

Instructional Lesson Plan  
Old Dominion University College of Education

## Overview

### Lesson Plan Overview

1. **Date:** October 29, 2025

2. **Lesson Title:** *The Land and the People: Learning from Indigenous Nations*

3. **Lesson Author:** Sinai Pena

4. **Grade Level:** 2nd

5. **Subject Areas:** Social Studies and English Language Arts (Literature)

6. **Time Allotted for Lesson:** Approximately 60 minutes

7. **Short Description of Lesson:** In this lesson, students will explore how geography and natural resources shaped the lives of three Indigenous nations: the Powhatan, Lakota, and Pueblo. Through an interactive read-aloud of *The Powhatan: The Past and Present of Virginia's First Tribes* by Danielle Smith-Llera, students will build background knowledge about how the Powhatan people used the land and its resources to meet their needs. Students will then use visuals, maps, and supplemental reading passages to gather information about all three nations. Working in small groups, students will organize their findings and create an anchor chart that illustrates where each group lived, what they ate, what they wore, and how they used their natural resources.

## SOL & Instructional Objectives

### 8. Lesson Plan Standards & Instructional Objectives

#### Social Studies

SOL 2.5 The student will use history and social science skills to identify the geographic location, use of resources, and contributions of Indigenous peoples past and present, including:

- a) Indigenous nations and tribes of the Eastern Woodlands (Powhatan);
- b) Indigenous nations and tribes of the Plains (Lakota);
- c) Indigenous nations and tribes of the Southwest (Pueblo).

**Instructional Objectives:** Identify the location, environment, and resources of the Powhatan, Lakota, and Pueblo peoples; describe how geography influenced each group's way of life.

#### English / Language Arts

SOL 2.W.1b The student will write informative/explanatory texts that introduce a topic and develop ideas with facts and examples.

**Instructional Objectives:** Write an informative paragraph using facts and examples from readings to explain how geography affected an Indigenous nation's way of life.

## 9. Enduring Understandings

### **Social Studies**

All students should: understand that people’s lives are influenced by where they live, including the land, climate, and available resources; recognize that Indigenous peoples adapted their lifestyles to meet their needs based on their environment; and appreciate the lasting contributions of the Powhatan, Lakota, and Pueblo to American culture.

### **English / Language Arts**

All students should: summarize key facts from informational texts, connect new learning to prior knowledge, and explain ideas clearly in writing. Students should also understand how to collect, organize, and present information from multiple sources to communicate their learning effectively.

### ***10. Essential Questions***

- How does where people live affect how they live?
- What can we learn from the ways Indigenous nations used their environment?
- Why is it important to understand how people lived in the past?

