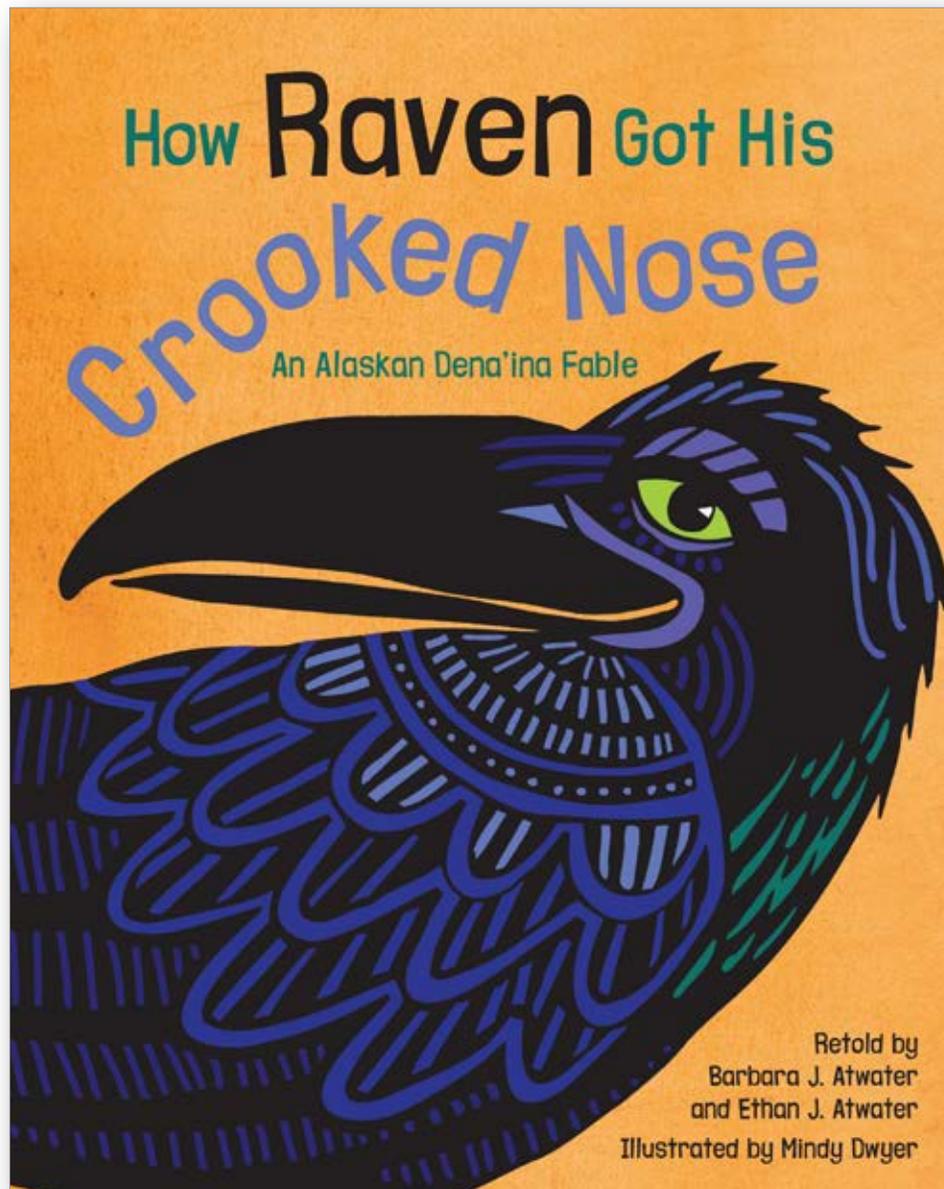




BOOK GUIDE FOR  
***How Raven Got  
His Crooked Nose***  
***An Alaskan Dena'ina Fable***

Retold by Barbara J. Atwater and Ethan J. Atwater  
Illustrated by Mindy Dwyer



Fry Readability: 3

Lexile Measure: AD530L

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# SUMMARY

A grandmother tells her granddaughter the tale of Chulyen the trickster raven, who loses his nose in an accident but vows to get it back using his magic powers. The story comes from the Alaskan Dena'ina people to teach lessons to the younger generations.



