**Storytelling in Native American Cultures**

Kassidy Jones and Jana Wilhite

**Grade**: 3

**Unit Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of storytelling, especially in Native American cultures, by exploring and telling stories in role.

**National Theatre Standards:**

* TH: Cr1.1.3 a. Create roles, imagined worlds, and improvised stories in a drama/theatre work.
* TH.Cr.2.3 b.: Compare ideas with peers and make selections that will enhance and deepen group theatrical work
* TH: Cr2.1.3 a. Participate in methods of investigation to devise original ideas for a drama/theatre work.
* TH.Cr.3.3 b.: Participate and contribute to physical and vocal exploration in an improvised or scripted theatrical work.
* TH:Cr 3.1.3 a. Collaborate with peers to revise, refine, and adapt ideas to fit the given parameters of a drama/theatre work.
* TH:Pr 4.1.3 b. Investigate how movement and voice are incorporated into drama/theatre work.
* TH:Re 7.1.3 a. Understand why artistic choices are made in a drama/theatre work
* TH:Cn 11.2.3 a. Explore how stories are adapted from literature to drama/theatre work.
* TH:Cn 11.2.3 b. Examine how artists have historically presented the same stories using different art forms, genres, or drama/theatre conventions.
* TH:Cn10.1.3 a. Use personal experiences and knowledge to make connections to community and culture in a drama/theatre work.
* TH:Cr1.1.3 b. Imagine and articulate ideas for costumes, props and sets for the environment and characters in a drama/theatre work.

**Utah Core Standards:**

* Objective 2: Explain how selected indigenous cultures of the Americas have changed over time.
* Describe and compare early indigenous people of the Americas (e.g. Eastern Woodlands, Plains, Great Basin, Southwestern, Artic, Incan, Aztec, Mayan).
* Identify how indigenous people maintain cultural traditions today.

**Big Ideas:**

* Performing Identity
* Story
* Connecting with culture
* Understanding Differences
* Self-expression
* Self-presentation
* Image
* Practicality
* Locational history
* Creation of humanity
* Family
* Symbolism

**Essential Questions:**

* How does the way that we tell stories influence others?
* Why is it important to make connections with cultures that are not our own?
* How do we tell our own stories?
* Why do we share stories with others?
* How does where you come from inform who you are?
* How do different people express the same ideas artistically?
* How does location affect artistic culture?
* What are the methods we use to express who we are?
* How does clothing inform and express who we are?

**Key Knowledge and Skills:**

* Understanding components of storytelling
* Basic structure of storytelling
* Basic understanding of different aspects of Native American storytelling
* Basic understanding of conflict
* Basic understanding of self-representation
* Basic understanding of costume

**Authentic Performance Tasks:**

* Learning and exploring in role
* Creating a story through drawing
* Using your body to tell a story
* Enacting origin myths
* Using face and symbols to tell a story
* Creating costumes to match a character
* Telling stories through movement, orally, frozen images, and clothing

Lessons:

**Introduction Lesson**

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of making creative choices by participating in a series of introductory drama games as a class.

**Searching for Stories**

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of the basic climactic structure of storytelling by working together as a class to interpret a story from Native American “cave paintings.”

**The Structure of Storytelling**

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of the structure of storytelling by telling their own story using and highlighting the people, place, problem and progress aspects of telling a story.

**Painting Your Own Story**

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of basic climactic structure of storytelling by working in role to create a story using Native American “cave paintings.”

**Movement in Telling Stories**

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of using their bodies and movement in telling stories by pantomiming and moving through the telling of a Native American folk tale.

**Where Did You Come From?**

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate understanding of the importance of setting by reading and enacting origin stories of different tribes in role as explorers.

**Carving out Stories**

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate understanding of how character is expressed physically by creating and interpreting human “totem poles.”

**Dressing the Part**

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate understanding of how appearance, especially clothing, contributes to character expression by exploring and drawing costumes.

**Introduction Lesson**

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of making creative choices by participating in a series of introductory drama games as a class.

**Hook: Name Game**

(This lesson is written as a first-day introductory lesson of the new drama teachers to the students, it is designed to break the ice with the students as well as beginning to get them used to drama work in the classroom.)

