



ELA Common Core Content Standards

Reading Standards for Informational Text 1, 4, 7
Reading Standards: Foundational Skills 3,4
Speaking and Listening Standards 1, 2

Estimated time:
2 sessions, 1 hour each

Goal: Students will learn different ways they and their families can provide respectful care for the environment to ensure it is healthy for future generations.

Background: There is a saying that is often attributed to a variety of American Indian tribes and native leaders, although its exact origin is unknown: ***“We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors. We borrow it from our children.”***

This saying expresses a principle that is common to many American Indian cultures. The well-known Haudenosaunee principle called the “Seventh Generation” philosophy states it a different way and relates it to government and important decisions: “The Chiefs are instructed that when they deliberate on the serious matters of the Council, they are to consider the impact of their decisions on seven generation into the future. *“This way, they are to proceed cautiously, thinking of what effect their decisions will have on the welfare of their descendants. It requires a special attention to the future. But it also produces a sense of stability”.*

In addition to taking into consideration future generations in important decisions, American Indian cultures believe that respect should be shown to plants and animals in the environment as well. This is because all things are interdependent and rely upon each other as relatives do. Thus, being a respectful caretaker of the community involves being aware of the interrelationships within the community environment. It means being a good relative.

In the first part of this lesson, students will discuss how one can be a good relative by thinking about the children of tomorrow and listening to one’s elders. The second part of this lesson will feature a Karuk local hero, whose efforts to effect federal recognition of the Karuk Tribe, work towards collaboration with federal agencies to improve the health of cultural species through indigenous land management practices, and to preserve the age-old practice and fine art of basket weaving are exemplary. Finally, the goal of the last part of this lesson is to help illustrate the principle that things in

nature are interdependent and our relationship with them resembles the relationship we have with relatives.

Theme/Big Idea:	We do not own land, we take care of it for future generations
Big Question:	How can we become stewards of our environment and our community?
Vocabulary:	deliberate, impact, proceed, welfare, descendants, essential, viable

Materials:

What is the Seventh Generation? (Excerpt included)

Local Heroes article – **An Eye on the Future: Karuk Elder Laverne Glaze** (included)

DVD *“People of the Klamath: Preserving a Way of Life”* by James Culp Productions (available from Shenandoah Films)

Vocabulary Worksheet (included)

Optional: DVD “Nature and Northern California Indians” (included)

Preparation: Write vocabulary words on a large poster board, leaving room for definitions (*deliberate, impact, proceed, welfare, descendants, essential, viable*). Copy “What is the Seventh Generation” excerpt (1 per student). Put DVD into computer and pull down the big screen

Session 1: Student Activities

Discussion: Begin the lesson by discussing with the children what the following proverb means: **“We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors. We borrow it from our children.”**

Explain to students that decisions made about land often affect people who are not yet born because the land is ever present but also capable of being changed. Its enduring presence connects ancestors, people living today, and future generations.

Distribute the Seventh Generation Philosophy excerpt to students.

Building Vocabulary: Show students the list of vocabulary words you have written on the large poster board, and ask them to underline the vocabulary words as you read. After reading the excerpt help students figure out the meaning of the vocabulary words using context clues. Write the definitions beside the words. If possible, take a screen shot of the vocabulary and their definitions to show class on the second day.

Deliberate – to consider, or think about something carefully

Impact – the effect that something has

Proceed – to move forward or continue

Welfare – a person’s or people state of health, happiness, and comfort

Descendants – your children, grandchildren, great grandchildren etc.

Essential – something you really need, and cannot do without

Viable – doable, practicable

Have students take turns reading the excerpt aloud. Stop after each sentence that has one of the vocabulary words and ask students what that sentence means.

Have the students brainstorm what it means to be a good relative. Ask them how they would apply this idea of being a good relative to members of their family who aren't born yet. Ask them to think up scenarios in which actions or decisions today may affect relatives who are not born yet. Ask students to ponder what decisions have been made by others that affect them.

