



Five Senses Literature Lessons

American History: Indigenous People of North America and Hawai'i Level: Yellow

A picture book history with
developmentally appropriate, hands-on
activities for children ages 6 - 10.

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Five Senses Learning, LLC
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Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	4
The Five Senses Approach.....	4
A Different Approach to Education.....	6
Why Start American History with Native Americans.....	8
<i>How to Use this Program</i>	9
Book List.....	10
Before You Begin.....	12
Appreciation, Not Appropriation.....	15
Recommended Schedule.....	16
What This Curriculum Does Not Cover.....	17
Adapting This Curriculum For Your Neurodiverse Child....	17
Symbol Key.....	19
<i>Stories and Traditions</i>	20
The Mound Builders.....	21
Zapotec.....	24
Lenape.....	28
Cherokee.....	33
Haida.....	37
Pueblo.....	41
Inuit.....	45
<i>Histories and Biographies</i>	49
Lakota.....	50
Hidatsa.....	55
Hawai‘i.....	59
Mogollon Culture.....	63
<i>Modern Native American Lives</i>	68
Muscogee and Ojibway.....	69
Ojibwe.....	71
Navajo.....	73
<i>Appendix</i>	79

Why start American History with Native Americans?

When I decided to write a history curriculum, I knew I wanted to start by writing about Native Americans. Native American history is United States history. Native Americans were living in North America for many thousands of years before Europeans arrived and are still here today. Their story is an essential part of the history of the United States of America as a whole. That story is complex and exciting. There is so much to learn that it can be hard to know where to start and what to include when teaching children. There is not one single story to be told about Native Americans. There are many, many stories, and it would take years to cover anywhere near a majority of them. In this curriculum, I have done my best to gather a wide range of stories to demonstrate the complexity and diversity of Native Americans.

There are currently 574 Native American nations recognized by the United States federal government. There are many more nations of Indigenous People that are not formally recognized. This unit study cannot attempt to teach the long and complicated history of so many different peoples. The goal of this unit is not to be an exhaustive resource. The children's books included in this program have been carefully chosen to reflect a variety of literature styles while demonstrating the diversity of the Native American cultures discussed.

This program includes stories from a few of the many different Native American nations from distant regions of North America. There are stories from the east coast, west coast, southwest, middle of the country or the plains, Canada, Mexico, and Hawai'i. Please take your time as you start each unit to show your child on a map where the story takes place. This will expose your child to North American geography and the many biomes that exist here. In addition to the people in these stories, pay attention to the animals and land. Point out to your child the different plants and animals in the pictures and discuss what is different in each story.

If you have knowledge of or connections to Native American nations in your area, access to Native American museums or other ways to expand this learning experience, please take advantage of those opportunities. This unit is, hopefully, a jumping off point for your child's exploration of the people and topics introduced in these lessons.

How To Use This Program

This unit study of Native American history is divided into three sections. The sections are further divided into individual lessons. Each lesson is focused on a single nation and has at least one picture book recommended as the reading material for the lesson.

The first section is made up of historical fiction and traditional stories from a variety of nations across the North American continent. You will introduce the connection the Native Americans have with the earth, through a selection of traditional stories that have been handed down for many generations. The combination of historical fiction, traditional stories, and legends lays the groundwork for appreciating the way of life of the Native Americans before the arrival of Europeans on the continent.

The Lakota lesson transitions us into history with a story about Crazy Horse, a Lakota warrior and leader who lived in the second half of the 19th century. You have the option to take that lesson as far as your child's maturity allows with book suggestions for both sensitive children and those who are ready to learn more history.

The next lesson is a biography of a Hidatsa woman in the 1800's and depicts what life was like before and after the U.S. government forced her and her family onto a reservation.

You will teach the real history of how Hawai'i became a state and the people there who lost their independence as a result. The Native Hawaiians are not technically Native Americans or American Indians (they trace their heritage from the Polynesian navigators who first discovered the islands), but their story is important to include here, as a group of Indigenous People whose way of life was changed by the U.S. government.

You will learn about a real artist in Mexico, Juan Quezada, who revived an ancient form of pottery to lift his village out of poverty.

The third and final section is about modern day Native Americans. It is vital that children learn that Native Americans are not people of long ago. They are people of here and now.

These stories, do not tell the full story of Native Americans, but they are a starting point.

Hidatsa



Primary Resource

Buffalo Bird Girl: A Hidatsa Story by S. D. Nelson



Supply List

- U.S. map that includes rivers (see map in the Appendix)
- Yarn in three colors
- Ears of corn in the husk (see the recipe for Roasted Corn)
- Beans
- Dirt
- Clear plastic cup
- Paper and pencil



Memory Work

And then came the corn harvest,
busiest and happiest time of all the year.

