



ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Oregon's Nine Federally Recognized Tribes

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- **Since Time Immemorial**
- **Identity**
- **History**

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will understand

- that Oregon has nine federally recognized Tribes,
- the meaning of tribal seals, and
- that each Tribe has its own special identity.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Who are the nine Tribes of Oregon?
- What can we learn about a tribe from their seal?

TIME REQUIRED

- **30 minutes**

Overview

This lesson focuses on the Essential Understandings, *Since Time Immemorial* and *Identity*, which refers to the deep, ancestral connection that Oregon's tribal nations have to their lands, cultures and traditions. There are numerous Tribes, Nations and Bands within the nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon. As distinct sovereign nations, there is variation among these Tribes with each having their own cultures, ways of being, lifeways and languages.

Students learn that Oregon has nine federally recognized Tribes that have been here since time immemorial. Through examining tribal seals and playing bingo, students are introduced to the Tribes of Oregon and practice visual recognition while learning that each Tribe has its own unique identity represented in its official seal.



Background for Teachers

This lesson focuses on the Essential Understandings of History, Identity, and Since Time Immemorial. Since before anyone can remember, tribal nations have had their own unique cultures and deep, ancestral connections to the land. There are nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon. Each is made up of numerous smaller Tribes, Nations and Bands. These Tribes have been present on the land in Oregon since time immemorial, predating written history and colonial records. This concept is fundamental to Indigenous worldviews, oral traditions and legal systems because it emphasizes Native Tribes' continuity, stewardship, and sovereignty over their lands long before external settlers arrived.

These ideas are often expressed in tribal seals. They are typically created through collaborative processes involving tribal councils, community members and artists. Tribal seals often incorporate meaningful symbols that represent the Tribe's identity and connection to their land, traditions and values. Each element is carefully chosen to tell part of the Tribe's story—from natural features like mountains and rivers to cultural symbols like sacred animals or traditional activities.

STANDARDS

Oregon English Language Arts Standards

- **3 K.RL.1:** With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- **K.SL.1:** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts.

MATERIALS

What materials are needed for students to engage in this activity?

- PowerPoint presentation
- Bingo Markers (beans, chips)
- Container to draw seals from
- Print outs of six varieties of [bingo cards](#) (color if possible)
- Seals cut out from one card for bingo container



Considerations for Teachers

Practices

While teaching this lesson, the following principles can help guide your decision-making and engagement with students.

- Focus on teaching the Essential Understandings through discussions of the nine federally recognized Tribes.
- When sharing content with students, address the “why” not just the “what.”
- Highlight the strengths and struggles of Oregon’s Indigenous peoples today while also acknowledging their history and tradition.
- Ensure your teaching practices are accessible and appropriate for Native and non-Native students.
- Be clear that traditional ecological knowledge is not a historical artifact but continues to be practiced and developed today.
- Avoid generalizing across all Native American groups.

KEY WORDS and IDEAS

- **Time Immemorial:** So long ago that no one can remember when it started.
- **Tribe:** A group of Native American people.
- **Seal:** A special picture that represents a group.

Assessment

During this lesson, observe and listen to students during discussions and as they work independently and collaboratively to determine how their learning progresses. Write down what you notice about what students say and do in relation to the success criteria. Use this formative information to provide feedback to students and plan next steps.

At the end of the lesson, provide students with an opportunity to reflect on their learning through self-assessment. Students can indicate their level of learning relative to specific success criteria. They can also write out an explanation of why they feel they are at that learning stage.



Success Criteria

- I can name one of Oregon's Tribes.
- I can describe what I see in a tribal seal.
- I can match the Tribes' seals in bingo.

For the following activities, use the slide deck to support your implementation.

Opening

Time: 10 minutes

Step 1:

Gather students in a circle on the floor.

- Begin telling students, "We are a group of people called a class. What other groups of people do you know? What other groups are you part of?"
- Prompt students (family, sports teams, countries).

Explain: "A Tribe is a group of Native American people. Oregon has nine Tribes that have been here since time immemorial—that means a very, very long time."

Show concept: "Each Tribe has a special picture called a 'seal' that shows important things about them. It's like their special symbol."

Show an example: Display your school logo or a simple familiar symbol and ask: "What does this tell us about our school?"

Step 2:

Present the essential questions that will guide the lesson:

- Who are the nine Tribes of Oregon?
- What can we learn about a Tribe from its seal?

Give students time to wonder about these questions and share their initial thoughts.



Step 3:

Engage with the number 9. Have students hold up nine fingers, look at the number 9 on the class board. Count aloud to 9 together.

Step 4:

Say, "There are nine Tribes in Oregon today, much less than in the long past. The Tribes are not the same! Each has its own land, language, and culture. Each Tribe is like a really big group of relatives, with lots of different big families. These families are called bands, and the bands come together to make the Tribe. One Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, has 27 bands!"

Step 5:

Review the learning outcomes and success criteria with students.

Main Activity

Time: 15 minutes

Step 1:

Show students the map of Oregon, highlighting the locations of the nine federally recognized Tribes.

Step 2:

Engage students with the Tribes' seals. Say to students, "Now we are going to look at each of these Tribes' seals up close and see what we can learn!"

Show the first tribal seal. Ask students: "What do you see in this picture?" Point out different elements.

Say to students, "I see feathers, I see mountains, I see beads..." Explain that this is the seal of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and that the pictures tell us about things that are important to this Tribe.

Build excitement: "We're going to look at all nine Tribal seals and then play a fun bingo game!" Move students back to their seats.



Step 3:

Set up students to play a bingo game with the tribal seals. Distribute bingo cards (six different varieties, each with nine tribal seals arranged differently). Give each student bingo markers (beans, chips or small paper squares). Explain the rules, saying, "When I show a tribal seal, find it on your card and cover it up!"

Call out seals randomly, showing each one clearly. When students get three in a row (or a full card for a shorter game), they call "Bingo!" Continue until several students have won.

Celebrate! Say to students, "Great job learning about Oregon's nine Tribes!"

Closing

Time: 5 minutes**Step 1:**

Gather students back in a circle with their bingo cards. Review the day's learning. Ask students, "What is a Tribe?" "How many Tribes are in Oregon?"

Ask students, "Who wants to share what they see in one seal?"

Ask students what the elements of the seal communicate about what's important to a Tribe and how they see themselves (their identity).

To close the lesson, say to students, "These nine Tribes are still here in Oregon today. They take care of the land and keep their traditions alive."

Step 2:

Support students to engage in self-assessment of their learning using the success criteria. A self-assessment template is included below.

Additional Resources

[Tribal Curriculum](#): This includes links to all the tribally-created curriculum folders, including all associated lesson materials.

The links below highlight examples of specific, related lessons from the Tribal Curriculum.





- Siletz Tribal Curriculum, 4TH grade lesson, Indigenous Oregon
- Grand Ronde Tribal Curriculum, Kindergarten lesson, Tribal Roles & Responsibilities
- Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians Curriculum, 4th grade lesson, Diversity Among Oregon Tribes



Handout: Student Self-Assessment

Name:

Directions: Read the lesson success criteria in the first column to students. Have them indicate if they think they can do each of the success criteria or not yet. Students can use hand gestures, share verbally, or mark their answers in the handout.

Success Criteria	Not Yet	Yes
"Can I..."		
name one of Oregon's Tribes?		
describe what I see in a tribal seal?		
match the Tribes' seals in Bingo?		

