

First Nation Studies 12 – Creation stories

Use your notes to help answer the following.

1. Give examples from the Tlingit story below that fit these three themes discussed in the notes.
 - **Dominant physical elements of the environment**
 - **Omit the role of women or condemn women**
 - **Begin in darkness, and the generation of light is part of the creation itself**

Tlingit Creation Story

According to Tlingit tradition, creation proceeded with help from the trickster figure of the raven. At the time there was no light or water. Raven had to steal light from where it was hoarded in the house of a rich man far up the Nass River, which was dry at the time. He accomplished this by making himself small and getting the daughter of the house to swallow him and become pregnant. When the child was born, it cried for the bundles of light hanging on the wall of the house. Finally, the family gave the raven the bundles of stars and moons to soothe him each of which he let escape through the chimney and which scattered across the heavens. He left with a box of daylight which was the last bit of light the family owned.

Raven then proceeded to trick the man who owned the everlasting spring of water into giving him a drink, but before he could escape through the chimney, the man made a fire and blackened raven to his current color.

First, he spit out water creating the Nass Stikine, Taku, Chilkat, the Alsek, and all the other large rivers. Smaller drops created the salmon creeks.

Raven then proceeded to a town that had never seen daylight. The people of the town quarrelled with him, so raven decided to scare them by opening his box of daylight. Upon seeing the Sun, the villagers scattered, some to the ocean where they became sea creatures and some to the forest where they became forest creatures.

Raven made the winds, the races, and dogs who were human beings that Raven cursed to walk on all fours.

