

Coping with Today's World

Focus on Parent Involvement



Children and Families Are Special

Subject Areas:

Guidance and
Counseling,
Health,
Home Economics,
Reading,
Science,
Social Studies

Grade Level:

5-9

**Preparing for
the Lesson:**

Skills:

listening
sequencing
communicating
coping

Objectives:

1. Students will develop a sense of pride in their tribal cultures.
2. Students will develop self-esteem through a sense of cultural pride.
3. Students will become aware of the type of discipline used in traditional Creek culture.

Materials:

brown paper bags
markers
glue
crayons
scissors
strings
staples
construction paper
contact paper

Resource Library Suggestions:

News media, personal experiences, law enforcement, McGruff program, grandparents, parents, video tapes, and community resources such as the Oklahoma Area Prevention Centers, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), Students Against Driving Drunk (SADD), and others.



**Developing
the Lesson:**

Setting the Lesson Purpose:

1. Invite a health-care professional or related resource person to talk to your class about the effects of substance abuse. Encourage the use of open-ended questions by the speaker.
2. Invite a traditional Indian community representative to class to discuss traditional uses of herbs and medicines. Contrast this traditional use to contemporary use of drugs.

Activities:

1. Create a Big Book for "Children and Families are Special."
2. Read the story.
3. Act out the story.
4. Discuss the meaning of the story.
5. Have the students make their own books about their families or a new story telling about the effects of alcohol and drugs on family life.

Vocabulary:

tradition
drugs
substance abuse
dysfunction

**Summarizing
the Lesson:**

Have the students tell the story in their own words and make booklets.



**Reinforcing
the Lesson:**

1. Ask small groups of students to prepare skits on the ill-effects of drugs and alcohol. Discuss each skit after presentation.
2. Have the students hand out information pamphlets during open house or community functions as a community service project.

**Evaluating
the Lesson:**

Host a student program to share the class findings with family. Invite trained counselors to lead the family discussion. Discuss positive solutions to encourage family "specialness".

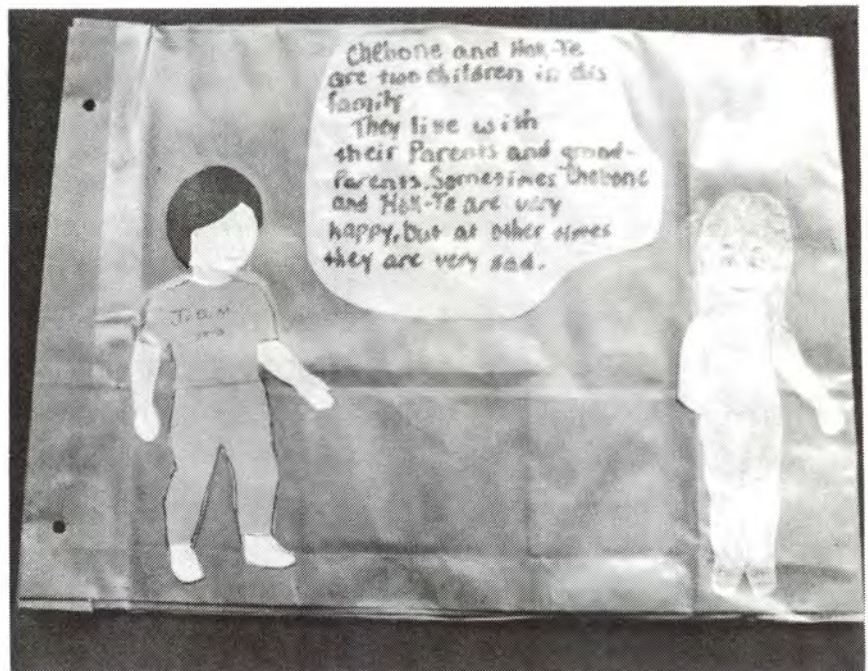
Contributors:

Berryhill, Estelle
Carl, Mildred
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Douglas, Harry
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Roberts, Mina
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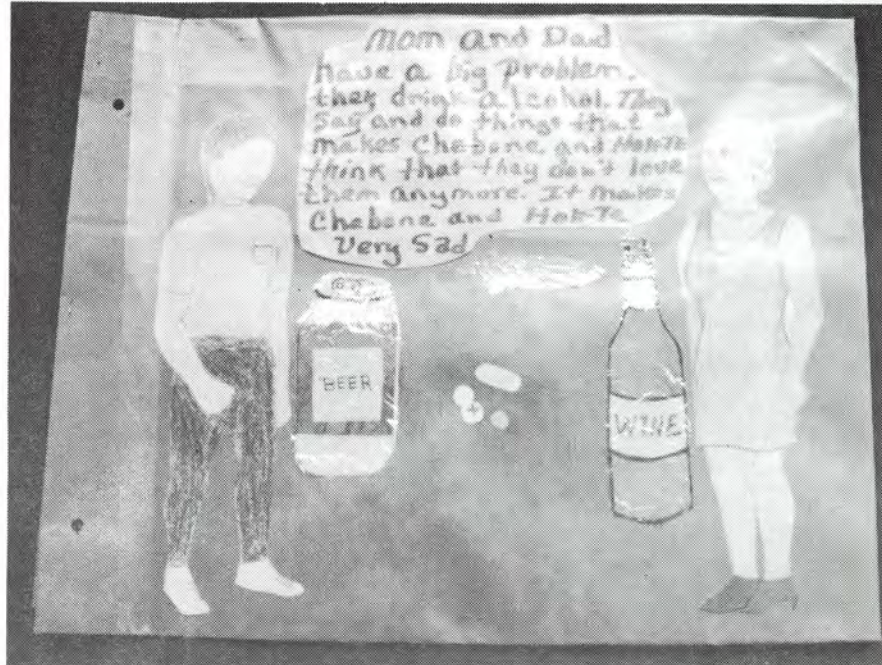
Children and Families are Special

Chebone and Hok-Te are two children in this family. They live with their parents and grandparents. Sometimes Chebone and Hok-Te are very happy, but at other times they are very sad.

