

# Native American Cultures across the United States

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## Grade Level

Appropriate for grades K-2

## Overview of Unit

This unit will enable elementary students to gain a broader understanding of similarities and differences among four main Native American cultures. Aspects that will be considered will consist of clothing, food, gender roles, family organization, religion, values, and shelter. The students will be exposed to different literature related to each specific culture. Students will also work on different projects that are associated with the cultures and create pages to complete a book of Native American cultures.

## Goals and Objectives

The goals of this unit are for students to: learn similarities and differences between Native American cultures in the United States, types . Students will achieve this goal through the following objectives: listening to various literature including children's books and oral stories, compiling their own knowledge into a summative book of Native American cultures, discussing similarities and differences they notice between the cultures, and finally creating a collage of their knowledge to serve as a cover for their book.

## Procedures

### Day 1: Introduction

Discuss the Native American cultures of present day, trail of tears

**Day 2:**

**Day 3:** After reviewing the Navajo culture and reading “Navajo Weaver” from the book Children of the Earth and Sky by Stephen Krensky have the students imagine they have just visited a Navajo Indian tribe and want to write a letter to a friend about what they have learned. Have them think about the Navajo’s way of life: their shelter, their customs, the roles of the tribe, etc. Have the students include as much information as possible. After students have written their letters have each student make a weaving on the back of their letter. After letter and weaving are finished have each student present their letter to the class then include it in their book.

Resources: <http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org>

**Procedure:**

- Review the culture of the Navajo Indians, how they build their shelter and get their food, their customs, and the roles of the different people in their culture.
- Read the story the “Navajo Weaver” from the book Children of the Earth and Sky by Stephen Krensky.
- After covering the Navajo culture ask the students to write a letter to one of their friends telling them about the Navajo culture.
- Have the students include all of the important information about the Navajo culture in their letter.

- After all of the students have written their letters have the students weave their own Navajo weaving on the back of their letters.
- After weavings and letters are finished have the students present their letters and weavings to the class.
- The letters and weavings help the students review the Navajo culture from the different student perspectives.

**Day 4:** -Begin by showing location on map (Great Plains)

-Introduce today's lesson with a few facts about the Sioux

1. Also know as the Lakota
2. Consumed buffalo meat
3. Important tradition was the Peace Pipe
4. Today they live on reservations in North and South Dakota
5. Found horse (brought by Spanish) valuable in hunting and travel

- Students should be encouraged to log all information on a page for their final book, including illustration.

- Display photographs of the Sioux' clothing, housing, etc through PowerPoint presentation or alternate means of visual representation

- Read the story "[The Women Who Lived with the Wolves](#)" (read in both English and Lakota). Story is derived from the website listed under "sources"

- If possible, print both English and Lakota translation onto an overhead slide and allow students to compare and contrast the Lakota and English language

- Students may also hear actual spoken words of the Sioux [here](#)

-A chart is also available from "edsitement" website to allow students to translate from English to Lakota

-Close by joining hands in a circle and listening to their native music.

Resources:

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/default.asp>

[www.ic.arizona.edu/ic/kmartin/school/lakotah.htm](http://www.ic.arizona.edu/ic/kmartin/school/lakotah.htm)

[language.nativeweb.org/lakota\\_story.htm](http://language.nativeweb.org/lakota_story.htm)

Assessment:

Assessment on this particular day will be informal. Progress will be measured by observation; that is, children's participation, motivation, and involvement. Students will be expected to be attentive, ask questions, and demonstrate an understanding of the topic.

### **Day 5**

Begin the lesson by telling students the myth *Grandmother Spider Steals the Fire*.

Explain that it's a Choctaw creation myth. After you tell the myth, talk about the different characters in the myth and why they might have created this myth. Also, discuss how Grandmother Spider helped the Choctaws and how she did so.

Point out on the map that the Choctaws live in the southeast US. Discuss the daily lives of the Choctaws, such as housing, food, clothing, games and entertainment, and culture using the website.

Allow students to work on a worksheet about the Choctaws to put in their Native American book.

