

Living History

Environmental Education Lesson
EDWARDS CAMP AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Summary

While visiting three different study stations, students will see what life was like for early American settlers and gain an understanding of how they lived off the land. We will explore the lives of Native Americans, Voyageurs, and the Logging community, who inhabited this area over the past 400 years.

Usage - Grade levels: 3rd-8th.available year round

IL Standards

16.A.1a; 16.A.1b; 16.C.1a; 16.C.1b; 16.D.1; 18.C.1
18.C.2
16.C.3a

WI Standards - Social Studies

B.4.1; B.4.4; B.4.8; B.4.10
B.8.3; B.8.11

Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson students will be able to:

- Identify the basic things we need to survive and explain how we get each of them from the earth.
- Identify at least two groups of early Americans that inhabited this area between 1600 and the 1800's.
- Discuss the importance of early explorers, traders, and settlers of Wisconsin and Illinois.

Materials

Animal pelts (beaver, raccoon, deer)
Traders bag (wool blanket, tomahawk, flint and steel, pictures)
Crosscut saw
Bow drills
Hoops and sticks

Background

While digging the foundation for Micklewright Lodge, builders found various signs that Native Americans used the Camp Edwards area. Broken pieces of pottery and fire circles with charred wood were found. Several arrowheads and other projectile points have been found around the camp property. This suggests that camp and the surrounding area were popular hunting grounds.

Native Americans depended on hunting and gathering of natural products for food, shelter, clothing, tools, and weapons. Some raised garden crops like corn or maize, squash, beans, and tobacco. They had to get the things they needed from the earth because they could not go to the grocery store or the mall to pick up supplies. Native Americans were also talented crafters; able to make their own clothes from animal hides, and tools from stone, wood, animal bones, skins, and other materials.

The original native tribes to this area were the Ho-Chunk (People of the Big Voice) and the Illinois. The Ho-Chunk lived in an area from Green Bay to the Wisconsin River to Illinois. The Illinois occupied most of the area of the present-day state of Illinois and southern Wisconsin. In the 1640's with large amounts of pressure from the east, the Fox, Kickapoo, and Potawatomi Tribes were displaced from Michigan and moved into Wisconsin and Illinois. This massive immigration drove many of the native tribes out of their ancestral homes.

During the mid 1600's early American frontiersmen were exploring the wilderness, gathering animal pelts by hunting and trapping. They also traded with Native Americans. These frontiersmen would return from the wilderness to trade in their pelts for needed supplies, like pots, pans, knives, colored cloth, wool blankets, beads, tomahawk heads, flint and steel, and gun powder. These items could be traded with the Native Americans on their next trip. Animal furs were also sold. Some people became wealthy after a successful expedition. The furs were traded to big fur companies that sent them to supply the wants and needs of people in Europe and eastern America. Beaver pelts were one of the most sought after furs; they made fine waterproof felt and were used to make men's top hats. Raccoon was used for the same purpose but was not as high in quality.

Traders soon followed the frontiersmen to trade with the Native Americans for beaver and deer skins, which were valuable and in demand back east. Early frontiersmen would return east after their expeditions and share stories of what they had seen. They sparked interest in others that started heading west to make a new life. This started the westward expansion.

The Fur Trade was an important part of the economic and the political development of North America. It stimulated the exploration of the continent and provided a source of income important to colonial businesses. Native Americans became involved in the global market for the first time. When they were no longer involved it became harder to keep the fur trade going.

Wisconsin has a history of logging, where the tall white pines from the northern counties became ship masts; and red pine, aspen, oak and maple have been used for pulp, paper, housing and many fine wooden products. Wisconsin's logging history is both gritty and romantic. Commonly called "the cutover", virtually all of the state's virgin timber stands were culled, leaving a historically impressive, and long lived, swath of stumps and bare land. At the same time, the cutover was a period of intense growth and prosperity in Wisconsin, providing the foundation for many of today's towns, farms, railroads, and industries.

Introduction (10 Minutes)

Introduce the Potawatomi phrase "Bozo Nikan" (Bo-jho ne-kon) which means "Hello friend". Explain that you will be leading the students on a hike that will allow them to travel back in time to see how people in this area lived nearly 400 years ago. They will visit 3 study stations to learn about Native Americans, the Fur Trade, and the Logging era.

Native Americans (20 Minutes)

