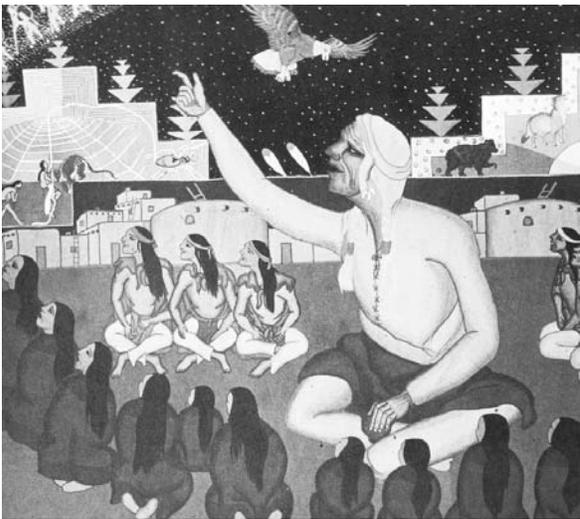


Lesson Plan Eleven: Learning from Oral Traditions



Students read or listen to traditional Pueblo stories to explore the role that oral tradition plays in preserving cultural values and educating Pueblo children in community customs.



ORAL TRADITION ACTIVITIES

Location: classroom

Suggested group size: whole class, sometimes divided into smaller groups

Subject(s): language arts, history, theater/drama

Concepts covered: oral tradition, myths, legends

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Student outcomes: Students will understand the idea of oral tradition, how it is used in the Ancestral Pueblo and present-day pueblo culture, and why present Pueblo people still consider it important to their culture. They will also gain understanding of the presence of oral tradition in non-Pueblo present-day culture.





EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

New Mexico Standards

Social Studies

Strand: History

K-4 Benchmark III-B: Identify and describe the symbols, icons, songs, traditions, and leaders of local, state, tribal, and national levels that exemplify ideals and provide continuity and a sense of community across time.

Grade 4

1. Describe various cultures and the communities they represent, and explain how they have evolved over time.

Art

Content Standard 1: Learn and develop the essential skills and technical demands unique to dance, music, theatre/drama, and visual arts.

Theatre

K-4

A. Use body and voice to portray character that contributes to the action of a dramatization.

1. Demonstrate the ability to concentrate and stay in character for the duration of short improvised dramatizations.

B. Select characters, environments, and situations for dramatizations.

1. In small or large group discussions, describe in detail what they imagine characters in their dramatizations look like, how they behave, how they feel about other characters, and where they live.

C. Improvise dialogue to tell stories.

NATIONAL STANDARDS

History

Topic 1 Living and Working Together in Families and Communities, now and long ago

Standard 1A, Grades K-4: The student understands family life now and in the recent past; family life in various places long ago



Standard 1B Grades K-4: The student understands the different ways people of diverse racial, religious, and ethnic groups, and of various national origins, have transmitted their beliefs and values

Standard 2B Grades K-4: The student understands how communities in North America varied long ago

Grade K-4: Compare and contrast the different ways in which early Hawaiian and Native American peoples such as the Iroquois, the Sioux, the Hopi, the Nez Perce, the Inuit, and the Cherokee adapted to their various environments and created their patterns of community life long ago. (Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas)

Grade 3-4: Compare and contrast how Native American or Hawaiian life today differs from the life of these same groups over 100 years ago (Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas)

Topic 3: The History of the United States: Democratic Principles and Values and the People from Many Cultures Who Contributed to its Cultural, Economic, and Political Heritage

Standard 6A: The student understands folklore and other cultural contributions from various regions of the United States and how they help to form a national heritage

Standard 7: Selected attributes and historical developments of various societies in Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe

7A: The student understands the cultures and historical developments of selected societies in such places as Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe

Grade 3-4: Investigate the ways historians learn about the past if there are no written records

I. Culture

Early Grades

- a. explore and describe similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures address similar human needs and concerns
- c. describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in a particular culture





Middle Grades

- a. compare similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures meet human needs and concerns
- c. explain and give examples of how language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development and transmission of culture

English Language Arts

K-4 Benchmark III-A: Use language, literature, and media to gain and demonstrate awareness of cultures around the world

Grade 4

1. Examine the reasons for characters' actions
2. Identify and examine characters' motives
3. Consider a situation or problem from different characters' point of view.