* Opening questions:
* Do you know what drama is?
* Have you had any experiences being a part of something in drama?
  + “Now that you know who we are, we want to get to know you all a little bit better.”
  + Have the students get into a big circle. In this game, the students will introduce themselves by saying their name, and pantomiming an action to go along with their name, preferable something that describes who they are or something they like. (For example, they would say: “I am \_\_\_\_”, while pantomiming reading a book). After all of the students have had a chance to state their name and pantomime their action, go around the circle once more saying their names to help remember the students’ names.

**Step 1: Wizards, Giants, Goblins**

* “You probably know, but one of the biggest parts of drama is creating and playing a character. We want to play a game with you where you get to all become a character.”
  + Divide the class into two teams.  Tell the teams to go on either side of “the stage”. Each team secretly decides if they are going to be Wizards, Giants or Goblins. They line up on two sides of the room facing each other. The teacher counts 1, 2, 3. On each number the groups takes one step forward. On “3” they take up the position of the character the group has decided on:
    - **Wizards:** lean forward throwing their arms forward as if casting a spell and say “Shazzam”
    - **Giants:** put both hands above their head, stretching up really tall and say “Ho, ho ho!”
    - **Goblins:** crouch down, put their hands up to their face as if scratching their beards and make a high pitch laugh.

Giants beat Wizards, Wizards beat Goblins and Goblins beat Giants. The losing team must run back to their side of the room. The winning team tries to “tag” as many of the losing team as possible before they get home. The captives now become part of their captors’ team. Continue until one team wins.

**Step 3: Wrap-Up**

* “Thank you so much for doing some drama work with today.”
  + Questions:
    - What was your favorite part about the games that we played today? Why?
    - What makes you nervous about learning and participating in drama?
    - Are you excited to learn more about drama? What are you excited about?

**Searching for Stories**

Lesson 1

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of the basic climactic structure of storytelling by working together as a class to interpret a story from Native American “cave paintings.”

**Essential Questions:**

* Why is it important to make connections with cultures that are not our own?
* Why do we share stories with others?
* How do different people express the same ideas artistically?

**Materials Needed:**

* Brown paper bags with Native American cave paintings on them
  + The bags should be cut open to look like a piece of paper. An actual picture of a Native American cave painting can be printed directly onto it, or one can be painted on, similar to what a cave painting might resemble. Crumple up the paper bag painting to make it appear to be old and worn like the walls of a cave.
* Symbols matching game
  + four different picture symbols (ex: stick figures of a class, footprints, binoculars, a cave) along with the five words (the class, walking, exploring, a cave) that the pictures represent.

**Hook: Symbols matching game**

* “Welcome aboard explorers! You are here because you are the bravest and smartest explorers that we could find. We have a very important exploration taking place in just a few minutes and we need your expert exploring skills to help us out. Are you up for the challenge? Just to be sure, we need to make sure that you are all able to work together to solve this puzzle. It is going to tell you where we will be exploring today.”
* Bring the students to the area where the symbol matching game has been set up. Ask them to work together to match the symbols with the words that they think represent the symbols.
* “You solved it, good work! Now, we can’t explore a cave without the proper equipment.”
* Encourage students to look around the room and find equipment that they may need (hiking boots, hat, tool belt, backpack etc.).
  + Questions: What equipment are you bringing? What do your exploring clothes look like?

**Step 1: Finding our way through the cave**

* Have the students close their eyes. “I want you to picture what this cave looks like, where is it located? On the side of a mountain? What kinds of things are around the cave? What do you see outside of the cave?”
* As the students are answering these questions, turn the lights off in the classroom, and hang up the different cave paintings around the room. Keep the students in the classroom if it all possible, leaving the classroom and returning may be difficult to keep the focus of the students. “Alright explorers, we have made it to the cave. Be careful when you open your eyes, it might be a little dark and hard to see. We need to find something that we can use to give us some light so we can find these Native American cave paintings.”
* Ask the students what we can use for light. Ex: Suggest the idea of a flashlight, ask if anyone brought one. Maybe a student will suggest a torch, etc. When they have come up with a solution, turn on the lights.

**Step 2: Discovering the cave paintings**

* “Listen up explorers, now is your time to see if you can find these cave paintings.” Encourage the students to look around the room at the different cave paintings that are hung up. Let the students know that we need to excavate them and bring them back to the center of the room to examine. As the students observe, talk about how different Native American cultures used cave paintings to tell a story.
* Instead of writing stories in a book like we do today, some Native American tribes told stories by painting pictures on cave walls. These stories were sometimes about the hunting that they did, or the places that they had moved from, or even stories about their families.

