



ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Honoring Siletz Women

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- Identity
- History
- Lifeways

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Use new academic vocabulary in speech and writing.
- Discuss reasons why Indigenous women have been excluded from many published historical accounts.
- Analyze biographical text about the lives and accomplishments of women of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.
- Describe in writing the important contributions of women to the survival of Siletz culture and lifeways.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How have women leaders worked to ensure the survival of the people, culture, and traditions of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians?
- Whose stories are left out of history and why?

(Continued on next page)

Overview

The women belonging to the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians (CTSI) have made significant contributions to their Tribal culture, community, society, and government. This lesson uses biographies of some notable Siletz women to help students explore these accomplishments, build an understanding of the importance of women in Tribal culture and history, and consider the ways that women are often overlooked in history.

First, students will be introduced to key vocabulary and engage in group and individual reflection activities to consider ways that the accomplishments and contributions of women, especially Native women, are often overlooked. Next, students will learn how to read and analyze biographical texts in a teacher-led group reading exercise. Then, they'll participate in a small-group research activity by rotating through different stations that focus on the achievements and contributions of different Siletz women. Lastly, students will select one Siletz woman and create a poster to present their findings to the class.



LOGISTICS

- Where does the activity take place?
Classroom
- How are the students organized?
 - ☑ Whole class ☑ Teams: 3 – 4
 - ☑ Pairs ☑ Individually

TIME REQUIRED

4 hours

Background for teachers

Scholars in the past have tended to downplay or ignore the contributions, impact, and struggles of women and girls—focusing instead on the actions, decisions, and thoughts of men. Despite recent advancements, this fact remains especially true in teaching and learning about Oregon’s Indigenous peoples. Oregon’s history continues to be dominated by the perspectives of male settlers, soldiers, mercenaries, and Indian Agents. If these men wrote about Native women at all, they tended to treat them as passive victims or spectators of events beyond their comprehension and ability to influence. As a result, men—and specifically white men—often appear in historical texts as the primary shapers of society giving the impression that they are the only ones whose stories are worth remembering while the experiences and impact of other people, such as women and girls, are diminished or dismissed.

STANDARDS

Oregon social sciences standards

3.11 - Describe how the inclusion or exclusion of individuals, social and ethnic groups, including individuals who are American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian or Americans of African, Asian, Pacific Island, Chicano, Latino, or Middle Eastern descent, religious groups, and other traditionally marginalized groups has shaped events and development of the local community and region.

Oregon English language arts standards

3.RI.1 - Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

3.RI.2 - Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.

3.RI.5 - Use text features and search tools to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.



This way of recounting history disguises the vital roles that women have played as political, medical, ceremonial, intellectual, and community leaders throughout the history of the Siletz people. All the Tribal groups removed to Siletz from across western Oregon hold social beliefs and practices designed to empower all people to uphold a balanced community, as well as complex views of gender that differed significantly from European ideas of traditional gender roles. Before colonization and forced removal to the Coast (Siletz) Reservation, women often married someone from outside their home village. Since women normally relocated to their husband's people, they played a central role in holding together the interconnected world that thrived before Euro-American colonization. This role of connection became especially important after the confinement to the Coast (Siletz) Reservation in the mid-1850s that disrupted so many facets of traditional life. Amidst the horrors of the early reservation and the following decades of ongoing dispossession and loss, women played a vital part in keeping families and Tribal groups together and ensuring the survival of Siletz people.

The biographies in this lesson have been selected to expose students to the wide variety of ways that women have contributed to the survival and persistence of the Siletz Tribe—both those typically recognized by conventional histories and those often overlooked. From preserving Tribal languages, art, and culture to serving as political leaders and activists, Siletz women have played

