

The Footprints



A Story by
Laurie Bayly
District Counsellor, SD61

Based on Greater Victoria School District's Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement, *The Spirit of Alliances*.
Artwork on stones from *The Spirit of Alliances*: Jamin Zuroski, 'Namgis Nation
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Little Mouse and Little Frog loved to
play together.





When they played, Little Mouse wanted to run around and race through the dry grass.
Little Mouse always wanted to play running games.



Little Frog wanted to leap and hop.
Little Frog was so excited about jumping high and landing in the damp, sticky mud.
Little Frog always wanted to play hopping games.



That's when the problem came.

When the problem came, they tried to get rid of it.
Little mouse tried yelling,
“WE’RE PLAYING A RUNNING GAME!”



Little frog tried yelling,
“WE’RE PLAYING A HOPPING GAME!”





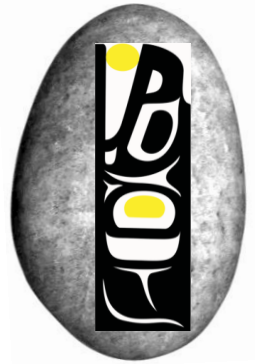
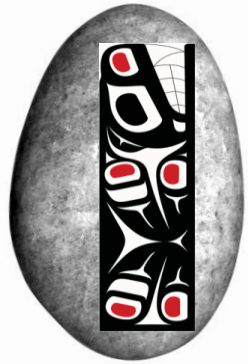
They tried telling each other, "I am NOT your friend anymore!"



They even tried to get rid of the problem by saying,
“I am never going to play with you EVER again!”

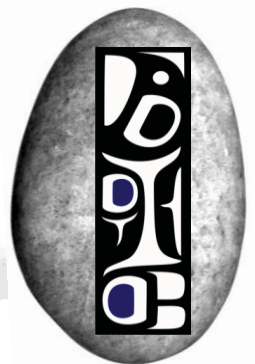
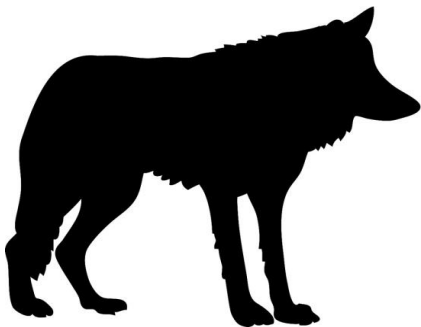


Nothing worked. The problem was still there.



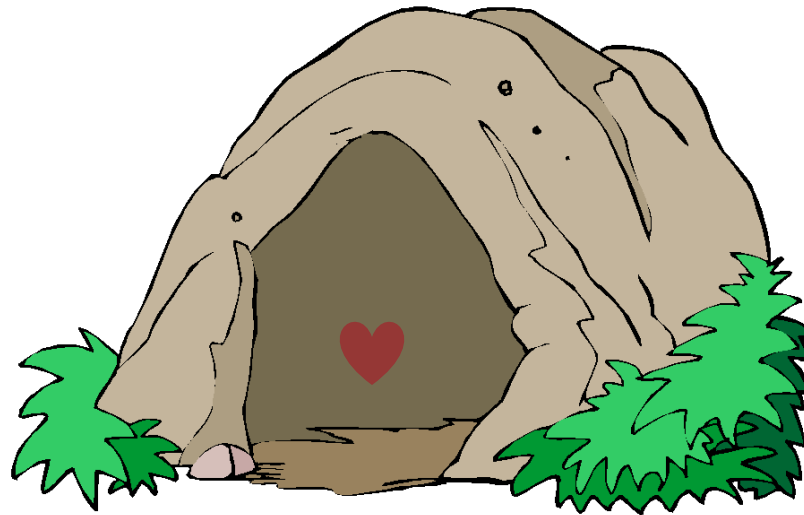
Although they did not know this, Little Mouse and Little Frog were not alone. Bear, Wolf, Raven and Salmon had gathered together because they could hear the problem echoing through the wind. They wanted to help their friends.

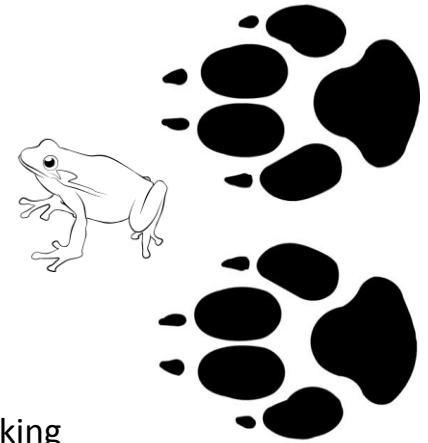
Raven, who was very clever, had an idea.
“Let’s use our footprints to show them the way.”



