



Role Plays Using Native American Sign Language to Learn About Contemporary Native American Cooperation, Conflict or Compromise

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Grade Level: 4th/5^h grade

Subject: Northern Cheyenne Language & Culture: Role Play

Context for Teaching/Learning:

- This lesson was taught to 30 fourth grade students at Alliance Intermediate School in Alliance, Ohio in the classroom of veteran teacher, Mrs. Danielle Gleason. Over 25% of the students are non-White. All children receive free and reduced lunch. The class included 15 girls and 15 boys, including 8 students with an IEP plan. The IEPs focus on reading remediation or visual impairment. The children in this 4th grade class have articulated that they prefer working together rather than alone. Student groups are assigned to have at least one typical reader. The classroom is set up with 8 tables seating 3 to 4 students each facing each other for easy communication.
- This lesson builds on some prior knowledge students have Native Americans, but also recognizes that many of the students recall little about Native American history or culture. These children enjoy working collaboratively, and this lesson appeals to groups who need more hands-on interactive learning.
- This lesson models Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory because students talk to each other and learn from each other through role play, de-briefing, and small group planning. This lesson privileges oral and sign language and helps students shape their own thoughts through peer observation and collaboration.

Social Studies Content Standard:

Ohio Grade 4. History Content Statement 3. Heritage:

Various groups of people have lived in Ohio over time including American Indians, migrating settlers and immigrants. Interactions among these groups have resulted in cooperation, conflict and compromise.

ISTE Technology Standards:

Teachers

2.2 Leader

Educators seek out opportunities for leadership to support student empowerment and success and to improve teaching and learning. Educators:

2.2.c

Model for colleagues the identification, exploration, evaluation, curation, and adoption of new digital resources and tools for learning.

- Teachers will be researching the Cheyenne website Ahtove, to obtain resources about the Native American sign language. Teachers will be using this online video tool to guide students' exploration of sign language.

Students

1.1 Empowered Learner

Students leverage technology to take an active role in choosing, achieving, and demonstrating competency in their learning goals, informed by the learning sciences.

- Students will be using their computers to review the sign language signs on Ahtove, as they are creating their roleplay with their groups. Students will be choosing which Native American sign language they will be showing to demonstrate their competency in their learning goals.

Learning Objective:

- After watching sign language videos on ahtove.org, students will role-play examples of cooperation, conflict, or compromise using different Native American sign language signs.

Academic Language:

- Sign Language: signals that are demonstrated through body movements that represent words.
- Native American: of any of the indigenous people in North America. People featured on the ahtove.org website

Signs that the students will be learning:

- Good morning: expressing good wishes to someone's start of their day.
- Good afternoon: expressing good wishes to someone's mid-day.
- Good day: wishing someone a good day.
- Good evening: expressing good wishes for someone's evening.
- Goodnight: expressing good wishes to someone's night.
- I'm here: allowing someone else to know that you have arrived somewhere.
- He/she is not here: telling someone that another person is not here/there.
- It's good to see you: letting someone know that you appreciate seeing someone.
- I'll see you again: telling someone that you will see them again/later.

Formative Assessment:

The teacher will walk around while the students are planning out their role plays in their groups to check in about what scenarios the children are creating. The teacher will ask students what sign they are doing at a certain part in their role play. The teacher can also ask them to sign and say the words while they are practicing their role play while working cooperatively in small groups.

Summative Assessment:

For the summative assessment, the teacher will grade each role play performance using the accompanying [rubric](#) with this lesson plan. The teacher can make group and/or individual comments on the [rubric](#). This rubric focuses on the actual content of the role-play (the setting is clear and the signs are being used correctly), the roles of each student (making sure that everyone is participating), preparation (how the students are working together), and debriefing (connecting to culture). The grade for the role play will be a group grade. To meet the lesson objective they will need to receive at least a 9/12 (75%) on their rubrics to show they grew from this lesson.

Procedures, Lesson Introduction: (5 minutes)

1. The teachers will demonstrate American Sign Language to the students by signing "Hi, my name is Kayla", Sammi will then sign back, "Hi, my name is Sammi." After teachers sign, ask the students, "Does anyone know what we just did?"

