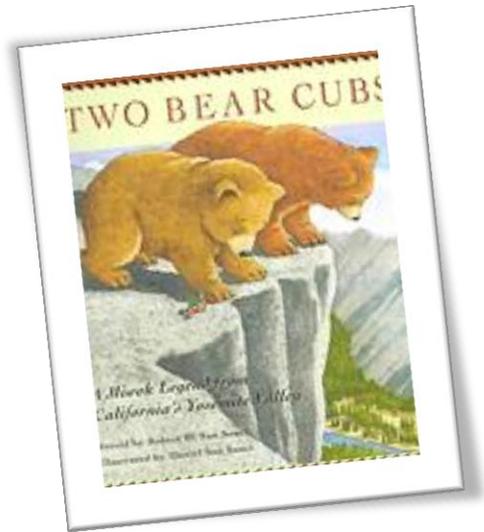


Title: Two Bear Cubs:

A Miwok Legend from California's Yosemite Valley

Author: Robert D. San Souci

Grade Level: 2nd Grade



SUMMARY

Have you ever wondered how certain land formations came to be? For many generations, Native American tribes have shared stories and legends to answer questions about the natural world. *Two Bear Cubs* is a legend that comes from the Miwok Native American People in California's Yosemite Valley. In this tale, two bear cubs do not heed their mother's advice and wander off, falling asleep on a rock. As they sleep, the rock grows and grows, eventually becoming a giant mountain. Their mother becomes worried and asks for help from the other animals to find her cubs. In the end, an unlikely creature is able to save the cubs. The playful, adventurous cubs in this story will charm your child. Your family will enjoy seeing this story unfold, as many animals try to help Mother Bear find her cubs! As the story concludes, families can have rich discussions about the many lessons and themes woven throughout this legend including the importance of listening to directions or that greatness can come in small packages.

QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT WHILE READING

VOCABULARY

It's important to make sure that your child has an understanding of key words in the book. Talking about words while reading is a great way for your child to learn new words.

In this book, you might talk about these words:

- waded (pg. 2)
- cautioned (pg. 5)
- stirred (pg. 6)
- brimmed (pg. 10)
- grieving (pg. 11)
- agile (pg. 16)
- resourcefulness (pg. 25)

You might use a question like: *On page 6, the author uses the word stirred. Usually when we hear the word stirred, it is referring to mixing something up in a bowl or pot, but in this text, the*

author uses this word differently. How do the words around it help you understand the meaning?

KEY IDEAS and THEMES

In addition to words, it's important to talk about key ideas and themes and how they develop over the course of the book. Here are some examples to get you started:

1. Before reading this legend, read the background information about the Miwok people on the first page and at the end of the book with your child. As you read the story, stop throughout and discuss: How might the lifestyle and beliefs of the Miwok people have influenced the legend? As you review the illustrations, what information about the Miwok people did the illustrator apply in his illustrations?
2. How does the author introduce this legend? As a family, use the words in the text to discuss how the author introduces the characters and setting. How does the problem develop at the beginning of the text? Be sure to reread pages 5-6 to guide your discussion.
3. How does Mother Bear respond when she realizes her cubs are missing? What do her actions show you about her character?
4. As Mother Bear asks the other animals for help, ask your child to point out words or phrases that are repeated. How does this repetition impact the way the story is told? Practice reading the dialogue between the characters, using different voices to make it clear when each animal is speaking.
5. What does it mean on page 13 when it says, "Here his courage failed him?" Ask your child to reread the sentence to help him/her explain.
6. What causes all of the other animals to laugh on page 16?
7. In what ways are Measuring Worm and his approach to rescuing the cubs different than the other animals' attempts? How do these differences help Measuring Worm to be successful? As you discuss, flip back to pages that show and describe the other animals' attempts to rescue the cubs. Notice what they say, do, and think in their process and compare this to the worm's process.



8. Native American Legends are often designed to answer questions about the natural world, but they also teach lessons. Talk about the bear cubs and other animals' experiences in this tale. What did the cubs learn? What can we learn as we think about Measuring Worm's successful rescue of the cubs?

EXTRA ACTIVITY

The author included a section at the end of the book called, "About the Miwok People." Point out to your child that this section is structured using headings, with facts and information related to the heading in each section. Use this structure as a guide for your own nonfiction text about the Miwok people. Pick 3-4 sections that your family finds most interesting and create a page about each topic for your book, using the same heading at the top, and describing the most interesting facts, in your child's own words. Younger siblings can help illustrate these pages, or you can search for photographs online together, to cut and paste into your book.