**Step 3: Climactic Storytelling structure**

* “Now that we’ve found all these paintings, let’s see if we can figure out the story that the Native Americans were trying to tell.”
* This is the point where instruction will be given as to the basic climactic structure of storytelling. This can be done by using the Freitag structure (introduction, inciting incident, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution/new life). Explain to the students how a story is told, as we go through each step of the storytelling process, have the students identify which painting they think represents each step.
  + We start with a main character.
  + Next we need a setting, or the place that the story will happen.
  + Now we need something that has happened to the character, what will this story be about?
  + Sometimes in a story there is a bad character, trying to foil the good characters plans.
  + A few things have to happen to move the story along. What is our main character doing to reach his goal? Did something bad happen to him along the way?
  + Then we come to the most exciting part of the story.
  + Then, our character figures out his problem, or reaches his goal to end the story.

**Step 4: Telling the story together**

* “Now that we have figured out what we think the story is, let’s tell it together as a class.” The class will tell the story together as we have put it together. The students may add extra details as we go along, and that is ok- it is their story that they have created.

**Step 5: Coming back to the classroom**

* “Great work today explorers, you are all experts at interpreting and creating stories! We need to head back to our classroom now, close your eyes and picture what it looks like to come back out of the cave and into the sunlight.” Turn the lights off again and gather up the cave paintings in the center of the room. Have the students open their eyes and encourage them to put away their exploring gear.

**Step 6: Wrap up**

* Talk to the students about what they learned.

Questions:

* + - Why did Native Americans use cave paintings?
    - What did the pictures represent?
    - How do we tell a story? What comes at the beginning, the middle, the end?

**The Structure of Storytelling**

Lesson 2

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of the structure of storytelling by telling their own story using and highlighting the people, place, problem and progress aspects of telling a story.

**Big Ideas:**

* Performing Identity
* Story
* Self-expression
* Self-presentation
* Family

**Essential Questions:**

* How does the way that we tell stories influence others?
* How do we tell our own stories?
* Why do we share stories with others?
* How does where you come from inform who you are?

**Hook**:

* “Native Americans told stories that were handed down over generations. They didn’t write them down. They told them to other people who kept telling them until they became legends. I’m going to share a story with you today that’s about my family.”
* Next the teacher will tell the students a story about an experience or family story. Try to be as detailed and engaging as possible, and make sure to include the four aspects of storytelling that the students will need to use to tell their stories: people, place, problem, progress.

**Step 1: Story Structure**

* Ask questions about story structure:
  + Who was in the story? (people)
  + Where did it happen? (place)
  + What sort of trouble did I cause? What sort of trouble did I get into? (problem)
  + Did someone learn something? (progress)
* “These are some of the key parts of a story. I bet you all have a lot of stories to tell as well. Thinking back to the story from the beginning of class today,”
* Ask students questions:
  + Have you ever locked someone out of where they needed to be?
  + Have you ever been locked out of where you needed to be?
  + Have you ever had to break into something?
  + Have you ever done something you were afraid to tell your parents about?
  + Have you ever disliked your babysitter?
* “You’re probably thinking of some stories right now. I can hear your ideas starting to pop out. Think about a picture of your story. Who are the people in that picture? What are the places? What sort of problems did you cause or were you a part of? Did anyone learn anything? As you’re thinking about these things, turn to a friend and share your story.” (Maybe number off the students. Ones tell first, twos tell second.)

**Step 2: Telling Stories**

* Side coaching:
  + As students tell stories, remind them to describe the people, places, problems, pictures, and eventually progress.
* If time, turn to another friend and tell your story again, but in 2 minutes.

**Conclusion:**

* What are the important pieces of stories?
* Do you think you can tell and write stories now?
* How did Native Americans tell their stories?
* Did your story change when you told it the second time?
* What’s exciting about telling stories out loud?

**Painting Your Own Story**

Lesson 3

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of basic climactic structure of storytelling by working in role to create a story using Native American “cave paintings.”

