

Standard One – Lesson Two

Achievement Goal:

Learn about the origins and history of several tribal communities, including one's own.

Time:

Two class periods

Core:

Cultural Arts, History, Language Arts



Grades: 3rd - 5th



Background:

Before the creation of reservations, American Indian tribes lived in every part of this continent. Origin stories place them here soon after the land's creation. The areas in which the tribe traversed or settled, in which they hunted, fished, gathered, or planted were their aboriginal homelands. In the cases of the great nomadic tribes, these homelands were hundreds of millions of acres. Other native societies settled in smaller areas and irrigated lands for cultivation of food.

As non-native people began to settle upon Indian lands and overwhelm native communities, many tribes began to sign treaties with the United States government to stop this encroachment and retain some of their lands for the tribe's exclusive use and benefit. This is how many reservations were established. However, some reservations were reserved for one tribe only. Other reservations became home to several American Indian tribes who had never shared land before. Some tribes never moved to a reservation or their reservations were taken away from them after the treaty was signed.

Moving to reservations or losing homelands caused many changes in the lives of tribal people. Tribes had to adapt to living in a smaller area or to living in a type of environment they were not familiar with. Despite the hardships this created, tribes and tribal communities still value the land they have and are always seeking to gain back land and use the lands they have wisely. Many American Indian people carried with them their ancient values, traditions and cultures. Some leaders successfully kept their extended families together by moving into certain areas on the reservations and establishing communities. Each of these newer communities has a different, unique history that is important to know and understand.

In this lesson, the students will listen to a tribal resource person and research the history of their community and several other Indian communities or tribes.

Student Activity:

- Reprint the "Tribal Territory and Reservations" diagram following this lesson on a poster board or transparency. Discuss the difference between aboriginal territory and reservations of the Apache, Sioux, and Cherokee.

- Show a map of American Indian reservations to the students and have them identify their own location as well as the present-day homelands of a few other tribes.
 - Recruit a tribal resource person who is familiar with local American Indian community history and culture to come into the classroom. Set up a video recorder and record the presentation.
 - Have the tribal resource person relate the history of the local Indian community from earliest treaties and reservation days, presenting important historical events.
 - Have the tribal resource person assist the students with developing a list of tribal words that are used in and around the community to describe places, animals and other items of local or tribal significance. List the names on the board for the students to copy and repeat out loud.
 - Allow time for students to ask questions about community origins, special relationships the people have with the land, and places that are sacred to the people.
 - List some names of tribes on the board and assign students the task of conducting an Internet search on another American Indian reservation or tribal community. Tell them to find at least two American Indian reservations and gather as much information as possible about the people who live there and the origins of their tribal communities. For example, they may have originally come from Tennessee or New York but now live in Oklahoma. See if students can find out how that happened.
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Evaluation:

- Students will be evaluated based upon their participation in discussions with the tribal resource person on community origins and connections.
 - Assess students' abilities to effectively research the Internet for other tribal community information.
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Resources:

1. "American Indian Territoriality: An online research guide", Imre Sutton, <http://thorpe.ou.edu/treatises/AITchptr%20pdfs/>

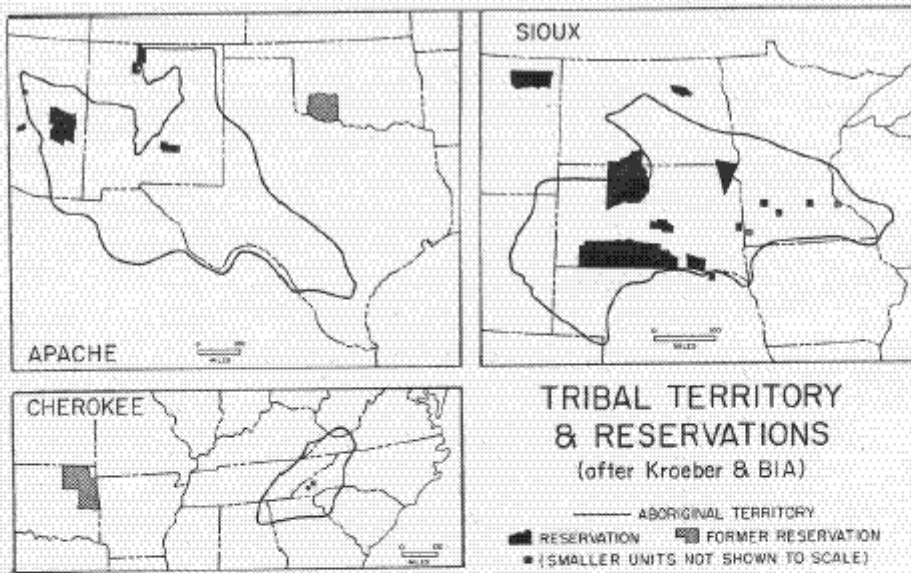


FIG.1.2 Some maps reflect the differences in interpretation of original territory and the greater reliance on ethnographic or cultural data, mainly languages, culture elements, etc., rather than political territoriality. These examples are based upon Kroeber's *Culture Area* map (1939) Source: Sutton, *Indian Land Tenure* (1975). The composite idea is borrowed from U. S. Congress, House, 1953. (See section 4). Keep in mind that Kroeber did not perceive his culture area boundaries as equivalent to political territoriality. See my discussion in Sutton (2002). Also note that the Kroeberian areas, even if they appear to correspond at times to adjudicated claims areas, were not perceived as legal entities when first designed in the 1930s. Map copyrighted by Imre Sutton.