MATERIALS

- Slide deck for Honoring Siletz Women
- Classroom audiovisual technology and internet access to display PowerPoint slides, video, and websites (see following items)
- Reading: Chapter 11 (“Change and Perseverance”) of *The People Are Dancing Again: The History of the Siletz Tribe of Western Oregon* by Charles Wilkinson, available through the University of Washington Press. Provided for lesson prep for teachers and/or use by students if desired.
- Honoring Siletz Women Vocabulary Packet
- Agnes Baker Pilgrim_Biography
- Annie Miner Peterson_Biography
- Augusta Toots Simmons_Biography
- Delores Ann Dee Pigsley_Biography
- Francella Mary Griggs_Biography
- Louisa Smith_Biography
- Pauline Nellie Bell Ricks_Biography
- Nellie Orton_Biography
- Ida Bensell_Biography



a crucial role in all facets of Tribal community life. Today (in 2023), and for most of CTSI's history since Tribal Restoration in 1977, Siletz people have consistently elected women as a majority of their nine representatives on Tribal Council. By refocusing on the stories of Native women, students can gain insight into the ways that Native women have shaped that history and continue to create the world in which we live today.

To prepare for lesson teachers should

- Review all handouts and worksheets for this lesson.
- Ensure students will have access to all materials (printed and/or electronic) and audiovisual resources (e.g., internet access and web-enabled devices such as laptop or tablet computers) needed to participate in this lesson (see “Materials” section above).
- Prepare classroom audiovisual technology to display the slides.
- Read chapter 11 (“Change and Perseverance”) of Wilkinson’s *The People Are Dancing Again*, which is provided for lesson prep for teachers and/or use by students if desired.

Resources

Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. (n.d.). *Our heritage*. [Online].

Wilkinson, C. (2010). *The people are dancing again: The history of the Siletz Tribe of Western Oregon*. University of Washington Press.

VOCABULARY

Impact – The effect or influence that actions or events have on others.

Accomplishment – Anything that a person or group worked hard for and succeeded in, like learning a new skill, finishing a difficult task, or making progress towards a goal.

Contribution – Something that you give or do to help someone or make something better.

Equality – Ensuring that every individual has equal status, rights, and opportunities.

ADAPTIONS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING



The lesson is primarily structured around group discussion and exploration, but much of it can be adapted for distance or independent learning purposes. Be sure all students have either print or electronic access to the materials described. A suggested sequence follows:

1. Hold a class meeting online and, using the PowerPoint slides and the steps in Activity 1 (“Warm-Up”), have students respond to the discussion prompts provided on slide 2 (“Warm-Up”). Alternatively, you can post the discussion questions on your school’s online classroom platform or in an online document and have students respond to them asynchronously.
2. Review information with students using a web conferencing or online meeting platform, the PowerPoint slides, and the steps and talking points.

Trauma-Informed Toolkit: A Resource for Educators. Oregon State University.
February 2022. <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em9348>

Cutcha Risling Balding (2018). *We Are Dancing for You: Native Feminisms and Women's Coming of Age Ceremonies*. University of Washington Press.

Considerations for teachers

Assessment

Teachers can use various methods to evaluate student learning. For instance, teachers can assess student understanding and participation during whole class and small group discussions, as well as review students' individually written reflections to gauge engagement levels.

The "Vocabulary Packet" and "Women of Siletz Biography Packet(s)" can be used as informal summative assessments for both individual students and student groups. Moreover, teachers can use the "Biography Poster Activity" to evaluate individual students' learning more formally by examining their final products for accuracy, level of effort, and completion.

Practices

- *Small groups* – Small group activities allow students to share and analyze ideas with three to five other people. This practice can be good for students who do not want to share their ideas with the whole class and/or who may be afraid of others' reactions. The teacher should monitor group discussions to determine the degree to which students are understanding the concepts and contributing to the group.
- *Classroom discussion* – Large group, whole class discussion allows students to express their thoughts and hear the thoughts of others. For the instructor, this practice is a good way to take the pulse of the group and see what general themes are emerging. For students, large group discussion can be a way to express themselves or to hear differing perspectives from others.

