

Native Americans

Suitable for Key Stages 1 and 2, adapted to suit the requirements of each individual group. Each school's specific learning objectives are incorporated into the programme plan for their visit.

This programme is designed to encourage children to understand the concepts of sustainability and respect for the environment. The programme content highlights the importance of living with nature as opposed to exploiting it. Children learn about the trees, plants and animals of the forest. They learn how the Native Americans lived in harmony with nature and that their approach was of practical benefit to them as well to nature itself. Human influences on climate change are included as appropriate. The programme is story led with a range of practical games and activities to engage children in their learning.

Key Concepts

Sustainable living and respect for nature and the environment.

Taking personal responsibility for the environment.

Forests have value as habitats for plants and animals, as a source of renewable materials, of medicinal plants and in mitigating the effects of climate change.

We can learn from other cultures.

Language work can be combined with cultural and environmental learning.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the programme pupils should

- understand the concept of sustainability and the need to live in harmony with nature if there are to be resources for the future.
- have gained an insight into Native American culture.
- be aware that the forest is managed in a sustainable way.
- have increased their knowledge of trees and forests.
- have a greater respect for the natural world and forests in particular.
- know that forests provide habitats for a great variety of plants and animals.
- know that trees provide us with renewable resources to make things.
- know that trees have an important contribution to make in relation to climate change but that climate change will have a serious effect on today's ecosystems.
- know that forests are exciting places to visit.

Introduction

Learning objective – to prepare pupils for activities in the forest and ensure that safety rules are understood by adults and children.

1. Welcome to Alice Holt - lovely woods; lots of different trees and open spaces; a place for animals; a place for people; a place to produce timber; looked after by the Forestry Commission.
2. Background to Native American life and culture:
According to Native Americans, everything man needed was provided by nature. We should be grateful, respectful and thankful for these gifts given to us. These gifts might be food, shelter, warmth, and even survival. Nature exists without man very well. In fact, Native American people (and most other cultures and religions) think that people were the last thing to be made. First was the sky and water and earth, then all kinds of plants and animals with different numbers of legs, four, six, eight, with and without wings etc., then lastly two legged creatures, people. We are the youngest in nature and have a lot to learn. They believed that most of the knowledge people need is often taught to us by animals. There is something to learn from everything in nature...the animals, plants, water, wind, sun, rocks, moon and stars. In Native American stories these things are often referred to as grandmother, grandfather, uncle or aunt, just as some people say "mother earth". This shows respect for these parts of nature, just as you respect the members of your family. The lessons learned from nature were passed on through stories. There was no written language before Europeans went to America. Today I am going to ask you to listen carefully to some Native American stories. Many of them are about animals or plants that have taught us things. We will also play some games and activities outside and we will see how well you have listen and learned from the stories.
3. Plan for the day
4. Safety, including foxgloves, fungi, slips and trips. Please keep together as a class unless asked to do otherwise. Please don't hold hands in the woods (mainly KS1) and don't overtake the leader. No need to regroup with your assigned adult when moving a short distance within the woods.

Morning (Beech Wood)

Learning Objectives	Activity
To provide information and to instigate a sense of involvement or empathy with Native Americans from wooded areas. (KS1)To have a sense of belonging to	Provide names of Native American Eastern Woodland tribes : Abenaki, Mikmaq, Wampanoag, Ojibwe, Algonquin, Iroquois, Narragansett, Mohawk, Mahican. Groups within the class choose a tribe and become members of it for the day. (KS1) If this is too difficult, the groups

the forest	can assume the names of woodland animals
To understand that when we use resources from the forest (or any source) we need to leave enough for others to use in the future. Plants and animals are all renewable resources if we use them carefully.	Children listen to the Choctaw story ‘ The Alligator and the Hunter ’
To have some exercise and to practice hand-eye co-ordination whilst appreciating the need for young Native Americans to learn skills for hunting.	Hoop and beanbag aiming game – children aim beanbags through moving hoops
To appreciate the balance in nature between the number of species at different levels in the food chain e.g. without man’s interference (or a catastrophic event), there will always be a sufficient supply of food at all levels in the long term.	(KS1/2) Fox and Rabbit chasing game in which foxes catch some rabbits but can never catch all of them or (KS2) Race to Survive running and chasing game involving several levels of the food chain indicating changes in food supplies and natural maintenance of long term balance.
To develop understanding of Native American culture, encourage development of vocabulary and creativity and to increase empathy with Native Americans	Give a brief example of some Native American names related to nature. Play the Name Game each child draws a wooden disc from a bag with picture and word on it, (Oak, Beetle, Rabbit, Water) each child thinks how to turn these into names, (Tall Oak, Lonely Beetle, Dancing Rabbit etc.) while the bag goes round the circle. Explain descriptive word followed by word on disk can be colour, mood, size, action etc. When everyone has had time and chosen names, share around the circle. “I am Running Water, I am Sleeping Birch” etc.
To learn to recognise some animal tracks and the animals to which they belong	In tribes follow sets of animal tracks to a picture of the relevant woodland animal that lives in Alice Holt Forest.
To understand that we can learn what animals are around us without seeing the animal itself	Discuss signs of animals e.g. hair, feathers, droppings, tracks, sounds, smells. Walk towards the pond using senses to spot animal signs. Discuss briefly what was noticed. Explain that streams and ponds are good places to watch for wildlife as all animals need water.

