



SOCIAL SCIENCES

Understanding the Seasons

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- Since Time Immemorial
- Tribal Government
- Identity
- Lifeways

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to...

- Name the seasons in both English and Dee-ni Wee-ya' (the People's Words) and identify characteristics of each (e.g., weather, activities).
- Learn about the seasonal activities of one of the many groups of people removed to the Siletz Reservation—the Dee-ni people.
- Create a seasonal scene using the monoprinting method.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How are seasons important to the ways of living among the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians people (specifically Dee-ni people)?

(Continued on next page)

Overview

In this lesson, students will explore how Siletz people in general, and Dee-ni people originally from Southern Oregon and Northern California in particular, organize their lives around the seasons of the year (spring, summer, fall, and winter).

In the first activity, students will learn what seasons are and how they impact people's lives. Next, students will learn about how ancestral Dee-ni people and their descendants today organize their lives by the seasons as well as learn words for the seasons in Dee-ni Wee-ya' (the People's Words). Finally, students will create a seasonal art visual using the monoprinting method.

Background for teachers

The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians is composed of dozens of bands of different Native peoples from across Western Oregon. Before the U.S. government and settlers forcibly removed the ancestors of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians from their homelands, each Tribe and band had different ways of making a living—getting food to eat; collecting materials for housing; and caring for the land, animals, and plants around them. These ways of making a living varied from



LOGISTICS

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

TIME REQUIRED

Approximately 90 minutes

Note: Activities can be divided up over multiple days or class periods and/or assigned as homework to individual students or groups.

STANDARDS

Oregon social sciences standards¹

K.11² - Examine culturally significant traditions, celebrations, days, and places including those from cultures that are currently and historically marginalized.

1.7 - Explain how seasonal changes influence activities in school and community.

1.8 - Give examples of local natural resources and describe how people use them.

Oregon English language arts standards

K.RL.1 With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

K.RL.10 Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.

1.RL.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

region to region according to the unique landscape features, climate, and ecologies of each area. For example, people from across Western Oregon depended on bountiful annual salmon runs, but coastal people's diet also included shellfish, ocean fish, whale, and sea lion, while people living in inland valleys relied more on acorns, camas, deer, and elk to survive.

While ways of living varied among the ancestors of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Siletz ancestors shared the practice of organizing their communities around the seasons. Many Siletz people continue this practice today.

¹ Oregon is in process of revising its social studies standards. This document references the draft 2018 standards for grades K-1.

² Oregon Department of Education. "2021 Social Science Standards Integrated with Ethnic Studies." (2021).



This lesson will introduce students to the ways that Native American people of Western Oregon organized their lives around the seasons. Specifically, this lesson will focus on the seasonal activities of one of the Tribes removed to the Siletz Reservation: the Dee-ni people from the Southern Oregon and Northern California coast. The Dee-ni people have always paid close attention to the seasons to survive and prosper and they made sure to pass this information down through the generations. These insights include understanding how animals and fish behave, how plants grow and thrive, and how the land needs to be cared for during different times of the year. This care for the land helps avoid overusing certain areas and ensures a healthy and sustainable ecosystem.

Dan' Nast-li~' (Spring)

Dan' Nast-li~' (Spring) is when all the good things people need are coming back from their wet, chilly winter sleep. This is an important season, as it marks the beginning of challenging work to gather the resources necessary to prepare for life and the chilly winter months. New leaves and branches are forming on plants, which makes this season the best time for the Dee-ni people to harvest the plants needed for making baskets and clothing. For example, to get the long straight sticks best for baskets, the Dee-ni people harvest branches of hazel bushes when the new sap is flowing so that

MATERIALS

- **Seasons Flipbook slide deck**
(load slides prior to the lesson to ensure they are displaying properly)
- **Seasonal Monoprint Examples slide deck**
(load slides prior to the lesson to ensure they are displaying properly)
- **Classroom writing surface**
(i.e., blackboard, whiteboard, chalkboard, chart paper and markers)
- **Seasons Activity Packet**
(one copy of the student handouts per student)
- **Art supplies for monoprint activity**
 - White paper, 12" by 18" (watercolor paper)
 - Paint brushes
 - Water (and small paper cups for water)
 - Newspaper (to help keep table surface clean)
 - Watercolors
 - Crayons

³Background information adapted from Wilkinson, C. (2010). *The people are dancing again: The history of the Siletz Tribe of western Oregon*. University of Washington Press.



the bark peels off easily. The materials gathered in the spring are used to make baskets for transport, storage, and as caps that can be worn daily.

