LESSON PLAN by Dawa F Sherpa

Lesson: Creating Stories Using Pictographs  
Length: two-three class periods  
Age or Grade Intended: fourth grade

Academic Standards: 3.1.1 Describe American Indian groups who lived in the region when European settlers arrived.

Performance objectives:
Students will be able to demonstrate the Native Americans use of pictographs by creating a clay pot story of their own with 95% accuracy.
Students will be able to identify at least three different ways to learn about culture.

Advanced preparation by Teacher:
- When Clay Sings by Byrd Baylor
- Indian Picture Writing by Robert Hofsinde (out of print)
- pictograph dictionary or book on pictographs
- modeling clay/clay pots
- black markers
- map of the United States
- paper

Procedure:
Introduction/Motivation:
To determine what the students know prior to instruction, the teacher will ask the students for ways that we can learn about culture. The teacher will write the students responses on the chalkboard. The teacher will ask the students what they already know about the Native Americans.
- Who are the Native Americans? (Bloom’s knowledge)
- When did they come here?
- How did they get here?
- Was it the Native Americans who inhabited the Southwest?
- How do you know?
These are some of the questions that the teacher will ask to gain a better understanding of whether or not the students are on task or not on task.

Step-by-Step Plan:
1. The teacher will talk about the different tribes, the Navajo, Hopi, and Mimbres. The teacher then asks that the students locate the Southwest region on a map and tell what states make up the region.
2. The teacher then tells the students that they will be learning about Native Americans and their culture by reading the Native Americans pottery.
3. The teacher tells the students that Native Americans decorated their pottery with pictures. These pictures told a story about what was going on in the tribe at the time.

4. The teacher calls the students over to the reading circle and reads Byrd Baylor’s “When Clay Sings.”

5. After the teacher is through reading the book, the teacher asks students to describe their impressions of Native American life based on the story. What were your initial thoughts while listening to the story? How did these pots tell us so much about their culture? Do you think it is a unique way to learn about culture? (Bloom’s Synthesis)

6. The teacher explains to the students that by examining the pictures on the remains of the pots, we will learn about the beliefs, customs, and everyday lives of these people. (Gardner’s Visual/Spatial)

7. The teacher asks the students, “Why didn’t Native Americans just write down their stories like we do today? The teacher explains that Native Americans did not use the alphabet we use today. They used pictures to represent what they wanted to say. These pictures were called pictographs. The teacher then hands out a pictograph dictionary to each student, so that they can see what it is. (Bloom’s Analysis)

8. Teacher tells students a brief story and then shows them how to translate it using the pictograph dictionary.

9. The teacher then tells students that they will use pictographs to write a story, imagining themselves as tribal members. The students will then transfer their story to a clay pot using black marker. (Gardner’s Bodily Kinesthetic and Visual/Spatial)

**Closure:**

Teacher tells students a brief story and then shows them how to translate it using the pictograph dictionary. The teacher then tells students that they will use pictographs to write a story, imagining themselves as tribal members( Gardner’s Intrapersonal). The students will then transfer their story to a clay pot using black marker.

**Assessment:**

Each student will be able to list at least three ways to learn about culture. Students will also write their stories. The teacher will check their stories for correct grammar, punctuation, and capitalization. They should be able to write the story with 95% accuracy. (Bloom’s evaluation)

**Adaptation and Enrichment:** the teacher can use some slides of pictographs and pottery that Native Americans created for the students to have a better understanding. If some students find it and finish it early then they can also do one on African American. The teacher will provide additional information on African American. This will be for the bonus points so all the students don’t have to do