

Native Peoples of Missouri – Elementary

Honoring Tribal Legacies: Place-Based Learning Past and Present

Recommended Grade Level: 4th-6th grades

Duration: 5-6 hours

Enduring Understanding: Students cannot understand the legacy of Native Americans in Missouri without understanding their presence and diversity through time.

Historical Background [For Teacher]

Native Americans have lived in North America for at least 13,000 years. Many researchers believe humans have lived on this continent for 20,000 or more years. The historic era begins around 1650 when Europeans started writing about Missouri's native peoples. So, 98% of American Indian presence in Missouri and the entire region lies in the prehistoric (or pre-European contact) era. We know of people from this time through oral traditions. Archaeologists also study artifacts and remnants of settlements left on the landscape.

The earliest people in Missouri hunted big game. Called Paleoindians, they lived at sites like the Kimmswick Bone Bed in Mastodon State Historic Site near St. Louis, Missouri (<https://mostateparks.com/park/mastodon-state-historic-site>). The earliest occupation at the Kimmswick site dates back at least 11,500 years.

Over time, Native American settlements in Missouri became larger. By 1,000 B.C., Native Americans were farming. The spear and atlatl (spear thrower) of the earliest Missourians gave way to the bow-and-arrow about A.D. 900. The first Europeans that Missouri Native Americans encountered were French and Spanish explorers and traders.

The earliest Europeans arrived around A.D. 1650. By the 18th century, Native Americans in the region were involved in the fur trade and business interactions with Europeans. St. Louis, founded in 1764, served as a major fur trade center.

In 1803, France sold the Louisiana Territory to the United States. Lewis and Clark embarked on their expedition in 1804. Soon everything began to change for Missouri's native peoples. The Americans intended on occupying the entire region with farms, towns, and cities. The Osage signed a treaty with the United States in 1808 giving up most of their Missouri lands. Only 13 years later, Missouri became a state in 1821. Another treaty with the Osage in 1825 pushed them completely out of Missouri. By the time of the Platte Purchase in 1836, all Native Americans in Missouri were forced to leave the state.

Let's look at four groups of Native Americans that have the longest history in Missouri.

Missouria [For Students]

The Missouria speak a dialect of the Chiwere Siouan language. They arrived in Missouri centuries before any Europeans arrived. Louis Jolliet and Father Jacques Marquette first documented the Missouria in 1673. That year the explorers saw the mouth of the Missouri River. They asked about the river and local Native Americans called it the "Oumessourit." This word referred to the first peoples living up the river. Oumessourit is the Illinois tribe's name for the Missouria. It means "people of the dugout canoes," giving name to the Missouri River and the state of Missouri.

We know where the Missouria lived based on oral traditions, history and archaeology. The main villages of the Missouria are in and near what is now Van Meter State Park near Marshall, Missouri. Visit the park to learn more, <https://mostateparks.com/park/annie-and-abel-van-meter-state-park>. Missouria towns were large, and contained a few thousand people. They lived in houses made of branches and woven cattail mats. Fifteen to 25 people lived in each house. The Missouria farmed, growing corn, beans and squash. They spent much of the year hunting white-tailed deer over most of central Missouri. The yearly cycle consisted of spring planting, summer hunting, fall harvesting, and winter hunting.

By the 1790s, smallpox, a European-introduced disease, had devastated the Missouria. The disease killed more than 90% of their population. They left Missouri in the 1790s and relocated to live near the Otoe tribe in what is now Nebraska. Today, the Otoe-Missouria tribal headquarters is in Red Rock, Oklahoma.

Osage [For Students]

The Osage speak a dialect of the Dhegia Siouan language. They lived in the region centuries before any Europeans arrived. The Osage had three bands (*groups of clans or villages*): the Great Osage, the Little Osage, and the Arkansas Osage. The Great Osage lived in southern Missouri. The Little Osage settled in central Missouri. The Arkansas Osage lived in what is now northeastern Oklahoma and northern Arkansas.