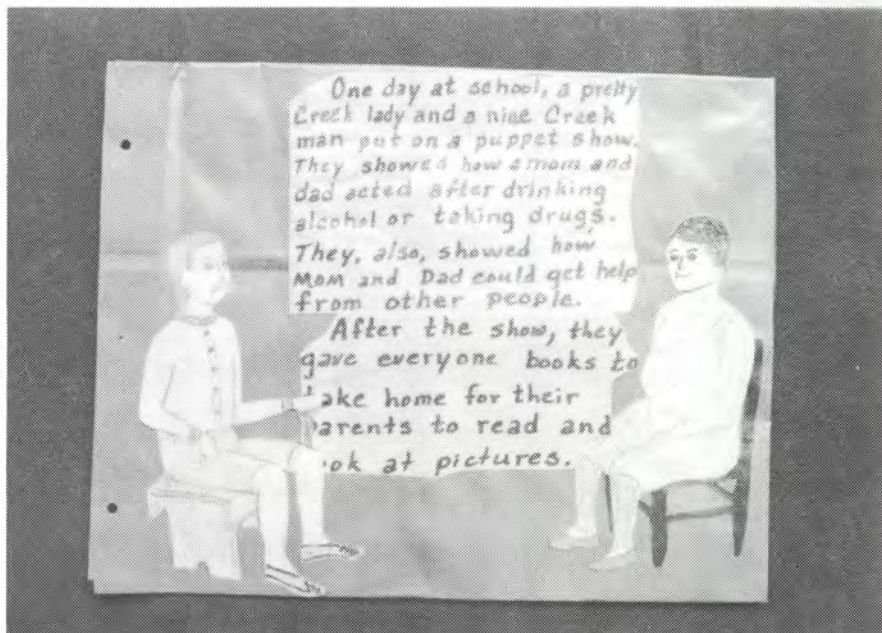




Mom and Dad have a big problem. They drink alcohol. They say and do things that make Chebone and Hok-Te think that they don't love them anymore. It makes Chebone and Hok-Te very sad.

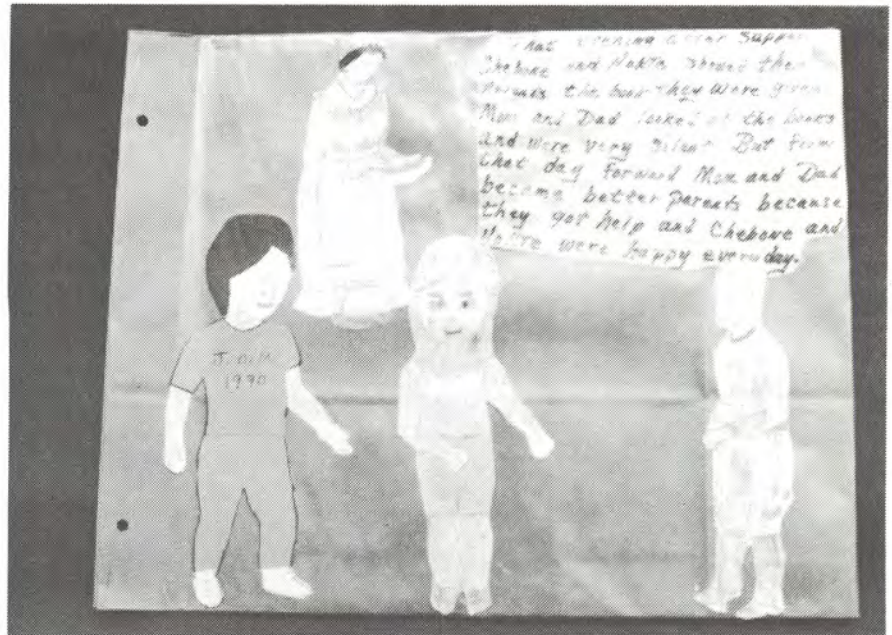


One day at school, a pretty Creek lady and a nice Creek man put on a puppet show. They showed how a mom and dad acted after drinking alcohol or taking drugs. They also showed how Mom and Dad could get help from other people. After the show, they gave everyone books to take home for their parents to read and look at pictures.





That evening after supper Chebone and Hok-Te showed their parents the book they were given. Mom and Dad looked at the books and were very silent. But from that day forward Mom and Dad became better parents because they got help and Chebone and Hok-Te were happy every day.





Cycles of Seasons...Circle of Life

Subject Areas:

Natural Science,
Art, Guidance and
Counseling

Grade Level:

5-6

Preparing for the Lesson:

Skills:

observation
change and consistency in life
art appreciation
research

Objectives:

1. Students will increase observation skills concerning nature through collection/observation walks.
2. Students will increase their understanding of change and consistency in life.
3. Students will experience joy of colors.

Materials:

waxed paper
iron
tissue paper of various colors

Background information:

The cycle of life is represented as a circle in many tribal cultural symbols. It is important to some traditionalists to know where one is on life's circle at any point in time. This knowledge prepares us for the future. The circle also represents a continuum for the environment with each part of the natural environment (animals, people, plants, minerals, etc.) playing a role in the cycle of life.

Setting the lesson purpose:

Discuss the concept of "cycle of life." What does this mean?



**Developing
the Lesson:**

Content reading for comprehension:

Ask each student to identify and clip a newspaper article which demonstrates a cycle in nature or in personal development. Have each student read his/her article and explain the cycle illustrated by the article.

Activities:

1. Cut out pictures depicting seasons.
2. Talk about colors that are warm and cool. Discuss colors and symbols related to each season.

Examples:

Winter — cold, white, snowflakes, crystals

Fall — autumn, Jack Frost, maple leaves, red, orange, yellow

Spring — blossoms, pink, yellow, rain, buds

Summer — sun, flowers, vegetables, bright, hot

3. Go on a collection/observation walk. Identify elements in the environment which demonstrate cycles or change. Collect specimens only if they can be removed without interfering with a cycle.

Vocabulary:

cycle

environment

habitat

**Summarizing
the Lesson:**

Assemble a light-catching ornament based on the previous activities and discussions:



1. Cut two circles out of black construction paper. Also, cut out inner circle as shown in diagram.

2. Cut symbols of each season from different colored tissue paper.

3. Layer as follows:

a. One piece of black paper

b. Waxed paper

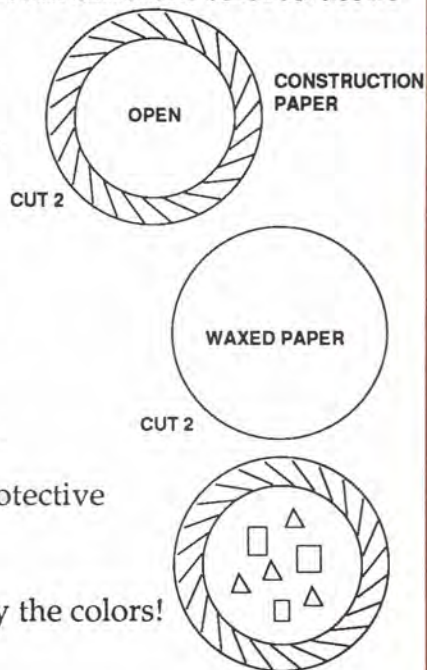
c. Tissue paper cut-outs depicting seasons

d. Waxed paper

e. One piece of black paper

4. Cover the ornament with protective cloth and iron together.

5. Hang in a window and enjoy the colors!



**Reinforcing
the Lesson:**

Illustrate a cycle using words, pictures, and specimens from the nature walk. Examples for illustrations include mounting the collection on a poster board, creating a report, or a book.

**Evaluating
the Lesson:**

Illustrate a cycle in animal or human life using words, pictures, and any other appropriate examples, i.e. photographs, memorabilia, collections, cultural items, etc.

