

Morning Star and the Northern Lights

Old Chief Morning Star had only one son. Young Morning Star worried his father because he would not play with the older boys. Instead, he would leave home for days at a time, always going towards the north.

One day the Old Chief followed his son. Young Morning Star took a strange path northward . . . the Spirit's Path . . . The Milky Way.

But when the Old Chief set foot upon the sacred path, suddenly he could not see or hear.

When he opened his eyes, he was in a land of strange lights. There the people all were wearing belts of rainbow light and color lights upon their heads. All through the night they played a game with a ball made of changing colors.

And as the Old Chief watched the players of the northern land dodge and leap and chase the ball, he saw his son, Young Morning Star, foremost among the players, wearing the most vivid lights.

When the game was over, Morning Star went home with his father, and all his people were glad, because the morning star was with them again brightening the colored skies of dawn.

And when the Morning Star cannot be seen, the people know he is in the northern land of color.

So when the special beam of lights display and the northern lights leap and dance about the sky . . . the people know that Morning Star lives on and will return.

Going Further

Do an Internet search for aurora mythology. Share stories you find with the class. Here are a few sites:

<http://www.gi.alaska.edu/ScienceForum/ASF1/197.html>

<http://gedds.pfrr.alaska.edu/aurora/english/Legend1.htm>

This Native American (Okanagan) story about Venus and the northern lights makes an excellent follow-up to the Northern Lights program. Suggested by Wayne Narron at: WNarron@compuserve.com Starlight Traveler. SOURCE: Mourning Dove, 1888-1936, Bison Books, University of Nebraska Press, 1990. Reprint. Originally published: Caldwell, Idaho, Caxton Printers, 1933.