Bear spoke first.

“Before our friends can deal with the problem, they need to listen to their own feelings. They must take care of their own hearts and bodies. I am going to stand in front of my den to remind them to listen, to go inside and to take care of themselves.”



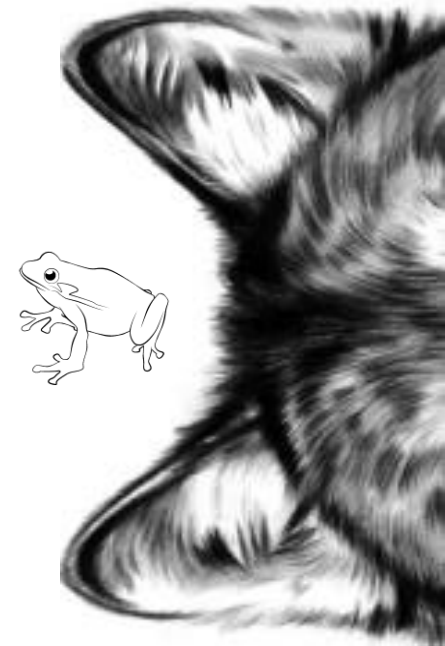
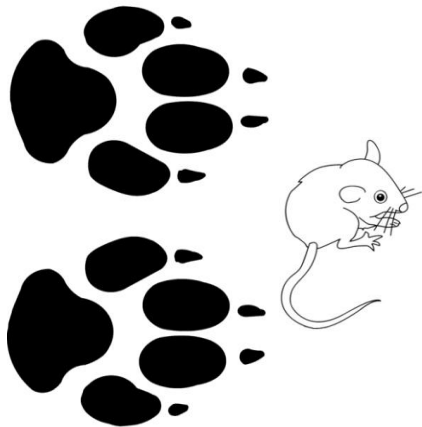


Wolf spoke up next.

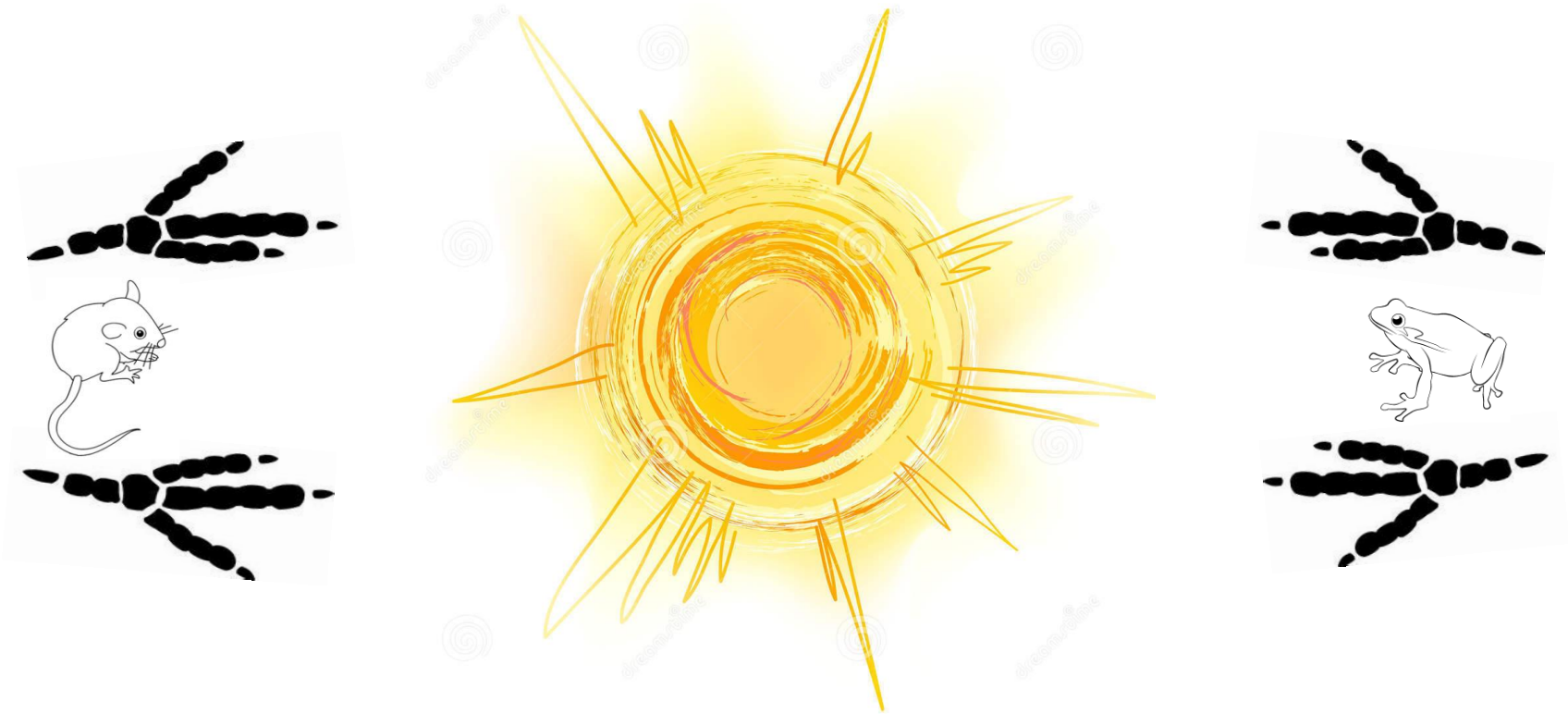
"I am going to use my paws and my ears. After listening and taking care of themselves, it will be time for them to listen to each other.

