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The Coyote and the Bear: A Pueblo Tale





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Group 3: Coyote had to remain on the ice until a warm spell brought a quick thaw that set him free.

All: As Coyote sat on the ice, he vowed that he would never, ever take Bear's advice again. Do you believe him this time?



The Coyote and the Bear:



- Group 1:** In much of the Native American folklore, animals have distinct personalities.
- Group 2:** In Pueblo lore, the bear is considered to be one of the wisest animals.
- Group 3:** In Pueblo tales, the coyote is considered to be gullible. He is also seen as being good-spirited and optimistic.
- Group 4:** Fooled by other animals again and again, he never seems to learn his lesson.

Group 5: The other animals enjoy making a fool out of the coyote.

Group 6: This is a story of how the coyote believed the bear yet again.

All: We now begin our tale, *The Coyote and the Bear*.

Group 1: Once upon a time Bear and Coyote happened to meet each other on a beautiful mesa in the picturesque Southwest.

Group 2: After a pleasant conversation, Bear and Coyote were both admiring the land where they happened to meet.

Group 3: “I have an idea,” exclaimed Bear, “– a wonderful idea! This is such fine land. Why don’t we farm it together? We can share the work and share the crops!”

Group 4: He sat and sat. Finally, Coyote felt a nibble on his tail and told Bear. “I think I’ve caught a fish! Should I pull my tail out now?”

Group 5: “No!” shouted Bear. “You’ll lose your catch. You have to wait until the fish has a firm hold. You must wait longer. Do as I tell you!”

Group 6: Once again, Coyote did as he was told. Finally, Bear shouted, “Pull!”

Group 1: Coyote pulled with all his strength, but his tail was frozen solid. He could not get it out of the ice.

Group 2: Coyote was weak from hunger and from the cold. He was puzzled as he watched Bear roar with laughter and walked away from him.



Group 2: “All right,” Bear finally said, “I will help you.” Coyote was so grateful. He listened to Bear’s every word, and watched his every move.

Group 3: Bear made a hole in the ice and directed Coyote to sit down and to put his tail through the hole into the freezing water. Coyote did as he was told.

Group 4: Without hesitation, Coyote announced that Bear did indeed have a great idea!

Group 5: The animals discussed what they might plant. They finally decided that they would plant a crop of potatoes.

Group 6: Bear had an idea of how they could share what they grew. He would take all that grew below the ground, and Coyote could have all that grew above it.



Group 1: Coyote agreed to this plan. When it was time, he and Bear plowed the rich soil of the mesa. Then they planted their crop of potatoes.

Group 2: During the entire summer, the two friends worked—tending, weeding, and watering their growing crop.

Group 3: When it was time for the harvest, Coyote cut down all that was above the ground. But he was not happy! Neither he nor his family could eat the greens. He did not have one single potato!

Group 4: When Coyote saw the potatoes that Bear had harvested, he was very angry! Coyote complained to Bear, but Bear reminded Coyote that they had made a bargain. Still, Coyote felt unhappy and cheated.

Group 3: You see, that winter Coyote was out foraging for food along the frozen Rio Grande River. He spied Bear sitting on the ice eating a plump fish.

Group 4: Coyote was very hungry. The fish looked so delicious! Without thinking, Coyote approached Bear and asked him how he had caught such a fine fish.

Group 5: “Simple, simple!” said Bear. “You could catch some too! I simply broke a hole in the ice. There are so many fish,” bragged Bear, “that they are easy to catch!”

Group 6: Coyote continued to watch Bear devour his catch. The fish smelled so delicious, and looked delicious, too!

Group 1: Coyote couldn’t resist. He pleaded with Bear to help him.

All: When Coyote fumed and fussed and complained, Bear reminded Coyote that they had made a bargain, and that Coyote must stick to it.

Group 1: Coyote was so upset! But what could he do? He vowed that he would never, ever, be fooled by Bear again!

Group 2: Yet, during the winter that followed, Coyote again took Bear's advice.



Group 5: Early next spring, Bear saw Coyote and suggested that they plant a crop on the same land.

Group 6: “I know that you were not happy with your share of the crop last fall,” said Bear. “So this year, I will harvest what grows above the ground, and you can harvest all that grows below it. But this year,” added Bear, “let’s plant corn.”

Group 1: Coyote thought quickly. I'll get everything that grows below the ground so next fall I will be the one with many full baskets, and Bear will have only greens!

Group 2: "Fine!" said Coyote, "I agree!"

Group 3: The two animals worked together, plowed the field, and planted their crop of corn. During the entire summer, Coyote and Bear shared the work—tending, weeding, and watering their growing crop.

Group 4: When it was time for the harvest, Coyote watched once again as Bear filled more baskets than he could carry. Each one was filled to the brim with ears of sweet smelling, golden corn.

Group 5: When Coyote dug up his share of the crop, which he had nurtured during the entire growing season, he found only fine roots, which were good for nothing!

Group 6: Coyote was furious! Once again Bear had tricked him. He had shared the work during the entire planting season, and once again he went home with nothing to show for his effort.

