

**WISDOM OF THE ELDERS RADIO: SERIES 3, PROGRAM 8
HONORING THE CHINOOK NATIONS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL * SOCIAL STUDIES**

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SUBJECT AREAS

SKILLS

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

Key Points

- Indians lived in Oregon before written records. They had no concept of land ownership, but regarded the earth as a gift to all.
- Early European-American visitors believed in the “right of discovery”; if land did not appear to be occupied by other white people, they considered it to be open for grabs and used various methods to “mark” their territory (e.g. maps, surveys, flags, medallions, carvings on trees, certificates, treaties, deeds). At the mouth of the Columbia, Lewis and Clark carved their names and other information into trees to identify their accomplishment. Likewise, they posted a notice at Fort Clatsop when they left and also gave a copy to a Clatsop Indian chief to give to the next seafaring captain arriving at the mouth of the Columbia.
- Indians lived a subsistence way of life (hunting, fishing, gathering) that met economic and spiritual (religious) needs. Oregon Country was rich in natural resources, particularly along the Columbia River and west of the Cascades, so food, fuel and fiber were not a problem most of the year. Trade patterns were very sophisticated; Celilo Falls and The Dalles region would be the equivalent to one of today’s super-malls with smaller trade centers networked regionally. The Chinook territory from The Dalles to the mouth of the Columbia was a major highway with Chinook “freighters” (60 ft. canoes) hauling large loads of products and people. Downstream villages would trade to villages near Sauvie Island and Portland for a favorite water-growing staple called wapato, a starchy vegetable growing in shallow lakes and along streams.
- When early traders, explorers and settlers came, tribes began to lose their traditional ways of life. New diseases (including smallpox, alcoholism and diabetes) had a terrible impact on families and communities in the following centuries.
- Missionaries came and tried to convert the native people to new religious faiths (e.g. the Whitman Mission and Roman Catholic priests); some of these

new spiritual practices did have an influence, and even today there are combinations of spiritual practices.

- Not all changes were bad: Euro-Americans brought all kinds of new materials and technologies that would increase the quality of life.
- Marriages between members of one tribe or race and another tribe brought changes as well as exchanges of customs and traditions. This continues today. One effect is that many Indian people no longer “look” Indian.
- Today there are very few traditional speakers of original tribal languages in the Pacific Northwest. Chinook Wawa is a generic language that borrowed from tribes as well as European-American traders. Tony Johnson, featured in the *Artist's Circle* segment of the WOTE program, is a recognized teacher of Chinook Wawa and has reported growing success in passing this language along to younger generations.
- Lewis and Clark also observed that women and men in lower Columbia River villages had very defined roles in domestic and economic life. Women may have enjoyed more equality and economic power in Columbia River tribal communities than their Euro-American contemporaries enjoyed.

Chinook Tribe Background

The Chinook Indian Tribe has a long and multi-faceted history. Written records about the Chinook Tribe first came to public attention after seafarers along the Pacific Coast described the people who lived near the mouth of the Columbia River. Some of the best and most extensive documentation about the Chinook Indians came from Lewis and Clark's extended stay in the fall, winter and spring months of 1805-1806. Long before Europeans set foot on the North American continent, the Chinook people heavily populated the Columbia River valley from the Pacific Ocean to the Gorge. The Pacific Coast, Columbia River and the moderate climate west of the Cascades guaranteed abundant natural resources which made life easier for Chinookan peoples than the harsher climates and terrain of the mountains, plateaus and plains to the east.

Headquartered in the Washington state city of Chinook along the lower Columbia River estuary, the Chinook Indians still yearn for federal recognition as a distinct recognized tribe. The most recent attempt came in 2001 when President Clinton opened the way. However, a new administration reversed that decision. Despite the lack of official recognition, the tribe continues to function as a sovereign nation, and is governed by a 9-member tribal council. During the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, greater attention was focused on the plight of the Chinook Tribe because of their relationship to the Corps of Discovery during the winter of 1805-1806.

For backgrounds on tribal council members, go to <http://www.chinooknation.org>. Other valuable sites for Chinook information are <http://www.trailtribes.org> and those of two Northwest repositories: Oregon Historical Society and the Center for the Study of Columbia River History. The tribal office in Chinook coordinates information and activities, sells authentic arts created by tribal members,

maintains a small historical exhibit, and is the place to contact first for any involvement with local schools.

