

## How the Chipmunk Got its Stripes

A legend of the Iroquis

Story lifted from [Pearsonlongham.com](http://Pearsonlongham.com)

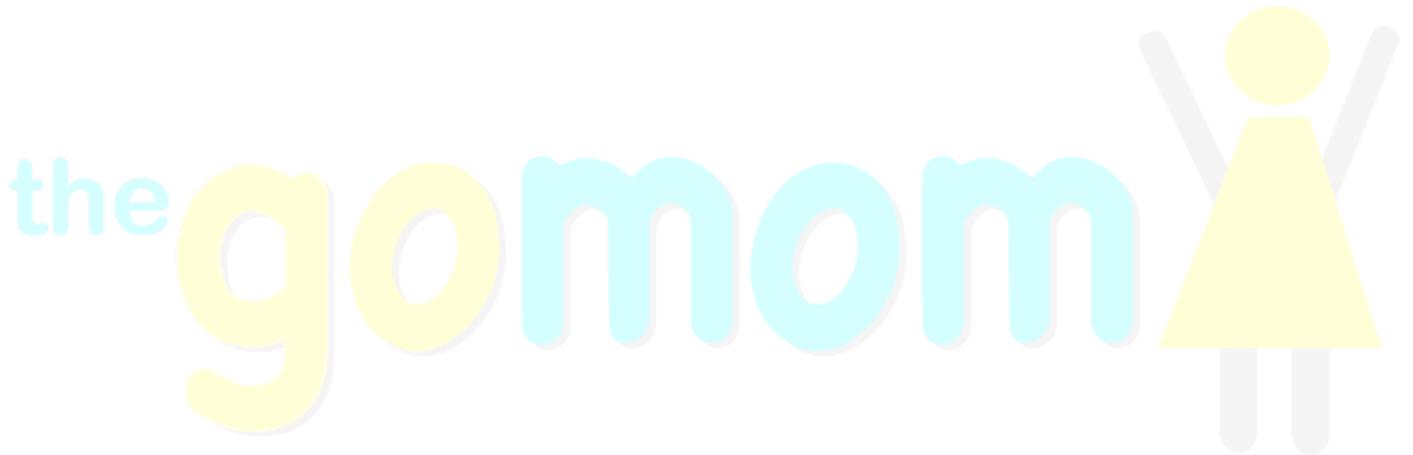
*Long* ago, the Earth was covered in darkness. None of the creatures living there knew what daylight looked like.

One day, all of the animals of the forest gathered together in a clearing. They wondered if it would be better to remain in darkness, or if it would be better to also have light. Deer, Chipmunk, Raccoon, Wolf, Bear, and many other creatures climbed to the top of the highest mountain. The mountain stood so tall that there were no trees on its top, and it was covered only with rocks. Millions of stars blinked in the dark sky overhead. The biggest and most powerful animal in the forest was the bear, and he was the first to reach the mountaintop. Bear stood on the highest peak, looked out over the forest below, and argued for remaining in darkness. He said that the creatures of the forest would be able to sleep better in darkness because there would be no light to keep them awake. Most of the other animals were afraid, and they agreed with Bear. Raccoon said that he did not mind the darkness because he was so smart that he could find plenty of food, even in the dark. Wolf was easy to please, too. She didn't mind the darkness because she could howl in darkness or in light.

But one animal did stand up to Bear. Chipmunk, the smallest of the animals, argued that it would be better to have both light and dark. Chipmunk was very clever. As Bear continued to argue for darkness, she made many good arguments for light.

Slowly, the night passed. Bear grew tired of talking, but Chipmunk chattered on and on, as if she had all of the energy in the world. As the other animals dropped off to sleep, one by one, Chipmunk kept arguing. Finally, the first sunrise ever seen by the animals appeared over the top of the mountain. They woke up and were amazed by what they saw.

Chipmunk began to dance from rock to rock. Bear became angry because he didn't get his way. He roared loudly and ran after Chipmunk. He chased Chipmunk all the way down the mountain. Bear was fast, and he reached out his giant paw to grab Chipmunk. Chipmunk got away, but not before Bear managed to scratch her back with his long claws. And that is why, to this day, you can see stripes on Chipmunk's back!



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1. What is the theme of the story?
  - a. Stand up for what you believe in
  - b. It is always better to go along with the crowd.
  - c. There is only one right way to do things.
  - d. Making decisions is easy.

2. What is Bear like?
  - a. He is a good listener.
  - b. He is used to getting his way.
  - c. He is unsure about what he wants.
  - d. He is well liked by the other animals.

3. Read this sentence from the story.

**Bear grew tired of talking, but Chipmunk chattered on and on, as if she had all the energy in the world.**

What does chattered mean?

- a. moved slowly
  - b. laughed
  - c. spoke quickly
  - d. argued
4. Where does the story take place?
    - a. in a barn
    - b. on an island
    - c. near a lake
    - d. on a mountaintop

5. According to the story, why do chipmunks have stripes on their backs?

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6. What happened after Chipmunk’s argument with Bear?

- a. The animals saw their first sunrise ever.
- b. Bear was happy that he got his way.
- c. The animals continued to live in darkness.
- d. Chipmunk fell asleep.

7. Read this sentence from the story.

**Chipmunk, the smallest of animals, argued that it would be better to have both light and darkness.**

What is the antonym for the word argued?

- a. whispered
- b. agreed
- c. jumped
- d. yelled

8. In what ways is Chipmunk different from the other animals? How does this help Chipmunk to win the argument with Bear? What lessons can we learn from Chipmunk?

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Answer Key:

1. a
2. b
3. d
4. d
5. Bear got mad when he didn't get his way. He ran after chipmunk and managed to scratch chipmunks back with his claws giving chipmunk his stripes.
6. A
7. B
8. Chipmunk was not afraid to tell everyone including the bear what he thought is right. Since he believed that he was right and was not afraid to say so he was able to argue well with Bear. We can learn from Chipmunk the lesson of standing up for what we believe in. We can also learn persistence as he argued his point.