HOW THE MILKY WAY
GOT INTO THE SKY

The Indian Reading Series

Level III Book 11
THE INDIAN READING SERIES: Stories and Legends of the Northwest is a collection of authentic material cooperatively developed by Indian people from twelve reservations. Development activities are guided by a Policy Board which represents the Indian community of the Pacific Northwest. The Pacific Northwest Indian Reading and Language Development Program Policy Board members are:

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How the Milky Way Got into the Sky
Level III Book 11

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A long time before our grandfathers were born, all the animals of the forest and prairie and all the birds of the air held a big council meeting.
They built a big fire and made the flames go as high as the trees. All the animals seated themselves in a circle around the fire. They started talking about who could make the greatest speed when traveling.
Puffing on his long pipe, Fox stood up and said,
    “I can run soswiftly that every bush and wildflower
    bow down as I pass.
They think I am their ruler, the wind.
I can travel so fast that the wind goes to rest
    in his lodge behind the heavens.”
After puffing on his pipe, Eagle stood up to speak. “I can travel swiftly too. I can go so fast that I keep the wind under my wings as I beat a pathway across the sky. He cannot escape me. I am the wind.” Soon all the animals and birds began to talk at once. They talked loudly. The air was shaking with their voices. No one heard what the others were saying.
Finally, the big fire began to die.
Everyone was worn out from talking too much.
But Wild Horse and Buffalo began the argument all over again.
"My hooves are the greatest and can make the grass blades tremble," said Buffalo.
"My hooves are even faster," said Wild Horse. "When I run, my mane is more beautiful than yours. It waves like prairie grass in the wind."

"When I run," said Buffalo, "I travel so fast no one can see my mane in the wind."
Chief Bear said, "The two of you shall run a race."
The race took place the next night,
    when all the world was asleep.
The moon shone brightly to make light.
Every tree was excited.
All the birds of the air stood about to witness the race,
    and they were excited.
The race was on!
At first, Buffalo took the lead.
He lowered his head and made snorting noises
like a thousand bullfrogs.
He blinded Wild Horse with his dust.
By midnight, Wild Horse was gaining on Buffalo. The little horse galloped closer and closer. His pretty mane and tail looked like wings. All the animals and birds cheered them on. They said they would cheer whoever won. The racers were neck and neck as the dust rose higher and higher.
At last Wild Horse was ahead of Buffalo.  
The finish line was just ahead.  
With his last breath, Wild Horse leaped over the finish line and won the race!
The smoke-like dust the racers stirred up went into the sky and remained there. Today the people call it the Milky Way.
Booklets available in the Level III sequence are listed below. Numbers refer to the planned sequence of use in the Teacher's Manual. Materials developed by these tribes and others in the Northwest are included in the Levels I and II sequences.

1 Story of the Seasons
   The Confederated Tribes of the
   Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon

2 The Beginning of the Earth
   The Confederated Tribes of the
   Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon

3 The Blacktail Dance
   Blackfeet Tribe

4 How Marten Got His Spots
   Kootenai Cultural Committee of
   The Confederated Salish and
   Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead
   Reservation

5 Lost in the Fog
   Jamestown-C illusion

6 How to Be a Friend
   The Confederated Tribes of the
   Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon

7 How the Morning and Evening Stars
   Came to Be
   Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the
   Fort Peck Reservation

8 Raccoon's Black Eyes and Ringed Tail
   Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the
   Fort Hall Reservation

9 Coyote and Old Lady
   Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the
   Fort Hall Reservation

10 Coyote and Trout
    Kootenai Cultural Committee of
    The Confederated Salish and
    Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead
    Reservation

11 How the Milky Way Got into the Sky
    The Confederated Tribes of the
    Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon

12 Inkdomi and the Buffalo
    Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the
    Fort Peck Reservation

13 Medicine Horse
    Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the
    Fort Hall Reservation

14 The Good Hunter and Fisherman
    Jamestown-C illusion

15 The Wild Buffalo Ride
    Blackfeet Tribe

16 I Am a Rock
    Crow Tribal Historical and Cultural
    Commission

17 The Man Who Loved Shell Money
    Skokomish Tribe

18 Old Man Nap
    Blackfeet Tribe

19 The Turtle Who Went to War
    Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the
    Fort Peck Reservation

20 Coyote and the Mean Mountain Sheep
    Salish Cultural Committee of
    The Confederated Salish and
    Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead
    Reservation

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