The Osage hunted in southern Missouri and surrounding areas. The Osage lived in large villages of a few hundred to a few thousand people. Fifteen to 25 people lived in each large branch and woven cattail mat house. Combined, the Osage had several thousand people in several villages. You can visit the Osage Village State Historic Site in southwestern Missouri near El Dorado Springs, <https://mostateparks.com/park/osage-village-state-historic-site>. They were farmers growing corn, beans, and squash. The Osage hunting range consisted of the Ozarks. By 1800, the Osage also hunted bison in the central plains in Kansas and Oklahoma. The yearly cycle consisted of spring planting, summer hunting, fall harvesting, and winter hunting. The United States took most of the Osage land to create the state of Missouri. The Osage are still numerous. Today, their tribal headquarters are in Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

Kansa [For Students]

The Kansa, from whom the river and the state of Kansas are named, are closely related to the Osage. They both spoke a similar language. At one time they may have formed one tribe.

When Europeans arrived in Missouri, the Kansa lived along the Missouri River in what is now northwestern Missouri. By the time of Lewis and Clark, the Kansa had moved west into what is today north-central Kansas.

The Kansa adapted their way of life to the Great Plains. For this reason their houses were much different than the Osage. The Kansa constructed earthlodges, like other native peoples in the plains. An earthlodge is a large house made from soil covering support posts made of wood. These structures were more adaptable to the Great Plains where wood was scarce and the winters harsher. The Kansa economy centered on bison hunting.

Ioway [For Students]

The Ioway, from whom the state of Iowa is named, spoke a Chiwere Siouan language like the Missouriia. They lived in a large area from northern Missouri to southern Minnesota. By 1800, the Ioway lived near the Mississippi River in southeastern Iowa. They hunted in northern Missouri along the Grand and Chariton Rivers. Ioway life and culture was like their Missouriia neighbors.

Objectives

1. Students will develop an understanding of the Native Americans who lived in their area.
2. Students will develop an understanding of how cultures and their lifeways change through time.
3. Students will view history through the perspectives of Native Americans using the resources in this curriculum and in the trunk.
4. Students will develop an understanding of how a place changes through time.

Missouri Learning Standards:

Social Studies

3a. Knowledge of continuity and change in the history of Missouri and the United States

Concept A: Grade 3: Describe the migration of Native Americans to Missouri prior to European settlement in the state.

Concept B: Grade 2: Compare and contrast the changing habitats, resources, art and daily lives of Native American people in regions of the U.S.

3a. Knowledge of continuity and change in the history of Missouri and the United States

Concept F: Grade 5: Investigate the causes and consequences of westward expansion c. 1800-2000.

5a. Knowledge of major elements of geographical study and analysis and their relationship to changes in society and the environment

Concept D: Grade 4: Analyze how people are affected by, depend on, adapt to and change their physical environments in the past and in the present.

7. Knowledge of the use of tools of social science inquiry

Concept B: Grade 5: Use visual tools to interpret, draw conclusions, make predictions, and communicate information and ideas.

Concept D: Grade 4: With assistance, conduct and present social studies' research to an audience using appropriate sources.

Science

Ess2. Grade 4.ESS2.B.1

Analyze and interpret data from maps to describe patterns of Earth's features.

Ets1. Grade 4.ETS1.B.1

Generate and compare multiple possible solutions to a problem based on how well each is likely to meet the criteria and constraints of the problem.

Materials

1. Missouri State Museum Missouri's Native People Traveling Trunk
2. This curriculum

3. Online resources listed below.

Lesson Preparation

1. Ask students what they know about Native Americans and discuss.
2. Ask students if they know about Native American tribes who lived in their area in the past. Are they still living in this area in the present? If not, where do they live today?
3. Prepare the students to view a place by how people live in that place through time and understand changes over time.
4. Show the video on Native American prehistory in Missouri: <https://dese.mo.gov/missouri-heritage/unit-3-ancient-ones>
5. Show some of the videos of modern Native Americans from the Lewis and Clark Tribal Legacy project: <https://lc-triballegacy.org/>

Challenge One: Research a place near you and learn about how Native Americans lived in your area through time.

