

LESSON PLAN - SURVIVAL OF NATIVE AMERICAN SPIRITUALITY

EALRS: (Reading 1) The student understands and uses different skills and strategies to read.(Reading 2) The student understands the meaning of what is read.

GRADE LEVEL: Secondary

BASIC CONCEPTS: Native American spirituality/metaphysics

ORGANIZING GENERALIZATION: In an effort to comprehend the power of Native American spirituality, we must first understand the context of the following categories; the Medicine Wheel, symbols, growth & change, identity, and values.

CULTURE AREA: United States

TIME PERIOD: Pre-historic - contemporary

BACKGROUND: The Medicine Wheel - This is an ancient symbol used by almost all the Native people of North and South America. There are many different ways that this basic concept is expressed: the four grandfather, the four winds, the four cardinal directions, and many other relationships that can be expressed in sets of four. Just like a mirror can be used to see things not normally visible (e.g. behind us or around a corner), the medicine wheel can be used to help us see or understand things we can't quite see or understand because they are ideas and not physical objects. **Symbols** - Symbols express and represent meaning. Meaning helps provide purpose and understanding in the lives of human beings. Indeed to live without symbols is to experience existence far short of its full meaning. Ways of expressing and representing meaning include the symbol systems of mathematics, spoken and written language and the arts. **Growth & Change** - All human beings have the capacity to grow and change. The four aspects of our nature (the physical, the mental, the emotional, & the spiritual) can be developed when we have a vision of what is possible and when we use our volition to change our actions and our attitudes so that they will be closer to our vision of a happy, healthy human being. **Identity** - a person's identity consists of : **Body Awareness**: how you experience your physical presence, **Self-Concept**: what you think about yourself and your potential, **Self-Esteem**: how you feel about yourself and your ability to grow and change, and **Self-Determination**: your ability to use your volition (will) to actualize your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual potentialities. **Values** - Values are the ways human beings pattern and use their energy. If there is not a balance between our values concerning ourselves and our values concerning others, we cannot continue to develop our true potential as human beings. Indeed, if there is an imbalance, individuals and whole communities suffer and die.

OBJECTIVES:

Knowledge:

Students will: (Reading 1.2) build vocabulary through reading, (Reading 2.1) comprehend important ideas and details.

Skills:

Students will: read the accompanying materials, and construct their own personal medicine wheel with their own personal attributes they have self-identified.

Values:

Students will: examine and increase vocabularies relevant to different contexts, cultures, and communities, and use prior knowledge of issues, characters, events, and information to examine texts and extend understanding.

ACTIVITIES: Students should understand the content of the material under Background in this lesson, read *The Story of the Sacred Tree & The Sacred Circle*, acquaint themselves with the materials on creating their own medicine wheel and using the accompanying lists and blank medicine wheel (circles) should then construct their own personal medicine wheel according to their own perceived attributes.

EXTENSIONS: Examining the lists of *The Gifts of the Four Directions*, students can identify the attributes they most need to work upon.

EVALUATION: It is extremely important that students be given time to consider all of the implications of this lesson. There are many insights to be had with this type of material. Many applications can be made, for students and teachers, to make them more aware of their own spirituality and values.

MATERIALS/ RESOURCES: materials taken from *The Sacred Tree: Reflections on Native American Spirituality* - Four World Development Project and available from OSPI *Breaking the Sacred Circle* - by Willard Bill