

Montana Small Schools Alliance  
**HONORING MONTANA'S FIRST PEOPLES**

**UNIT:** Mapping the Flathead Reservation

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**SCHOOL AND COUNTY:** Elliston School in Powell County

**GRADE LEVEL:** 5-8

**INDIAN RESERVATION REFERENCED:** Flathead

**CONTENT STANDARDS ADDRESSED:**

Montana Social Studies Content Standard 3: Students apply geographic knowledge and skills (e.g. location, place, human/environment interactions, movement, and regions)

Montana Social Studies Content Standard 4: Students demonstrate an understanding of the effects of time, continuity, and change on historical and future perspectives and relationships.

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS ADDRESSED:**

Essential Understanding 4: Reservations are land that have been reserved by the tribes for their own use through treaties and was not “given” to them. The principle that land should be acquired from the Indians only through their consent with treaties involved three assumptions:  
-That both parties to treaties were sovereign powers.  
-That Indian tribes had some form of transferable title to the land.  
-That acquisition of Indian lands was solely a government matter not to be left to individual colonists.

Essential Understanding 5: There were many federal policies put into place throughout American history that have impacted Indian people and shape who they are today. Much of Indian history can be related through several major federal policy periods. Examples: Colonization Period, Treaty Period, Allotment Period, Boarding School Period, tribal Reorganization, Termination, Self-determination

Essential Understanding 7: Under the American legal system, Indian tribes have sovereign powers separate and independent from the federal and state governments. However, the extent and breadth of tribal sovereignty is not the same for each tribe.

**Purpose:** Students will be able to locate the Flathead Reservation, identify the tribes located on the reservation, have an understanding of the changes of land ownership the reservation has undergone, have an awareness of the history behind the formation of the reservation, define sovereignty and recognize that the Flathead reservation is a sovereign nation.

Materials:

- ✓ DVD “Tribes of Montana and How They Got Their Names”  
{[www.opi.mt.gov/IndianEd](http://www.opi.mt.gov/IndianEd)}
- ✓ Map of Montana with Reservations outlined –Map A
- ✓ Political Map of the United States –Map B
- ✓ “Tribes and Historical Locations of Western Montana”- Map C {Wood, W Raymond and Liberty, Margot, editors, *Anthropology on the Great Plains*, University of Nebraska Press, 1980.
- ✓ “Traditional Tribal Trade Centers and Networks” -Map D {same source as above}
- ✓ Land Status Maps of the Flathead Reservation 1855-2004- Maps E – I  
{obtained from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes}
- ✓ Contour Map that includes the Flathead Reservation -Map J  
{[www.askusgs.gov](http://www.askusgs.gov) }
- ✓ Materials to create map such as salt dough, clay, paper mache, cardboard, colored pencils, paint (preference of the teacher)

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHER:**

“The appearance of the Blackfeet, who shortly thereafter also acquired the horse, drastically changed the arrangement of Indian tribes in eastern Montana. The Kootenai, who at times traveled from western Montana or from the north to hunt the bison on the plains, were quickly pushed into northwestern Montana by the aggressive Blackfeet. The Salish also retreated to the western Montana mountain valleys and would venture into the Great Plains only with their allies, the Nez Perce, for annual buffalo hunts.”

...” The Salish apparently had six main centers of activity east of the Continental Divide, all focal points for buffalo hunting. These included the Helena Valley, the Three Forks area, the Big Hole country, the Jefferson Valley, and probably areas along the upper Yellowstone and Sun Rivers.”

“The Pend d’Oreille lived primarily from what is now Paradise, Montana, upstream perhaps as far as Butte. Most of them settled in Bitterroot, Missoula and Flathead Valleys.”

“Around 1830, they began to focus most of their activity near what is now St. Ignatius. This allowed them good access to all three major western valleys as well as to buffalo hunting routes to the east.”

“The Kootenai are presumed to have always been located in southeastern British Columbia, north Idaho, northwestern Montana and southwestern Alberta. Some archaeologists believe that this area is the aboriginal territory of the Kootenai. It is thought that they were divided into at least seven major bands...”

“When the Pend d’Oreille moved south of Flathead Lake to St. Ignatius, the Kootenai moved into the Flathead Lake Country. By the 1850s the Salish tribes and the Kootenai tribes were close allies living in the mountain valleys of western Montana and making regular forays east of the divide to hunt buffalo.”

-Excerpts from: Bryan, William L. *Montana’s Indians Yesterday and Today* 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. American & World Geographic Publishing, 1996.

- 1855 Isaac Stevens, governor and superintendent of Indian Affairs for Washington Territory, met with representatives of Kootenai, Flathead and Pend d’Oreille Tribes to persuade the formation of the reservation which would cover the southern half of Flathead Lake down through the Jocko Valley. Also established a reservation in the Bitterroot Valley. Agreement known as Hellgate Treaty. According to terms of the treaty, the chiefs ceded about 95% of their aboriginal territory.....”Many elders have long told how tribes were taken advantage of at many points in our history because of inadequate or inaccurate translation.”.... “In letters and records throughout the following decades, many tribal leaders including Sam Resurrection said that according to the way the treaty was translated to the chiefs in 1855, the reservation’s boundaries were suppose to be considerably bigger than it was stated in the written treaty, particularly on the west and north sides. Many said that the northern boundary was supposed to be the Canadian line.”(*A Brief History of the Salish and Pend d’Oreille Tribes, p. 29*)
- 1872 Flathead Band agreed to allow white settlers in the Jocko Reservation
- 1891 final group of Flatheads move to the Jocko Reservation, it then became known as the Flathead Reservation
- 1904 Flathead Lands were allotted because of a law Congress passed. Fifteen days later the government announced 1 million acres were open to homesteading. Later, laws allowed Indians to sell allotted land to non-