Contributors:

Neihaus, Nancy





From Tears To Joy!

Subject Areas:

Reading,
Guidance and
Counseling

Grade Level:

6-9

**Preparing for
the Lesson:**

**Developing
the Lesson:**

Skills:

life-coping
dealing with loneliness, sorrow
survival

Objectives:

1. The students will identify a variety of emotions using guided imagery activities.
2. Students will determine alternative emotions when experiencing negative or sad emotions.
3. Students will analyze their use of emotions to determine appropriate emotions in unplanned situations.

Materials:

large sheets of paper
felt-tip markers

Background Information:

Students need to know that they do not always control the path or outcome of any given situation. Life experiences are full of surprises.

Setting the Lesson Purpose:

Ask the students to list emotions. Make sure the list includes a wide range of positive and negative emotions.

Content Reading for Comprehension:

Plan a class trip to the library. Find and read stories about feelings and animals. Use books, audio and video tapes, and computer software.



Activities:

1. Select one or more stories from those identified which best illustrates emotions. Read the selected story aloud. Ask the students to close their eyes with their heads resting on their desks to better visualize the emotions and characterizations in the story.
2. Discuss the feelings portrayed in the story. Point out contrasting feelings and emotions i.e. happy, sad, loneliness, overwhelmed, etc. List the identified emotions. Did the students anticipate the emotions and/or outcomes of the story? Why do you think animals were used to portray the characters of the story?
3. Act out the story using role-play.

Vocabulary:

emotions
opposites
expectations
loneliness

**Summarizing
the Lesson:**

Ask the students to draw pictures showing the emotions represented in the story. Have each student show his/her picture to the class and have the other students guess which emotion is being represented. Are there sometimes more than one interpretation of a picture? Of an emotion?

**Reinforcing
the Lesson:**

1. Write stories of something that happened and how it made you feel.
2. How did you cope with this feeling?
3. Why do Indian people often use animal imagery and characters to help teach traditional or practical lessons?

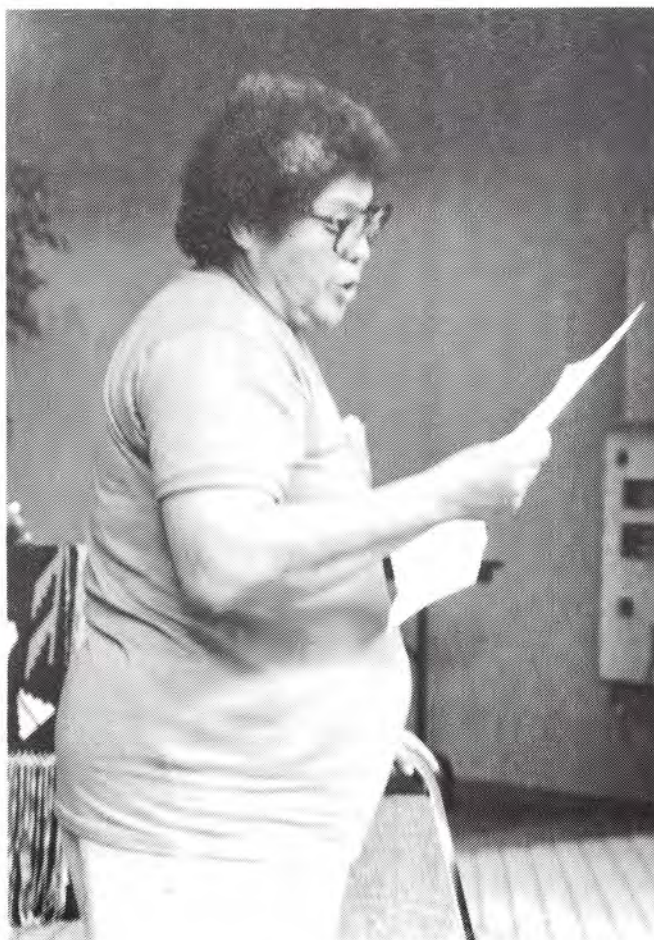


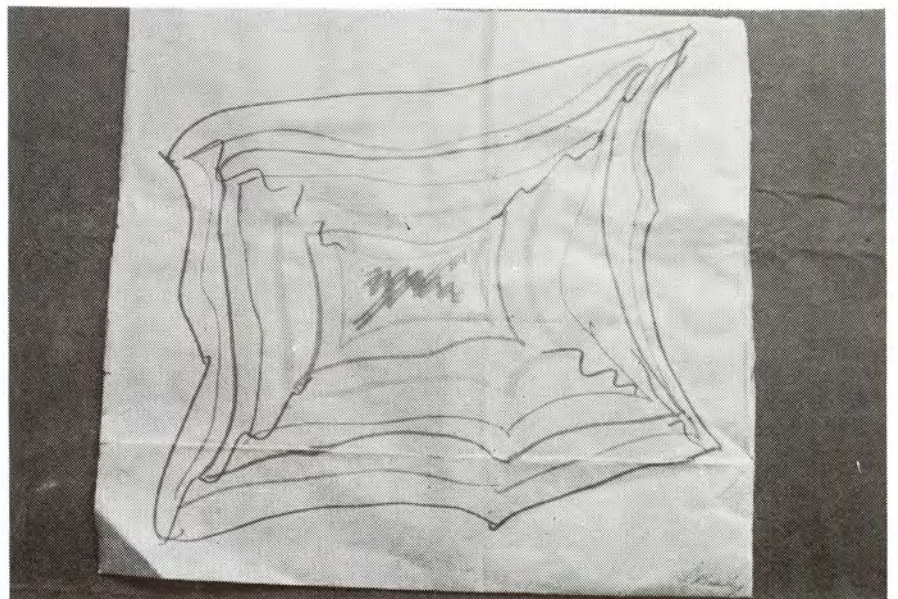
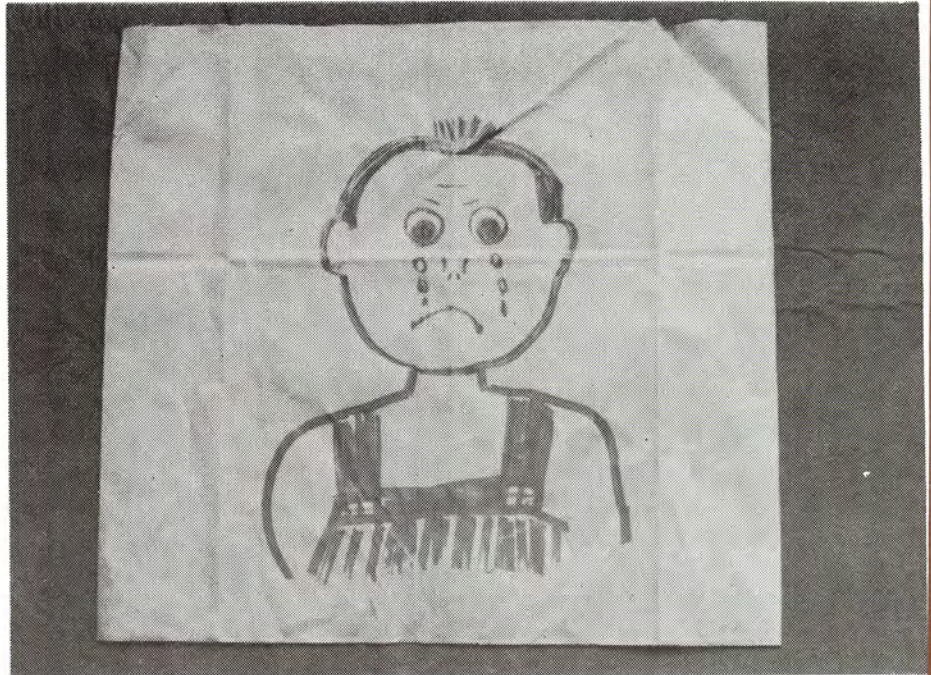
**Evaluating
the Lesson:**