K-4 Benchmark III-B: Identify and use the types of literature according to their purpose and function

Grade 4

1. Identify beginning, middle, and end of a story.
4. Compose fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and drama using self-selected and/or assigned topics and forms.

MATERIALS

Paper, pencils

Northern Pueblo Creation Story at end of lesson plan

Zuni Migration Story at end of lesson plan

Books:

"Coyote &" by Joe Hayes

"The Good Rainbow Road" by Simon Ortiz

"Old Father Storyteller" by Pablita Velarde

or similar (available for loan from Bandelier, 505-672-3861 x 517; see full citations under "Resources" section at end of lesson plan)



VOCABULARY

Archeologist: a scientist who learns about groups of people, particularly those in the past, by studying places they have lived and items they used

Consequences: what happens when someone does a particular thing; for instance, something bad that happens if someone breaks a rule

Culture: a group of people who share traditions, beliefs, and customs. Sometimes used to mean the traditions, beliefs, and customs themselves, and things or activities related to them.

Elder: an older member of a group, depended on by others for their knowledge and wisdom

Ethnographer: a scientist who studies about groups and their culture past and present by learning about current customs from present-day people

Generation: the continuity of people or families, as in grandparents, parents, and children make three generations. Also used to mean the time from one set to the next, how many years from the time someone is born until they have a child.

Legend: a story that has been told for many years, often for so long that it is hard to know if it did actually happen

Myth: usually a story that involves characters doing things that probably never could have happened

Oral: saying something instead of putting it in writing

Puye: a site considered by the Santa Clara Pueblo people to be a home of their ancestors; located near the current Pueblo

Tradition: the way a particular group of people chooses to do something, often passed down through many generations

Witch: one English translation for the Pueblo idea of someone who was willing to hurt other members of the community in order to have power; the word has other meanings in other cultures





PRE- AND POST-EVALUATION

Pre-Evaluation: (choose among)

1. Ask the class if they think it would work better to learn rules by talking or by reading, or if there are other ways that are better, and why. Write the ideas on the board or a piece of flipchart paper, and save for later.
2. Ask the students what “oral tradition” is and whether it happens in their culture.
3. Ask the students if they can think of any ways that oral tradition has been important to Ancestral and present-day Pueblo people for holding on to their customs and culture.

Post-Evaluation:

1. Bring out the flipchart from 1. above. Go over the ideas and see if the students have more to add, some things they don't think any more, or things they see differently now.
2. Again ask the question concerning what oral tradition is and whether it is a part of the students' culture, and see if they have different views now.
3. Again ask the question concerning the importance of the oral tradition to Ancestral and present-day Pueblo people and see if they have more or different ideas.
4. Have the students write and illustrate their stories from Activity 4A and post them in a public place in the school. Have them make a title and caption for the exhibit as a whole, to explain the purpose of the stories. Have them make a list of the themes of the stories and post it, so other students can match the themes to the corresponding stories.

PROCEDURES: ACTIVITIES TO CHOOSE FROM

- 1A. Initiate a discussion with the class about the many skills known to Ancestral Pueblo people, and how young people would have learned them. Stress the idea that the people had no written language, but they had complex skills and extensive knowledge to pass from generation to generation. Brainstorm with the class to make a list of particular skills and knowledge that, if they were Ancestral Pueblo elders, they would want to be sure were passed to the next generation and not lost. Be sure to include some concrete skills and some that are not concrete (see examples below) . Then brainstorm ways the students think would be effective for passing each kind of information from one generation to the next.

