

We Can Order Events in Time

Fast Facts

Curriculum Area: Social Studies
Grade Level: Grade 1
Suggested Duration:

Stage 1 Desired Results

Established Goals

Social Studies Standard 4, Benchmark (1)(b) – Use a timeline to select, organize, and sequence information describing eras in history.

IEFA Essential Understanding 3 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.

IEFA Essential Understanding 5 There were many federal policies put into place throughout American history that have affected Indian people and still shape who they are today (Reservation Period – Allotment and Assimilation, 1887-1934).

Understandings

- Laws change Indian lives
- Indian traditions are still taught to Indian children

Essential Questions

- What does it mean to have a tradition?
- How does one law change the lives of some Indian families?
- Do you know what your name means?

Students will be able to...

- retell the events in order of time during the four days before Shi-shi-etko left for school, naming the person and places they went.
- identify three things you would miss from home if you had to live away from home and why you would miss them.
- tell how your parents might feel if a law said their child had to go to a school far away from home.
- create a bag of memories. What is in it and why is each thing in it special to you.
- learn what your name means (only if knowing this is acceptable and appropriate – Montana tribal customs vary if students have tribal affiliations).

Students will know...

- some laws keep families apart from each other while the children go to school.
- some families give children a traditional name, like Shi-shi-etko, to honor their child.
- all names are special and respected.
- to respect traditions practiced by others.

Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

Performance Tasks

1. Students and teacher will “write” a letter to Shi-shi-etko to tell her how they feel about the way she spent her four days before leaving home and how she may have felt the day she left.
2. Students will order events in time during the four days before Shi-shi-etko left home, naming the person(s) she spent the day with, the places they went, and some sights and sounds she experienced.

Other Evidence

Design and create a student-made classroom quilt for Shi-shi-etko to “send” to her with the letter they “write” (colored paper or fabric, possibly with family, plan, and animal pictures using any geometric shape and pattern).

Learn about the five senses and relate them to things in nature that were important to Shi-shi-etko and/or other familiar plant and animal life. Nature walks, study and collection of plant species, animal tracks, etc. can support this.

Create what a traditional paddle song or mother’s song might sound like.

Stage 3 Learning Plan

Learning Activities:

What learning experiences and instruction will enable students to achieve the desired results: This lesson on putting events in order focuses on a striking era of history for American Indians who were (and still are in some areas) required to leave home to attend residential (government boarding) schools. During the four days before Shi-shi-etko, (the story character) leaves home, she gathers the honor and beauty of her family and home, both in her heart and memory, as she prepares a small pouch (memory bag) which she takes with her. Sharing this moving story with young children and drawing on how they might feel to have to leave their home and family to go to a far-away school, will create a poignant sense of empathy both for students and staff, for American Indian children who have lived (and continue currently) to endure this loss. *The teaching focus is on empathy for the character and the joy she found each day – even with the challenge of having to leave her home and family. This lesson is part of one of the major federal policy periods – The Boarding School Period, from 1879 to present* (the historical information is support for the teacher).

W = Help students know where the unit is going and what is expected

The teacher and students will discuss what they know about laws. After discussing laws in general, the teacher will tell students they are going to talk about a law that was written to make American Indian children have to leave their homes and families to attend a school far away from them – so far away they could not go home at night. They sleep alone in a bed in a building with other Indian children who have also had to leave their homes and families. Some Indian students still have to live away from home to go to school, separated from their families.

H = Hook all students and hold their interest

Read aloud, *Shi-shi-etko*, a narrative about a young girl that the law says she must leave her home and family in four days. The teacher will emphasize the order of events during the four days and nights.

Who is she with each day? What special things does she gather to take with her (why is a memory bag special)? What are some things her family teaches her? What are some words that show Shi-shi-etko comes from a traditional family? (What does it mean to have a tradition – what is a traditional food, celebration, language, etc. as related to individual student's self-knowledge?) What things represent the five senses?

E = Equip students, help them experience the key ideas and explore the issues

Provide some information about the author of the book, Nicola I. Campbell, whose family is of the Interior Salish and Métis Tribes of Canada (review a map or use a globe to locate Canada).