- *Differentiation* – This lesson makes use of readings with complex sentence structures and archaic language. You may choose to organize groups based on reading needs and support or have students identify appropriate scaffolds for understanding if necessary.
- *Student group reporting and presentation* – When groups report what they have discussed or provide a brief presentation, it is important to have clear norms and expectations they can use to ensure their success. The teacher should be prepared to explain to the class how to listen respectfully when a classmate is reporting on group work. The teacher should also be prepared to help students gather their thoughts and explain main ideas if they are struggling to do so.
- *Trauma-informed best practices* – Implementing trauma-informed practices can be helpful in supporting young students when engaging in challenging conversations and reflections regarding intolerance, sexism, and racism. The following is a list of considerations to support the well-being of all students:
 - Consider playing soothing music in the background and/or providing a snack before presentations begin to help students regulate their nervous system.
 - If possible, arrange the classroom in a circle to help with a feeling of inclusiveness and collaboration. Allow students some time to look around the classroom set-up to become comfortable.
 - Create a calming space in the classroom with sensory tools and invite students to retreat to this space at any point during presentations.
 - Share with students some tools they can use to help calm their nervous system such as deep breathing, drinking water, or moving to the classroom calming space.
 - Allow opportunities for students to share with the teacher their ideas, any hesitations they may have with stories, or other feelings they may have about the activity.

- When asking students to present, ensure they understand that presenting to the whole class is voluntary and encouraged if the student feels safe and supported. Students may feel most comfortable with the option of presenting to a small group, one peer, or the teacher.
- Acknowledge the feeling of anxiety around giving a presentation, particularly around difficult topics such as intolerance.

Learning targets

- I can use new academic vocabulary in speech and writing.
- I can discuss reasons why the experiences of Native women have been left out of history.
- I can analyze biographical text about the lives and accomplishments of women of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.

Appendix

Materials included in the electronic folder that support this lesson are:

- Honoring Siletz Women_Slides.ppt
- Honoring Siletz Women Vocabulary Packet.pdf
- Biography_Agnes Baker Pilgrim.pdf
- Biography_Annie Miner Peterson.pdf
- Biography_Augusta Toots Simmons.pdf
- Biography_Delores Ann Dee Pigsley.pdf
- Biography_Francelle Mary Griggs.pdf
- Biography_Louisa Smith.pdf
- Biography_Pauline Nellie Bell Ricks.pdf
- Biography_Nellie Orton.pdf
- Biography_Ida Bensell.pdf

Activity 1

Vocabulary Four Corners

Time: 20 minutes

Overview

Students engage in a kinesthetic activity to learn key vocabulary for this lesson.

Set-up

Post the following vocabulary words at each of the corners/walls of the classroom. Do not include a definition.

- **Impact**
- **Accomplishment**
- **Contribution**
- **Equality**

Step 1

Begin by presenting student-friendly learning objectives for this lesson.

Step 2

Share with students that the goal of the first activity is to understand and practice the use of new academic vocabulary.

Step 3

Begin the first activity by pointing out the new terms posted in the four corners of the classroom.

Step 4

Ask students to walk around the room while music is being played. Instruct students to stop at the closest corner when the music stops.

Activity 1 *(Continued)*

Step 5

Share the definition for one of the vocabulary words posted around the room. Ask students if they think they are standing at the corner with the matching vocabulary word. If yes, they take a seat. Keep playing until all students are seated.

Step 6

Next, distribute one copy of the **Vocabulary Packet** per student.

Step 7

Display slide 2 and ask students to copy down the definition for **impact** in the correct space.

Step 8

Next, model for students how to complete the “example” and “non-example” section of the **Vocabulary Packet**.

Step 9

Ask students to turn to a partner and brainstorm their own example and non-example for **impact**.

Step 10

Give pairs 1–2 minutes to brainstorm, then ask for volunteers to share out with the whole class.

Step 11

Repeat steps 7–10 with accomplishment, contribution, and equality. Share slides 3–5 to support student understanding.

Activity 2

Fishbowl

Time: 20 minutes

Overview

In this activity, students will participate in a fishbowl discussion to discuss questions and share their opinions about what types of accomplishments and contributions make an important impact on our lives.

Set-up

To conduct a fishbowl discussion, the classroom requires either a circle of chairs or a designated space on a classroom rug where students can be separated into two groups. The first group forms an inner circle comprising 6–12 students who actively participate in a discussion. Meanwhile, students seated in the outer circle observe and listen attentively to the conversation.