**Skills might include:**

- Concrete: making arrows, making bows, making arrowheads, planting seeds, grinding corn, building a house, spinning thread, weaving cloth, sewing moccasins, weaving sandals, butchering a deer, tanning a rabbit skin, making paint for pottery, making pottery, firing pottery (and so many more)
 - Non-concrete: knowing why a particular rule is important, knowing the words to songs for a particular ceremony, knowing when the corn is ripe and needs to be picked, knowing when to plant in the spring, knowing when to gather plants so they would be effective as medicine, knowing landmarks to find your way on a trading trip, knowing the locations of water sources away from the home village (and so many more)
- 1B. Divide the students into small groups. Have each group choose one item from the list to teach, and decide on a way they could teach it to the class using methods available to the Ancestral Pueblo people. They could do a demonstration, give instructions, tell a story with the idea built in, or try other ways. Just be sure no written words, electronic devices, sheets of paper, etc. are involved. Have each group take their turn. Ask the class their reactions - do they like learning that way? Do they think they would have learned better doing it orally or by reading? As an option, the next day or several days later, ask students to go over something they learned from one of the other groups. How well did they remember?
2. Look through the books *Coyote* and *Old Father Storyteller* for one or more stories that would be appropriate for the class' objectives, and read them aloud, or read *The Good Rainbow Road*. That day, or a day or two later, have the students divide into groups and have each tell one of the stories, or act it out, without referring to the book. How well did everyone remember the plot and the details? Ask them if they would rather have learned the stories by listening or by reading them silently.
3. Many cultures have stories like "Long Sash" (in *Old Father Storyteller*), and the Zuni Migration Story or the northern Pueblo Creation Story included at the end of this lesson plan, that explain how the world came to be the way it is. After reading one or both stories, ask the students why they think the elders would tell stories of this type. Ask the students if they can think of any famous non-Pueblo stories that provide similar explanations.
- 4A. Ask the students, "If you were an Ancestral Pueblo elder and you wanted to teach the children why a particular rule or custom was important, how would you do it?" Often elders showed the children the consequences of misbehaving or disrespecting traditions by telling a story in which a



character, often Mr. Coyote, disregards the rules. Several of these appear in *Coyote &*. Read one or two to the class. Have the students work in pairs, small groups, or as individuals to come up with very short stories set in the present that are intended to teach their classmates the importance of a particular present-day rule or custom. Examples might be such things as looking both ways before crossing the street, never making fun of anyone, eating your vegetables, telling the truth, doing your homework on time, listening in class, telling your parents where you will be, etc.

Share some of the stories with the class and ask them to tell what rule was being presented. Ask the students if they can think of any famous stories/books/movies that made them realize why it was important to act a certain way or follow a certain rule.

4B. As a class or in small groups, have the students make a list of things that were taught to young Ancestral Pueblo people and are still important for students to learn today. Examples could include manners, personal hygiene, the proper way to wear various pieces of clothing, cooking, sewing, using tools, building houses, stories of their people's history, taking care of minor injuries, avoiding dangers, what your group knows about other groups around you, social skills like relating to people of the opposite gender, where to find water or wild herbs, and so many more.

EXTENSION IDEAS

1. The Ancestral Pueblo people told stories each winter, and over time everyone in a particular group would know all the stories that their local storytellers had to offer. Is there any story that everyone in the class really knows from beginning to end? Is there any part of the history of their school, city, state, or nation that everyone knows well? Is there any song that everyone knows from beginning to end? How did they learn it - by listening or reading?
2. Ask the students if they think they could learn another language better by looking in a book or by hearing stories told by a native speaker. If they were present-day Pueblo parents who wanted to be sure that their children could speak their own language, what would be one way for them to practice? Sometimes stories contain old or unusual words that are not used in regular conversation. Can the students think of any words like that in stories told in non-Pueblo languages? (examples: 'twas, once upon a time, yonder, beanstalk, olden, thence, happily ever after)
3. Look at the lesson plan "Making Pueblo Pottery" for ideas on learning a particular skill. It utilizes a video of Maria Martinez, the late master potter from San Ildefonso Pueblo, showing the stages of traditional Pueblo pottery making.