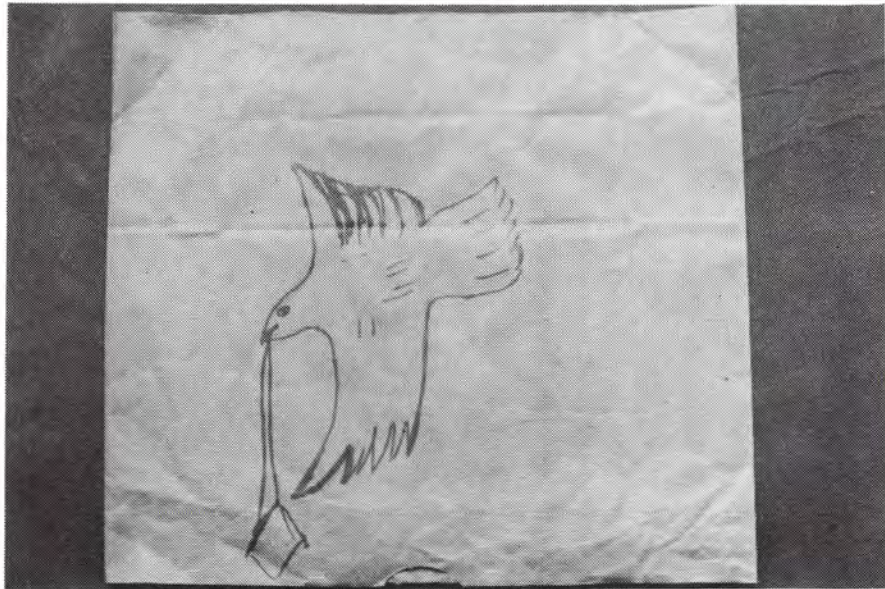
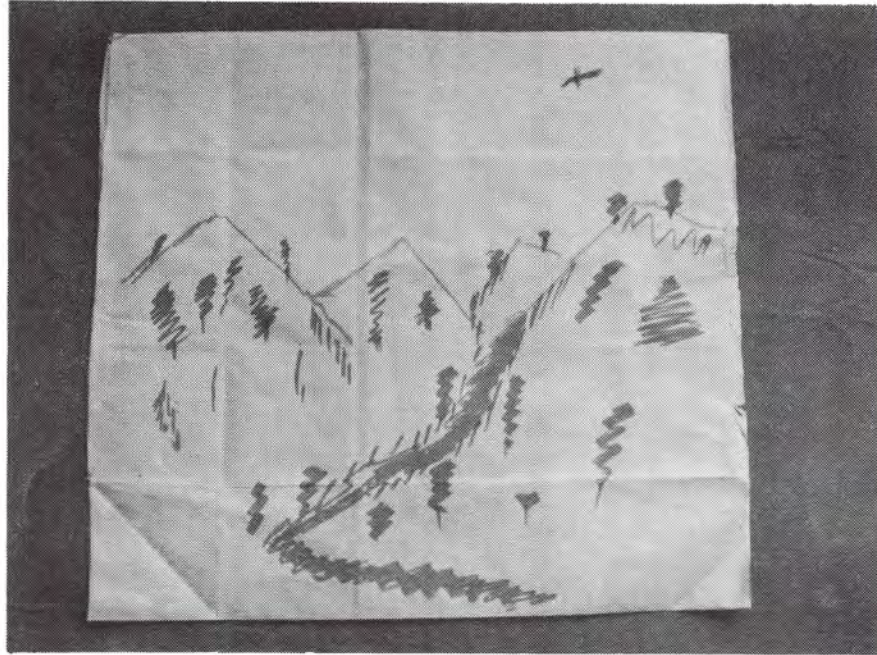
Based on the class composition, write a hypothetical crisis for a "mythical" creature. Ask the class to determine the outcome of the crisis using initial actions based on emotions and several approaches for a conclusion to the crisis. Use role-play to act out the scenarios.

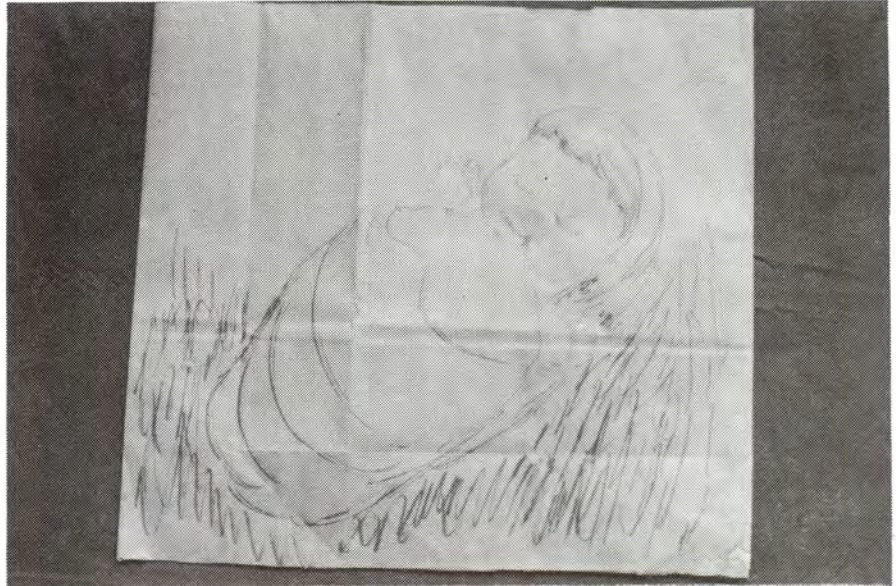
Contributors:

Brady, Lily











Life

Subject Areas:
Guidance
and Counseling,
Drama,
Language Arts

Grade Level:
K-12

**Preparing for
the Lesson:**

Skills:

life-coping
creativity
storytelling
problem-solving

Objectives:

Students will identify and demonstrate an understanding of life coping skills as shown in student-developed role plays.