– Buffalo Bird Woman

Discuss with your child that this memory verse is a quote from the biography, instead of a proverb. Discuss why the corn harvest was both busy and happy.



Literature Notes

This book is a biography of a Hidatsa woman who lived from the 1840s until the early 20th century. Please note, in this story, there is an attack by one group of Native Americans on another, and a person is killed and scalped. The book is not graphic about it at all, and the event is only briefly mentioned. The book moves along in a way that some children may not think twice about it. However, if your child is sensitive, you may choose to edit yourself as you read aloud this part of the text.



Teacher Resource

The original biography this book is based on was written in 1917 by Gilbert Wilson, and can be read for free online.



<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/buffalo/garden/garden.html>



Geography

In the front of the book is a map to help you with this lesson. The Hidatsa people lived in North Dakota along the banks of the Missouri River. Use a map of the US, and help your child find this river, trace it with a finger or with a pencil. Look at how the river winds through the state. The way it twists and turns would have created many places for communities to spring up that depended on the river for clean water and transportation.

The Hidatsa live in the same region of the United States as the Lakota people in the previous lesson. Take a moment to talk to your child about how many different nations lived close to each other, and had different cultures and traditions.



Arts and Crafts

In the story, the girls and women braid the corn together so that they can hang in up. Learning to braid requires fine motor skills and planning that children need in other life skills. Have your child braid together strands of yarn to learn this skill and create simple decorations or belts.

For a beginner: Select 3 colors of yarn, you may choose to use only one strand of each or to use several, but use the same number of strands of each color. Cut the yarn to 1 foot or 30 centimeters, and tie a knot in one end, to hold all the strands together. Show your child how to spread the three colors out (center, right and left) then fold one side to the middle, and then the other to the middle to braid them together.



By using the three separate colors you should be able to instruct by color, and your child should see the pattern they are creating more easily. Hold the knot for your child while they work, if the rope moves too much. When your child has finished the braid, tie the end of the rope into a knot. Display your child's work.

For an advanced project: To make this project more challenging or interesting, you may choose to make the yarn longer, use more or less colors, or use a mix of colors of yarn that do not help the child to see which strand comes next. Use seasonal colors to create decorations or help your child to create a long rope that can be used in other games.




Language Arts

This story is a biography, the story of the life of a real person, Buffalo Bird Woman. Explain to your child that this story is neither myth, legend, nor historical fiction, like most other stories you have studied about Native Americans. The things in this book did happen, and the story is the life story of Buffalo Bird Woman, with a focus on her childhood.

With your child, help them write a short version of their biography. Here is a fill-in-the-blank version that you may choose to use if you and your child are not sure where to begin.

My name is _____.
I was born _____ (date)
in _____ (place).
I live with my _____.
My favorite foods are _____ and
_____.
My favorite toy is _____.
My favorite game to play is _____.

 See page 96 in the Appendix for a printable version of this biography activity.


Science – Farming

This book has terrific details about how the Hidatsa grew, dried and preserved their staple foods of corn, beans, and squash. Growing your own garden, or sprouting some seeds, is a wonderful way for children to learn about the life cycle of plants. Corn can be tricky to grow, and squash of any kind requires a lot of garden space but it is very easy to sprout beans. You can purchase seed packets, and follow those directions, if you would like to have a crop. However, almost any dried beans you have in your pantry should sprout.

Plant beans against the side of a clear plastic cup, so that you can watch how the root grows down, and the leaf comes up. Water them daily and place them in a sunny spot. They should sprout in just a few days. Once they sprout, point out to your child the stem, leaves, and roots. These are the essential parts to most plants.

Math – Farming Continued

Once your beans have sprouted, have your child measure the bean plant regularly to see how tall it is. At the end of the month, make a graph of the bean plant's growth.

 See page 97 in the Appendix for a printable graph to use with this activity.

History

The Hidatsa were pushed onto a reservation by the US government in 1885. At this time, the US Government was forcing many different Native American nations onto reservations. Discuss with your child that this forced relocation that Buffalo Bird Girl's nation went through happened to tribes nations the United States.

Questions to discuss with your child:

Do you think the Hidatsa (and other nations) were happy to give up their way of life to live the way the U.S. government said they should?

Would you want to give up all you know and move into a different type of home and have to go away to school the way the Native American children were forced to do?

Was this fair or right?



Life Skills – Food

Purchase corn that is still in the husk. Show your child how to remove the husk and silks.

This task requires hand-eye coordination and is a wonderfully unique experience in both a sensory and motor coordination way. Performing different tasks helps the brain and body connect and prepare to do other new tasks in the future.

Cook your corn and serve it with a meal.

Roasted Corn

4 ears of corn, with husks and silks intact.
Salt and pepper
Olive Oil or butter
Aluminum foil



Shuck corn to remove husk and silks. Coat corn in butter or olive oil. Add salt and pepper, or seasoning of choice. Wrap in aluminum foil. Bake in the oven at 450 degrees F for 30 minutes, or until done.

