Lesson Plan:

**Building a Mississippian House**

**Ocmulgee National Monument**

**Grade Level:**

2nd and 4th grades

**Subject:**

Social Studies

**Duration:**

15-20 minutes

**Group Size:**

8 or more

**Setting:**

Classroom

**Georgia State Standards:**

SS2H2

The students will describe the Georgia Creek and Cherokee cultures of the past in terms of tools, clothing, homes, ways of making a living, and accomplishments.

SS2H2a

Describe the regions in Georgia where the Creeks and Cherokees lived and how the people used their local resources.

SS4H1b

Describe how Native Americans used their environment to obtain food, clothing, and shelter.

**Overview**

In "Building a Creek House," students will learn the wattle and daub method used by the Creek Native Americans to build their homes. This is a hands-on, movement activity for students to "experience" the construction of a home.

**Objectives**

**Guiding Question:**

How did the Creek Native Americans use their environment to construct their shelters?

**Critical Content:**

Process of shelter construction by the Creek Native Americans.

**Student Objectives:**

Students will describe shelter construction by Creek Native Americans.

**Background:**

The activity "Building a Creek House" will have students up and moving as they go through the steps to build a house just as the Creek Native Americans once did in Georgia and at Ocmulgee National Monument. By being part of the process, students will gain a deeper understanding of the wattle and daub method of home construction.

**Materials:**

Flexible material of length to represent river cane – for example: rope, finger weaving, yarn

Words to song displayed (See Step 2)

**Procedure:**

Step 1:

Ask for 6-10 volunteers. These students will stand in a line arms' length apart. They represent the tree trucks that make the posts for the house.

Step 2:

Two students will be the weavers. One stands on the inside, and the other will be on the outside.

Have the words to the following song posted or held by a student.

As the "audience" sings, the two weavers pass the flexible material representing river cane between the posts or tree students. The material will be in front of and then behind the posts, continuing front-back until used up.

Wattle and Daub by Amy Atao

set to the tune of "To Grandmother's House We Go"

In and out – Between the posts

To wattle our house, we weave

Over and under – Between the cane

To daub our house, we pat

If numerous students, let other students have a turn being the weavers.

Sing the song over and over until material is out. Emphasize the wattle part.

Step 3:

Once the weaving is between the posts, a group of students can pretend to go to the riverbank, gather mud, and pat it between the river cane weaving. Sing the song a few more times to emphasize the daub part.

The wall of the Creek house is now complete. Explain how the weaving of the river cane makes the wall stronger than just using mud or clay to construct the house.

**Extensions:**

Students could write a paragraph describing the step-by-step process of shelter construction.

Visit this website to see a reconstruction of a Creek wattle and daub house:

<http://explorationsoutheast.blogspot.com/2010/10/etowah-indian-mounds-cartersville-ga.html>