The Black Crow

In ancient times, the people hunted the buffalo on the Great Plains. These huge animals were their source of food and clothing. With stone-tipped spears, they stalked the great beasts through the tall grasses. It was difficult and dangerous work, but they were forced to do it in order to survive.

At that time, there were many crows flying above the plains, as there are today. But unlike the crows we see now, these birds were white. And they were friends to the buffalo, which caused the hunters no end of travail. The white crows flew high above the plains, where they could see all that was happening below. And when they saw that hunters were approaching the herd, they would warn the buffalo. Swooping down low, they would land on the heads of the great beasts and call out to them: "Beware! Beware! Hunters are coming from the south! Caw, caw. Beware!" And the buffalo would stampede, leaving the hunters empty-handed.

This went on for some time, until the people were hungry, and something needed to be done. A council was convened, and the chief of the people spoke to them. "We must capture the chief of the crows, and teach him a lesson," he said. If we can frighten him, he will stop warning the buffalo when our hunters approach, and the other crows will stop as well."

The old chief then brought out a buffalo skin, one with the head and horns still attached. "With this, we can capture the chief of the crows," he said. And he gave the skin to one of the tribe's young braves, a man known as Long Arrow. "Disguise yourself with this, and hide among the buffalo in the herd," the chief told Long Arrow. "Then, when the chief of the crows approaches, you will capture him and bring him back to the tribe."

So Long Arrow donned the buffalo skin disguise and went out onto the plains. Carefully, he approached a large herd of buffalo and mingled among them, pretending to graze upon the grasses. He moved slowly with the herd as they sought fresh food, and he waited for the great white bird that was the chief of the crows.

The other braves made ready for the hunt. They prepared their stone-tipped spears and arrows, and they approached the grazing herd of beasts, hiding in ravines and behind rocks to try to sneak up on them. But the crows, flying high in the sky, saw everything.
The chief of the crows saw the men in the ravines and tall grasses, and eventually he came gliding down to warn the buffalo of the approaching hunters.

Hearing the great white crow's warning, the herd ran from the hunters. All stampeded across the plains except Long Arrow, still in his disguise. Seeing that Long Arrow remained, and thinking that he was a buffalo like all the others, the great white crow flew to him and landed upon his head. "Caw, caw. Hunters are approaching! Have you not heard my warning? Why do you remain here?" But as the great bird cried out, Long Arrow reached from under his disguise and grabbed the bird's feet, capturing him. He pushed him into a rawhide bag and brought him back to the tribal council.

The people debated what to do with the chief of the crows. Some wanted to cut his wings, so that he could not fly. Some wanted to kill him, and some wanted to remove his feathers as punishment for making the tribe go hungry. Finally, one brave strode forward in anger, grabbed the rawhide bag that held the bird, and before anyone could prevent it, threw it into the fire.

As the fire burned the rawhide bag, the big bird struggled to escape. Finally, he succeeded in getting out of the bag and managed to fly out of the fire, but his feathers were singed and covered with black soot from the fire. The chief of the crows was no longer white; he was black - as crows are today.

And from that day forward, all crows have been black. And although they fly above the plains and can see all that transpires below, they no longer warn the buffalo that hunters are approaching.

Q 1 According to the passage, the people used stone spears to hunt the buffalo because

They needed to eat.

They needed to eat.

They were plentiful.

They had no horses.

They had no metal.
Q 2 The word travail means

Travel.

Anger.

Fear.

Difficulty.

Q 3 Which statement best describes what the chief of the crows represents in this passage?

He symbolizes all that is evil.

He is a symbol representing all crows.

He represents the animal kingdom.

He represents other predators who compete with the tribe.

Q 4 Which of the following best describes the people's motivation for wanting to capture the chief of the crows?

They wanted to eat him.

They wanted to turn him black.

They were hungry.

They hated birds.
Q 5 Long Arrow's activities among the herd while disguised imply that he

Had time to kill.

Had forgotten his stone-tipped spear.

Wanted to fool the crows.

Wanted to fool the buffalo.

Q 6 In this tale, the rawhide bag and stone-tipped spears are both details that

Paint a picture of the primitive culture of the people.

Make it clear that the people were dependent upon the buffalo.

Are important for the outcome of the tale.

Show how the people hunted.

Q 7 Why might the chief of the crows have landed upon Long Arrow's head after seeing the other buffalo stampede away?

He wanted to see the disguise.

He had no fear of men.

He thought his warning had not been heard.
He thought that Long Arrow was an injured buffalo.

Once the bird has been caught, what emotions are revealed by the people's deliberations about how to deal with him?

Hunger

A feeling of celebration now that the bird has been caught

A calm resolve to change the birds' behavior

Anger

What does the story tell us about why Long Arrow was selected for this task?

He was related to the chief.

He was able to act like a buffalo.

He was the bravest man in the tribe.

The story says nothing about why he was selected.

What does this story suggest that the American Indians thought of crows?

They disliked the people in the tribe.

They were selfish animals.
They were clever animals.

They were dirty animals.

**The passage suggests that the Spray was**

A packet.

A sailboat.

A bus.

A jet of water.

**The author found that, since his previous visit, the greatest changes in Buenos Aires had taken place:**

At the bank.

At a lemonade stand.

At the harbor.

Downtown.

**The author was shown around Buenos Aires by Mr. Mulhall. How did he come to know Mr. Mulhall?**

They met through a letter of introduction.

They met on the docks.
They had previously met in Ireland.

They had met on the author's first visit to the city.

**The passage suggests that the "Standard" was**

An ocean chart.

A newspaper.

A sailboat.

A steam packet.

**The author uses the term "landmarks" to refer to**

Monuments.

Merchants.

Buildings.

Banks.