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## Real American: Making Literature a Means for Displacing Native American Stereotypes

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### Content Objectives

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#### Introduction

This curriculum unit on American Indians is intended to be taught to second graders. In my inner-city school, the students are of mixed abilities with the primary ethnicity being African-American. The unit will be taught during the Language Arts and Social Studies time blocks because it will incorporate picture books that will teach the students about the American Indians, both past and present. It will cover the tribes from the Plains (Rocky Mountain West and Plains States), Southwest (New Mexico, Arizona, Oklahoma, Colorado, West Texas, and Southern California), and the Eastern Woodlands (Northeast). I will read a variety of picture books, discussing the culture and values of the tribes, and we will spend time interpreting various forms of literature from and about these cultures.

Though Native Americans from each of these regions will be my main focus around which everything else revolves, the two "big ideas" that I will focus on during this unit is the concept of change over time, or timelines, as well as the concept of culture. In order for my students to gain a full understanding of Native Americans through these stories and picture books, they must understand that there are cultures outside of their own, discover and learn to appreciate elements of those cultures, and understand that the culture (with the people in the culture) has changed over time.

This unit will be taught over the course of three weeks, one week for each tribal region. I will spend an hour each morning reading one picture book and initiating and/or completing an activity that is geared toward that book or regional tribe. For instance, when we read *Loon and Deer Were Traveling*, the activity for the day will be interpreting the text individually, with a partner, and then as a whole group. Then, we will write words to go with the pictures in the story. For a multi-day project, we will read and discuss *The Magic of Spider Woman* and begin weaving a small "mug rug" for students to take home and use as a drink coaster. The unit will include a variety of projects and activities that emphasize understanding of Native American culture, understanding of elapsed time, reading comprehension, and vocabulary development.

#### Unit Objectives

By the end of the unit, the students should be able to do the following four things. First, the students will understand basic cultural elements of the Native Americans (e.g. respect for nature, explanation of creation through storytelling, the intimate tie between the people and their surroundings, as well as the facts listed in the "three tribes" section below). Second, the students will understand what culture is and develop an appreciation of other cultures arising from their familiarity with Native Americans. Third, the students will have a basic understanding of change over time — that these native people that we study lived a certain way in the past and that they and their culture have changed over time. Fourth, the students will have a general knowledge of Native Americans in three distinct regions (Appendix A). While realizing these four objectives, my students will also be practicing interpretation and comprehension of each of the texts.

## **Background Information**

### *Native American Culture*

American Indian cultures are interesting and rich in history, art, and literature (among many other things!). In Virginia, students are required to memorize basic facts about the three regions where the American Indians lived, such as their modes of transportation, food, and types of dwelling during more primitive times. Students can learn this at a fairly fast pace, but in order to gain a deeper understanding, we will dive into a variety of literature from these cultures, experience the art from the tribes, and discuss the rich history they leave with us through their creativity.

I want to teach my students to appreciate American Indian culture and find beauty in their art, storytelling, and history. By this means, they will be more apt to appreciate cultures other than their own and find beauty in everyone around them. I also plan to teach them about the forced transition of the tribes into reservations, and that there are American Indians living among us even now. These American Indians still celebrate their culture through tradition, art, and storytelling, and through my unit, my students will celebrate along with them.

It is no secret that Native Americans have been oppressed for hundreds of years. The ancient tribes had established their homes in different regions of the country, but others came along from other continents, took land for their own, and forced the Native people to live in small sections of land that were strictly regulated by non-Indians. According to Deloria, the Lakota Sioux were actually fenced in by the white man. These "fences marked the spatial confinement of the Lakotas and other Indian people....[they] were expected to be primitive - though slowly progressing toward the modern world." <sup>1</sup> This is just one of many examples of how Native Americans were oppressed and seen as "less than human" by those moving onto the land they had inhabited for so many years.

Thinking the American Indians to be primitive people generates a whole set of stereotypes. In my elementary years, I was easily impressionable (as many children are), and I was only exposed to the Native American culture that portrayed Indians as "savages" who would ride around with their feathered headdresses and kill anyone who was not Indian. It is so important that during the early years of life, a holistic view is given of Native Americans. Sure, in the far past, they lived a simpler life than modern peoples do, a life that depended on nature and the land, but my students will also understand that many tribes today live in "two worlds." They do not want to turn their back on their beginnings, but also want to experience the ease and advantages of the modern world. Many tribes deliberately stay in touch with their traditional culture while also holding down jobs, eating at local restaurants, owning a home with modern amenities, and living as modern Americans.

