



South Carolina

Full STEAM Ahead:

Connecting Library of Congress Primary Sources and Graphic Novels

Lesson Plan Template

Author(s):

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Grade Level(s):

Upper Elementary/Middle School

Subject:

History/Social Studies/Library

Length of Class:

Multiple classes for intro, research, build, coding, and parade.



Image Citation:

Indigenous portrait. "modern day powwow indigenous people celebration culture native american indian usa multiple people family women men children", MagicSchool.ai and

9/16/2025,
<https://app.magicschool.ai/tools/image-generator?slug=image-generator&thread=31961827>

Lesson Title:	Celebration of Indigenous Cultures
Overview:	Kids are familiar with the Balloon Parade (Macy's Thanksgiving Parade), but adjusting the lens to be a celebration of Indigenous cultures in order to reclaim the season.
Learning Objective:	<p>Students will utilize resources to learn about various Indigenous people in North America. Students will create a totem pole that includes artifacts representing their research findings about the Catawba, Cherokee, and Yemassee tribes. The totem pole will be presented to the class, showcasing both collective and individual aspects of the cultures studied.</p> <p>Students will take their new knowledge of many proud American Indian nations and share important traditions, celebrations, and cultural contributions in a "balloon parade" navigated down the hallways with the aid of robots.</p>
Standards:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Social Studies Standards: Understanding historical events and their impact on present-day society; analyzing cultural diversity.● Social Studies Standards (SC): Students will be able to research and describe the complex societies of American Indian cultures, focusing on Eastern Woodlands tribes, and celebrate their contributions to U.S. life while dispelling common myths.● Common Core Standards for Reading and Writing: Researching information, presenting findings, and using evidence to support claims.● Art Standards: Creating visual art that represents cultural identities and understanding the role of art in communication.
Essential Question:	The essential question should be student-friendly and academic. It should be inquiry-based and connected to standards and learning objectives.
Supporting Question(s):	What do we know about Thanksgiving? What have we learned in our research about Indigenous peoples, the treatment they received and the establishment of this holiday?

	<p>Major points to be made..</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Eastern Woodlands tribes, such as the Catawba, Cherokee, and Yemassee, have rich histories and cultures that are still present today. • Common myths about American Indians, including misconceptions about their existence and culture, will be addressed and dispelled. • Contributions of American Indians to U.S. life, such as agricultural practices, governance, and cultural traditions, will be highlighted. • Understanding the significance of artifacts and how they represent cultural identity and heritage. • The importance of recognizing American Indians as active members of society, not just historical figures.
Digital Primary and Secondary Sources:	See links and slide deck
Required Classroom Materials:	Computer to read, research and create Supplies to build totem poles Dash robots (Wonderworkshop)
Classroom Environment:	Promethean boards, shared devices, room to work on tables as well as materials to construct with.
Differentiation and Adaptations:	Snap and Read could be used to read text on screen. Various databases have an audio feature. Time and builds could be extended to groups as needed. Partner work could alleviate some burden on children allowing for all to contribute.

Lesson Sequence/Procedures	
Estimated Time Needed	Detailed Description of Teaching and Learning
Layin the ground work ton level background knowledge Class observations	<p>Display image of painting to students https://www.arthistoryproject.com/artists/jennie-augusta-brownscombe/the-first-thanksgiving-at-plymouth-1914/</p> <p>Invite individual reflection, notations in notebook about their observations</p>

	<p>Turn and talk to shoulder partners to encourage more observations Share out with the class Invite students to research the author Jennie Augusta Brownscombe Site 1 Site 2 Site 3 Ask students to return to the painting and make further observations after learning about the artist.</p>
Class reading	<p>Read pages 150-163 of History Smashers: The Mayflower (by Kate Messner) Students will annotate in Kami if online or with post its on class print copies. Students will also write a gist of what was discovered in the reading.</p>
Introduction	<p>Begin with a thought-provoking question: "What do you know about American Indians today?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Show a short video clip or images of modern Native American life to engage students. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKUin2Zaug8 ● Illustrate that the Catawba Nation is alive and well. Indigenous Americans are not a thing of the past. https://www.catawba.com/about-the-nation ● Illustrate how there a long lasting effect on American culture. This link shows how Catawba mapped and how it was adopted in the creation of the DC Metro map. (map, Primary Source) https://blogs.loc.gov/maps/2016/11/celebrating-native-american-cartography-the-catawba-deerskin-map/ ● Discuss students' initial thoughts and feelings about the video, encouraging them to share any prior knowledge or misconceptions. <p>Optional read aloud: Sarah Gives Thanks: How Thanksgiving Became a National Holiday by Mike Allegra</p> <p>SLIDE DECK https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1N-oegFFnjlopMfpAkB540eFn9e2FzbqZxRcL67c5FM/edit?usp=sharing</p> <p>MakerMat</p>

	<p>https://docs.google.com/drawings/d/1mv_NA6oO5cKrVBPTChqhuvvRJe0dvABNnES95xulBqc/edit?usp=sharing</p> <p>Pathfinder (linked in makermat)</p> <p>https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OPyVKGHvr3qknU4LNfbvEovKwmwIApBSHdJvqyclH7Y/edit?usp=sharing</p> <p>Article (linked in makermat)</p> <p>https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hZw0aWvhSS6k8QQx_aTjg7MCJgwXzZh2/copy</p>
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide students into small groups to research specific tribes (Catawba, Cherokee, Yemassee). • Assign each group to find information about their tribe's history, culture, and contributions. • Scaffold questioning by starting with basic facts (e.g., "What is the tribe known for?") and moving to deeper analysis (e.g., "How did their culture influence modern society?"). • Monitor groups by circulating and offering support, ensuring all students are engaged and contributing. • Utilizing the makermat will give students structure, graphic organizer
Engineering/Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will create individual totem poles using craft materials, incorporating at least three artifacts that represent their research. • Each artifact must have a brief description explaining its significance and connection to the tribe. • Students will be expected to present their totem poles to the class, explaining their choices and what they learned.
Celebration of Learning	Create QR codes to slide decks of gathered information to be displayed for other classes to read further as the balloon parade goes down the hallway.

Assessments:	Touchpoints for research are multiple.
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	<p>Graphic organizer, notes, facts gathered, citations to ensure proper usage of databases/credible sources.</p> <p>Art/engineering of "totem" poles are an opportunity to share learning.</p> <p>Coding shows algorithmic thinking and collaboration with partners.</p>
Learning Extensions:	<p>Other cultures in the Americas could be included and celebrated.</p> <p>Further research on Aztecs, Mayans, etc.</p>