



Lesson Plan: Indigenous Children

Standards

Established Goals:

Students will gain an understanding of the importance of indigenous, traditional and tribal cultures. This lesson will clarify the relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous groups, governments and international organizations. Students will be made aware of the rights of indigenous peoples and the responsibilities of governments to protect them. This lesson explores the many obstacles indigenous people face and promotes respect for indigenous perspectives by mainstream society.

National Council for Social Studies Standards:

II. Time, Continuity, and Change

III. Peoples, Places and Environments

IV. Individual Development and Identity

V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

VI. Power, Authority, and Governance

IX. Global Connections

X. Civic Ideals and Practices

Transferable Concepts/Links:

Culture and Civilization, Developing World, Poverty, Imperialism and Colonialism, Globalization, Sustainable Development, Indigenous People, Urbanization, Infrastructure, Political Science, Sociology, Nationalism, International Cooperation, Collaboration, Civil Society, Humanitarian Agencies, NGOs (non-governmental organizations), Human Rights.

Course Connections:

Global Studies

Current Events

Geography

Economics

History

Social Studies

Understandings:

People construct knowledge based on their experiences, values and perspectives.

Indigenous cultures are often connected to the environment in which they live thus conservation efforts to preserve natural habitats are crucial to the survival of such peoples.

The term "indigenous" can sometimes be hard to define.

There are complex relationships between indigenous groups, the societies of the countries in which they live and the international community.

Indigenous peoples face serious difficulties such as the constant threat of loss of land rights and territorial invasion, cultural and legal discrimination, as well as a lack of recognition of their institutions and way of life.

Students will know:

Human rights vocabulary

What is being done about this global problem

International documents and the issues they address

The names of international organizations and NGO's working to help indigenous peoples

How to get involved.

Essential Questions:

Understand the importance of identity and micro-history within culture and society.

Comprehend the role of the global community in ensuring the cultural survival of indigenous people.

Interpret human existence as valid regardless of traits, customs and beliefs.

Discuss the importance of educational opportunities for persons of indigenous cultures.

Examine international documents like the Convention on the Rights of the Child; Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples; and the United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Learn about the role of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Use interpersonal communication skills to raise awareness about indigenous issues.

Review the success of international efforts to promote the preservation of indigenous cultures.

Enable students to synthesize the knowledge they have gained.

Hypothesize the steps required to balance the impact of mainstream societies on indigenous culture.

Students will be able to:

Respect others through exposure to a way of life different from their own.

Advocate for the rights of indigenous peoples.

Realize the consequences of international economic decisions on indigenous groups and communities.

Equipment and Materials:

Television, VCR or DVD Player

Computer with access to the internet

'*What's Going On? Indigenous People in Australia.*' Actress Rachel Ward works with aboriginal children and teens in Australia's urban centers and the country's vast outback.

Convention on the Rights of the Child

<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm>

C169 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/ampro/mdtsanjose/indigenous/derecho.htm>

Hand out # 1 (link to hand out)

Hand out #2 UNFP

Activity 1:

1. Ask students to define the word "indigenous." Answers might include: authentic, native, tribal, traditional, etc.
2. Ask students what characteristics are considered indigenous? What does an indigenous person look and act like? Where do indigenous people live? Do they know any indigenous people? Depending on where this lesson is being taught, answers might include: Native Americans, the Maasai or Inuits.
3. Distribute Handout # 1 (link)
Students should read each definition and answer the questions at the bottom of the worksheet either in a written response or small group discussion.
4. Explain that the term "indigenous" is hard define. Ask students: Do you have a clear understanding of what an indigenous person is?

The United Nations has not adopted an official definition of "indigenous". Considering the diversity of indigenous peoples, the UN believes it is more useful to identify rather than define indigenous peoples. A modern understanding of the term "indigenous" is based on the following:

- Self-identification of indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by their community as their member.
- Historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies
- Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources
- Distinct social, economic or political systems
- Distinct language, culture and beliefs
- Form non-dominant groups of society
- Resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities

Activity 2:

1. On the board write: "Traditional Culture" & "Mainstream Society"

Ask students to list words that come to mind when they hear these two terms. Record their response under each word.