The teacher should prompt the students to switch groups after every five minutes to provide an opportunity for everyone to engage in both the active and passive roles during the discussion. This technique encourages participation and active listening skills while allowing students to learn from each other and gain new perspectives.

Step 1

Review the student-friendly learning objectives for this lesson.

Step 2

Ask students to help set up the fishbowl discussion. Share with students that in this next activity they will learn to use new vocabulary words in an activity called a fishbowl discussion.

Activity 2 (Continued)

Step 3

Share slide 6 and review directions for a fishbowl. Let students know everyone will have a turn to be inside the fishbowl.

Step 4

Begin the fishbowl discussion with a review of key vocabulary.

Ask:

What does it mean to make an impact?

Step 5

After 1–2 minutes, pose the following questions:

Ask:

What does making a positive impact look or feel like (at school, home, in the community)? and What might a negative impact look or feel like?

Say:

It is important to understand that an event or action can have both positive and negative impacts for different people. For example, the construction of a new highway can have positive impacts, such as reduced travel time or improved access to job opportunities, education, and healthcare. However, for other people, the construction of a new highway can have negative impacts, such as loss of homes, business, and the destruction of parks and wildlife habitats. It is important to think about how people may experience an event or action differently.

Step 6

Ask students to switch groups. Pose the next question to students in the inner circle. Record student responses.

Activity 2 (Continued)

Ask:

What types of accomplishments impact our lives? (Consider reviewing the definition of “accomplishment” to support student understanding.)

Helpful teacher talking points

- When students are asked to identify significant accomplishments and contributions, they may focus on outcomes that involve material gain, fame, and power. For example, they may think of buying a large home, making lots of money, or owning a successful business as important accomplishments. They may view giving away money, creating technological advances, or building a large company as the most significant contributions to society.
- However, it is crucial for teachers to guide students to think beyond these narrow categories and to consider other examples of accomplishments and contributions that have a positive impact on others and society. For instance, inspiring others to make positive changes in their community, helping young people grow and learn, or creating beautiful art are all meaningful ways to contribute to the world.
- By broadening students’ perspectives on what constitutes significant accomplishments and contributions, teachers can help foster a more inclusive and holistic understanding of success.

Say:

Thanks for sharing your thoughts! Sometimes certain people’s accomplishments are more recognized than others. Why do you think that might be?

Step 7

Give students 3–5 minutes to share their thoughts on this last question.

Activity 2 (Continued)

Step 8

Summarize the key points from the entire fishbowl discussion and ask if students have any additional questions.

Say:

Great ideas! Some people get recognized more than others for many different reasons. One of the reasons this happens relates to gender discrimination. Gender discrimination is when someone is treated differently because of their gender identity. For example, people writing history books have often valued the accomplishments of men above others and left out the accomplishments of women and girls. For many years, people writing history books believed men were better, and so they often didn't think it was important to pay attention to the accomplishments of other people.

This has been especially true for Native women. For example, historians writing about Siletz people were not interested in finding out about the impact of Native women on their Tribal community and so they just didn't write about them. Of course, the Siletz community always recognized the importance of women and has always honored and valued women. However, that value and importance isn't often recognized by people from outside the Tribe because of the way that people write about history.

This lesson is part of that honoring. Siletz people want to help spread the word about important women of the Tribe and help people understand how women worked to hold the community together through difficult times and have been important political, cultural, and spiritual leaders.

Activity 3

Journal Reflection

Time: 15 minutes

Overview

In this activity, students write a reflection about whose accomplishments and contributions are recorded in history and whose are left out.

Step 1

Distribute writing journals or scratch paper to each student.

Step 2

Ask students to independently think of individuals (past or present) whose accomplishments they believe impacted their lives.

Step 3

Give students 2–3 minutes to independently write down their ideas.

Step 4

Ask for volunteers to share. Record and project all student ideas.

Step 5

Next, ask students to review the list and notice any patterns. Then ask students if there are types of people who are not included on this list (e.g., children).

Step 6

Present key ideas about how history books and lessons often don't include the impactful accomplishments of women and people of color, especially Native women.

