

Shingbiss and The North Wind



Suggested Age Range: 7 - 8 years; 8 - 9 years; 9 - 10 years; 10 - 11 years; Adult;

UK Curriculum: Key Stage Two (Upper);

Suggested UK Year Group: Year Five

UK Primary Curriculum Link: Earth and Space

Science Subject: Seasonal Changes

Science Questions: Why do we have Seasons?

Suggested Science Activity: Seasons

Children with SEND: Use to boost comprehension of science vocabulary

EAL children: For intermediate learners

Country of Origin: First Nations of America

Source: Unknown

Contributed by Fran Stallings, USA

Long ago in the far, far North of what is now called America, it was not possible for the people to stay in their homes throughout the year. For when the North Wind came, they had to move away to the warmer lands down South. As so as Summer changed to Autumn, the people would be wait for the first signs and sounds of The North Wind blowing through their land.

Now it was said that The North Wind was made of ice, with icicles for his hair and beard. It was said that even his heart was made of ice, for he loved to watch the world begin to freeze and wither and die as he swept throughout the land.

Pah! With each icy breath, snow would fall and cover the trees and bushes. The leaves would turn brown and the fruit and berries would fall.

Pah! With each icy breath, the snow would fall deeper and deeper, flattening and the long, long grass and smothering any signs of life.

Pah! With each icy breath, he would turn rivers and lakes and streams into ice

And there was never any pity in his soul, for the loss of all the life.

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And so, as soon as they heard the first winter wind beginning to murmur through the prairie grass, the people would prepare to leave.

They would take their leather off their tents, untie the poles and pile them up, pack all their clothes inside the leather and tie it all onto their backs.

And then they would leave their winter home, elders and children, all of them staggering a little under the weight of carrying their home, with hundreds of miles to walk before they could rest.

And so the people began to fear the end of Autumn each year.

Except for one young girl, Shingbiss.

She didn't want to leave her home in the North.

She hated watching her people suffer as they travelled back and forth.

"Why cant we stay?" "Because we cannot survive The North Wind "

"But we do we always give in to him?" "Because he would kill us if we stayed!"

"Why don't we fight for our home?" "You cannot fight The North Wind!"

And the little girl disagreed with that! "Well we could try!"

And so she did.

She began to experiment with ways of keeping warm through the cold of Winter.

Each summer, the people cut the long grass and placed it under their blanket at night, and she noticed that lying on the cut grass was warmer than lying directly on the ground.

So, she cut more of the grass and placed it around the walls of her tent.

That made it a little warmer but not enough.

So, she cut and stitched a second layer of leather to go inside the first.

And between the two layers she stuffed more grass. Now that was a lot warmer!

She stuffed the long grass inside her shoes, she stuffed it inside her hood and her head and her toes felt cosy and warm!

She experimented too, with using the dried grass and sticks to keep a fire burning.

She trained herself to wake up every hour to feed the fire, so it stayed alight throughout the night, and so the air inside the tent stayed cosy and warm.

Then she began to experiment with food.

In the heat of the summer sun, she dried some berries and found they remained good to eat. She dried some meat and it too, when dried, tasted good to eat.

She thought about how she could hunt and fish even in the depths of winter.

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Until at last she was ready! Except - she felt frightened inside.
She didn't want to admit it even to herself - but what if she was wrong?
And so ... she began to sing:

*I'm not afraid, I'm not afraid.
Whatever North Wind does, I won't be afraid, I won't be afraid. I won't be afraid.
Whatever North Wind does, I shan't be afraid, I shan't be afraid, I shan't!*

And she began to feel a little braver inside.

And Summer turned into Autumn and Autumn turned into winter,
and the people heard the first sounds of the North Wind. **PAH!**
They took down their tents, they packed all their belongings and got ready to move.

Except for one little tent! The people turned and looked at the tent.
"Shingbiss - come on, we need to go?"
And they heard a voice singing inside the tent:

*I'm not afraid, I'm not afraid.
Whatever North Wind does, I won't be afraid, I won't be afraid. I won't be afraid.
Whatever North Wind does, I shan't be afraid, I shan't be afraid, I shan't!*

And Shingbiss said "**I am staying!**"
And whatever the people said, she would not listen.
And so they left her there all alone.
And as the cold began to settle around the deserted camp, Shingbiss felt so alone.

So she sang to herself:

*I'm not afraid, I'm not afraid.
Whatever North Wind does, I won't be afraid, I won't be afraid. I won't be afraid.
Whatever North Wind does, I shan't be afraid, I shan't be afraid, I shan't!*

And she waited.

North Wind strode across the land. As he breathed, snow began to fall, the leaves turned brown, berries and fruit began to drop to the ground. The long, long grass withered, the rivers turned to ice and all life fled before him. And North Wind smiled.

But ...

There in the middle of the prairie, was a tent!
Someone had stayed!
And then from inside the tent he heard a voice singing;

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I'm not afraid, I'm not afraid.

Whatever North Wind does, I won't be afraid, I won't be afraid. I won't be afraid.

Whatever North Wind does, I shan't be afraid, I shan't be afraid, I shan't!

It was a little girl!. He would show her, how foolish she was, not to be afraid of him!

And North Wind blew; **PAH!**

And the lake, by which her little tent stood - turned to ice.

But, then as he watched, the flap of the tent opened and out she walked.

She was dressed from top to toe in leather, with the dried grass stuffed inside the leather,

She looked ridiculous - but warm!

And she walked across the snow, in her insulated shoes, and then onto the ice.

She took out a knife and cut a hole and lowered a fishing line. And even though the air was freezing cold, she seemed comfortably warm.

And as she fished she sang:

I'm not afraid, I'm not afraid.

Whatever North Wind does, I won't be afraid, I won't be afraid. I won't be afraid.

Whatever North Wind does, I shan't be afraid, I shan't be afraid, I shan't!

The North Wind was furious! He watched as she walked back to her tent, clutching a fish, and then he heard the sound of the fish being cooked on the fire.

And she sang as she cooked and she sang as she ate:

I'm not afraid, I'm not afraid.

Whatever North Wind does, I won't be afraid, I won't be afraid. I won't be afraid.

Whatever North Wind does, I shan't be afraid, I shan't be afraid, I shan't!

North Wind seethed with rage.

He marched up to the tent, and breathed a huge icy breath inside. **Pah!**

But the tent stayed warm!

He went into the tent and breathed again **Pah!**

But the tent stayed warm!

He sat down close to the fire and breathed again. **Pah!**

But, the little girl put more dried grass on the fire, the fire stayed burning and the tent stayed warm!

But then ... to his horror the North Wind noticed that he was getting warm!

He could feel the ice in his hair start to melt and trickle down his face!

No! He ran outside and rolled around in the snow until he was ice once more!

But he didn't dare go back to the tent! He knew that he was beaten.

And as he walked away, he heard a voice singing:

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I'm not afraid, I'm not afraid.

Whatever North Wind does, I won't be afraid, I won't be afraid. I won't be afraid.

Whatever North Wind does, I shan't be afraid, I shan't be afraid, I shan't!

And so when the people came back from the South, they saw to their delight that the little tent was still there! And there was Shingbiss waiting for them!

And she was still singing!

I'm not afraid, I'm not afraid.

Whatever North Wind does, I won't be afraid, I won't be afraid. I won't be afraid.

Whatever North Wind does, I shan't be afraid, I shan't be afraid, I shan't!

And they knew that she was right.

And so Shingbiss taught them all how to survive winter, and so they stayed, unafraid.