4. Have someone who is skillful at a particular craft or technique come to the class and demonstrate their methods. Afterwards, ask the students if they think they would have learned the skill better that way or from a book. You might link this with the lesson “Making Pueblo Pottery” Activity 4, or “How Did They Live Without Supermarkets” Extension Activity 1, which also suggest a visit from a craftsperson.
5. In pairs, small groups, or individually, ask the students to write directions for doing something fairly complicated. Distribute the resulting directions to other groups and ask them to read through the description very carefully. Ask them if they think they would be able to do the activity correctly without having someone show them. If possible, have them try doing it (this would be difficult if it is something like putting a saddle on a horse or changing the oil in a car!). Or, have each group write directions for doing a particular action without saying what the action is. Post them or read them to the class and see if other groups can figure out what is being done.
6. Ask the students to imagine they are archeologists or ethnographers, studying old legends. Could you look at stories and find clues about the way people lived long ago when the story was first told? These could include such things as tools, rules, clothing, and customs being used by the characters.
7. After the Spanish came to New Mexico, many stories were shared between the Pueblo people and the newcomers. In the process, new things appeared in old stories, like characters riding horses or using metal tools. In the stories you read in this lesson, did you notice any things like that? (In the book *Coyote &*, look at “*Coyote and His Bow*”, “*Coyote and Rabbit*”, and others)

RESOURCES

Books: Available for loan from Bandelier, 505-672-3861 x 517:

Hayes, Joe, *Coyote &, Native American Folk Tales retold by Joe Hayes*, Mariposa Publishing, Santa Fe, NM 1983 (ISBN 0-93553-01-3)

Ortiz, Simon J., *The Good Rainbow Road*, University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 2004 (ISBN 0-8165-2340-1)

Velarde, Pablita, *Old Father Story Teller*, Clear Light Publishers, Santa Fe, NM, 1989, (ISBN 0-940666-24-3)

Videos for loan from Bandelier:

Pablita Velarde (video/DVD) 25 min. Pablita talks about the time she spent at Bandelier in the 1940s doing paintings for the park museum, and also about her book “*Old Father Story Teller*”.



Pablita Velarde: Golden Dawn, (video) from KNME series “Colores!”. Pablita tells about her book, “Old Father Story Teller,” and paintings she’s done.

Voices (VHS) 15 min. Larry Littlebird, Max Salazar, and Rachel Agoyo share stories from New Mexico’s three cultures in a casual session of storytelling. From the KNME series “Colores!”

Web Resources:

Bandelier website: www.nps.gov/band

Bandelier museum collections website: www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/band or click on the “collections” icon on the Bandelier website

Creation Story from the northern Pueblos

this version, provided by a Pueblo member of the Bandelier staff, contains story elements found in stories in a number of the pueblos between Santa Fe and Taos

In the beginning, before the People lived upon this earth, they lived below this world. In this underworld, the People struggled to survive. Life was difficult and the People prayed for a better life. The Creator heard their pleas and sent them on a long journey below this world. For years and years the People journeyed. Far off in the distance, they could hear digging and scratching noises. As the sounds grew closer, they saw a Mole and this Mole began to talk to the People. He told the People that he had been digging this hole for a long time and that through this hole the People were to emerge into a better world. With that, he called the Ant People together and they built a huge ladder. One by one, on the backs of the Ants, the People slowly emerged into this world. Upon reaching this new world of light, the People were instructed by Grandmother Spider Woman to continue their journey to find their homelands. She told them that when they found her sign and the sign of the Mole, that was where they were to make their homes. So the People set off.

First they traveled to the north. There they found a land that was blanketed by ice and snow. Tired from traveling such a long distance, they rested. After some time of searching for the sign of the Mole and Spider Woman, they packed up and set off to journey again. When it was time to leave, some of the People decided to stay in this land to the North. They knew life would be hard and so they called upon the Bear to become the protector of the People to the North. The Bear knew how to survive in a land that was so cold and he knew how to find food. And so it was that the rest of the group walked to the west.

In the west, they found a land that was very dry and very hot. Tired from traveling such a long way, the People decided to rest in this land. After finding no sign of the Mole or Spider Woman, the People packed up and readied themselves



for another long journey. When it came time to leave, some of the People decided that they wanted to travel no more and wanted to make the West their home. They called upon the Coyote to become the protector of the People to the West. He knew how to live in a land where water was scarce and the days were long and hot. And so it was that the rest of the group walked to the East.

