

For Creative Minds

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Cherokee Then and Now

This story is a legend of the Cherokee people. Historically, the Cherokee lived in the mountains of southeastern North America. The Cherokee and their ancestors lived there for thousands of years! The Cherokee were once the largest nation of Native Americans.

Many stories have been passed down, from generation to generation. The storytellers made these tales come to life. They were dancers, actors, and singers. Some stories were a sacred part of the Cherokee religion. Other stories taught how to live or explained about the world.

The Cherokee culture is very much alive today! For modern Cherokees, like in most cultures, children learn the stories, history, religion, and language of their people from their parents, grandparents, and other adults. Storytelling is still an important part of the Cherokee culture. Cherokee children hear many of the same stories that other children listened to hundreds of years ago.

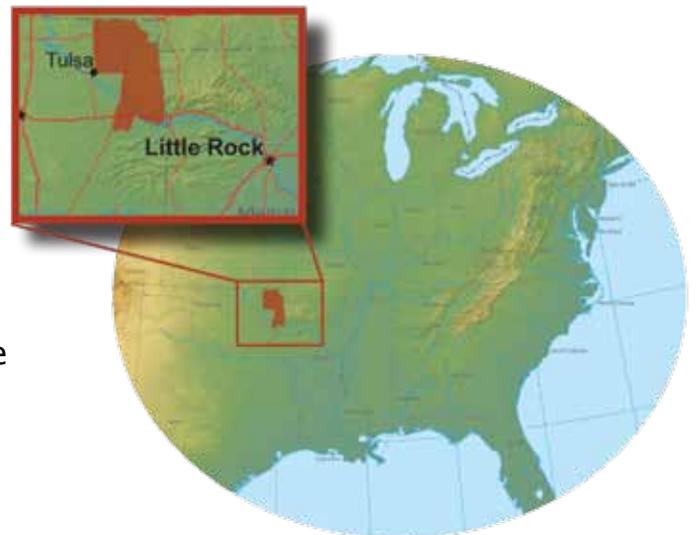


Cherokee Territory



The map above shows the original lands of the Cherokee civilization. In the 1830s, the United States government forced the Cherokee out of their homes. The Cherokee were removed to Oklahoma. More than 4,000 died during this forced removal. This journey is called the Trail of Tears.

There are currently three Cherokee tribes recognized by the US government: the Cherokee Nation, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma. The Cherokee Nation is the largest of these three. The map to the right shows the **jurisdictional boundary** of the Cherokee Nation. "Jurisdictional boundary" means that this region is under the laws and government of the Cherokee Nation.



Cherokee Nation

Fire

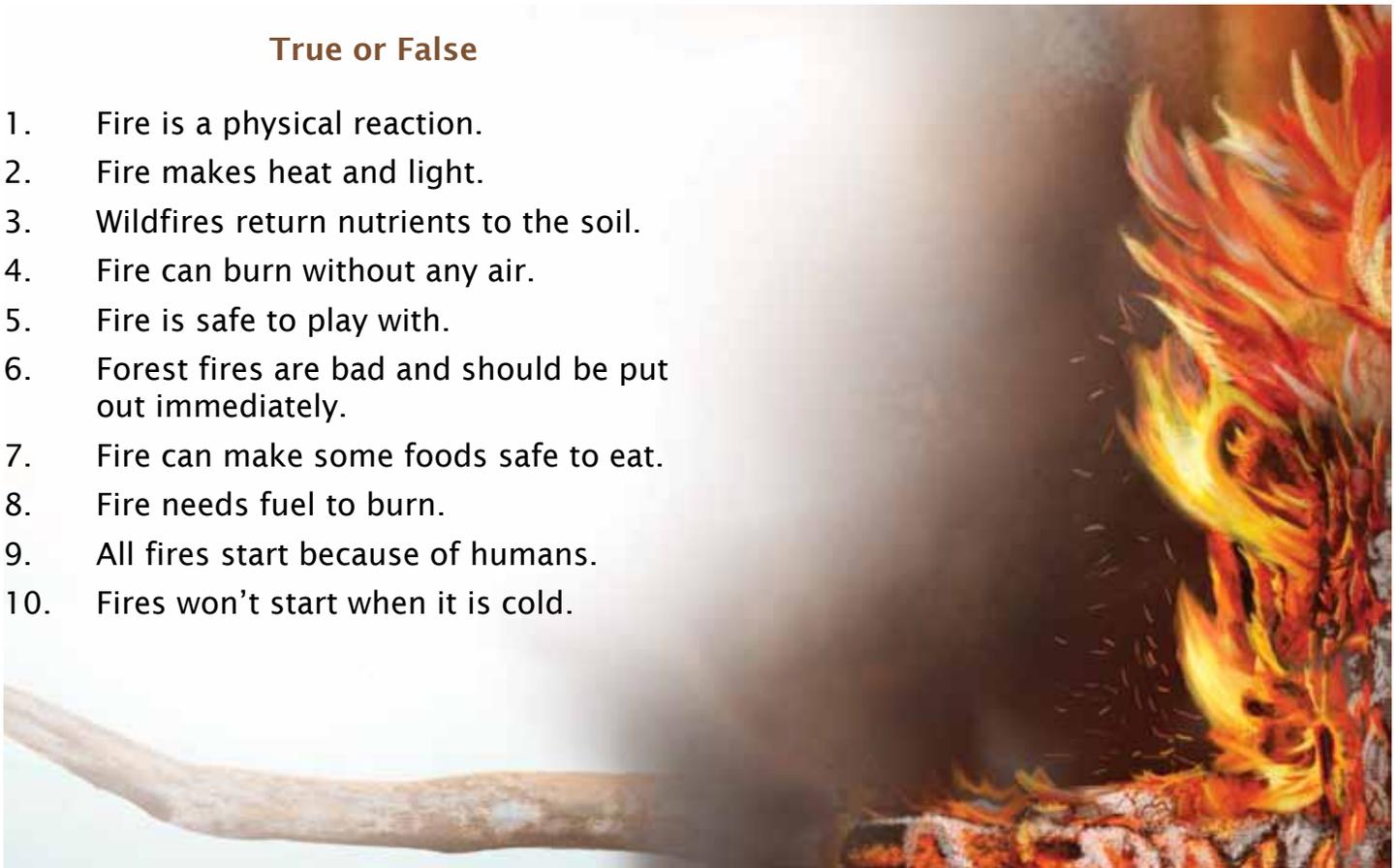
Fire is very important for the entire natural world, including humans. Fire is a chemical reaction that uses fuel and oxygen to create heat and light.