Relationship to the Lewis and Clark Journey.

Lewis and Clark entered ancestral Chinook Indian territory in late October 1805 and departed in late March 1806. From November 1805 through April 1806 Lewis and Clark encountered some of their most memorable experiences with Chinookan villages along the Columbia who shared the Chinook language system and many of the same traditions, particularly the sleek cedar canoes. The Lewis and Clark journal keepers also wrote extensively about language, dress, family practices, shelters, burial practices as well as the rich flora and fauna of the lower Columbia and coast. Teachers would be well advised to read the actual journal entries for the time spent by the Corps of Discovery, particularly during the months at Fort Clatsop (December-March). Here you will find rich documentation of tribal lifeways as observed by these European-Americans. Researchers still utilize this information today.

History of Treaties in Oregon

- The legal rights of Indians are traced back at least to the U.S. Constitution.
- American Indians did not become citizens until 1924, which gave them the right to vote.
- Treaties are legal agreements (promises) between nations. The President has the right to make treaties, which then must be ratified by the U.S. Senate. Treaties of all nine federally-recognized tribes in Oregon were ratified. Several of these treaties date back to the 1850s. The Chinook Tribe's treaty was never ratified.
- Lands left to Indians were generally guaranteed in perpetuity. In Indians' terms, this means "as long as the grass shall grow and the waters run."

Indians made treaties to:

- Reserve portions of their land, creating reservations.
- Maintain the right to decide their own government.
- Maintain the right to use their lands as they choose in order to preserve the land and keep their usual way of life.
- Maintain as a natural entitlement (not a gift) the right to hunt, fish and gather foods and other natural resources in traditional and accustomed places (e.g. fishing for Columbia River salmon, gathering berries, digging roots).
- Identify and define the rights of both nations (the tribe and the U.S. government).
- Deal with non-Indians on an equal basis.
- Establish borders for their nations.
- Be able to trade with other nations.

The United States made treaties to:

- Take land from the Indians (to then give away or sell for settlement).
- Protect certain rights of Indians, many of which they already had, but also to provide services like health and education.
- Keep the peace.
- Encourage trade with Indian nations.
- Set up reservations to keep Indians in one area.
- Set up a trust or management relationship for Indian land. As trustee, the government was to take care of reservation land for tribal use and benefit.
- End warfare.

Following ratification, political and legal decisions began to impact the treaties:

- Because treaties were signed by the federal government and became the Supreme Law of the Land between the nations, the U.S. Courts have more power than opposing state or local laws, though states can pass laws for conservation reasons and tribes are to be the “least restricted.”
- Tribes have their own legal system (laws, police, judges) within reservations, while also conforming to most state and federal laws.
- Some non-Indians believe the treaties are no longer relevant and have outlived their usefulness.
- Most Indians and many non-Indians believe treaties are still fitting the need, particularly for conservation of natural resources (as long as the mountains stand and rivers flow). They often take a long view that decisions regarding the people and the natural environment should consider how life will be impacted seven generations from now.

Overview

This unit provides a brief history of the Chinook Indian Tribe with activities based around the WOTE radio program by the same name. Drawing from appropriate segments of the Wisdom of the Elders radio program, there is one suggested lesson for each area of focus in elementary social studies: civics (quest for tribal recognition and legal framework); geography (locations of specific places such as Willapa Bay in Washington and towns that bear the name of Chinookan tribes today); economics (comparisons of trade then and now, focusing on the rich resources of the Lower Columbia); history (building timelines of Chinook, Oregon and family history); and social analysis (salmon protection). For an update on news about the Chinook Indian tribe, go to <http://www.chinooknation.org>. For graphics that accompany each CD segment, go to <http://www.wisdomoftheelders.org>.

