



Grade Level: 9-10
Subject: ELA

chinuk wawa Revitalization

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- History
- Identity
- Lifeways
- Language

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will be able to explain what assimilation is and how it impacted Native people in the United States.
- Students will be able to explain what language revitalization is and its importance to the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.
- Students will be able to discuss the lasting impacts assimilation still has on Native communities today.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PRACTICES

- Interaction with others through group conversation
- Preserving and honoring cultural history
- Student talk, working together and individually

ASSESSMENT

Students will be assessed on their proficient completion of their Graphic Organizer and Exit Ticket

Overview

Students will watch a TED talk given by a fluent speaker of chinuk wawa, which is the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde native language. Students will engage in discussions around what language revitalization is, why traditional tribal languages have died or been sleeping and its impacts on Indigenous peoples.

MATERIALS

- [TED talk by Crystal Star](#)
- [Graphic Organizer](#)
- [Language Revitalization Presentation](#)
- [Exit Ticket](#)

LOGISTICS

- Where does this activity take place?
Classroom
- How are the students organized?

Whole Class

Individually

TIME REQUIRED

60 minutes

STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-RH.9-10.3 Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

Background for Teachers

“Chinuk Wawa (historically usually called “Jargon” in local English) is an intertribal hybrid language indigenous to the Pacific Northwest, where it served as a regional lingua franca facilitating communication between speakers of different tribal languages as well as between tribal people and speakers of English and Canadian French. It arose on the lower Columbia River at a time and under circumstances that remain in dispute. Scholars are in agreement that it must have arisen from contact between Chinookan, the tribal languages originally spoken along the Columbia River from its mouth to The Dalles, and people speaking language foreign to the immediate lower Columbia.” -Chinuk Wawa Dictionary Introduction

“The circumstances and events surrounding the founding of Grand Ronde Reservation are key to understanding the long survival of Chinuk Wawa there. At the time this reservation was founded, it was the policy of the United States government to consolidate multiple Native groups on single reservations, where they could be controlled and guided towards Euro-American “civilization”.” -Chinuk Wawa Dictionary Introduction

Websites:

[https://www.npaih.org/member-tribes/grand-ronde-tribes/#:~:text=At%20Grand%20Ronde%20reservation%2C%20Chinook,era%20\(1954%2D1983\).](https://www.npaih.org/member-tribes/grand-ronde-tribes/#:~:text=At%20Grand%20Ronde%20reservation%2C%20Chinook,era%20(1954%2D1983).)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCf0URTCz2s5U3AgefuDgylq>

Books:

Chinuk Wawa Dictionary: As our elders teach us to speak it.

Order Here: <https://www.grandronde.org/media/2341/chinuk-wawa-book-order-form.pdf>

VOCABULARY

- **chinuk wawa-** the common language of the Grand Ronde reservation used by the native peoples to communicate with each other – at Grand Ronde it became a first language in the households of most tribal members – the language was developed previously by Native people along the Columbia River, to communicate with traders, explorers, and settlers. For a time the language was the most common language of communication between all of the peoples in the region, Tribes, settlers, explorers, fur traders in places like Portland and Seattle.
- **Language revitalization-** an attempt to reverse the decline of a language.
- **Boarding schools-** also known more recently as American Indian Residential Schools, were established in the United States from the mid 17th to the early 20th centuries with a primary objective of "civilizing" or assimilating Native American children and youth into Euro-American culture. In the process, these schools denigrated Native American culture and made children give up their languages and religion. At the same time the schools provided a basic Western education. (Wikipedia)

Opening

Begin the lesson by asking students:

- *Do you know the names of any traditional native languages that were spoken in Oregon?*
- *How many languages do you think were spoken by tribes in the Willamette Valley before Euro-settlers arrived?*

