

# Features of Montana Indian Reservations

## Fast Facts

Curriculum Area: Social Studies  
Grade Level: Grades 7-8  
Suggested Duration: Five 50-minute class periods

## Stage 1 Desired Results

### Established Goals

Essential Understanding 1: There is great diversity among the 12 tribal nations of Montana in their languages, cultures, histories, and governments. Each nation has a distinct and unique cultural heritage that contributes to modern Montana.

### Understandings

- Each reservation is a nation (EU 1, 4).
- Researching information about a tribal nation’s economic conditions, political geography, dominant patterns of land use, climate, population density, and demographic characteristics is essential in gaining knowledge and perspective about that Montana tribal nation (EU 1, 4).
- Information about reservations is collected by the tribal nations, and some is available at tribal Internet sites.
- Information about reservations is collected by the state of Montana and the US Census Bureau, and is available at Internet sites.

### Essential Questions

- Why are reservations called and regarded as “nations?”
- What factors are important in beginning to gain knowledge and perspective about the \_\_\_\_\_ Reservation?
- How can we gain information about reservations?

### Students will be able to...

- generate and interpret information about a reservation and its tribal nation(s): economic conditions, government, political geography, dominant patterns of land use, population density, and demographic characteristics appropriate to the lesson.

### Students will know...

- a reservation is a land base which a tribe or tribes reserved, through treaty (sovereignty).
- facts about a particular reservation, based on the research completed for their five-minute poster presentation.

- how to research current information about reservations.

## Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

### Performance Tasks

1. On a map, label features of a Montana reservation, including physical, political, cultural, and historical sites.
2. Generate a “Poster Presentation” concerning the reservation’s demographic characteristics, population density, recent economic, tribal government, patterns of land use, and other interesting facts found. The presentation format may include technology such as PowerPoint/Prezi presentations, videos, music, etc.

## Stage 3 Learning Plan

### Learning Activities:

#### Part I

Students and teachers generate “I Can” statements that outline the information to be learned, the thinking to be accomplished, and the tasks to be completed. These are based on the lesson goals and Essential Understandings. “I Can” statements orient students to expectations, hook their interest, and structure the lesson to the key ideas and issues. **For example:**

- I can name and locate the reservations and tribal nations in Montana.
- I can tell why Montana reservations are nations.
- I can research and interpret information about a reservation (a tribal nation’s economic conditions, government, political geography, dominant patterns of land use, population density, and demographic characteristics) to better my own understanding.
- As I find out about this reservation, I can identify my own misunderstandings I may have in general about reservations. I know how my pattern of thoughts can influence my understandings.

While each student will choose a particular Montana reservation to research, **the first part of this lesson is spent in orienting students to all seven reservations, so they obtain an overview.** Utilize materials and the resources listed below. Supply each student with a Montana highway map, and orient the class to the seven Montana reservations and their surroundings. This is also the time to talk about Montana’s urban Indians; review information about the Little Shell Chippewa and their recent land acquisition near Great Falls. Students outline each reservation in color on the Montana map.

Supply each student with a blank Montana student map so they can label the reservations. At this time, have them label the tribal capital and other tribal towns (for each reservation).

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Take time to discuss the relevant sites; have students locate and place the particular site on their own reservation map. Students should take notes about the significance of each site; they can use the information in discussions and assessments.

### Part II

In this second part, ask each student (or pairs of students) to identify a Montana reservation they will research. They will research to learn about a tribal nation's economic conditions, government, political geography, dominant patterns of land use, population density, and demographic characteristics.

Give students their directions (see student worksheets at end of this lesson), and provide time for them to research, make a rough draft of their poster, and then make their poster. If they identify other information they would like to include, have them place that information on the back of their poster.

Students should create an outline of their brief poster speech. Give each student a poster sheet (need not be cardboard—could be 14 x 17 paper, for example).

Use class time for Poster Presentations

This particular lesson may take five days (50-minute periods), depending your students' backgrounds. Discussion and frequent active rethinking should keep student engagement and learning high.

This lesson is extended from previous social studies lesson plans. In grade 5 students developed an understanding of reservation as nation, and the geographic features (physical, political) of the reservations. In Grade 6 students learned about the cultural geographic features of Montana reservations, including places considered sacred.

### Materials/Resources Needed

[Blank Montana student maps](#), one per student.

Montana highway maps, one per student. Students will need these to locate the reservations in the context of Montana.

Access to the following Internet Sites:

- [Montana Indians: Their History and Location](#) This publication provides a brief introduction to the Tribal Nations of Montana.
- [Montana Governor's Office of Indian Affairs](#) Here you can find fast facts on the tribes, reservations and their economy, and tribal councils.
- [Montana Department of Commerce](#)

## Student Worksheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Goals

1. Use appropriate resources to interpret and generate information explaining information about Montana Indians, including government, population density, demographics of reservations, and economic information.

### At the end of this lesson

- I can tell why Montana reservations are nations.
- I can research and interpret information about a reservation (a tribal nation's economic conditions, government, political geography, dominant patterns of land use, population density, and demographic characteristics) to better my understanding.
- As I find out about this reservation, I can identify my own misunderstandings I may have about reservations. I know how my pattern of thoughts can influence my understandings.

### Understandings

- Each reservation is a nation (EU 1, 4).
- Researching information about a tribal nation's economic conditions, political geography, dominant patterns of land use, climate, population density, and demographic characteristics is essential in gaining knowledge and perspective about that Montana tribal nation (EU 1, 4).
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### Directions

#### Part 1

Follow the teacher's instructions in orienting yourself to the seven Montana reservations. Ensure you have correctly identified all of the reservations (including the Little Shell). Star the tribal capital. Note the other important towns and communities within the reservation boundaries.

Make a list of things you already know about some of the reservations and generate a list of questions you would like to know more about.

#### Part II

Choose a reservation to research. You are expected to find information about a tribal nation's **economic conditions, government, population density, and demographic characteristics.**

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Use the Internet to research for this information at the following sites:

- [Montana Indians: Their History and Location](#) This publication provides a brief introduction to the Tribal Nations of Montana.
- [Montana Governor's Office of Indian Affairs](#) Here you can find fast facts on the tribes, reservations and their economy, and tribal councils.
- [Montana Department of Commerce](#)

If internet access is not available, utilize resources in your school's library to research your reservation.

Use the grid below to help you remember what you are researching.

Once you have finished your research, use a piece of paper to draw a rough draft of the information you have collected. You are going to transfer this to a large poster board so plan carefully. Remember to include the following titles on your rough draft:

- Reservation Official Name
- Government Structure
- Demographic Characteristics (including population density)
- Economic Conditions
- Other Facts (optional)

Once your rough draft of the poster has been created, check with your teacher to see if you are ready to draw the final poster board presentation.

Use pencil on the poster board to rough in your presentation. Use markers to finish your final draft.

Plan your three-five-minute oral presentation of the facts you have found.

You may also utilize any technology supports to enhance your presentation such as videos, PowerPoints, pictures etc. (please check with your teacher to see if this can be an option).

**FEATURES OF \_\_\_\_\_ RESERVATION IN MONTANA**

**Reservation Name**

**Governmental Structure (Describe number on council, departments, etc.)**

**Demographic Characteristics**

**Economic Conditions**

**Other Facts**