- Indians. Prior to allotment, tribal leaders utilized their inherent sovereign right to govern themselves with minimal interference by the federal government.
- 1919 Homesteading was suspended so new allotment act could be put into place.
  - In 1909 the American Bison Society in New York convinced Congress to seize over 16,000 acres of the Flathead Reservation in order to form the National Bison Range. The tribal leaders did not want to give up the land because it was valuable hunting ground, but they were given no choice and the price was dictated to the Tribes.
  - 1934 allotment eliminated by the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. At this time the tribe reorganized as a charter corporation with a constitution. Currently 10 tribal council members elected for 4-year terms.
  - 1,242,969 acres within the reservation, of that, 622,615 acres owned by tribe/tribal members. The tribe is currently working towards buying back as much of the reservation as possible.
  - The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes are governed by a ten-person council representing eight districts on the reservation: St. Ignatius, Arlee (two representatives each), and Ronan, Pablo, Polson, Elmo, Dixon, and Hot Springs (one representative each). The tribal members elect the council. The term of a councilman is four years. A person must be a member of the tribe, over 18, and maintained a legal residence for at least one year on the Flathead Reservation to vote in the election of a councilman. The council selects a chairman, vice chairman, secretary, and treasurer amongst themselves. There is a Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes Constitution which includes a Bill of Rights. There is a Tribal Court, Tribal Court of Appeals, and a Tribal Law and Order Department.

## REFERENCES

Bryan, William L. *Montana's Indians Yesterday and Today 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.* American & World Geographic Publishing, 1996.

Cahoon, Heather. *For Better or for Worse: Flathead Indian Reservation Governance & Sovereignty.*

Salish-Pend d'Oreille Culture Committee. *A Brief History of the Salish and Pend d'Oreille Tribes.* 2003.

### Introductory Activity:

Watch the DVD “Tribes of Montana and How They Got Their Names”

#### Day 1:

Introduce map of Montana with reservations outlined (Map A). Discuss establishment of reservations. Have students label the reservations. Have each student journal as they are learning about the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribe, have students record things they have learned as well as questions they may have. The journal can be used as the assessment of information learned. Each day students and teacher should discuss questions to see if they have learned answers. Have students (and teacher may have to!) research to answer the questions to share at the beginning of each lesson.

#### Day 2:

Go over the previous day’s questions and answers. Using a Map of the Northwest (Map B-D), locate and label Canada, Alberta, British Columbia, Oregon, Washington, Columbia Plateau, Idaho, Montana, Helena, Kalispell, Billings, Bitterroot Valley, Jefferson Valley, Big Horn Mountains, Three Forks, Big Hole, Sun River, Yellowstone River, Continental Divide. Discuss areas in which the tribes were located discussing the reasons for movement. Have students color code areas where tribes came from originally. Have the students journal about new information learned and questions they may have.

#### Day 3:

Go over the previous day’s questions and answers.

Introduce sovereignty and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai government structure. As a class compare the Tribal Government to the United States Federal Government. Have students journal about “What is sovereignty?” and record any questions they may have in their journal.

#### Day 4:

The students should discuss previous day’s journal questions and answers. Go over maps showing the reservation on various stages of tribal ownership (Maps E-I). Introduce the term “allotment” and “checkerboard pattern”. Discuss 1904 Flathead Allotment Act and the negative consequences of opening the reservation to homesteaders (i.e. impact on sovereignty, natural resources, economy). Break the students into groups; each group is given maps of the reservation of each time period. Have each group locate the Flathead Lake,

National Bison Range, Polson, Pablo, St. Ignatius, Arlee, Ronan, Hot Springs, Mission Mountains, and Rivers on one of their maps.

Each group will look over the maps, recording their comparisons and comments about the various states of tribal ownership. The group will organize the information and prepare it to share their findings with the whole group on the following day, focusing on the amount of tribal ownership and ways the tribe used/uses the land, and allotment. The students can journal about the findings each group shared.

Day 5-?

Go over the previous day's journal questions and answers.

Look over contour map of the Reservation (Map H). Show the class various features on the map. The students will work in groups and make a map of the reservation (the reservation alone or the reservation within an outline of Montana) using guidelines as determined by the teacher (i.e., towns, county lines, rivers, lakes, mountains, etc.). Students can use overhead to project map onto their poster paper. The teacher can have the students make a 3-D map (features can be made of clay, salt dough) using the contour map as a guide or make a flat map labeling required features on the reservation. Each group will present map focusing on a chosen physical feature/natural resource/ area of the reservation discussing its history and current use by the tribe. (i.e., Flathead Lake/Kerr Dam, National Bison Range)

The student's can journal daily, during map-making, on information learned and progress on map. As a final journal assignment the students should summarize what they have learned about the Flathead Reservation, the history of the Tribes and the government of the Tribes. (Maybe including what they would like to learn next!)