



Estimated time:

2 sessions, 1 hour each

### ELA Common Core Content Standards

Writing Standards 2, 4, 5, 8

Speaking and Listening Standards 1, 2, 3

Language Standards 2, 3

**Goal:** Students will gain perspective on the exceptional value of their natural resources. This will be further instilled as they prepare a list of “gifts from nature” and present a 3D photo or drawing and essay illustrating these treasures.

**Background:** In the past, Native Americans were highly innovative in how they survived by relying on their environment. They observed nature very closely and became extremely knowledgeable about wildlife, plants and natural resources. They knew the life cycle patterns and characteristics of plants and animals. They knew where to find food and medicinal plants. They knew the correct seasonal times to harvest plants for medicinal use and for food. They harvested plants where they grew in abundance and harvested the plants only after the seeds were scattered into the wind. To ensure the survival of a species they took from nature only what was needed for survival.

This knowledge and care developed into a tremendously sophisticated system of traditional ecological knowledge that ensured the welfare of the tribe and the continuation of the plants and animals upon which they depended. They relied so heavily on the environment that they considered the items, materials and foods they reaped from the environment as gifts from nature. In turn, the original people of Northwest California were reverent towards nature, respected the forces that produced the gifts they used, understood their stewardship responsibility of their environment, and prayed for the renewal of these resources. This understanding and knowledge is alive today in the ancestors of the People, even as their environment has been changed dramatically.

*“We had nice deep holes in Ti Creek when I was young. The vegetation wasn’t dried out and broken up the way it is today. Presido Bar has changed. The river was never scummy the way it*

*is now. You could walk around in the river, there was more sand than sediment. We had supplies from the river the year round. We hadn't been told that we couldn't get our fish any time of the year. That was put there for us by the Creator and when we were hungry we went to the river and got our fish. We never wasted it. What we got we ate. That's what I used to teach my kids when they were little and had BB guns. I said, 'What you kill, you eat.'*" (interview with Karuk Elder Vera Vena Davis in 2001)

- Theme/Big Idea:** Take only what we need, and give something back
- Big Questions:** How do we take care of ourselves and our relations?
- Vocabulary:** vegetation, sediment, supplies, resemble, overharvest, minimize, impact, population

**Materials:**

- DVD *People of the Klamath: Preserving a Way of Life* by James Culp Productions (available from Shenandoah Films)
- Cultural Resource Cards, and list of card matches (included)
- Interview with Karuk Elder Vera Vena Davis** (included)
- Gathering Ethics*, excerpt from After the First Full Moon in April by Josephine Peters & Beverly Ortiz (excerpt included)
- Vocabulary Master: Gifts of Nature** (included)
- Vocabulary Worksheet** (included)
- Comprehension Worksheet: Gathering Ethics** (included)
- People of the Klamath; Preserving a Way of Life: Notes and Questions** (included)

**Preparation:** Copy both the **Vocabulary: Gifts of Nature** and the **Interview with Karuk Elder Vera Vena Davis** on a document reader, or into a projector-friendly format, or prepare large posters that the class can see easily.

Contact a guest speaker familiar with plants and wildlife in the area. Ask them to come to the class to conduct a nature walk and speak to the children about some "gifts of nature" that come from the local environment. If the speaker is a tribal employee, ask the presenter to describe the efforts that tribes are making to maintain and restore those gifts

You may want to make a few copies of the cultural resource cards and laminate them, or buy additional decks of cards so all students can play at the same time (4-5 in a group)

Set up a DVD player or computer with speakers connected to the big screen.

**Developing Vocabulary:** Display **Vocabulary Master** (included in this lesson) on the document reader. Read the words and their definitions and tell the class that they will be listening to two documents in

which this vocabulary will be used. You may wish to ask students to try to use these words in a sentence, correcting and clarifying meaning as examples are suggested.

### Session 1: Reading Comprehension and Discussion

Project the interview with Karuk Elder Vera Vena Davis onto a screen. Read the passage above (recorded by anthropologist John Salter of an interview with Vera Vena Davis: White Paper on Behalf of the Karuk Tribe of California, 2003) to the students. Make sure the students have understood the meaning of the vocabulary underlined. Conduct a class discussion on the meaning of the Karuk Elder's words, the values she had been taught by her relations, and what gift from nature she spoke of. Ask them why things have changed since her childhood and allow for free responses.

