

# HOW BUZZARD GOT HIS CLOTHING

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Genre – Narrative, Retelling of a Legend  
Set 16 - 320 Words

## Building Anticipation - Setting the Context

Look at some reference materials on birds. Show a picture of a buzzard, also called the turkey vulture. Go over the headings in the following chart and then read aloud information about the buzzard (turkey vulture). Cooperatively fill in the chart below on chart paper or on the board.



Buzzard

Size	
Color	
Food	
Habitat	
Unique Facts	

## Introduction

Tell students that they are going to read a retell of a legend entitled, *How Buzzard Got His Clothing*, and that some legends explain more than one thing in the story. Ask students to read to find out how Buzzard got his clothing and to see what else is explained.

## Discussion – Book Talk

*Right there questions:*

- From whom did the birds want to get their clothes?
- Who was sent to ask the Great Spirit?
- What happened as Buzzard got closer to the sun?
- How did the other birds get their feathers?

*Think and search questions:*

- Why did Buzzard give the blue and white feathers to the Blue Jay?
- Why did the Great Spirit let Buzzard pick his color first? Why did Buzzard not get feathers for his legs or his red head?
- What else does this legend explain?

*On your own questions:*

- If you could have given Buzzard some advice before he went to the Great Spirit, what would you have said?
- If you could change this book, how would you change it?
- Who do you think was the most important character and why?
- What lesson can be learned from this legend?

## Creative Response - Independent Practice

*Fact and Fiction Project*

Using reference books, ask students to choose one type of bird to research. Students can follow the same format as the chart in the *Building Anticipation* section. As the second part of the project, students write their own tale of how their chosen bird got its colored feathers. Students may do an oral presentation.

## Writing Workshop

Prepare the following sentences on chart paper. Read each sentence with the group. Decide what meaning each of the following sentences gives. Discuss some text features that would help make the meaning more clear. Students can then create their own sentences incorporating text features.

I saw a dinosaur in the park.

“No,” the boy said, “I am not going.”

The leaf went around and around and around in the wind.

The house was very scary.

The little chick chirped a tiny peep.

## Art

Students draw the outline shape of their research bird on large white drawing paper and then color in the parts that do not have feathers. Students use the appropriate colored tissue paper to cut out feather shapes, short ones and long ones, and glue these onto the bird.

## Readers' Theater

Using the reproducible master, the children can dramatize the story using a readers' theater. Have the students practice the script and perform for another group or another class in the school. Simple construction paper headbands can designate parts.

## Read Aloud and Poetry Connections

*Cow-Tail Switch and Other West African Stories* by Harold Courlander, George Herzog, Madye Lee Chastain, Henry Holt and Co. Inc., 1987.

*Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Pacific Northwest* by Gerald McDermott, Harcourt, 1993.

*The Language of Birds* by Rafe Martin, G. P. Putnam and Sons, 2000.

## Related websites

<http://www.story-lovers.com/listsbirdstories.html>

<http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/Infocenter/infocenter.html>

<http://cleveland.about.com/library/weekly/aa030201a.htm>

## Learning about Language – Focused Teaching

High Frequency Words - find, last, tried, even, only, none

Interest Words - buzzard, blue jay, cardinal, gold finch

Word Families and Letter Clusters - Endings : *ly* in only, *st* in first, *ch* in each

Structural Features of Words - Past tense: try, tried – Comparison: close, closer

Text Features - Use of capitals: GREAT SPIRIT – Varying print size and spacing to create meaning – Legend beginning: *A long, long time ago ...*

# Reproducible Master 4 - How Buzzard Got His Clothing



## How Buzzard Got His Clothing

Characters:

**Narrator 1, Narrator 2, Birds (3 or 4), Buzzard, Great Spirit**

Narrator 1: A long time ago birds had no clothes.

Birds: We need clothes! We should ask the GREAT SPIRIT for some clothes.

Buzzard: I will fly and find the GREAT SPIRIT. When I find him I will ask him for clothes.

Narrator 1: Buzzard flew up and up and up.

Narrator 2: He flew very close to the sun. So close that it made Buzzard's head turn red.

Narrator 1: At last he came to the GREAT SPIRIT.

Buzzard: Oh, GREAT SPIRIT, please help us! The birds need clothes.

Narrator 2: The GREAT SPIRIT was happy to help the birds.  
He quickly made feathers for each different kind of bird.

GREAT SPIRIT: You choose your feathers first.  
You can only try them on once. Choose carefully.

Narrator 1: First Buzzard tried on the white and blue feathers. He gave them to Blue Jay.

Narrator 2: Next Buzzard tried on some red feathers. He didn't like red so he handed the red feathers to Cardinal.

Narrator 1: Buzzard tried on the yellow feathers next.

Buzzard: I don't like yellow feathers! I will give them to Gold Finch.

Narrator 2: Only black was left. Buzzard pulled and pulled, trying to get the feathers on.  
The black feathers only covered his body.

Buzzard: I need more feathers! I have no feathers on my legs or my head.  
What am I going to do now?

GREAT SPIRIT: There are no feathers left.

Narrator 1: And so, even today, Buzzard flies with beautiful black feathers on his body  
but no feathers on his legs and no feathers on his red head.