The one who stands on my paws will speak first. The other will stand on my ears to listen. Then they will switch.

They will both have a chance to understand each other and to remember that they are connected."

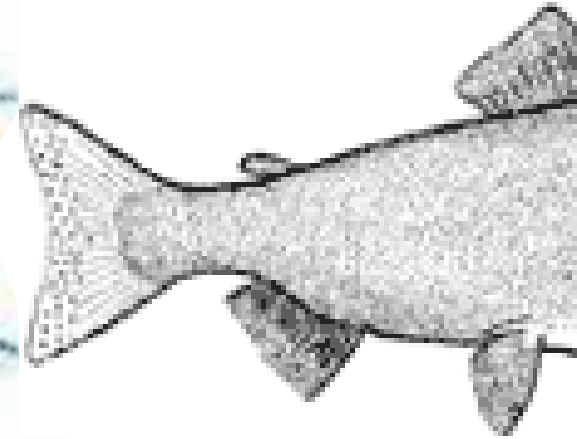
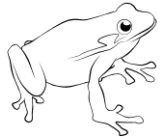
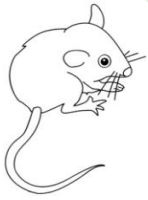


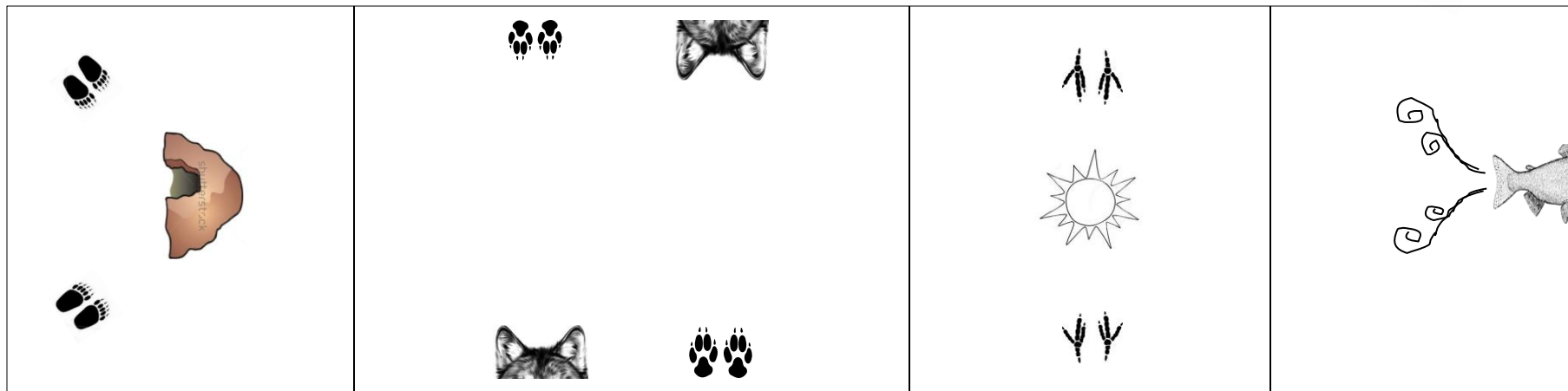
“And then,” said Raven,
“they can bring the problem right out into the bright sunshine. They don’t have to get stuck in it.”



Once they take care of themselves and listen and understand each other,
they will discover a new way to play together.”

Salmon's tail splashed in the water. "I will remind them that they can do it. Even when it's hard, they will get through it. They will keep trying and they will find their way."





And so, Little Mouse and Little Frog followed the footprints.

What do you think happened next?



