

Grandmother Spider: A Cherokee Tale

When the Earth was first made, there was only blackness, and nobody could see anything. People said: "What this world needs is light." (paragraph 1)

"I have heard there is something called the Sun," said the Bear. "It is kept on the other side of the world, but the people there will not share it. Perhaps we can steal a piece of it." All the animals agreed that it was a good idea. But who would be the one to steal the Sun? (paragraph 2)

The fox was the first to try. He sneaked to the place where the Sun was kept. He waited until no one was looking. Then he grabbed a piece of it in his mouth and ran. But the Sun was so hot it burned his mouth and he dropped it. To this day all foxes have black mouths because that first fox burned his carrying the Sun. (paragraph 3)

The possum tried next. "I have a beautiful, bushy tail," he boasted. "I can hide the light inside all that fur." Possum set out for the other side of the world. There he found the sun hanging in a tree and lighting everything up. He sneaked over to the sun, picked out a tiny piece of light, and stuffed it into his tail. But the light was hot and burned all the fur off. Ever since, Possum's tail has been bald. (paragraph 4)

"I'll try," said Buzzard. "I know better than to hide a piece of stolen light in my tail. I'll place it on my head." He flew off and swooped straight into the sun, seizing it with his claws. He then placed it on his head, where it proceeded to burn all his head feathers off. And ever since that time Buzzard's head has remained bald. (paragraph 5)

Grandmother Spider said, "Let me try!" First, she made a thick-walled clay pot. Next, she spun a web reaching to the other side of the web. Because she was so small, nobody noticed her coming. Quickly Grandmother Spider scooped up the sun in her pot and scrambled back home along one of the strong strands of her web. Now her side of the world had light, and everyone rejoiced. (paragraph 6)

Grandmother Spider brought not only the sun to the Cherokee, but fire as well. And, she taught the Cherokee people the art of pottery making. (paragraph 7)

Answer these questions about the text:

1. Why did the author write this story? Tick ONE.

- a. To entertain us.
- b. To persuade us that the buzzard was the nicest animal in the story.
- c. To teach us why only half of the world has sunlight.

2. What problem caused the animals to decide that they needed sunlight on their side of the world?

- a. They were tired of not being able to see in the dark.
- b. They were tired of always being cold and wanted the sunlight for warmth.
- c. They were tired of the other animals bumping into each other because they couldn't see in the dark.

3. **He sneaked to the place where the Sun was kept.** (paragraph 3)

Which word is closest in meaning to "sneaked"? Tick one.

took <input type="checkbox"/>	crept <input type="checkbox"/>	marched <input type="checkbox"/>	ran <input type="checkbox"/>
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4. a) What happened when Buzzard tried to steal the sun?

b) How is this similar to what happened to Possum?

5. Write the name of the character that matches these events from the story.

- a. Burnt the feathers on his head and is now bald. _____
- b. Hid the sun in its tail. _____
- c. Suggested the animals steal a piece of the sun. _____
- d. Made a clay bowl to carry the sun in. _____

6. What character trait do the Fox, Possum and Spider all have? Tick ONE.

a.	All three are scared and don't want to help the other animals.	
b.	All three are brave and put themselves in danger to help the other animals.	
c.	All three are brave but don't want to help the other animals.	
d.	All three are brave and have trouble helping the other animals.	

7. Explain in your own words how Grandmother Spider was able to take the sun without anyone noticing.

8. What does the story say happens now because Grandmother Spider was able to bring sunlight to the dark side of the world? Tick ONE.

- a. Spiders have shiny bodies that sparkle like the sun.
- b. Spiders have eight legs that look like the rays of the sun.
- c. Spiders weave the shape of the sun at the center of their webs.

Grandmother Spider (Cut-up version)

<p>When the Earth was first made, there was only blackness, and nobody could see anything. People said: "What this world needs is light."</p>	<p>Possum set out for the other side of the world. There he found the sun hanging in a tree and lighting everything up. He sneaked over to the sun, picked out a tiny piece of light, and stuffed it into his tail. But the light was hot and burned all the fur off. Ever since, Possum's tail has been bald.</p>
<p>"I have heard there is something called the Sun," said the Bear. "It is kept on the other side of the world, but the people there will not share it. Perhaps we can steal a piece of it."</p>	<p>"I'll try," said Buzzard. "I'll put in on my head." He flew off and, diving straight into the sun, seized the light with his claws and put it on his head. It burned his head feathers off. And ever since that time Buzzard's head has remained bald.</p>
<p>All the animals agreed that it was a good idea. But who would be the one to steal the Sun?</p>	<p>Grandmother Spider said, "Let me try!" First, she made a clay pot. Next, she spun a web reaching to the other side of the web. She was so small that nobody noticed her coming.</p>
<p>The fox was the first to try. He sneaked to the place where the Sun was kept. He waited until no one was looking. Then he grabbed a piece of it in his mouth and ran. But the Sun was so hot it burned his mouth and he dropped it. To this day all foxes have black mouths because that first fox burned his carrying the Sun.</p>	<p>Quickly Grandmother Spider scooped up the sun in her pot and scrambled back home along her web. Now her side of the world had light, and everyone rejoiced.</p>
<p>The possum tried next. "I have a bushy tail," he said. "I can hide the light inside all that fur."</p>	<p>Grandmother Spider brought not only the sun to the Cherokee, but fire as well. And, she taught the Cherokee people the art of pottery making.</p>