

Standard Three – Lesson Two

Achievement Goal:
Study the ways several Indian tribes and tribal communities work to make sure their lands are healthy and natural resources for fishing, hunting, and gathering are protected for future generations.

Time:
Four class periods

Core:
Civics/Government, Geography



For Grades 4-5

Indian Land Education

Contemporary American Indian Land Issues



Background:

Due to the fact that tribes are sovereign governments, many tribes and tribal communities have departments within their tribal government which actively protect and repair the environment and natural resources on tribal lands. In this lesson, the students will be introduced to the idea of Tribal Resource Departments and learn more about the work of the Tribal Resource Department on their reservation and other reservations.

Preparation:

- Prepare Internet access for students to view the websites of other Tribal Resource Departments around the country. To keep the students on task, you may want to prepare a one-page worksheet for the students to fill out the answers to three basic questions about the tribes' Natural Resource Department:
 - What are the natural resources available on the tribe's land?
 - How does the tribe make sure their lands are healthy and maintain their fishing, hunting or gathering capabilities?
 - How do they make sure their natural gifts are protected for the future generations?

After the students find answers to these questions about the department, supply them with the supplies necessary to write directly to the departments.

Student Activity: (Class periods 1-3)

1. Have students locate the following tribes on a map showing US reservations:
 - Nez Perce Tribe (ID)

- Hoopa Valley Tribe (CA)
 - Tulalip Tribe (WA)
 - Coeur D'Alene Tribe (ID)
 - Wampanoag Tribe (MA)
 - Nooksack Tribe (WA)
 - Ho-Chunk Tribe (WI)
 - White Earth Tribe (MN)
 - Seminole Tribe (FL)
 - Osage Tribe (OK)
 - Pueblo of Sandia (NM)
 - Sitka Tribe (AK)
2. As you are going through the tribes, ask to students to briefly brainstorm what natural resources these tribes might have on their reservations.
 3. Have the students select one of the tribes. Ask them to go to explore the tribe's Natural Resource Department website (the addresses are listed in the resource section of this lesson).
 - What natural resources are found on tribal lands?
 - How does the tribe maintain their fishing, hunting or gathering capabilities?
 - How do they make sure their natural gifts are protected for the future generations?
 4. After the students answer these questions, ask them to find the department's mailing address and compose a brief letter to the department asking them about stewardship on their reservation. Brief them on an appropriate format for the letter and make sure they address the letter properly. In the letters, have the children ask the department for brochures or maps and any other information about the protection of natural resources on tribal lands. Have the children ask additional questions they might be interested in, such as "Do you involve young tribal members in the work of your department?" or "Does your tribe hold any festivals or tribal get-togethers to celebrate the natural resources on the reservation?" Remind children they should include in their letters a statement that this information is for a classroom project and they would appreciate a response by a particular date. Collect these letters from the children, review them, and mail them.
 5. After the responses come in from the departments, ask the students to review the information in class. After they review the information, ask the students to write-up a brief article about the Natural Resource Department, complete with any maps or images they received from the tribe. Inform them these articles will be placed in a class newspaper called the Natural Resource Gazette. When the students are finished with their brief reports, compile into a newspaper or booklet format. Make copies of the newspaper. Give a copy to each student and send one to each natural resource department that participated in this activity.

Evaluation:

- Assess the student's ability to perform simple internet research based on how they answer the three questions about their selected tribal resource department.
- Assess the student's ability to write simple letters of inquiry.
- Assess the student's ability to synthesize information into a brief article.

Resources:

- Nez Perce, http://www.nezperce.org/Programs/departement_of_natural_resources.htm
- Hoopa Valley, <http://www.hoopa-nsn.gov/departments/naturalresources.htm>
- Tulalip, <http://www.tulalip.nsn.us/>
- Coeur D'Alene, <http://www.cdatribe-nsn.gov/depts/nr/>
- Wampanoag Tribe, <http://www.wampanoagtribe.net/resource/>
- Nooksack Tribe, <http://www.nooksack-tribe.org/Natural%20Resource.htm>
- Ho-Chunk Tribe, http://www.ho-chunknation.com/government/executive/heritage_pres.htm
- White Earth Tribe, <http://www.whiteearth.com/naturalresources.htm>
- Seminole Tribe, <http://www.seminoletribe.com/services/water.shtml>
- Osage, <http://www.osagetribe.com/>
- Pueblo of Sandia, http://www.sandiapueblo.nsn.us/environment_department.html
- Sitka Tribe, <http://www.sitkatribе.org/>

If you wish to include or explore other tribes, visit a helpful list of Tribal Governments at State and Local Government on the Net, <http://www.statelocalgov.net/other-na.htm>.