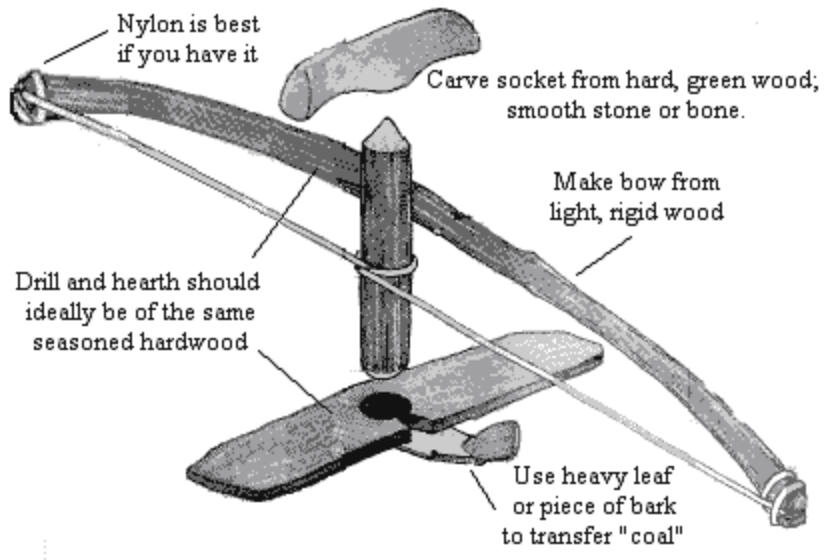
1. Review the Potawatomi phrase “Bozo Nikan”. Teach the words for Yes and No, and have the students use them when answering questions. Yes – “ahaw”(pronounced ‘auhow’), No – “co” (pronounced ‘cho’)
2. Give a brief history of the Native Americans in this area (the tribes, how life was different, hunters and gatherers, nomadic lifestyle, types of housing). Use pictures and artifacts to show who they were and how they lived.
3. Discuss the relationship Native Americans had with the earth. Identify medicinal and edible plants that they would have used. (white pine, balsam fir)
4. Lead the group in some tracking of animal signs to see what kinds of animals were around to hunt. (i.e.: look for signs of deer, discuss the importance of deer to Native Americans, share pelt and antlers.)
5. Take the group to the field to play the “Hoop and Pole” game. In this game students will try to throw a stick through a hoop that is rolled in front of them. Students take turns, using this activity to see how hunters would practice their aim and spear throwing. Use this activity to discuss one way Native Americans would hunt.

Fur Trade (Voyageurs) (20 Minutes) *1650s to 1850s*

1. Transition from Native Americans to the Fur Trade by discussing how the fur trade in the mid 1600s began to change the way Native Americans lived. They traded animal skins for wool blankets, metal pans, colored cloth, guns, flint and steel, tomahawk heads, glass beads, etc.
2. Move to the fire ring and discuss the life of a Voyageur. Show pictures and share the contents of the Trader’s Bag, discussing the importance of each item.
 - Voyageur Sash
 - Beaver and raccoon pelts
 - Wool blanket...for warmth when sleeping and doubled as a warm overcoat
 - Tomahawk, flint and steel...useful tools
3. Teach a few Voyageur games such as;
 - a. Standing Arm Wrestling – have two people stand toe to toe and lock arms. Each person tries to force the other off balance by pulling toward him/herself.
 - b. Hand slap – also a partner game where a person holds their hands palms down slightly above the hands of their partner’s whose palms are up. The person with their hands underneath tries to quickly come over top of their partner’s hands and slap them before they are pulled away.
 - c. Voyageurs lives were unbelievably hard, but they were fun loving and carefree men who loved to sing and play games.

Logging Era (20 Minutes) *1825 to present*

1. Besides the fur trade being a way of life for early Americans, logging was also a way to earn a living. Wisconsin's first lumber camp was started in 1829. This was right around the time when the fur trade was slowing down. Logging was one of the economic foundations of Wisconsin.
2. Loggers were hearty men. They would wake up around 4AM, eat breakfast, and work from the first morning light until it was too dark to see. They would get a bed, 3 meals a day, and would earn about \$1.00 per day.
3. Have the students take a look at the pine trees around them. At camp we have mostly red and white pines. Loggers predominantly cut down white pine trees. After cutting down the trees, loggers had to remove the branches, cut them into 16-foot lengths, haul them and float them down the river to lumber mills. Discuss the dangers involved with this type of work.
4. Pioneer Tools
 - a. **Crosscut Saw** – This was used to cut logs into smaller sections.
 - i. The crosscut saw consists of a blade with a handle on each end.
 - ii. One or two people hold the log between the supports, three feet from the saw.
 - iii. With one person on each handle begin cutting by **only** pulling on the saw.
 - iv. When the log is cut halfway through you should rotate the log to aid in cutting.
 - b. **Flint and steel** - When students are doing this safety goggles must be worn.
 - i. Set up some very small kindling in a teepee shape with a space the size of an egg.
 - ii. Prepare a silver dollar size pile of fine tinder and press a small hole in the top.
 - iii. Place a charcloth in the hole in the tinder and set it on piece of dry bark.
 - iv. Hold the steel in your left hand directly over and very close to the charcloth. The closer to the char, the hotter the sparks will be when they reach the char.
 - v. Strike the flint down onto the face of the steel at about a 20-30 degree angle. The idea is to use the sharp edge of the flint to peel a tiny scrape of metal off the steel. Think of it as shaving a layer of metal off.
 - vi. Aim the sparks right into the charcloth and soon a spark will catch
 - vii. Gently and steadily blow onto the char ember to cause it to grow.
 - viii. When a flame erupts, quickly place the tinder into your kindling and carefully feed the flame.
 - c. **Bow drills** The use of a short bow made from a tough, springy branch of ash or maple, strung with rawhide or leather makes the twirling action more efficient. The drill and hearth should both be made of the same kind of relatively soft wood.
 - i. Find level ground away from people.
 - ii. Place one foot on top of the hearth to hold it motionless.
 - iii. Place a flat stone or piece of bark under the notch in order to catch the embers.
 - iv. Wrap the bowstring once around the drill and hold it to keep it in position.
 - v. Stick the bottom end of the drill into the hole in the hearth.
 - vi. Move the bow vigorously back and forth.
 - vii. Apply enough downward pressure to create maximum friction without causing the string to slip off the drill.
 - viii. If you create smoke you have the potential for fire.



Nylon is best if you have it

Carve socket from hard, green wood; smooth stone or bone.

Make bow from light, rigid wood

Drill and hearth should ideally be of the same seasoned hardwood

Use heavy leaf or piece of bark to transfer "coal"