## Procedures

### 11. Lesson Set (Preparation Phase)

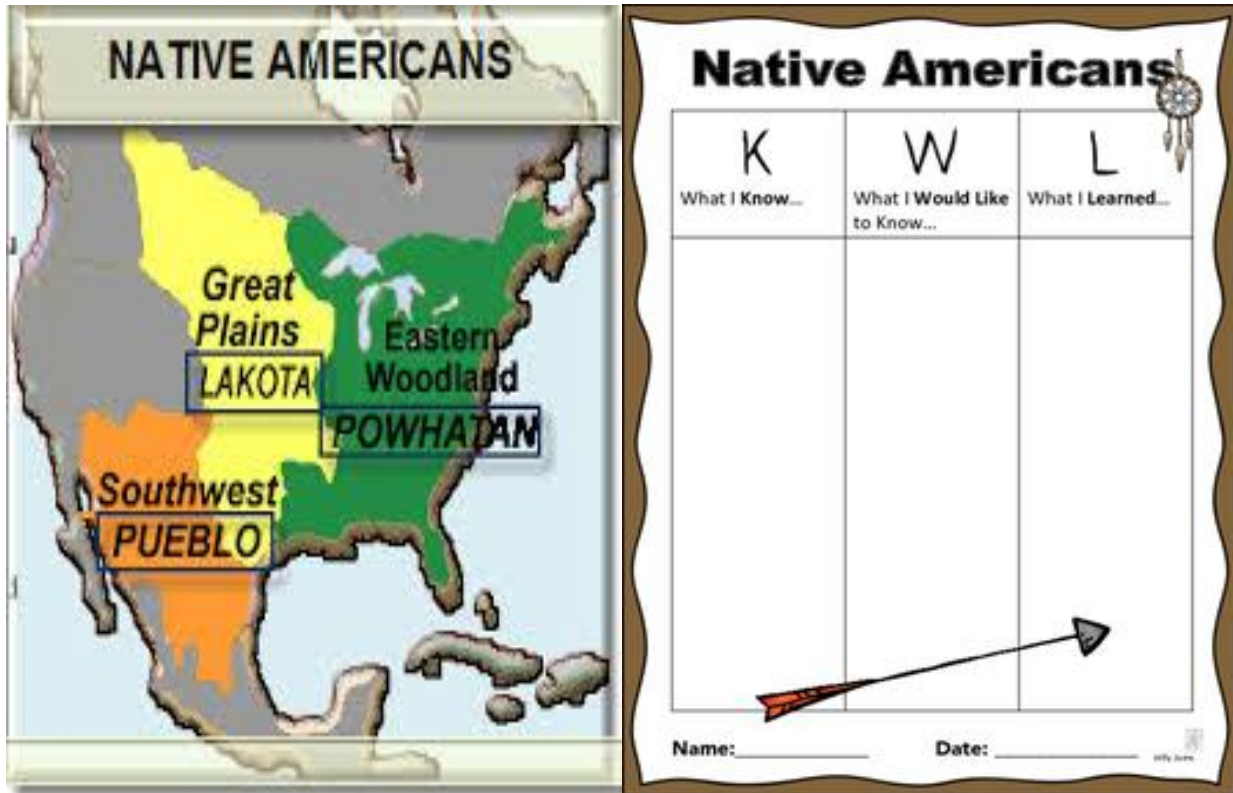
To begin the lesson, guide students in a visualization activity to help them imagine life long ago. Say to the class:

“Close your eyes and imagine living in a place where there are no stores or cars. Everything you need, your food, clothes, and home comes from the land around you. Look around... what do you see? What sounds do you hear? What would your day be like?” Allow students to share what they imagine. Record a few of their ideas on the board. Then, explain that different Indigenous nations lived in different parts of the United States, and their surroundings shaped how they lived. Next, introduce the lesson topic by showing a U.S. map with the three regions labeled:

**Eastern Woodlands (Powhatan), Great Plains (Lakota), and Southwest (Pueblo).**

Create a modified **KWL chart** titled “*People of the Land*” on the board. Write “*What We Know*” and “*What We Wonder*” columns. Invite students to share any facts or questions they already have about how people lived long ago in these regions.

**The purpose of this activity** is to activate students’ prior knowledge of how the environment affects people’s lives and to prepare them to explore how the Powhatan, Lakota, and Pueblo used their land and resources to survive.



## 12. Rationale

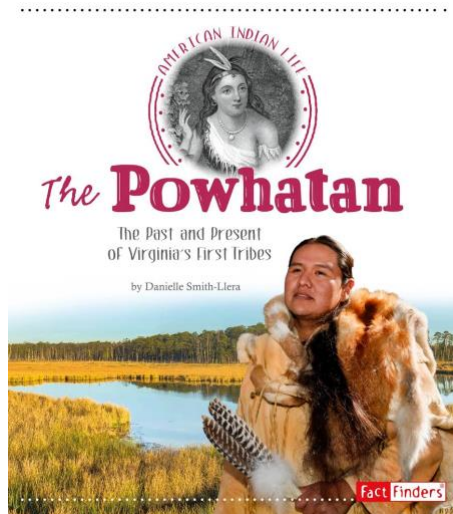
*This lesson is designed to introduce students to how geography and natural resources influence the way people live. Specifically, this lesson will spark students' curiosity about the Powhatan, Lakota, and Pueblo nations and give them a foundation for understanding how each group's environment shaped its culture, homes, food, and clothing. To connect the lesson to prior learning and real-world experiences, students will participate in a visualization activity that allows them to imagine life long ago, relying on the land for survival. This experience helps students recognize that people's lives are deeply connected to their environment and sets the stage for deeper exploration in future lessons.*

