

*The Michigan Native American Experience:  
Developing Respect beyond Cultural Boundaries and Over Time  
Cooperative/Inquiry Lesson – Webquesting: The Three Fires Tribes of Michigan  
[http://teacherweb.com/WQ/ElementarySchool/Michigan\\_Native\\_Americans/index.html](http://teacherweb.com/WQ/ElementarySchool/Michigan_Native_Americans/index.html)  
Laura Weakland, CURR 304 – Fall 2007, Dr. Lowenstein*



**Content Areas:** Social Studies with Integration of Language Arts and Technology

**Grade Level:** 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> grade

**Purpose**

An important goal of this unit is to help students develop an appreciation and level of respect for the cultural identities of others as a result of becoming educated in the traditions and customs of the Michigan Native American cultural group. By participating in this lesson, students will gather knowledge about the Three Fires Tribes of Michigan and summarize it in a format to share with others. This lesson focuses on the question: “*Are the Native American people a culture of the past?*” This lesson falls about mid-way through the unit, following introductory lessons on human commonalities, diversity as a core democratic value, stereotypes on Native Americans and in general, Michigan’s first people, timelines, and mapping. Lessons following this one will include sovereignty, treaty rights, the oral tradition, and Native American use of the environment. The “*book of knowledge*” and some of the research done during this lesson will be shared with family and friends at the culminating project of the unit, “*Young Author’s Night*” and subsequently, the “*book of knowledge*” will then be given to the library to share with the community.

In this lesson, students will participate as members of an “*investigative research team*” and learn about the concept of “*webquesting*” in a cooperative-inquiry activity on the Michigan Three Fires Tribes (Ojibway, Potawatomi, and Ottawa). The format of this webquest is one of “*compilation*” whereby students will assemble and organize a team “*book of knowledge*” in a form that would be

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useful to the local library. In teams, students will gain practice in making choices, as well as, organizing and summarizing information drawn from a variety of sources and forms. Students will be given the opportunity to determine what they think is important and to formulate their own selections of what to include in the “*book of knowledge*,” as well as, how to format it. The teams will then present their findings to a panel of their teacher and peers. The lesson will be completed over the course of the unit and will require eight to ten class periods to complete.

In addition, students will be developing social skills in the area of cooperative learning as they work in their investigative research teams. Skills they will be developing and working on include: helping, listening, participating, and respecting.

*Notes:*

The webquesting model was developed by Bernie Dodge and Tom March of San Diego State University in 1995. (For more information, go to [www.webquest.org](http://www.webquest.org) and <http://webquest.sdsu.edu/designpatterns/all.htm>).

The “*book of knowledge*” idea was obtained from Tarry Lindquist’s book, [Seeing the Whole Through Social Studies](#).

**Michigan Standards and Benchmarks**

SOC.1.2.LE.2 Students will use narratives and graphic data to compare the past of their local community, the state of Michigan and other parts of the United States with present day life in those places.

SOC.II.1.LE.1 Students will locate and describe cultures and compare the similarities and differences among the roles of women, men and families.

SOC.II.1.LE.2 Students will locate and describe diverse kinds of communities and explain the reasons for their characteristics and locations.

SOC.II.2.LE.4 Students will explain how various people and cultures have adapted to and modified the environment.

*Integrated Subjects (English Language Arts and Technology):*

ELA.1.LE.1 Students will use reading for multiple purposes, such as enjoyment, gathering information, learning new procedures and increasing conceptual understanding.

ELA.2.LE.1 Students will write fluently for multiple purposes to produce compositions, such as stories, reports, letters, plays, and explanations of processes.

ELA.3.LE.1 Students will integrate listening, speaking, viewing, reading and writing skills for multiple purposes and in varied contexts. An example is using all the language arts to prepare and present a unit project on a selected state or country.

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ELA.3.LE.3 Students will read and write fluently, speak confidently, listen and interact appropriately, view knowledgeable, and represent creatively. Examples include exploring ideas in a group, interviewing family and friends, and explaining ideas represented in pictures.

