BRIDGES EDITION

GENRE readers' & writers' WORKSHOP™

Pourquoi Tales



How Rabbit Lost His Tail

How Chipmunk Got Its Stripes

Why Hummingbirds Drink Nectar





retold by Cynthia Swain

Benchmark EDUCATION

Genre: Pourquoi Tales
Level: K/20*

GENRE readers' & writers' WORKSHOP™

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LITERARY ANALYSIS
- Respond to and interpret text
- Make text-to-text connections
- Analyze the genre

READING SKILLS
Comprehension
- Analyze character

Word Study
- Antonyms

Tier Two Vocabulary (see Glossary)

WRITING SKILLS
Writer's Tools
- Metaphor

Writer's Craft
- How to write a pourquoi tale

THEME CONNECTIONS
- Native Americans

*The reading level assigned to this text is based on the genre examples only. "Focus on the Genre," "Reread," and "Writer's Craft" features were not leveled. These sections are intended for read-aloud or shared reading.

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The Readers' & Writers' Genre Workshop series includes eleven fiction and nonfiction genres. There are two titles with multiple stories for each genre.

How to use this book

1. Learn about the genre by reading pages 2–3. Get background information about the stories on pages 4–5.
2. Read the pourquoi tales for enjoyment.
3. Reread the stories and answer the questions on pages 11, 15, and 21.
4. Reread the last story. Pay attention to the comments in the margins. See how an author writes a pourquoi tale.
5. Follow the steps on pages 22–23 to write your own pourquoi tale.
6. Complete the activity on the inside back cover. Answer the follow-up questions.

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How Rabbit Lost His Tail



How Chipmunk Got Its Stripes



Why Hummingbirds Drink Nectar

Three Native American Pourquoi Tales

retold by Cynthia Swain
illustrated by Liz Conrad and Jackie Urbanovic

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POURQUOI TALES

What is a pourquoi tale?

A pourquoi tale is a short story that explains why something in the natural world is the way it is. Usually the characters in a pourquoi tale are animals. Sometimes the characters are other objects in nature, such as the sun, the sky, or the sea.

What is the purpose of a pourquoi tale?

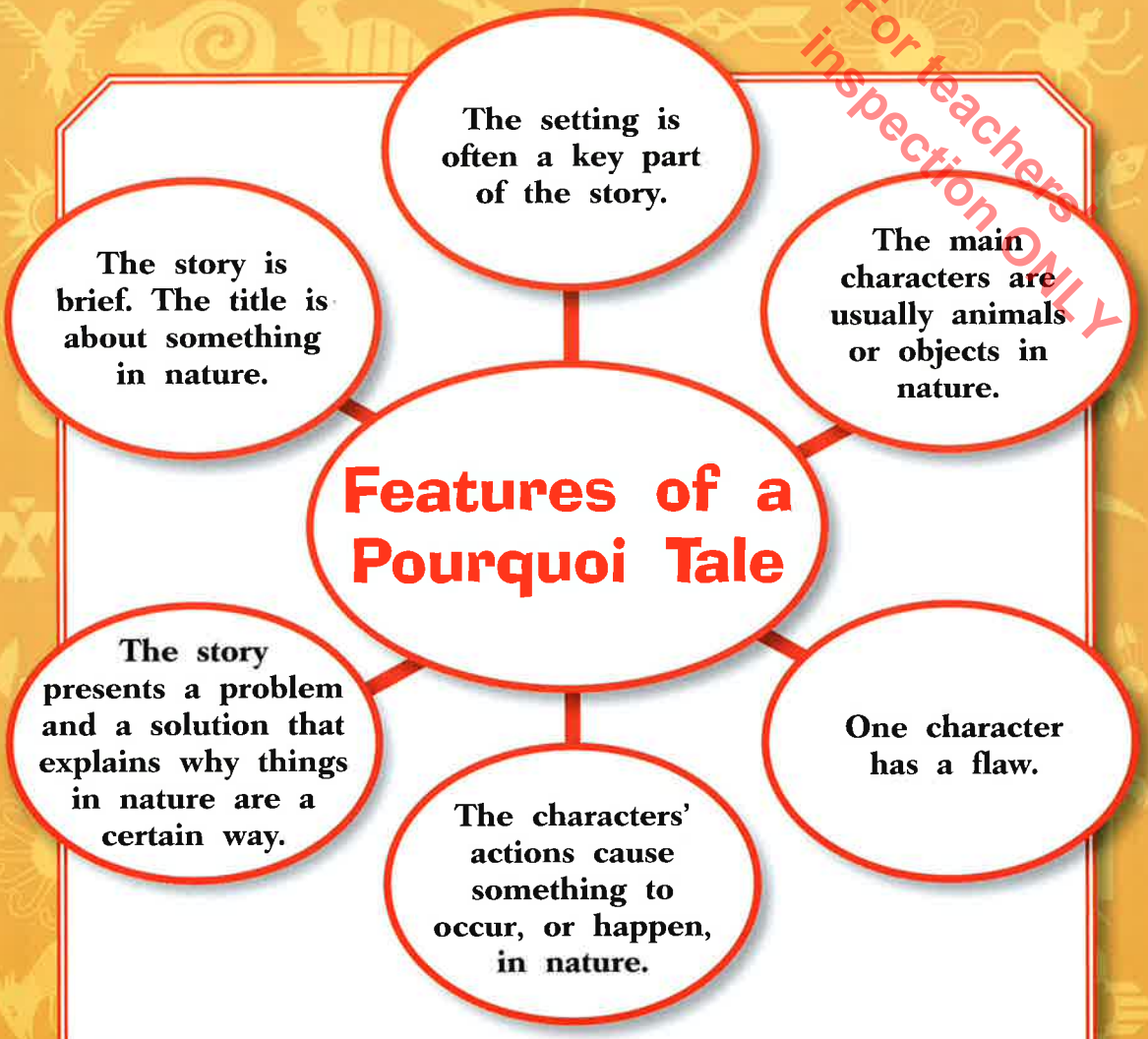
Pourquoi tales are explanations of why and how things happen in nature. Pourquoi tales allow us to think about what caused the curious things we see in the world. Pourquoi tales often point out character flaws, or foibles, that people have, such as being boastful, proud, or impatient. In addition, these tales entertain us.

