

Shoshone Seasonal Land Use and Culture

Summary

The student will be able to analyze the relationship between the culture and environments of the Northwestern Shoshones. The student will also understand the importance of oral tradition to the transmission of Shoshone culture.

Main Core Tie

Social Studies - 4th Grade

[Standard 2 Objective 1](#)

Additional Core Ties

Social Studies - 4th Grade

[Standard 1 Objective 2](#)

Social Studies - 4th Grade

[Standard 2 Objective 2](#)

Time Frame

2 class periods of 30 minutes each

Materials

Teacher Materials

- [At a Glance: The Land and Culture of the Northwestern Shoshones](#) (pdf)
 - [Shoshone Seasonal Activities and Foods Cheat Sheet](#) (pdf)
 - [Instant Book Sample](#) (pdf)
- Video: [We Shall Remain: The Shoshone](#)

Student Materials

- [A White Explorer Meets Shoshone Indians Camped at Bear River](#) (pdf)
- 11 x 17 copy paper
Standard art and crafts supplies

Background for Teachers

The name "Shoshone" comes from the descriptive "So--so--goi," which means "those who travel on foot." The Shoshones traveled with the seasons to most efficiently utilize the natural resources of their homeland. The culture that grew around these travel patterns and resources make the Northwestern Shoshones unique.

Like other Indian peoples, the Northwestern Shoshones teach family and tribal history through the oral tradition. In this lesson your students will teach each other about their own seasonal traditions by sharing stories. By creating a personal connection to the oral method of cultural transmission and the relationship between seasons and culture, your students will more readily retain the knowledge they gain about the Shoshones.

Instructional Procedures

Prior to lesson (at the end of the school day or social studies class one day ahead of the lesson), ask students to think about what activities they take part in at this time of year and what foods they eat and be prepared to talk about it tomorrow.

The next day or period, hand each student a copy of "A White Explorer Meets Shoshone Indians

Camped at Bear River." Have them read it silently and then discuss the questions as a class. This should lead you into a discussion of food and cultural practices.

Next, explain to the class that Shoshone children learned about their history and culture by listening to storytellers. Story time was very important and the Shoshone children could not interrupt or fall asleep. That is how children memorized the history of the Shoshone people. Tell each student that in this next activity, they will get to be a listener and a storyteller.

Hand each student a piece of 11x17 copy paper, and have him/her fold it into 8 boxes (see Instant Book Sample). Tell students to label the inside pages of the book for the seasons of the year. Put the students into groups of four, and assign a season to each student in that group. Ask each student to take turns sharing the foods and traditions for the season he/she was assigned. The whole team will write and draw examples on the season pages in their books. By the end, each student will have taught and learned through oral storytelling about the seasonal traditions, activities, and foods of three of his/her classmates.

Have students return to their seats and turn their foldable inside out. Tell them to label the pages for the seasons again. Then use the teacher background material to explain the seasonal diet and activities of the Northwestern Shoshones. Tell the students to record the foods and activities of the ancestors of the modern Shoshones as they migrated with the seasons.

If time permits, discuss of the similarities and differences in the dietary habits and activities of the modern students and the ancestral Shoshones. (A Venn diagram could be used to summarize class learning, or as an assessment of understanding.)

Extensions

Students may take their Seasonal Activities and Foods book home and teach someone about the ancestral Shoshones. The "learner" may sign the student's book to prove the experience took place.

Assessment Plan

- Discussion participation

- Group participation

- Seasonal Activities and Foods book -- both sides

[End of Unit Assessment](#)

Bibliography

D'Azevedo, Warren L., ed. *Handbook of the North American Indians. Vol. 11, The Great Basin.* Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1986.

Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation. "Harvest and Diet."

Parry, Mae. "The Northwestern Shoshone," in *A History of Utah's American Indians*. Ed. Forrest S. Cuch. Salt Lake City: Utah State Division of Indian Affairs, 2000.

The University of Utah's [American West Center](#) (AWC) produced the curriculum materials in consultation with the [Utah Division of Indian Affairs](#), [Utah State Office of Education](#), [KUED 7](#), and the Goshute, Northwestern Band of the Shoshone, Southern Paiute, and Ute nations.

Authors

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