## 13. Techniques and Activities (Teaching of the Lesson- Learning Experience)

### Interactive Read-Aloud: Teacher Directed

1. **Introduce the book**, *The Powhatan: The Past and Present of Virginia's First Tribes* by Danielle Smith-Llera, to the students.
  - Before reading, ask students to predict what they think the book will be about and what kind of text it is (fiction or nonfiction).
  - Preview the text by pointing out nonfiction features such as the table of contents, headings, captions, and maps.
  - Tell students: "As we read, think about how the Powhatan people used the land around them to get what they needed for food, clothing, and shelter."

- Inform students that after reading, they will work in groups to learn about the Lakota and Pueblo nations and compare how all three groups used their environments.



## 2. Read the book aloud to the class.

- As you read, pause to ask comprehension questions:
  - “What resources did the Powhatan use from their environment?”
  - “How did they use rivers and forests to survive?”
  - “What kind of homes did they build, and why were those homes useful in the Eastern Woodlands?”
- Draw students’ attention to pictures and maps in the text to support comprehension.
- Record key vocabulary and facts (longhouse, forest, corn, river, trade, fishing) on the board.
- Students should gain knowledge of the Powhatan’s region, natural resources, types of shelter, and how they met their basic needs.

## 3. Return to the class KWL chart

- As a class, verify any prior knowledge that matches the information from the book.
- Add new details learned about the Powhatan under the “What We Learned” column.
- Ask: “What can we now say about how geography affects people’s lives?”
- Encourage discussion that connects this to the essential question.

Native Americans		
K	W	L
What I Know...	What I Would Like to Know...	What I Learned...

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Mini Research Activity: Cooperative Learning

4. **Explain the group activity.**
  - Tell students they will work in small groups to research one Indigenous nation: Powhatan, Lakota, or Pueblo.
  - Each group will gather information about their assigned group's location, homes, food, clothing, and use of natural resources.
  - Explain that they will create an anchor chart to show what they learned and share it with the class.



Example of anchor chart:

5. **Group the students** into three teams: Powhatan, Lakota, and Pueblo.
  - Provide each team with their supplemental materials:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Powhatan Native Americans

The Native Americans are also called American Indians or First Americans. The Native Americans had respect for nature. Many Native Americans farmed. They have many great stories and legends. They made beautiful art. They made jewelry, pottery, and weaved beautiful fabrics.

The Powhatan Native Americans lived in the Eastern Woodlands region of the United States. The land in the Eastern Woodland region had rivers, hills, mountains and coastland. The climate in the Eastern Woodland region is hot, humid summers and mild winters. The climate is the weather that an area has over a long period of time.

The Powhatan Native Americans lived in longhouses. Longhouses are made of wood and bark. The Powhatan Native Americans hunted, fished, and farmed the land. They walked and paddled canoes.

- *Powhatan:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Lakota Native Americans

The Native Americans are also called American Indians or First Americans. The Native Americans had respect for nature. Many Native Americans farmed. They have many great stories and legends. They made beautiful art. They made jewelry, pottery, and weaved beautiful fabrics.

The Lakota Native Americans lived in the Plains region of the United States. The land in the Lakota region had plains, prairies, and rolling hills. Prairies have lots of grass and open space. The climate in the plains region is hot summers and harsh, cold winters. The climate is the weather that an area has over a long period of time.

The Lakota Native Americans lived in teepees. Teepees are like a tent. It was made from wood and animal skins. The Lakota people hunted and were horsemen and warriors. They walked and used horses to get

- *Lakota:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Pueblo Native Americans

The Native Americans are also called American Indians or First Americans. The Native Americans had respect for nature. Many Native Americans farmed. They have many great stories and legends. They made beautiful art. They made jewelry, pottery, and weaved beautiful fabrics.

The Pueblo Native Americans lived in the Southwest of the United States. The land in the Southwest region had high flatlands. The climate in the Southwest region is hot days, cold nights, a little rain. The climate is the weather that an area has over a long period of time.

