

Name _____

Skill: Reading Comprehension

Read the story and answer the questions.

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Tall Tales

Many types of stories, such as myths and fables, began in Europe and Asia, but the tall tale is a completely American invention. Perhaps you have heard of some of the most famous tall tales - Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox, Rip Van Winkle or Pecos Bill. What do all of these characters have in common? All of the characters were honorable heroes and fought on the side of good. For example, Pecos Bill was thought to have lassoed a cyclone to save his neighbors. Early American settlers did not have televisions or radios. For entertainment, they sat around campfires spinning, or making up, tall tales. Later, they would tell their children and grandchildren the stories, always exaggerating just a little bit. It was not important for these stories to be historically correct. It was only important that they were fun. Next time you hear a tall tale, remember that these "yarns" had their start in America.

1. What is the main idea of this story? (Circle the answer)

- A. You cannot believe a tall tale.
- B. Tall tales began in America.
- C. Myths and fables began in Europe and Asia.

2. Why was Pecos Bill considered a hero?

3. If you were telling a "yarn," you might be accused of: (Circle the answer)

- A. exaggerating the details of a story
- B. telling the truth
- C. telling only your side of a story

4. What characteristics do the heroes of tall tales share?

5. Would you rather watch TV or sit around a campfire making up stories with friends and family? Explain your answer.