Read **Gathering Ethics** (included) to the class. Ask them if they can find any similarities or differences in the interview text they just heard from Vera Vena Davis on salmon.

**Independent Work:** Ask students to complete the **Vocabulary Worksheet** and the **Comprehension Worksheet: Gathering Ethics** in their workbooks.

### Session 2: Listening Comprehension and Discussion

Show movie *People of the Klamath; Preserving a Way of Life* by James Culp Productions. Have students write notes on the template provided in their workbooks (included), and after the movie is over, ask them to form questions and answers about the information in the video after they watch it. Giving them some time to form questions, students will then take turns asking their classmates their questions.

Have students create a list of indigenous gifts of nature from their local community or original country. Remind students that these gifts can include food, medicinal plants, sources of water, materials for artwork and adornment, etc. Students should draw or collect pictures and photographs of as many of their listed gift to make a display, labeling each of nature's gifts.

**Writing:** Assign students the task of writing a short essay about one of their favorite gifts. Make sure that students "qualify" their choice, relating that gift to its environment.

**Optional:** Cultural Resources Card Game "Go Fish" with **Go Fish Directions** (included) and **Resource Card Matches** (included).

*Field Trip:* Invite a cultural resource person to guide the students on a nature walk at a nearby location. Have students bring a note pad to write down what the guide identifies as an indigenous gift of nature. Look for birds, insects, types of trees and plants, seeds and water sources. Take photographs, collect specimens after reviewing or make drawings of these gifts. If appropriate allow students to gather "gifts."

Return to the classroom and conduct a class discussion about the students' observations and drawings and why each item presented during the walk is a gift of nature. Make a list of these gifts on the board. These could be added to the collage made in class.

**Evaluation:**

- Evaluate students in their overall participation in discussions, activities, and nature walk.
- Assess their understanding of what makes something a gift from nature as expressed in their essay
- Assess their understanding of the “gifts of nature” by the questions they create from the movie.

**Resources:**

Salter, J. (2003). White Paper on Behalf of the Karuk Tribe of California, <http://www.mkwc.org/old/publications/fisheries/Karuk%20White%20Paper.pdf>

Peters, J., & Ortiz, B. (2010). After the First Full Moon in April. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, Inc.

California Indian Basketweaver's Association, <http://www.ciba.org/>

Karuk Tribe Department of Natural Resources, (530) 627-3446

Margo Robbins, KTJUSD Indian Education Director

**Additional Resource:** “Plant Dyes”, The Educator's Reference Desk, <http://www.eduref.org/cgibin/>

## Vocabulary Master: Gifts of Nature

**vegetation** – plants; plants that cover a particular area

**sediment** – material (such as stones and sand) that is into water by water, wind, etc.

**supplies** – things (such as food) that are needed for something

**resemble** – to look like

**overharvest** – to gather or collect too much of something

**minimize** – to make something as small as possible

**impact** – to have a strong and often bad effect on something

**population** – the number of people, plants or animals that live or grow in a place

## Vocabulary Worksheet: Gifts of Nature

Choose the best word from the vocabulary box to complete the sentences.

vegetation, sediment, supplies, resemble, overharvest, minimize, impact, population

1. You \_\_\_\_\_ your Auntie Lillian. Both of you look alike!
2. Don't \_\_\_\_\_ the lilies! They are very rare.
3. Can you please \_\_\_\_\_ the noise you make when you practice your drumming?
4. Don't forget to take \_\_\_\_\_ with you when you go for your camping trip.
5. The \_\_\_\_\_ here is mainly grasses and root plants.
6. There is a lot of \_\_\_\_\_ that goes into the river when people mine for gold and put dirt in the water.
7. Do you know the \_\_\_\_\_ of Karuk Tribal Members?
8. When I watch scary movies, they sometimes have a bad \_\_\_\_\_ on me. Sometimes I have nightmares!