Native Americans were not static people. Their identity with a "place" changed over time. Some groups left, new groups arrived. You cannot understand your place unless you understand changes over time.

- a. Have the students examine the part of Missouri they live in. Have them examine maps, preferably topographic maps, and pay close attention to the landscape and where rivers and creeks are. Topographic maps can be found here, <https://www.topozone.com/missouri/>.
- b. Uncover Prior Knowledge: Start a discussion with the students about what they know about their local environment. Has the landscaped changed from 200 years ago, 2,000 years ago, or even 20,000 years ago? What Native Americans do they believe lived in their area?
- c. Examine the map below. This is a hypothesized map of tribal locations in the 17th century in what is now Missouri right before Europeans arrived. Where are these tribes located today? See “Resources” below. Can you locate roughly where your school is on this map?



<<http://www.native-languages.org/missouri.htm>>

Challenge Two: Discover the history behind why Native Americans were forced out of your area in the 1800s.

- a. Uncover Prior Knowledge: Why were most Native Americans forced to leave Missouri in the 1800s?
- b. When Lewis and Clark ventured up the Missouri River in 1804, who was living in Missouri?
 - a. Missouri already contained native peoples, but Americans east of the Mississippi River were anxious to find new lands to farm, seeking prosperity.
 - b. Break students into small groups and assign each group a video below. Watch these videos and have each group discuss their particular video:
 - i. Osage: *The Osage Homelands* by Leonard Maker: <http://lc-triballegacy.org/video.php?vid=1296&source=tribe&tribe=36&backTo=5>
 - ii. Kansa: *Homelands and the 1825 Treaty* by Betty Durkee: <http://lc-triballegacy.org/video.php?vid=1228&source=tribe&tribe=33&backTo=5>
 - iii. 1808 Osage Treaty: *Unit 5: Gateway West*: <https://dese.mo.gov/missouri-heritage/finding-missouri-our-history-heritage/unit-5-gateway-west>
 - iv. Kickapoo: *Loss of Kickapoo Lands* by John Thomas: <http://lc-triballegacy.org/video.php?vid=1246&source=tribe&tribe=34&backTo=5>
- c. Much of the land that was to become the State of Missouri was taken from the Osage in the 1808 treaty drafted by William Clark. This treaty enabled the United States to remove tribes from east of the Mississippi River, like the Kickapoo, into Osage territory. Here's an excerpt from the 1808 Osage Treaty.

