

Structures and Designs Lesson Plan

by Jessica Wesaquate and Andrea Rogers

Grade Level:

Seven

Evergreen Curriculum Objectives:

Students will be able to: Identify the purposes of various parts of constructed objects, compare the strengths of different components of a structure, and investigate the technical, social, and cultural implications of design and construction of objects.

This activity can be conducted individually, or in a group setting. You can have students watch the tipi-raising clips either before presenting this lesson, or after they have done their own research on the tipi. Students can draw a Venn diagram and see how their research was similar as well as different from what was seen in the video clips.

The tipi has a very unique design. When it was windy outside, its shape would prevent the wind from ruining it or blowing it away. As First Nations people on the Plains migrated to different areas they were able to easily take the tipi down and get it to the next location because it was portable and light in weight.

Have your students research the structure and design of the tipi and recognize why the tipi is such an interesting design. Students should note the shapes found in a tipi, how it is structured, and what materials were used in its design. Students can place their found information into an oral presentation or poster board with their own creative touch.

Along with their presentation, have students build their own mini-tipi to portray the strength the tipi had. Have students explain how the tipi was able to withstand different weather conditions.

Materials students can use for their own tipi: dowels, canvas, rocks, skewers, tortilla wraps, pencils, etc. A miniature tipi can be created using household items. You can collect these items in the classroom, and ask parents/guardians to contribute items.

After students have completed this activity, ask an elder to come into your classroom to share the teachings and explain the significance of the tipi to the First Nations culture. Remember to follow traditional protocol and have students practice their listening skills.

Assessment:

Have students do a self-evaluation on their presentation and on their design, along with this you can have a peer-assessment. If students worked in groups, have them look at and discuss how they worked as a group. As the teacher, you can use anecdotal records and a rating scale.

Aboriginal Perspectives is supported by the University of Regina, the Imperial Oil Foundation, the Canadian Mathematical Society and the Pacific Institute for the Mathematical Sciences.