Lesson 1: Change a Law

Lesson 2: Chinook Traders

Lesson 3: Mapping Chinook Country Today

Lesson 4: Two History Timelines
Lesson 5: Salmon Restoration

GUIDING QUESTIONS

PREPARING TO TEACH THIS LESSON

- Each of these elementary-level lessons is keyed to grades 3 and 5 benchmarks (learning objectives) issued by the Oregon State Board of Education. Listen to the entire program on the Chinook, then find the exact segment(s) to play for students that match the selected lesson. You may discover other segments on the CD that will address different benchmarks. We have only provided some suggestions.
- Try to have a high-quality CD player in the classroom so all can hear the segments selected for each activity. Many of the music segments are also ideal for setting the mood for a lesson and as background for the opening of class.
- There are two children's books available addressing the Chinook Tribe: **(Trafzer is one; the other is more recent? What does Tribe recommend?)** which the teacher may provide for related reading activities for students.
- Post a large map showing Oregon and Washington today on the classroom wall. Circle the area extending from The Dalles to the mouth of the Columbia and include Willapa Bay (Hoquiam area) in Washington state and Cannon Beach, Oregon. This is the broad geographic area addressed in the WOTE CD.
- The WOTE website includes fine graphic images that can be used to supplement lessons. For example, pictures of each person whose voice children hear are available for projection on a classroom screen or monitor. The WOTE website also has hotlinks to related websites, such as locations of more information on Chinook canoes. The dugout canoe image featured on the Artists Circle page is not the traditional Chinook canoe, but a replica of the more rapidly constructed clumsy style used by Lewis and Clark (typically roughly-hewn cottonwood logs). A Chinook canoe picture is shown on the ____ segment.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Lesson 1: Change a Law

Standards

CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT

- SS.05.CG.01.01—Know the concept of rule of law.
- SS.05.CG.02.02—Know how laws are made.
- SS.05.CG.04.01—Identify basic rights that are given to citizens of the U.S.

- SS.05.CG.05.01—Identify and give examples of resources that provide information about public issues.
- SS.05.CG.06.01—Identify and give examples of actions citizens can take to influence government policy and decision-making.
- SS.05.CG.07.01—Know how the U.S. makes treaties with other nations, including Indian nations.
- SS.05.CG.07.02—Know how nations demonstrate good will toward other nations in a variety of ways.
- SS.05.CG.08.01—Recognize that governments are organized in different ways.

CD Segments to Play

For this topic, go to *Historical Introduction* and *Elder Wisdom*.

Background

These two Chinook elders describe how many meetings were held as the tribe worked for recognition. Working for a goal takes time. When laws are being made, or treaties being worked out, there must be time for all sides to be heard. Explain to students that although the Chinook people were the first citizens in our region, they did not automatically receive the rights of US citizens as we know them today. In fact, for many years our government tried to make Indians forget their language and customs. Reservations were set aside and tribes of Indians were forced together.

In 1851, the Anson Dart Treaty recognizing the Chinook Tribe was approved by representatives of the Chinook people and the U.S. government at the local level, but was never ratified (approved) by the U.S. Senate as prescribed in the Constitution. Now, over 150 years later, the Chinook Indians are still trying to change something they believe isn't right. Just as in modern-day legislative discussions in Salem or Washington DC, Native ways of doing things involved patient conversations sometimes lasting hours and days.

See more information on treaties at the beginning of this lesson. However, as noted in the *Historical Introduction*, the Chinook Tribe Treaty of 1851 was never ratified by the Senate.

Suggested Strategies

Guiding questions:

- Why are the Chinook Indians not recognized as a tribe by the Federal government, but are recognized at the state level?
- Why does it take so long to achieve recognition?

- What is a new rule in our school that might need to be made? How would we do it?

Activities

1. Listen

Turn to C-SPAN on the classroom TV monitor and let students briefly watch a congressional committee in action and the speeches and discussions that occur on all sides of a question.

2. Get involved

Brainstorm a school problem or rule that students believe needs to be fixed or changed.

- Is this a problem that involves rights for people on both sides of the question? How should those rights be protected?
- How should the class be organized to carry out this objective?
- How do we make sure all voices are heard, not just the loudest or most outspoken students?
- What about the student with limited English?
- What about the student with some disability?
- How do we get others to help?
- How will the request be presented?
- Who will take it to the principal?
- What are the key points to be made?
- What if the answer is no?
- What are the next steps?

When the government rejected their status, how did the Chinook people address this? (they just kept working on it steadily and will never give up)

Secondary-age students are challenged to actually tackle the issue of Chinook Tribe recognition and write letters, conduct petition drives to bring this to the attention of authorities both in the executive and congressional branches. If your students are interested in pursuing this idea, then contact the Chinook Tribe office for guidance.

