



Standard Three

Curriculum Summary

Grades:



For Grades 4-5

Students will develop knowledge and understanding of the myriad of issues affecting American Indian lands and the abilities of tribes and tribal communities to exercise sovereign powers.

RATIONALE

The third standard grapples with a variety of issues concerning Indian land that are relevant today. The evolution of federal Indian land policy has created a special “trust relationship” between the US federal government and American Indian tribes and tribal communities which extends to the lands they occupy. This trust relationship has created a complex set of issues that must be thoroughly understood by Indian communities in order for them to effectively exercise their sovereign powers and prevent further land loss, regain lost lands, realize benefits from good land stewardship and revitalize traditional connections to the lands. While contemporary challenges tribes face are very complex, these lessons will introduce the students to some basic concepts and knowledge that will stimulate their thinking about the importance of land to their community. Contemporary issues include continued land losses, land management problems, jurisdictional conflict, natural resource disputes, infrastructure shortcomings and the protection of sacred sites.

Lesson 1: **Develop knowledge of Indian homelands, territories, and the natural resources the land provides.**

Achievement Goal: **Explain the following terms: “natural resources”, “interdependence”, “ecology”, “biodiversity”, and “sustainability”.**

Students will be introduced to the ideas surrounding the sustainable use of Indian lands and natural resources in accordance with traditional knowledge and values.

Lesson 2: Study real-life examples of the sustainable use of Indian lands and tribally controlled natural resources.

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

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

Lesson 3: Develop knowledge of the types of Indian land “ownership” including tribal trust, individual trust, Indian fee, and non-Indian fee ownership, all within reservation boundaries.

Achievement Goal: Using maps, demonstrate how land is owned by the tribe, by tribal individuals, and by non-tribal members.

In this lesson, students will be introduced to the allotment of Indian lands, different types of land ownership on reservations, and the affect it has on tribal communities and the ability of tribal governments to govern.

Lesson 4: Develop knowledge of tribal sovereignty and how the exercise of sovereignty affects tribal governance and land management.

Achievement Goal: Explain the concepts of “sovereignty” and “self-determination” and how these powers help tribes protect land.

In this lesson, students will be asked to perform a thought experiment which will reveal to them the importance of tribal sovereignty and self-determination. They will then learn more about what sovereignty is, how it relates to them, and how to spell the difficult word.