Materials:

poster board
cotton
markers
glue

Background Information:

This story was told by word-of-mouth by John Little Axe, Absentee Shawnee grandparent.

Setting the Lesson Purpose:

Show the students the spider web chart and then tell them the story about Father Sun. Show the students how an insect will get caught in this web. Tell what will finally happen to this insect as a result. Assist children in relating the story to their own lives.

**Developing the
Lesson:**

Content Reading for Comprehension:

Read the story "Life."



Activities:

1. Play Win, Lose, or Draw. Using the vocabulary, have the teams (2 or more) demonstrate the concepts using pictures.
2. Divide the class into small groups. Ask each group to discuss the meaning of each concept.
3. Ask each group to select one concept (or related group of concepts) and create a story demonstrating the concept.

Vocabulary

motivation
cooperation
participation
respect
tardiness
laziness
love
fear
alcohol
jealousy
lying
cheating
stealing
anger
stealing
joy
generosity
purpose

**Summarizing the
Lesson:**

Ask each group to share their story with the class.



Reinforcing the Lesson:

Make up a skit on life coping skills using Father Sun, Mother Earth, children, etc.

Extend lesson to levels such as love, fear, alcohol, jealousy, lying, cheating, stealing, laziness, anger and courage.

Evaluating the Lesson:

Ask each student to create a story using one concept or related group of concepts.

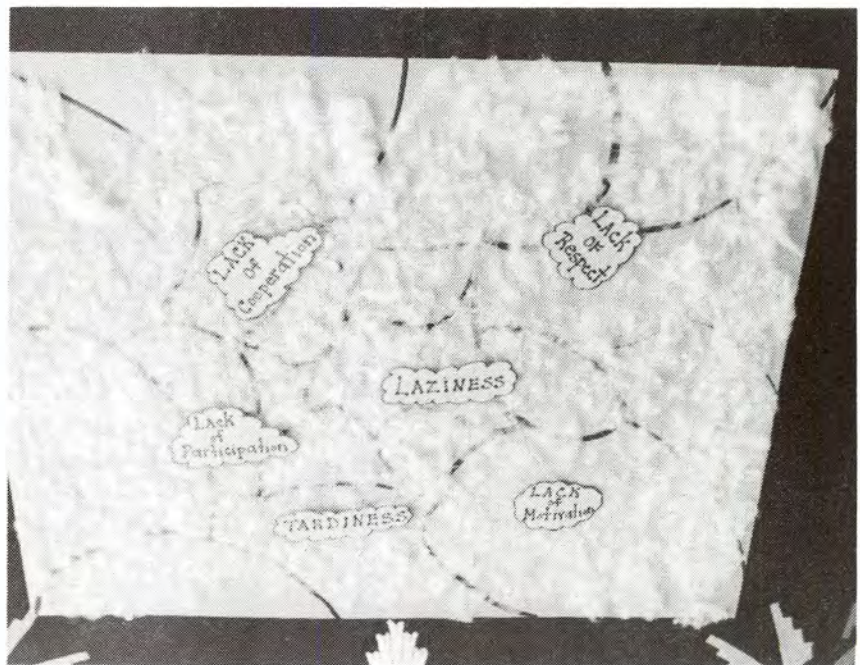
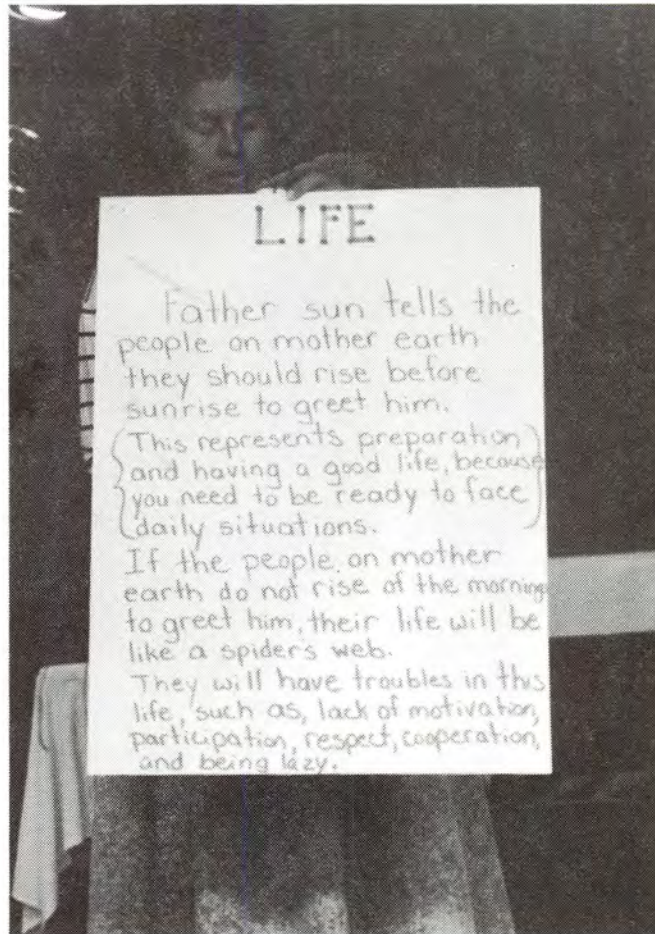
Contributors:

Beaver, Pete

Soap, Lawaunta

Spurlock, Jamie

Sullivan, Glenda





Nutrition and Traditional Indian Foods

Subject Areas:

Mathematics,
Reading, Science,
Language Arts,
Social Studies

Grade Level:

3-4

**Preparing for the
Lesson:**

Skills:

measurement
reading
speaking
writing
following directions
sequencing

Objectives:

1. The students will identify the four basic food groups.
2. The students will demonstrate an appreciation for traditional Indian food.
3. The students will learn about Indian culture by getting acquainted with their traditional foods.

Materials:

community people such as elders and librarians
traditional recipes

Five Indian Tribes of Eastern Oklahoma Curriculum

Guide, Oklahoma State Department of Education.

Native Americans in Oklahoma Curriculum Guide,
Oklahoma State Department of Education

Cultural Curriculum for Communities, Curriculum Guide,
Oklahoma State Department of Education

Background Information:

Some of the animals eaten by the Indians were deer, buffalo, rabbits, birds, and turkeys. Fish, clams, and turtles were included in the diet of coastal Indians. Some of the coastal tribes also consumed whales and seals.

The bear was eaten by some tribes but considered sacred by others because he walked on his hind legs like a human, and, therefore, was not eaten.



Many Indians raised gardens. They used parts of plants for food: leaves, stems, roots, flowers, and seeds.

The Indian helped the early settlers survive by providing food and teaching them to grow certain crops. The Indian introduced new foods to the early settlers such as tomatoes, vanilla, pepper, squash, peanuts, chocolate, chicle (for chewing gum), maple sugar, and pineapple.