Discuss pottery with the students, and how the Choctaws use pottery in their everyday lives. Also discuss how the Choctaws use pottery today as a way of celebrating their cultural heritage. Show them the kinds of designs they put on their pottery. Remind the students how Grandmother Spider showed the Choctaws in the story how to create pottery when she gave them the gift of fire.

Give each student a worksheet. Explain the symbols and the assigned meaning of the colors.

Then allow the students to make pinch pots of self-hardening clay. Have them each carve one of the Choctaw designs into their pottery using sticks, and paint the pots using at least one of the sacred colors of the Choctaws. Then have students leave their pots to dry. In a few days, they will have a pinch pot like the Choctaw clay pots.

After doing the pottery, have the students draw a picture of their pot that they made, making sure they drew the Choctaw design and their chosen colors on their drawing of the pot. On the same sheet, have the students write a reflection telling why they chose that particular design and color. Have them relate what it meant to the Choctaw and what these designs and colors mean to them.

## **Day 6**

-Adapted by Active Learning Strategy #92

- “This exercise uses the activity of making a picture collage to enable students to assess themselves in a creative way.”

1. After reviewing the week's activities and discussions, students will gather resources, including magazines, internet references, etc, to incorporate in their collage. Examples that might be used include:

- Navajo- Weaving, Official Flag, Livestock, Window Rock, etc
- Sioux- Rice and Herbs, Buffalo, Horses, Wolves, etc
- Choctaw- Baskets, Food, Clothing, Deer, etc
- Iroquois- Long Houses, Feathers from Headdresses, clothing, etc

2. Each student will receive a blank map of the United States. Through the studies of the Native Americans, students should be able to identify each tribe and their location on the map.

3. By keeping a recording of information given throughout the week, students will be able to find items unique to each culture to incorporate onto their map.

4. Students are given many craft items to create their collage (see rubric)

Suggestions:

- Words from magazine advertisements
- Use markers to add own words or images
- Apply relevant visual images
- Create a gallery of collages for students to tour and comment on

### **Essential Questions**

What are some Native American cultures that exist in the United States?

How do the different Native American cultures appear similar and different?

## **Standards**

### Academic Expectation 2.20

- Students understand, analyze, and interpret historical events, conditions, trends, and issues to develop historical perspective.

### Program of Studies:

- SS-P-CS-2
  - Students will understand that diverse groups celebrate heritage and culture in a variety of ways.
- SS-P-CS-3
  - Students will recognize the roles individuals have in various groups.

### Core Content for Assessment:

- SS-E-5.2.1
  - Native American cultures, both in Kentucky and the United States, had similarities (e.g., gender roles, family organization, religion, values) and differences (e.g., language, shelter, tools, foods, and clothing).

## **Resources**

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/default.asp>

[www.ic.arizona.edu/ic/kmartin/school/lakotah.htm](http://www.ic.arizona.edu/ic/kmartin/school/lakotah.htm)

[language.nativeweb.org/lakota\\_story.htm](http://language.nativeweb.org/lakota_story.htm)

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org>

[http://www.choctawnation.com/Culture/dsp\\_TradDress.cfm](http://www.choctawnation.com/Culture/dsp_TradDress.cfm)

<http://www.choctaw.org/culture/index.htm>

[http://www.oklachahta.org/new03\\_culture\\_traditions.htm](http://www.oklachahta.org/new03_culture_traditions.htm)

<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/CC/bmc57.html>

<http://www.greatdreams.com/native/nativehsg.htm>

## Assessment

The assessment strategy that will be utilized at the end of this unit will be #92 Assessment Collage. The students will be given a map of the United States on which they will use pictures, drawings, words, etc. to create a collage cover for their book including information retained after discussing each of the four Native American cultures chosen. Below are rubrics for the collage and the book.