Many of the picture books in this unit display early Native American culture, but one picture book that I will

use to illustrate Native Americans as they are today is *Shi-shi-etko* by Nicola I. Campbell. This book is about a young girl that is being sent off to a residential school and is filling the last three days before she leaves with the experiences of her home, nature, and her family. This gives a voice to a Native American child who is forced from her native culture and life to be fully assimilated into "modern" American society.

Throughout my unit, we will read and experience picture books that will tell about the lives and beliefs of the Native Americans who live in the three regions listed above. Storytelling was essential to the life and culture of all Native American tribes and was not only a means of entertainment; it was primarily used to explain the nature of things or to teach lessons about the past. Creation stories are explanations of how many things came into existence or why things are the way they are (e.g. why skunks have stripes and why hares have split lips, as seen in *The Animals' Ballgame*). As with many cultures, these myths are a way of explaining the world, but my students will also understand that many Native Americans still believe in the coexistence of their creation stories with the explanations of modern science.

Various characters are introduced and seen throughout the texts, such as "Spider Woman," who is associated with weaving, and "Coyote" the trickster. These characters will be analyzed throughout the stories as to give the students a feel for recurring characters and the purpose they serve.

While many of the stories that I read will be traditional tales and creation stories, some of the books will be used to explain the Native American culture as a whole. Themes such as a love for nature (as seen in *Sky Sisters* by Jan Bourdeau Waboose), connection to the earth (as seen in *And Still the Turtle Watched* by Sheila MacGill-Callahan), and assimilation into modern American society (as seen in *Shi-shi-etko* by Nicola I. Campbell) will be discussed at some length in the unit itself. These stories are important to include because they explain what is important to the Native American people, describe the role of children and adults in their society, and provide history and background.

### *The Three Tribes*

The three regions around which this unit is framed are the Southwest, Plains, and Eastern Woodlands. The state of Virginia singles out the Pueblo, Lakota Sioux, and Powhatan, as particular tribes from each of these regions, respectively.

The people of the **Southwest** lived primarily in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, southern California, and Colorado. This particular region is known to have a desert climate, receives little precipitation, and can have hot temperatures throughout the year. The tribes of the southwest lived in houses made with wood (as a base), and wood, sticks, and mud mixed together that is sun-dried and spread on the outside of the wooden structure. The houses were effective because of the lack of rain in the desert region. Some were made in a hexagonal or octagonal shape, and others were shaped more like a cube or rectangular prism and were multi-terraced.

The Indians of the southwest were primarily farmers. Their main crop was corn (maize), but they also farmed beans, squash, melons, pumpkins, and fruit. They did do hunting for small game, but their primary source of food was what they produced through farming. They were also known for their ability to irrigate from rivers for their crops (due to the lack of rain).

The people of the Southwest used walking as their primary mode of transportation. Some speculate that this was because there was not enough water to feed both them and their animals, but it may have also been because of their lack of need for animals, since they did not hunt or travel over long distances and were not

nomadic by nature.

The people of the Southwest weave baskets and blankets (among other things), make jewelry primarily out of turquoise, and create pottery. The items that are woven or made out of clay are functional for them and can be used on a daily basis. Though the jewelry is made for appearance, it is also symbolic. Traditionally, the Pueblo would wear earrings before marriage, and after they were married they would place the earrings on a necklace for their daughters to wear when they came of age.

The American Indians of the **Plains** lived in the Rocky Mountain West region that spanned from Canada to Texas and included states such as Montana, North and South Dakota, Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, and Texas. The region is known as the "Great Plains" because of its grasslands, but it is also known for great mountains, a mild climate in the summer, and cold winters. These tribes primarily lived in tipis which were made of long, wooden poles that were stood up, bunched at the top, and spread out at the bottom to form a circle (the structure is cone shaped). The covering of the tipi was made of animal hide (primarily buffalo). A hole was left in the top so that smoke could exit the structure. These structures were made in this manner because the Plains Indians were nomadic and needed to carry their homes with them.

The Plains Indians got most of their food through hunting. There were times when they would gather nuts and berries from native plants, but their growing season was shorter than in the Southwest and they were nomadic, so farming was not an effective food source. Though they hunted all types of game (deer, rabbits, squirrels, bears, etc.), they primarily hunted buffalo. They rode horses and walked as their primary modes of transportation not only because they were hunting such large (and fast) game but also because they were so nomadic. They were also great horsemen and warriors.

Many of the artistic forms that these tribes created used beads and paint. Many times stories were painted onto tipis in the form of pictures. Since they were great hunters, their clothing was made of animal pelts and many of the embellishments on their ceremonial clothing included feathers.