Part 2: THE FOOTPRINTS

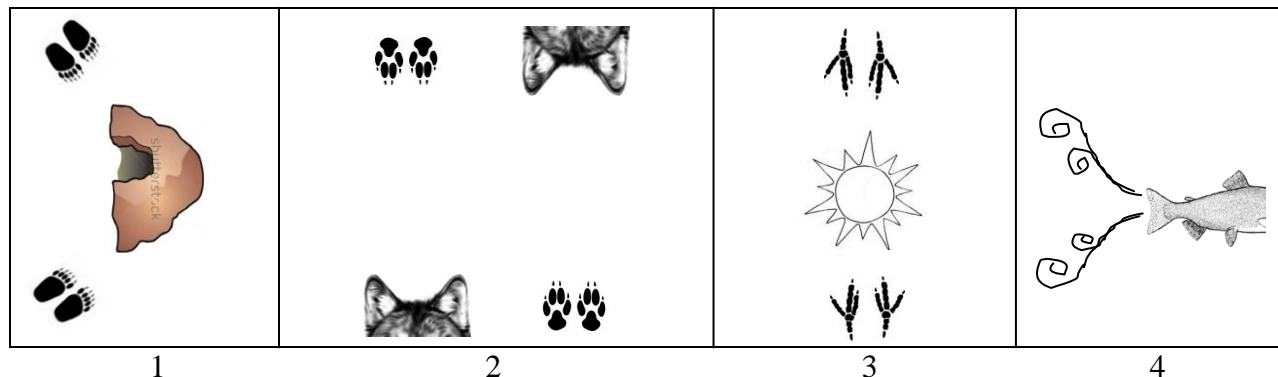
Using Bear, Wolf, Raven and Salmon to help find Peaceful Ways through Conflict

A guide for using the story, The Footprints.

Guiding students through the path:

There are 4 steps and the footprints are followed in order, from the Bear to the Salmon.

The first step is always to go into our own bear den.



Some ways to talk about the first step:

Conflicts can't be solved when our feelings are really big. We need to step back and find a calm place inside before trying to talk things out. We need to go into our own bear den and take care of ourselves. If we try to skip this step, we usually stay stuck in our big feelings and we can't work things out.

Calming ideas:

- 5 deep breaths (butterfly breaths, snake breaths, bee breaths...)
- take a quick walk
- run on the spot
- push ups against the wall
- freeze and thaw (tense all my muscles for 10 seconds, then release)
- find a quiet place to be
- close my eyes and picture someone who loves and supports me
- find a stone that feels good in my hands and hold on to it as a calming stone
- shake my arms, then legs to help the big feelings to move and not stay stuck inside me
- other ideas...



Bear: I take care of myself

I go into my den to calm my body.

This means I do what I need to do to help myself

When I am calm and ready to work it out, I stand on the Bear footprints.



Wolf: We take care of each other

(Each person has the opportunity to listen and to speak)



Wolf Ears

It is my turn to listen .

I pay attention to the other person.

I do not interrupt the other person.

I try to understand how the person is feeling and what they are wanting.

After the person has spoken, I repeat how the person feels and what they want.



Wolf Paws

It is my turn to speak.

I speak calmly and kindly.

I do not blame the other person.

I tell the other person how I feel.

I tell the other person what I want.

“When _____ I feel _____. I would like _____.”

eg. “When I don’t get a turn, I feel upset. I would like us to share taking turns.”



Raven: Together, we look for a creative solution

Words we might use as we explore the best way forward:

“We could...”

“What if we...”

“Let’s try...”

“What do you think about...”



Salmon: I make a commitment to keep trying, even when it’s hard

I remember that I might not get everything I want.

I remember that we are both trying hard to work it out.



I will remind myself, *I can do it.*

I thank the other person for working things out with me.


If they are not able to commit, go back to Raven and see if they can come up with other ideas, or back to Wolf if they are still needing to hear and understand each other. If it does not work out, encourage them to go back to Bear – ie. maybe they need some space from each other/the game and taking that space is the best way to deal with the problem right now. It doesn’t mean the problem can’t be worked through, but that for now, the best thing they can do to take care of themselves and each other is to take some space.

Footprints Guide

For students to use as a reference. You'll need 2 sets of cards, one set for each person. Cards can be cut out and laminated and put on a key ring, or placed along the path on either side.





WOLF:
We take care of each other



It is my turn to listen.
I pay attention to the other person.
I do not interrupt the other person.



After the person has spoken,
I repeat how the person feels and
what they want.




SALMON:
**I make a commitment to keep trying,
even when it's hard**

I remember that I might not get
everything I want.
I will remind myself, *I can do it.*

I thank the other person for working
things out with me.





WOLF:
We take care of each other



It is my turn to speak.
I speak calmly and kindly.

"When _____ I feel _____.

I would like _____."



BEAR:
I take care of myself

I go into my den to calm my body.

When I am calm and ready to work it out,
I stand on the Bear footprints.



RAVEN:
**Together, we look for a creative
solution**

Words we might use:

"We could..."

"What if we..."

"Let's try..."