

How Fire Came to the World

When the world was new and fire did not exist, the animals shivered in the cold. One day during a ferocious storm, lightning struck a tree on an island and started a fire in the stump. The animals saw the fire and desired it greatly. They met to decide who would retrieve some of the fire.

Snow-white Raven was the first to volunteer. She soared over the water and perched on the hollow stump. As she pondered how to carry the fire, the flames scorched her white feathers, frightening Raven so badly that she flew back without the fire. Raven feathers have been black ever since.

Golden-eyed Screech Owl jeered at Raven, calling her a coward. Then he flew to the island and stared down into the hollow tree, wondering how to grab hold of the fire. He sat so long that the smoke stung his eyes, terrifying Screech Owl so much that he flew back without the fire. Screech owl eyes have been red ever since.

Emerald-green Snake mocked Screech Owl and said he was a fool. He swam to the island and slithered into the fire. The flames seared his gleaming scales, and he hissed in terror. Snake swam back without the fire, and his scales have been black ever since.

Finally, little Water Spider said she would try to retrieve some fire. All the animals laughed and said that she was too puny to carry the coals. "I will find a way," she replied. Water Spider ran across the water to the island. She spun her web into a little basket and fastened it to her back. Then she crept into the tree stump, put a single ember into her basket, and brought it back to the grateful animals. The world has had fire ever since, and the little water spider still carries a basket on its back.



MONDAY

Write each word next to its definition.

ember **ferocious** **jeered** **puny** **retrieve**

1. _____ a glowing piece of coal or wood
2. _____ spoke with scorn
3. _____ small and weak
4. _____ to get and bring back
5. _____ fierce or violent

TUESDAY

Circle the genre of this passage. Give details to support your answer.

nonfiction

historical fiction

myth

realistic fiction

science fiction

WEDNESDAY

Choose the correct answer.

1. Who brings fire to the animals?

(A) Raven

(B) Screech Owl

(C) Snake

(D) Water Spider

2. What happens to Screech Owl when he tries to retrieve fire?

(A) His feathers turn black.

(B) His eyes turn red.

(C) He loses his voice.

(D) He succeeds.

3. How does Snake get to the island?

(A) Raven carries him.

(B) He slithers.

(C) He swims.

(D) He rides in Water Spider's basket.

THURSDAY

Write the letter of each cause next to its matching effect.

Causes

A The shivering animals saw fire on an island.

B The world was new, and there was no fire.

C Water Spider brought an ember in her basket.

D Raven sat by the fire too long.

E Screech Owl came back without fire.

Effects

_____ The animals were cold.

_____ Her feathers turned black.

_____ The animals wanted to get some fire.

_____ Snake called him a fool.

_____ Water spiders still carry baskets.

FRIDAY

How is Water Spider different from the other animals? Provide details from the story.
