

Inside Games from American History...

Lesson 4: Games of the North American Indians

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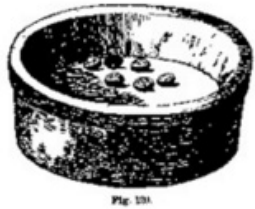
Essential Question

What game design principles are found in these early Native American games?



"Tchung-kee, a Mandan Game Played with a Ring and Pole" by artist George Catlin, 1832

Peach Stone Bowl Game



Peach Stone Bowl Game, diameter of bowl 9.5 inches. Seneca Indians, New York

In this game, peach stones were used as dice. This game of chance involved intricate counting of how peach stones landed after being shaken in a bowl and set down hard so the stones hopped. The way the stones landed was converted according to a point system to a number of beans awarded to the player.

Description

Students gain knowledge of games played by Native Americans before and during the time of westward settlement.

Standards Alignment: College and Career Readiness standards for Reading and Writing Literacy in History/Social Studies, grades 6 - 8.

Materials

None

Notes/Lesson Plan

Native Americans played a wide variety of chance and skill games. Have students play the Peach Stone Bowl Game.

Students may be familiar with the game of Lacrosse. Interested students may wish to research other games played by North American Indians.

Assignments

[Playing the Kick Stick Race](#)

Activity

[Add Assignment](#)

Playing the Kick Stick Race

Description

Here's a game to try!

Kick Stick Race (Zuni)* - Southwest region

Ceremonial event. If used as a call for rain, the sticks would be buried in a cornfield at the conclusion of the game.

Objects needed: hardwood sticks approximately 5 inches long by 3/4 inches in diameter. Dowel rods work well. One stick per player or team. The sticks should have distinctive markings so one stick is easily identified from the next.

This ceremonial game is played individually or by teams. If teams are used, they should be no bigger than four to a team. The object of the game is to kick the stick from one point to another. The distance between start and finish should be anywhere from 100 yards to 500 yards on flat ground.

This race game can be laid out in a straight line or in an oval or circle shape. Markers should define the race path.

To start the race, the sticks should be lined up at a starting point with about 3 feet of distance between sticks. With the shout of "GO" each player kicks his or her stick.

- Touching the stick with a hand disqualifies the player.
- Kicking someone else's stick disqualifies the player.

The first player to arrive at the finish line wins.

Rules may be modified if agreed to by the group.

Evaluating the Game

Have fun playing the game with your classmates and family.

- Write a description of the game: explain the rules of the game and describe the game play experience.
- Did players enjoy playing the game? Explain why in terms of which game principles make the game a good game.
- If players didn't like the game, explain why not. For example, is the game balanced (equal chance for everyone to win)?

*From Handbook of American Indian Games by Allan and Paulette Macfarlan, Dover Publications 1958

Instructor Note

Depth of Knowledge Applied:

- Level 2: Skills and Concepts / Basic Reasoning

Use applicable rubrics for assessment.

Question 1:

Upload your short essay and pictures of your game or game play.

No file chosen