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Activity Guide

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Flecha al Sol

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ABOUT THE STORY

A Pueblo Indian tale of a boy's transformation into an arrow that journey's between the Sun and the Earth.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR / ILLUSTRATOR

Gerald McDermott's unique style of illustration has earned him an international reputation. He began his study of Art at an early age and received his degree from the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. With *Flecha al Sol*, he demonstrates his special interest in folklore and mythology. Mr. McDermott is also the author / illustrator of *The Stone Cutter: A Japanese Folk Tale*, *Daniel O'Rourke* and *Tim O'Toole and the Wee Folk*.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

This story is about a boy who sets off on a long and mysterious journey to find his father.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- "Why wouldn't the other children play with the boy?"
- "Why did the boy set off on his search?"
- "Why do you think el Sembrador de Maiz and la Alfarera wouldn't speak to the boy?"
- In this story, the boy turned into an arrow more than once. "When did this happen and why?"
- "Why wasn't the boy afraid of the four tests?"
- "Why do you think the boy returned to the earth? How did the people treat him when he returned?"

Personification

In this story, the sun is portrayed as a person. This technique is of personification is very common in folktales. Ask children to think of other stories they know where non-living things are given human characteristics. Discuss.

Vocabulary

Verbos- Past to Present and Back Again

In the story, these past tense verbs are in the present tense. Change them from past back to present. If needed, use the book for help.

hizo	tuviste	importo	debiste
pudo	fui	tu ve	

In the story, these present tense verbs are in the past tense. Change them back.

vive	juega	deja	vía
contesta	sigue	vuela	sale
entra	llegá	preguntá	se da
es	veine	dice	ve

More than One, More than One Way

If a word ends in a vowel, it is made plural by adding 's'. If it ends in a consonant, 'es' is added. Using this rule, make the following words from the story plural.

rayo	casa	flecha	leon
señor	hijo	abeja	sembrador
serpiente	cielo	hombre	cosecha

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Social Studies: Pueblo Homes

This is a folktale of the Pueblo Indians. On a map, show children the southwestern United States, the area native to the Pueblos. Explain how the extremely dry climate influenced the type of shelter that was used. Show pictures of the adobe homes originally used by the Pueblos. Compare with the illustrations in the text. If you wish, research how adobe bricks are made out of clay and straw and make one with your class.

Science: A Trip to al Sol

Can an arrow from the Earth really reach the Sun? Discuss the real distance between Earth and Sun. Explain how even though the Sun is 93 million miles from the Earth, it is so powerful that it provides the light and heat we need to live. If children are interested, research together to learn more about the Sun.

Art: Four Color Artwork

Most of the drawings in this book are done in only four colors. Have children choose only four colors to create a drawing of their own. If children want, they can recreate the geometric style used in the book.

Before and After

Compare how the boy looked when he first came to Earth and how he looked when he returned. Why do you think the boy looked different when he returned? Have children make their own illustrations depicting these events.