The American Indians from the **Eastern Woodlands** lived primarily in the Northeast United States (Pennsylvania to Maine), the region around the Great Lakes, and on the Eastern shore south of New York through North Carolina. These tribes were stationary, and their homes reflected this way of life. Many tribes in this region built "longhouses" which were made of sticks from saplings and woven together using bark. These houses could become very large and house around 20 people, or they could house a single, small family.

The Native Americans from this region had a more diverse diet than those in the other regions discussed above. Their modes of transportation were also diverse. To get around, the Native Americans could walk, ride horses, or use canoes in the rivers and lakes nearby. They farmed, fished, and hunted. They are well known for their farming practices (as they generally have a long growing season) and are particularly known for growing the "three sisters," which are corn, beans and squash. The "three sisters" are grown in such a way that each plant is dependent on the other two. The corn stalk is used for the beans to climb, and the squash plant's purpose is to provide ground covering. It was an efficient and effective way to grow the crops, but the foods were particularly delicious, and provided most of the nutrients needed to survive when combined into a succotash. The native people grew other crops too, while picking nuts and berries from native plants. Besides farming and gathering, they could hunt wild deer, bears, rabbits, and other native animals as well as fish in the many rivers and lakes throughout the region.

The art of the Eastern Woodland Indians is reflected in their clothing. They wore beautiful clothing with intricate beadwork, and feathers were frequently seen in their clothing. They are also well known for their

weapons and tools for hunting and cooking.

### *Cultural Sensitivity and Appreciation*

The world we live in is constantly changing, and, in effect, so is our country, our communities, and our schools. The dynamics of change can be difficult to navigate in today's educational system. With little time to focus on anything but the core standards, we as educators must integrate lessons on being sensitive into the core subjects taught throughout the day. One way to do this is through the use of picture books. DoBroka states that it "It is important for our students to recognize that each of us uses our own cultural experiences as criteria by which we interpret and react to what goes on in our everyday environment." <sup>2</sup> The students in our classroom may look very similar to each other, or even to us, but each has had a variety of experiences that makes up who they are and who they will become.

Plata and Robertson state that students of color often experience cultural insensitivity from their peers and even their teachers at school. This affects their ability to learn, their confidence, motivation, and sometimes, their will to live. <sup>3</sup> By teaching cultural sensitivity, as well as practicing it on our own, we are encouraging our students to realize that there is something that everyone can offer and that each person is uniquely gifted and special.

It is extremely important to integrate the idea of cultural sensitivity and appreciation into each and every classroom, no matter the make-up of the student population, and one way of incorporating a simple, yet effective curriculum is to teach through the use of picture books. Kim, Green, and Klein state that "books can be used to help children develop a sense of identity, an awareness of the ways in which they are different from others, [and] knowledge about their own and other cultures." <sup>4</sup> Children are not innately sensitive to the larger world and the peoples in it. It is a taught skill. It is about the time they get to second grade when children begin realizing that others are different from themselves in one way or another. In their formative years, they might play alongside other children who show differences on the outside, but there does come a point when they become aware of others as "not like me," and it is at this point when they form assumptions and prejudices differing groups. It is imperative that we as educators help build a positive attitude toward other cultures in general. By the use of picture books, children can relate to the characters and what they are experiencing on some level. Through this process, they can gain a certain appreciation for a given culture as a whole.

In my curriculum unit, I will not directly teach about cultures that compose the majority in the region around the school; rather I will teach about the Native American cultures, which I hope will open doors for discussions of stereotypes closer to home. This will allow the students to see that there are people who are different all around them who are diverse, and that they have a choice to respond negatively to diversity in culture or they can discover those things that Kim, Green, and Klein address. The goal is for my students to gain an appreciation for Native American culture, and, in turn, learn to find ways to appreciate other cultures that they encounter with a more open mind.

### *Change Over Time*

In my past experiences as a teacher of lower elementary students (K-2), I have discovered that many children do not have a solid grasp on the concept of change over time. In Virginia, first graders are taught the concept of past, present, and future, but it is a brief unit, and for many of my students, it is also very abstract. After all, they have only been alive for seven or eight years. Their view of time is very narrow.

