



THE LEGEND OF THE BLUE LIZARD

Adapted and Formatted as a Choral Reading/Speaking Script

By Lois Walker

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CAHUILLA:

The Cahuilla are Native Americans with a common culture whose ancestors inhabited inland areas of southern California 2,000 years ago. The traditional Cahuilla territory was near the geographic center of Southern California. It was bounded to the north by the San Bernardino Mountains, to the south by Borrego Springs, and the Chocolate Mountains, to the east by the Colorado Desert, and to the west by the San Jacinto Plain and the eastern slopes of the Palomar Mountains.

LAKE CAHUILLA AND THE SALTON SEA:

Oral legends suggest that when the Cahuilla first moved into the Coachella Valley, a large body of water which geographers call Lake Cahuilla was in existence. Fed by the Colorado River, it dried up sometime before 1700, following one of the repeated shifts in the river's changed course. In 1905 a break in a levee created the much smaller Salton Sea in the same location.

STORYTELLING:

The Cahuilla did not have a writing system, so they learned about the world around them through storytelling. The tribe continues to pass on myths and legends from one generation to the next. "The Legend of the Blue Lizard" is one of those legends.

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 readings will not clap throughout the entire piece during performance.

FORMATTING:

This Choral Reading/Speaking adaptation is formatted for ALL GIRLS, ALL BOYS, ALL, 3 SOLO VOICES (1,2,3) and 3 NARRATORS (A,B,C).

POETRY AND PROSE:

The script features both rhyming and prose sections. Together they combine to offer a variety of performance choices, especially in mood and tempo. The use of solo voices and narrators has also been included to help give a variety of sound to this piece.

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THE LEGEND OF THE BLUE LIZARD

BEGINNING RHYMING SECTION:

ALL: A Cahuilla storyteller
 And a reptile dressed in blue
 Once told this native legend
 We now are telling you.

 And if you like the story
 Of this reptile dressed in blue,
 We hope you'll like it well enough
 To tell this story too!

ALL BOYS: In the dry Coachella Valley,
 Before we all were born,
 The Cahuilla native people
 Felt frightened and forlorn.

ALL GIRLS: Their children were afflicted
 With a sickly, deadly flu.
 No one could find the remedy
 To help them all pull through.

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ALL BOYS: So they prayed to the "Great Spirit"
 And soon he answered back...

SOLO VOICE 1: "Yes! I have the proper medicines,
 But still, the future's black.
 I'm clean out of delivery folk
 To bring meds to your village.
 Need someone I can trust
 To get them there with minor spillage."

ALL GIRLS: Then the spirit had a brilliant thought,
 A creative inspiration!
 He cried...

SOLO VOICE 1: "I'll **make** a messenger
 To fit this situation!"

ALL BOYS: Then he tore a strip out of the sky,
 He rolled it in his hands.
 He formed a tiny lizard
 To suit his godly plans.

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ALL GIRLS: The lizard knew his mission,
 And as strange as it may seem,
 He carried the medication
 Down to earth on a sunbeam!

ALL BOYS: The Cahuilla native people
 Could smile again – it's true!
 The children healed, the flu was gone,
 They prospered and they grew.

SOLO VOICE 2: But someone must have overlooked
 The thing all sunbeams lack.
 For those beams move from sky to earth

ALL: But never can move back!

ALL GIRLS: The lizard now was stranded.
 You know the reason why.

ALL BOYS: He couldn't walk the sunbeam
 To his home up in the sky.

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SOLO VOICE 3: The sad blue lizard sulked,
 And soon he grew home-sickly.
 He truly missed "Great Spirit"

ALL: And wanted home quite quickly.

(Narrators step forward to lead the following):

START OF PROSE/POETRY SECTION:

NARRATOR A: And so, one day the blue lizard decided to take matters into his own hands!

ALL: NO!

NARRATOR B: Yes he did. He decided he might find his way back to heaven if he climbed to the top of San Jacinto Mountain.

ALL: NO!

NARRATOR C: Yes he did. And early one morning he started to climb up the mountain.

*(**OPTIONAL:** Slap upper legs in rapid succession to make the sound of a lizard scampering up the mountain. This must be done in unison, starting and stopping at exactly the same time).*

ALL: WHAT HAPPENED?

NARRATOR A: Well the children saw him climbing and they softly called out:

ALL GIRLS: Don't you go!
 Don't dilly, don't dally.
 Stay here with us
 In the Coachella Valley.

NARRATOR B: And the blue lizard looked down on them softly called back...

ALL BOYS: No, no, no.
 Just leave me alone.
 I miss the "Great Spirit"
 And I want to go home!

NARRATOR C: The blue lizard turned and started climbing the mountain again.

*(**OPTIONAL:** Slap upper legs in rapid succession to make the sound of a lizard scampering up the mountain. This must be done in unison, starting and stopping at exactly the same time).*

ALL: WHAT HAPPENED?

NARRATOR A: Well the children saw him climbing again and this time they called out a little louder:

ALL GIRLS: Don't you go!
 Don't dilly, don't dally.
 Stay here with us
 In the Coachella Valley.

NARRATOR B: And the blue lizard looked down on them and called back a little louder... (CONTINUED)...

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