ELA.6.LE.1 Students will practice using elements of effective communication to enhance their relationships in their school and communities.

ELA.11.LE.3 Students will organize and analyze information to draw conclusions and implications based upon their investigation of an issue or problem.

*Michigan Educational Technology & Expectations (Gr 3-5):*

- Students will collaborate with classmates using a variety of technology tools to plan, organize and create a group project.
- Students will use basic telecommunication tools (e.g., Webquests, IM, blogs, chat rooms, web conferencing) for collaborative projects with other students.

### **Objectives**

*Students will:*

- complete a webquest designed to accumulate resources on the Three Fires Tribes of Michigan in the areas of archaeology, government, natural resources, and culture.
- work cooperatively in investigative research teams and practice the social skills of helping, listening, participating and respecting each other.
- compose a letter explaining their positions on why they feel Native Americans are not a culture of the past.
- create a "*book of knowledge*" for the library showcasing what they learned about various aspects of life of the Michigan Native Americans.
- distinguish between what is worth including and what is not in their "*book of knowledge*."
- structure their "*book of knowledge*" in a way that makes sense for the intended audience.
- present their findings to peers, teacher and family and friends.

### **Materials**

Index cards, one per student, red and green markers

Webquest designed on Teacherweb, located at:

[http://teacherweb.com/WQ/ElementarySchool/Michigan\\_Native\\_Americans/index.html](http://teacherweb.com/WQ/ElementarySchool/Michigan_Native_Americans/index.html)

See Appendix F for a hardcopy of the webquest

Computers with access to the Internet and MS Word (students may work in groups or alternate use of the computers if computers are not available for all students)

Student directions sheet

Research graphic organizer

"*Book of knowledge*" supplies – colored paper, lined paper, markers, scissors, glue, etc.

Assessment rubric

Student assessment checklist

Teacher teamwork observation checklist

Student self-assessment

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### **Review/Prior Knowledge**

Students will have some prior knowledge on the customs and traditions of the three main Michigan Native American tribes (Ojibway, Ottawa, Potawatomi) from earlier lessons in the unit. In addition, students will have had prior experience using the Internet, MS Word and Powerpoint and some basic computer skills. They will also have had prior experience working in groups and taking roles within the groups. And lastly, they will have had prior experience in letter writing and bibliography formation. However, students may or may NOT have had any previous experience using the cooperative-inquiry webquesting method.

***NOTE: The following steps (1-5): introduction, task, process, evaluation, conclusion are standard steps in the webquesting cooperative/ inquiry-based model.***

### **Procedure**

#### **Step 1: Introduction (Opening/Anticipatory Set)**

The teacher will tell the students that today they are beginning a webquest inquiry on the Three Fires Tribes of Michigan. At this time, the teacher will hand out an index card to each student. On one side they are instructed to write “No Clue” in red and on the other side “Got It!” in green. The teacher then asks for a show of cards of how many students know what a webquest is. This will give the teacher a really good indication of how many students have used the webquesting method of cooperative-inquiry before without students revealing whether or not they know what it means to their peers. This method prevents students from raising their hands in a “show of hands” method to keep from feeling left out and gives the teacher a quick accurate check of understanding.

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The teacher will explain the webquest model is a method of learning whereby students are posed with a problem/scenario and then use resources on the Internet to research and problem-solve as members of cooperative “teams.”

The teacher then reads the following introduction to the students:

*“The mayor has a special guest visiting this fall. He is of Michigan Native American heritage. He has been touring the town and took a trip to the local library last week. He was shocked at the lack of resources available for patrons to check out on Michigan Native Americans, historically and present day. The librarian says that Native Americans are a culture of the past and there is no reason for any more resources. **Do you feel this is a fair statement?**”*

*At your school, you have been discussing how one’s background and experiences shape one’s cultural identity and how by learning more about the cultural backgrounds of others, one can develop a greater respect for cultural differences. Your principal was saddened to hear about the lack of resources for the local community to learn more about Michigan Native Americans and the librarian’s view on the lack of need for resources. She is friend of the mayor and has asked your class to form investigative research teams to gather information in the areas of archaeology, government, natural resources and culture and create “books of knowledge” on the Three Fires Tribes of Michigan: the Ojibway, the Ottawa and the Potawatomi to share with the community. At the end of your investigation, you will present your findings to your peers and the books will be presented to the local library for patrons to read and learn more about Michigan Native Americans.”*

