

Title

Student pretest: What we know and what we will learn.

Grade Level

Undergraduate college students.

Theme

An introduction to course content, and an opportunity to examine what students know about American Indian history. This lesson plan addresses both general issues, and Lakota culture specifically.

Duration

50 minutes.

Goal

Students will be introduced to the key concepts and areas of study within the course.

Objectives

1. Students will have an opportunity to evaluate their own knowledge base relevant to course materials. Students will be able to contribute to discussion of course topics and ask questions.

South Dakota Standards

N/A (Although specific university standards could be substituted here).

Cultural Concept

Understanding through openness and respect for varying perspectives, as well as understanding of personal views, biases, and knowledge. Specifically, the Lakota value of *woksape*, wisdom, is promoted through this lesson plan.

Cultural Background

The current status of relations between Anglo and American Indian people as individuals and as societies can be improved through greater understanding of the history, perspectives, and culture of each group. Native peoples are embedded in the larger society which demands certain knowledge of the dominant culture in order to function. Schools primarily teach from a Euro-American standpoint, and media and government promote the majority status. Therefore, American Indian people typically have a firm grasp on Anglo history, perspectives, and culture. Unfortunately, the reverse is not often the case. Although roughly 8-12% of South Dakota's population is American Indian, they are an often misunderstood and underrepresented minority. Native students themselves may be unaware of some of the critical history and issues facing the larger American Indian population. Students of all ethnicities could benefit from an improved understanding of American Indian history and culture.

In brief, this pretest touches upon very basic critical concepts in American Indian Studies with specific emphasis on Lakota culture. This lesson plan can also be tailored to encompass the

foundation material for other courses, such as a government, language, or literature class. Answers and/or discussion points for each question in this pretest are outlined below.

- Why are you taking this class?
Many students will take a course because it is a requirement for their degree. Others may think of it as an easy A, or enroll because their friend is taking or has taken the class. Some are curious about American Indian Studies, and some are passionate. Hopefully each student will answer honestly about why they are in the course, which provides a better understanding for the professor and can improve the approach used to best reach the students. Instructors should also touch upon who they are, their background and qualifications, and why they are teaching the course. See Cunnion, A. (2005).
- List any legislation, laws, acts, and/or court cases impacting American Indian people:
Obviously there are nearly infinite answers to this question, beginning with the papal bulls preceding the Doctrine of Discovery, and continuing on through the immigration legislation in Arizona today. Most students should be able to answer with some of the following: the Dawes General Allotment Act, the Doctrine of Discovery, the Marshall trilogy (*Johnson v. McIntosh*, *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*, and *Worcester v. Georgia*), the Northwest Ordinance, the Louisiana Purchase, the Indian Removal Act, the Major Crimes Act, the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, the Indian Child Welfare Act, Public Law 280, etc. It should be emphasized that decisions about indigenous people have been made by foreign powers for centuries, and that since the ‘discovery’ of the New World, all policy decisions, laws, acts, and legal proceedings of the European nations involved, and later the U.S., have had an impact on American Indians. The instructor can choose which events to emphasize within the semester and focus on those in the survey review. See Getches, D. H., Wilkinson, C. F., & Williams, R. A. (2004) and Canby, W. C. (2009).
- Describe allotment:
This question should highlight what students know about a critical piece of U.S. history. The Dawes General Allotment Act of 1887 was designed to parcel out Indian lands to individuals. The idea was to break up the communal ownership of the tribes and turn Natives into farmers. The legislation impacted each reservation at different times and in different manners. Discussion of the amount and placement of allotments, the dislocation of community groups, coercion by the U.S. government, the sale of ‘excess’ lands, and the concept of land being held in trust by the government, are all crucial to the discussion of allotment. Other questions to present to the class include: Was the land ‘given’ to the Native peoples or merely not taken? What is the importance of place to Lakota people and other Native Americans? Was this legislation designed to help or hurt the tribes? Was allotment successful in its goals? What are the impacts of allotment on the reservations and tribes today? The concept of land ownership is a key difference between majority society and traditional Lakota and American Indian societies that should be explored in depth. See Deloria, V., Jr. (1999), Utter, J. (2001) and Canby, W. C. (2009).
- What is education?

Any answer here is probably correct: a process of learning, how society perpetuates itself, etc. The instructor can then share some opinions on what education is, and how it is achieved.