I plan to address this concept because it is crucial to understand that Native Americans do not live as they did 200 years ago, just as white or black persons' ancestors did not live as now as they did then. In the second grade (as with many people much older), the students may not be able to distinguish between different, specific, periods of time, but they are able, with proper training, to distinguish past from present. Alleman and Brophy state that "even though they may still be hazy about particular dates, [they] can understand age-appropriate representations of people and events from the past." <sup>5</sup>

My plan is to (re)introduce the concept of change over time to my students through the use of a permanent timeline in the classroom (as they should have been introduced to the concept in first grade). The timeline will be quite long so as to accommodate for the various history topics covered throughout their second grade year. Also, instead of teaching exact dates, I will place pictures, drawings, photos, and labels on this timeline to pinpoint a point of time when certain events occurred. They will be placed in order of occurrence in the "far past", "near past", "present", and we will even dive into discussing the future during a unit in our language arts curriculum.

Alleman and Brophy also state that when students learn to "view past lives and events through the eyes of people who lived them," they are more apt to appreciate their activities and lives and not view them as ignorant or weak because they did not have the technological advances that we possess today. <sup>6</sup> For instance, by building on the timeline in my classroom in such a way that students understand that transportation began with walking, then horses, and on into today's various methods of transportation, they come to understand that we really have come a long way over thousands of years but that each stage in the process has been appropriate for our needs at the time, not necessarily better. A narrative accompanying the creation of the timeline is crucial, as it is the basis for student understanding.

*And Still the Turtle Watched* is a great way to teach the concept of change over time because it takes a rock that was carved as a turtle to watch over the people "long ago" (as the story states), and takes a journey through time and changes to the forest. The book also shows different tools and modes of transportation that have changed over time. This will help with the creation of the timeline, as the students will begin to recognize images and put them in time order.

### *Reading Comprehension*

Broek, Kendeou, Lousberg, and Visser state that reading comprehension takes place when a reader can recall the representation of words and sentences in order to "recall information from the text, answer questions, and apply the knowledge obtained from the text." <sup>7</sup> In my unit, we will be practicing early reading comprehension skills through guided listening to the picture books, discussing the text with partners, small group, and whole group, and through written comprehension (answering questions, graphic organizers, and journal entries).

A strategy called "Guided Listening" will be the primary source of the reading comprehension skill set mentioned above. In her book *Guided Listening*, Lisa Donohue outlines a procedure for guided listening: (1) Introduce the Strategy; (2) Introduce the Organizer; (3) Model the Strategy; (4) Review the Text; (5) Review the Strategy; (6) Practice; and (7) Assess. The strategies are metacognitive and include making inferences, making predictions, determining important information, making connections, visualizing, asking questions, and synthesizing. <sup>8</sup> Many of the strategies are used in elementary classrooms, but because of the standards in Virginia for second grade, I will use only the following strategies: making inferences, making predictions, determining important information, making connections, and asking questions (five of the seven strategies suggested). This is also due to the fact that visualizing and synthesizing are slightly more abstract and would



be introduced later in the academic year and in subsequent years. I will discuss in more depth which questions will be asked during the section outlining the classroom activities.

Guided listening is essential to this unit because it is focused primarily on picture books that will be read in a whole group and small group read aloud format. The students will be processing the information as it is given to them in an auditory format rather than reading it and processing themselves. It is truly a different type of comprehension when the text cannot be stopped and reread for important information. The guided listening strategy mentioned above also allows me to outline a strategy with a picture book that does not always occur naturally with some students. Many times, students need to see the text themselves (visual learners), and if I provide a sequence and strategy for listening comprehension, the students are more apt to absorb and comprehend the text to which they are listening.

### *Interpretation*

Throughout the unit, there will be moments when the students will be asked to interpret the texts and pictures. Wolf states that in a picture book:

The images do not decorate the text, and the words do not caption the illustrations. Instead, they work hand-in-hand and sometimes in opposition to deliver two kinds of information that together make up a unique message. <sup>9</sup>

In other words, children's picture books' text and illustrations are intertwined in such a way that neither could tell the complete story alone. Many times, as we read a text together, my second graders tend to look only at the pictures to interpret and comprehend the text. I frequently catch them doing this because they will answer my questions by stating what is in the picture instead of using the text and enhancing the answer to the question with the illustration. By reading and showing pictures, I want my students to use both the words and the pictures to gain a fuller understanding of the story. The illustrations in the text are crucial to the understanding of the text as a whole. Both word and image will be used to help the students understand not only what the text is saying at a lower level of comprehension, but to help them analyze, synthesize, and connect with the book as a whole. The text is equally important in the sense that it is working *with* the illustrations to tell the whole story. One cannot truly interpret and comprehend a text without the whole story.

