



ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

# Indigenous Peoples' Day as an Act of Sovereignty Part II

## ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- Sovereignty
- Identity
- Genocide, Federal Policy and Laws

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will be able to understand that tribal sovereignty is an inherent right of tribes in the United States. As such, they cannot be erased. By establishing Indigenous Peoples' Day, there is growing validation of the enduring presence and contributions of Native Americans in this country.
- Students will learn the elements of a proclamation in order to write one.
- Students will connect the advocacy of Indigenous people to a topic they feel strongly about.

## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

- What is the value in a proclamation?

## LOGISTICS

- Where does the activity take place?  
*Classroom*
- How are the students organized?
  - Whole class
  - Teams: 2 – 4
  - Pairs
  - Individually

## TIME REQUIRED

60 – 120 minutes

## Overview

Throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries tribal nations and Indigenous communities have continued to assert their right to self-governance and sovereignty despite numerous efforts to force them to assimilate. By extension, the purposeful erasure of Indigenous peoples as a living and thriving presence in the contemporary world also remains a reality.

Tribal sovereignty predates the existence of the U.S. government and the state of Oregon. Tribal governments are separate and unique sovereign nations with the power to execute their self-governance to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their citizens and to govern their lands, air, and waters. One of the ways Indigenous communities have been embodying their right to sovereignty is through the establishment of an Indigenous Peoples' Day. Indigenous Peoples' Day serves as reminder of the contributions, both past and present, of Indigenous communities and tribal nations.

This lesson extends the knowledge gained from Part I by asking students to make meaning of Indigenous Peoples' Day and to explore how advocacy leads to a local proclamation and change.



## Background for teachers

Teacher should familiarize themselves with Indigenous Peoples' Day.

This lesson can stand alone but will be enhanced by using Indigenous Peoples' Day as an Act of Sovereignty Part I and lessons on tribal sovereignty.

## Considerations for teachers

### Assessment

- Students will engage in a substantial amount of discussion with partners and groups. The teacher should actively monitor student discussion for correct understanding and should ask for the pair to turn in Handout One: Indigenous Peoples' Day Notes
- Students will complete a proclamation that will allow the teacher to assess understanding.

### Practices

*Class discussion and working in pairs –*  
Teachers will need to have two separate pairings of students for this lesson.

### Learning targets

- I am familiar with Indigenous Peoples' Day and why people are advocating for it.
- I can discuss how Indigenous Peoples' Day relates to sovereignty.
- I can write a proclamation aligned to a checklist on a topic that needs civic engagement.

## STANDARDS

### Oregon social sciences standards

**HS.5** Evaluate the relationships among governments at the local, state, tribal, national, and global levels.

**HS.11** Examine the pluralistic realities of society (such as ethnic and social groups, urban/rural, cultural, poverty, religion, and age) recognizing issues of equity, and evaluating the need for change. (Civics)

**HS.55** Analyze the complexity of the interaction of multiple perspectives to investigate causes and effects of significant events in the development of world, U.S., and Oregon history. (History)

**HS.60** Analyze the history, culture, tribal sovereignty, and historical and current issues of the Native American/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian in Oregon and the United States. (History)

**HS.61** Analyze and explain persistent historical, social and political issues, conflicts and compromises in regard to power, inequality and justice and their connection to current events and movements. (History)

**HS.62** Identify historical and current events, issues, and problems when national and/or global interests have been in conflict and provide analysis from multiple perspectives. (History)



## Options/extensions

- Encourage students to spend time looking at the PowerPoint timeline and then learning about one of those accomplishments.
- Research proclamations that exist in their community.

## Reflection/closure

- Review the learning targets.
- Discuss with students what they believe they learned.

## MATERIALS

**There should be classroom copies of all handouts.**

- **Handout One:** Indigenous Peoples' Day Notes
- Access to a computer and screen to show the following:
  - **Clip one:** Public Broadcasting Service video on Seattle's Quest for Indigenous Peoples' Day: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1LDUqF1jNJ8>
  - **Clip two:** This shows that there is advocacy for recognition across U.S. borders: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1LDUqF1jNJ8>
  - **PowerPoint:** Indigenous Peoples' Day Timeline
- **Handout Two:** Oregon Cities Adopt Indigenous Peoples' Day
- **Handout Three:** Two more states are dumping Christopher Columbus to celebrate Indigenous people instead
- **Handout Four:** Indigenous Peoples' Day: Rethinking American History
- **Handout Five:** State of Oregon Proclamation of the Governor
- **Handout Six:** Arbor Day Example
- **Handout Seven:** Beaverton, Oregon Examples
- **Handout Eight:** How to Write a Proclamation



### KEY VOCABULARY

**Tribal sovereignty** – Tribal governments are separate and unique sovereign nations with powers to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their enrolled members and to govern their lands. This tribal sovereignty predates the existence of the U.S. government and the state of Oregon.

**Self-determination** –

- The Self-Determination and Education Act of 1975 (PL-93-638) allowed tribal governments to contract for programs such as police, maintenance, education, social services, timber management, health clinics, and more.
- Native American self-determination refers to the social movements, legislation, and beliefs that the Native American tribes in the United States have the right to exercise self-governance and decision making on issues that “affect their own people.”

**Proclamation** – A public or official announcement, especially one dealing with a matter of great importance.

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## Activity 1

# Introduction and Note Taking

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This first activity is to introduce students to what Indigenous Peoples' Day is via teacher presentation, video examples, and student interaction. Pass out Handout One: Indigenous Peoples' Day Notes (one copy per student).

