The Indian in the Cupboard

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Education 340
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Theme: My chosen theme is *The Indian in the Cupboard* by Lynne Reid Banks. I would like my 4th graders to study this theme for several reasons. This is a great piece of literature for 4th graders to read, and it will be a great way to incorporate a study of Native Americans into the curriculum. It will be a good book to use to somehow challenge all of my students. I have several goals for this unit:

1. My students will read this book and participate in group discussions on given topics about the book.
2. My students will research and learn information about the Iroquois nation.
3. My students will be able to compare and contrast Native Americans from different regions in the United States.
4. My students will learn new information about Native Americans to replace the stereotypes they have learned from television and movies. (For example: all Indians live in tepees).
5. My students will identify some of the conflicts between Native Americans and European/American settlers (like Little Bear and Boone).

Book: *The Indian in the Cupboard*, by Lynne Reid Banks

2. [http://inkido.indiana.edu](http://inkido.indiana.edu)
3. *The Iroquois (Indians of North America)*, by Barbara Graymont
4. *If You Lived with the Iroquois*, by Ellen Levine
5. *The Iroquois Indians, Their Manners, Customs*, by George S. Conover
6. *Shelters: From Tepees to Igloos*, by Harvey Weiss
Academic Standards:

Social Studies 5.1.1 Give examples of early cultures and settlements that existed in North America prior to contact with Europeans.

Social Studies 5.5.1 Describe the basic needs that individuals have in order to survive—such as the need for food, water, shelter, and safety—and give examples of how people in early America adapted to meet basic needs.

Language Arts 5.3.2 Identify the main problem or conflict of the plot and explain how it is resolved.

Language Arts 5.3.3 Contrast the actions, motives, and appearances of characters in a work of fiction and discuss the importance of the contrasts to the plot or theme.

Language Arts 5.4.3 Write informational pieces with multiple paragraphs that:
- present important ideas or events in sequence or in chronological order
- provide details and transitions to link paragraphs
- offer a concluding paragraph that summarizes important ideas and details

Goals/Objectives: The goals are listed above with the explanation of the theme. Objectives for the standards are listed below.

1. Given books and internet resources as research, the students will create an informational poster about the Iroquois tribe including: foods, shelters, family life, and traditions of the tribe with 100% accuracy.

2. The students will list the items individuals need to survive including: food, water, shelter, and safety with 100% accuracy.

3. After reading each chapter of The Indian in the Cupboard, the students will identify the main conflict in that chapter with 100% accuracy.
4. The students will identify how the conflict of each chapter is solved with 100% accuracy.

5. The students will list at least 10 descriptions each of Little Bear and Boone including their actions, appearances, and motives with 100% accuracy.

6. Given the list of descriptions, the students will create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting the character descriptions of Little Bear and Boone with 100% accuracy.

7. The students will write informational paragraphs about the difference between tepee living and longhouse living with at least 5 important facts about each one with 100% accuracy.

Activities:

1. The students will read *The Indian in the Cupboard.* The teacher will read one chapter a day to the students and the students will be assigned to read a chapter each day individually. This will allow the sixteen chapters to be completed in two weeks. They will keep a daily journal that will be a record of their own thoughts, questions, and feelings about what they have read. (Verbal/Linguistic, Intrapersonal)

2. The students will meet in discussion groups on Wednesdays and Fridays during the unit to discuss the plot, characters, and conflicts in the story, as well as teacher-made discussion questions. Examples of the teacher-made discussion questions are:
   a. What would you do with the Indian if you were Omri?
   b. What else would you bring to life using the cupboard?
   c. Would you have told Patrick about the Indian if you were Omri?
   d. In Chapter 11, would you have put Boone and Little Bear in the pocket together?
   e. What do you think will happen in Chapter 12 since Omri put them together?
   f. What would you do with Little Bear and Boone? Would you keep them or send them back? Why? (Verbal/Linguistic, Interpersonal)

3. The students will use the internet, their history books, and the related books and resources to research information about the Iroquois tribe (Little Bear’s tribe). They will use this
information to create a poster to display about the Iroquois. This poster should include information on foods, shelters, family life, and traditions of the tribe. They may include additional information if they would choose. Students will display their posters around the room. (Visual/Spatial)

