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Sommario/riassunto	To many Native American cultures, songs and stories are dramatic enactments of reality, and words bring reality into existence. In this chapter from his award-winning book, <i>The Anguish of Snails</i> , Toelken thoughtfully approaches a number of stories from Native American traditions, discussing how narratives can be touchstones of shared values among closely associated traditional people and how songs and stories go far beyond an evening's entertainment or ""lessons" about life. A traditional narrative can be a culturally structured way of thinking and of experiencing the patterns that make cultur