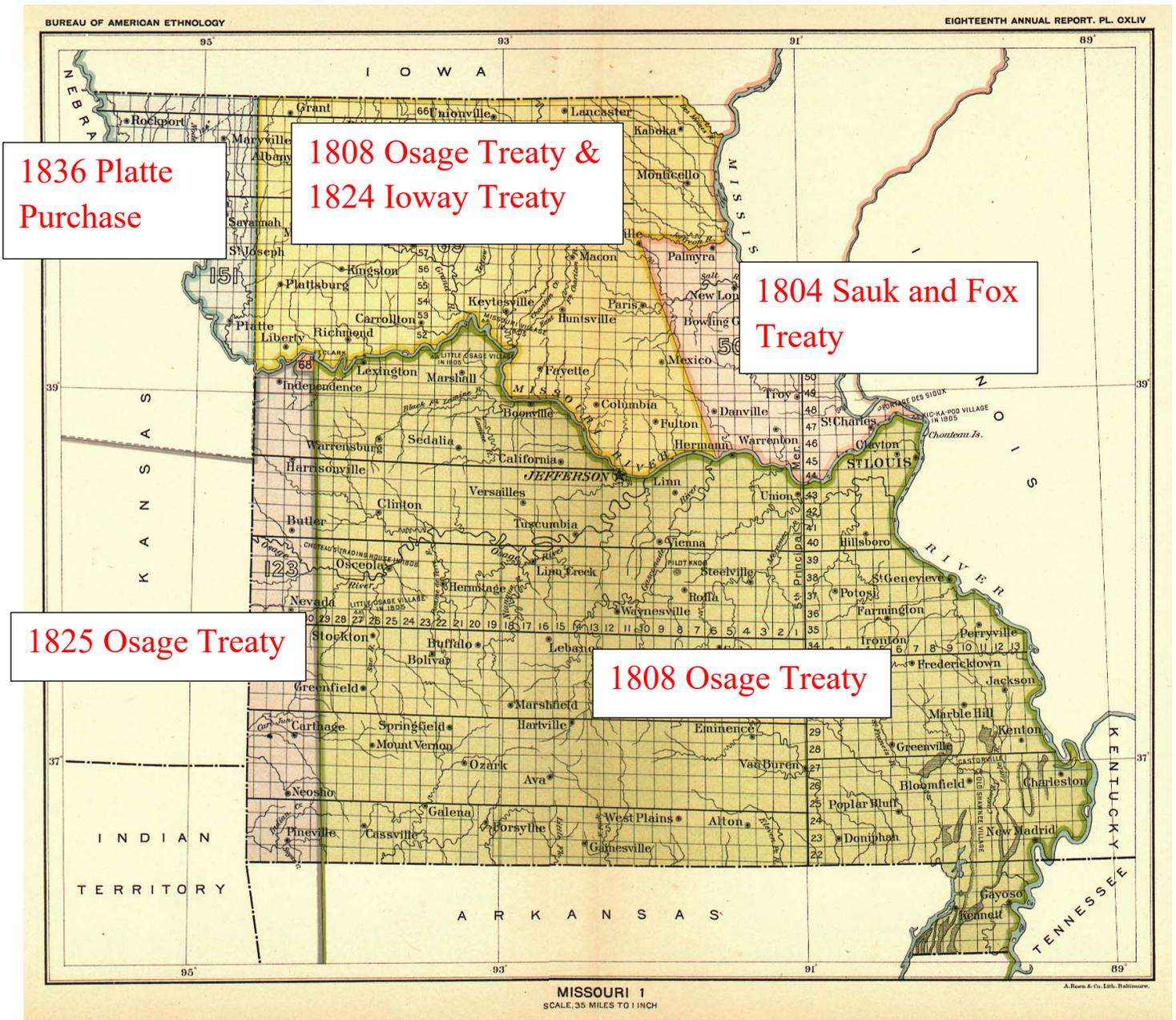
Article 6

And in consideration of the advantages which we derive from the stipulations contained in the foregoing articles, we, the chiefs and warriors of the Great and Little Osage, for ourselves and our nations respectively, covenant and agree with the United States, that the boundary line between our nations and the United States shall be as follows, to wit: beginning at fort Clark, on the Missouri, five miles above Fire Prairie, and running thence a due south course to the river Arkansas, and down the same to the Mississippi; hereby ceding and relinquishing forever to the United States, all the lands which lie east of the said line, and north of the southwardly bank of the said river Arkansas, and all lands situated northwardly of the river Missouri.

- d. Fort Clark mentioned in the treaty above is actually Fort Osage located near Independence, Missouri. Look at a map of Missouri and Arkansas and see if you can figure out what lands were ceded (*given*) to the United States in this treaty. Start at Fort Osage, go south all the way to the Arkansas River, then go east all the way to the Mississippi River—a lot of land!

- e. Examine the map on the following page showing the portions of Missouri ceded (*given up*) in various Native American treaties in Missouri. It is important to note that the United States started to enter Missouri after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Less than 35 years later, by 1836, all Native Americans had been forced to give up their Missouri lands.

Analysis: Study the part of Missouri that you live in. Which Native American tribe gave your area to the United States? Think about the perspective that this tribe might have today about their ancestral lands. What might they think? View their tribal nation websites under “Resources” below. You can read about their perspectives on their history and their modern lives.



1840s era map of Missouri showing the territory that Native American tribes surrendered to the United States in treaties.

Key dates:

- The Louisiana Purchase 1803
- Lewis and Clark Expedition 1804-6
- Missouri Territory 1809
- Missouri Statehood 1821

Challenge Three: Using Traveling Trunk objects.