Spring also heralds the return nutritious foods—from the nettles that appear first in early spring, to the plants that will produce important roots, bulbs, and berries in the coming months. Beautiful flowers, like camas, show promise for food to come and the people gather to offer prayers that help ensure that the chinook salmon and other foods return in great abundance to sustain people for another year.

Shin-dvn (Summer)

The warm weather of the summer makes this season a suitable time for traveling long distances to visit friends and relatives, decide marriages, compete in games and sports, and trade. It also allows for large outdoor projects, like building new homes, canoes, or making new fish nets. The summer season is an important time to gather fresh, delicious berries. In addition, the Dee-ni people gather specific plants that mature in the summer and are important for decorating baskets like beargrass and maidenhair fern.

VOCABULARY

Dan' Nast-li~' – Spring

Shin-dvn – Summer

Dan'-xvt-dvn – Fall

Xii-dvn – Winter

Pronunciation key: Listen to the recording “Dee-Ni Practical Alphabet” (siletzlanguage.org/videos.php) at the Siletz Tribal Language Project for the pronunciation of the alphabet and special sounds of Dené (Athabaskan).

Note: Historically, Dené (Athabaskan) dialects like Dee-ni Wee-ya' (the People's Words) are not written. Various spelling and pronunciation strategies have been developed by historians, linguists, and Tribal communities that may vary depending on the source and time period.

Ancestor – Family members who have come before.

Seasons – Annual changes to the natural environment caused by the Earth's orbit around the Sun, such as the length of day and night, weather, how animals and fish behave, how plants grow and thrive, and how the land needs to be cared for during various times of the year.

Weather – The condition of the atmosphere in relation to heat or cold, wetness or dryness.

Monoprint – A single impression of an image made with many different materials (oil paint, watercolors, crayons, markers, chalk).



Dan'-xvt-dvn (Fall)

The fall season is a valuable time for the Dee-ni people to prepare for the chilly winter by putting different foods in storage. For example, the chinook salmon that run in the rivers in fall can be dried on racks and tied in bundles to be kept inside and eaten throughout the winter. Salmon is an essential food staple, and fall is the time to dry or smoke enough salmon to last throughout the winter. Fall is also the best time for the Dee-ni people to hunt deer and elk for the many things they provide—meat for food; sinew for tying; hides for clothing, shoes, or drums; and antlers for making sturdy, long-lasting tools like spoons and needles. Lastly, the acorns that drop from the oak trees during the fall can be gathered and stored in large baskets. These acorns are shelled and leached to remove the tannic acid, then boiled into a meal for breads or to thicken soup.

Xii-dvn (Winter)

During the winter, the Dee-ni people care for the land in a unique way—with prayer and ceremony. The winter season in Western Oregon is cold and dark with great rains and wind. The days are shorter and the nights longer. As a result, there is less food available to harvest and hunt. Winter is a time for the Dee-ni people to gather in the house and enjoy foods that have been prepared and stored, and also pray, hold ceremonial dances, and tell ancestral stories. In fact, winter is the only time that many stories are told because the

³This activity was adapted from Higgins, P. (n.d.) "Fall Reflections Monoprints." KinderArt. <https://kinderart.com/art-lessons/printmaking/fall-reflections-monoprints>

ADAPTIONS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING



The lesson is structured around teacher oral presentation and small-group and classroom discussion, but much of the content can be implemented for distance and independent learning purposes. The following is a suggested sequence. Be sure all students have either print or electronic access to the lesson materials.

Activity 1: What are seasons?