Most picture books are made of both words and pictures, but in the unit, two wordless texts on creation will be presented to the students. This will give the students a chance to put their own words to the pictures, thus promoting interpretation on their part. Perrine states "A correct interpretation, [...] must be able to account satisfactorily for any detail of the poem. If it is contradicted by any detail it is wrong." <sup>10</sup> I will be working with my students to help them understand that when they interpret the text, they should be aiming to make the most comprehensive interpretation possible.

### **Correlation With State Standards**

Virginia Social Science Standard of Learning (SOL) 2.2 states "The student will compare the lives and contributions of three American Indian cultures of the past and present, with emphasis on the Powhatan of the Eastern Woodlands, the Lakota of the Plains, and the Pueblo peoples of the Southwest." (Appendix A) This is my primary objective, but I will also weave in cultural sensitivity, the concept of change over time, and debunking stereotypes.

By the end of the unit, my students will understand a lot about Native Americans, but by using children's

literature I want to integrate language arts objectives into the unit as well. As for language arts objectives, my students will be studying the Virginia Standards of Learning for second grade (Appendix A) concerning fictional reading comprehension 2.8(a-i). These standards will all be interwoven into the teaching process, with the ones italicized being the main standards I will focus upon. These standards require second grade students to *make and confirm predictions*, relate previous experiences to the main idea, *ask and answer questions about what is read*, locate information to answer questions, *describe characters, setting, and important events in fiction and poetry*, identify the problem and solution, *identify the main idea*, summarize stories and events with beginning, middle, and end in the correct sequence, and *draw conclusions based on the text*.

## Teaching strategies

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Within my curriculum unit spanning the course of three weeks, I plan to do a myriad of tasks centered on the picture books I have chosen. There will be an hour devoted to the stories in the morning Language Arts block (a total of 15 days), and 30-45 minutes in the Social Studies block every other day (a total of 7-8 days). In this section, I will outline how I will move through each of the three units, describe planned activities for each unit, and emphasize general questions that will be asked throughout to meet both the Virginia State Standards of Learning for second grade and, more importantly, my own objectives. Throughout the unit, I will be using the method outlined in *Guided Listening* by Lisa Donohue <sup>11</sup> .

Throughout this unit, there will be a variety of learning strategies that will be used:

### Cooperative groups

At times, students will learn in small groups of 3-4. They will each be encouraged to have a voice in the conversation. Roles may be assigned to each of the students in the group, such as a leader who helps facilitate the group, a recorder who will take notes, someone to clean up the area when the task is complete, and someone who is elected to be the only student to approach the teacher during the cooperative learning time.

### Paired Learning

Students often learn best when they are placed in pairs. With only two in the group, each child has a better chance of participating. Students can be paired with someone at a different learning level, but frequently it is more beneficial to pair students with those who are at the same learning level. If necessary, the teacher should be available to work with the lower-level students to provide them with more guidance.

### Guided Listening

The purpose of guided listening is to teach important comprehension skills while students listen to a text being read aloud. The students focus on one skill during the reading by filling out a graphic organizer based on the focus skill while listening to the text being read aloud. As mentioned above, the teacher may present and teach a specific skill at the beginning of the lesson in order to focus the instruction on that skill.



## Vocabulary Instruction

When teaching specific vocabulary words in this unit such as "culture" or "tradition," I will do the following. First, I will state the word and ask them to repeat it. This can be done 2-3 times depending on the word. Second, I will give the definition of the word. Third, I will put the word in a sentence that explains its meaning. Fourth, I will ask the students to think of a sentence with the word in it and share it with a partner. Fifth, I will chose 2-3 students to share their sentences with me. Finally, I will draw a picture if it helps to do so. My students will complete a vocabulary word page in their interactive notebooks that reflects this process (see Appendix B)

## Cultural Sensitivity

It will be important to emphasize the desire of many American Indians to keep up their heritage and traditions. We will take time to review some of the traditions that certain members of the tribes have kept, such as Powwow, storytelling, weaving, clay art, their native language, and horseback riding, as well as others we encounter in the picture books.

## Classroom Activities

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This unit will take place over the course of 3 weeks. I will first discuss important opening lessons that will begin the unit, then I will discuss the three main sections of the unit as described above in "Strategies." It is also important to note that I will be teaching them the facts about each tribe as listed in Appendix A throughout the unit.

### Lesson 1: Introductory Activity

In the first lesson, the focus will be on activating prior knowledge. The focus of the lesson will be reading *Turtle Island ABC*. This book lists and describes something associated with Native Americans, starting with each letter of the alphabet. A chart will be placed in front of the classroom with one letter from the alphabet in each square (see figure below). Each student will be given up to four sticky notes and will be asked to write down a word or short phrase on **two** of them **before** the book is read and place it on the alphabet chart. This word or phrase will be something they already know about Native Americans or American Indians. **After** the book is read, the students will write **two more** words or short phrases on sticky notes and place it on the alphabet chart. If there is enough time, the teacher may choose students to read their words.