3. Vocabulary

tribe
treaty ratification
chief

Lesson 2: Chinook Traders

Standards

ECONOMICS

- SS.05.EC.01.01—Know that whenever a choice is made, there is a cost.
- SS.05.EC.02.01—Identify and give examples of consequences of economic choices in terms of trade-off and opportunity cost.
- SS.05.EC.02.02—Understand the difference between “needs” and “wants” and their relationship to economic trade-offs.
- SS.05.EC.03.01—Understand that prices rise and fall depending on supply and demand.
- SS.05.EC.04.01—Recognize that nations interact through trade.
- SS.05.EC.05.01—Distinguish between “barter” and “money” and how they facilitate the exchange of goods.

CD Segments to Play

For this topic, go to *Turtle Island Storytellers* (bartering) and *Artist’s Circle* (role of canoes in trade/transportation to get products to buyers).

Background

For centuries, the Chinook Tribe has had a reputation for being tough traders. They controlled the Columbia River. And they lived in a rich country full of food and other materials (such as fur) that were highly prized by other nations. The climate was moderate, which meant there was time for creating things others wanted (fresh and tanned skins, fresh and processed seafood, canoes, skin and cedar clothing, fine baskets, decorative ornaments, carvings, hunting and fishing equipment, fish oil). They also eagerly sought items from other parts of the Northwest and entire continent: dentalium shells from today’s Vancouver Island (a type of money), obsidian (for making sharp items) from the Cascade Mountain areas, abalone shell from the southern Pacific Coast, buffalo from the Plains, and eventually firearms and “luxuries” from non-Indian peoples (Europeans, Americans, and Asians).

Suggested Strategies

Activities

1. Role play

Set up a bartering activity with students where the only medium of exchange is items they trade with each other. Set a maximum original value so students don’t bring valuable things. Let students trade items from their brown bag lunch (for those who bring sacks from home). Or, invite students to

bring small toys or cards. Set a time (10 minutes) for the bartering to be conducted. After the first round, invite students to discuss what happened and any problems they observed.

- Should there be any rules set up for all to follow or not?
- Was everyone happy with their trade?
- What were the most popular items?
- Did they command a higher price?
- Was this a scarcity item?
- How did that seem to affect the trade values?

Then, see if the group thinks the rules should change. If so, write them down. Now, begin round two and debrief again. Some teachers have had students make trade beads and exchange them. Lewis and Clark reported that the Chinook Indians really wanted blue beads, so make sure there are fewer blue beads available than white or red (other common colors of the time period).

Lesson 3: Mapping Chinook Country Today

Standards

GEOGRAPHY

- SS.05.GE.01.01—Know and use basic map elements to answer geographic questions or display geographic information.
- SS.05.GE.02.01—Use maps and charts to interpret geographic information.
- SS.05.GE.02.02—Use other visual representations to locate, identify and distinguish physical and human features of places and regions.
- SS.05.GE.03.03—Locate, identify and know the significance of major mountains, lakes and land regions of Oregon.
- SS.05.GE.05.01—Understand how physical geography affects the routes, flow and destinations of migration.
- SS.05.GE.05.02—Explain how migrations affect the culture of emigrants and native populations.
- SS.05.GE.06.01—Identify and give examples of positive and negative impacts of population increases or decreases.
- SS.05.GE.07.01—Understand how and why people alter the physical environment.
- SS.05.GE.07.02—Describe how human activity can impact the environment.
- SS.05.GE.08—Understand how human activities are affected by the physical environment.
- SS.05.GE.08.02—Understand how the physical environment presents opportunities for economic and recreational activity.

CD Segments to Play

For this topic, go to *Historical Introduction*, *Turtle Island Storytellers*, and *Artist's Circle*.

Background

Suggested Strategies

Activities

1. Mapping exercise

Prepare an outline map of Oregon and Washington showing lines for rivers. List all the place names mentioned in the above CD segments: Astoria, Chinook (WA), Willapa Bay, Hoquiam, Bay Center, Skamakoawa, Columbia River, Saddle Mountain)

Identify locations of places with Chinook names today, importance of rivers, where Chinook people migrated, effects of geography, why Chinook canoe built way it is, conical hats at the Coast; identify today's locations of places mentioned on the CD: Discuss how geography affects where these villages are located (look for streams/rivers nearby towns; point out where the rapids near Cascade Locks and Celilo slowed down canoe traffic up and down the Columbia and how weather changes from east to west of the Cascades and Coast Range. Man has changed the mouth of the Columbia with jetties.