NOTE: You can use Italian dressing in the place of the oil, butter and seasonings. You can add garlic powder, Italian seasoning, or other seasoning blend to change up the flavors.



See page 98 in the Appendix for a printable recipe card.

My Biography

My name is _____.

I was born on _____

in _____.

I live with my _____

in _____.

My favorite foods are _____

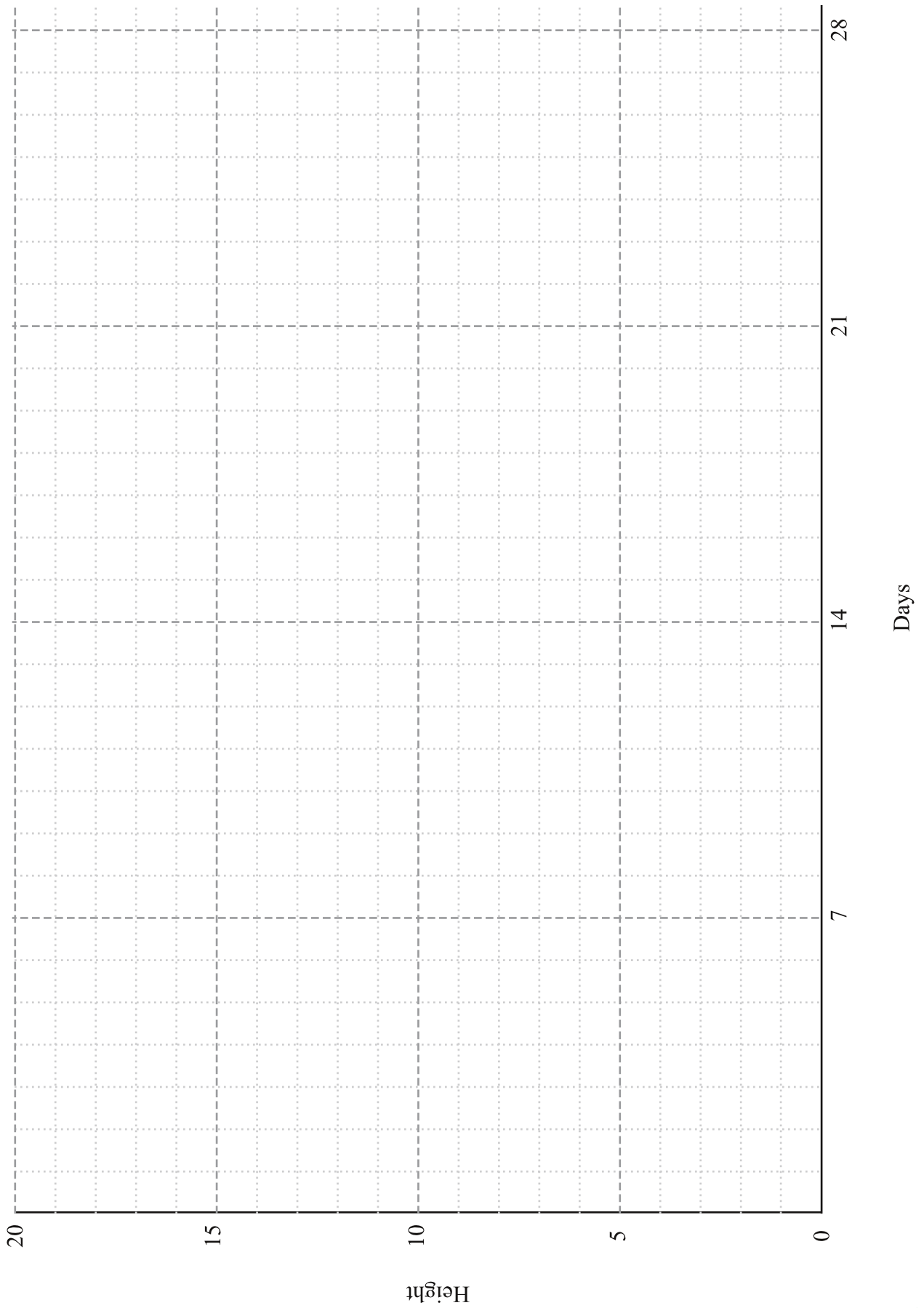
and _____.

My favorite toy is my _____

My favorite game to play is _____



Bean Growth Chart



Roasted Corn

4 ears of corn, with husks and silks intact.
Salt and pepper
Olive Oil or butter
Aluminum foil



Shuck corn to remove husk and silks. Coat corn in butter or olive oil. Add salt and pepper, or seasoning of choice. Wrap in aluminum foil. Bake in the oven at 450 degrees F for 30 minutes, or until done.

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