Slowly they traveled. In the East, they found a land that was lush, green, and beautiful. The People were certain that this was where they would find the signs they had been searching so long for. Here they rested and searched for the sign of the Mole and Spider Woman. Finding nothing, the People decided it was time to pack up and leave this area. Some of the group decided to stay in the East. Here, they called upon the Cougar to become the protector of the People to the East. He knew how to live in a land where the weather changed so quickly. And so it was that the rest of the group walked to the South.

The journey South was long and difficult. The People were becoming discouraged. Slowly they walked. Traveling for such a long time, the People decided to rest along the banks of a river. Here they stayed for some time. As the women went to collect water from the river, they noticed faint mole tracks. Quickly they ran to get the others. The People followed the tracks until they came to their end. Here, at the end of the tracks, was an animal, an animal none of them had ever seen. It had a little round head and a hard thing that rested on its back. Every time someone got close to it, the animal would pull its little head into the hard covering on its back.

Disappointed, the People cried because they had not found the Mole or Spider Woman but some creature they had not seen before. The leader of the group came forward and began to talk to the People. He reminded them of their long journey and about how slowly they traveled with all they had on their backs. He told them to watch the strange creature. As they observed the creature they noticed that he walked very slowly and that the hard thing on his back was his home. Their leader advised the People that this animal had traveled like they had, very slowly and carrying their homes on their backs. He told them to look at its tracks, which resembled those of the Mole, and as for the sign of Spider Woman, it was on the back of the animal. It was her web carved into the shell of this animal you and I know as Turtle.

The People had found the signs they had been searching for! In the land to the South, the People scattered and made their homes on the mesa tops, in the canyons, and along the life-giving waters. This was now their homeland.



Zuni Migration Story

The Zuni Emergence and Migration Story describes where the A:shiwí (Zuni) people came from and how they arrived at Idiwanna, the Middle Place, now known as Zuni. As a part of a tribal project to make a series of murals portraying this story, youth apprentices drew details of the story from interviews with tribal elders. *Place names: the San Francisco Peaks are near Flagstaff, AZ, and the Grand Canyon is north of them; Mt. Taylor, El Morro, El Malpais, and San Rafael are near Grants, NM; Zuni is south of Gallup, NM; Bandelier is north and west from Santa Fe, NM, Mesa Verde is near Durango, Colorado, and Chaco Canyon is south and east from Farmington. This Ojo Caliente is not the one that is south of Taos. Zuni /Idiwanna/Middle Place is south of Gallup and Grants.*

Our ancestors emerged from the Fourth Underworld at a place called Ribbon Falls in the Grand Canyon. The Twin Warriors brought our people onto Mother Earth to live and to bless the Father Sun with daily offerings. When they emerged, our people had algae hair, tails, webbed hands and feet, and a protrusion on their foreheads. The Twin Warriors changed our ancestors' bodies into the way we look today. After they had rested and gotten well, our people were ready to start their Journey to the Middle Place. The people traveled through the San Francisco Peaks, on to Comanche Point, and then to Datura Mound.

At Datura Mound they separated into two groups and had to choose between two eggs, a colorful egg and a dull egg. The dull egg hatched into a colorful parrot, which led its group south to the Lands of Everlasting Sunshine, now called Mexico and South America. A black crow emerged from the colorful egg to lead its group to the lands in the East.

Before beginning their journey, the people following the crow split into three groups. One group went directly to search for the Middle Place. They traveled through the Zuni Heavens, and then to Hard Scrabble Wash where the clans originated. They passed through nearby places like Twin Buttes, Ojo Caliente, and Hawikkuh before arriving at the Middle Place. When they arrived at Halonawa, at the Ant Pile, they called upon the water strider to stretch out its legs to all four oceans to help find the Middle Place. The water strider rested and its heart remained at Idiwanna, our present-day Zuni.

A group of A:shiwí journeyed north through what is now Mesa Verde, Chaco Canyon, Bandelier, and Sandia. They then returned through Mt. Taylor, San Rafael, El Morro, Box Canyon, Nutria, the Village of the Great Kivas, and then to the Middle Place to reunite with our ancestors as they had promised. The remaining group journeyed through the southern lands toward the White Mountains, then back up through what is now El Malpais, to El Morro, and then made their way to the Middle Place. Our A:shiwí people continue to live in the Middle Place.