

# LESSON ONE

## CREATION/ORIGIN STORIES

Because a culture's creation story is such an essential part of understanding how they understand themselves, this lesson starts with how the Neshnabé, or Original Man, came to be and some of the teachings he received.

After this orientation, students will learn about how the Potawatomi, once part of a larger tribe called the Anishinaabe, moved to the Great Lakes region to find the prophesized food that grows on water.

One of the goals of this series of lessons is to help students think through how different Nations have different relationships to the land, and that those relationships have varied over time as the Nation has moved from place to place, whether because they chose to move or because of forced removal. Starting at the beginning, this lesson introduces some of the ways that Bodéwami are oriented towards the world.<sup>1</sup>

Students and teachers should be mindful that Bodéwami traditions have primarily been handed down orally. Because of this, as well as the context of settler colonialism attempting to erase indigenous histories and cultures, students and educators may have interacted with different Potawatomi creation stories or may encounter them in the future. It is important to remember they are just different stories, not incorrect.

Review before lesson:

- [potawatomiheritage.com/360-virtual-tour](http://potawatomiheritage.com/360-virtual-tour)  
(lesson focuses on the first gallery and the first part of the second)
- [youtube.com/watch?v=em6-F7DFasM](https://youtube.com/watch?v=em6-F7DFasM)
- [youtube.com/watch?v=MriSxRI4YMU](https://youtube.com/watch?v=MriSxRI4YMU)

### PREPARATION: BUILDING CONNECTION TO CURRICULUM

*Oklahoma Academic Standards: 5.7.W* students will create multimodal content that communicates ideas, thoughts, or feelings for an audience

Connection to Students and Previous Lessons:

Previous lessons and connections could be a discussion of what creation stories students may already be familiar with, or on whether students have had to move before.

Guiding Questions for the teacher:

- What will the students ponder?
- What will guide the lesson?
- What do the students already know?
- What are some of their misconceptions?
- What will students be able to discuss without Googling it?
- What is the relevance to the students and the teacher?
- What stories does this lesson tell?

<sup>1</sup>Potawatomi is the anglicized version of Bodéwami, and both are used interchangeably throughout the lesson. Like with a lot of the language, alternate spellings students may come across are not necessarily incorrect, just different.

## INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES TO ENGAGE STUDENTS

These three videos tell part of the creation story:

- [youtu.be/jM2VBjDAK14](https://youtu.be/jM2VBjDAK14)
- [youtu.be/TR\\_YOn9zmd4](https://youtu.be/TR_YOn9zmd4)
- [youtu.be/uFcjLeI.sRw](https://youtu.be/uFcjLeI.sRw)
- Vocab sheet/pronunciation guide

Students should watch these 3 videos and use the associated vocabulary handout to help them understand the stories. Potential discussion questions: why is it important that these words are in Potawatomi? What questions do you still have about the videos? Do you see any similarities between this and other creation stories you may know?

## APPLIED/EXTENDED EXPERIENCE-BUILDING REAL WORLD CONNECTIONS ACTIVITY

Ask students to read through Seven Fires handout, focusing on the first Three Fires.

As they read, they should find the places mentioned on google maps so they can see the path Potawatomi took to find their homeland where the food grows on water.

If time allows, students should take the virtual tour [potawatomiheritage.com/360-virtual-tour](https://potawatomiheritage.com/360-virtual-tour)

## ASSESSMENT

There are a few options for assessment for this lesson to be more responsive to different classroom scenarios. They are:

**Option 1** - Students will create a Kahoot using facts and events from the creation story as a guideline, finding appropriate Images to correspond with the facts or events chosen. Students may work independently or in pairs, and they must have 10 questions w/ accompanying visuals if they work alone, and 15 if working in a group. These created quizzes can be played should time allow.

**Option 2** - A multimodal project (Canva, Google Slides, or physical medium artwork are all acceptable) that depicts the events and symbolism of at least one of the 7 fires. These artworks or multimodal productions must be accompanied by a short-to-medium length explanation of which of the 7 fires was chosen, they meaning and symbolism of their piece or in the case of a Canva presentation or slideshow, information should be directly written onto the slides.



Contact CPN Department of Education with any questions  
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