

First Americans 101: Day 5

Lesson Name: How Do I Engage with People of Other Cultures?

Timeframe: 1 Day

Standards / Objectives

Soft Skills - Cultural competence and interpersonal communication

Specific Learning Targets -

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be better prepared to interact with people outside of their home culture.

Skills and Background Knowledge -

Students should consider the different historical and social contexts of Native peoples, specifically how they differ from dominant Western (European) American culture.

Teacher Materials Needed:

- Access to Internet
- Dry erase board and markers
- Projector, screen or smartboard
- Access to exhibition images from FAM
- Index Cards

Student Materials Needed:

- Paper

Opening / Bell Ringer:

Give students each an index card. Ask students to write 5 facts about themselves (NOT physical characteristics). Once students have completed their facts, shuffle the pile and read the 5 facts aloud. Students should guess which student these 5 facts are describing.

Direct Instruction / Mini Lesson / I Do:

As students participate in guessing which peer is described, ask questions such as “How is this person’s life like yours and how is it different?” or “How would that person’s experience or elements of their family life/culture change how you see the world?”

Share: When you made a guess at whose card is whose, you were making assumptions based on a few bits of information. Neuroscience suggests that everyone unconsciously makes assumptions on incomplete information or generalizations. This can result in a distorted understanding of other people and other cultures.

These assumptions reflect and perpetuate stereotypes.

Guided Practice / We Do:

Share the image of historic items from the FAM collection that exhibit long standing stereotypes. Write the following stereotype genres on the board or a Google Doc (omit the content in parentheses; these are examples you can share to get students started):

- Vanishing Indian (Romanticizing the decline of Native cultures, without acknowledging removal and assimilation; last of the Mohicans)
- Playing Indian (Cowboys and Indians; Mascots; Halloween costumes; related to misappropriation)
- Primitive Culture (Natives as less civilized than other cultures, closer to nature/the animals; sometimes this is a “positive” stereotype)
- Red Devil (Violent and scary; old Western movies)
- Indian Maiden (Often provocative images of women for non-Native enjoyment; Land O’ Lakes Butter logo)

Together, define or describe these stereotypes by example. Write students’ contributions on the board or in a Google Doc.

Ask: “Which object would you use as an example of _____? What do you see that makes you say that?”

Then, share an example of a contemporary Native artist satirizing stereotypes (available in the Google Drive). With aforementioned stereotypes in mind, ask:

- What stereotypes do you think are being addressed in this image?
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- How does humor deflate or undermine the stereotypes?

Independent Practice / You Do:

Throughout the remainder of the semester, we will have visitors from a number of tribes in Oklahoma. They will be visiting us and bringing information on different aspects of their cultures, from food ways and origin stories to political organization and fine art.

In pairs or small groups, ask students to brainstorm questions they might ask presenters from different tribal nations. Use a shared Google Doc to post questions and to comment on others' questions to better refine them to identify assumptions or avoid stereotypes.

Ask students before they add their question whether they would be comfortable answering a similar question about themselves.

Student Engagement with Content

- Students will consider how to reduce biases and ignore stereotypes through developing considerate questions.
- Academic Vocabulary: Stereotype, satire, culture, empathy, perspective-taking

Evidence of Learning / Assessment:

- Ask students to write 3–5 sentences about a work of contemporary art from the Google Drive addressing stereotypes—what stereotypes are being made fun of and how?

Closing / Exit Ticket

- Ask students to write the biggest takeaway or “aha” moment they had during this lesson and give it to the teacher on the way out the door.

Homework / Extended Learning (if appropriate)

- Encourage students to watch out for stereotypes they encounter in their daily interactions. Ask them to consider—can “positive” stereotypes be harmful, too?

Potential Adaptations

- Scaffolding:
 - Some students may need examples to work with in their “5 facts” activity
- Further models:
 - You may need to provide students with further examples of explicit bias, implicit bias, and stereotypes, but be careful not to reinforce negative ideas students were not previously aware of.
- Extension:

- Accelerated students may want to draft an “Instead of” T Chart to modify common questions rooted in prejudice or stereotypes into culturally sensitive explorations.