

AIH-5: Westward Expansion

Summary

Students will research how the westward expansion affected the American Indians.

Group Size

Small Groups

Background for Teachers

This is the first of four lessons in the Fifth Grade American Indian History Lesson Plan Unit:

AIH-5: Westward Expansion

- [AIH-6: American Indians' Loss of Land](#)
- [AIH-7: American Indians' Reservations](#)
- [AIH-8: American Indian Lifestyles](#)

There are currently 560 federally recognized Indian tribes located in the United States. As explorers came to this land, they encountered the many tribes that called this land home. This lesson is to help students understand the diversity of the tribes, and research where and how they lived. Students will develop a basic understanding of the diversity of the tribes - that they are not the same, nor can they be grouped under one huge umbrella that will encompass them all. The misnomer of "American Indian" or "Native American" will fade as the student begins to understand the cultures of each of the tribes and their people.

Teacher Resources

[Indian State Names answer sheet](#) (teacher resource)

Video: Native Americans VHS NATI-ELK

Teacher's Video Company:

Phone: 1-800-262-8837 Fax: 1-800-434-5638

Mail: Teacher's Video Company

P.O. Box 4455 Scottsdale, AZ 85261

Student Prior Knowledge

Introduction:

People walked upon the face of the land known as the United States of America long before it was a country. Some archeologists estimate that the first inhabitants arrived 40,000 years ago, and others 13,000 years, before the present day. Many American children are taught about Christopher Columbus discovering America and the First Thanksgiving at Jamestown. Yet, this is not the correct history. As so the history now unfolds.

The Indians that inhabited the lands of the Americas learned of this great land by experience. They were eclectic biologists and scientists in their own right. They knew of the waters, the trees, and the various animals. They tilled the earth, grew food, and walked the paths through this great land. It was their homeland. They were the first people to inhabit this land. Their history is one of pride, sacredness, and knowledge of the land. Learning this history requires a look into their past, their trials, and the story of the days when others came to their land and began to change the face of their world forever. However, some of their traditional cultural values, ethics, and sacred beliefs exist to this day.

This unit is an attempt to help children understand the first people of this land and develop an even greater appreciation for their diversity, culture, and the generations whose hands helped forge this land and were pivotal in the building of this nation.

Some general information about American Indians:

Today there are many terms that describe the people who first inhabited this land. There is conflict about what to call these people. Part of the problem is that they are not one people, but many. Traditional names translated from their native languages generally mean "the People." Yet, they are called Native Americans, American Indians, First People, aboriginal and Indigenous People, and by a very general term "Indian." The word "Indian" is wrongly used, in its application as a term, which collectively designates tribal groups as "one people." Christopher Columbus' erroneous geography and impression that he had landed among the islands off Asia led him to call the peoples he met "los Indios." His casual use of the term "Indios" in his letters introduced the New World to European populations; thus, similar words in other European languages evolved, such as the French "Indien," the German "Indianer," the English "Indian." Subsequent usage of the term "Indian" for the New World's inhabitants evoked descriptive words as "savages," "infidels," and "heathens." However, Europeans had limited contact with groups of people with such diverse cultures and languages.

Initial establishment of the imagery of the "Indian," like the word itself, came from the pens of Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci. Such imagery and stereotypes have prevailed to the present through inaccurate written accounts and Hollywood movies. Each Indian tribe has its own language, which is different from those of other tribes; its own history and origins; its own customs (social and spiritual); its own traditional dances; its own styles of clothing; its own foods; its own values; its own culture; its own spiritual beliefs and practices; its own life styles; and its own tribal governments. Most tribes also have an extended family system.

Indian tribes are not one people, although many tribal philosophies and concepts are similar--e.g., nearly every tribe's beliefs have reference to a Supreme Being; refer to the earth as "Mother Earth" and sky as "Father Sky"; have a belief that all things in creation must have balance and harmony; and have respect for all animals, sea life, and birds, and for all things.

There were 560 federally recognized Indian tribes and bands, as of January 2000, in the forty-eight mainland United States of America. Alaska has the Aleuts, and Athapascan tribal groups that number 229. But there are perhaps 300 more Native Entities in Alaska which, while eligible to receive services, are not federally recognized as tribes/nations.