**Big Ideas:**

* Performing Identity
* Story
* Self-expression
* Self-presentation
* Symbolism

**Essential Questions:**

* How does the way that we tell stories influence others?
* How do we tell our own stories?
* Why do we share stories with others?
* How do different people express the same ideas artistically?
* What are the methods we use to express who we are?

**Materials Needed:**

* Colored markers or colored pencils
* Paper for the students cave paintings

**Hook Activity**:

* Have the students get up on their feet and find their own silo of space in the room. Have them stretch out their arms and make sure that there is enough space between them. When all the students have found space, have them do the “brain dance”.
  + The Brain Dance (http://www.rebeccaannskirk.com/resources/Brain%20Dance%20Handout.pdf):
    - Breathe: Take a deep breath
    - Tactile: Squeeze, tap, pat, scratch or brush various parts of the body
    - Core-Distal: Reach out with toes, fingers, head, tail and curl back to your core.
    - Head-Tail: Move head and tail separately and together in all planes, wiggle spine.
    - Upper-Lower: Move all parts of upper half of body, then all parts of lower half of body.
    - Body-Side: Move all parts on right side of body, then all parts on left side, do horizontal eye tracking.
    - Cross-Lateral: Move across midline and connect upper and lower body quadrants.
    - Vestibular: Move off balance with swings, spins, tips, and rolls on all levels and in all directions.

**Step 1: Character Images**

* Now that the students are energized and ready to work, ask them if they remember what a character is? “Today we are going to practice creating characters. Let’s practice.” Staying in their own space the students will create their characters.
  + **First frozen images**: “Raise your hand if you have a favorite storybook character.” Take suggestions from the students, call out 3 2 1 and have them freeze like that character. Take a few more suggestions then move forward.
  + **Next moving images**: “Sometimes characters can be real people. Let’s practice this- stay in your space and you can move around within that space.” Call out characters like- teacher, policeman, pilot, etc.
  + **Lastly, picking your own character**: “Now, I want you to pick your own character to try. You can pick your favorite character that you have tried today, or choose a character that you haven’t tried. 3,2,1 freeze!” The students will first freeze as the character. Come around and tap students on the head, have them tell you what character they are. After allowing a few students to share, allow the students to start to move around. “Show me how your character gets ready to go to school/work/etc. in the morning.” Let them take about a minute to move around, and then call 3, 2, 1 for them to freeze again. Have them shake off the characters and return to their seats.

**Step 2: Cave Painting Activity**

“Great work everyone. You did such great work becoming the characters that you chose.” Ask the students to recall the Native American cave paintings from the previous lesson, and have them describe how we can tell a story through cave paintings and pictures. During this discussion, pass out the materials for the students to create their own “cave painting.”

“Today you are going to get to create your own cave painting. Remember the story you just told through your body movements of how you get ready in the morning as the character that you chose? Now I want you to create your own cave painting telling that story.”

The rest of time left in the lesson will be dedicated to the students creating their own cave painting. Make sure to walk around the room, ask questions about the student’s choices as well as provide scaffolding and assistance if needed.

**Step 3:** **Wrap Up**

* + What are the three things we need to tell a story?
  + What was the hardest part about telling the story with your body? In the cave painting?
  + Why do you think we tell stories in different ways?
  + What is your favorite part of telling a story?

**Movement in Telling Stories**

Lesson 4

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate their understanding of using their bodies and movement in telling stories by pantomiming and moving through the telling of a Native American folk tale.

**Big Ideas:**

* Story
* Connecting with culture
* Understanding Differences
* Self-presentation
* Image
* Creation of humanity

**Essential Questions:**

* How does the way that we tell stories influence others?
* Why is it important to make connections with cultures that are not our own?
* How do we tell our own stories?
* Why do we share stories with others?

**Materials Needed:**

* Native American Folk tale: “The Wise Owl: A Woodland Indian Myth”
* Cards with pantomime actions written on them

**Hook: Pantomime Activity**

* “How many of you have pretended to act like something was there when it really wasn’t? Do you know what we call this in drama? We call it pantomime, and today we want to practice that.” Have the students come up in groups of 4-5. On a card that can be shown to the performing group, have simple actions to be pantomimed written on the front (ex.: brushing your teeth, playing basketball, opening a birthday present, etc.). Make sure to have enough cards that everyone in class has a chance to perform with a group.

