

**Title:** Native American Ingenuity: A Report

**Objective:** Share how Native Americans use natural materials in a report form

**Time:** Over a period of several days

**Materials Needed:** Sources of information on MN Native Americans, paper/journal, pencil, crayons or colored pencils

**Interdisciplinary Lesson**

**Theme: Stewardship**

Topic: Native American uses for natural items

Suggested Grade Level: 2-5

Indoors or Outdoors: Indoors

**Directions:**

1. Have students gather information about MN Native American tribes (Ojibwe or Dakota).
2. Students select one tribe and use reference materials to learn about that tribe.
3. Write a report about the natural items Native Americans used for shelter, clothing, tools, food, medicine, protection, art, and games/toys. (Depending on grade level, decide the number of categories your students will research.)
4. Reports should include at least two drawings.
5. Share information with classmates.

**Variation:** Teachers may give students a choice of formats other than a written report such as a mural, collage, poster, diorama, PowerPoint, oral presentation, etc.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What did you find as the most interesting or surprising use of natural materials by the Ojibwe or Dakota people?
2. How are Native American uses of nature evident in our community/state/region? Explain.
3. Do you ever benefit from Native American ingenuity? How? (syrup on pancakes, canoe, corn bread, aspirin from willow)

## **Science and Engineering Practices:**

8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information.

## **Crosscutting Concepts:**

6. Structure and function.

## **Disciplinary Core Ideas:**

Engineering, Technology, and the Applications of Science: ETS 2: Links among Engineering, Technology, Science and Society.

## **Background Information:**

- In Minnesota there are 11 sovereign American Indian nations, 7 Ojibwe (Chippewa, Anishinaabe) and 4 Dakota (Sioux).
- Native cultures survived by cooperating and using their natural surroundings. They looked to nature for ideas. Today, Minnesotans still live that way. (Burs inspired Velcro®, video games help surgeons have quick reflexes and use high tech medical equipment).

## **Additional Resources:**

- *A Native American Thought of It- Amazing Inventions and Innovations* by Rocky Landon
- *A Kid's Guide to Native American History - More than 50 Activities* by Yvonne Wakim Dennis
- *Indian Handcrafts: How to craft dozens of practical objects using traditional Indian techniques* by C. Keith Wilbur

## **Extension:**

Native Americans use games to teach their children safety, strength, agility, and sportsmanship. The games are fun and they serve a purpose. After students research Native American games using natural items (Butterfly Hide and Seek, Moccasin Game, Lacrosse are examples), have them create their own game using items from nature.

## **Correlates with:**

Greeting - Boozhoo (p. 4)

Activity - Designing Items from Natural Materials (p. 44)