- Is there a difference between education and schooling? The idea here is to differentiate between the concept of education and the formal school setting. Discussion can include quotes about traditional Lakota education, through family and play, and Euro-American schooling. This is also a way to introduce the concept of boarding schools and the forced assimilation of American Indian children in the early 20th century. What were the impacts? Does schooling have to be different from informal education? How do children best learn what they need? What is taught and does it contain a bias? Is there a bias to this class? See Utter, J. (2001).
- What percent of people in the U.S. identify as American Indian?
According to the 2000 Census, approximately 1% of the U.S. population identifies as American Indian or Alaska Native. The instructor should note that this is self-reporting, and perhaps touch on the decimation of Native peoples, and recent resurgence. What makes a person American Indian? What is blood quantum? What accounts for differences in self-reporting throughout the years? Is a minority as important as the majority in U.S. society? Even the most quantitative measures can be skewed, and must be interpreted. The emphasis here should be that there are rarely 'hard facts' in American Indian Studies, and so students must be careful and attentive to what is available. See <http://www.census.gov>.
 - In South Dakota? According to the 2000 Census, approximately 8.5% of the U.S. population identifies as American Indian or Alaska Native. There is reason to believe this number is noticeably underestimated. South Dakota contains a large American Indian population, and vast tracts of tribal lands. Does this number seem accurate? Are American Indian issues discussed at large in media and government? A better understanding of students' communities and immediate areas can help put larger trends in perspective. See <http://www.census.gov>.
- Who are the "Sioux?"
The Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota peoples of South Dakota and the Great Plains region are grouped together under the term "Sioux." The *Oceti Sakowin* would be a more accurate and appropriate term for these people, since the origin of the word "Sioux" is foreign. Like most American Indian peoples, members of this nation refer to themselves traditionally as simply the People. Some tribes bear the title "Sioux," while others have adopted the word *Oyate*. Some Native people find the word "Sioux" offensive or misinformed, and most prefer to be introduced themselves more specifically by tribe, or at least as Lakota, Dakota, or Nakota. See <http://1onewolf.com/lakota/society6.htm>, http://www.college.cengage.com/history/readerscomp/naind/html/na_036100_sioux.htm, and Utter, J. (2001).

List the nine South Dakota reservations and circle those in which Lakota bands are primarily located:

1. Yankton
2. Flandreau

6. Pine Ridge

- 3. Lake Traverse
- 4. Crow Creek
- 5. Lower Brule

- 7. Rosebud
- 8. Cheyenne River
- 9. Standing Rock

Reservation	Yankton	Flandreau	Lake Traverse	Crow Creek	Lower Brule	Pine Ridge	Rosebud	Cheyenne River	Standing Rock
Division/Dialect	Nakota	Dakota	Dakota	Dakota	Lakota	Lakota	Lakota	Lakota	Lakota
Area	Middle	East	East	East & Middle	West	West	West	West	West
Council Fire	Ihanktonwan	Mdewakantowan & Wahpekute	Sisitonwan & Wahpetonwan	Mdewakantowan & Ihanktonwan	Titon-wan	Titon-wan	Titon-wan	Titon-wan	Titon-wan
Meaning	Dwelling at the End	Dwelling at Spirit Lake & Leaf Shooters	Dwelling among the Swamps & Dwelling among the Leaves	Dwelling at Spirit Lake & Dwelling at the End	Dwelling on the Plains	Dwelling on the Plains	Dwelling on the Plains	Dwelling on the Plains	Dwelling on the Plains
Band(s)				Sicangu	Oglala	Sicangu	Owohe nupa, Mnikoju, Itazipa cola, Siha sapa		Hunkpapa, Sicasapa
Meaning					Thighs scorched	Cast out own	Thighs Scorched		
Others	Ihanktonwana-Little End	Wahpetonwan-Dwelling among the leaves	Wahpekute-Leaf Shooters						Ihanktonwana-Little End
Location	Charles Mix County	Moody County	Roberts, Marshall, Day, Grant & Codington counties in SD, Sargent & Richland counties in ND	Buffalo, Hughes & Hyde counties	Lyman & Stanley counties	Shannon & Jackson counties	Todd County	Dewey & Ziebach counties	Corson County in SD & Sioux County in ND

See <http://www.state.sd.us/oia/tribes.asp>.

- Where did the Lakota people come from?

