

Learning Steps in an Inquiry Process

Fast Facts

Curriculum Area: Social Studies

Grade Level: Grade Three

Suggested Duration: Two 30-40 minute class periods

Stage 1 Desired Results

Established Goals

- (1) The civics and government content standards for third grade are that each student will:
 - (a) describe and identify the basic functions of local government, including tribal governments;
 - (b) recognize that civic participation involves remaining accurately informed about public issues, taking action, and voting in elections.
- (3) The geography content standards for third grade are that each student will:
 - (a) examine maps and other representations to identify historical and contemporary political and cultural patterns in the Americas.
- (4) The history content standards for third grade are that each student will:
 - (a) identify tribes in Montana by their original and current names; and
 - (b) explain how perspective impacts the telling of historical events.

Understandings

- We can use the steps of an inquiry process to learn new information about Montana Indian tribes and reservations.
- The steps of the inquiry process are similar to those we use in scientific inquiry and in library inquiry.
- Any of the seven Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians might be addressed in this lesson depending upon the questions generated in the inquiry process

Essential Questions

- What are some good ways to identify questions or problems we would like to research?
- Where can we find the information we need? How do we determine what library sources to use? What other resources could we use?
- What questions would be good to ask? What do we want to know?
- Where could we find information about Montana Indian tribes and reservations?



Students will be able to ...

- use the steps of the inquiry process as they research information for their assignments.
- define tribe, culture, and reservation in their notebooks and on class assignments and take notes about the tribes they research.
- correctly label the seven Montana Indian reservations on a map.
- label the 12 Montana Indian tribes as they relate to reservations/primary sites of residence.
- talk about their maps and notebooks and share information with others in the classroom context.
- talk about the characteristics of all 12 tribes, using notes and worksheets they have produced as they compared information about tribes.
- keep a notebook or log of the new words they learn and review this information at intervals decided by the teacher.
- create a new product (such as a report) from the information gathered using their own words – they should not copy a report word-for-word.

Students will know ...

- inquiry process steps are useful guides when we need to find information and make reports about our new knowledge
- the steps, which include
 - identify a question or a problem and write it.
 - locate resources and materials and write down the information that can be used to answer a question or problem.
- good readers evaluate the information they find.
- good readers identify their purposes for reading and select material to meet the purpose.
- good readers compare and integrate information from at least two sources.
- good readers set appropriate reading goals, so they target the information they need.

Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

Performance Tasks

1. Each student uses the inquiry process to obtain and synthesize information through library research, classroom assignments, and making maps and notebooks.

Stage 3 Learning Plan

Learning Activities

This lesson provides students with an opportunity to apply the inquiry-based model to conduct research about Montana tribes and the seven reservations.

Students should learn the names of the seven Montana reservations as third graders; this is essential building block information they will need as they progress through the grades. For example, by the end of third grade, students will know the original names of the 12 Montana tribes and in higher grades they will learn more detailed information about every Montana tribe.

To begin, make a large poster (laminated if possible so you can write on it with a water base marker) of the steps in the inquiry process and place it on a wall in your classroom for easy reference by students.

Key components of the inquiry model:

Learning Steps in an Inquiry Process

- ✓ stating a "what if" or "I wonder" question to be investigated
- ✓ brainstorming possible procedures
- ✓ identifying an "I think" statement to test
- ✓ designing and carrying out a plan
- ✓ collecting evidence and drawing conclusions
- ✓ sharing and communication results

“Did You Ever Wonder?”

Day 1

Use a large piece of roll paper so the activity can be saved. Use either a Venn Diagram or draw a tree base. Label the center of the Venn Diagram or the tree trunk “question/problem.” Ask students to provide any/all questions/problems they can think of they would like to know more about. As students supply these questions, add branches or small circles to the diagram, using the student input. Next, have students determine source materials where they might find information regarding their questions and show these with smaller lines coming off Venn diagrams or small branches off larger branches of the tree. This portion of the lesson should be posted for further reference as the lesson progresses.

Ask small groups to choose a question/problem, then make a list of what they want to know and where they could find information specific to their question/problem. If possible, collaborate with your school librarian for assistance in facilitating the discussion with students about where to find resources to help answer the questions they have put forth.

Student groups gather information from sources identified and generate findings. Each group records findings before reporting back to the whole group. Set aside class time for students to visit the library to check out books.

Day 2

Apply inquiry method from Day 1, instruct students to think about questions they have about Montana Indian reservations and tribes. To the extent possible, facilitate questions in a way that addresses the standards outlined in the established goals. Note: For schools on/near reservations, consider having the students focus some of their questions about information they would like to know about their own tribe(s).

Prior to the lesson, be sure to review the list of IEFA books that have been sent to your library to help you guide students in their search for resources.

Student groups gather information from sources identified and generate findings. Each group records findings before reporting back to the whole group. Set aside class time for students to visit the library to check out books.

All work generated by this activity should be posted for reference and reinforcement of concepts of the inquiry process as students will use the inquiry process frequently in social studies and in science. Encourage students to add more answers to their questions as they progress through the year.

Management Tip: After each lesson session, provide notebook/journaling time and a very quick map review of reservation locations. These serve as great closure activities and take very little time.

Resources

[IEFA Resources Sent to Schools List](#)

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

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

[Tribal Territories in Montana Map](#)

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