The teacher now instructs the students to think about this problem and asks the students to write down their initial thoughts in a paragraph in their writer’s notebook answering the question, “**Do you think this is a fair statement?**” in response to the librarian’s statement that Native Americans are a culture of the past and there is no need for any more resources. It should be mentioned to the students at this time, that although this is a very possible scenario, that it in fact is just a hypothetical scenario of which we will role-play.

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**Step 2: Task**

The teacher then tells the students that we will work to problem-solve this issue in “*teams*” and that teamwork is a very important component of this activity. Students are told that that they will be expected to practice teamwork skills in the areas of: helping, listening, participating and respecting each member of their team and they will be evaluated on such skills. The teacher will explain to the students that when you get into the work world after schooling, success is driven by one’s ability to work well with others. The goal of our “*teams*” is to prepare a collaborative “*book of knowledge*,” along with letters to librarian convincing her/him for the need of Native American resources in the library.

The teacher now explains the task of the webquest: students will be divided into groups of four. The teacher will use a Popsicle method or the “sort ‘em” cards method of selecting heterogeneous teams. Once the groups are selected, each investigative research team will meet with their group members. At this time, team members will discuss the roles to be split up among the group: archaeologist/historian (researches tools and materials, including modes of transportation and housing), village specialist (researches how tribes were governed historically and currently, and brings to the group current issues and treaty rights) natural resources specialist (researches how the Native Americans used and adapted to the natural resources available for food, clothing, etc. and how they traded with other tribes and the Europeans, historically and modern day) and cultural specialist (researches other aspects of their tribes culture: handicrafts, ceremonies, storytelling and legends, gender roles, language and games). The students will write each task down on a sheet of paper and place in a “*hat*” and draw a role to assume on this investigative research team.

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**Step 3: Process**

After students have met in their groups and chosen their assigned roles, the teacher will hand out to students the “*student directions sheet*” (See Appendix A) which is a combined printout of the “*introduction,*” “*task*” and “*process*” on the webquest.

The teacher will ask for student volunteers to read aloud the instructions:

**STEP 1. Meet with members of your team. Read the introduction of this webquest. Ask any further questions of your teacher for clarification. Print this page for future reference or go to the "Files and Rubrics" page and download the "Student Directions Sheet." Remember this is a "team" effort. You are expected as a team member to help each other, listen to each other's ideas, fully participate in the group task, and respect other team members by encouraging and supporting their ideas and efforts. If a fellow team member is having trouble with their part of the task, you are expected to help them.**

**STEP 2. Read the task of your investigative research team. Determine which group member will take which role. Place all the names of your team in a "hat" and draw names. The person chosen first will select their job on the team, the person chosen second will chose next and so on.**

**STEP 3. Read and understand the rubric and rubric checklist. (See further discussion on the "Evaluation" page and then download the rubrics on the "Files and Rubrics" page.) This explains how you will be evaluated.**

**STEP 4. Begin your research! Click on your job page. Start reviewing the websites and completing the research graphic organizer\* to help your organize your material using the websites provided and any other books and resources you may have. (Go to the "Files and Rubrics" page to download the research graphic organizer). Place your expertise in the center circle (i.e. "culture") and then locate 4 main ideas in your area of expertise. Then with each main idea, look for 3 sub ideas. Take lots of notes in your writer's notebook and print any relevant pages or pictures. Make sure to keep track of resources that you use. You will be creating a bibliography of your resources to include in your "book of knowledge" and you need at least three sources. Go to the "Other Helpful Links" page if you need an online dictionary or some other general help. At the end of each computer session, you need to regroup with your team and discuss your successes and pitfalls.**

*\* see Appendix B*



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**STEP 5.** When the research is completed by each team expert, meet again with your investigative research team. Discuss your findings. You will now be creating a "book of knowledge" summarizing what you have learned in your investigative research teams about the Three Fires Tribes of Michigan to present to the library to help others learn more about Michigan Native Americans. It is important that each team member participates and shares equally in the preparation of the book. Each individual will also be writing their own letter to the librarian, as well as their "expert" pages. (Go to the "Book of Knowledge" page for more information.)