- Provide students with an electronic copy of the "Seasons Activity Packet" prior to beginning this activity. Students will complete this packet as an online guided practice.
- Facilitate steps 3–10 as a teacher presentation and whole-class discussion using your learning management system (LMS) or online classroom platform.
- Replace-pair-share in step 1 by giving students 1 to 2 minutes to brainstorm independently, then ask students to raise their hand or use the LMS "raise hand" to share out.

Activity 2: Seasons and the Dee-ni people

- Make sure each student has a hard or electronic copy of the "Seasons Flipbook" so that they can follow along as the teacher conducts a read-aloud.
- Gather students for an online facilitated listening and speaking activity. Tell students that they are going to learn the importance of the seasons from the perspective of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz, specifically the Dee-ni people. Let students know that during this read-aloud activity, they will have the opportunity to learn the Dee-ni words for seasons.

people believe that telling stories out of season is dangerous and can be harmful to the community or the person telling the story. Winter is also a suitable time for indoor work projects like making baskets and ceremonial regalia needed for the upcoming year. The ancestors of the Siletz Tribes (including the Dee-ni people) teach that if the people live in this way, the natural cycles that the people depend on will endure.

Today

Siletz people continue to pay close attention to the seasons. For example, basket weavers need to know just when plants will be ready to pick at certain parts of the spring and summer so they can make strong, durable, and beautiful baskets. Hunters pay close attention to the best season to hunt a deer or elk to ensure adequate harvesting and the health of the herd. In addition, the Siletz people continue to watch the weather during each season to know when the fish will start to run, so they can gather meat and fish for their families. Most importantly, Siletz people continue their ceremonial responsibilities at the right time of year to ensure that the people and the land will be strong and healthy in the future.

It is important to understand and to communicate to students that the names and specific months associated with each season (spring, summer, fall, and winter) come from a western, European calendar and that most Native people in Western Oregon organized their years around a lunar calendar based on the moon.

ADAPTIONS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

(Continued)



- Present the “Seasons Flipbook” using the following steps.

1. Click to play the audio of the Dee-ni Wee-ya’ (the People’s Words) for each season.
2. Teacher repeats the word.
3. Teacher asks students to repeat the word together (or offline in a mirror at home).
4. Teacher reads the text that describes each season from the perspective of the Dee-ni people.

- Facilitate steps 3–6 as a whole class. Teacher models how complete the “Seasons Activity Packet.”

Activity 3: Art—Season reflective monoprinting³

- Share the “Seasonal Monoprint Examples” slide deck with whole class.
- Ask students to gather art supplies for this activity. Supplies might be limited for many students working from home, so assure students they don’t have to have paints to create a monoprint; they can use crayons, any kind of pen, or even pencils. White paper or lined paper is also fine.
- Have students follow along as you walk them through steps 4–7.



References

- Berg, L. (2007). *The first Oregonians*. Oregon Council for the Humanities.
- Wilkinson, C. (2010). *The people are dancing again: The history of the Siletz Tribe of Western Oregon*. University of Washington Press. (Specifically, chapter 1, which is also provided in the appendix)

Considerations for teachers

Assessment

Some activities in this lesson are built around student discussions as a class or with partners. Teachers can assess student learning by monitoring participation and engagement in these discussions. Teachers can also monitor student completion of the “Seasons Activity Packet” in which students will need to develop visuals and/or write words demonstrating their understanding. In addition, students will work independently to create a seasonal monoprint. Students will depict a scene from their own seasonal experiences and/or from the seasonal ways of living of the Dee-ni people.

ADAPTIONS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING



(Continued)

- If students are having difficulty making a copy of their image (possibly due to limited art supplies), tell students that they can also draw a picture of an activity they (or the Dee-ni people) do during a specific season.

Activity 4: Art—Reflection/closure

- Ask for student volunteers to share their artwork with the class by holding it up to the camera (one at a time).
- Model for students how to share their work. (For example, say: I chose to create a mono-print/drawing of summer because I love picking berries in the summertime).