Fire helps people stay warm when it is cold and be able to see when it is dark. Fire can cook food so that it is safe to eat. Small, controlled fires are useful, but if a fire gets too big or is out of control, it can be very dangerous.

Natural fires are usually started by lightning. Wildfires burn in forests and clear out old, dry wood. This helps return nutrients to the soil so that new plants can grow. These fires are normal and natural. The fires often die off on their own. If the weather has been very dry and hot, the fire can grow very large and threaten humans and animals.

True or False

1. Fire is a physical reaction.
2. Fire makes heat and light.
3. Wildfires return nutrients to the soil.
4. Fire can burn without any air.
5. Fire is safe to play with.
6. Forest fires are bad and should be put out immediately.
7. Fire can make some foods safe to eat.
8. Fire needs fuel to burn.
9. All fires start because of humans.
10. Fires won't start when it is cold.



Answers: 1—False. It is a chemical reaction. 2—True. 3—True. 4—False. Fire needs oxygen to burn. 5—False. Fire can cause very painful burns. Always have a responsible adult with you when there is fire around. 6—False. Forest fires are necessary to clear out old plant matter. Small, naturally-occurring fires every few years can actually help to prevent major fires that threaten humans and animals. 7—True. Most raw meat and some raw plants can be dangerous to humans. Fire heats these foods until they are safe to eat. 8—True. Fire can use lots of different types of fuel, such as wood, coal, paper, and charcoal. 9—False. Lightning, lava from volcanoes, or sparks from falling rocks can start fires. 10—False. If there is good fuel and oxygen, fires can start even in cold weather. A nice, contained fire on a cold night can be just the thing you need to stay warm and cozy!

Water Spiders

“Water spider” is a common name for a spider that walks on or swims in the water. There are many different species of spiders that can do this. Some spiders, like the one in this story, spin webs that are used to hold or carry things. Match the description to the image.

wolf spider



water strider



1. Although they breathe air, these spiders live underwater. They **trap air bubbles** in the fine hairs on their stomach (abdomen) and legs. The female builds a bell-shaped web underwater that she fills with air. This bell provides a place for her to rest, mate, and raise her offspring. Newborn spiders are called **spiderlings**.
2. Spiders in this family live on every continent except Antarctica. Fine hairs on their legs allow them to spread out their weight so they can run across the water’s surface. Instead of spinning webs to trap their prey, they chase them down! The females carry their eggs in ball-shaped **egg sacs** that they spin out of silk. After the spiderlings are born, their mother carries them on her back for a few weeks until they can survive on their own.
3. The females in this group of spiders are nearly twice as large as the males. They can grow up to 1 inch (2.6cm) long with a 3 inch (7.6cm) leg span. These spiders race out across the water to hunt. They usually eat aquatic insects, but some of the larger spiders can catch and eat **small fish**.
4. This insect is often called a “water spider,” but is **not a spider** at all. Spiders have eight legs, but insects have only six. Even though they have wings, these insects cannot fly. Instead, they walk on the surface of the water.

fishing spider



diving bell spider



Answers: 1-diving bell spider. 2-wolf spider. 3-fishing spider. 4-water strider.