

# Fact or Fiction

## Fast Facts

Curriculum Area: Social Studies  
Grade Level: Grade 1  
Suggested Duration: One-two 50-minute class periods

**Note:** This lesson is best suited for students who are not American Indian and may have limited knowledge and understanding regarding contemporary Indian people. However, if you have students in your class who you know are American Indian, it might be appropriate to ask them to share their tribal identity and cultural practices with the class so long as they are comfortable doing so. (To be respectful, you should check ahead of time to determine if they wish to share.) This lesson could present an opportunity to change misperceptions regarding American Indian students and allow them to experience a classroom environment where they are better understood and their tribal identity is strengthened (also see Essential Understanding 2 below).

## Stage 1 Desired Results

### Established Goals

**(1) The civics and government content standards for first grade are that each student will:**

(a) demonstrate being a citizen of a classroom and school community through interactions and by following established rules and expectations.

**(3) The geography content standards for first grade are that each student will:**

(a) identify and describe human and physical local landmarks.

**(4) The history content standards for first grade are that each student will:**

(a) distinguish between past, present, and future time; and

(b) understand how events might be described differently depending on historical contexts and perspectives, including those of tribes in Montana.

**ELA Standard RL.1.7 (grade 1)**

Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.

**ELA Standard RL.1.9 (grade1)**

Compare and contrast the adventures and experiences of characters in stories, including American Indian stories.

**IEFA Essential Understanding 1** There is 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.

**IEFA Essential Understanding 2** There is great diversity among individual American Indians as identity is developed, defined, and redefined by entities, organizations, and people. There is no generic American Indian.



## Understandings

- There are and have been common misconceptions about American Indians.

## Essential Questions

- What do you know about American Indians?
- What are some misunderstandings about American Indians?

## Students will be able to . . .

- identify a few misconceptions about American Indians living today.

## Students will know . . .

- great diversity exists between individual American Indians.
- American Indian people and cultures have changed over time

## Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

### Performance Tasks

Students will answer orally or write a short paragraph answering the question “What would you add or take away from your picture to represent American Indians living today?”

### Other Evidence

Journal entries

## Stage 3 Learning Plan

### Learning Activities

Be sure the students are familiar with the following vocabulary words prior to the start of the lesson: **misunderstanding, celebrate, traditions.**

Begin the lesson by explain to the students that they are going to learn about American Indians today. Put a KWL chart on a whiteboard or smartboard and have the class identify what they **know** about and what they **want** to know about American Indians. Leave the column on what they **learned** for the conclusion of the lesson.

After the first two columns of the KWL chart have been completed, have students close their eyes and picture what they think an Indian may look like. Have each create a drawing of this image. Please remind students there is not a right or wrong answer/picture. All pictures are acceptable but be sure that no pictures have content that could be construed as offensive prior to sharing. The pictures will be used to identify the level of background knowledge students have in terms of American Indians.

Hang the student drawn pictures up in the front of the room (only those who want to share). As a class, create a list of the characteristics seen in the pictures. Highlight any references to celebrations or traditions where appropriate.

View the Office of Public Instruction “Honor Your Self” and “Making Montana Proud” posters. Each poster has a short description of the individual. The teacher should read these to students, so they have a better understanding about the people in the posters.

Discuss professions, places they live, the clothes they wear.

Create a list of the individual characteristics seen in the poster.

Compare and contrast the posters and the student drawn pictures as well as the lists. Discuss with students if the pictures they had in their minds about Indians were accurate.

Questions to consider:

- Do the individuals in the posters look like the drawing you made? Why or why not?
- Were any of the student drawings showing Indians that lived in the past? If yes, how do you know?
- How are the individuals in the posters different from one another? What types of jobs do they have?

Read Aloud *Jingle Dancer* by Cynthia Leitich Smith and/or *The War Shirt* by Bently Spang.

Questions to consider:

- Did you know that some American Indians celebrate traditions from the past?
- How are the children in the book dressed?
- Where do the main characters live?
- What do you have in common with the child in the book?
- What is a pow wow?

Make connection between the characters in the books and the individuals in the poster series as well as the drawings.

Pose the following questions to the students and have them either provide written response or via oral responses/class discussion:

1. What were the differences between the student drawn pictures and the posters?
2. How are Indians today different than Indians in the past?
3. What are some things that you now understand about Indian people?

Circle back to the KWL chart and fill in the What I Learned column as a class activity.

After discussing the questions and completing the KWL chart, have students answer the following question either in writing or orally depending upon their writing skills. You may also offer both options for response:

What would you add or take away from your picture to represent American Indians living today?

## Materials/Resources Needed

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

*Jingle Dancer* by Smith, Cynthia Leitich Smith (Muscogee Creek), illustrated by Cornelius Van Wright and Ying-Hwa Hu (This should be in your school library.)

[KWL Chart](#)

[Poster Series: Honor Your Self and Making Montana Proud](#)

*The War Shirt* by Spang, Bently Spang (Northern Cheyenne, illustrated by Troy Anderson (Northern Cheyenne) (This should be in your school library.)

[\*Your Guide to Understanding and Enjoying Pow Wows\*](#)