2. Ask students: Describe the difference between living a "traditional culture" and a "mainstream society" lifestyle. Record answers on the board.

3. Ask students: Do you think it is difficult for indigenous people to decide whether to live a traditional or modern lifestyle? How might it feel to be caught between two worlds? What are some problems indigenous people face trying to live in both worlds?

4. Ask students if they know what the term 'globalization' means. List student responses on the board.

Explain that: Globalization refers to the cross-border movements of goods, money, information, ideas, and people, and the concomitant interdependency of people and institutions around the world. This interconnectedness, and the changes it brings in living conditions and perspectives, creates both opportunities and challenges.

5. Ask students: What might globalization do to a group of indigenous people? How can indigenous cultures adapt to the modern world without losing their traditions and identity? What can be done to ensure that indigenous people do not feel pressured to adapt to modern society? What can be done to help indigenous people be a part of mainstream or dominant society while preserving their cultural heritage?

Activity 3:

1. Hand out copies of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In 1989, world leaders decided that children under 18 years of age often need special care that adults do not. The Convention is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate a full range of human rights such as civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights for children.

The Convention is an international document negotiated by Member States at the United Nations. Every Member State of the United Nations has ratified (or adopted) the treaty except the United States and Somalia, who have only signed it.

The Convention offers a vision of the child as an individual and as a member of a family and community, with rights and responsibilities appropriate to his or her age and stage of development. By recognizing children's rights in this way, the Convention firmly sets the focus on the whole child.

Madeline Albright, the United States ambassador to the United Nations, signed the Convention in 1995. However, the United States Constitution requires that such documents receive a two-thirds approval by the Senate to be adopted. There are some articles in the Convention that the US Senate has yet to come to an agreement on.

Ask Students:

What is the difference between ratifying and signing a treaty?

Why do you think the United States has not adopted the Convention?

Answers can include:

a. Signing does not create a binding legal obligation but does demonstrate the State's intent to examine the treaty domestically and consider ratifying it. Ratification signifies an agreement by the state to be legally bound by the terms of the treaty.

b. Some US legislators feel that the provisions or certain articles of the Convention could interfere with the role of parents in their children's lives.

The Convention is the most widely supported international treaty because nations, organizations and individuals realize that the future of humanity is in the hands of our children.

2. Share these facts with your students:

- There are 300-350 million indigenous groups worldwide.
- The majority of indigenous people, around 150 million live in Asian countries.
- 30 million indigenous groups live in Latin America.
- Indigenous peoples account for 6% of the total world population.
- In Bolivia, Guatemala and Peru, indigenous peoples make up over half the population.
- Indigenous peoples remain among the world's poorest and most marginalized and are often disproportionately victimized by the effects of armed conflict.
- Indigenous people have often been impoverished, displaced or even decimated by intensive agriculture, industrial logging and infrastructure developments.
- The Amazon River Basin is home to over 300 different indigenous peoples.
- Indigenous people are still struggling to preserve their lands.
- Indigenous people first brought their concerns to the United Nations in 1977 during the Geneva Conference.
- Nuclear testing around the world has adversely affected indigenous people.
- Nuclear weapons have been tested on indigenous lands in different countries. The Western Shoshone Nation of the United States, the Marshall and other South Pacific Islanders, Australian Aboriginals are but a few of those whose land has been contaminated by nuclear tests.

- The Sami, an indigenous community of herd people in Norway, had their life altered by the Chernobyl nuclear accident, which contaminated the herds and their food source.
- Under Apartheid in South Africa, the Zulu people were considered second-class citizens.
- The Ralco Dam in Chile displaced the Mapuche/Pehuenche peoples when it flooded their lands.
- Life expectancy is substantially lower for indigenous people.
- Access to health services and health education is worse for indigenous peoples.
- Suicide, alcohol and drug-related problems are more common in indigenous communities.

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii>
<http://www.cwis.org/fwdp/Americas/imc-96.txt>

2. The Convention on the Rights of the Child says that all indigenous children shall not be denied the right, in the community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practice his or her own religion or to use his or her own language.

Ask students to identify and highlight which Articles of the Convention that refers to indigenous children.

Answers are: 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 37 and 38

Ask students to rephrase the Articles 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 37 and 38 for an in class discussion.