Activity 3 (Continued)

Say:

Sometimes, when we learn about the history of different places and times, we only hear about what men did, and we don't hear about what women did, especially women of color. This is also true when we learn about the history of Indigenous peoples.

Let's think back to our journals. Why do you think that is?

KEY POINT

History books often describe events that only men were allowed to participate in (voting, holding political office, or fighting) and ignore other important activities and types of leadership.

Say:

When we do learn about Native women, they are often not described as active participants in events. But that's not true! Native women have always helped shape the history of their people and continue to impact their communities to this day.

By including Native women's perspectives in our understanding of the past, we learn a clearer and more complete history and better understand how Native communities have managed to survive and thrive to this day.

Activity 4

Teacher Modeling

Time: 30 minutes

Overview

This activity aims to teach students how to read biographical texts to learn about the experiences and contributions of women from the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.

Step 1

Share with students that they are going to have the opportunity to read biographies about some very important women from the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians whose accomplishments and contributions have impacted their people and the world.

Say:

Reading biographies about Siletz women can help us learn more about the history of Oregon and what's happening now. These biographies show us how Siletz women saw and experienced important events as active participants. We can also learn about what they did to help make their families, communities, and the world a better place. It's important to understand and appreciate all the amazing things Siletz women have done!

Step 2

Next, present slide 7 and explain to students what a biography is and how it is different from other types of texts.

Say:

A biography is a story about someone's life. It's a book about a real person and it can help us learn about what they did and how they made a difference in the world. Biographies can teach us about famous people like presidents, inventors, or athletes. They can also be about everyday people who have done something amazing

Activity 4 (Continued)

and made important contributions to their country, Tribe, family, or community. By reading a biography, we can get inspired and learn about all the interesting things that people can do!

Let's learn about the important features of a biography.

Step 3

Present slides 8–10 and share how a biography is different from other types of texts.

Step 4

Next, distribute one copy per student of the **Annie Miner Peterson Biography Packet**.

Step 5

Share slide 11 and define for students the meaning of a confederated Tribe.

Say:

The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians is a confederated Tribe. A confederated Tribe is a group of different Native American Tribes that were often forced by the federal government to come together on a single reservation. Today, confederated Tribes have one Tribal government but are made up of people from many different Tribes and bands. Lots of different Tribes in Oregon are confederated Tribes—like the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.

Step 6

Share slide 12 and introduce students to The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.

Say:

The ancestors of the Siletz people came from different Tribes that lived in western Oregon and parts of northern California and southwest Washington. Each of these Tribes has their own special ways of living and doing things, but they also share many things in common, like building houses out of planks, fishing for salmon to eat, and visiting and trading with each other.

In the 1850s, the U.S. government forced these Tribes to leave their homes and live together on the Coast (Siletz) Reservation. Times were hard—people had to leave their homes and everything they

Activity 4 (Continued)

knew. There often wasn't enough to eat. But people survived and kept together and today members of those many different Tribes are all part of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.

Keep this in mind as we read these biographies. All the women that we are going to read about today are Siletz Tribal members. Their families were removed from many different places across western Oregon to the Coast (Siletz) Reservation.

Step 7

Define any other new vocabulary words that students will encounter in this biography (e.g., reservation, homeland, ancestor).

Step 8

Before you begin to read the biography of Annie Miner Peterson to the whole class, start by pointing out key textual features.

- Highlight or underline each of the headings (e.g., Who is Annie Miner Peterson, Early Life, Adult Life) and explain that each of these headings introduces a specific time in Annie's life. For example, in the Early Life section they will learn about her childhood.
- Circle or draw an arrow toward Annie's picture and describe what you see.

Step 9

As you read, ask questions that encourage students to think about the information presented in the biography. For example, you might ask, "What challenges did Annie face?" or "What were some of Annie's accomplishments?" or "What about Annie's life or experiences was new and interesting to you?"

Activity 4 (Continued)

Step 10

After you finish reading, review the biography with students, pointing out important details and discussing any questions or insights that arose during the reading.

Say:

Annie did some important things to help Siletz people keep their language and culture alive. She worked hard with researchers from the University of Washington to help preserve the Hanis and Miluk languages, two of the languages spoken by people forced onto the Coast (Siletz) Reservation.