Practices

- *Classroom discussion* - Large-group, whole-class discussion allows students to express their thoughts and hear the thoughts of others. For the teacher, this practice is an effective way to take the pulse of the group and see what general themes emerge. *Differentiation* - This lesson makes use of readings with some technical information, complex sentence structures, and archaic language. You may choose to organize groups based on reading needs and supports, or have students identify appropriate scaffolds for understanding if necessary.
- *Language* - Teachers should understand the correct pronunciation and intonation of the target language, Dee-ni Wee-ya’.
- *Art instruction* - Teachers should understand how to instruct students to create a monoprint using watercolors.

Learning targets

- I can name the seasons (in both English and Dee-ni Wee-ya’) and identify characteristics of each.
- I can describe the seasonal activities of the Dee-ni people.
- I can create a monoprint about the seasons.

Appendix

Materials included in the electronic folder that support this lesson are:

- Seasons Flipbook slide deck
- Seasonal Monoprint Examples slide deck
- Seasons Activity Packet

Activity 1

What are seasons?

Time: 15 minutes

Overview

Students will review the names and characteristics of the four seasons on the western, European calendar.

Step 1 (partner discussion)

Ask students to turn to a partner and see if they can name any of the four seasons. One way to help kindergarten students have successful “turn-and-talk” times is to let them know beforehand which partner will go first (for example, “the person with the longer hair will talk first”). Give students one minute to exchange thoughts and then ask students to raise their hands to share ideas.

Step 2

Distribute one copy of the “Seasons Activity Packet” to each student. Use an overhead projector or laptop to share a copy of the workbook page 1 with the whole class.

Say:

We live in an area with four seasons: spring, summer, fall, and winter. Each of the four seasons has different weather depending on where you live. We are going to talk about each of the four seasons in Oregon [the teacher can also be more specific, e.g., Salem] and how we can tell when a season begins. Let me show you!

Activity 1 *(Continued)*

Step 3

Using the overhead projector, point to the first column with the spring icon on page 1 of the “Seasons Activity Packet.” In the first box, write and/or draw a picture of a flower. Write another example using “I hear...” (for example, In the spring I hear birds chirping, with a visual of a bird).

Say:

Fresh flowers and plants bloom in the spring season as the weather in Oregon begins to warm and wake up from the chilly winter season. I know it is spring when I see flowers or when I hear baby birds chirping. Please copy down the word “flower” and draw your own picture. Color your flower!

Step 4

Ask students to either copy one of your examples or create their own. Give students a few minutes to complete the first box. Walk the room and assist students as needed.

Step 5

Continue to model completion of the “I see... I hear...” activity for summer, fall, and winter. For students who can complete boxes with little assistance, consider allowing them to move forward using their own words, sentences, and pictures for each season.

Activity 1 *(Continued)*

Step 6

Once all students have written/drawn at least one idea for each box, facilitate a classroom discussion about how we know when each season has begun. Use examples below to help facilitate the discussion.

Teacher examples

Spring has begun when...	Summer has begun when...
Flowers are in bloom.	The weather begins to get hotter.
The weather begins to warm.	Some fresh fruits bloom.
New baby animals are born.	
Fall has begun when...	Winter has begun when...
Leaves turn colors.	The weather gets cold.
Leaves fall from the trees.	The days are shorter/darker.
The weather gets cooler.	It snows.
It rains.	

Step 7

Next, share page 2 of the “Seasons Activity Packet” using an overhead projector.

Say:

People organize their lives in many ways depending on the season. For example, children go to school at the beginning of the fall season. This time of year is sometimes called the “back-to-school” season. What are some other important events or activities that happen in the fall? What about the winter? Spring? Summer?



Activity 1 (Continued)

Step 8

Ask different students to respond to different seasons. Record student responses using both words and pictures.

Step 9

Give students 5–10 minutes to work individually or with a partner to add their own ideas to page 2. Depending on their level of literacy, students may write words or sentences or create a picture. Walk the room and check for student understanding.

Step 10

When most students have completed page 2 of the “Seasons Activity Packet,” transition the whole class to the next activity.

Say:

The four seasons of spring, summer, fall, and winter are based on a western, European calendar. Not all people and cultures divide the year into four seasons. For example, ancient Egyptians divided the year into three seasons and some people—like those near the equator—live in places with only one or two seasons!