The Pueblo Native Americans lived in multi-story terraced buildings. They were made from adobe clay. The Pueblo Native Americans were farmers. They walked to get where they are going.

- *Pueblo:*
- Give each group a graphic organizer with the following categories:
  - Where they lived
  - Homes or shelters
  - How they used natural resources
  - What the weather was like

The image shows three identical graphic organizers for different Native American tribes. Each organizer is titled "All about the" followed by the tribe name: Powhatan Tribe, Pueblo Tribe, and Lakota Tribe. Each organizer includes a small illustration of a person from the tribe. The organizers are designed to be filled out with information about the tribes, including their region, homes, occupations, transportation, and interesting facts.

Tribe	Region	Homes	Occupation	Transportation	Interesting Fact 1	Interesting Fact 2
Powhatan Tribe						
Pueblo Tribe						
Lakota Tribe						

6. **Distribute materials** such as chart paper, markers, crayons, and visuals.
- Walk around the room to monitor collaboration, answer questions, and guide discussions.
  - Ask questions like:
    - “What do you notice about their land or weather?”
    - “How might that affect what they build or eat?”

## Brief Presentations: Cooperative Learning

7. Have each group present their anchor chart to the class.
  - Each group explains the key features of their nation's lifestyle and how their environment influenced their daily lives.
  - Encourage students to make comparisons during the presentations.
  - Example prompts:
    - “How are the Pueblo homes different from the Lakota homes?”
    - “Which group lived in a forest? Which lived in a desert?”
8. **Class Discussion / Wrap-Up**
  - After all groups share, revisit the KWL chart to add new information under “What We Learned.”
  - Discuss the essential question one final time: “How does where people live affect how they live?”
  - Reinforce the idea that geography and resources shape how all people past and present live.

### 14. Lesson Closure (Student Activities to enhance comprehension)

To wrap up the lesson, the class will return to the KWL chart and talk about what they learned about the Powhatan, Lakota, and Pueblo peoples. Students will share one new fact they discovered about how each group used the land to live. Then, each student will complete a short exit ticket by finishing the sentence, “*Where people live affects how they live because...*” Finally, students will share one idea or fact that stood out to them and explain how it shows the land was important to each group's way of life.

### 15. Assessment/Evaluation

During whole group instruction and learning activities, students will be evaluated through **informal observation** and participation. The teacher will monitor students' engagement during the read-aloud, group research, and class discussions. Immediate feedback will be provided as students share ideas, collaborate in groups, and complete their anchor charts.

*Group participation:* Students will be monitored to ensure that all members of the group are contributing equally, listening to one another, and staying on task. The teacher will use student dialogue and questioning to gauge understanding of how geography and resources affected each Indigenous nation's way of life.

*KWL Chart:* The class KWL chart will serve as an assessment of student comprehension. New information added to the “What We Learned” column will demonstrate understanding of how the Powhatan, Lakota, and Pueblo used their environments to meet their needs.

*Group Anchor Chart Project:* The group anchor chart will be used to evaluate each team's comprehension of content, ability to work collaboratively, and connection between the

environment and human needs. Each chart should include accurate information and visuals about where the group lived, what they ate, what they wore, and how they used natural resources.

<i>Anchor Chart Rubric</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Completion</i>	The student did not participate or contribute to the group's chart.	The group chart was incomplete or lacked key information about the assigned nation.	The group chart included most required details but was missing one area (food, clothing, or homes).	The group chart was complete with accurate facts, visuals, and clear organization.
<i>Social Studies</i>	Did not identify how geography affected the nation's lifestyle.	Identified some facts but with errors or unclear connections to geography.	Correctly identified how geography influenced one or two aspects of life.	Clearly explained how geography and natural resources shaped daily life for the nation.
<i>English</i>	Did not contribute to group writing or labeling.	Wrote limited or unclear sentences.	Wrote or dictated simple, relevant facts with minor errors.	Wrote clear, complete sentences with accurate information from readings.

