



Virtual Firefly Lesson: Firefly Folklore

In this lesson, participants will travel back in time to discover firefly folklore and the magic fireflies created for different communities.

Folklore is a story that is passed on from generation to generation by word of mouth, which is why you can find multiple stories that are slightly different from one another. Many countries have folklore associated with their people or land. Below you will find 2 different tales, one from North America and one from the Philippines, both citing fireflies.

The Origin of Fire (The Apache Tribe – North America)

Here is a tale from before there was fire, or so we thought... On a fox's journey to discover fire for the world, it stumbled upon a fireflies' village. There was a fire that constantly burned in the center the village. The sly fox befriended the fireflies and had a gathering around the fire where they played music and danced all night. When no one was watching, the fox tied a piece of wood to his tail, lit it in the fire, and ran away as fast as he could! With the fireflies hot on his tail, the fox grew tired and handed off the burning piece of wood to a crane who flew southward, scattering fire sparks everywhere. This was how fire first spread over the earth.

As the fireflies caught up to the fox they exclaimed, "Forever after, Wily Fox, your punishment for stealing our fire will be that you can never make use of it for yourself."



For the Apache tribe, this too, was the beginning of fire for them. Soon, they learned to use it for cooking their food and keeping themselves warm in cold weather.

Interested in reading the whole tale? [Check it out here.](#)

Fore more information on the map above [click here](#) to read the Ancient Origins article.

For a more detailed map of Indigenous territories, [click here.](#)

The Legend of Kapre (Philippines)

In a country far away, there's a tale of a creature known as kapre. It is described to be a nocturnal creature that can be found inhabiting woody areas, such as forests. It is recognized as a generally mischievous character, known to play tricks on humans, but kapre can become vengeful when a tree they are inhabiting gets cut down. It is a tall, hairy, long-legged, and red-eyed creature that smokes a smelly pipe. It is believed that if you come across an abundance of fireflies in a woody area, that they are the embers from kapre's pipe.

Is there a lesson in this tale? What do you think the contributors of this wanted to teach the youth of the area?