Activity

1. Begin the Language Revitalization presentation, stopping to discuss with students when prompted by “Speakers Notes”
 - a. **Slide 3:** Pause and pose this question to students. Have students think to themselves for a moment and then share with a partner. Come back as a class and have a few students share their answers.
 - b. **Slide 4:**
 - During the discovery of gold in 1852 and the Oregon Donation Land Act of 1850, settlers flooded Indian Country via the Applegate Trail.
 - Much of the land and their resources to survive were taken and dispersed.
 - A reservation is land held for special use, in this case a place for Indians.
 - c. **Slide 5:**
 - Each band and tribe spoke their own language. The first common language of the reservation was not English, but a Native language called chinuk wawa.
 - d. **Slide 6:**
 - chinuk wawa was earlier developed by Native people along the Columbia River, to communicate with traders and foreigners. This became the first language that people on the reservation used to communicate with each other. When people got married they usually wouldn't marry someone from their tribe. They would usually marry someone from another tribe who spoke a different language. Most often they would use chinuk wawa to communicate. This chinuk language was spoken in the home and the first language that many children would hear and learn.
 - Note: chinuk wawa doesn't use upper and lower case letters, that is why when you see chinuk wawa text it is not capitalized.
 - e. **Slide 7:**
 - They started forcing the Native people to send their children to boarding school. A boarding school meant that the children lived at the school and they only came home on vacations and sometimes on holiday breaks. The goal of these schools were to “civilize” the Native children. The children were made to wear clothes like the European people and eat food as they did as well. They were also not allowed to speak their Native language. In fact, they were punished if they did. Many families stopped teaching their children chinuk wawa, so they wouldn't be punished at school for speaking it. However, chinuk wawa continued to be used with older people in the community, with the result that chinuk wawa survived far longer than the reservation boarding school era did.
 - f. **Slide 9:**
 - In the late 1970's and early 1980's a few elders conducted community classes in chinuk wawa, trying to keep it alive. Also at that time, there was a scholar who came through and he recorded elders speaking the language. He also learned to speak it. In 1997 The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde hired a language specialist who organized a program to revive Chinuk Wawa. He began teaching community classes and getting more people to speak the language. He worked together with the scholar who had come through earlier, to create curriculum and lessons for these classes.

Activity cont.

g. Slide 10:

- In 2000 they helped start a preschool immersion class at Grand Ronde. An immersion Kindergarten started in 2004. Currently, the program serves K-4th graders. You can also take the class at Willamina High School. Many community classes are held in order to get as many people as possible speaking the language. There is also a chinuk wawa language app available for use using iPhones or iPads.
2. After viewing the presentation,, pass out the Graphic Organizer to each student and share the short bio of the presenter in the TED talk video:
“In this talk Crystal Starr Szczepanski teaches us about one of the traditional indigenous languages of the pacific northwest. She shares her personal journey in helping revitalize and heal chinuk wawa.”
 3. Have students complete the Graphic Organizer as they watch the video.
 4. Upon completing the TED talk, have students get into groups of 4 to discuss their sheets with one another.

Closure

Upon having students discuss their organizer in their groups, come back together to have a whole group discussion on the issue of tribal language revitalization. Give students the exit ticket at the end.

Differentiation

- To provide an additional resource, teachers can pass out the Language Read Aloud document to students.

Extension

- Students can explore the Chinuk Wawa Education Program YouTube Channel to hear and learn more chinuk wawa: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCf0URTCz2s5U3AgefuDgylg>
- Additional Video: wawa - <https://vimeo.com/89961319>
This video demonstrates the use of the chinuk wawa language in modern-day and provides clips of interviews with various proficient speakers

Notes/Other

- Before teaching this lesson it is important for teachers to know that talk about language revitalization, assimilation and the impacts it had and continues to have on Native people can bring up trauma for some students. It's important to approach this topic with care and understanding, as language makes up just one part of a person's identity and they can sometimes carry shame.

Appendix

Language Revitalization Presentation:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1oZ7jSXScT6MAS1q4ac4ljY9jfK1Kn7N0fC3bVO8HHw/edit?usp=sharing>

TED talk by Crystal Star: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eKMSTkbtPBk>

Graphic Organizer: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1apudq4aYKfNYnPbjF3pbnnHJdnrnFbzI/view?usp=sharing>

Exit Ticket: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1E10XCOvDMXDlcFO5DWJCJSnoreVdcArH/view?usp=sharing>