

First Americans 101: Day 4

Lesson Name: How Do Cultures Change, and How Do They Stay the Same?

Timeframe: 1 Day

Standards / Objectives

OKH 1.4, USG 3.4, USH 1.3

Specific Learning Targets -

Upon completion of this lesson, students will consider the cultural perspectives of Native peoples as distinct and living.

Skills and Background Knowledge -

Students should remember those things lost and kept by tribes during forced removal to form a basis of Native American cultural understanding.

Teacher Materials Needed:

- Access to Internet, including clip from *Rutherford Falls*:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZAelnOlhea0>
- Projector, smartboard or screen
- Whiteboard and markers
- Access to contemporary Native works of art from the FAM exhibitions

Student Materials Needed:

- Paper
- Chromebook

Opening / Bell Ringer:

Play a clip from the Peacock show *Rutherford Falls*. Share that the TV series was produced and written by Native people—link this to Day 1 and 2’s focus on representation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZAelnOlhea0>

Prompt students to take notes of examples of “traditional” Native cultures and examples of “modern” American culture. Following the clip, complete a T-chart on the board with students identifying examples from two categories on the board.

As a group, define and consider the following:

- Characteristics of Cultures

- Assimilation
- Cultural Diffusion
- Cultural Continuum

Direct Instruction / Mini Lesson / I Do:

Explain that, unlike Western perspectives that view cultures as evolving or progressing over time, it is more helpful to understand Native cultures as a continuum that defy a traditional vs. contemporary binary. Native values and cultural practices continue into the 21st century.

Guided Practice / We Do:

Ask students to share “traditional” cultural practices that their families continue today, or ones they have observed in other communities. Examples can include attending German Oktoberfest, Juneteenth celebrations, family recipes, etc. Populate a Google Doc with responses or write them on the board.

Consider: how have these traditions evolved over time as society has changed?

Independent Practice / You Do:

Prompt students to browse a digital copy of contemporary Native magazine. Examples include:

- Native Max magazine:
<https://www.flipsnack.com/5C667DFF8D6/native-max-magazine-indigenous-excellence-issue/full-view.html>
- NMAI magazine: <https://www.americanindianmagazine.org/>

Students can “clip” images by taking screenshots and create a “moodboard” that addresses the theme of “Cultural Continuum.” Screenshots can be compiled in Google Docs or Slides as digital collages.

Ask students to then make a 39-word response to the question, “In what ways have Native cultures changed over time?”

Student Engagement with Content

- Students will consider the defining characteristics of cultures and understand the living nature of diverse Native cultures.
- Academic Vocabulary: Culture, Cultural Diffusion, Assimilation, Cultural Continuum, Representation

Evidence of Learning / Assessment:

- Students use a timeline (as a class or individually) to identify important events that have helped define Native cultures, including but not limited to:
 - Indian Removal Act
 - Boarding Schools
 - The Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968
 - The American Indian Movement (AIM)
 - McGirt Supreme Court Decision
 - Indian Citizenship Act of 1924
 - Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)
 - Standing Rock Protests
 - *Reservation Dogs* premieres on FX/Hulu
- Students will include a short (one-sentence) description of the event.

Closing / Exit Ticket

- Students write the words “cultural continuum” on an index card and write how different cultures may interpret this word.

Homework / Extended Learning (if appropriate)

- Students may finish any incomplete assignments to turn in tomorrow.

Potential Adaptations

- Scaffolding:
 - Some students may need sentence starters for the questions and answers in the guide for analyzing art (Why did the artist choose to...). Further, students may need sentence starters to participate in trio discussions (This painting is meant to make the viewer feel...).
- Further models:
 - Students may wish to look up definitions of “continuum” that may be applied to a cultural context.
- Extension:
 - Encourage accelerated students to directly compare Western understandings of linear progression over time to Native understandings of cyclical progressions over time.