### Assessment Collage Rubric

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
<b>Quality of Construction</b>	The collage shows considerable attention to construction. The items are neatly trimmed. All items are carefully and securely attached to the backing. There are no stray marks, smudges or glue stains. Nothing is hanging over the edges.	The collage shows attention to construction. The items are neatly trimmed. All items are carefully and securely attached to the backing. A few barely noticeable stray marks, smudges or glue stains are present. Nothing is hanging over the edges.	The collage shows some attention to construction. Most items are neatly trimmed. All items are securely attached to the backing. A few barely noticeable stray marks, smudges or glue stains are present. Nothing is hanging over the edges.	The collage was put together sloppily. Items appear to be just "slapped on". Pieces may be loose or hanging over the edges. Smudges, stains, rips, uneven edges, and/or stray marks are evident.
<b>Creativity</b>	Several of the graphics or objects used in the collage reflect an exceptional degree of student creativity in their creation and/or display	One or two of the graphics or objects used in the collage reflect student creativity in their creation and/or display.	One or two graphics or objects were made or customized by the student, but the ideas were typical rather than creative (.e.g., apply the emboss filter to a drawing in Photoshop).	The student did not make or customize any of the items on the collage.

<b>Time and Effort</b>	Class time was used wisely. Much time and effort went into the planning and design of the collage. It is clear the student worked at home as well as at school.	Class time was used wisely. Student could have put in more time and effort at home.	Class time was not always used wisely, but student did do some additional work at home.	Class time was not used wisely and the student put in no additional effort.
<b>Attention to Theme</b>	The student uses relevant items in the collage that are related to the assigned theme. For most items, the relationship is clear without explanation.	The student uses relevant items in the collage that are related to the assigned theme. Some items require explanation for their connection.	The student uses a few relevant items in the collage that are related to the assigned theme. Several items require explanation for their connection.	The student doesn't use relevant items in the collage that are related to the assigned theme. Items require explanation for their incorporation and don't connect.
<b>Number of Items</b>	The collage includes 12 or more items, each different.	The collage includes 9 different items.	The collage includes 6 different items.	The collage contains fewer than 4 different items.

### Native American Book Rubric

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Neatness and Effort	The book has no distracting errors, corrections or erasures and is easily read. It appears the student spent a lot of effort getting things just right.	The book has almost no distracting errors, corrections or erasures and is easily read. It appears the student worked hard on it.	The book is fairly readable but the quality is not too good on some parts. It looks like the student ran out of time or didn't take care of it.	Very messy and hard to read. It looks like the student threw it together at the last minute without much care.
Illustration(s)	Illustrations were creative, drawn and colored neatly and were a good size.	Illustrations were drawn and colored neatly and were a good size.	Illustrations were drawn and colored neatly, but some were too large or too small.	Illustrations were drawn and/or colored carelessly.
Vocabulary	Student correctly uses 2 or more new words from the lessons on each culture and can define them, if asked.	Student uses 2 or more new words, but may not be able to accurately define one of them.	Student uses 1 new word, but may not be able to accurately define it.	Student has not used any recently studied vocabulary in the book.

<p>Front and back cover</p>	<p>The book has a front and back cover. The collage is placed on the front cover. The inside has a small photograph or drawing of the book creator. The front cover is clearly labeled with the author's name.</p>	<p>The book has a front and back cover. The collage is placed on the front cover, but may be messy. The small photograph or drawing of the books creator may be missing, or the author's name is not clearly labeled on the front cover.</p>	<p>The book has a front and back cover. The collage is placed on the front cover, but is messy. There is no small photograph or drawing of the books creator on the inside, The author's name may not be clearly labeled on the front cover.</p>	<p>The book is missing one or both covers, or the collage is missing from the front cover. The picture or drawing on the inside is missing. The name is not clearly labeled on the front page.</p>
<p>Use of time and amount of content</p>	<p>Class time was used wisely. It is clear the student used a lot of time to complete this book and put a lot of effort into its completion. The contents of the book are very thorough.</p>	<p>Class time was used wisely. Student could have put in more time and effort. The contents of the book could be more thorough, but most information is there.</p>	<p>Class time was not always used wisely. The student could have put in more time and effort. The book seems to be missing content.</p>	<p>Class time was not used wisely. It is obvious little effort was put into the completion of the book. The book looks thrown together, and has minimal content.</p>