They showed the early settlers how to prepare special dishes such as popcorn, tapioca, grits, and succotash.

Setting the Lesson Purpose:

1. Provide examples of the four basic food groups.
2. Discuss traditional foods.
 - a) What are traditional foods?
 - b) How did each ethnic group develop traditional foods?
 - c) What is the importance of traditional Indian food?
3. Tell a traditional tale describing the origin of corn from *Cultural Curriculum for Communities, 1989-1990*.

Developing the Lesson:

Content Reading for Comprehension:

1. Read library material related to the research.
2. Read class collaboration story.

Activities:

1. Read about and study the four basic food groups.
2. Do class collaboration writing.
3. Do computer-generated word search with Indian foods.
4. Cook a traditional Indian food such as fry bread (see recipes).



Vocabulary

frybread
succotash
pemmican
jerky
grits
sof-ke

Summarizing the Lesson:

Cook a traditional Indian dinner with parent/elder participation.

Make a fry bread puppet.

Reinforcing the Lesson:

Collect traditional Indian recipes for a cookbook. Put them together in a booklet for each student. Students may decorate their own cookbook covers.

Evaluating the Lesson:

Evaluate by having the students describe the basic four food groups and classify traditional Indian foods in the four groups.

Contributors:

Raspberry, Barbara
Carter, JoAnn



Fry Bread Recipe

by
**Lillian Williams,
Skidi Pawnee,
Chickasaw,
Cherokee**

2 cups self-rising flour
1 cup milk
1/8 teaspoon salt
Crisco shortening

Place the flour and salt in a medium size mixing bowl. Form a round hollow in the center of flour. Slowly pour milk in center of hollow and blend by hand. Mix until it forms a soft mound. Cover with a cloth and let rise about two hours.

While heating about three-fourths of a can of Crisco in skillet to 450 degrees or "hot," prepare a surface for the dough by sprinkling the rolling area, rolling pin, and hands with flour. Knead the dough to a biscuit consistency adding a dusting of flour, if needed. Divide the mixture in half and roll out to 1/2" depth. Cut dough into 2" by 4" rectangles and put 1/2 inch slit in the center. Fry each side until golden brown, turning over only once.

NOTE: The best fry bread cooks add a heaping cup of good feelings and usually sprinkle it with laughter.

The fry bread may be served with honey on the side.



Fry Bread Recipe

by
Flossie Mathews,
Quapaw/Seneca

1 cup flour
1 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
dash sugar
dash salt
1 teaspoon Crisco
3/4 cup heated buttermilk (approximate amount)

Mix and roll dough. Take a knife and cut dough in your desired shapes. Fry in hot shortening, turning only once on each side. Cut a small potato into about three one-half inch slices to keep your bread from becoming too dark.

Grape Dumplings Recipe

1 bottle grape juice
equal amount of water
sweetener to taste

Make dumplings (use fry bread dough recipe from above) and use grape juice instead of liquid. Roll out dough and cut into small pieces. Boil your juice and drop your dumplings in. Cook until done in the middle.

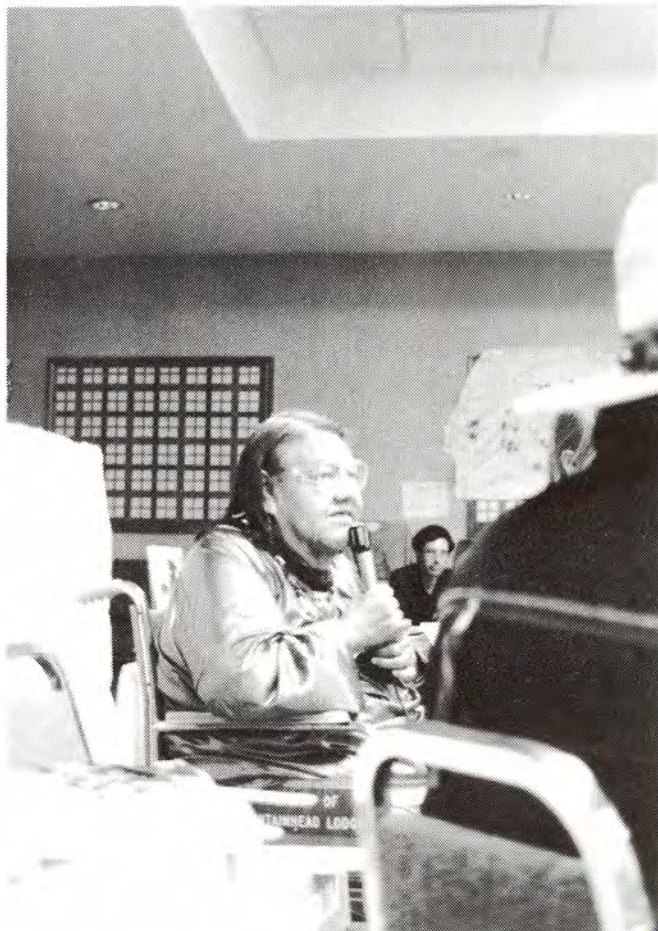


Fry Bread Recipe

by
JoAnn Alred,
Osage

4 cups flour
4 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon Crisco oil
lukewarm water

Sift dry ingredients together. Make a hollow in center and slowly add lukewarm water. Blend together until dough is the right consistency. Pinch off a small piece, flatten, and drop into hot oil. Fry until golden brown. Turn only once. Delicious!





Self-Confidence Through Knowledge

Subject Areas:
Guidance and
Counseling

Grade Level:
9-12

**Preparing for
the Lesson:**

Skills:

problem-solving
transition
self-confidence

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to construct a college class schedule.
2. Students will be able to understand and work with the concept of a college "hour."
3. The student will be able to set up his/her own "mock" college schedule. The student will be able to read and understand a college class schedule and catalog.

Materials:

college catalogs (examples from many schools)
college class schedule
pencils
worksheets

Background Information:

College class schedules are basically identical, only the format changes.

Setting the Lesson Purpose:

1. Review the meaning of the vocabulary words.
2. Point out credit hours that are denoted by the last number of the course number.



**Developing the
Lesson:**

Content Reading for Comprehension:

1. Read the introductory sections of several college catalogs.
2. Review the purpose of a college schedule.
3. Read the general requirements of each catalog.
4. Discuss the relevance of college hours.

Activities:

1. Have students enroll in a full-time schedule and a part-time schedule.
2. Have students work in 2 or 3 groups.
3. Have students all enroll in two general requirements, i.e., English Composition I and American Government. Make two other class selections based on the choice of a major.
4. Have students share their class schedules with others. Have a show of hands of those in the same class.

Vocabulary:

college hour
catalog course number
course number
full-time schedule
general requirements
pre-requisites
major
minor
degree



Summarizing the Lesson:

Review the terminology used for developing a college schedule.

