

How The Robin Got Its Red Breast

Adapted from a Sechelt Legend and Formatted for Choral Reading/Speaking

By Lois Walker

FORMATTING:

This script was written as a choral speaking/reading piece and is formatted for ALL, ALL GIRLS, ALL BOYS and lines for 8 SOLO READERS.

ESTABLISHING THE RHYTHM:

To find the proper rhythm, first read-aloud and clap through the piece as you go. Each underlined word or word part falls directly on a beat. As you read, clap on each underlined word, keeping the rhythm steady. Be careful not to read too fast! This is a rehearsal technique and readers will not clap throughout the entire piece during performance.

ALL: The Pacific Northwest - long, long ago...

ALL BOYS: Was either dull, drab, and gray -

ALL GIRLS: Or covered with snow.

ALL: And huddled in caves, was a Sechelt band,
Living hard and cold in a dull, drab land.

ALL BOYS: They awoke every morning to the song of a bird
Who was dull, drab, and gray -
Feathers muted and blurred.

ALL GIRLS: The bird was a robin, but without a red breast,

SOLO 1: This robin was a bird not properly dressed!

ALL CHORUS: It's a Sechelt legend
To be told and spread
Through the oral tradition.
Let's follow the thread.
As the story grows,
And each word is said,
We'll finally know how
The robin's breast turned red!

ALL BOYS: So this is the story
Of how the breast turned red.
A Sechelt legend,
Yes, that's what is said.

SOLO 2: "Mother, I'm hungry"

ALL GIRLS: The little girl cried.

SOLO 3: "I know"

ALL GIRLS: Said the mother,

SOLO 3: "But who will provide
Meat for our people
And wood for the fire?"

SOLO 2/3: "Let's ask Grandfather
Just how to acquire
All that we need."

ALL GIRLS: He is old and is wise.

ALL BOYS: Let's ask him now
Before the fire dies!"

ALL CHORUS: It's a Sechelt legend
To be told and spread
Through the oral tradition.
Let's follow the thread.
As the story grows,
And each word is said,
We'll finally know how

The robin's breast turned red!

ALL BOYS: Grandfather took charge,
Put the men on their feet
And into the forest
To hunt for meat.

ALL GIRLS: Yes, he took charge
As best as he could,
And sent all the women
To gather up wood.

ALL: But because he was old,
And wise, and discerning,

ALL: Grandpa stayed in the cave
To keep the home fire burning.

ALL GIRLS: He took care of the young ones -
The babes left behind,

ALL BOYS: And they snuggled together,
Combined and confined.

ALL CHORUS: It's a Sechelt legend
To be told and spread
Through the oral tradition.
Let's follow the thread.
As the story grows,
And each word is said,
We'll finally know how
The robin's breast turned red!

ALL BOYS: Grandpa fed the fire
All day and night.
Feeding little by little,
Through dawn's early light.

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