Encourage the students to remain silent and to only use their bodies to communicate the action. Then open it up for the class to guess what the pantomimed action is. Repeat until everyone has had a chance to participate.

* + Questions:
    - How could you tell what your classmates were pantomiming?
    - Was it hard to know what they were doing without them using their words?
    - Do you think that we can tell a story just using our bodies?

**Step 1: Prep for Pantomime**

* Before beginning the focus of the activity for this lesson, encourage the students to find their own silo of space in the room. They should have done something similar to this in previous lessons, so it should not take very long. Remind the students that they need to stretch out their arms to make sure they are not touching anyone, and that they are only able to move within their own space bubble.

**Step 2: Pantomime and Storytelling Movement**

* “Remember what we have been learning about with the Native American storytelling? What are some of the ways that we have learned, or what are the ways that Native Americans shared their stories?” Explain to the students that one way that certain Native American tribes, particularly the Woodland Indian tribes, told stories were through dance and movement. The ways that they would move their bodies would tell a story, like the activity that we did at the beginning.
* Next, explain to the students that we will be reading a Native American folk tale together. (The wise owl story is extremely descriptive, and lends itself to a lot of options for the students to be creative in portraying and pantomime the characters and actions.) Encourage the students to listen very careful to the descriptive words and to create with their bodies what they think the characters look like, how they move, and what their facial expressions would look like. Remind them that they can move, however it needs to be in their own space.

**WISE OWL: A WOODLAND INDIAN MYTH**

Once upon a time, a long time ago, the Everything-Maker was very busy, making all the animals and all the plants and all the rocks and caverns and everything else that covered the earth.

Owl had not yet been made. He ***had*** been given a voice. And two eyes. And a head and a body and strong wings. Owl was waiting his turn to be formed. "I want a long neck like Swan," Owl told the Everything-Maker. "I want red feathers like Cardinal and a beak like Hawk."

"Yes, yes," mumbled the Everything-Maker. "Whatever you want. But you must wait your turn." The Everything-Maker looked sharply at Owl. "Your eyes are open again. You know that no one is allowed to watch me work. Turn around and close your eyes. I have no time for you now. I am busy creating Rabbit."

The Everything-Maker turned his attention back to Rabbit who was shaking with nervousness. "And what do you want, little rabbit?" the Everything-Maker asked encouragingly.

"Long legs and ears," Rabbit spoke softly. "And fangs. Could I possibly have a fang or two? And claws. I would dearly love to have claws!"

The Everything-Maker smiled. "I think we could manage some claws and fangs." He smoothed Rabbit's long legs and ears.

"Silly Rabbit!" Owl hooted loudly. "Why don't you ask for something useful, like wisdom?"

"This is your last warning, Owl. Be quiet and wait your turn."

Owl twisted around and glared at the Everything-Maker. "You have to do it," he hooted. "You have to give us what we ask. I demand wisdom!"

"I warned you, Owl!" shouted the Everything-Maker. He shoved Owl's head down into his body, which made Owl's neck disappear. He gave Owl a shake, which made Owl's eyes widen in fright. He pulled Owl's ears until they stuck out from his head.

The Everything-Maker snapped his fingers. "I have made your ears big, the better to listen. I have made your eyes big, the better to see. I have made your neck short, the better to hold up your head. I have packed your head with wisdom, as you have asked. Now, use your wisdom and fly away before you lose what I have given."

Owl was no longer a fool. He flew quickly away, pouting and hooting.

The Everything-Maker turned back to Rabbit, smiling gently. "Claws," he reminded himself. But Rabbit was gone. Rabbit had hopped hurriedly away, too afraid of the Everything-Maker to stay for his fangs and claws.

As for Owl, Owl knew if he angered the Everything-Maker again, he would lose all that he had gained. Even today, Owl only comes out at night, when the Everything-Maker is fast asleep. As for Rabbit, his claws and fangs are waiting. Perhaps someday.

**Step 3: Wrap-up**

Have the students return to their desks and take out a piece of paper. In the last few minutes of class have the students write the name of one of the characters in the story we just read, and three descriptive things about the character that they heard while pantomiming the story. In addition, have them write down what they did with their bodies to portray those three descriptions. This serves as an exit slip in addition to the visual assessment that takes place during the lesson.

**Where Did You Come From?**

Lesson 5

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate understanding of the importance of setting by reading and enacting origin stories of different tribes in role as explorers.

**Big Ideas:**

* Locational history
* Creation of humanity

**Essential Questions:**

* How does where you come from inform who you are?
* How do different people express the same ideas artistically?
* How does location affect artistic culture?

**Hook: Attention Grabbers**

* “We’re going to be doing some physical work today, so we need to work together really well. What can we say to grab your attention? We need to know that you’ll be able to stop and listen.”
  + Practice some of that attention-grabbing classroom management. These can be calls for attention, freezing mechanisms, or whatever the class decides to come up with.
* Let’s practice a little bit of what we’re going to be working on today.
  + Remind them of standing in their own spaces like last time.
  + Remind students of being explorers a few weeks ago. “Remember how we explored the classrooms like a cave? And you were all explorers? Let’s be explorers again. So put on your imaginary hats and goggles and boots. Whatever you need in order to explore some more imaginary spaces.”
  + Imagine that now the classroom is an ice rink. How do you explore an ice rink? Repeat for various locations, such as a beach, a grocery store, a volcano, a forest, a desert, a jungle, a laboratory.
  + Side coaching:
    - How can you show that you’re exploring these different places?
    - How do you walk differently as an explorer? How do you walk differently in different places?
    - What sort of things do you find in these places?
    - What sort of people do you see?

**Step 1: Haida Origin Myth**

* Invite students to come sit on the carpet.
* “Recently, we (teachers) found stories that have been passed down for centuries about how the world was created. One way Native Americans preserved their ancient stories is by telling them over and over again, kind of like the story (the experience or family story) I told you last week. They didn’t write these stories down, but told them to each other so they would remember them. The stories are written down now, but there are many different versions because different people tell stories in different ways. We’d like to share a few of these tales with you. As we read the myths, think about interesting images or ideas you hear. What seems cool? What seems strange? What seems familiar?”
* Read the Haida myth
  + Raven was so lonely. One day he paced back and forth on the sandy beach feeling quite forlorn. Except for the trees, the moon, the sun, water and a few animals, The world was empty. His heart wished for the company of other creatures. Suddenly a large clam pushed through the sand making an eerie bubbling sound. Raven watched and listened intently as the clam slowly opened up. He was surprised and happy to see tiny people emerging from the shell. a small creature emerged from the clam shell. It had long black hair, a round head, brown smooth skin and two legs like Raven but no feathers. This was the first of the First People.
  + When he got bored with them, he considered returning them to their shell, but opted instead to find female counterparts of these male beings. The raven found some female humans trapped in a [chiton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiton) (which is another kind of sea shell), freed them, and was entertained as the two met and began to interact. All were talking, smiling, and shaking the sand off their tiny bodies. Men, women, and children spread around the island. Raven was pleased and proud with his work. He sang a beautiful song of great joy and greeting. He had brought the first people to the world.
* Questions:
  + Where do you think these people lived? What clues did they give you in the myth? How does location contribute to these stories? If they lived in the middle of the desert, how might the story change?
* Let’s return to our spaces in the classroom. Remember how we explored the classroom as an ice rink etc.? Let’s do that again with the Haida’s world.
  + What do you think this world looks like?
  + What do you see? What reminds you of the myth? What sort of plants do you see? What animals do you see? Is there any water? What time of day is it?
* *Maybe discuss: What did you learn about the world of the Haida people? How did this contribute to their story about how people were created?*
  + *They lived on islands near British Columbia and Alaska*

**Step 5: Conclusion**

* At the end, compare and contrast where each of these people come from. What does it tell you about them? What did it add to their stories? Does where you come from add to your own life story? Does it affect what you wear, eat, say, look like?

**Carving out Stories**

Lesson 6

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate understanding of how character is expressed physically by creating and interpreting human “totem poles.”

**Big Ideas:**

* Family
* Symbolism

**Essential Questions:**

* What are the methods we use to express who we are?

**Materials Needed:**

* 12 facts printed out and sliced up (at the end of document)
* Images, either on a computer or printed out
* Perhaps papers for students to draw totem poles

**Hook: Discovering Facts**

* At the beginning of the lesson, place the 12 facts (from Information about Totem Poles section) around the room so students can discover them. Get students into role as explorers again
* “Today, I think we’re going to discover another way Native Americans told stories. Find a partner to explore with and look around the room to see if you can discover a fact.”

**Step 1: Share Information**

* As students discover information, have them read the paper together and talk about what they learned. Then, go around the class, and have every group share one important thing they learned from their fact.

**Step 2: Totem Pole Group Images**

* Let’s explore with some totem poles together. One of the types of totem poles we talked about was the house frontal pole. Remember what this totem pole was? It told the story of a family’s history. The different animals and symbols on the pole told people about their family. If you could understand the code in the totem pole, you would understand where the family came from and what they cared about. For example, in totem poles the owl represented wisdom and watchfulness and the eagle represented leadership, strength, and connection to the creator. (Helpful image: <http://mssheikh5.weebly.com/uploads/1/1/3/4/11347532/animals.jpg>)
* What are some animals you are familiar with? What might these animals represent?
  + Have students list animals and teacher write them on board, or have students make a word cloud. Create our own key for understanding animals in totem poles.
* Split the class in half. (If still in pairs, have each pair of students decide who will be a circle and who will be a triangle. Then, split the class into two groups, one of circles and one of triangles.) The circles will still be explorers, and the triangles will make frozen images of totem poles with their bodies.
* Instruction for explorers:
  + “We are near a settlement in northern Washington. There are some interesting sculptures here that we’re not familiar with. Take a good look at these sculptures and write down what you think these might tell us.”
* Instruction for actors:
  + “You get to act together as totem poles. Try to move your body and face in a way that is different than how you would normally move it. Because totem poles are statues, we’re going to create frozen images together to represent these creatures. We’ll cue this image with a 1-2-3-freeze, and then you have to be perfectly still in your chosen position. Don’t worry if you don’t like how your first pose works out. We’ll do a few images together, so you can change it up a couple of times.”
  + Perhaps students can split into groups of 3, with one on the ground, one sitting on a chair, and one standing above. Otherwise, just let students play together.
* Do a 1-2-3-freeze, and let explorers investigate the totem poles. What animals or emotions do you see in these totem poles? What does it tell you about who might have created them? What can you interpret from the key we’ve created?

**Step 3: Totem Pole Group Images Switched Roles**

* Repeat Step 2, but let groups switch roles

Helpful Information to be used for possible facts for the hook activity: Information about Totem Poles:

* + Totem poles were carved by Native Americans in the Pacific northwest, who lived in Washington and Oregon up into British Columbia and Alaska
  + Totem pole is an Algonquian word, which translates to “His kinship group”
  + Big, outside totem poles were built during the 1700s and the 1800s. Before that, Native Americans made smaller carvings in the pillars of their houses
  + Totem poles were mostly carved into giant cedar trees or red cedar trees
  + Tribes that made totem poles were the [Haida](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haida_people), [Tlingit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tlingit), [Tsimshian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tsimshian), [Kwakwaka’wakw](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kwakwaka%27wakw) (Kwakiutl), [Nuxalk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuxalk) (Bella Coola), and [Nuu-chah-nulth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuu-chah-nulth) (Nootka)
  + Totem pole carvings may include animals, fish, plants, insects, and humans, or they may represent supernatural beings
  + Totem poles were not religious symbols. Their purpose was to generate allusions or illustrate stories
  + Types of poles:
  + House frontal poles
    - This type of totem pole, usually 20 to 30 feet tall is the most decorative. Its carvings tell the story of the family or clan who own them. These poles are also known as heraldic, crest, or family poles. Poles of this type are placed outside the clan house of the most important village leaders. Often, watchman figures are carved at the top of the pole to protect the pole owner’s family and the village. Another type of house frontal pole is the entrance or doorway pole, which is attached to the center front of the home and includes an oval-shaped opening through the base that serves as the entrance to the clan house.
  + House posts
    - These interior totem poles, typically 8 to 10 feet in height, are usually shorter than exterior poles. The interior posts support the roof beam of a clan house and include a large notch at the top, where the beam can rest. A clan house may have two to four or more house posts, depending on the native group who built it. Carvings on these poles, like those of the house frontal poles, are often used as a storytelling device for children and help tell the story of the owners' family history.
  + Mortuary pole
    - The rarest type of totem pole is a mortuary structure that incorporates grave boxes with carved supporting poles or includes a recessed back to hold the grave box. It is among the tallest, reaching 50 to 60 feet in height, and most prominent pole .The Haida and Tlingit people erect mortuary poles at the death of important individuals in the community. These poles may have a single figure carved at the top, which may depict the clan's crest, but carvings usually cover its entire length. Ashes or body of the deceased person is placed in the upper portion of the pole.
  + Memorial pole
    - This type of totem pole, which usually stands in front of a clan house, is erected about a year after a person has died. The clan chief’s memorial pole may be raised at the center of the village. The pole's purpose is to honor the deceased person and identify the relative who is taking over as his successor within the clan and the community. Traditionally, the memorial pole has one carved figure at the top, but an additional figure may also be added at the bottom of the pole.
  + Welcome pole
    - Carved by the Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl) and Nuu-chah-nulth (Nootka) people, these totem poles include large carvings of human figures, some as tall as 40 feet. Welcome poles are placed at the edge of a stream or saltwater beach to welcome guests to the community, or possibly to intimidate strangers.
  + Shame/ridicule pole
    - Totem poles used for public ridicule are usually called shame poles, and were created to embarrass individuals or groups for their unpaid debts or when they did something wrong. The poles are often placed in prominent locations and removed after the debt is paid or the wrong is corrected. Shame pole carvings represent the person being shamed.

**Dressing the Part**

Lesson 7

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to demonstrate understanding of how appearance, especially clothing, contributes to character expression by exploring and drawing costumes.

**Big Ideas:**

* Connecting with culture
* Understanding Differences
* Self-expression
* Self-presentation
* Image
* Symbolism

**Essential Questions:**

* What are the methods we use to express who we are?
* How does clothing inform and express who we are?

**Materials Needed:**

* Paper human patterns
* Images and a way to present them

**Hook: Self-Clothing Patterns**

* Discussion: What did you wear to school today? Do you wear different clothes in different places and for different occasions? What do you wear in the summer? What do you wear on the weekend? What do you wear when you go out to recess? What do these differences tell us about what you do at these places and times?

**Step 1: Clothing patterns of Self Elsewhere**

* Transition: If you lived in a different place, might you wear something different? What about if you lived in California? What if you lived on the moon? What if you lived in Alaska?
* Hand out the paper human patterns. “Draw one body as if it were you living in a different place. Share with 2 new friends. What do you notice about each other? Can you figure out what kind of place their drawing lives in?”
* What if you lived in Alaska a long time ago?
* “Draw one more body as if you lived in a different time and place. Share with 2 new friends. What do you notice about each other? What’s different between this and the first one? Where and when do you think this drawing lives?”

**Step 2: Native American Clothing Patterns**

Pull up the Native American clothing images or pass around a printed version. The pictures are attached at the end of the lesson.

* If you were part of the Inuit tribe, your clothing might have looked something like this:
  + Where do you think they lived? How can you tell? What can you tell about them by looking at their clothing and faces?
  + The Inuit lived in Alaska and dressed in caribou skins, with fur on the inside and outside.
* If you were part of the Maidu tribe, you might have dressed like this:
  + Where do you think they lived? What was the weather like there? How can you tell? What can you tell about them by looking at their clothing and faces?
  + The Maidu lived in California and mostly wore loin cloths, grass skirts, and aprons.
* If you were part of the Sioux tribe, you might have dressed like this:
  + Where do you think they lived? Why do you think that? What can you tell about them by looking at their clothing and faces?
  + The Sioux lived on the plains. Their clothing was made of elk, deer, or buffalo hide. They protected them from harsh winter winds.

**Step 3: What If**

* If you were a Native American living in old Provo, where would you find supplies to make your own clothes? What would you need form your clothes? How would your winter clothes function in the summer? How would summer clothes help you in the winter? What would you need protection from?
* Can you draw what your clothes would look like, using elements from the clothing you saw in these tribes? Your clothes might be a little bit different because of who you are as a person and where you live. Fill in the last human form on your paper

**Step 4: Sharing**

* Share your final image with some friends. Show them your image, and then show them how you would walk around in those clothes. Ask each other questions about your drawings. Why did you choose to create your costume like this? Remember what we did at the beginning with the “masks?” Remember how those changed how you moved and spoke? How might your Native American clothing change how you move and talk?