Note to teacher: Students should keep their copies of the Convention for further use during other "What's Going On?" lesson plans. It is recommended that you have students use the following initials next to each article that is violated for each topic they learn about from the "What's Going On?" series. (Child Soldiers (CS), HIV/AIDS (AIDS), Refugees (RF), Child Labor (CL), Landmines (LM), Girl's Education (GED), Indigenous People (IP), Northern Ireland (NI), Poverty in America (PA), Street Children (SC).

Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples was adopted at the International Labour Conference (Geneva, June 1989). The Convention applies to tribal peoples in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws and regulations. The Convention allows indigenous and tribal peoples to retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/ampro/mdtsanjose/indigenous/derecho.htm>

Activity 3

1. Screen the documentary *What's Going On? Indigenous People in Australia*. Actress Rachel Ward works with aboriginal children and teens in Australia's urban centers and the country's vast outback.

2. Ask students to site the challenges Belitta, Jake and Michael face. Ask students to respond emotionally to the experience of the young people in the film.

3. Ask students to imagine what it might be like to live as one of the characters in the film. What would their challenges and fears be?

Activity 4

1. Ask students what are some ways that can make it easier for indigenous peoples to preserve their culture while adapting to the modern world?

2. The United Nations and its agencies work to help protect the rights of indigenous people.

a. The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council with a mandate to discuss indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights. The forum is the UN's central coordinating body for matters relating to the concerns and rights of the world's indigenous peoples. It holds a two-week session each year which takes place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York any other place as decided by the forum.

The Forum provides expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to the Council, as well as to UN agencies and programmes. It raises awareness and promotes the integration and coordination of activities related to indigenous issues within the UN system. It also prepares and disseminates information on indigenous issues.

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/>

b. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): UNDP's engagement with indigenous peoples at the country level is extensive. Since the inauguration of the United Nations International Year of Indigenous People in 1993, many UNDP programmes at the local, national and regional levels have involved indigenous peoples' communities. These initiatives have focused on many issues ranging from poverty reduction, and environmental conservation to conflict prevention and peace-building and cultural revitalization.

c. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: The International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, was celebrated from 1995-2004, has brought with it advances such as the establishment of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The Human Rights Council adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and recommended its adoption by the General Assembly.

<http://www.ohchr.org/english/issues/indigenous/>

d. United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP): UNEP is in full partnership with indigenous people and their communities, Governments and intergovernmental organizations. UNEP aims to strengthen the role indigenous people and their communities.

<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=189&ArticleID=2748&l=en>

e. World Bank: The World Bank aims to promote indigenous peoples' rights in a manner which ensures that the development process fosters full respect for the dignity, human rights, and uniqueness of indigenous peoples. <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/EXTINDPEOPLE/0,,menuPK:407808~pagePK:149018~piPK:149093~theSitePK:407802,00.html>

Activity 5:

1. Write a response to the lesson's focus questions: Why should it be a global priority to preserve indigenous cultures and what are the major threats facing them today?
2. Have students read the personal stories of Belitta, Jake and Michael. Ask students to respond emotionally to the experience of the young people in the film.
3. Ask students to imagine what it might be like to live as one of the characters in the film. What would their challenges and fears be?
4. Research and report on the work of NGO's that are working to preserve indigenous cultures. (see resources below)
5. Students should be able to form their own activist groups and contribute to the global effort to preserve indigenous cultures. Divide students into groups of 3-5 and have them come up with the following:
 1. A group name and logo.
 2. The group's mandate and mission statement.
 3. Long and short term goals for the group.
 4. Other organizations to collaborate with.
 5. Come up with a PR campaign to inform the school and public about their organization and its mission.

Learn More

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner
http://www.hreoc.gov.au/social_justice/index.html

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)
<http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/>

American Aloha Lesson Plan
<http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2003/americanaloha/for.html>

Native Web
<http://www.nativeweb.com/>

Native American Cultures Across the U.S.
http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=347

Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources
<http://www.cier.ca>

Center for World Indigenous Studies
<http://www.cwis.org/index.htm>

Get Involved

Global Village Congress, GVC

UN Cyber School Bus

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/indigenous/index.asp>

Taking IT Global

<http://www.takingitglobal.org/themes/indigenous/>

The Indigenous Peoples Survival Foundation (IPSF) helps needy peoples regardless of origin, race, religion, nationality, or gender.