Students may (when appropriate) learn the meaning of their individual names from family or a baby name book to support the understanding and self-awareness of respect for individual names.

The teacher will discuss with the students an understanding of how Shi-shi-etko is the character of the story, not a real girl, who helps us understand how Indian children's lives have had to change because of a law. What are emotions children may feel when they knew they would have to leave home to go to an unfamiliar school where they to live also, and spend nights without their families? What are the emotions of the families (fear, anger, sadness, worry)? How does Shi-shi-etko's face look each day – does it change with how she feels? The teaching focus is on empathy for the character and students' understanding of the courage Shi-shi-etko showed. This lesson would be best taught in the spring as students have developed a strong bond of trust with their teacher, and the teacher (who has gained foundational support through non-fiction literature about this era) carefully guides the students into an understanding of empathy by reflective teacher pedagogy.

What would it be like if you had to leave your family and home and go to a school far away?

Who would you miss? What objects would you want to take? How would you communicate if you could not call or you were too young to write letters? How would your family feel every night when you were not sitting at the table and getting ready for bed, and could not hear your laughter?

Assessment (1) will follow after several discussions: the teacher guides the students to provide

thoughts and feelings, which are relative and sensitive to the story's character in creating a classroom letter for Shi-shi-etko. This letter will be "reread" with teacher support throughout the lesson.

Students will create an individual bag of memories to help them understand the reason why Shi-shi-etko made one (students add a special thing - rock, feather, picture, coin – things that each student finds special to them) each day.

R = Provide opportunities for student to rethink and revise their understandings and work

Provide time for students to retell and order the events in the four days before Shi-shi-etko left for home. Review in ongoing discussions throughout the lesson.

Assessment (2) is given after students have a clear understanding of the events.

Allow students to evaluate their work and its implications

Students can practice "reading" the letter they write as a class/student and tell why they think writing a letter is important, even though Shi-shi-etko is a character. What do the students think Shi-shi-etko's name means (her name means "she loves to play in water")? What does she do in the story that shows her name is just for her? Find examples of other traditional things in the story (grandma's name, songs from her mother, father, and grandfather).

T = Be tailored (personalized) to the different needs, interests, and abilities of learners

Provide support for students who are learning to order events during the writing process. Review or teach simple letter format, punctuation, and grammar.

Prerecord the story on tape for individual listening.

O = Be organized to maximize initial and sustained engagement as well as effective learning

As the classroom teacher, please read, *A History and Foundation of American Indian Education Policy*, pages 20-27 to provide an understanding and self-reflective process before sharing this lesson with young students.

If possible, respectfully (follow tribal customs and protocol when asking members for information) access a tribal member who may be willing to help support the understanding of boarding schools; this remains a contemporary issue for many American Indians and being sensitive to this is very important.

If your library does not have Shi-shi-etko, request it through an interlibrary loan.

Prior to reading the read aloud, review the forward information to be able to use some of it with the students.

Gather some plant (nature walk) and animal pictures to support the story and allow students to become familiar with an association between the words and pictures in context.

Provide a small bag for each student (to create a bag of memories).

The teacher may shorten the read aloud by explaining some of the sentences for attention level, and/or reading it in parts over a week, with attention to discussion time.

Prepare a class name list with meanings using parent or guardian support **only** if this is appropriate with the customs of any particular tribal membership of classroom students. *Please ask the school native language teacher*, where possible, as the meaning of names may be private among certain Montana Indian tribes and need to be respected as such.

The teacher may want to wait until spring to read this story and work on this lesson (attention span will be longer, and listening skills greater, allowing for a higher, student self-awareness for empathy).

Resources

Campbell, Nicola I. (Interior Salish/Métis). *Shi-shi-etko*. Illustrated by Kim LaFave. Berkeley, CA.: Groundwood Books, 2005. 28 pp. ISBN: 0-88899-659-4

Juneau, Stan; Revised and Updated by Walter Fleming and Lance Foster. [History and Foundation of American Indian Education](#). Montana Office of Public Instruction, Helena, MT, 2013. (pages 17-27)