## About the Authors

Barbara J. Atwater is the daughter of George and Dolly (Foss) Jacko and was raised in the village of Pedro Bay, Alaska. Her great uncle, respected Dena'ina elder Walter Johnson, told her many Dena'ina fables, including the story of Chulyen the Raven, that she felt needed to be shared. Barbara has retired from teaching but continues to educate people about the Dena'ina culture.



Ethan J. Atwater is Barbara's son and was also raised in Pedro Bay. As a lover of stories, he enjoyed listening to his great, great uncle's fables and learning about the Dena'ina people and his culture in this way. Ethan lives in Anchorage, Alaska.

## About the Illustrator

Mindy Dwyer is the author and illustrator of several Alaska-inspired books, including *Aurora, A Tale of the Northern Lights* and *The Salmon Princess*. Her favorite stories have always been the fairy tales, where a kind of magic still dances in the shadows from an ancient world. Find her at [mindydwyer.com](http://mindydwyer.com)



# READING DISCUSSION

## Before Reading

Look at the book title and predict what the story will be about. What do you think Raven's "crooked nose" refers to? Why do you think it's shaped on the cover like that?

This story is retold by mother and son Barbara J. Atwater and Ethan J. Atwater. How is a story "retold" by someone different from it being "written" by someone? What hints does that tell you about what kind of story *How Raven Got His Crooked Nose* is?

Define the terms "fable," "legend," and "myth." Think about some fables, legends, or myths you know already, either from books and movies or from your family.

The back cover shows two panel boxes that look different from the rest of the cover. Talk about why they look different and what is happening inside. Predict what you'll find on the pages inside the book.

Discuss what comics are and how they tell stories as opposed to a traditional picture book.

## After Reading

From looking at the illustrations on the first page, talk about why Grandmother is telling Granddaughter this story. What is the Chulyen's story meant to teach? Why does Grandmother think about Chulyen's story when she sees Granddaughter on this page?

Some pages have some small words at the bottom. What language are these in? What do each of the words mean?

Discuss how the pages of Grandmother and Granddaughter look different from the pages of Chulyen's story. Which one reminds you of the two panels on the back cover?

When Chida finds Chulyen's nose, she uses it as a tool for many things. Name the ways she uses his nose and how Chulyen's nose changes in the end because of Chida.

What does Chulyen's special powers allow him to do? Look at him in his raven and human forms and compare the two. How are they similar or different?

Look at the first and last illustrations we see of Chulyen and spot the differences.

There were two different stories going on at the same time in this book. Look at the pages of just Grandmother and Granddaughter and summarize what's happening there. What are they doing? Then look at Chulyen's story and do the same.

## SOCIAL HISTORY

The Dena'ina people are a Native people who live in the southern part of Alaska. Look at the "More About Alaskan Dena'ina Stories" note at the back of the book and summarize a few points about who the Dena'ina people are and the stories they tell.

## SCIENCE

Write down some things that you've seen birds do with their beaks. Then do some research and find some other uses for beaks. Does Raven do any of these activities?

## CREATIVE WRITING

The story never mentions how Chulyen lost his nose in the first place, but Grandmother guesses it might have been an embarrassing incident. Make up a story about how you think he might have lost his nose. Draw a picture to illustrate your story.

### Did You Know...

- The Common Raven is the largest of the perching birds and can be found across all of the United States and most of Canada. Ravens are as big as hawks and have a 4-foot wingspan!
- Ravens are acrobatic fliers! They can do somersaults in the air and even fly upside down.
- The raven is one of the smartest animals. Among the most intelligent birds, they can communicate a range of messages through its calls and can even solve puzzles.
- A group of ravens is called a "bazaar," "constable," or "rant" of ravens.

## ARTS & CRAFTS

Create your own raven! There are several bird crafts online, but here are some ideas:

[https://www.craftideas.info/html/paper\\_crow\\_b.html](https://www.craftideas.info/html/paper_crow_b.html)

<https://origami.wonderhowto.com/how-to/make-spooky-origami-raven-for-halloween-380652/>

