

NATIVE AMERICAN PROJECT

Assignment and Grading Rubric

Objective: For each child to explore a Native American tribe in order to learn about specific elements of its culture.

Elements of the project: Written, Visual, Oral

Written: Students will describe, in paragraph form (three to four paragraphs total), the culture of the tribe they are studying. They will include a description (one paragraph each) of the group's:

- Food
- Clothing
- Shelter/geographical location
- Additional interesting facts (optional)

In class, we will use the resource materials each child has gathered to write a paragraph on each of these aspects of the Native American group's culture. At times, students may be required to complete, rewrite, or revise a paragraph for homework if they are not able to complete the work in class. If this is the case, the assignment will be listed in your child's assignment notebook.

The paragraphs we write in class will cover the basic written requirements for this project. It is possible for students to complete the entire written aspect at school (rough drafts and final drafts); however, some students will need to complete the final drafts at home.

Visual: There are many ways students can choose to visually depict the group they are studying. It is important that the visual aides **depict aspects of the group's culture (clothing, shelter, art, food, ceremonies, etc.)** This is the part of the project where students can get really creative. It is also the part of the project where DETAILS make the difference. No matter which visual style is chosen, it should be neat, detailed, and should include the child's name and the name of the Native American group.

- A model made of clay, wood, paper, etc.
- A picture book
- A diorama (with a shoe box or other box)
- Puppets with background scenery
- Totem Pole (made of paper, poster, or even wood!)
- A board game
- An authentic art project (craft) from that particular tribe
- A poster

These are only a few ideas. If students come up with an idea of their own, just let me know what it is, and I'm sure it will be approved! Students should choose something they can complete as much on their own as possible. The project is not meant to be a burden on your family's time, so each child should stay within his/her own means.

Students may choose to combine some of the written information with their visual aid. For example, they may want to label a poster, identifying types of clothing, food, shelter, etc. Or,

students may want to take the paragraphs they wrote, and use them to make a picture book they will illustrate.

Oral: Students will use their visual aides to teach the class about the group they study. **The oral presentations should be no longer than 5 minutes each.** Some projects will naturally have an oral aspect--like a little puppet show to go with the puppets made. Other projects--like a clay model--will require the child to explain the visual by pointing to the different parts and sharing what they know about the group. In any case, **the visual aide should be used during the oral presentation,** as a way to show how the Native American group lived. Students need to practice their oral presentations at home and come to class prepared to share with the class on **Tuesday, March 7, Wednesday, March 8, or Thursday, March 9.** **Students will be assigned a day to present their projects and should be prepared for any of the three days.**

Time line: In order for students to complete this project at a manageable pace, we will work according to the following time line. Students have about a week and a half to decide on their topic (tribe), gather the materials and information needed to write about the tribe, and to come up with the **idea** for the visual part of the project. Each student has a list of possible Native American groups to investigate, as well as ideas for the visual part of the project. It is very important that they choose their topic and gather the research materials needed as soon as possible. I will be able to offer help and guidance as students come to class prepared with the books they need to complete the research.

Resource Materials: It can be difficult to find age-appropriate resource materials for the children to use. That is one of the reasons I am allowing almost two weeks to gather the kind of materials which the children can read fairly independently. I have found that the most successful written reports stem from easy-to-read and understand resource materials which have been written for children. Most information from internet sites is too difficult for third graders to read, understand and paraphrase. Some resource books are written at a high-school level. Short, basic, illustrated materials are best for this age group. Students will be allowed to use WebPath Express (library based search engine) to find information on the web about their tribe. I will be sending home a guide that explains how to access the online library catalog from your home computer. This is a great tool because all websites are approved by librarians and it is easier to find "kid-friendly" material. Students will not have access to a computer during in-class research time. Therefore, if students find information online, they should print it out and bring it to school. Students still must have at least two books about their tribe (they cannot just use the internet). Students can also use World Book Online (instructions on how to use this will also be sent home).

Over the years, the Holy Rosary Library has accumulated a collection of resource books for this project. We have resource materials for the following tribes: **Apache, Cherokee, Chinook, Coast Miwok, Comanche, Iroquois, Mandans, Ojibwa, Oneida, Onondaga, Pomo, Pueblo, Seminole, and Sioux.** I strongly encourage the children to choose one of these tribes for their report, particularly if they have not been able to find outside resources written at their level. The Holy Rosary resource materials will be kept in the classroom for the students to share. They will have access to them at any time during the day when we

work on the reports. Therefore, no one will be allowed to check them out.

TIME LINE:

Between Jan. 2- 11th:

- Tribe chosen
- Research materials (books from the library and printed material from the internet) gathered
- Start reading through resource materials, work on mind-maps/graphic organizers for note-taking (to be given out later)

Jan. 11th-March 6th:

- **In-class** research (bring books from the library to school)
- **In-class** paragraph writing on elements of culture--food, clothing, etc.
- **At-home** work on visual aid project
- **At-home** practice of oral presentation

Tuesday, March 7th:

- Projects due

March 7th, 8th, 9th (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday)

- In-class presentations

Marc 7th-22nd:

- Projects on display in the hall

Reminders will be given each week in the newsletter, as well.