Intersections Between Land, Culture, and Identity

in the

Native American Community

A Unit of Study for Eleventh Grade U.S. History

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Created for the Native Americans of New England: A Historical Perspective, Summer Teacher Institute
University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst MA
Sponsored by the National Endowment for Humanities

Lesson Three: Exploring Native American Connection to the Land as Sacred Space

Introduction/Overview:

This unit of study has five components that will be outlined below.

The lesson following this introduction will be PART THREE of the entire unit.

1. Introduction (whole class activity): Students will be exposed to several videos that give an overview of the major topic of Native Americans and reservations/land issues. Each facet of the project will be discussed and objectives for the entire unit will be posted and handed out to students. Further discussion will ensue of what students may already know about the issues.

2. Initial research (whole class, direct & guided instruction, and independent work): conducted on the history of Native American land cessation and the creation of Indian Reservations in various parts of North America/United States. Topics will include the Haudenosaunee (Tuscarora and Seneca Nations specifically) the Mohegan Tribe, and the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and issues regarding land for each of these groups. Students will practice specific skills of developing search terms and search strategies, accessing and navigation of select electronic resources and databases, extracting information through note-taking, and summarizing information. Finding aids and graphic organizers for note-taking and summarizing will be used.

3. Close reading (whole class, direct & guided instruction, small group): Lesson will open with a review of the brief video of The Saylor Foundation on land loss. Students will practice close-reading of selected texts, using graphic organizers. They will work in small groups to read articles on issues of Native sacred land and issues of being cut off from Native culture or land and the effect of this on Native communities. Students will practice answering open-ended questions by specifically referring to texts they've read. This lesson will close by listening to a song written and sung by Native people in response to land loss.

4. Socratic Circle (direct instruction, demonstration, & practice): Project will culminate in a Socratic Circle discussion of essential questions related to each topic of the unit. Students will have a rubric to guide them for the culminating circle.
5. Reflection Essay (individual): Students will write a two part reflection piece. The first part will discuss what they learned, what they still need to know, how the research process and Socratic discussion pieces worked or didn't work for them and how they might approach this type of research project in the future. The second part of the reflection essay will be their opportunity to discuss or elaborate on any personal observations they may have regarding any of the issues or topics researched or discussed.

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Rationale:
Information literacy requires competency in efficiently accessing quality information to investigate, solve problems, gain knowledge, form opinions and discuss. An integral facet of information fluency is the capability to discern differing points of view being presented in multiple forms of information. Another aspect of information literacy involves understanding the usefulness of not only text documents, but how information can be gleaned from other forms, such as images, maps, video and audio. Students also need to be able to synthesize various sources of information to identify overarching themes related to historical research in order to understand the impact history has on the current moment.

Essential Questions:
• How does connection to ancestral lands or sacred spaces shape or affect issues of identity in the Native American community?
• How does being cut off from your ancestry or culture affect a person's sense of self and identity?
• How can aspects of the actual physical landscape and features of a particular place affect Native American cultural identity?

Time Period:
This part of the unit will encompass two forty minute class periods in the library media center.

Standards:
Common Core Learning Standards: English Language Arts: Grade 11

Objectives:
1) Students will learn the ways in which place is connected to Native American culture and identity.
2) Students will learn how to cite specific text to answer open-ended questions.

Learning Outcomes:
1) Students will correctly complete questions on graphic organizers based on articles they read.
2) Students will present information to entire class on the ways in which land and place are important to Native American communities and individuals.

Procedures:
• Students will watch the video on land loss.
• Discuss and review the video and the historical research they have conducted, as a whole class.
• Students will be broken up into small groups and each group will have a reporter, recorder, collector and time-keeper. The reporter will report back to class on the group's findings. The recorder will write down the answers to questions and information regarding the readings. The collector will ensure that the graphic organizers and group sheet, as well as writing implements, are handed out and collected. The time-keeper will ensure the group remains on the time schedule.

• Each group will be given a different article, portion of an article, or document on the topic to read, review, and discuss. They will first read the article/text/document aloud, each person in a group reading part of it. They will then use markers or highlighters to underline important concepts, passages, vocabulary and will circle text that they have questions about.

• Librarian and teacher will circulate among groups to assist and provide additional support.

• Students will complete a group sheet answering some basic questions about the article. This will include citing text in their answers.

• Each group will report about their article back to the whole class.

• Final discussion about the articles and ideas in each.

• Students will listen to the audio song file of the Seminole song that was a response to land loss. Discussion of the music and how it possibly informs us about this group's response.

• Note: Students will all receive copies of each group's final group sheet answers, to assist in the Socratic Circle discussion and reflection parts of this unit.

Assessment:

Students will be assessed through direct observation, the completed group sheets, and participation in discussions for this part of the unit.

Materials/Technology:

Projector, Screen, Computer with Internet access for video, speakers for audio file, group question sheets, markers and highlighters.

Primary Sources:


Secondary Sources:


An article on the past losses of land and subsequently culture, affecting various Indian tribes in North
America with emphasis on how they are reclaiming and/or preserving their prosperity and cultural identity.

Extensive report on the background of Native American sacred sites, sacred objects, fourteen specific types of sacred sites and their purpose, burials and ruins, mourning and condolence ceremonies, impact of the United States Government on sacred sites, and discussion of laws related to Native American sacred places.

The article discusses issues in current land loss and how the Indian Land Tenure Foundation works to stop land loss. The article highlights the importance of land-based resources to Native communities and their well-being.

Brief article on the subject of culture, dominant culture, and Native communities current efforts to revitalize their cultural practices. Includes the aspect of land loss as a reason for cultural loss.

Video animation of the land losses of Native Americans from 1784 to the present.

This article discusses the Iroquois celebration at Ganondagan of the Great White Pine Tree of Peace. It also discusses the history of the site and the importance behind it to the Haudenosaunee.

This report discusses the idea of corporate responsibility in protecting Native American Sacred sites. Highlighted are a number of case studies in which corporations and the Native Community worked on a plan to protect sacred spaces. The report ends with information on promoting corporate responsibility.