THE INDIAN READING SERIES: Stories and Legends of the Northwest is a collection of authentic material cooperatively developed by Indian people from twelve reservations. Development activities are guided by a Policy Board which represents the Indian community of the Pacific Northwest. The Pacific Northwest Indian Reading and Language Development Program Policy Board members are:

• Warren Clements — Warm Springs
  Chairman
• Morrie Jimenez — Klamath
• Joan Kennerly — Blackfeet
• Walter Moffett — Nez Perce
• Emmett Oliver — Quinault
• Bob Parsley — Chippewa
• Lloyd Smith — Warm Springs
• Max Snow
• Jeanne Thomas — Yakima
THE INDIAN READING SERIES:
Stories and Legends of the Northwest

The Blacktail Dance
Level III Book 3

Developed by the Blackfeet Indians
Written by Joan Kennerly, Carmen Marceau, Doris Old Person, June Tatsey
Illustrated by Melvin Tailfeathers
Joseph Coburn, Director
Pacific Northwest Indian Program
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
This story took place in the early nineteen hundreds. It is about the Blacktail Dance, one of the sacred ceremonies of the Blackfeet Indians which is still performed today by some people. The Blacktail Dance ceremony is given to honor a promise made to the Great Spirit, to show gratitude for a promise fulfilled by him or to show thankfulness. It is believed that bad luck will come if the ceremony is not performed as promised.

The Blacktail Dance originated in a dream of a Blackfeet Indian many years ago. In the dream, the person met a deer who told him how to perform this ceremony for good luck. The person was also taught a song for the ceremony.

The Blackfeet Indian people have been great believers in dreams and visions. Many people still have Indian songs which have been handed down from generation to generation in their families. Only the family owners of the songs can start singing them in ceremonies.
One day, Lone Star Woman called to Eagle Boy, "Get up, my son, and get some water." Eagle Boy did not move or answer.
She walked over to him to see what was wrong. He was very sick!
She called to her husband,
"Eagle Plume, get the Medicine Man.
Eagle Boy is very sick!"
Soon Eagle Plume was back with the Medicine Man.
The Medicine Man started doctoring Eagle Boy while the drummers sang medicine songs.
Lone Star Woman made a promise to the Great Spirit.
“If my boy gets well, I will give a Blacktail Dance
in his honor.”
After a few days had passed, Eagle Boy sat up and asked his mother for something to eat. Soon he was up and around.
“Eagle Plume, now it is time to give the Blacktail Dance to give thanks for our son getting well,” said Lone Star Woman.
Eagle Plume invited the people. 
They gathered that evening at his house.
When everyone was there, the Blacktail Dance began.
Eagle Plume started praying.
Then he sang two Blacktail songs.
These songs had been given to him by his moter and father.
Next the fire was made.
Lone Star Woman placed a hollow rock filled with hot coals in the middle of the room.
She put sweet grass on the coals to make it smoke. The smell of the sweet grass filled the room.
One by one the people went up to get blessed with the smudge. 
This would cleanse their minds and bodies for the ceremony.
Eagle Plume and his helpers sang four Blacktail songs. Then it was time to eat.
The women brought in the food.  
There was Indian fry bread, berry soup, boiled dried meat, pemmican and peppermint tea.
After the feast, Eagle Plume went to the middle of the floor. He held some sacred deer hoofs in his hands.
Eagle Plume shook the hoofs as his helpers shook bells. The people felt the sacred meaning of the dance in their hearts. They wanted to dance.
Eagle Plume started to sing his song. Everyone stood and danced in a circle. They moved up and down like deer to the beat of the song. After Eagle Plume had finished his song, Aimsback stood up, prayed and sang his song. The people danced. This went on and on as each person who had a song of his own took his turn.
Eagle Plume warned, "Do not fall down, my friends, or bad luck will fall upon you."
The dancing went on until early morning.
Finally, Long Fingers sang the Morning Song. Everyone knew it was time to go home because no one was allowed to dance after this song was sung.
Lone Star Woman put a happy Eagle Boy to bed. The Indian parents were thankful that Eagle Boy was well and their promise had been fulfilled.
JOAN BULLSHOE KENNERLY
Mrs. Kennerly has twenty years of teaching experience in the Blackfeet and Northern Cheyenne public school systems and was the first runnerup for the 1972 Montana Teacher of the Year. She received her B.A. in education from Northern Montana College and her M.A. in education from Arizona State University. She was responsible for establishing Native American Day for the State, and was appointed by the Governor of Montana to serve on the Commission on Post Secondary Education. She also was the Chairperson of House Joint Resolution 60, which established the Master Plan for Indian Education for the State of Montana. She has two children.

