

Title

People Purchasing Pe' Sla

Grade Level

High School

Theme

The cultural significance of Pe'Sla and why tribes paid \$9 million for this piece of the Black Hills.

Duration

This can be a one or two hour lesson depending on the resources available-movie or no movie.

Goal

Students will understand the importance of Pe'Sla and why tribes felt the purchase was important to their cultural benefit.

Objectives

Students will be able to explain what the cultural significance of Pe'Sla is through myths and actual physical evidence.

More specifically, students will be able to explain the Fallen Star story.

Students will cite 2 types of physical evidence at Pe'Sla making the site culturally significant.

South Dakota Standards

Reading: 7.R.5.2 Students can analyze and organize data from a variety of sources.

7.R.1.1 Students can analyze and organize word parts to determine meaning and context.

Cultural Concept

The concept of showing respect and understanding for places of spiritual significance.

Cultural Background

According to accounts Okslataya Wowahwala (Peace at Bear Spot) (Goodman 1992: 8, 13, 16; Black Elk, C. 1992a: 50-51) one short paragraph describes that there were sightings in the 1870's of large stacks of elk horns as well as an abandoned "medicine lodge" both which have spiritual significance. One of the modern sacred names in Lakota for Reynolds Prairie is "Elk Flats" which is also known as Pe Xla (Bare/Bald Head). There is speculation that this is one of the sites Falling Star visited in the myth cycle Black Elk narrated in the 1940's. It was also identified as a site for eagle trapping in a Lakota winter count in 1807.

In PDF form there is a two paragraph explanation of the Falling Star story on page 6 from the CAIRNS booklet entitled "Tender Reverence-Explanations of the Lakota Universe".

Also included from the website by Steven Mizrach Lakota Ethnoastronomy at www2.fiu.edu/~mizrachs/Lakota.htm is an excellent explanation of Milkway and Fallen Star. These 3 references are included in PDF form with your lesson.

Student Activities

If students have access to individual laptop computers they will be using the internet to access the various websites described in this lesson. If they do not have access, I would duplicate the material from the websites and have students work off the papers to answer the questions and stimulate discussion.

Students will basically look at the material, answer 5 questions from a worksheet and have a class discussion. If the video “Lakota Star Knowledge” (30 minutes) is available I would show that as well after students have done their research.

1. On the internet:
2. Go to <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com>
3. 11/30/12 Tribes reach \$9 million Goal and Purchase Sacred Site of Pe’ Sla.
4. Next go to www2.fiu.edu/~mizrachs/lakota.htm
5. Here you will find information about Fallen Star and the Milky Way.
6. Read the enclosed one-half page selection from the booklet “Tender Reverence Explorations of the Lakota Universe”
7. View the video if it is available.
8. Using the internet, try to find Pe’ Sla on Google Maps or Google Earth.
9. Complete the questions and discuss the topic.

Questions

1. From your readings describe the sacred site Pe’ Sla.
2. From the reading in the Lakota Ethroastronomy Website, what is the significance of Falling Star in the Lakota Culture? What is the North Star doing for eternity?
3. Describe your feelings about a group of people purchasing a piece of land where certain sacred events have occurred in their culture.
4. Can you think of any other group of people who have identified a sacred area that is special to their culture? Please describe it below.
5. At this point, go to Google maps and try to find Pe’ Sla and go to the ground level and walk around the area. It is north of Deerfield Lake in the Black Hills of South Dakota. If you have Google earth it will be more productive.

Resources

Computer, Internet connection, pencil, and paper.

Assessment

Students will answer the questions on the worksheet and participate in a general class discussion.

References

“Tender Reverence Explorations of the Lakota Universe” page 6.

<http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com> Indian Country Today website.

www2.fiu.edu/~mizrachs/lakota.htm this is the website by Steven Mizrach Lakota on Ethnoastronomy

<http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com>

11/30/12 Tribes reach \$9 million Goal and Purchase Sacred Site of Pe’ Sla.

The reading on page 102 “Teaching Oceti Sakowin Histories and Cultures” *b. The Central Prairies: Slate, Gillette, and Reynolds.*

The video “Lakota Star Knowledge” 30 minutes length.

Developer

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