

Upriver to Morning Character Biographies

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Animal Characters:

With **SALMON**, we experience a river that pushes against us, day and night, in the opposite direction of our swim. Through Salmon, we learn about perseverance and strength, when to accept help, the importance of giving back, setting goals, and how to express gratitude.

With **COYOTE** we strut, boast, and dramatize stories. Throughout the journey, Coyote's dogged devotion to Salmon and his friends is absolute. With Coyote we laugh, we are entertained, and we discover the meaning of loyalty. He keeps us chuckling with his unpredictable humor, and we laugh at his exaggerated charm and all too familiar foibles.

Consistent with **DEER WOMAN**, community and homeland are important to us. We retreat with her into the mountains when life in the valley feels out of balance. We seek protection among the Old Ones, the Rock People, and Tree People. We offer kindness, patience, and comfort at every opportunity.

The world of **RED-TAILED HAWK** is the sky. We fly alongside her. She is the selfless Winged-Watcher who oversees the passage of those traveling below. As Guardian, she keeps her travelers informed of what lies ahead. She demonstrates qualities of responsibility, caregiving, foresight, and communication.

RIVER HAWK saves the life of Salmon when it's the right thing to do. We learn with Hawk that selfless acts of kindness can involve personal sacrifice while benefiting the greater whole.

EEL: With Eel, we know that life is a beautiful thing if we can put some music to it. With music we celebrate events, increase energy and focus, unify with our surroundings, and bring good to the world. Eel shares her music as her most precious medicine.

JACKRABBIT: With Jackrabbit, we are in tune with the surface of the world; its dirt, foliage, flowered meadows, wildfire scars, burrows, and

boulders. We get around with ease. Our ears are quick to sense life and weather stirring around us. We learn that we possess the ability to inspire others to do the right thing, such as becoming a friend, which will nourish us far longer than a single meal.

BEAR: With Bear, we dream – which invites many long naps – but also, we understand the importance of dreaming. We know our dreams have much to teach us. With Bear, we live in the real world and the dream world, equally, because Bear is both a land animal and a sky animal. By land we love to eat ripe huckleberries, and in the celestial world, we are responsible for circling the seasons around the North Star.

MORNING STAR: represents universal wisdom and the good sense and warm heart that lives inside each one of us. When we finally meet her at Boundary Springs, she tells us that we have gathered essential teachings along the way. From now on, they are part of who we are. Along the journey, we too became the wisdom keepers, and will pass on these trusted truths to all who come after us. Like any elder, Morning Star is a good teacher because she unlocks the wisdom already within us.

Earth Element Characters:

WIND & WATER PEOPLE have important chores to accomplish each night, keeping stars afloat in the sky, and the ocean stirred.

ROCK PEOPLE are good listeners and offer stability in an otherwise dynamic world.

TREE PEOPLE (the ONE-LEGGEDS) pass information through the forests on the wings of birds and clean the air we breathe.

FIRE PEOPLE keep Creatures warm inside their shelters during the dark of winter and keep the forests healthy and uncluttered.

GRASS PEOPLE are light-hearted souls who love to dance in the wind. Without a worry in the world, they live in the present, and celebrate every moment with no concerns of what is to come.