JUNE BULLSHOE TATSEY
Mrs. Tatsey is a Blackfeet Indian with sixteen years experience in teaching grades one through eight and pre-school in the public school system on the Blackfeet Reservation. She received her B.S. in education from Northern Montana College and her M.A. in guidance and counseling from the University of South Dakota and the University of Montana. She was the reading supervisor and is now vice-principal at K.W. Bergen Elementary School in Browning, on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation.

CARMEN BULLSHOE MARCEAU
Mrs. Marceau is a Blackfeet Indian with eighteen years teaching experience. She has had one year experience in guidance and counseling on the Blackfeet Reservation and is principal of Browning Elementary School. She received her B.S. in education from Northern Montana College and her M.A. in guidance and counseling from the University of South Dakota and the University of Montana.

DORIS BULLSHOE OLD PERSON
Mrs. Old Person has eighteen years experience teaching in the Blackfeet Public School System. She has specialized in remedial reading and has been Head Start Director-Supervisor for ESEA Title I and Director of the Native Song and Dance Program. She received her B.A. from Northern Montana College and her M.A. in education from Arizona State University. She has five children.

MELVIN TAILFEATHERS
Mr. Tailfeathers is a self-taught artist who has lived on the Blackfeet Reservation all his life. His grandmother was a Blackfeet medicine woman. Mr. Tailfeathers prefers to do pen and ink sketches of Blackfeet life although he sometimes works with ceramic figurines.
Booklets available in the Level III sequence are listed below. Numbers refer to the planned sequence of use in the Teacher’s Manual. Materials developed by these tribes and others in the Northwest are included in the Levels I and II sequences.

1 Story of the Seasons
   The Confederated Tribes of the
   Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon

2 The Beginning of the Earth
   The Confederated Tribes of the
   Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon

3 The Blacktail Dance
   Blackfeet Tribe

4 How Marten Got His Spots
   Kootenai Cultural Committee of
   The Confederated Salish and
   Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead
   Reservation

5 Lost in the Fog
   Jamestown-Clallam Tribe

6 How to Be a Friend
   The Confederated Tribes of the
   Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon

7 How the Morning and Evening Stars
   Came to Be
   Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the
   Fort Peck Reservation

8 Raccoon’s Black Eyes and Ringed Tail
   Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the
   Fort Hall Reservation

9 Coyote and Old Lady
   Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the
   Fort Hall Reservation

10 Coyote and Trout
    Kootenai Cultural Committee of
    The Confederated Salish and
    Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead
    Reservation

11 How the Milky Way Got into the Sky
    The Confederated Tribes of the
    Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon

12 Inkdomi and the Buffalo
    Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the
    Fort Peck Reservation

13 Medicine Horse
    Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the
    Fort Hall Reservation

14 The Good Hunter and Fisherman
    Jamestown-Clallam Tribe

15 The Wild Buffalo Ride
    Blackfeet Tribe

16 I Am a Rock
    Crow Tribal Historical and Cultural
    Commission

17 The Man Who Loved Shell Money
    Skokomish Tribe

18 Old Man Napi
    Blackfeet Tribe

19 The Turtle Who Went to War
    Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes of the
    Fort Peck Reservation

20 Coyote and the Mean Mountain Sheep
    Salish Cultural Committee of
    The Confederated Salish and
    Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead
    Reservation

For order information and prices of the above booklets and the Teacher’s Manual, contact the publisher:

Educational Systems, Inc.
2360 Southwest 170th Street
Beaverton, Oregon 97005
(503) 649-7516