



Learning From Legends

> Section A) The Legend of Wountie

A long time ago, even before the time of the flood, the Cheakamus River provided food for the Squamish people. Each year, at the end of summer when the salmon came home to spawn, the people would cast their cedar root nets into the water and get enough fish for the winter to come.

One day, a man came to fish for food for his family for the winter. He looked into the river and found that many fish were coming home this year. He said thanks to the spirit of the fish, for giving themselves as food for his family, and cast his net into the river and waited. In time, he drew his nets in and they were full of fish, enough for his family for the whole year. He packed these away into cedar bark baskets and prepared to go home.

But he looked into the river, saw all those fish, and decided to cast his net again. He did so, and again it filled with fish, which he threw onto the shore. A third time, he cast his net into the water and waited. This time, when he pulled his net in, it was torn beyond repair by sticks, stumps and branches which filled the net. To his dismay, the fish on the shore and the fish in the cedar bark baskets were also sticks and branches. He had no fish and his nets were ruined.

It was then he looked up at the mountain and saw Wountie, the spirit protecting the Cheakamus, who told him that he had broken the faith with the river and with nature by taking more than he needed for himself and his family. And this was the consequence. And to this day, high on the mountain overlooking the Cheakamus and Paradise Valley, is the image of Wountie, protecting the Cheakamus. The fisherman? Well, his family went hungry and starved – a lesson for all the people in his family.

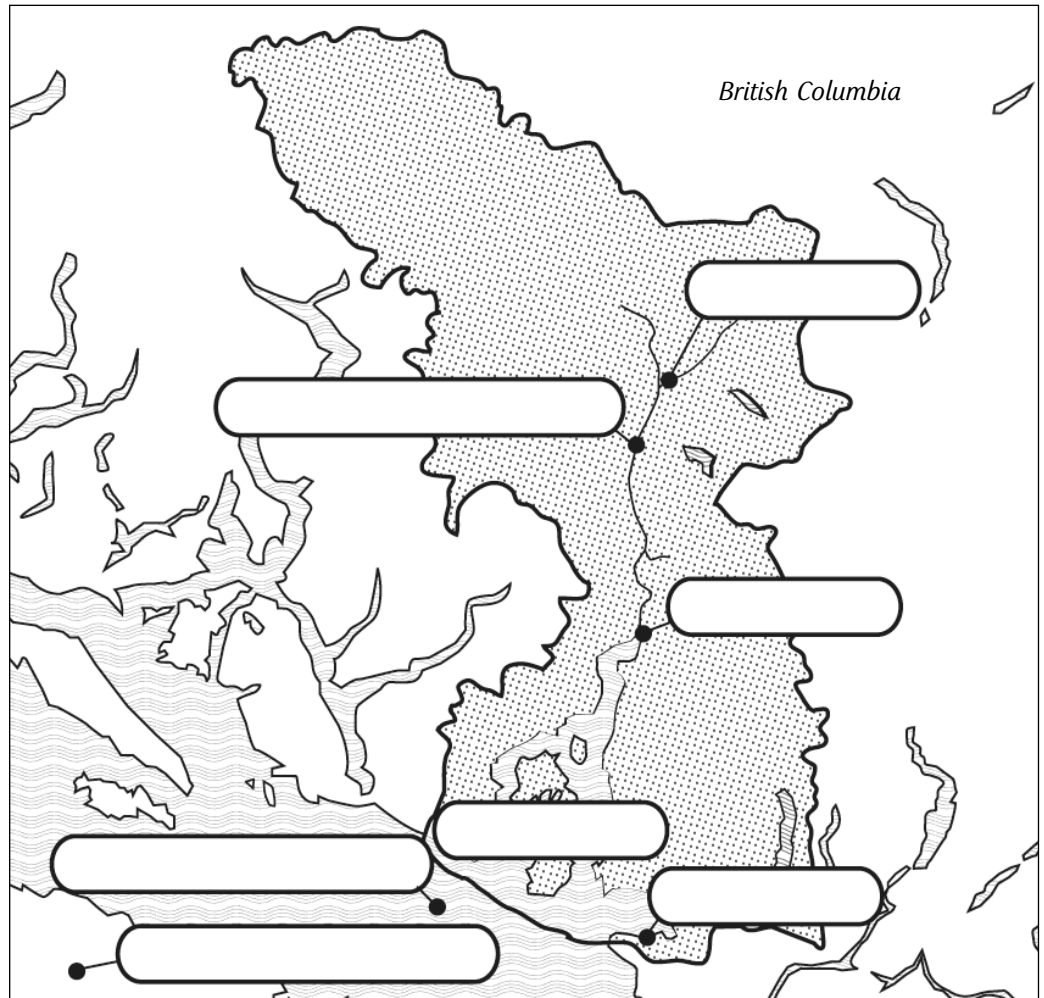


Name: _____

> **Section B) The Squamish Nation, Coast Salish**

When you read a legend or story, it is important to understand who is telling you the tale. This is a traditional legend from the Squamish Nation, Coast Salish, on the west coast of Canada.

1. The map below shows the area of land that the Squamish Nation traditionally called their home, before European settlers immigrated to Canada and built farms, towns and cities.



 Water  Traditional Territory Boundary Squamish Nation





Name: _____

Using encyclopedias, atlases and the internet, research and answer the following questions about the Squamish Nation.

a. Locate the current location of these communities, then label them on the map:

- i. Vancouver
- ii. Whistler
- iii. Squamish
- iv. Burnaby

b. Locate these bodies of water, then label them on the map:

- i. Pacific Ocean
- ii. Howe Sound
- iii. Cheakamus River
- iv. Fraser River

c. Locate these geographical features, then label them on the map.

