

Strategic Skill: Evaluating Information Quality Using Electronic Sources

Fast Facts

Curriculum Area: Social Studies
Grade Level: Grade Four
Suggested Duration: 3 – 4 thirty-minute class periods

Stage 1 Desired Results

Established Goals

- (4) The history content standards for fourth grade are that each student will:
- (a) understand tribes in Montana have their own unique histories;
 - (d) describe how historical accounts are impacted by individual perspectives.

Understandings

- There is a great diversity among the twelve sovereign tribes of Montana in their languages, cultures, histories, and governments. Each tribe has a distinct and unique cultural heritage that contributes to modern Montana (EU1)
- History is a story most often related through the subjective experience of the teller. With the inclusion of more and varied voices, histories are being rediscovered and revised. History told from American Indian perspectives frequently conflicts with the stories mainstream historians tell. (EU6)
- Students understand ways to determine the accuracy of information (finding errors by reading and comparing, finding inconsistencies or variations in facts).
- Students understand information relevance; that is, how does the information found relate to the information needed.
- Students understand the differences between fact and fiction.

Essential Questions

- How can we determine whether the information we find is accurate?
- How does the information we find relate to the information we need? How important is it?
- How can we determine the difference between fiction and facts?
- How can we determine whether the information we find is relevant?

Students will be able to...

- read information about American Indians to verify facts for accuracy. They can detect errors, inconsistencies, and list only the accurate facts found about a particular event or person.
- determine the relevance of information they find, evaluating it to determine whether it should be included.



Students will know...

- how to evaluate information found on-line about American Indians.
- that some websites contain inaccurate information about American Indians.
- there is a great diversity among the 12 tribal nations of Montana in their languages, cultures, histories, and governments.

Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

Performance Tasks

1. Each student will complete Examining Electronic Sources (see template, attached).
2. Peer review of their completed Examining Electronic Sources evaluation can provide helpful feedback to the students. Teacher observation could best assess how well the students evaluated electronic sources.
3. Students demonstrate their understandings via oral and/or written assignments.

Stage 3 Learning Plan

Learning Activities

With the whole class conduct a general internet search about Native Americans and/or Native Americans – how many sites come up? Scroll through some of the search results and read off some of the various websites. Pose this question with the class: How do we know the information from this website is accurate or true?

Tell the students they are going to be evaluating websites that have information about American Indians and they will use a checklist to help with their evaluation process.

Demonstrate the process by modeling the use of the Examining Electronic Sources template with a pre-selected site. This step will help the students be more prepared to evaluate websites by themselves.

Using websites that follow your school's acceptable use policy, have students choose several they think they would like to evaluate. For purposes of time and quality control, have a preselected set of websites students can choose from to evaluate. Ask students to examine at least one website that has information about a Montana tribe.

Have students work with a partner to answer the questions on the Examining Electronic Sources template. Allow students ample class time to complete their evaluation. This activity may be spread out over several days. In addition, have students suggest how the website could be improved to incorporate more accurate information.

Once students have completed their evaluations, ask them to share their findings with the class. Encourage them to use quotes and visual aids as part of their presentation. Ask each student pair to turn in their evaluation once they have finished their presentation.

Once all groups have shared their evaluations, facilitate a class discussion and revisit the Essential Questions to see if students have a better understanding of the concepts put forth about evaluating

information found on the internet. This exercise will enable students to make informed decisions regarding information found on the internet for use in future research projects that are about American Indians.

Teacher tip: If your school has limited internet access print copies of website materials available for students to evaluate. Be sure to include examples of websites that have inaccurate information about American Indians. To get a good sampling of biased resources to share, evaluate a few websites and utilize the evaluation criteria from the Examining Electronic Sources handout.

Assessment Criteria

- ✓ Participation in class discussion regarding the bias contained within the resources evaluated.
- ✓ Individual/small group presentations/discussions.
- ✓ Summary of websites/materials reviewed and results.
- ✓ Assessment is an ongoing process; students will be aware of potential bias and should be able to point out future instances in other curricular areas.

Background Resources

[*Evaluating American Indian Materials and Resources for the Classroom*](#)

[*Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians*](#)

[*Essential Understandings Key Concepts*](#)

[*Montana Indians Their History and Location*](#)

Office of Public Instruction [Indian Education for All Website](#)

Examining Electronic Sources

People:

- Who is the author of the page?
- Is the author an expert on this topic?

Purpose:

- Is the purpose of the site listed?
- Does the site follow the stated purpose?

Issues/Events

- Does this website refer to or offer information about a specific event(s) or issue(s) that impacts American Indian people?
- Does the website offer American Indian perspectives regarding this event or issue?

Publication:

- Where does the information come from?
- When was the site created?
- When was the site last updated?

Plan:

- Is this information useful for my purpose?
- Is this information accurate?
- Why should I use this information?
- Did I detect errors or inconsistencies in this information?
- How did I determine the relevance of this information?

General Questions:

- Which tribe or tribes are identified in this resource?
- If the creator of this resource is not a tribal member, were tribal members, cultural committees, or knowledgeable experts consulted about the American Indian content in this resource?
- Has this resource been reviewed by a tribal cultural committee, tribal historian, or other well qualified reviewer?
- Is there anything about this resource that leads you to question the validity, accuracy, or authenticity of the information it presents about American Indians?