Reinforcing the Lesson:

Identify a hypothetical or actual major and plan a schedule for the next year for a full-time student.

Evaluating the Lesson:

Ask the students to develop a checklist of everything needed to develop an effective class schedule.

Contributors:

Beaver, Pete
Soap, Lawaunta
Sullivan, Glenda







Seneca Problem-Solving Techniques

Subject Areas:

Language Arts,
Social Studies,
Guidance and
Counseling, Visual
Arts, Bilingual
Education

Grade Level:

4-8

**Preparing for the
Lesson:**

Skills:

interpersonal communication
traditional Seneca moccasin construction
use of the Seneca language
problem-solving techniques

Objectives:

1. The students will demonstrate self-awareness and tribal identity by identifying a tribal elder, personally visiting with the elder, and inviting the elder to class. The student will document his/her experience in an extension activity to be shared with others.
2. The students will interact with parents or other tribal elders in a classroom setting in the preparation of a cultural item or event.

Materials:

deerskin (or substitute*)
needles
beading thread
beeswax
scissors
ribbon
vocabulary handouts
camera
film
audio tapes
tape recorder

(*Substitutes for deerskin could include felt or, if moccasins are not to be worn, polyester fabric, or ultrasuede.)



Developing the
Lesson:

Background Information:

Seneca women traditionally create moccasins using the individual footprint of the intended wearer. This skill is handed down from elders to the younger generations. Moccasin making is an excellent lesson for learning problem-solving techniques.

Setting the Lesson Purpose:

Read the background information. Display pictures or real cultural items featuring moccasins and other tribal regalia. Read excerpts from the resources.

Content Reading for Comprehension:

Morgan, Lewis Henry. *League of the Iroquois*.

Skinner, Linda. *Traditions for Teaching*, "The Great Law of Peace," September, 1987.

Activities:

1. Ask each student to work individually or in groups to identify Indian elders in the community.
2. Write letters to the identified elders asking for a time to meet and tell about their Indian cultures. Explain the reasons for the needed visit, class, or personal background in the letters. The letters should convey sincerity and be respectful in tone.
3. For the positive responses, have the students visit the elders and record their experiences in a report. Invite each elder to class to demonstrate a cultural skill.
4. Write thank you letters to each elder who allowed a visit.
5. Read the reports on the visits out loud to the class.



6. On the day of the demonstrations, document the activities with photographs and audio recordings. Make special note of vocabulary words used by elders.
7. Make cultural items based on the demonstration.
8. Ask the elder to share perspectives on family relationships and problem-solving techniques.

Vocabulary:

Seneca vocabulary sheet (See "Seneca Communication" lesson.)

Summarizing the Lesson:

List Seneca perspectives and problem-solving activities as shared by the elder.

Reinforcing the Lesson:

Construct an extra-large size moccasin or other cultural item using special decorations. Fill the moccasin with small thank you notes written to the elder from the class members. Use Seneca vocabulary words whenever possible. Deliver the moccasin to the elder.

Evaluating the Lesson:

Ask each student to describe in role-play, pictures, or writing another problem-solving technique identified and used by American Indians.

Contributor:

Whitecrow Ollis, Sally





The Race

Subject Areas:

Guidance and
Counseling,
Physical Education,
Social Studies,
Language Arts,
Visual Arts

Grade Level:
K-12

**Preparing for
the Lesson:**

Skills:

life-coping
teamwork
recall
observation

Objectives:

The students will demonstrate understanding of the concepts of teamwork and cooperation by using the concepts to complete interactive games and to develop stories.

Materials:

paper plates
construction paper
glue
crayons
paper sack
brads
tape

Background Information:

Traditionally, Indian people used stories and learning-by-doing activities to teach life-coping skills. These activities provide a base for further practice in using interpersonal skills.

Setting the Lesson Purpose:

Play "Knots" to introduce the lesson:

1. Randomly select a group of five to ten students. Ask these students to come into an open area. Ask the remaining students to be observers and "spotters" for safety.



2. Have the students stand in a small circle with their shoulders almost touching and with their arms fully extended in front of their bodies with their wrists crossed.
3. Ask the students to grab and hold hands with the other members of the group, making sure that they do not hold the hands of their immediate neighbors.
4. Without letting go of the hands, and keeping safety in mind, ask the students to untangle the knot. Ask the observers/spotters to remain silent during the process. Avoid intervening with the process unless safety or absolute non-success requires external help.
5. When the knot is untangled or impossible to untangle, ask the students to sit on the floor and discuss the process of untangling the knot. What happened? What worked best? Who was the leader? Did everyone have to help? Did anyone refuse to help? What would have worked better?
6. Repeat the activity and the follow-up discussion. Did it work better the second time? Why?
7. Discuss the meaning of the terms: teamwork, cooperation, perception, observation.

**Developing the
Lesson:**

Content Reading for Comprehension:

Martin, Novella Godman. *Choctaw Little Folk*, "The Race"

Activities:

1. Read the story. Discuss examples of teamwork, cooperation, perception, and observation from the story.
2. Discuss the importance of traditional Indian stories. What was their use beyond entertainment?
3. Have students construct paper plate puppets using the turkeys and turtles from the story.



4. Ask the students to make up another story about life-coping concepts using these same characters.

Vocabulary:

spotter (as used in adventure learning/sports)

teamwork

cooperation

perception

observation

**Summarizing the
Lesson:**

Have each student give an example of cooperation from either the written or new story. Ask each student to take his/her puppet home and tell it to his/her family.

**Reinforcing the
Lesson:**

Play the game "Everybody Up" to practice life-coping skills (adapted from *New Games*):

1. Ask for two volunteers (students of the same height and weight work best to start). Have the students sit on the floor with their feet together and holding hands or arms.
2. Ask the student to figure out how they both can stand up at the same time while holding hands and using the life-coping skills. Use spotters for safety.
3. After two students accomplish the task, add another student. After each success, add another student. What is the maximum number that can be reached?
4. When everyone has had a try (or is exhausted) have everyone sit down and discuss the process.