How do you read a pourquoi tale?

When you read a pourquoi tale, pay attention to the title. The title will help you know what question the story answers. Pay attention to the actions of the main characters as well. These actions will cause some type of change in nature. Think about how the events in the tale explain why something is the way it is.



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Who invented pourquoi tales?

People have told pourquoi tales for tens of thousands of years. Many ancient cultures, including the Greeks, Chinese, and Egyptians, used these types of stories to explain nature and the universe. Many Native American, African, and Asian storytellers also used these tales to answer questions about the world, such as:

- Why do certain animals look and act the way they do?
- How did Earth, the sun, and the moon come to be?
- Why do the seasons change?

Today, some authors still use this genre to explain events in nature in a fun and imaginative way.

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Learn About NATIVE AMERICAN STORYTELLERS

Background: Prior to 1492, North America was populated exclusively by groups of Native Americans. These first peoples lived closely with nature. Part of their tradition was oral storytelling. Native peoples in North America today still tell their traditional tales explaining the natural world.

"How Rabbit Lost His Tail" was told by the Sioux people. The Sioux homeland covered parts of modern-day Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Sioux women built and owned their family's homes, and cooked and cared for the children. The men were responsible for finding food and defending their families.

"How Chipmunk Got Its Stripes" comes from the Seneca people, who first lived in what is now New York. Long ago, Seneca men hunted, traded, and went to war, while the women farmed and took care of the family and their property.

"Why Hummingbirds Drink Nectar" is a story from the Hitchiti people. The first Hitchiti tribes lived in west Georgia. In the 1700s, the Hitchiti joined other tribes from Georgia and Florida to form the Seminole Nation. The women farmed, cooked, and took care of the children, while the men hunted and went to war to protect their families.



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The Seneca people lived in longhouses.



Many Seminole people lived in chickees.



The Sioux people lived in tepees.

Tools Writers Use

Metaphor

A **metaphor** (MEH-tuh-for) compares two things that are alike in one way. Metaphors directly describe something by using the word **is** or **was** rather than **like** or **as**. Writers use metaphors to help readers create pictures in their minds. Notice how the author of these tales uses this type of comparison to describe what something looks, feels, tastes, smells, sounds, or acts like. Authors also use metaphors to show how characters or objects resemble, or represent, something else.

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How Rabbit Lost His Tail



Rabbit was handsome. He thought he was the best-looking animal in the forest. He walked around like a king. He showed off his thick, white fur. Rabbit was not **humble**. He was proud. His long, bushy tail made everyone jealous.

"Brrr," said Deer. She was cold. "I wish I had a warm tail like Rabbit. I would wrap it around myself. I would keep warm."