## Interview with Karuk Elder Vera Vena Davis (2001)

“We had nice deep holes in Ti Creek when I was young. The vegetation wasn’t dried out and broken up the way it is today. Presidio Bar has changed. The river was never scummy the way it is now. You could walk around in the river, there was more sand than sediment. We had supplies from the river the year round. We hadn’t been told that we couldn’t get our fish any time of the year. That was put there for us by the Creator and when we were hungry we went to the river and got our fish. We never wasted it. What we got we ate. That’s what I used to teach my kids when they were little and had BB guns. I said, ‘What you kill, you eat.’”

*(interview with Karuk Elder Vera Vena Davis in 2001)*

## Gathering Ethics

*Excerpt from "After the First Full Moon in April" by Josephine Peters & Beverly Ortiz*

### General Guidelines:

- Only gather what you will use.
- Take good care of what you do gather.
- Share with people who need it and can't get out to gather the plants themselves.
- Gather from areas that are more difficult to access so Elders can gather from places that are easier to get to.
- When gathering leaves or flowers, cut branches from several individual plants rather than pulling the plant up by the roots, which would kill the plant.
- Gather plants from large populations.
  - Take small amounts from several different places to minimize your impact on plant populations.....take a little bit from here, a little bit from there.
- Only gather common plants.
  - Be certain of plant identification before you harvest. Some common plants have rare relatives that resemble them closely.
- Avoid gathering frequently from the same place
  - Slow growing plants can easily be overharvested, especially if the root is the part used.
- Bring wild plants into your garden.
  - Gather seeds or cuttings to grow in your garden so that you don't have to keep finding new places to gather from in the wild.
- Gather only from healthy plants.



## Gifts of Nature: Gathering Ethics Worksheet

*Excerpt from "After the First Full Moon in April" by Josephine Peters & Beverly Ortiz*

Circle each of the options that are correct! Hint: there are 9 correct answers, the first one is given.

When you gather plants, **you should**:

- a. not waste what you take.
- b. clip even the unhealthy plants.
- c. gather all from one area.
- d. gather only what you will use.
- e. gather seeds or cuttings to plant.
- f. harvest next to the road.
- g. keep everything for yourself.
- h. leave the roots so not to kill the plant.
- i. gather where there are lots of plants.
- j. take as much as you can.
- k. only gather common plants.
- l. only gather healthy plants.
- m. gather from different places.
- n. pull the plants up by their roots.
- o. take from harder to reach places.
- p. take rare plants.

## People of the Klamath; Preserving a Way of Life: Notes and Questions

As you watch the movie, write down some notes that you can turn into questions to ask your classmates.

Example note: salmon for food

Example note: What did the people of the Klamath eat?

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Questions to ask your classmates:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_

# Go Fish

## ***Directions***

4-6 players

Object of the game: To pair up as many natural resource cards with the items they are used for/made into. For example, the elk is a match for an elk horn purse, or elk horn spoon.

DO NOT match an elk with an elk.

Dealer gives out 4 cards to each player

Players take turns asking any of the other players for a card that matches one of theirs. (For example, if you have a picture of a maple bark skirt, you would ask someone, “Do you have a maple tree?” If yes, the player gives you the card with a maple tree on it. If no, then the player says, “Go fish.”

If they give you a card that matches yours, lay the pair of cards (ex. maple bark skirt and maple tree) face up in front of you, and then you get another turn. If the other player does not have what you asked for, they should tell you to “go fish,” and then you draw a card from the pile. If the card you draw is a match for one of yours, you lay the pair face up in front of you, and it is the next person’s turn.

Play until all the matches are paired up.

# Go Fish

## Cultural Resource Cards - Matches

### *Natural Resource*

### *Use*

abalone	necklace
abalone	ceremonial dress
deer	drum
deer	Deerskin Dance
deer	deer meat – food
dentalium	money
elk	man's spoon
elk	elk horn purse
hazel sticks	Basket
iris	iris fiber net
maple tree	maple bark skirt
mussel	woman's spoon
obsidian	arrow heads
otter	quivers
pepperwood	herbal tea leaves
redwood tree	Canoe
Port Orford Cedar	House
salmon	salmon cooked on sticks – food
woodpecker	Brush Dance head roll
woodpecker	Jump Dance head dress
yew tree	sinew back bow