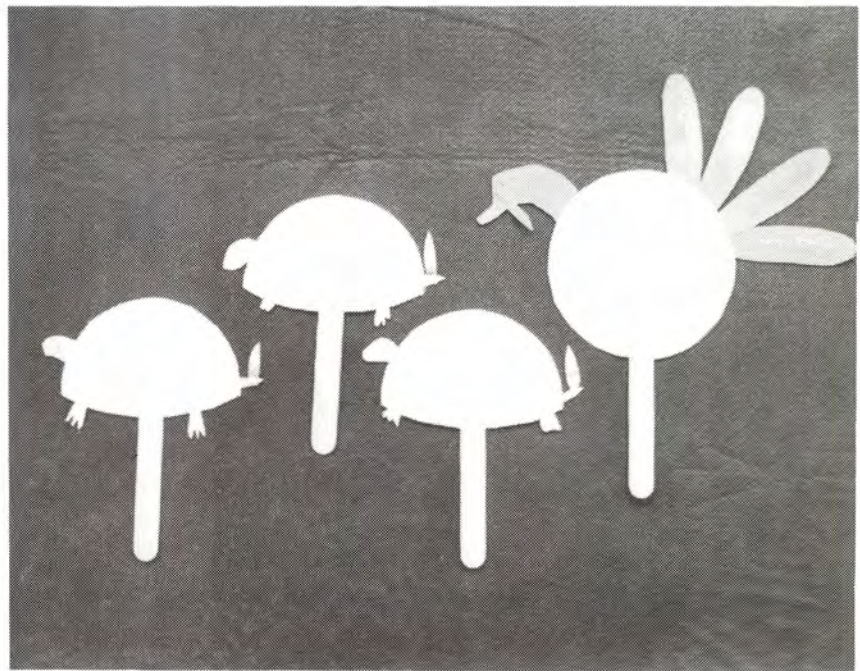


Evaluating the Lesson:

Ask each student to write an example of a life-coping skill that they observe in their own home or with their friends outside the classroom.

Contributor:

Lovell, Terry Jane





Why Animals Don't Drink

Subject Areas:

Cultural
Awareness,
Guidance and
Counseling,
Language Arts,
Health

Grade Level:

2 - 12

**Preparing for the
Lesson:**

Skills:

listening
speaking
role-playing
reading
motor
communication

Objectives:

1. The students will be able to verbalize at least two facts about the history of alcohol and drug use among Indians in North America.
2. The students will identify at least one argument against drug and alcohol abuse from the story.

Materials:

crayons
paper plates for masks
paper
colored paper
pencils
cloth and yarn for puppets

Background Information:

Ask a drug/alcohol abuse counselor to visit the class to provide expert information and resources. Discuss fetal alcohol syndrome and dependency.

Setting the Lesson Purpose:

1. Have students list what they know about drugs and alcohol.
2. Have them discuss what they know about different drugs and how they affect the body.



3. Discuss reasons for using drugs. Who should be involved in drug prevention?
4. Present these basic assumptions:
 - a. Alcohol and other drugs are not needed for success in life.
 - b. Use of alcohol and other drugs does not make you popular.
 - c. Alcohol and drugs impair judgement and cause neglect of responsibilities to ourselves, our families, and to the society in which we live.
 - d. Alcohol and drug abuse can affect people's lives physically, mentally, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

**Developing the
Lesson:**

Content Reading for Comprehension:

1. Read the story aloud while the students read silently.
2. Identify at least two facts about the history of alcohol and drug use among Indians in North America.
3. Identify at least one lesson to be learned from the story.
4. Discuss these questions:
 - a. Why was the rabbit stumbling when he came to the meeting?
 - b. How was the rabbit changed by his trip to town? List at least three ways.
 - c. What was the Great Spirit trying to teach the animals? What can people learn from this?

Activities:

1. Ask the students to write another story about a fictional animal. Does that animal choose to use drugs and alcohol?



2. Ask groups to present the stories using role play.
3. Identify where and who to call to help someone who is on drugs.
4. Learn about the laws and penalties regarding drug and alcohol abuse.
5. Learn to identify someone on drugs.

Vocabulary:

1. Define words dealing with drugs and alcohol.
2. Become familiar with *slang* words and their meaning for various drugs.

Summarizing the Lesson:

Ask students to list the results of alcohol and other drug use:

loss of self-respect

false courage

neglect of responsibilities to ourselves and others

physical and mental damage to body

decline in student motivation

early use leads to continued use

Reinforcing the Lesson:

Present the story to an audience of parents and peers. Allow time to break into small groups for discussion and sharing.

Extension Activities:

1. Report to class on newspaper articles that deal with drugs and alcohol.
2. Have guest speakers visit with students about the effects of alcohol and drug abuse.



3. Show films such as "The Honor of All".
4. Visit a drug and rehabilitation center.
5. Start group counseling to help students deal with peer pressure.

Evaluating the Lesson:

Require each student to summarize what he/she personally learned from this lesson.

Contributors:

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Why Animals Don't Drink

Retold by
Darrell Covin

Once upon a time, a long time ago, the Great Spirit told all the animals to gather by twos in the woods for a big meeting. The animals wondered what the Great Spirit wanted to tell them.

Along the path came a rabbit stumbling to this great meeting. All the other animals looked to see the rabbit. He was singing and staggering as he approached the meeting. The rabbit acted very strange. The fox asked the rabbit where he had been and told him that his family and children were lonely and worried about him as they had not seen him for a long time. The rabbit said: "I don't care anymore about being a rabbit, and I feel better than ever."

Then the rabbit told the fox why he felt good and of his venture to town where he drank alcohol. He was having so much fun he lost track of time. This was why he had been gone so long. The fox replied: "Your family and children are worried about you and want you home."

The rabbit laughed and kicked the fox in the leg. The fox then struck the rabbit and sent him tumbling. The fox, much stronger, could have killed the rabbit easily, but did not. Still laughing at the fox, the rabbit seemed not to care. All the other animals looked and stared at the rabbit who acted so strange.

The Bob Cat said to the rabbit: "Why do you walk on two legs and talk so different when the Great Spirit gave us four legs and our own language? It sounds like you do not care about your family and children. What has happened to you?" The rabbit said: "I was in town drinking and learned to walk, talk, and have fun in a different way."

Then he kicked the Bob Cat and said: "You are always picking on me, and I am not afraid of you either." Startled, the Bob Cat slapped the rabbit on the head and sent him flying through the air. He could have easily killed the rabbit instantly, but did not. The other animals did not understand where the rabbit received his false courage to attack the animals that



could have easily killed him. The other animals were stunned by the peculiar behavior of the rabbit and began to wonder why he acted in this manner.

The rabbit ridiculed, made fun of, and laughed at all the others for preparing for winter, gathering food, building their homes, and caring for their families when they could have been in town having fun like him. The rabbit said: "I am going back to town."

As the rabbit walked away he passed behind a large tree and changed himself back into the Great Spirit. All the animals saw what had happened and were greatly surprised. The Great Spirit told them this was why there was a great meeting — to show all the animals what could happen if they drink alcohol.

The Great Spirit looked at the Bear and said: "Remember the time the humans captured you and put you in a cage, tied you up, and gave you alcohol to drink?" The bear put his head down. The Great Spirit went on to talk to the animals about how they were given a language of their own to speak, four legs to walk on, and a way of life of their own to follow with a code of conduct by which they should live. To do anything differently is disrespectful to the way of life that the Creator has given us.

If we drink alcohol, we act differently. We get false courage. It becomes a way of life for us, and we neglect or forget our responsibilities to others as well as to ourselves. This is why animals don't drink.

During the early years, Europeans used alcohol to trade with Indian people for things the Europeans needed or wanted. Many problems developed as a result. Many Indian leaders have spoken out against the use of alcohol since that time in history.