

# Eleven Nature Tales: A Multicultural Journey

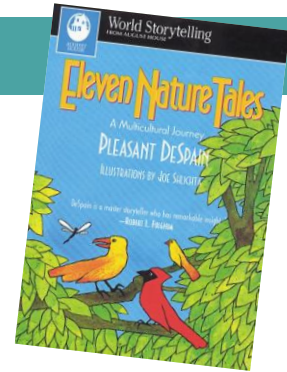
## Read Aloud Guide

**Themes:** Nature, Consequences, Tales Around the World

**Book Brief:** Travel around the world through 11 traditional tales about nature! These stories from different cultures share lessons about animals, the Earth, and the importance of caring for our natural world.

**Author:**  
Pleasant DeSpain

**Illustrator:**  
Joe Shlichta



## Before Reading

**The Cover & Pictures:** Look closely at the cover and illustrations. What parts of nature do you notice? What do the pictures make you wonder about the stories you will hear?

**Prior Knowledge:** Explain that a folktale is a story that has been shared and passed down over many years. The tales in this book come from cultures around the world and use people, animals, and elements of nature to share ideas and lessons.

**Vocabulary:** Frontload Tier 2 words using [RIF's Tier Two Vocabulary Guide](#).

**Purpose for Reading:** “As you read, notice how people, animals, and nature interact. Think about the lesson each tale shares and what it can teach us about our relationship with the natural world.”

## During Reading

**Check for understanding & make connections:**

### All Things Are Connected

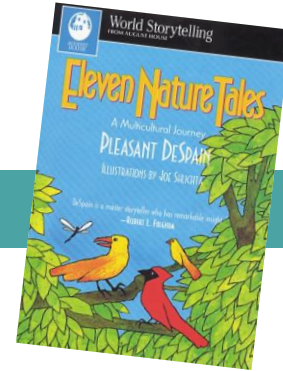
- How are the people, animals, and nature connected in this story?
- What happens when one part of the natural world is changed?
- What lesson does this story teach about caring for the Earth?

### Sun Catcher

- What problem do the characters face, and how do they try to solve it?
- How does the sun affect the characters and their world?
- What does the story teach us about respecting the power of nature?

### Cooking with Salt Water

- What do the characters learn about the ocean and salt water?
- How does a character's choice affect what happens next?
- What lesson do you think the storytellers wanted people to remember?



## Eleven Nature Tales: A Multicultural Journey

### During Reading

#### **The Friendship Orchard**

- How does the orchard bring people together?
- What do the characters learn about sharing and working together?
- Why might an orchard be a good symbol for friendship?

#### **Frog Swallows Ocean**

- Why does Frog swallow the water, and what happens because of his choice?
- How are the other animals affected when the water disappears?
- What does this tale teach about sharing Earth's resources?

#### **Rabbit's Tail Tale**

- What does Rabbit want, and what does he do to get it?
- How do Rabbit's choices affect what happens to him?
- What lesson can we learn from Rabbit's experience?

#### **The Savage Skylark**

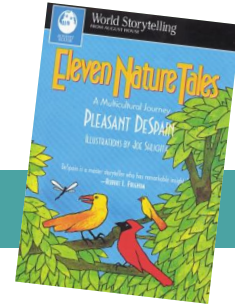
- How do the characters respond to the skylark?
- What changes as the story unfolds?
- What does this tale teach about how people and animals can live together?

#### **Cardinal's Red Feathers**

- What happens that explains why Cardinal has red feathers?
- What qualities does Cardinal show through his actions?
- How does this tale use an animal to teach an important lesson?

#### **Starfire**

- What role does fire play in the story?
- How does gaining or using fire change life for the characters?
- What does the story suggest about using nature's gifts responsibly?



## Eleven Nature Tales: A Multicultural Journey

### During Reading

#### The Grizzly Bear Feast

- What happens at the feast, and how do the characters respond?
- How do the characters show (or fail to show) respect for one another and nature?
- What lesson does the tale teach about taking only what we need?

#### Enough Is Enough

- What causes the characters to realize that “enough is enough”?
- What happens when people take more from nature than they need?
- How can we use the lesson from this story to help care for the Earth today?

### After Reading

#### Revisit the Purpose

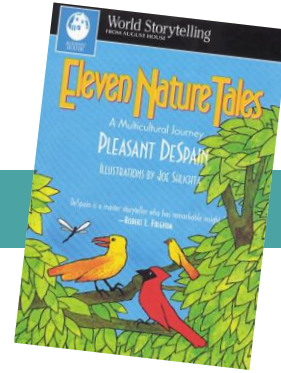
Think back to our purpose for reading. What did you notice about how people, animals, and nature interacted across the stories? What did the tales help you understand about our relationship with the natural world?

#### Explore the Lessons

What lessons or messages appeared across the tales? How were the lessons similar or different from one story to another?

#### Reflect and Connect

What ideas from the stories stood out to you most? How can the lessons from these tales help us think about the way we understand, respect, and care for the natural world?



## Eleven Nature Tales: A Multicultural Journey

### Extension Activities

#### Nature Connections

**Materials:** Paper, pencils, crayons or markers

**Directions:** Have students choose one tale and identify the people, animals, and parts of nature that are important to the story. Draw or create a web showing how they are connected. Then write or discuss what the tale teaches about the relationship between people and the natural world.

---

#### Tales Around the World

**Materials:** World map or globe, sticky notes or paper, pencils

**Directions:** Explore where the tales in the collection come from. Locate several of the places or cultures represented on a map, then compare two tales. Discuss what is similar and different about the way each story uses nature, characters, and events to share a lesson.

---

#### Lessons from Nature

**Materials:** Paper, pencils, crayons or markers

**Directions:** Have students choose a lesson or message that stood out to them from the collection. Draw a scene from one tale that represents that lesson, then explain how the characters and events help communicate it. Connect the lesson to something students can do in their own lives or communities.