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Lenape Culture and Customs

Subject Area: Social Sciences

Core Curriculum Content Standards: 2.5.A & D; 3.3.A; 3.4.A; 5.10.B; 6.1.A; 6.4.A, B, C & D; 6.6.E

SESSION DESCRIPTION

This session considers the Lenni Lenape, the original inhabitants of New Jersey. Students will examine the daily life style of the Lenape, including customs, mores, legends, anthropological investigations and dealings with the European settlers. Special consideration is given to the Lenapes' interactions with their natural environment. Lenape and other Native American Indian artifacts are available for examination and interpretation, via a hands-on problem-solving activity. Several Eastern Woodland games are available and students will have the opportunity to play at least one.

OBJECTIVES

1. To acquaint students with Native American Indian cultures, in particular the Lenape.
2. Students will enumerate the cultural differences between the Lenape and the European cultures at the time of contact.
3. Students will describe the unique aspects of the Lenape lifestyle.
4. Students will accurately identify artifacts of the Lenape and determine their functions.
5. Students will review the Lenape use of natural resources.
6. Students will play games representative of Eastern Woodland peoples.

MATERIALS

Teaching materials for this class are stored in the SOC Library. They will be put out when the first class is taught, either by an SOC staff member or a trained visiting teacher.

Materials include:

- library diorama*
- deer hide
- face paints
- equipment for Eastern Woodland games
- wooden box with compartments holding Lenape artifacts
- artifacts and simulations reflecting modern technology needed for survival

**The diorama is reflective of Lenni Lenape culture and lifestyle, in contrast to the early European settlers' lifestyle.*

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The history of the United States is laden with a rich diversity of cultures. This statement may bring nods of agreement, but too often, in the minds of many readers, the mention of cultural diversity abolishes the Native American Indians and their many contributions to modern American life. Too often, a lumping together of all Native American groups under the stereotypical image of "Indian," precludes the objective scholarship that more fully and truthfully presents the contributions of this diversity of cultural groups. An ignorance of and/or a lack of respect for cultural distinctiveness blinds students to the perspectives of other peoples. The social sciences must be studied from multiple perspectives. Studies of the history of North America must consider both the European and African settlers, as well as the indigenous peoples who have been living on this land for thousands of years. Beginning in their earliest