Cultural Survival

<http://www.indigenouspeople.org>

The Peoples of the World Foundation work with indigenous peoples to document their traditional and modern life, sponsor their education and help them adapt to the challenges they face in a changing world.

<http://www.peoplesoftheworld.org>

Survival International: helps tribal peoples defend their lives and protect their lands.

<http://www.survival-international.org>

The Rainforest Foundation supports indigenous people and traditional populations of the world's rainforests and works to protect their environment and fulfill their rights.

<http://www.rainforestfoundationuk.org/s-index>

Nawa Institute strengthens and preserves indigenous knowledge and ancestral traditions.

<http://www.agamanawa.com/nawa.html>

Indigenous Peoples Task Force:

<http://www.indigenouspeoplesf.org>

Books

Indigenous Peoples in International Law, by S. James Anaya

Indigenous Peoples, Ethnic Groups, and the State (2nd Edition), by David Maybury-Lewis

Reclaiming Culture: Indigenous People and Self-Representation, by Joy Hendry

The Politics of Ethnicity: Indigenous Peoples in Latin American States, by David Maybury-Lewis

Political Theory and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, by Duncan Ivison

The Challenge of Diversity: Indigenous peoples and reform of the State in Latin America, by Willem Assies

First Peoples: Indigenous Cultures and Their Futures, by Jeffrey Sissons

Conservation Through Cultural Survival: Indigenous Peoples And Protected Areas, by Stanley Stevens

Simply Living: The Spirit of the Indigenous People, by Shirley A. Jones

A Global History of Indigenous Peoples: Struggle and Survival, by Ken S. Coates

The Indigenous People of the Caribbean, by Samuel M. Wilson

Indigenous Peoples and Poverty: An International Perspective, by Robyn Eversole

Radio

Bigger Political Voice for Bolivia's Indigenous People

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1908111>

The State of Indigenous People, Part I: American Indians

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1524097>

The State of Indigenous People, Part II: A World Power

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1524544>

Zapatistas in Mexico City

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1119795>

Hawaiians Seek Same Rights as American Indians

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4762516>

Multiculturalism in Bolivia

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1036117>

Tourism a Blessing and Curse for Uros Indians

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4714228>

Aboriginal Activist

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1127425>

Native American Land Claims

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1065091>

Violence Pervasive in Australia's Aboriginal Community

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5418075>

Aboriginal Rights

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1111472>

Aborigene Protests

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1081179>

Native American Culture

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1011162>

Articles

Poverty Still the Indigenous Norm

<http://www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/asiapcf/02/22/australia.aboriginal/index.html>

Ecuador, Indigenous Protesters Reach Agreement

<http://archives.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/americas/02/08/>

ecuador.agreement/index.html

Protests Planned for Brazil's 500th Anniversary

<http://archives.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/americas/04/21/brazil.anniversary/index.html>

Indigenous People 'Worst-off World Over'

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/5019582.stm>

World 'Failing Indigenous Peoples'

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/3137133.stm>

Sri Lanka's Indigenous People Want to go Back to Jungles

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/291585.stm

Indigenous Canadians get Apology

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/45511.stm>

Park Preserves Amazonian Frontier

<http://msnbc.msn.com/id/3077270/>

Films

Rabbit-Proof Fence (2002) directed by Phillip Noyce

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0252444/>

Tong Tana: Journey into Rainforest (1980) directed by Jan Roed, Eric Pauser, Bjorn Cederberg

http://www.mediarights.org/film/tong_tanajourney_into_rainforest.php

Two Worlds Colliding (2004) directed by Tasha Hubbard

http://www.mediarights.org/film/two_worlds_colliding.php

The Rules of the Game (2004)

http://www.mediarights.org/film/the_rules_of_the_game.php

The Last of the Hiding Tribes (Series): Return from Extinction

http://www.mediarights.org/film/the_last_of_the_hiding_tribes_series_return_from_extinction.php

The First People - The Last Word (TV)

http://www.mediarights.org/film/the_first_people_the_last_word.php