Indian tribal groups also exist in Canada, Mexico, Central America, and South America. Tribes of the Caribbean were mostly destroyed by diseases that the Europeans brought, and the remaining Caribbean tribal peoples intermarried with the French, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, and black slaves.

There are 378 treaties which the U.S. government entered into with Indian tribes, the first being the treaty with the Delawares (September 17, 1778) and last the agreement with the Columbia and Colville (July 7, 1883).

There are 292 reservations, rancherias, and pueblos. These land areas are held in trust under the United States Department of Interior.

Today there are many new findings about the Indians. Science is linking peoples and their migrations as far away as Siberia. Someday these links to the past may open up explorations of where the native peoples really came from. Does the theory of the Bering Strait link peoples of two continents? Do the glaciers of Alaska hold secrets? What about connections with the people of South America? We are now in the process of interweaving cultures, people, and evidence that in the near future might establish these connections.

Instructional Procedures

Essential Question 1: How did the westward expansion affect the American Indians?

1. Migration Map / Indian Tribes Map

Students will use the [map of the United States](#) to identify several tribes (number of tribes is teacher's choice) and fill out basic information on the tribes.

Research Information Websites

- [North American Groups](#)
http://www.mce.k12tn.net/indians/navigation/native_american_territories.htm
- [Tribes-by-States Map Index](#)
<http://www.kstrom.net/isk/maps/usmapindex.html>
- [INDEX OF THE NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN](#)
<http://curtis-collection.com/tribalindex.html>
- [American Indian Resource Directory](#)
<http://www.indians.org/Resource/FedTribes99/fedtribes99.html>
- [American Indians](#)
<http://www.americanindians.com/>
- [Native American Boundaries](#)
<http://inkido.indiana.edu/w310work/romac/map.htm>

2. State Names

Students will fill out the [State Names Worksheet](#) and begin to understand that Indian names are part of the United States' culture and development. Over ½ of the States names were derived from Indian names. Websites for state name research information -

<http://www.xmission.com/~amauta/images/namestate.pdf> or
<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0854966.html>

3. Westward Expansion Worksheet

Working in teams, students will review several factors that were pivotal during the [westward expansion](#) and determine how these factors affected the Indian peoples.

4. Class Discussion (after team work)

How did the westward expansion affect the American Indians? Students can fold a 12" x 18" piece of paper into eighths and draw or write down the ideas the class shares as they discuss the question.

5. Indian Leaders/Heroes Worksheet

Begin the discussion with students listing people they would consider to be heroes or great leaders. Review the list and see if any Indian leaders are listed. Pose the question: Do you know of any of the great leaders of this land's first people? Continue discussion based on their knowledge. Pass out the Indian Leaders/Heroes worksheet and invite them to do research on great Indian leaders. They are to choose a report format and prepare a presentation to the class on their chosen person. After the reports, open another class discussion with this question: Why do you think that we don't hear about these great leaders very much? What is the value of their contributions to the United States? The following resources maybe helpful for research:

Websites

- [The Amauta Series -- Heroes](#)
<http://www.xmission.com/~amauta/heroes.htm>
- [Famous Native American Indians Tribute Page](#)
<http://jbttank.com/indians/>
- [Native American Culture](#)
<http://www.ewebtribe.com/NACulture/famous.htm>
- [Great Chiefs & Leaders](#)

<http://www.indians.org/welker/leaders.htm>

- [Geronimo's Song](#)

<http://www.indians.org/welker/gerosong.htm>

Book: *Great Indian Chiefs*

Bellerophon Books ISBN 0-88388-033-4

- [Navajo Leaders](#)

http://www.lapahie.com/Navajo_Leaders_Left.cfm

For an extension assignment you could have teams develop timelines for particular periods of expansion, with a dual timeline to show what was happening to the Indian peoples during that time.

Additional information about great Native American Leaders - Northwestern Shoshone Leaders: Chief Bear Hunter, died during the Bear River Massacre; Chief Lehi also died; Chiefs Sagwitch and Sanpitch survived to help their people live among the newcomers. Willie Ottogary, writer. James Pabawena, a graduate from Carlyle.

Bibliography

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American Indian History

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