**Say:**

*Here is a sheet of paper to write down our notes on today's topic. What do we know about Indigenous Peoples' Day? As we generate a list, write down at least four of the ideas generated from our discussion on row one, column one of the sheet labeled, "Pre-Notes."*

If students do not know anything, try asking probing questions: What might this day be about? Why might people want such a day? What might take place on this day? What does Indigenous mean? Why are days set aside to mark occasions?

Allow for a class discussion to further engage students in this topic.

**Say:**

*OK, great. Next topic for our notes: What does sovereignty mean? What does supreme power mean? What does authority mean? Self-control? Write down at least three of those ideas in row two, column one (pre-notes for Sovereignty)*

*Sovereignty means supreme power especially over a political unit (as a country); it can also mean a country's independent authority and right of self-control. What are some examples of that?*

*There are important political examples, such as the sovereign rights of a country to decide who is a citizen, as well as more individual sovereign rights, such as your right to decide what you want to eat for lunch today.*

*Because there are over 500 tribal nations in the United States, the concept of sovereignty is very complex. For today's conversation, "tribal sovereignty" refers to the right of Native American tribes to determine their own governance structure and*

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## Activity 1 (Continued)

*membership. Native American tribes, through elected tribal governments, have the right to operate as self-governing nations. There are nine nations here in Oregon and each of them has the right to create laws and rules for how they want to live.*

### **Say or explain:**

*Throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries tribal nations and Indigenous communities have continued to assert their right to self-governance and sovereignty despite numerous efforts to force them to assimilate. By extension, the purposeful erasure of Indigenous peoples as a living and thriving presence in the contemporary world also remains a reality.*

*Tribal sovereignty predates the existence of the U.S. government and the state of Oregon. Tribal governments are separate and unique sovereign nations with the power to execute their self-governance to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their citizens and to govern their lands, air, and waters. One of the ways Indigenous communities have been embodying their right to sovereignty is through the establishment of an Indigenous Peoples' Day. Indigenous Peoples' Day serves as a reminder of the contributions, both past and present, of Indigenous communities and tribal nations.*

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## Activity 2

# Review Two Short Video Clips and National Timeline

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**Say:**

*We are going to watch two short news clips on Indigenous Peoples' Day:*

Clip one: Public Broadcasting Service video on Seattle's Quest for Indigenous Peoples' Day: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1LDUqF1jNJ8>

Clip two: This shows that there is advocacy for recognition across U.S. borders: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1LDUqF1jNJ8>

**Say:**

*As you watch these two clips, take notes in row one, "post-note" on answering the question: What is Indigenous Peoples' Day?*

After the video, ask some students to share what they wrote down.

Next, share the PowerPoint. This PowerPoint is packed with information, so teachers do not need to read all the bullets. Feel free to choose certain main points. The main idea is that there has been a growing movement in the past few years to create Indigenous Peoples' Day.

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## Activity 3

# Reading and Paired Sharing

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Determine ahead of time how to have students work in groups of two. Pass out the Mark the Text Protocol or explain the protocol using a whiteboard or use the one you have been using with your students.

### Say and write on the whiteboard:

1. "Oregon Cities Adopt Indigenous Peoples' Day"
2. "Two more states are dumping Christopher Columbus to celebrate Indigenous people instead"
3. "Indigenous Peoples' Day: Rethinking American History"
4. "State of Oregon Proclamation of the Governor"

### Say:

*On your notes, in column one, row three (pre-notes/Readings), write down next to each number: Based on the title, what do you think you might learn about? Some titles are more obvious than others. Take number two for example: Could we guess the states?*

*Great! Next, I'm going to put you in pairs. Each pair will have these four items to read. You are going to read two and your partner will read two. Use the Mark the Text Protocol I've shown you to mark the text.*

*After you've both read, give each other a one-minute summary of your two items and fill out the third row, third column (post notes/Readings) where it says Name One New Thing Learned for each.*

Pass out handouts: Each pair gets a copy of handouts 2 through 5.



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## Activity 4

# Class Discussion and Meaning Making

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**Say:**

*Now we're going to discuss on how Indigenous Peoples' Day relates to the definition of sovereignty. Tribal sovereignty refers to the right of Native American tribes to govern themselves and determine their own future. How is creating Indigenous Peoples' Day an example of that? Write down a response in row 2, column 3: How does Indigenous Peoples' Day relate to the definition of sovereignty?*

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## Activity 5

### Writing a proclamation

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**Say:**

*As teenagers, many of your rights are restricted, such as the right to vote or the right to own property, but your right to advocate for yourself is less restricted. We're going to practice writing a proclamation on something that matters to us. We're going to get new partners for this exercise. First, I'm going to hand out some sample proclamations.*

Briefly summarize the sample proclamations (handouts 6 and 7) as you hand them out. Remember that half the class has already read Governor Brown's proclamation, so pass out a copy for the rest of the class.

**Say:**

*First, let's make a list of some things you might advocate for. The right of teenagers under the age of 18 to vote or to own property can also be there.*

If students struggle to find a topic, try suggesting some of the following:

- A later class start time
- More homeless shelters in town
- An official day to recognize the contributions of teenagers to society

Next, put them in their new pairs and pass out Handout 8: How to Write a Proclamation

**Say:**

*OK, in your new groups on a fresh sheet of paper, write one proclamation.*