

Teacher: Craig Goff Email: cgoff@ishpemingschools.com
School: Ishpeming Middle School

A Face in the Rock Teaching Unit

Target Grade Sixth Grade, Language Arts/Social Studies/Science

Unit Overview

The novel A Face in the Rock will serve as a starting point and source of historical information for a multi-day unit focusing on Native American Heritage in the Lake Superior region. The first part of the unit is classroom-based and will serve as the prelude to a class at sixth grade camp titled, “A Face in the Rock- The Native American Experience”.

Students will begin the unit by reading the novel and connecting the knowledge they gained in previous classroom lessons regarding the identification of key elements in a novel (ie., protagonist, genre, theme, conflict ect.) Through out the novel, students will be asked to respond to the text with reflective journal writing and on-going questions that will check their understanding and comprehension of the material. The first part of the unit will culminate with students constructing a timeline that summarizes the history of the Grand Island Chippewa.

The second part of the unit will take place in an outdoor setting at the sixth grade outdoor education camp in June. This optional class will focus on the culture of the Chippewa and their dependence on foraged plants, shrubs, and trees for food and medicinal purposes.

Materials

Teacher and student copies of A Face in the Rock
Question list from Face in the Rock. Legend, Lore, and Loss of a Culture
Poster board and materials for timeline activity
Various field guides for sixth grade camp class

Books/Sources Consulted

Densmore, Frances How Indians Use Wild Plants for Food, Medicine & Crafts.
New York, NY: Dover Publications, Inc.1974

Graham, Loren R. A Face in the Rock. The Tale of a Grand Island Chippewa.
Washington D.C: Island Press, 1995.

Naegele, Thomas, A., D.O. Edible and Medicinal Plants of the Lake Superior Region. Wilderness Adventure Books, 1996.

National Audubon Society. Field Guide to North American Trees. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995.

Objectives

At the end of this unit, students will have a better understanding and appreciation of the Lake Superior Chippewa culture. They will be able to...

1. Produce a “Reader Response Journal” that records their thought and feelings about various events in the story in both first and third person point of view.
2. Construct a timeline that illustrates 10 major events in the history of the Grand Island Chippewa.
3. Identify the “Essential Parts of a Novel” as they relate to A Face in the Rock. The Tale of the Grand Island Chippewa.
4. Identify at least five different types of trees, plants or shrubs, and their uses for food and at least one medicinal purpose.

Michigan Content Standards Addressed

English Language Arts Content Standard 5.3 (Later Elementary)

Students will read and analyze a variety of texts to seek information, ideas, enjoyment, and understanding of their individuality, our common heritage and common humanity, and rich diversity in our society.

Science Content Standard 1.6 (Elementary)

Students will construct charts and graphs and prepare summaries of observations.

Social Studies Content Standard 1.1 (Middle School)

Students will construct and interpret timelines of people and events from the history of Michigan and the United States.

Unit Plan Activities

Part I

History of the Lake Superior Chippewa

Materials: *Book- A Face in the Rock . The Tale of a Grand Island Chippewa
*Question list from A Face in the Rock. Legend, Lore and Loss of a Culture
*Poster board and supplies, paper and overhead transparency for the KWL comprehension and timeline activities

After breaking into small groups, the teacher will lead a KWL (what you Know already, what you Want to know, and what you Learned) activity. After recording and sharing, students then make a list of the questions they would like to have answered in this unit. The teacher then begins to read aloud the Prologue and first chapter of the book. The class continues to read the book and answer ongoing student and teacher generated questions that check for understanding.

Students are also required to construct and decorate a “Reader Response Journal” for on-going reflective writing. Responses will be required to be written in both first and third person point of view. Journal coursework will be given after each reading assignment.

Upon completion of the book students will create a timeline (poster size) that includes a minimum of **10 major** events from the novel A Face in the Rock. The timeline must include illustrations/drawings and explanations of the events. Timelines must also be in chronological order. Explanations should be brief but in complete sentences.

Part II

The Native American Experience

Materials: *Edible Wild Plants handout and “Items Found” recording form
*Resource books for edible and medicinal plants
*Field Guides

At sixth grade camp students will have the option to take the class titled, “A Face in the Rock- A Native American Experience”. Students taking this class will break into small groups and have the task of identifying at least five different plants, shrubs, or trees and how they were used by the Chippewa. Of the five uses, one must be a medicinal use. The instructor will model the identification and recording of a birch tree and its uses. Students will regroup and share their findings for the final 20 minutes of the class. Students are encouraged to find more than five if possible.

Unit Assessment

Students will be given three grades for the first part of the unit. The first classroom grade will be a participation/effort grade from assigned comprehension and discussion questions through out the book. The second classroom grade will be double-graded and based on the timeline requirements. The third grade, also double-graded, will be determined by reflections and feelings put forth in first and third person journal responses in students’ Reader Response Journals.

Assessment for the sixth grade camp class will be more informal. Since final grades will already have been determined, the teacher will base student accomplishment by the number of entries each group records. The teacher should

be monitoring for overall enthusiasm and possible adjustments, as this will be the first time for this class is offered at sixth grade camp.