Accepting Responsibility.

Grade Level
Middle School, 7th grade.

Theme
Reciprocal responsibility.

Goal
Students will understand the concept of reciprocal responsibility within the framework of governance utilizing the Lakota model of organization.

Objectives
Students will be able to
1. Define basic vocabulary of the unit: reciprocal, responsibility, governance, etc.
2. Define and apply Lakota terms: tunwan, oyate, tiyospe, wicoti, opeya.
3. Identify their responsibilities within the greater communities of the classroom, the middle school, the school as a whole, and their town, and the responsibilities of each of those entities to the other.

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.
7.R.1.2 Students can infer how word choice affects meaning.
Writing: 7.W.1.3 Students can select language and style for writing.
7.W.1.4 Students can summarize and paraphrase information from references to compose text.
Listening, Viewing, Speaking:
7.LVS.1.3 Students can create organized descriptive, informative, and narrative presentations.

Cultural Concept
The concept of governance with reciprocal responsibility is central to traditional Lakota philosophy.

Cultural Background
According to Royal Hassrick, “The firm base upon which the Sioux’s rather fluid governmental structure rested was the family hunting group or tiyospe.” (p. 11) This extended family arrangement is governed by rules of kinship, rules based on reciprocal responsibility. This idea of responsibility extends from the tunwan (nation) at center outward to the oyate (community) to the tiyospe (extended family group) to the wicoti (camp) to the tiwahe (household) and, at the outermost edge of this multi group structure, the opeya (one belonging to a group). The phrase mitakuye oyasin (all my relatives) embodies the belief that all living entities are interrelated and have a responsibility one to the other. This responsibility is not confined to human relationships but extends to plants.
and animals, as well. Knowing the kinship terms, relationships, and expectations “was important to being a good Dakota.”

If one has time to read only one work dealing with the idea of Lakota kinship, The Dakota Way of Life by Ella Deloria is highly recommended. Ella Deloria came from a Dakota family, spoke her native language, followed Dakota philosophy but also had a B.S. degree in education from Columbia University in New York. She worked closely with Dr. Franz Boaz, famous anthropologist, who greatly influenced her continuing work on kinship, tribal structure, and the roles of women in Native society.

Student Activities
1. Students will respond to a prompt and discuss traditions and rituals.
2. Students will listen to a reading of the short story “The Medicine Bag” by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve.
3. Within a group of four, students will discuss and respond to the questions within the Making Meanings section of their text.
4. Students will participate in a teacher-led discussion of responsibility within the story.
5. Teacher will introduce basic terms and vocabulary of reciprocal responsibility and Lakota social groupings and lead student discussion of definitions. Students will take notes. (See specific definitions/correlations at end of this lesson plan.)
6. Within their groups students will discuss the reciprocal responsibilities.
7. Each group will create a graphic representation of their conclusions and present these to the class.
8. Students will participate in a teacher-led discussion to solidify and specify those responsibilities that the majority see as most important.
9. Each group will then create a finalized graphic showing the reciprocal responsibility of each social grouping.
10. These can then lead to a discussion of any particular issue of taking responsibility (i.e. doing well on standardized tests for the good of the group, etc.)

Resources
Poster board, markers, and rulers.

Assessment
Self-assessment, group evaluation, oral presentations, student notes, and graphic representations.

References


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**Additional Information**
Definitions/ Graphics
Knowing that there are differing retellings of the information available, for the purposes of this lesson the following definitions and correlations will be used:

- **Tunwan** = nation
- **Oyate** = community
- **Tiyospe** = extended family
- **Wicoti** = camp
- **Tiwahe** = household
- **Opeya** = one belonging to a group

- United States
- New Underwood
- New Underwood School
- 7th Grade
- English Class
- Individuals

It is important to note that in traditional Lakota society the **nation** is at the heart of the organizational structure. In Western thought the individual is at the center of the organizational structure. This is a difficult concept for non-Lakotas to keep in mind. Western thought equates with ME while Lakota thought equates with WE.