*Exit ticket:* Each student's written exit ticket will be used to check individual understanding of the essential question:

*"How does where people live affect how they live?"*

### **16. Student products**

As a result of this lesson, students will help create a class KWL chart to show what they knew and what they learned about how geography and natural resources shaped the lives of the

Powhatan, Lakota, and Pueblo peoples. Working in groups, students will complete a mini-research activity and create an anchor chart that explains where their group lived, what they ate, what they wore, and how they used the land around them. To demonstrate individual understanding, each student will complete a short exit ticket explaining how where people live affects how they live.

## 17. Supplemental Activities: Extension and Remediation

### *Extension*

Students will have several opportunities to extend their learning. Early finishers or advanced learners may research additional facts about their assigned Indigenous nation, such as traditions, languages, or contributions that continue today. Students may also create a short written paragraph or digital slide comparing life in the past and present for the Powhatan, Lakota, or Pueblo. As an optional creative activity, students may record a brief “news report” video summarizing their group’s findings using an iPad or classroom tablet.

### *Remediation*

Remediation activities will include both visual and auditory supports to reinforce understanding. Students who need extra support may review the class KWL chart and picture cards showing each nation’s homes, land, and resources. The teacher may re-read sections from *The Powhatan: The Past and Present of Virginia’s First Tribes*.

## 18. Adaptations for Diverse Special Learners

### **All Learners**

(The accommodations for “All learners” are geared toward students with learning disabilities, dyslexia, dysgraphia, etc; however, these accommodations could be beneficial for all students.)

- Students will work in flexible, small groups to encourage peer support and collaboration.
- Students may choose their work environment (desk, carpet area, or group table).
- Students may use assistive technology such as text-to-speech tools or audio books for listening support.
- Use of tactile and visual learning methods, including maps, charts, and illustrations.
- Tasks and directions may be read aloud or broken into smaller, manageable steps.
- Sentence stems and visual word banks will be provided to support writing and comprehension.

### **ESL Learners**

- Students may be paired with a supportive native English-speaking buddy during group work.
- Vocabulary cards with images and definitions will be available in both English and the student’s home language (if possible).

- The lesson includes hands-on and visual learning experiences so students can show understanding through discussion and visuals rather than only written responses.
- Key concepts (geography, resources, homes, food, clothing) will be reinforced through repeated visuals.

#### Gifted Learners

- Students may extend their learning by researching how the Powhatan, Lakota, or Pueblo live today and creating a short “Then and Now” comparison.
- Students may take on leadership roles during group work or help organize class discussions.
- Option to create a digital presentation or short video explaining how geography continues to shape people’s lives today.

### 19. Differentiated Instruction

This lesson is designed to meet the diverse learning needs of all students through integrated instruction that connects social studies with reading, writing, and technology. Students will work in flexible cooperative groups during the research and anchor chart activities, allowing auditory learners to engage through discussion, visual learners through charts and images, and kinesthetic learners through hands-on exploration. The lesson encourages multimodal learning rather than traditional methods, giving students multiple ways to demonstrate understanding, including speaking, writing, and creating visuals. The classroom environment supports student choice by allowing flexible seating options that help with focus and comfort. Student evaluation will consider both the accuracy of group information and each learner’s participation and contribution during collaborative activities.

#### Resources

---

#### 20. Materials and Additional Resources

*Book: The Powhatan: The Past and Present of Virginia’s First Tribes*

- **Citation:** Smith-Llera, D. (2017). *The Powhatan: The Past and Present of Virginia’s First Tribes*. North Mankato, MN: Capstone Press.
- **Summary:** This nonfiction text introduces students to the Powhatan people of the Eastern Woodlands, explaining how geography and natural resources shaped their homes, food, and way of life. The book includes clear visuals, maps, and vocabulary that support

comprehension for young readers. It is an excellent resource for introducing the concept of how people adapt to their environments and provides a strong foundation for comparing other Indigenous groups such as the Lakota and Pueblo.

- Supplemental reading passages for each Indigenous group:
- Printed or digital U.S. map showing the Eastern Woodlands, Plains, and Southwest regions
- Chart paper, markers, crayons, and anchor chart templates
- Classroom tablets or laptops for digital visuals or optional video creation
- Smart Board for displaying maps, pictures, and reading materials