

I Know Who I Am: My Ethnic Heritage

Fast Facts

Curriculum Area: Social Studies
Grade Level: Grades 1 - 2
Suggested Duration: 1 Week (brief activities each day)

Stage 1 Desired Results

Established Goals

Social Studies

The geography content standards for first grade are that each student will:

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

The geography content standards for second grade are that each student will:

(b) describe how geography and human activities impact each other.

The history content standards for first grade are that each student will:

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

The history content standards for second grade are that each student will:

(a) identify how people lived differently in the past than they do today;

(b) understand that there are twelve distinct and unique tribes within Montana whose people contribute to modern life;

(c) identify different kinds of historical sources, including oral histories of American Indians.

IEFA Essential 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)

Just as there is a great diversity among tribal nations, 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. (EU2)

The ideologies of Native traditional beliefs and spirituality persist into modern day life as tribal cultures, traditions, and languages are still practiced by many American Indian people and are incorporated into how tribes govern and manage their affairs. Additionally, each tribe has its own oral histories, which are as valid as written histories. These histories predate the "discovery" of America. (EU3)



Understandings

- Students will identify and learn about their individual ethnic heritage.
- Families are unique.
- The people of the twelve tribes of Montana have different languages and traditions.
- Everyone looks different from each other.
- Each tribe has its own oral stories about their ancestors.

Essential Questions

- How are our looks all different from each other?
- How is your family unique?
- What is your ethnic heritage?
- Why should you know who your ancestors are?
- What do you know about the first people who lived in Montana?

Students will be able to...

- write and learn new vocabulary words and meanings: tribe (tribal membership), clan, heritage, ancestor, empathy. Pictures may instead be drawn to illustrate some of the vocabulary.
- name student's own clan, tribal affiliation, and/or country of national origin.
- demonstrate an understanding of a student's yearly sequential timeline with a family member, giving an oral presentation about the student's own unique ethnic heritage.
- name a family ancestor.
- identify and share information about fun facts that help support what each student learned about own individual ethnic heritage, and each other.
- locate general geographic locations of student heritage ties (Montana, United States, Mexico, Europe, etc.) to begin the introduction of maps.

Students will know...

- they have an individual ethnic heritage.
- there are differences between all the students in the class, but each is a member of a community.
- they may share a clan or tribal membership *or similar ethnic background* with other students in the class.
- they may not share the same ethnic background, but they will respect and listen to each other's story.
- it is important to learn about individual family ancestors and tell others about it.
- many of the twelve tribes of Indian people in Montana have ancestors who lived here before anyone else.
- empathy is an understanding by someone of another person's feelings and beliefs about that person's life story (it is not just knowledge; it is an experience).

Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

Performance Tasks

1. Create an individual student timeline at home with parents for classroom use beginning with a grandparent or great-grandparent photo (or drawing), of a student's birth through the student's current age (birth date, one year old, two years old, etc.) using photos, drawings, and a short list of important events. If a student is able to use a copy of a great-grandparent family member photo, this will help support the understanding about ancestors (students may express empathy for other students whose grandparents have died and are now their "ancestors").
2. Give an oral presentation (with a parent, family member, or with the teacher if a family member is not available) of an individual student timeline (above), recounting important people and family events from birth to first grade with the support of a family member.

Note: Expectations and directions for the timeline and timeline presentation will be sent home or picked up in class by a parent before the lesson begins (including paper supplies). Parents may be invited to photocopy/scan several pictures to support the creation of the timeline.

Other Evidence

Teacher and students may create a collective display together of photocopied pictures of their ancestors to be used in further discussions of similar clan members and/or reminders of vocabulary words such as ancestor. A video could also be made of the display with student comments and presented for the parents and family members. A time capsule could be made to save for the students upon graduation.