The current theory on where all Native peoples of the Americas came from is Asia. The Bering Strait was exposed during the last Ice Age, and hunter gatherers migrated across following the herds of animals. There is also some discussion of the possibility of boats or rafts being used. There is considerable debate about precisely when the first humans arrived in the Americas. These theories and possibilities are important to present to the class. Equally important are the origin stories of American Indian tribes themselves. Lakotas believe that their ancestors emerged from a world beneath the earth, possible through Wind Cave in the Black Hills. Discussion of the sacredness of the Black Hills is critical to understanding Lakota culture and history. Many American Indian people insist that they have always been here. A discussion on origin myths as stories, explanations, religious beliefs, and possible truths is critical. Some students may believe in intelligent design and others in evolution, but neither *theory* can be definitively proven. It is important that students understand that it is insulting to some Native peoples to suggest that they migrated from Asia. Cultural sensitivity is very important. See Walker, J.R. (1917), pp. 181-182 and Utter, J. (2001).

- Define the following:

- *Oceti Sakowin*–Seven Council Fires–The seven bands of the Great Sioux Nation. These include the... See Blunt Horn, J. (1982) and Herman, A. & Walker, J. R. (1982).
 - *Oyate*–Nation or people–Instead of calling themselves a tribe or Sioux, many Lakotas think of themselves as part of the *Oyate*. For example the official name for the ‘tribe’ at the Lake Traverse reservation is the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate. See <http://1onewolf.com/lakota/society6.htm> (2010).
 - *Tiyospaye*–An extended family, typically the basis of a camp. See <http://1onewolf.com/lakota/society6.htm> (2010).
 - *Wacipi*–Commonly called a Powwow, is a social event where Native people gather to dance. This is not a major religious event, but there are ceremonial aspects to a *wacipi*. Most students from South Dakota will be familiar with Powwows, although these gatherings are found throughout the U.S. The concept has been adopted by many tribes who did not originally have such events. The word Powwow is not a Siouan word, but has been adopted into the English vocabulary. *Wacipi* translates into ‘they dance.’ Some gatherings are traditional, meaning no prizes are given away for competitive dancing, while others provide large cash awards in the various styles of dance. Drum groups are a key part of the Powwow, and may compete at some events, but are generally paid for their participation. Food is provided to guests, and there are often honorings for people in the community. See <http://1onewolf.com/lakota/society6.htm> (2010).
- What is the principle social idea which organizes Lakota life?
Kinship is the basis of Lakota society. Life is organized around an intricate system of family relationships. It is important to emphasize both the similarities and differences between the Lakota kinship system and Western kinship schemes. Students may also have varied ideas about what constitutes a family, who their family is, and so on. See Deloria, E. (1983), Maynard, E. & Twiss, G. (1970), and Deloria, V., Jr. (1999).
 - What are the core values of Lakota society?
Lists of the core values of Lakota society are numerous and diverse. However, there are several basic values that most authorities agree on. These include Generosity (*Wacantognaka*), Courage (*Woohitika*), and Wisdom (*Woksape*) among others. See Malan, V. D. and Jesser, C. J. (1959) and http://kalloch.org/lakota__four_values.htm.
 - Name the seven major Lakota religious ceremonies:
 1. *Ini(kaga)pi*- Sweat Lodge purification.
 2. *(Wa)Nagi yuhapi*- Keeping of the spirit.
 3. *Tapa wankayeyapi*- Throwing the ball.
 4. *Hanbleceya*- Vision quest.
 5. *Wiwanyang wacipi*- Sun dance.
 6. *Isnati(pi)*- Girl’s puberty.
 7. *Hunka(pi)*- Making relatives.

See Black Elk, N. (1980), Looking Horse, A. (1987), and <http://1onewolf.com/lakota/society6.htm>.
 - What is the significance of the pipe?

This topic requires deep discussion and there are numerous sources on the spiritual significance of the pipe and its origins.

See Finger (1991) and Lone Man (1972).

