

Montana Small Schools Alliance
HONORING MONTANA'S FIRST PEOPLES

UNIT: Indian Alphabet

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SCHOOL AND COUNTY: Helmville School in Powell County

GRADE LEVEL: 3-5

INDIAN RESERVATION REFERENCED: Flathead

SUBJECT AREA: Reading, Arts

OBJECTIVE: This lesson will acquaint the students with words related to Montana Indian Tribes and their cultures by making an alphabet book. These words will be compiled into a booklet to be used by K-2 grades to help them learn their alphabet sounds while building their Indian vocabulary.

CONTENT STANDARDS ADDRESSED:

Reading/Literature Standard 1: Students construct meaning as they comprehend, interpret, and respond to what they read including literary works.

Reading/Literature Standard 4: Students interact with (select, read and respond to) print and nonprint material and literary works, from various cultures, ethnic groups, traditions and contemporary viewpoints written by both genders, for a variety of purposes.

Reading/Literature Standard 5: Students gather, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of sources, and communicate their findings in ways appropriate for their purposes and audiences. Students use literary works to enrich personal experiences and to connect to the broader world of ideas, concepts, and issues.

Art Standard 1: Students create, perform/exhibit, and respond to the arts.

Art Standard 5: Students understand the role of the Arts in society, diverse cultures, and historical periods.

Art Standard 6: Students make connections among the Arts, other subject areas, life, and work.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT MONTANA INDIANS:

Essential Understanding 1: There is a great diversity among the 12 tribal Nations of Montana in their language, cultures, histories, and governments. Each Nation has a distinct and unique cultural heritage that contributes to modern Montana. There is a great diversity among individual American Indians as identity is developed, defined and redefined by many entities, organizations, and people. There is a continuum of Indian identity ranging from assimilated to traditional and is unique to each individual. There is no generic American Indian.

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. History is a story and most often related through the subjective experience of the teller. Histories are being rediscovered and revised. History told from an Indian perspective conflicts with what most of mainstream history tells us.

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.

Additionally, each tribe has its own oral history beginning with their origins that are as valid as written histories. These histories pre-date the “discovery” of North America.

MATERIALS:

Construction paper, drawing paper, cover stock

Ruler, crayons, colored pencils

Lifeways Series by Raymond Bial (Montana Tribes)

Encyclopedia

Access to computer

www.salishworld.com

Laminator

ACTIVITIES: (30 minute lessons for one to two weeks)

*Students will be introduced to the topic with a discussion of familiar Indian words. Students will be led in a discussion of resources available to find other words associated with Indian tribes and their culture. (glossary of Lifeways books)

*Students in grades 3-5 will be assigned letters of the alphabet. They will use the resources introduced to find an appropriate word representing their assigned letters. The students will give a brief description of the word and draw a picture.

*A booklet will be constructed with the student's alphabet letters. The booklet will be bound and laminated. Grades K-2 will use the booklet as they study the alphabet. The booklet will be an addition to our primary library.

ASSESSMENT:

Each student will present their work giving information about their reference sources.

EXTENSIONS:

The Indian word and pronunciation for each word in the alphabet may be included. The booklet will be displayed on parent conference day.