2. Wait for responses; guide students to recognize that they just saw American Sign Language (ASL).
3. Ask "Is this an actual language?"
4. Wait for responses and guide students to recognize that ASL is a real language.
5. Asked the students, "What is the purpose of ASL?"
6. Wait for responses; guide students to articulate that ASL is one way to communicate with people who are deaf. ASL is part of deaf culture, and ASL is taught at the nearby university.
7. The teachers will then explain how Native American tribes each have their own languages, but there is more of a universal sign language that is used by Northern Cheyenne people (even if they can hear and talk). This different Native American groups to be able to communicate with each other even if they don't speak the same oral language. Sign language can help groups cooperate, communicate, or deal with conflict.
8. Teachers will say, "Today we will be learning about sign language that correlates with Native Americans and how Native Americans use sign language!"

Procedures, Lesson Body: (40 minutes)

1. Tell students that they will be able to do skits today using Native American sign language, so we are going to learn some signs now from a Northern Cheyenne language professor.
2. Play all 9 [videos](#) that Ahtove provides for Native American sign language.
3. After each video plays, pause it and practice each sign with the students. Do this for all 9 videos.
4. Once the students feel comfortable with the signs, transition into explaining role play.
5. Show the students the [rubric](#) for the role play assignment.
6. Each group will be given a setting (playground, home, grocery store, classroom, and bus).
7. Tell students that they should use at least three signs correctly, everyone needs a role, use their time wisely, and be prepared to talk about their role play after they perform it. In their role plays, try to show an example of how Native Americans might use signs to cooperate, resolve a conflict, or compromise.
8. Assign role play groups (count off in 5s, or choose based on personalities, etc.)
9. The students will then split into their groups and can have one person with their computer open to the Ahtove website to review the videos if needed to practice signs for their role play.
10. The teacher will be walking around helping with finding the website and assisting with any part of the role play. Encourage children to use props, multiple Native American signs, etc. Check for culturally appropriate ideas and use the terms cooperation, conflict, and compromise.
11. Remind the children of what is in the [rubric](#) for this assignment.
12. Once all of the groups feel confident with their role-play preparation, start the performances.
13. Call each group up individually so they can come to the front of the classroom to show their role-play.
14. The students will do their role-play one time, without speaking and only using signs, and a second time doing the signs while also saying what they are signing so the class can figure out what scene their peers were acting out. (Each one should take 1-2 minutes).

15. At the end of each role play, ask the students whether they saw conflict, cooperation, or compromise.
16. Give a group round of applause for each group.

Procedures, Lesson Closure: (10 minutes)

1. To review what we had just learned, Ask the students, "How did you feel using sign language?"
2. Wait for responses.
3. We will also ask students, "Why is knowing sign language important for having social interactions? Can you give an example of how knowing ASL or Native American sign language could really help you?"
4. Wait for responses.
5. "Do you think sign language is important to know? Why or why not? Should it be important for everyone to know or just certain people? What people?"
6. Wait for responses.
7. Ask, "Do you think that these scenarios we watched are realistic? Why or why not? Do you think that they apply to Native Americans today?"
8. Wait for a response; guide students to recognize that Native Americans are here in the U.S.A today on playgrounds, at home, in the grocery store, classrooms, and buses. Native Americans do speak English, but preserving sign language is important to preserving unique cultures in our country.
9. If there is extra time, the class can learn the American Sign Language alphabet and how to spell their names in ASL.

Differentiation and Individualized Instruction:

- **Accommodations:** This lesson was taught to a class that included a student with a visual impairment. While the student could access ahtove.org, a student buddy assisted the student with visual impairment in creating the sign language signs. The student buddy also helped with teaching the signs initially when all of the videos were shown and even fixing her hand placement while preparing for the role play.
- **Individualization:** The students will learn content through the videos on the Ahtove website and through discussion with their peers. Captions are available on the ahtove website. Students with extra time at the end of class can look for videos and websites using ASL.
- Children who would benefit from enrichment may create more elaborate role plays and explanations. The teacher may need to provide additional coaching to help some student groups prepare their role plays successfully.
- **Environment:** Students may collaborate where they would like. Students can be in designated "quiet" spots if the room is too loud, or the hallway could be accessed for children who need quieter space to create their role plays.

Instructional Materials and Support:

- [Ahtove website for sign language - with Marty](#)
- [Role play rubric](#)