

Title

Establishment of the Four Winds.

Grade Level

Adult Learner.

Theme

All Relationships are Historical.

Goal

Students will learn the historical Lakota events that originated relationships among gods, spirits, and ancestors that includes the potential for growth and change.

Lesson Goal

Participants will increase their understanding of the importance of the four winds and their role in ordering the Lakota world.

Objectives

Participants will be able to:

1. Express how the four winds were established.
2. Express the familial relationship between the four winds, their parents, grandparents and little brother.
3. Identify the role the four winds played in establishing the cardinal directions.
4. Identify the attributes and characteristics of the four directions.

Cultural Concept

A ceremonial foundation of Lakota culture is Tate Topa or the four winds that established directionality and spatiality.

Cultural Background

Prior to the founding of the four directions the world existed in chaos. The four winds, with the help of their grandfather, brought order to the world by establishing the four directions. Each wind has a unique personality and is associated with one of the four cardinal directions. Each cardinal direction is associated with various attributes, such as a color, a bird, a geographical feature, and order in precedence when addressed through prayer. The familial relationships between the four winds, their parents, and grandparents builds the foundation for understanding not only the ceremonial but some of the kinship aspects of Lakota culture.

Narratives pertaining to this cultural background are contained in *The sun dance and other ceremonies of the Oglala division of the Teton Dakota* (Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. 16 pt. 2, pp. 164-182). New York: American Museum of Natural History.

This work is based on interviews with Lakota elders and medicine men that was collected by James R. Walker a physician on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota from 1896 to 1914. During his time with the Lakota people he collected material pertaining to

traditional or pre-reservation Lakota way of life. Through interviews, Walker recorded information on beliefs, traditions, and rituals.

Student Activities

Day 1

1. Critical reading of the Walker narratives:
Walker, J. (1917). Narratives. In *The sun dance and other ceremonies of the Oglala division of the Teton Dakota* (Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. 16 pt. 2, pp. 164-182). New York: American Museum of Natural History.
2. Diagramming of each story to identify:
 - a. Kinship relationships.
 - b. Characteristics and qualities of each direction.
3. A speaker will tell the stories and be available to answer questions.
4. Participants, as a group, discuss the stories and identify key concepts such as important characters, their relationships, and the characteristics and qualities of each direction.
5. Participants will review and discuss the concept of a readers theater (see attached).
6. Participants prepare to present a readers theater (see attached description). Participants are grouped into teams and each team presents a different Walker narrative.
 - a. Each team identifies a narrator to tell the story they will enact.
 - b. Each team member chooses a character.
 - c. Each team works with their narrator to establish a story that will capture the relationships of the characters to each other, identify the four directions, and incorporate the characteristics and qualities of each direction.

Day 2

1. Each team presents their narrative in a readers theatre format.

Evaluation Activities

Participants in the audience score the presentation based on character development and group identified key concepts and provide feedback to the performing team as peer reviewers using a feedback form that lists the group identified key concepts.

Resources

Colored swatches white, yellow, red, and blue
Large pad of newsprint paper
Colored markers
Scissors
Tape
Glue
Sewing notions (ribbon, material scraps, bindings)
Compass

Readings:

Walker, J. (1917). Narratives. In *The sun dance and other ceremonies of the Oglala division of the Teton Dakota* (Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. 16 pt. 2, pp. 164-182). New York: American Museum of Natural History.

Developer

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The following description of a readers theater is from:

Source: <http://bms.westport.k12.ct.us/mccormick/rt/whatrt.htm>

What is Readers Theater?

Reader's theater is often defined by what it is not -- no memorizing, no props, no costumes, no sets. All this makes reader's theater wonderfully convenient. Still, convenience is not its chief asset.

Like storytelling, reader's theater can create images by suggestion that could never be realistically portrayed on stage. Space and time can be shrunk or stretched, fantastic worlds can be created, marvelous journeys can be enacted. Reader's theater frees the performers and the audience from the physical limitations of conventional theater, letting the imagination soar.

Almost any story can be scripted for reader's theater, but some are easier and work better than others. In general, look for stories that are simple and lively, with lots of dialog or action, and with not too many scenes or characters.

Reader's Theater involves children in oral reading through reading parts in scripts. Unlike traditional theatre, the emphasis is mainly on oral expression of the part. Reader's Theater is "theatre of the imagination". It involves children in understanding their world, creating their own scripts, reading aloud, performing with a purpose, and bringing enjoyment to both themselves and their audiences. Reader's Theater gives children a purpose for writing, for reading, and for sharing their learning by bringing others into the joyful "imagination space" they create. Reader's Theater "succeeds in giving the same suggestive push to the imaginations in the audience that the act of silent reading gives to the imagination of the perceptive silent reader". It is a simple, effective and risk-free way to get children to enjoy reading. As children write, read, perform and interpret their roles they acquire a better understanding of the literature.

"Everyone needs to talk - to hear and to play with language, to exercise the mind and emotions and tongue together. Out of this spirited speech can come meaningful, flavourful language, worth the time and effort of writing and rewriting, phrasing, rehearsing, and reading aloud."

The above is excerpted from "Readers Theatre in Elementary Classroom" and "Strategies for Reading: Readers Theatre in the Middle School" by Lois Walker.