Stage 3 Learning Plan

Learning Activities

What learning experiences and instructions will enable students to achieve the desired results: Students and teacher will explore the diversity among classmates to discover and/or support ethnic heritage. This lesson supports **all** students in gaining a positive image of themselves and their heritage (culture), as well as learning about each other's unique heritage and the American Indian cultural heritage of classroom students. This process will be supported through timelines developed by students and parents/caregivers and then presented with a parent/caregiver to the whole class. This presentation will be a foundation to infuse and support Essential Understandings 1, 2, and 3: oral language; acceptance/tolerance of others; and a foundation in developing an awareness of one's ethnic heritage, as well as American Indians' ancestors who predate the statehood of Montana.

Use a KWLH chart: A class discussion between the students and teacher will take place about what we (class) know about our ethnic heritage (What do you know about where your family comes from? What do you want to learn more about? What did you learn? How can we extend this lesson with more information or activities?). This chart will be added to throughout the lesson in an ongoing and student-engaged manner as a student identifies more facts and information learned about student's own family, as well as what learned about each other's families.

If the classroom has American Indian students, in addition to learning about a classroom student's tribe(s), the teacher will incorporate and extend the lesson to include and support the teaching and relevant understandings about "ancestors" to encompass the Essential Understandings 1, 2, and 3 regarding ancestors and family histories which predate the statehood of Montana.

Teacher will review the expectations for student oral language presentations and share that with parents prior to the presentations (complete sentences, clear voice, vocabulary, etc.).

Read and discuss relevant literature which supports classroom individual student identity within the classroom.

Let parents know (through emails, newsletters, or classroom notes) your classroom students will be learning about each other's ethnic heritage and encourage family discussions in order for students to bring family information to school (parents may allow students to share heirloom objects or photos which the teacher may want to take photos of or photocopy for classroom discussion and then safely return the objects to parents).

Have a class discussion about where students were born and where their parents were born.

Students can bring things from their individual culture to share with the rest of the class (special object, photograph clan chart, etc.). Reviewing and adding to the KWLH chart will help students retain information and ask new questions.

Practice oral presentations in other content areas to lead to the timeline presentation.

Model oral presentation expectations (Language Arts Standards for oral language) and how you will use a rubric to grade them individually.

The emphasis should be on sharing individual student cultural awareness, as opposed to an emphasis on food only or objects in isolation.

Parents can begin making a timeline at home with their student, after receiving written guidelines and paper strip.

Focus classroom discussion on an introduction to family ethnic heritage locating state, region, or country of family origin with map, world globe, and information from student timelines, etc. Discussions and questioning will be ongoing regarding individual student identity development.

After students have gained a foundation and understanding of cultural differences through the KWLH chart, discussions, background information, student questions, and preparing the timeline at home, students will proceed with Assessment (1) of returning with individual timelines (if possible, made at home); and (2), individually, students will present timeline (with family member, if possible), sharing events and cultural information about their family (students may want help with a map or globe). If students have a picture of themselves with an elder or grandparent who has passed away, they may then be able to use the word "ancestor" to describe them; this encourages empathy from other students for a student who may have a grandparent or other family member who has passed away. The teacher may have to allow presentations to occur at various times throughout the week when parents or other family members can get to the classroom to support student learning.

Teacher creates and presents individual student timeline with student if family member is not available.

Prepare paper strips for timelines (8" H x 36" L folded every 4" for nine sections) for number of students in class along with timeline directions and classroom model for parents.

Take individual student photos of students who will not be able to complete the timeline at home (they will have to draw baby pictures on their timeline but will have a picture of themselves at the age of 6 from the teacher). Always check school policy on use of student photos and videos.

Prepare a rubric for the oral presentation of the timeline (use Language Arts Standards, or curriculum).

Plan several different times for presentations in order to best facilitate parent class time. Invite parents and, if possible, elders of Indian communities to the classroom for any presentations.

Suggested Resources

These lesson plans have instructional strategies and resources for understanding culture and identity.

[*Crossing Boundaries Through Art: Seals of Montana Tribal Nations*](#)

[*Double! Not Half. Model Lesson*](#)

[*Model Teaching Units for Language Arts - Elementary Level - Volume One*](#)

[KXLH Chart](#)