

# *Native Americans: People of the Forest* Teacher's Guide



**Grade Level:** 3-8

**Curriculum Focus:** Social Studies

**Lesson Duration:** Two class periods

## **Program Description**

*Native Americans: People of the Forest* – Beautifully recreated scenes tell the story of how the Ojibwa lived and worked in the Eastern Woodlands, as seen through the eyes of Little Flower, a girl who wishes she could hunt and fish like her brothers. Live action footage shows how these Native Americans built houses, made fire, hunted, fished, cooked, and more. A glimpse of modern life on a reservation closes the video.

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## **Discussion Questions**

- What needs must human beings satisfy to live physically, socially, and spiritually?
  - What is the land like where you live? Are there mountains, forests, prairies, or lakes nearby?
  - Imagine that it is hundreds of years ago and the area is still wild. How would you use natural resources to survive?
  - Choose an everyday tool such as a spoon or an eraser. How is this tool usually used? What might be another use for the tool?
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## **Lesson Plan**

### *Student Objectives*

- Understand how Native Americans of the Eastern Woodlands lived and worked.
- Compare the lives of these Native Americans with their own lives.
- Demonstrate how the Eastern Woodland tribes met a basic need.

### *Materials*

- *Native Americans: People of the Forest* video and VCR, or DVD and DVD player, or access to the program in downloadable or streaming format online
- Computer with Internet access
- Print and Web resources about Native American arts, crafts, tools, and stories

## Procedures

1. When accepting student feedback regarding human needs during your prescreening discussion, write suggested needs as headings on the board. As a class, discuss how the Ojibwa met these needs and what tools and natural resources they used to do so. Write the students' ideas below the headings. Be sure to include social and spiritual needs.
2. Ask students to discuss how people in their own community today satisfy these needs and the tools and natural resources they use.
3. Ask students to write a short essay (minimum 300 words) comparing the ways the Ojibwa met their needs with the ways people in the students' community meet theirs. Ask more advanced students to consider what their community could learn from the Ojibwa.
4. In groups have students research one of the following topics about Native Americans of the Eastern Woodlands: their arts, crafts, and tools; their games, toys, and pastimes; their myths and legends; their food and recipes. The teacher may find more topics, and advanced students may choose a topic of their own. The object of the research is for students to demonstrate to the class how the tribes of the Eastern Woodlands met a need. You may wish to begin with the Web sites below. DiscoverySchool.com (see under Support Materials) also has information on Native American culture.
  - Effigy Mounds National Monument Online Teachers' Guide  
<http://www.nps.gov/efmo/parks>
  - Iroquois Oral Traditions  
<http://indians.org/welker/iroqoral.htm>
  - Enchanted Learning: Dream Catchers  
<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/Dreamcatcher.shtml>
  - Nativetech: Native American Technology and Art: Food and Recipes  
<http://nativetech.nativeweb.org/food/index.php>
  - Native American Crafts, Food and Games  
<http://www.americanpentimento.com/crafts.htm>
5. When their research is complete students will write an illustrated report on their findings. For example, they might explain how a tool is used or how a game is played, or they might retell a myth or legend in their own words and explain its importance in the lives of the people.
6. Students will also demonstrate the tool or game, act out the story, or in some other way present their findings to the class. If resources are available, students may wish to make a videotape of their demonstrations, for instance, of playing a game outdoors or preparing a recipe in a kitchen. The length of time assigned for the demonstrations depends on the maturity of the students.



## Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- 3 points: Students were highly engaged in class discussions; produced a complete comparison, including all of the requested information; wrote an organized, detailed record of their research topic; gave an informative and enthusiastic demonstration.
- 2 points: Students participated in class discussions; produced an adequate comparison, including most of the requested information; wrote an understandable record of their research topic; gave a somewhat informative and interesting demonstration.
- 1 point: Students participated minimally in class discussions; produced an inadequate comparison, including little of the requested information; wrote a poorly organized record of their research topic; gave an unenthusiastic demonstration.

## Vocabulary

### **birch**

*Definition:* A tree that grows in the northeastern United States and has white, easily peeled bark

*Context:* Native Americans of the Eastern Woodlands used birch bark to make canoes and to cover their wigwams.

### **canoe**

*Definition:* A long narrow boat propelled with a paddle

*Context:* Native Americans used canoes for water transportation and fishing.

### **Eastern Woodlands**

*Definition:* A large area of the United States where forest tribes such as the Ojibwa, Seminole, and Iroquois once lived

*Context:* The climate and resources of the Eastern Woodlands made the life of the tribes that lived there different from that of other tribes.

### **elder**

*Definition:* The spiritual leader of an Indian tribe; also called a medicine man or a shaman

*Context:* When illness, lack of food, or other hard times affected the tribe, the elder called upon helpful spirits.

### **land bridge**

*Definition:* A bridge of dry land such as the one that once joined Siberia and Alaska across the present-day Bering Strait

*Context:* A land bridge probably allowed the ancestors of Native Americans to cross over to the North American continent from Asia.



### **Ojibwa**

*Definition:* A Native American tribe that lived in the Eastern Woodlands

*Context:* The video portrays the life of the Ojibwa people.

### **wigwam**

*Definition:* A Native American dwelling commonly having an arched or cone-shaped framework of branches and overlaid with bark or hides

*Context:* Among the Ojibwa, women build the wigwams.

## **Academic Standards**

### **Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)**

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- Behavioral Studies: Understands that group and cultural influences contribute to human development, identity, and behavior
- Language Arts – Writing: Uses general skills and strategies of the writing process
- Language Arts – Writing: Gathers and uses information for research purposes
- Language Arts – Listening and Speaking: Uses listening and speaking strategies for different purposes
- Language Arts – Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

### **National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)**

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has developed national standards to provide guidelines for teaching social studies. To view the standards online, go to

<http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands/>

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- Culture
- People, Places and Environments



### **National Council for Geographic Education**

The National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE) provides 18 national geography standards that the geographically informed person knows and understands. To view the standards online, go to <http://www.ncge.org/publications/tutorial/standards/>

This lesson plan addresses the following NCGE standards:

- Places and Regions: The physical and human characteristics of places
  - Places and Regions: That people create regions to interpret Earth's complexity
  - Human Systems: The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface
  - Environment and Society: How physical systems affect human systems
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### **Support Materials**

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the DiscoverySchool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>
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### *Credit*

Sylvia Alloway, educational writer and former middle school teacher

