

STORY ELEMENTS: PLOT AND THEME



Raccoon and Crayfish

By Joseph Bruchac

Raccoon was very hungry, so he went to the river. Crayfish was hiding under a rock. Raccoon waded into the water and reached under the rock. As soon as Raccoon touched the crayfish, it pinched him. Raccoon shook his paw and climbed out of the water.

“Crayfish”, he said, “you were right to pinch me, because I wanted to eat you. I am hungry. In fact, I am starving!” Then Raccoon fell down with his eyes closed and his feet sticking up in the air.

Crayfish hurried to tell his friends that Raccoon was dead. All the crayfish made a circle around Raccoon. They danced and sang until they were too tired to move.

Suddenly, Raccoon jumped up. “Thank you for that lovely dance,” he said. Then Raccoon ate up all the foolish crayfish. As the wise ones say, “Never celebrate someone else’s troubles.” Remember what happened to those crayfish!

Instructions: Read the passage. Use information from the passage to answer each question.

1. Raccoon fell down with his eyes closed and his feet sticking into the air because:

(a) he was hungry and weak.

(b) he wanted to trick crayfish.

(c) he tripped on a rock.

2. Raccoon could be described as:

(a) silly (b) unhappy (c)tricky

3. The crayfish could be described as:

(a) foolish (b) proud (c)smart

4. What should have been the smartest thing for Crayfish to do after Raccoon fell down?

(a) Hide and wait to see if Raccoon got up

(b) Have a party

(c) Play in the water

5. Write whether the following sentences happened at the **beginning**, **middle** or **ending** of the story.

(a) Raccoon ate up all the foolish crayfish.

(b) Crayfish and his friends celebrated because they thought Raccoon was dead. _____

(c) Raccoon was hungry so he went to the river.

6. What is the theme/lesson of this story?

(a) Raccoons are smarter than crayfish.

(b) Do not be happy about someone's troubles. You might have troubles, too.

(c) Don't fish for crayfish or you might get pinched.