Annie wanted to make sure that future generations knew as much as possible about their culture and language. Today her work with stories, language, and plants impacts not just the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians but neighboring Tribes like the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Siuslaw, and Lower Umpqua and the Coquille Indian Tribe, who also come from Hanis and Miluk people. Her own life story tells about their experiences and traditions and the challenges that Native people from western Oregon had to overcome to survive.

Step 11

Finally, model for students how to complete the questions and graphic organizer in their copy of the Annie Miner Peterson Biography Packet. Explain to students that this will help them organize their thoughts and remember important details when they read biographies on their own in the next activity.

Activity 5

Biography Stations

Time: 60 minutes

Overview

This activity involves students rotating through different stations, where they will have the opportunity to practice reading biographical texts about impactful women from the Siletz Tribe.

Set-up

Create table space for 5–6 stations around the room. Each station should have the following materials:

1. Station number
2. 1–2 biography packets
3. Set of highlighters
4. Colored pens/pencils

Step 1

Share slide 13 and explain the purpose of the activity and what students will be learning.

Say:

Today, you'll be working in small groups to read biographies about some important women from the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. You can choose to read the biographies by yourself, or you can select a group member to be the reader and read aloud to the rest of the group. Then, you'll work together to answer the questions in your packet. Remember to help each other and work together as a team!

Step 2

Assign groups of 3–4 students or let students self-select.

Activity 5 *(Continued)*

Step 3

Explain that each group will have 20 minutes at each station to read the biography and complete the packet of activities.

Step 4

Set a timer for the designated time at each station, and let students know when they need to rotate to the next one.

Step 5

Encourage students to work together and help each other.

Step 6

Finally, allow time at the end of the activity for students to reflect on what they have learned and share their insights with the rest of the class.

Activity 6

Biography Poster

Time: 60–90 minutes

Step 1

Show slide 14 on creating a biography poster about an important woman from the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.

Say:

Using the information that you gathered during the station activities, you will create a biography poster on one of the impactful women from the Siletz Tribe. Your poster should highlight the person’s contributions and accomplishments and provide insights into their life experiences. Remember to use the information you learned from your reading and to write in your own words!

Step 1. Choose a Siletz woman you learned about in class and write their name in big letters at the top of the poster.

Step 2. Use colorful markers, crayons, or colored pencils to decorate the poster with pictures and information about the person that you read about. Make it look beautiful and creative!

Step 3. Find photos or pictures of the person you are writing about or draw a picture of the person.

Step 4. Write short descriptions or captions that talk about the woman’s accomplishments and contributions. Explain how their life impacted the Siletz people and the world.

Activity 6 *(Continued)*

Step 2

Show slide 15 with an example of a biography poster. Share with students some different layouts they can choose for their poster. For example, it could have a large picture of the woman and words to describe her accomplishments around the picture. Or students could create a timeline on posterboard with important life events.

Step 3

Consider having students share their posters with students in another classroom, grade, or school. If this is not possible, set up the posters in the hallways outside your classroom to share with the entire school.

Activity 7

Reflection

Time: 15 minutes

Overview

In this activity students reflect on and summarize what they learned in the lesson.

Step 1

Restate or point to the learning targets for the lesson and review with students emphasizing that they have learned about the many ways that people impact and support their community. Ask if they have any questions about what they learned.

Step 2

Think about something that surprised you from the lesson that you would like to draw and explain to a partner or class.

Activity 8

Extension Activity

Overview

As an extension activity, students could create a mini-biography or profile of a person they admire in their own lives. Here are some steps you could follow for this activity:

1. Ask students to choose a woman they admire at home, at school, or in the community. Encourage them to think about what qualities they admire in this person.
2. Provide the child with a template or outline for a biography, including sections such as early life, education, achievements, and legacy.
3. Encourage students to interview/talk with this person, if possible.
4. Using the template or outline, ask students to write a mini-biography of their chosen person. Encourage them to include interesting facts that illustrate the woman's life and achievements.
5. Finally, allow students to present their mini-biographies to the class.