4. The students will put themselves in the perspective of Omri to create a list or outline. The list/outline will include all things that humans need to survive. They need to list all of the items they would need to buy and consider for their own small Indian. They will need to list/outline what food they will obtain for him/her, how they will keep him/her safe, what kind of shelter they will build and materials needed, etc. (Verbal/Linguistic, Logical Mathematical)

5. After creating their list, the students will implement part of their plans. They will build the shelters that they described in their listing. They may build tepees, longhouses, wigwams, or other housing structures that would shelter a plastic Indian. (Bodily Kinesthetic, Visual/Spatial)

6. The students will be placed into groups that are different and smaller than their discussion groups. Their will be eight groups total, and each group will be assigned groups of chapters. The groups will look at their assigned chapters and decide what they believe to be the main conflict or event in the chapter. They will also look at how the conflict was solved or details about the main event. The student will create and present reader’s theatres to the class in order so the story is presented sequentially. The skits will be presented on Friday of the second week, and the class will use the events presented to make a time line of the book. (Bodily Kinesthetic, Verbal/Linguistic, Logical/Mathematical)

7. The students will brainstorm descriptions of Boone and Little Bear including appearance, motives, and actions. They will create a Venn diagram that compares and contrasts the two characters. The Venn diagram will be presented to their discussion groups. This will be done in partners. (Verbal/Linguistic, Logical/Mathematical, Interpersonal, Visual/Spatial)
8. The students will research the difference in life styles between Indians who lived in longhouses (like Little Bear) and the Indians who lived in tepees (like the ones Omri thought all Indians were like). They will write a paragraph that contains at least 5 important facts about each lifestyle. The students will then choose how they will present their information to the class. They can do a poster, diagram, similarities/differences chart, build a model, write an oral report, or create a skit with other students. (Verbal/Linguistic, all others possible depending on the project chosen)

**Time Schedule:**

**Week 1:**

**Monday:** The teacher reads Chapter 1 to the class and students are assigned to read Chapter 2. The discussion groups and reader’s theatre are assigned, and the reader’s theatre schedule is assigned. The students will write their responses to the teacher’s chapter in their journals.

**Tuesday:** The teacher reads Chapter 3 to the students, and the students are assigned to read Chapter 4. They will have time to begin reading with some individual reading time. They record their thoughts about the previous chapters in their journals. The students will begin research for their Iroquois informational poster and begin creating the posters.

**Wednesday:** The teacher reads Chapter 5 to the students, and they are assigned to read Chapter 6. The discussion groups meet to discuss the plot thus far, characters, conflicts, and their own thoughts about the book. They will respond to several of the teacher made discussion questions, and they will write in their journals about the discussion of the group. The students will finish their Iroquois posters and display them around the room.

**Thursday:** The teacher reads Chapter 7 to the class, and the students are assigned Chapter 8. There will be time given for individual reading time. The class will brainstorm and discuss all of the things humans need to survive. The students will create their lists/outlines of plans for their own miniature Indian friend. To finish their plan, they must decide what kind of house their Indian will live in, so
that they can have a list of supplies. The students will begin research on the difference between Indian homes (mostly tepee and longhouse).

**Friday:** The teacher reads Chapter 9 to the class, and the students are assigned Chapter 10. The discussion groups meet and the students write in their journals. The students will use their research on Indian homes to write a paragraph about the difference between the lifestyle of Indians who lived in tepees and Indians who lived in longhouses. Using this information, they will decide which type of home their little Indian friend will have. They will finish their lists/outlines and give them to the teacher. The teacher will provide them with materials to build their Indian friend a home (and yes, they will have little plastic Indians). They will also turn in a proposal for their choice of project for the difference between longhouse living and tepee living.

**Week 2:**

**Monday:** The teacher reads Chapter 11 and the students are assigned Chapter 12. They are given individual reading time. The students respond in their journals. The students will finish their Indian homes if they have not, and begin working on their self-directed projects. The reader’s theatre’s groups will meet to plan skits for chapter 1-8. The groups 1-4 may begin planning chapter 9-12 if they choose.

**Tuesday:** The teacher reads Chapter 13, and the students are assigned Chapter 14 and given time to read. The students will begin their brainstorming lists of character descriptions of Boone and Little Bear. The students will brainstorm in partners. The reader’s theatre groups will have time to meet again and plan. Students will have time to work on their individual projects as well.

