

Oral Reading Test

- ▶ A long time ago, people did not have any stories to share. Thus, there were no storytellers to help occupy people's minds during the long nights of winter, when the only sounds were the howling winds outside.

A young man named Crow lived on his own at the edge of a village. He did not have family to care for him, so he hunted in the woods for food, trading with other villagers for corn and other necessities for sustenance. As winter loomed, Crow was compelled to go farther into the woods to hunt for food.

One day he came to a clearing in the depths of the ancient forest and saw a large stone with a smooth, flat top. Exhausted from his journey, Crow sat down on the stone. Suddenly, he was startled by a rumbling voice that said, "I will tell you a story." Crow looked around, soon realizing that the voice was coming from the stone, which Crow noticed had almost a human face.

"What is a story?" asked the young man, incredulously.

"Stories describe all of the things that have happened before now," answered the stone, "and if you give me a gift, I will tell you how the world came to be."

Crow presented the stone with some birds he had caught, and the stone recounted magnificent stories until dusk, when the stone said, "Now I must rest. Come back tomorrow with more gifts, and you will be rewarded with more stories."

The next day, Crow brought gifts to the stone in exchange for its stories. After several days, the stone was depleted of all it knew. The stone commanded Crow that he must now be the storyteller, exchanging his knowledge for food, shelter, and other provisions. Some would remember the stories better than others, but the knowledge would never be lost again, passed down from generation to generation.