

Cultural Standards

- **4.1.1: C-10**—Give examples of traditional Native American practices (e.g., ceremonies, transportation) still in use today
- **4.1.1: I-10**— Research elements (e.g., values, beliefs, customs) of an Native American culture in Minnesota, and explain their influence on contemporary ways of life
- **4.1.2: A-10**—Research and present stories and legends relating to Native American cultures in Minnesota
- **4.1.2: B-10**—Demonstrate awareness that Native American stories contain more than one teaching
- **4.1.2: C-10**—Explain protocols associated with Native American oral tradition
- **4.1.2: D-10**—Discuss barriers to preserving Native American oral tradition
- **4.1.2: E-10**—Give reasons why it is important for contemporary Native American peoples to maintain or re-establish traditional values in their lives
- **4.1.2: F-10**—Discuss ways of preserving and transmitting Native American cultural identity
- **4.2.3: B-10**—Demonstrate awareness of the special significance of animals, plants, and celestial objects for Native American/indigenous cultures
- **4.3.1: D-10**—Discuss the portrayal of diverse elements of Native American cultures in North America in a variety of texts

MN State Standards

9th Grade:

- I can support my thinking with evidence from the text. (9.4.1.1, 9.5.1.1)
- I can analyze how word choice shapes the meaning or tone of a text. (9.4.4.4)

10th Grade:

- I can read closely to determine the explicit and implicit meaning of a text. (10.4.1.1, 4.5.1.1)
- I can support my thinking with evidence from the text. (10.4.1.1, 10.5.1.1)
- I can analyze a text's structure and how portions of the text relate to each other and the whole. (10.4.5.5)
- I can assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text. (10.4.6.6, 10.5.6.6)

Sacred Stories

Objective: How oral traditions shape identity

Integration: Social Studies, Math, English

Background Information

Sky stories of the Anishinabe are part of a complex system of spiritual beliefs. Knowledge of the stars is found in many aspects of culture including storytelling, symbolism and religious traditions.

Some spiritual leaders have special knowledge of the stars and the planets. In ancient times, these indigenous astronomers used this knowledge to help guide the day-to-day affairs of their communities.

The Anishinabe have been given ways of communicating with the powerful heavenly forces. The oral teachings and stories which flow out of this communication between mortals and the spiritual world have been passed down from generation to generation since

the beginning of time. For example, one of the most powerful symbols for the life force is the Sun. The need for its presence for survival is stressed in the ancient story called "Snaring the Sun."

To this day, the stories of the Anishinabe of Central North America featured in this project are remembered and told by respected storytellers. With the coming of the first snow, families gather around their elders during the long winter evenings, and the time for storytelling begins. In the summertime, when the plants are awakened and the animals are roaming about, these stories are not told, as the plant and animal "beings" might hear and be offended. The storytellers speak of these things only in the winter



when the spirits are resting.

In our Anishinabe culture, only our "stargazers", some of whom are known as the Wabeno-innin, the "Morning star Men" or "The Men of the Dawn", are privileged to have a full knowledge of the Sky world. Much of their knowledge is sacred in nature and is used only under special circumstances associated with religious matters.

Lesson

Ideally, you will have access to the Star Lab to provide a complete experience. If unable to coordinate the dome, a storyteller should be invited into the classroom to share stories.

Anishinabemowin: sacred stories can be translated and discussed for inherent teachings.

English: Stories could be adapted to be made into story books or puppet shows for younger students, plays, or stop frame videos.

Social Studies: Using the math lesson from the middle school grades, have students choose a star on the attached constellation maps. The numbers in parentheses indicate how many light years away that particular

star is. Thus, the light that is shining on us tonight left that star x amount of years ago. What was happening in the world as we know it when the light left that particular star? Have students research the history of the place they live in based on a stars timing.

Materials:

- Access to Star Lab (optional)
- Copies of traditional stories (both in English and Ojibwe)

Vocabulary:

Aadizookaan

Anung

Asterism

Big Dipper

Constellation

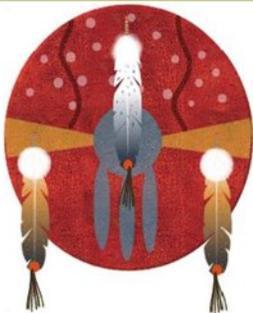
Dibaajimowin

Maang

Ojiig

Pattern

Perspective



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Discussion Questions

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the difference between aadizookaan and dibaajimowin? 2. What are the protocols surrounding oral storytelling for Ojibwe peoples? 3. How do sacred stories inform us? 4. What answer can you give someone who asks, "Are these stories re- | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> al?" Support your answer (thus, simply saying yes won't suffice). 5. How do sacred stories teach us about the Seven Grandfather Teachings? |
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Evaluation

Students should be able to give an example of how sacred stories provide "rules" for living the good life (mino bimaadiziwin)

Enrichment Activities

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attached is the model for Maang (the Ojibwe version of the Little Dipper) 2. Research other names for the Fisher/Ojiig constellation. 3. What is this group of stars known as in other places in the world? (See attached) 4. Make a star clock to use the stars to tell time like our ancestors did (see attached for two versions). 5. Borrow the Animal Signs trunk from MPS | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Indian Education to learn more about animals native to Minnesota. 6. Invite a wildlife biologist into the classroom to learn more about fishers. 7. Invite storytellers from other cultures into your classroom. 8. Plan a storytelling evening for Family Night. 9. Make puppets of the <i>Fisher in Skyland</i> story and create a play to share with others. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Map where the various Big Dipper stories are told around the world. |
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