**Wednesday:** The teacher reads Chapter 15 and the students are assigned Chapter 16. The discussion groups meet to discuss the plot, characters, and main events of the story. The later teacher questions may be used as well. The students will respond to their discussion in their journals, and meet with
their partners to create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast Boone and Little Bear. Reader’s theatre groups will meet again to plan, and student will finish their individual projects.

**Thursday:** There will be a special discussion group meeting to act as a culmination to the book. The students will discuss their opinions of the book. In this meeting, the partners will also share their Venn diagrams, and they can discuss the different ideas of the different pairs in the group. Students will meet in their reader’s theatre groups once again to practice their two skits. The individual projects will be displayed or presented.

**Friday:** The reader’s theatre will be presented sequentially to the rest of the class. Chapters 1-8 will be presented, and then the students will have time to practice their second skits before Chapters 9-16 are presented. The class will create a time line of events together to hang in the classroom, using the skits to remind them.

**Grouping:** The students will be grouped several ways during this unit. Their discussion groups will be mixed ability groups that are chosen by the teacher. These groups can be chosen at random (like drawing colored sticks or numbering off, etc). Their will be about 6 people in each discussion group. From those discussion groups, the students will form pairs for their Venn diagram projects. Those pairs will be picked by the students. The reader’s theatre groups will be different from the discussion groups. They will also be picked by the teacher. These groups will also be mixed ability groups for the most part. This would be a great way to incorporate some differentiation, so there may be a group for more gifted students. That group could contain some enrichment activities.
Student Checklist: Check off the activities as you complete them. Not all of the activities will be completed in order!

1. Read The Indian in the Cupboard
   
2. Complete at least 10 journal entries about the chapters
   
3. Create an informational poster on the Iroquois tribe
   
4. Create a list of things your Indian needs to survive
   
5. Build a shelter for your plastic Indian
   
6. Write skits for the Reader’s Theatre for your two assigned chapters
   
7. Perform the two Reader’s Theatre skits
   
8. Create Venn diagrams on Boone and Little Bear in partners and present to discussion group
   
9. YOUR CHOSEN PROJECT!!! ☺ tepees vs. longhouses (must be approved by the teacher) Teacher initials for approval

Completed
Bloom’s Taxonomy Questions:

Knowledge:

1. Who are the main characters in the book?
2. What does Omri receive for his birthday?
3. Where does Omri find a key to fit the cupboard?
4. Who is Tommy?
5. What happens when Omri and Patrick bring Little Bear and Boone to school?
6. How does Boone get hurt?
7. What does Omri do with the key at the end of the book?

Comprehension:

1. Summarize the events in the first three chapters.
2. How would you describe Little Bear to someone who has not read the book?
3. How would you describe Boone?
4. Explain why Omri thinks the Indian from Patrick is the best birthday present.
5. Why did Mr. Yapp think that Omri was stealing from his store?

Application:

1. In what order (sequence) do the plastic characters appear?
2. Dramatize the main events in chapter 1
3. How would a diagram of Little Bear’s home (the seed plot) look?
4. What examples can you find in the book of Little Bear’s bravery?
5. What other way would you plan to keep the little people a secret if you were Omri?
6. What would happen if the children at school saw the little people?

**Analysis:**

1. Why do you think the cupboard turns plastic toys into real things?
2. Why do you think Omri decides to send the little people back to their own times?
3. What is the theme of the book?
4. What is the relationship between Omri’s mother’s key and the cupboard?
5. Why do you think Omri told Tommy he was only having a dream?

**Synthesis:**

1. What would happen if Omri did not send Little Bear and Boone back?
2. What would be an alternative ending to the story if Omri kept Little Bear and Boone?
3. If you were Omri, how would you keep the secret of the little people from others?
4. What facts can you compile about Iroquois Indians from the book?
5. How would you help Little Bear and Boone design places to live if you were Omri?

**Evaluation:**

1. If you were Omri, what choice would you make about keeping the little people? Why?
2. What other characters or plastic toys would you select to bring to life? Why?
3. Why was it better for Omri to send the little people back?
4. Why do you think Little Bear wanted to become “brothers” with Boone before they were sent back?
5. What is your opinion of the book? Did you like it or dislike it? Why?