

Montana Small Schools Alliance
HONORING MONTANA'S FIRST PEOPLES

UNIT: American Indian Names

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SCHOOL AND COUNTY: Deerfield Colony School in Fergus County

GRADE LEVEL: K-4

INDIAN RESERVATION REFERENCED: Fort Belknap

SUBJECT AREAS: Language Arts, Social Studies

LESSON DESCRIPTION: Students will find out how American Indian names are secured. Students will learn about naming ceremonies. Students will learn about their family tree.

This lesson will take 3-5 days.

CONTENT STANDARDS ADDRESSED:

Social Studies Standard 6: Students demonstrate an understanding of the impact of human interaction and cultural diversity on societies. Benchmark 6.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT MONTANA INDIANS:

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.

Editor's Note:

These are a series of eleven short instructional units that integrate various subject area content standards and the Montana American Indian Essential Understanding 3. The different units can be used at different times throughout the year so that students will have several opportunities to learn to Honor Montana's First Peoples of the Fort Belknap and the Flathead Reservations. It is suggested that the teacher use the Fort Belknap lessons first.

Before beginning these units, teachers should view the official website of the Fort Belknap Nations (www.fortbelknapnations.nsn.gov) and read the home pages of the histories of the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine Peoples. Also, teachers could review and use the three DVD's provided to all Montana school districts by the Indian Education for All Program at OPI. The three are *Long Ago in Montana*, *Talking without Words*, and *Tribes in Montana*. In addition, the author has provided some specific resources for these units.

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE:

Students will have learned and discussed the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine tribes. Students will have prior knowledge about their own family tree.

Students will understand that American Indians did not have last names until modern times. Their names may have been given to them by the government, a priest, or an interpreter. They may have different last names among their family members. Families were divided by relatives, and followed the family's father's relatives. Even though they follow the father's family, the mother's family is still acknowledged. Clans, or relatives, never mixed together, for fear of birth defects in their children. Babies are given a name from birth, so that they can pray for them. As the child grows, the name may change. When the children become adults, they will receive names that will stay with them. Naming ceremonies are performed by an elder or medicine man in a public ceremony. Sometimes there are songs made for a person that belong to them, singing of their great deeds.

OBJECTIVES:

Students will research how American Indian names were given. Students will discuss naming ceremonies. Students will assemble their own family tree.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

Students will begin research of different American Indian names. Student will read about naming ceremonies. Students will collect information about their family and arrange it into a family tree. Students will show their findings to the class.

ASSESSMENT:

The final assessment will be the presentation of their family tree. Students will report their findings about the naming ceremonies.