Aa	Bb	Cc	Dd	Ee
Ff	Gg	Hh	Ii	Jj
Kk	Ll	Mm	Nn	Oo
Pp	Qq	Rr	Ss	Tt
Uu	Vv	Ww/Xx	Yy	Zz

## Lesson 2: Change Over Time

In this lesson, students will be reintroduced or initially taught the concept of change over time. In Virginia, first grade students are introduced to the concepts of past, present, and future, but many do not have a solid grasp of the subject matter when they progress to the second grade. In this lesson, students will be taught to the concepts of future, present, near past, and far past. A large timeline will be placed somewhere in the classroom for the students to see. During this and subsequent units, items will be placed on the timeline in their respective places.

During the first lesson, images of what the future may look like, images from the present (maybe a picture of the class), photographs from various times in the previous hundred years, and images from before the previous century will be shown to the class. Discuss the concepts of past, present, and future, but pay particular attention to the past. Focus on what "near past" and "far past" mean and how we can determine where something lands in that time frame. The images should be big enough to be seen from afar because as each image is shown, it should be placed in order on the timeline. Specific dates should not be placed on the timeline (although they may certainly be discussed), because the point of the activity is simply to give the students a concept of change over time.

Students may be placed in small groups and given 5-10 images to put in order by time of occurrence. These images may have a particular theme such as transportation, telephones, or clothing. Then, as a group you may go through each set of images and discuss why they are placed in a particular order.

## Lesson 3-7: Native Americans of the Southwest

These lessons will focus on the culture of the Native Americans from the Southwest, but the focus will also be cultural sensitivity. To begin, I will introduce the words "cultural" and "traditions" by using the vocabulary instruction described above.

I will begin by reading *When Clay Sings* by Byrd Baylor. This will be an introduction to the Southwest region through the use of poetry. I will ask the students questions such as "What did you notice about the setting of the book?" and I will ask them to imagine they are in the desert. For their Guided Listening activity focusing on visualization, they will draw a picture of the desert as they understand it from their own experience and from the book. This will lead to questions about what they see in the desert, which will subsequently lead into the next stories of the section.

Going along with the theme of clay, I would next read *Children of Clay* by Rina Swentzell. The graphic organizer we will use during Guided Listening will be a main idea and details web where the students will list what is needed to make clay pots. We will connect the two texts and begin making clay pots, asking questions such as "Can you explain what is happening when they are making the pots?" In the meantime, we will be discussing how the adobe houses are made from wood, clay (mud), grass, and rocks, and as the week progresses I will bring in a replica of an adobe house made of cardboard to be used as a reading nook in the classroom. We will add pictures of the adobe house and a modern house to our timeline.

The next three books will be about storytelling and will include (in order) *The Storyteller* by Joan Weisman, *Coyote and the Laughing Butterflies* by Harriet Peck Taylor, and *The Magic of Spider Woman* by Lois Duncan. Throughout the reading of these stories we will discuss the importance of storytelling in Native American culture, Coyote as a trickster character, and creation stories. The students will be using the skills of prediction, asking and answering questions about the text, and drawing conclusions (by finding the themes or lessons from the stories). While discussing the book on Spider Woman, we will begin weaving "mug rugs," which are small, yarn-woven creations. We will continue to work on these throughout the unit. We will take the characters of the coyote "trickster" and Spider Woman and analyze them. This will be done by showing or drawing a picture of each on chart paper and asking the students to list character traits on sticky notes that will be placed on the chart paper.

### **Lessons 8-12: Native Americans from the Plains**

In the second major section of the unit, we will mostly be reading and discussing stories and storytelling. The themes of the importance of nature and creation will be brought to the forefront as the students learn other basic facts about the Native Americans (see matrix in Appendix A). In *How the Mouse Got Brown Teeth* by George Littlechild, students will practice predicting what will happen in the story and checking their predictions. *Sky Dogs* by Jane Yolen will bring in another creation story. During the Guided Listening activities of these two stories, the students will be asked to write the events in order on a graphic organizer and compare and contrast the two texts. Questions that will be asked to guide them include "How are these stories similar and different?" "How would you summarize this story?"

These stories lead us into *Deer and Loon Were Traveling*, a wordless picture book by Vi Hilbert. We will go through this story and discuss what is happening while we practice making interpretations of the story together. To do this, we will go through the story initially silently. Next, we will discuss what we think is happening by first discussing it with our partners and then discussing it with the whole group. Next, we will write a paragraph about what we think is happening in the wordless text.