To understand the need for patience, silence and observation to observe and understand nature and continue the theme of traditional story telling to teach children.	Story of 'How the Spider Symbol came to the Osage people'
To develop knowledge and understanding of the animal life in the forest, particularly the role of invertebrates. To remind of Native American belief that all creatures are considered to be elders and should be respected, thereby encouraging the children to respect nature	Minibeast Hunt employing patience, careful observation, signs left by invertebrates e.g. boreholes, nibbled leaves etc., respect for invertebrate homes and care of the creatures in captivity. Discuss role of minibeasts in natural recycling and in the food chain .
To learn that trees, plants and animals have much to give us, including music. Wood can be used to make many things. To recognise that even dead and rotting wood is valuable. To introduce the concept of wind power.	Observe tree with woodpecker holes and listen to the ' Story of the First Flute' (Lakota) .
To understand that recognition of pitch and pattern is important for birds and animals, and to use this as a basis for musical skill development.	Children sit and listen to the sounds of the forest, then take part in call and response and voice pitch activity. If time rhythm activity with hands or sticks
To consider uses of wood. To understand the importance of trees to Native Americans and the respect they had for trees.	Count growth rings on tree stumps and logs . Is it old enough to be a sister, parent, grandparent? Children feedback. Tell children what Native Americans used trees for and how they preferred to use a fallen one rather than to cut one down.

Afternoon (Story Clearing and Blue Trail)

To introduce concept of evergreen plants and plant adaptations for coping with climatic conditions.	Cherokee story 'Why some trees are always green' . Discuss ways of recognising trees without leaves, show 'sleeping' wood e.g. willow stems / beech buds which will wake in spring.
To be like native Americans and learn to move quietly	Creep using toe-heel movement to Blue Trail
To observe a wide range of trees and plants and recognise how this is important for wildlife and the environment.	Count number of different tree species down the trail. Children feedback their findings to the class.
To learn that plants have many uses which people today don't understand	Cherokee Story 'Powerful Plants' . Using cards shaped as medicine bags, children collect small pieces

	of plants and imagine how they might be remedies for ailments. Children share their ideas with the class.
To remind children of the many uses of wood and its importance to native Americans	Stop and look at birch trees and mention birch bark canoes for travel.
To consider plants as food sources for animals and people	Observe cones nibbled by squirrels and other plants eaten by animals e.g. fungi (slugs), bracken stems and bark (deer), leaves (caterpillars). Mention pine nuts and acorn flour used by native Americans
To learn more about Native American culture, particularly the role of music and dance and the understanding of the need to 'tread lightly' on the earth.	Take part in a circle dance using heel-toe stepping . Children can clap rhythm or use percussion sticks, or can employ call and response during the dance
To be a visual reminder of the day and especially the story of the First Flute.	Make a feather necklace. First experiment with feathers by throwing them up to float down and adding a small piece of clay and repeating.

Other possible activities

These can be included in the programme in place of some of the above to ensure that the content suits the age and ability of the group members and meets the learning objectives of the school. **Ad hoc discussions and activities** often take place in response to children's observations and questions so programmes are adapted 'in the moment' while continuing to work towards achieving desired learning outcomes.

Hand map and experiencing a special place – children follow natural lines on their hands to a tree (either by matching the pattern with a pattern in a tree) or by following the direction). They sit down silently on their own and use their senses to experience this special place. Young children are asked to be able to tell what was the most special thing about the place. Older children record what they see, hear, smell and touch on a small piece of card –this can be done by means of pictures, symbols or words. The activity can be extended to encompass imagination about what might be there when people are not. The **objective** of this is to encourage greater empathy with nature, to understand that patience is needed to really observe (Native Americans tracked and hunted patiently) and to provide material for creative work (poetry, stories, art etc.)

Save the World game – children hold hands in a circle (the world) and move around in a clockwise direction. They are then asked a series of questions about their behaviour which relate to the environment. A series of forfeits follows which make it increasingly difficult to 'turn the world'. This is followed by a discussion about our responsibility to look after our world and a

consideration of what ordinary people, especially the children present, can do to help. What will you do differently now? **Objective** to encourage children to consider their own responsibilities.

Tree Rings, Thinnings and Climate Change – children look at tree rings and see that trees have been cut down to allow the remaining trees to grow well. They are told how using timber in construction or manufacturing locks up carbon while the trees still growing, and newly planted trees, soak up more of it. **Objective** to teach about the role of trees in relation to climate change.

Photosynthesis Game and Moving Carbon game – two games which show how trees take in CO₂. Lead to discussion on the need to keep growing trees and that we must use them sustainably. Native Americans understood sustainability.

National Curriculum Links

KS1 and KS2

Geography, History, Science, English, Music and more depending on activities chosen