Lesson 4: Two History Timelines

Standards

HISTORY

- SS.05.HS.01.01—Order events found in historical narratives.
- SS.05.HS.01.02—Calculate time and infer information from timelines.
- SS.05.HS.05.02—Understand the impact of early European exploration on Native Americans and on the land.
- SS.05.HS.06.01—Identify significant people in the history of Oregon from pre-history through the period of the American Revolution.
- SS.05.HS.06.02—Understand the interactions and contributions of the various people and cultures that have lived in or migrated to the area that is now Oregon from pre-history through the period of the American Revolution.

CD Segments to Play

For this topic, go to *Elder Wisdom* and *Historical Introduction*.

Background

Suggested Strategies

Activities

1. Timeline

- Construct parallel charts down hallway or around classroom wall: 1. Grand Ronde Confederation and Oregon History Timeline; 2. My Family Timeline.
- Start each time with 0 (to represent earliest record passed down; for each child's family, start with a question mark representing their earliest ancestors, then put the birth year of the oldest living grandparent. On the family timeline, just show years and a symbol or word representing an event (birth of sister, a family move, date entered kindergarten, when learned to ride bike, first visit to Portland, first visit to ocean, first airplane ride, etc.). Share with a small group.
- Elder woman Landergren describes how baskets she wove incorporated symbols for each grandchild. Ask students to bring from home the following information: names and dates of birth for all their family members they can get. OR dates and places where they and their parents/grandparents lived (determine which of this information may not be appropriate for some students to share, particularly if the parents' immigration status is unclear or if home situation makes this info hard to gather). Option: Student draws a timeline of their own individual history from birth to now based on their memory: mark key events of own choosing (date entered kindergarten, when learned to ride bike, first visit to Portland, first visit to ocean, first airplane ride, etc.) Share with small group.
- For Chinook and Oregon History Timeline, start with "15,000 years ago" and draw a mastodon like the ones found in various parts of Oregon. For Oregon history, include key dates required for your curriculum, but now add important Chinook leaders such as Concomly, Coboway, Selwoots, Ilche mentioned by Chief Snider; Gary Johnson, former Chief (heard on CD); 1792: Robert Gray visits mouth of Columbia, Broughton travels to Portland area and charts Mt Hood and other peaks; Lewis and Clark spend winter of 1805-1806 in Oregon Country; Astor arrives in 1811; Oregon Trail Settlers begin to arrive (1843); Anson Dart Treaty not ratified (1851).

Lesson 5: Salmon Restoration

Standards

SOCIAL SCIENCE ANALYSIS

- SS.05.SA.01—Examine an event, issue, or problem through inquiry and research.
- SS.05.SA.02—Gather, use, and document information from multiple sources.
- SS.05.SA.03—Identify and study two or more points of view of an event, issue, or problem.
- SS.05.SA.04—Identify characteristics of an event, issue or problem, suggesting possible causes and results.
- SS.05.SA.05—Identify a response or solution and support why it makes sense, using support from research.

CD Segments to Play

For this topic, go to *Elder Wisdom* and *Artist's Circle*.

Background

Suggested Strategies

Activities

1. Discuss

What is something you and your family could hardly live without? Bread? Fruit? Salt? Sugar? Car? Electricity? TV? Weekends and holidays? Being with your grandparents? Going to church? Going shopping?

Now, what if someone took this away from you? How would this make you feel? How would it affect your life? How would you feel toward those persons? Would you try to bring them back?

This happened to the Chinook Indians and other tribes in Oregon and Washington when their major food supply and spiritual support, the salmon, was nearly lost forever. Today, the big salmon runs Indian people relied on, and that were described by Lewis and Clark, are almost gone entirely.

EXTENDING THE LESSON/REFERENCES

1. Extension Activity: Write a class letter to Oregon's Senators asking why the Anson Dart Treaty of 1851 was never ratified. Ask the senators what they have done to help the Chinook Tribe gain Federal recognition.