- A majority of Lakota people today practice what religion?
Although students may think that the majority of Lakota or American Indian people in general practice their traditional religion, this is not the case. Most Lakotas are affiliated with some Christian denomination: Catholic, Episcopal, etc. Many religious organizations sought to convert American Indians at the time of contact and throughout history. In order to assimilate American Indians into American society the U.S. government hired religious groups to set up schools and churches on the reservation. Boarding schools were often run by priests and religious officials, such as the schools at Holy Rosary and St. Francis. Many people struggle with the history of conflict between traditional and Christian religions. Although it may seem unlikely that Native peoples would stay faithful to a belief that sought to erase their traditional religion and was used as a tool of persecution, this is not the case. Some Lakotas are traditional, some are Christian, some are a mix of the two, and some are neither. Religion is an important part of society, and cannot be overlooked in a course on Lakota history and culture. It is important that students keep an open mind to the information presented on the matter, and the possibilities of each belief system. See Utter, J. (2001).
- What are some of the social issues facing American Indian people today?
Poverty, disease, crime, discrimination, and many other social ills are huge problems on reservations, and for American Indian people as a whole. Although students may be aware of these issues, statistics on incarceration rates, suicide rates, diabetes, heart disease, and poverty should be used to highlight the severity of the situation. The issues of treaty rights, sovereignty, allotment, legal jurisdiction, and blood quantum should be discussed. There are many historic factors that impede tribes and tribal peoples from attaining a standard of living on par with the average non-Indian American. The Massacre at Wounded Knee, and the AIM occupation of Wounded Knee are good segues into the issue of historical trauma, and are critical to American Indian history. Questions to students on their thoughts on why these problems exist in Native communities should help reveal any biases or misinformation students may have on these issues. See Champagne, D. (1999), Russell, G. (2004), <http://1onewolf.com/lakota/society6.htm>, and Utter, J. (2001).
- Name one thing you would like to learn more about in this class:
Ideally, the answers to this question can be incorporated into the course, and at the end of the semester students will have gained knowledge about their interests. Even the most jaded student probably has something they are curious about in regards to American Indians or Lakota people.

Student Activities

1. The first day of class in most universities is focused on the syllabus for that course. While the syllabus is an important reference for grading scales, schedules, tests, and required readings, this pretest can serve as perhaps a more comprehensive and less passive introduction to course topics.

After taking 5 minutes to establish that the correct students are in the correct room for the correct class, the instructor can hand out the pretest. Instructions are printed at the top, and the survey should be completed within 15 minutes and handed back. At this time, the instructor should initiate a class discussion to answer the questions which will likely take the remainder of the class time. Students may volunteer answers, or the instructor can briefly touch on the topic. Some questions require subjective answers, while others may seem objective and yet are open to interpretation. The goal of this entire exercise is to get students thinking about the class, their motivations and opinions, and differing perspectives on course topics.

- This creative approach to what is popularly termed ‘Syllabus Day’ helps to set the tone for the semester. Although a syllabus will probably still be handed out at the end of the day, students will have an opportunity to think about the general tone and context of the course before focusing on the mechanics. Class discussion and a more personal approach to education are in keeping with traditional Lakota views on learning. The instructor can review student responses at their leisure in order to tailor the class to fit students’ knowledge level and needs. At the end of the semester these pretests should be returned to the students so they can gauge their progress. A posttest, either identical to the pretest, or covering more specific topics, can also be administered for this purpose. Hopefully, students can feel responsible for their own education through this process.

Resources

- Students will only need a copy of the pretest and a writing utensil (which hopefully they have brought with them to class). The instructor could put together a short PowerPoint presentation outlining the answers or varying aspects of each question to show as the class walks through the survey.

Assessment

1. The instructor can review student responses at their leisure in order to tailor the class to fit students’ knowledge levels and needs. At the end of the semester, these pretests should be returned to the students so they can gauge their progress. A posttest, either identical to the pretest, or covering more specific topics can also be administered for this purpose. Hopefully, students can feel responsible for their own education through this process.

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What We Know & What We Will Learn

This survey is designed to identify major concepts we will be learning about in class, and to assess your basic knowledge of these ideas. This is not a graded assignment. These surveys will be returned at the end of the semester for your use in evaluating what you've learned in this class. Please print your name in the space indicated. The instructor and you will be the only people to see your survey so please answer thoughtfully and honestly.

Why are you taking this class?

List any legislation, laws, acts, and/or court cases impacting American Indian people:

Describe allotment:

What is education?

Is there a difference between education and schooling?

What percent of people in the U.S. identify as American Indian?

In South Dakota?

Who are the "Sioux"?

List the nine South Dakota reservations and circle those in which Lakota bands are located:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

Where did the Lakota come from?

Define the following:

Oceti Sakowin-

Oyate-

Tiyospaye-

Wacipi-

What is the principle social idea which organizes Lakota life?

What are the core values of Lakota society?

Name the seven major Lakota religious ceremonies:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

What is the significance of the pipe?

A majority of Lakota people today practice what religion?

What are some of the social issues facing American Indian people today?

Name one thing you would like to learn more about in this class: