

Cultural Standards

4.1.1:D-2 Compare traditional and contemporary seasonal activities of a Native culture

4.1.2:A-2 Demonstrate understanding that storytelling is an important part of oral tradition

4.1.2:C-2 Demonstrate awareness that Native stories have specific teachings

4.1.2:F-2 Describe the role of Elders in traditional Native society

4.2.1:A-2 Demonstrate awareness of the original peoples/inhabitants of North America

4.2.1:E-2 Give examples of seasonal gatherings and celebrations (ex. summer fishing camps, wild rice harvesting, powwows) of Native people in North America

4.2.3:A-2 Give examples of ways in which people depend on the Earth for survival

4.2.3:E-2 Identify examples of common needs (ex clean air, water, food) of humans, plants, and animals

MN State Standards

Science

Kindergarten

0.3.2.2.2 Identify the sun as a source of heat and light

1st grade

1.1.1.1.1 When asked "How do you know?," students support their answer with observations

2nd grade

2.2.2.1.1 Describe an object's change in position to other objects or a background

Social Studies

Kindergarten

0.3.1.1.2 Describe a map and a globe as a representation of a space

1st grade

1.3.2.3.1 Compare physical and human characteristics of a local place and a place far away on a globe

2nd grade

2.4.1.1.1 Use and create calendars to identify days, weeks, months, years, and seasons; use and create timelines to chronicle personal, school, community and world events

Lunar Energy in Ojibwe culture

Lesson by Deanna StandingCloud

Lesson template by Odia Wood-Krueger

Objective: Learn the importance of the moon in Native culture

Integration: Science, Social Studies

Background Information

Ojibwe people consider the moon as a cherished relative.

Described in the Creation stories, Nanaboozhoo was raised by his Grandmother (Nookomis) near a magnificent lake. Before ascending into the sky world, Nookomis gave birth to twins on the back of a Great Turtle; a boy and a girl. She named them "Anishinaabe" the spontaneous ones, for they were not born from substance, but from the Creator's thought.

Grandmother moon now lives in the sky world as a nurturing energy, watching over Anishinaabeg by providing light in the darkest nights.

Without the moon, Earth would not be habitable for plant-life, animals or human beings. The moon unconditionally provides our planet with balance, stabilizing the planet's rotation and regulating ocean's tides.

Earth's only natural satellite, the moon surface reflects the light of the sun in phases, depending upon the position of the planet. The time it takes for the moon to orbit our Earth is 28 days, the same as a woman's menstrual cycle. This is why the moon is regarded as having feminine properties.



In the 7 Teachings of the Anishinaabe, we are told to honor our Elders. Grandmother moon is a treasured ancestor who radiates love and encouragement for every being on Earth by holding our world together. Through an Indigenous lens, we are able to begin to connect with natural phenomenon, like our moon, as family.

Lesson

1. Create a KWL chart with students. What they KNOW, what they WANT to know, and then finally, what they LEARNED.
2. Invite a local Elder to the class to discuss the significance of the moon to tribal people. If you are unable to locate an Elder, work with local American Indian community to identify an individual available to come in to present information about the importance of the moon and the indigenous calendar.
3. Conduct moon phase activity. Material list is on the back page.
4. This activity calls for the use of Oreo cookies, so be sure to check with students beforehand if they have any dietary restrictions because they will be eating the cookie at the end of the lesson! :)
5. Pass out a chart with easy to read moon phases.
6. Demonstrate to students how to twist one side of the Oreo so that most of the frosting is on the other side when the halves are separated. (You may want to practice before showing the students!)
7. Give each student a popsicle craft stick, a small paper plate and their cookie. Allow them to separate the sides as you demonstrated.
8. As a class, wipe frosting off cookie using popsicle stick to demonstrate each moon phase pictured one by one, starting with the full moon. After finishing New Moon, enjoy Oreo!

Materials

- Oreo cookies (one for each student)
- Ojibwe moon phase chart
- Small paper plates
- Popsicle craft sticks
- Turtle calendar with Ojibwe moon names
- Journals
- Colored pencils

Vocabulary

Aabitawaabikizi - *Half Moon*

Aki - *Earth*

Bakwewi - *Crescent Moon*

Bakwezhigaans - *Cookie*

Dibikad - *Night*

Dibiki-giizis - *Moon*

Ganawendan - *Care for*

Giizhig - *Day*

Giizis - *Sun*

Mikinak - *Turtle*

Nookomis - *Grandmother*

Oshkagoojin - *New Moon*

Waawiyeyaa - *Round*



Minneapolis Public Schools
Indian Education
indianed@mpls.k12.mn.us
612-668-0610

Discussion Questions

1. Why is the moon important?
2. How does the moon shine?
3. Why do you think Ojibwe people called the moon Grandmother?
4. Which of the seven teachings does Grandmother moon show when she helps take care of human beings on Earth?
5. Why do we even need the moon?
6. What would happen if we had no moon?
7. Where is the moon when the sun is out?
8. Why does the moon change?
9. What is it like on the surface of the moon?
10. How old is the moon? Where did it come from?
11. What is one way you can honor the moon in a respectful way?
12. Who might you go to if you have a question about Native culture? How do you go about asking them a question?

Assessment

Student journals should demonstrate through drawings or writings that they understand the basic concept of why we need a moon, why the moon changes, and that the

moon orbits the Earth.

Students should also be able to demonstrate they have a basic understanding of why Grandmother moon (Nookomis) is important to Ojibwe culture.

Students should also connect Turtle shell with tracking time. Take note about student usage of Indigenous concepts, because it indicates higher order thinking skills.

Enrichment Activities

1. Read the book "Thirteen Moons on the Turtles Back" by Joseph Bruchac to class. Follow up with having students color a Turtle Shell. Note that each larger scute represents a month and the smaller scutes along the outside represent a day. There is an animal teaching trunk with a real turtle shell included available for check out from the MPS Indian Education Department.
2. During calendar math, acknowledge Grandmother moon when she's full. Invite local Elder to come into the classroom to show how to make traditional red willow. Welcome the Elder to provide a teaching for the proper protocol in utilizing the bark shavings. Ask students to offer red willow during the full moon.
3. Conduct an activity about the behavior of light! Using flashlight, shine light on the surface of a ball. Have students move around the ball to see how the shadows change and what parts are illuminated.
4. Create "The Changing Moon" wheel with paper as another way to show the phases of the moon.
5. Organize a field trip to a local planetarium or sky lab. Connect the information with all the celestial bodies in our solar system, including our moon. Invite a local Elder along on the field trip to add an Indigenous world view along with the information given during the field trip.