Finally, we will read *Sky Sisters* by Jan Bourdeau Waboose and discuss past vs. present. We will make connections to the text, and I will ask the students how they are the same as or different from the girls portrayed in the story. During the unit, a tipi will be brought into the classroom that will be used as another reading nook (like the Adobe house). We will decorate the tipi by drawing images like those they have seen on the side of this type of ancient dwelling and attach these images to the tipi. We will add pictures of the girls from the story *Sky Sisters* and a picture of a tipi to our timeline. During this lesson, it is necessary to discuss the importance placed on nature and how the girls seem to be tied to the land by assigning personality traits to various parts of nature.

### **Lessons 13-17: Native Americans from the Eastern Woodlands**

The third section of the unit will include poetry and creation stories, and will lead us into the challenge of

debunking stereotypes and explaining how Native Americans live in the modern world. We will begin with *Did You Hear Wind Sing Your Name?* by Sandra De Coteau Orié. Before, during, and after reading we will discuss the appreciation and connection with nature. I will ask the students to compare and contrast the feelings for nature portrayed in the book with their own feelings by using a Venn Diagram.

Next, we will read *The Animals' Ballgame* by Lloyd Arneach. It is another wordless text, and I plan to have them work in partners to come up with a text that goes with the illustrations. The next story, *And Still the Turtle Watched* by Sheila MacGill-Callahan, will point us in the direction of change over time. Here we will add images from the book to our timeline.

The next two books, *Shi-shi-etko* by Nicola I. Campbell and *Powwow* by Linda Coombs, will illustrate what American Indian children went through when they were forced into boarding school and how they celebrate their heritage today. A small longhouse will be brought into the classroom that will be used as a reading nook like the others. We will add pictures from the two books and a picture of a longhouse to our timeline.

### **Lesson 18: Tying it all together**

The final book of the unit will be *Thirteen Moons on Turtle's Back* by Joseph Bruchac and Jonathan London. It brings illustrations from tribes throughout the United States together in one group of poems. It will be a good culminating activity, as the students will use their knowledge of the seasons and of Native American tribes to figure out the time of year and tribal region. They will then create an image of a moon and relate it to a season just as the book did. They will integrate images from a specific tribal region to be placed in a classroom book.

## **Appendix A - Implementing Virginia State Standards**

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### **Language Arts Standard**

VA SOL 2.8 - The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of fictional texts.

- (a) Make and confirm predictions.
- (c) Ask and answer questions about what is read.
- (e) Describe characters, setting, and important events in fiction and poetry
- (g) Identify the main idea
- (i) Draw conclusions based on the text

### **Social Science Standard**

VA SOL 2.2 - The student will compare the lives and contributions of three American Indian cultures of the past and present, with emphasis on the Powhatan of the Eastern Woodlands, the Lakota of the Plains, and the Pueblo peoples of the Southwest.

<b>Region</b>	<b>Indians</b>	<b>Homes</b>	<b>Occupations</b>	<b>Transportation</b>
<b>Eastern Woodlands</b>	Powhatan	Wood frame houses with bark/reed covering	Fisherman, hunters, farmers	Walked, paddled canoes
<b>Plains</b>	Lakota	Teepees	Hunters, horsemen	Walked, used horses
<b>Southwest</b>	Pueblo	Multi-story terraced buildings	Farmers, hunters	Walked

## Appendix B - Vocabulary Instruction

Word	
Describe It	
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
Draw It	Use It
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## Instructional Resources

