

Tall Tales

1. True or False

- Tall tales were especially popular in the 18th and the 19th centuries.
- One of the best known statues of Paul Bunyan is located in Bemidji.
- Pecos Bill is credited with digging the Rio Grande with his bare hands.
- The tale of Johnny Appleseed is based on a real person.
- American tall tales are usually realistic and grounded.

Answer Key: a. true; b. true; c. true; d. true; e. false

2. Match each adjective to its opposite meaning.

fictional • enormous • humble • ordinary • valuable

- worthless
- amazing
- real
- miniature
- arrogant

Answer Key: a. valuable; b. ordinary; c. fictional; d. enormous; e. humble

3. Fill in the gaps with the correct words.

of • for • it • by • to

- Legend has ___ that Bill was raised by coyotes.
- The tall tales were spread ___ word of mouth.
- The over-exaggerated exploits of American folk heroes make ___ great campfire stories.
- John Henry remains a symbol ___ determination.
- John Chapman dedicated his life to planting apple trees across the Midwest, encouraging settlers ___ grow orchards and live sustainably.

Answer Key: a. it; b. by; c. for; d. of; e. to

4. Fill in the gaps with appropriate articles (a, an or the).

(a) tale of John Henry is rooted in strength and perseverance. John challenged _(b)_ steam-powered drill to _(c)_ contest. _(d)_ railway worker won, but it came at _(e)_ cost – he later died from exhaustion.

Answer Key: a. The; b. a; c. a; d. The; e. a

5. Match each feat to the folk hero it's attributed to. One hero performed two of the feats listed.

lassoing a thunderstorm • cutting down a forest in a day • digging the Rio Grande • planting apple trees across the Midwest

Johnny Appleseed:

Pecos Bill:

Paul Bunyan:

Johnny Appleseed: planting apple trees across the Midwest
Pecos Bill: lassoing a thunderstorm, digging the Rio Grande
Paul Bunyan: cutting down a forest in a day

Answer Key:

6. Discuss the topics.

- Are there any famous Polish folk heroes? Do you know about their exploits?
- What moral lessons do Polish folk legends try to teach?
- What traits make someone a hero in Polish legends?
- Do you think it's important to preserve folk legends in the modern age? Why?