- i. Vancouver Island
- ii. Rocky Mountains

2. What does the word 'squamish' mean?

3. What type of shelters did the Squamish Nation traditionally live in?

4. Using paper, Popsicle sticks and markers, build a model of a traditional Squamish shelter. Include labels that explain how each part of the house was used.





Name: _____

> **Section C) The Legend of Wountie**

Now that you know the story and the storytellers, answer the following questions on The Legend of Wountie.

1. Who is Wountie?

2. Draw a picture that shows how you imagine Wountie.





Name: _____

3. How did Wountie punish the fisherman? Why do you think Wountie punished the fisherman for his actions?

4. Why would a legend like this one be important for the Squamish culture?

5. What does this legend have in common with what you have learned about food webs and ecosystems?

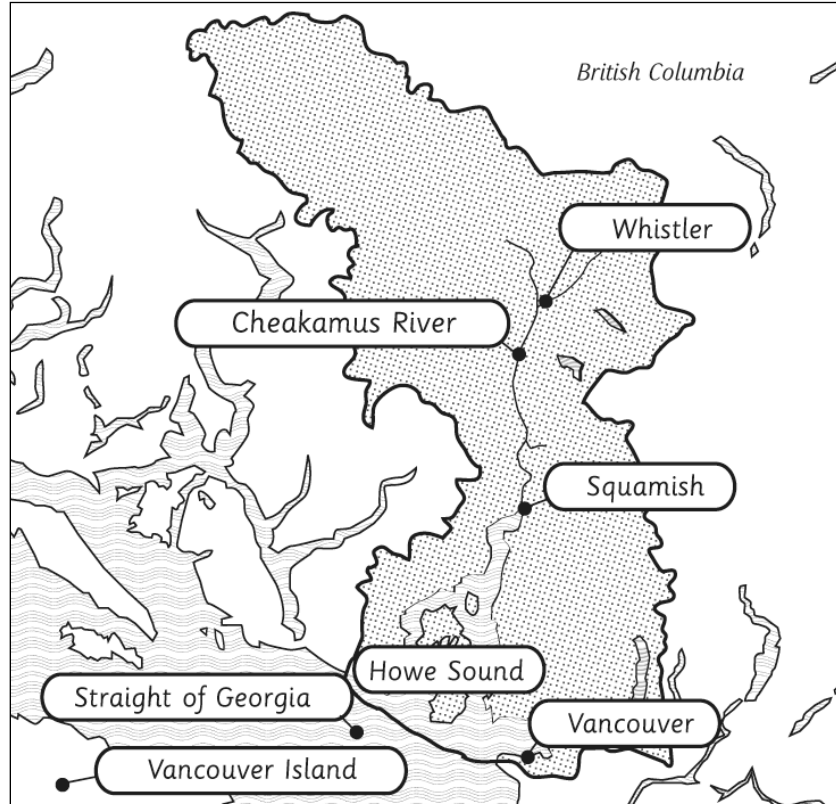




Answers: Learning From Legends

Section B) The Squamish Nation, Coast Salish

1.



 Water  Traditional Territory Boundary Squamish Nation

2. Squamish means “a great wind”, “mother of the wind” or “mother of wind”.
3. Longhouse.
4. Model labels should include most or all of the following details:
 - That a longhouse was a shelter, with one long room that could accommodate extended family, or even a whole village.
 - On average, they ranged in size from 18-30 metres.
 - It was also a centre of social community and community activities.





Answers: Learning From Legends (continued)

- Ceremonial events, including drumming and singing were conducted in the centre of the longhouse.
- Longhouses were made from wood (usually cedar logs or planks).
- Sometimes the frames were covered in bark that was sewn in place.
- The West Coast longhouse usually had a slanted roof (pitched to allow rain to trickle down its slope).
- Sleeping platforms were built along the walls.
- Above the platforms were storage shelves.
- In some larger longhouses, families had their own compartments, sectioned off with woven mats.
- Each family built a fire on the earthen ground in the longhouse.
- Roof slats could be adjusted to let smoke out and light in.
- Anger and hatred could bring evil spirits into the longhouse, so residents of the longhouse were taught to leave harsh feelings outside the door.
- Usually there was one door (often facing the shore).
- The outside entrance was often decorated with murals and carvings of family crests and animal totems.

Section C) The Legend of Wountie

1. Open – Should be specific:
 - Wountie is the Squamish spirit protecting the Cheakamus River.
 - Wountie protects the river from overfishing.
3. Open – Should be specific:
 - How – turned all the fish to twigs, in river and in baskets.
 - How – ruined fisherman's nets.
 - How – fisherman and family starved.
 - Why – for breaking faith of river with nature.
 - Why – for taking more fish than he needed.
 - Why – Wountie is the protector of the river.

Canon



Answers: Learning From Legends (continued)

4. Open – Should be specific:
 - To serve as a lesson.
 - To remind people in the Squamish culture not to take more than they need from nature.
 - As they relied on fish for food, it would be crucial for their survival that they learn not to take too many fish, leaving enough to spawn and grow so the population would never be depleted.
5. Open – Should be specific:
 - Serves as a warning that depleting the population of one species will upset the balance of the ecosystem.
 - We cannot depend on one creature for food, if we take too much we risk losing the entire species.
 - Removing a species from an ecosystem can affect all the other species who depend on it – in some cases, it could cause another species to starve or die out.
6. Open – Should express an awareness that we need to improve as stewards of the environment, and that we are damaging the balance of our ecosystem.

Section D) The Story of the Karner blue butterfly

Open – Student should create a legend with a protective spirit like Wountie for the Karner blue butterfly. The legend should contain a lesson about the repercussions of removing a species from the ecosystem.