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- Arneach, Lloyd, and Lydia Halverson. *The anima[s'] ballgame: a Cherokee story from the Eastern Band*. Chicago: Childrens Press, 1992.
- Baylor, Byrd, and Tom Bahti. *When clay sings*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972.
- Bruchac, Joseph, Jonathan London, Thomas Locker, Nanette Stevenson, Patrick Collins, and David Gatti. *Thirteen moons on turtle's back: a Native American year of moons*. New York: Philomel Books, 1992.
- Callahan, Sheila, and Barry Moser. *And still the turtle watched*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1991.
- Campbell, Nicola I., and Kim LaFave. *Shi-shi-etko*. Toronto: Groundwood Books, 2005.
- Coombs, Linda, and Carson Waterman. *Powwow*. Cleveland, Ohio: Modern Curriculum Press, 1992.
- Duncan, Lois, and Shonto Begay. *The magic of Spider Woman*. New York: Scholastic, 1996.
- Hausman, Gerald, Cara Moser, and Barry Moser. *Turtle Island ABC: a gathering of Native American symbols*. New York: HarperCollins, 1994.
- Hilbert, Vi., and Anita C. Nelson. *Loon and deer were traveling: a story of the Upper Skagit of Puget Sound*. Chicago: Childrens Press, 1992.
- Littlechild, George. *How the mouse got brown teeth: a Cree story for children*. Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1988.
- Orie, Sandra, and Christopher Canyon. *Did you hear wind sing your name?: an Oneida song of spring*. New York: Walker, 1995.
- Swentzell, Rina, and Bill Steen. *Children of clay: a family of Pueblo potters*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Co., 1992.
- Taylor, Harriet Peck. *Coyote and the laughing butterflies*. New York: Macmillan Books for Young Readers, 1995.
- Waboose, Jan Bourdeau, and Brian Deines. *SkySisters*. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 2000.
- Weisman, Joan, and David Bradley. *The storyteller*. New York: Rizzoli, 1993.
- Yolen, Jane, and Barry Moser. *Sky dogs*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990.

## Teacher Resources

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Alleman, Janet, and Jere Brophy. "History Is Alive: Teaching Young Children about Changes over Time." *Social Studies* 94, no. 3 (2003): 107.

This article is useful when teaching young children about timelines and change over time.



Broek, Paul van den, Panayiota Kendeou, Sandra Lousberg, and Gootje Visser. "Preparing for reading comprehension: Fostering text comprehension skills in preschool and early elementary school children." *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education* 4, no. 1 (2011): 259-268.

This article is a good resource when teaching reading comprehension for young children.

Conrad DoBroka, Cheryl. "Teaching to Develop Children's Intercultural Sensitivity: A Multicultural Literature Lesson on The Sandwich Swap." *Ohio Journal of English Language Arts* 52, no. 1 (2012): 53-57.

This article is a useful resource when teaching about cultural sensitivity.

Deloria, Philip Joseph. "Violence." In *Indians in unexpected places*. Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas, 2004. 15.

If you want to know more about stereotypes and the history of Native Americans over the last century, this book is a good start.

Donohue, Lisa. *Guided listening: a framework for using read-aloud and other oral language experiences to build comprehension skills and help students record, share, value, and interpret ideas*. Markham, Ont.: Pembroke Publishers, 2007.

This book is crucial if you want a full understanding of Guided Listening.

Kim, Bryan S K, Jennifer L. Greif Green, and Eileen F. Klein. "Using Storybooks to Promote Multicultural Sensitivity in Elementary School Children." *Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development* 34, no. 4 (2006): 223-234.

This article is useful for teaching cultural sensitivity with picture books.

Perrine, Laurence . "The Nature of Proof in the Interpretation of Poetry." *The English Journal* September (1962): 393-98.

This article is great to understand how to interpret poetry.

Plata, Maximino, and Harvetta Robertson. "Cultural sensitivity: A factor in the success for students of color." *Journal of Instructional Psychology* 25, no. 2 (1998): 115.

This article is useful in understanding how important it is to teach cultural sensitivity to young children.

Wolf, Shelby Anne. "Chapter 7: Visual Arts." In *Interpreting literature with children*. Mahwah, N.J.: L. Erlbaum, 2004. 225-230.

This is a good resource when teaching children how to interpret literature.

## Notes

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1. Philip Joseph Deloria, "Indians in unexpected places", 15
2. Cheryl Conrad Dobroka, "Teaching to Develop Children's Intercultural Sensitivity: A Multicultural Literature Lesson on The Sandwich Swap" 53
3. Maximino Plata and Harvetta Robertson, "Cultural sensitivity: A factor in the success for students of color.", 115

4. Bryan S K Kim, Jennifer L. Grief Green, and Eileen F. Klein, "Using Storybooks to Promote Multicultural Sensitivity in elementary School Children", 226
5. Janet Alleman and Jere Brophy, "History Is Alive: Teaching Young Children About Changes Over Time", 107
6. Ibid, 108
7. Paul van den Broek, Panayiota Kendeau, Sandra Lousberg, and Gootje Visser, "Preparing for reading comprehension: Fostering text comprehension skills in preschool and early elementary school children", 260
8. Lisa Donohue, "Guided listening: a framework for using read-aloud and other oral language experiences to build comprehension skills and help students record, share, value, and interpret ideas", 29-32
9. Shelby Anne Wolf, "Interpreting literature with children", 228
10. Laurence Perrine, "The Nature and Proof in the Interpretation of Poetry", 1
11. Ibid

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