In our next activity, we will learn about the seasons from the perspective of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. We will focus on the seasonal activities of Dee-ni people from the Southern Oregon and Northern California coast.

Activity 2

Seasons and the Dee-ni people

Time: 25 minutes

Overview

Students will understand the importance of the seasons from the perspective of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, specifically the Dee-ni people from the Southern Oregon and Northern California coast.

Step 1

Gather students close to the front of the room to sit in a circle for story and discussion time. Read slides 1–3 of the “Seasons Flipbook.” Emphasize the following key point:

Say:

Knowing the seasons means understanding not just the length of the day or weather but also the patterns of how animals and fish behave, how plants grow, and how the land needs to be cared for during different times of the year. Dee-ni people have always paid close attention to the seasons because they live in close relationship with the land.

Step 2

Share slides 4–7, one at time, using the following steps.

- Click to play the audio of the Athabaskan name for the season.
- Teacher repeats the name.
- All students repeat the name together.
- Read the text that describes each season from the perspective of the Dee-ni people.

Activity 2 (Continued)

Step 3

After reading slides 4-7 of the “Seasons Flipbook,” work as a whole class to complete page 3 of the “Seasons Activity Packet.”

Step 4

Using the overhead projector, point to the first column “In the spring” on page 3 of the “Seasons Activity Packet.”

Say:

What did you learn about how the Dee-ni people live during the spring? What did the Dee-ni people, see, hear, or do?

Step 5

Gather ideas from the class (for example, new leaves and plants in bloom, gathering camas, making clothing from the inner bark of maple trees) and draw visuals that represent the class discussion.

Step 6

Repeat for summer, fall, and winter. Walk the room and help students with drawings. Keep the “Seasons Flipbook” in view so students can draw from the visuals provided.

Activity 3

Art—Season reflective monoprinting

Time: 45 minutes

Overview

Students will create their own seasons flipbook in which they explore what each season means to them and their families.

Preparation:

Set up art-making space or stations with the list of supplies provided in the materials section (white paper, brushes, water, paint, crayons).

Say:

In our next activity, you will learn how to create a seasonal scene using something called monoprinting. Monoprinting is a type of art where you create an impression or copy of an image. Let's look at some examples.

Step 1

Share the “Seasonal Monoprint Examples” slide deck.

Step 2

Make sure students are seated at an art station or a space set up with the necessary art supplies.

³This activity was adapted from Higgins, P. (n.d.) “Fall Reflections Monoprints.” KinderArt.
<https://kinderart.com/art-lessons/printmaking/fall-reflections-monoprints>

Activity 3 (Continued)

Step 3

Ask students to follow along as you walk them through each step of this art activity. The teacher should model each step.

Say:

Think about which season you would like to show in your monoprint: spring, summer, fall, or winter. Also think about how you will show your season. You can show an activity you would do during the season or something in nature you would see during the season. You can also show an activity that is important to the Dee-ni people.

Step 4

Fold the white paper the long way (like a hot dog).

Step 5

Create a scene on one half of the paper (from the middle fold going up) using watercolors and crayons. The lower half of the paper will be the water—a reflection of the scene you create.

Step 6

When you complete the top scene, fold the paper back in half again, with your drawing/painting facing in. Use a ruler to rub the paper so that the image transfers to the other half of the paper.

Step 7 (optional)

Use blue watercolors or crayons to create water on the bottom and sky on the top to enhance the reflection effect.

Activity 4 Reflection/closure

Time: 5 minutes

Overview

Sum up the lesson by asking students to share their monoprint with a partner and their families. It is helpful at this age to assign students their partner(s) for sharing activities. Be sure they know who goes first (for example, assign pairs of students so that one is “peanut butter” and the other is “jelly,” then ask all “peanut butter students” to share first).

Step 1

Ask students to share their work with partner 1 about the season they chose and why.

Step 2

Model for students how to share their work. (For example, say, *I chose to create a monoprint of summer because I love picking ripe berries in the summertime.*)

Step 3

Ask students to follow along as you walk them through each step of this art. Give students one minute to share with a partner.

Step 4 (move and change partners)

Next, ask students to move around the room and find a new partner (or find their assigned partner 2).