- a. Form into small groups of two or three students.
- b. Select an item from the Traveling Trunk.
- c. Learn more about this item in order to do a show-and-tell with your class.
 - a. Use the laminated sheet included in the trunk, “How to Analyze an Artifact.”
 - b. Have each group talk about their artifact with the class.
- d. As an extra activity, students could also bring artifacts from home representing themselves or their families. They can complete the activity again to examine their culture.

Lesson Plan Assessment:

- a. Did the students learn about the Native Americans that lived in their area?
- b. Did they learn about changes through time in their place?
- c. Did they learn about where Missouri Native Americans live today?
- d. Did the students learn how to analyze an artifact?

Additional Activities

1. Native American Bingo
2. Osage dice game (see laminated sheet in trunk)
3. Talking stick

Vocabulary

17th Century – A.D. 1600-1699

18th Century – A.D. 1700-1799

Archaeology – study of past people through the objects and material they left behind

Artifact – any object made or altered by humans

Atlatl – spear thrower

Bison – important mammal hunted by the Osage on the Great Plains

Bow-and-Arrow – used in Missouri starting around 2,100 years ago

Chiwere Siouan – native language of the Missouri

Corn, Beans, Squash – primary crops historically grown by Osage and Missouri farmers

Dhegia Siouan – native language of the Osage and Kansa

Earthlodge – a large house made of a thick soil covering over wooden support posts

History – study of people through written records

Oral Tradition – stories passed from generation to generation by the spoken word

“Oumessourit” – the Illinois tribe’s name for the Missouri

Paleoindian – a term archaeologists use for the earliest people in North America

Prehistory – before written history

Smallpox – deadly disease introduced to the Native Americans by the Europeans

Treaty – a formal document signed between two nations.

Village – a settlement composed of many families

White-tailed Deer – primary mammal hunted by the Missouri and Osage

Places and People

Father Jacques Marquette – first European to write about the Missouri and the Missouri River

Fort Osage (Fort Clark) – U.S. Army fort (1808-1827) on the Missouri River northeast of what is now Independence, Missouri <https://www.makeyourdayhere.com/205/Fort-Osage>.

Kansa – close relatives of the Osage, and the tribe that gave Kansas its name

Kimmswick Bone Bed – Paleoindian site at Mastodon State Historic Site where evidence of humans hunting mastodons and other large game was discovered

Missouria – Missouri native tribe

Osage Village State Historic Site – a site where one can visit a historic Osage village

Osage – native tribe from Missouri

Otoe – tribe that the Missouri lived with after the 1790s

Pawhuska, Oklahoma – modern day headquarters of the Osage

Red Rock, Oklahoma – modern day headquarters of the Otoe and Missouri

Van Meter State Park – site where one can visit to learn about the Missouri and Osage

Resources

In addition to the traveling trunk contents, you can learn more using the resources below.

Honoring Tribal Legacies: <https://blogs.uoregon.edu/honoringtriballegeries/>

Curriculum Handbooks:

Vol. 1

<https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/blogs.uoregon.edu/dist/5/13162/files/2016/04/HTLVolumeOne-125tbl5.pdf>

Vol.2

<https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/blogs.uoregon.edu/dist/5/13162/files/2016/04/HTLVolumeTwo-147uq09.pdf>

Lewis and Clark Tribal Legacy Project (videos)

<https://lc-triballegeracy.org/>

See Essential Understandings 2 and 3: <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/pdf/NMAI-Essential-Understandings.pdf>

<https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/blogs.uoregon.edu/dist/5/13162/files/2018/02/Place-Based-Multiliteracies-2n0omr4.pdf>

Video on Missouri prehistory: <https://dese.mo.gov/missouri-heritage/unit-3-ancient-ones>

Tribal Nation Websites:

Online modern tribal:

- a. Osage: <https://www.osagenation-nsn.gov/>
- b. Kansa: https://kawnation.com/?page_id=72
- c. Otoe/Missouria: <https://www.omtribe.org/>
- d. Quapaw: <https://www.quapawtribe.com/>
- e. Iowa/Oklahoma: <https://www.bahkhoje.com/>
- f. Iowa/Kansas: <https://www.iowatribeofkansasandnebraska.com/>