others, so many that no one besides the Creator could even begin to count them all. All went out to seek their proper places on earth.

Seminole Indians

Myth 2

Near the beginning of time, five Seminole Indian men wanted to visit the sky to see the Great Spirit. They traveled to the East, walking for about a month. Finally, they arrived at land's end. They tossed their baggage over the end and they, too, disappeared beyond earth's edge.

Down, down, down the Indians dropped for a while, before starting upward again toward the sky. For a long time they traveled westward. At last, they came to a lodge where lived an old, old woman.

"Tell me, for whom are you looking?" she asked feebly.

"We are on our way to see the Great Spirit above," they replied.

"It is not possible to see him now," she said. "You must stay here for a while first."

That night the five Seminole Indian men strolled a little distance from the old woman's lodge, where they encountered a group of angels robed in white and wearing wings. They were playing a ball game the men recognized as one played by the Seminoles. Two of the men decided they would like to remain and become angels. The other three preferred to return to earth. Then to their surprise, the Great Spirit appeared and said, "So be it!"

A large cooking pot was placed on the fire. When the water was boiling, the two Seminoles who wished to stay were cooked! When only their bones were left, the Great Spirit removed them from the pot, and put their bones back together again. He then draped them with a white cloth and touched them with his magic wand. The Great Spirit brought the two Seminole men back to life! They wore beautiful white wings and were called men-angels.

"What do you three men wish to do?" asked the Great Spirit.

"If we may, we prefer to return to our Seminole camp on earth," replied the three Seminoles.

"Gather your baggage together and go to sleep at once," directed the Great Spirit.

Later, when the three Seminole men opened their eyes, they found themselves safe at home again in their own Indian camp.

"We are happy to return and stay earthbound. We hope never to venture skyward again in search of other mysteries," they reported to the Chief of the Seminoles.

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