**STEP 6.** As a team, you will present your findings to the rest of your peers and teacher. Your team's presentation can be in a format of your choosing. Some examples are a power point presentation, a commercial, speech, etc. (See the "Present Your Findings" page for more information).

During the webquesting process, the teacher will circulate among the groups, checking for understanding and offering further guidance if anyone has questions.

**Step 4: Evaluation/Assessment**

This webquest will be assessed using a rubric addressing criteria related to webquest research, the persuasive letters, the book-of-knowledge, teamwork and presentation. In addition, the students will be provided a checklist to aid in meeting the criteria on the rubric. (See Appendix C). Teamwork will be analyzed based on the teamwork skills of helping, listening, participating and respecting. The teacher will be using an observational checklist to aid in scoring this aspect of the rubric (See Appendix D). In addition, the teacher will instruct the students that any team where all team members get the maximum possible points on their "teamwork" assessment criterion will receive an extra 5 minutes of recess. The students will also participate in a self reflection, Student Self-Assessment (See Appendix E) on their teamwork skills.



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**Step 5: Conclusion**

Upon completion of the webquest research and the teams' *"books of knowledge,"* the teacher will host a whole-class discussion to help assess learning in this webquest activity. Questions may include:

- What was the most challenging part of this webquest assignment?
- What was the most beneficial aspect of this assignment?
- Do you feel you were able to gather enough information and resources to adequately compile a *"book of knowledge?"*
- Do you feel you could convince the "librarian" in the webquesting scenario that Native Americans are NOT a culture of the past and libraries do in fact need adequate resources for members of the community to learn about them?

In addition, the teacher will meet with each group to discuss their assessment of teamwork and social skills. At this time, the teacher will provide feedback on what went well and suggestions for improvement. The students will then present their books to the library.

**Extensions**

For extended activities, the students could participate in the following activities:

- *Participate in another webquest – research and learn about other webquests in the same subject or other subjects and propose to the teacher one that you would like to complete in group work.*
- *Organize a group to complete another "book of knowledge" – work with other team members to complete another book to present to the library on Native Americans. This time choose a different Native American tribe to research.*

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**Differentiation**

Students with different learning styles (visual, auditory and kinesthetic) will have an opportunity to use their dominant mode of learning in this cooperative-inquiry webquesting activity. Visual learners will have the opportunity to see the illustrations on the websites and to produce illustrations for the “*book of knowledge.*” Auditory learners will learn through listening to the teacher and their classmates during group discussions. Kinesthetic learners will participate in the hands-on construction of the “*book of knowledge.*” The activities of this lesson also touch on various different intelligences, such as visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic, intrapersonal, interpersonal, and mathematical/logical.

This lesson is built on multicultural content which allows students to see relevance to their own cultural identities and encourages students to see different perspectives as well as their own. Everyone can relate to a situation when someone has told them something they don’t agree with and felt the need to persuade them otherwise. The lesson also offers the students many choices with creative options on assembling their “*book of knowledge,*” as well as choices on presentation options; thereby building on students’ different interests. Because this lesson is cooperative/inquiry-based and offers many opportunities for students to extend their opinions and reflections, students of all levels of readiness can participate. If students are below grade-level in reading or the ability to use the computer, the teacher may pre-select the groups to ensure that at least one member of each group can perform at grade-level and aid students in the group who are performing at below-grade level.

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**Appendices**

A – Student Directions Sheet (“*Introduction*,” “*Task*” and “*Process*”)

B – Research Graphic Organizer

C – Assessment Rubric and Checklist

D - Teacher Teamwork Observation Checklist

E – Student Self-Assessment

F – Hardcopy of the “*Three Fires Tribes of Michigan Webquest*”