

Southcentral Alaska legends compared with Western fairy tales.

Objective: Students will be able to write a short, hybrid story/legend combining elements from already-familiar stories (e.g. fairy tales) and Alaska Native legend. Students should be able to identify the characters and values in their story and how they relate to other stories.

Essential Question: How do stories help reflect peoples’ values?

Application of Alaska State Cultural Standards for Curriculum

A1: ...recognizes that all knowledge is imbedded in a larger system of cultural beliefs, values and practices, each with its own integrity and interconnectedness – Students recognize the values represented in their own stories and the stories of others.

A2: ...insures that students acquire not only the surface knowledge of their culture, but are also well grounded in the deeper aspects of the associated beliefs and practices – Students recognize the morals represented in their own stories and the stories of others.

C6: ...makes appropriate use of modern tools and technology to help document and transmit traditional cultural knowledge – Websites were used to give students visual and auditory information on traditional stories.

D1: draws parallels between knowledge derived from oral tradition and that derived from books – students will be comparing oral stories and written stories.

(Background Knowledge) Talk about fairy tales/myths/legends/folklore students already know: note the characters involved, their traits, and the values that are presented in each story. Students may be familiar with non-Western tales as well*. Include sufficient wait time.

e.g.

Story	Characters	Traits
Cinderella	Cinderella	Good, hardworking
	Step Sisters	Cruel, lazy
	Step Mother	Cruel, unfair
Values: Karma (good things to good people, bad things to bad), and trickery is unrewarded.		
Hansel and Grettle	Hansel and Grettle	Curious, disobedient
	Witch	Opportunistic
Values: Listen to your parents/elders, don’t trust strangers		
Boy who cried wolf	Boy	Mischievous
	Townfolk	Trusting, sensible, betrayed
Values: People remember one’s reputation and act accordingly.		

(New Information) Read the Alutiiq legend: The Woman Who Became A Bear

Follow the link below:

<http://www.afognak.org/files/Archived/Selected%20Stories/BearWoman.pdf>

or Listen to a Dena'ina story: Otter and Wolf or Sunshine Man.

Otter and Wolf from the Anchorage Museum.

<http://denaina.anchagemuseum.org/multimedia/denaina/otter-and-wolf.html>

Sunshine Man from the Anchorage museum.

<http://denaina.anchagemuseum.org/multimedia/denaina/sunshine-man.html>

Note the characters, traits, and values in the story.

e.g.

Story	Characters	Traits
Woman Who Became a Bear	Husband	Dishonest, untrustworthy
	Wife	Honest, trusting, vengeful
Values: Be truthful, Reciprocity (husband gets food, wife does housework), Retribution for extreme emotions/anger, Interrelationship between nature and humans		
Otter and Wolf	Otter	Helpful, generous
	Wolf	Mocking/Teasing
Values: Respect others, be helpful to others in their time of need, be generous		
Sunshine Man	Hunters	Willing to listen
	Sunshine Man	Helpful
Values: act appropriately in nature, obey mysterious spirits		

* If a student/the students are already familiar with Alaska Native stories, but are missing the Western stories, those could be introduced and discussed instead.

(Creation) Students write their own story/legend incorporating elements from an Alaska Native story and an already-familiar story of their choice. Incorporated elements could be characters, traits, and/or values. Students write a paragraph about their own hybrid story explaining where the characters, traits, and values originate.

It may help students prepare to write a draft if they plan out the characters, traits, and values that they want to represent in their story.

Characters	Traits
Values:	

There are options available to take this writing one step further: Students can illustrate their own stories as well and share it with younger students; stories could be compiled into a book, the students can act out their story in a play, etc.