Session 2:

Preparation: Project screen shot or display poster board with the vocabulary words and their definitions (*deliberate, impact, proceed, welfare, descendants, essential, viable*). Put DVD into computer and pull down the big screen

Building Vocabulary: Show students the screen shot (if available) or list of vocabulary words and definitions you have written on the large poster board to remind them of their new vocabulary. Tell them that some of these words will be in the reading activity for today's lesson.

deliberate – to consider, or think about something carefully

impact – the effect that something has

proceed – to move forward or continue

welfare – a person's or people state of health, happiness, and comfort

descendants – your children, grandchildren, great grandchildren etc.

essential – something you really need, and cannot do without

viable – doable, practicable

Reading Comprehension and Discussion: Begin by reading the Local Heroes article “**An Eye on the Future: Karuk Elder Laverne Glaze**” (included). Ask them why this person is featured as a “Local Hero” in this lesson.

Ask students if they can name three things that make her a steward of her environment and her community. You may wish to explain that a “steward” is a responsible protector of someone or something. Answers can be:

- a) she fought to achieve federal recognition of the Karuk Tribe,
- b) she worked towards collaboration between the Tribe and federal agencies to improve the health of cultural species through indigenous burning practices,
- c) she teaches traditional basket weaving, and

- d) she works hard with “an eye on the future.” Perhaps by inference, students could include
- e) she loves her family and respected her elders, and
- f) she is proud of her students, etc.

Independent Work: Assign students the Vocabulary Worksheet (included) in their workbooks.

Comprehension and Discussion: Show part 2 of the movie “People of the Klamath: Of Land and Life” produced by James Culp Productions. Discuss:

- What actions were taken to protect sacred places for future generations
- The basic responsibility of being a respectful caretaker (or steward) of the environment.
- If the student treats the environment as a respected living relative, what does that mean in terms of careful treatment of the environment?

Optional: View DVD “*Nature and Northern California Indians*” (included). Have students select a quote from the film. Ask students to illustrate how they could apply this “thought or philosophy” in their own life.” Students can also use the text from the previous day to select quote.

Evaluation:

- Students will be evaluated on the quality of their participation in discussions and activities regarding what it is to be a good relative and responsibilities for the environment.
- Students will be assessed on their ability to interpret information and apply it to their own behaviors.

Resources:

- DVD part 2 “People of the Klamath: Of Land and Life
- Seventh Generations: The Role of the Chief, by Ely Parker 1844-1865, available at the PBS webpage: <http://www.pbs.org/warrior/content/timeline/opendoor/roleOfChief.html>
- 3 Yurok Tolowa Heritage, Our Connectedness to the Earth, Curriculum Resource Center

What is the Seventh Generation?

Excerpt

The Seventh Generation Philosophy

1. The (Haudenosaunee) Chiefs are instructed so that when they deliberate on the serious matters of the council, they are to consider the impact of their decisions on the seventh generation into the future.
2. This way, they are to proceed cautiously, thinking of what effect their decisions will have on the welfare of their descendants.
3. It requires a special attention to the future.
4. But it also produces a sense of stability.
5. Some things will always need to remain the same because we still live on the same earth, we still live in the same areas, and we still have many of the traditions that allowed our ancestors to survive.
6. These very same traditions will be essential for the future generations.
7. Keeping the traditions alive and viable is the responsibility of this generation.
8. Our gift to the future is all of the things that have been described above.
9. But these traditions are not simply words on paper that can be studied when needed.
10. The traditions must be practiced each and every day.

Vocabulary Worksheet

Name _____

Complete each sentence by underlining the correct vocabulary word.

1. When you think about something carefully, you deliberate/ essential.
2. Your children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren are your impact/ descendants.
3. When you really need something and cannot do without it, that something is essential/ viable to you.
4. The effect that something has on you proceeds/ impacts you.
5. To move forward or continue to do something, you descendants/ proceed with it.
6. If something can be done, it is viable/ proceeds.
7. A person's health, happiness, and comfort can be called their deliberate/ welfare.

An Eye on the Future: Karuk Elder Laverne Glaze, by Malcolm Terence

Tribal Elder Laverne Glaze likes to remember the time almost 40 years ago when she was among a handful of activists pushing for federal recognition for the Karuk Tribe.

“We started out in an old trailer,” she remembers. “There were volunteers who spent a lot of time working hard on this – maybe ten years!” These individuals spent countless hours contacting federal agencies; over the phone, writing letters, driving down to Sacramento, and flying out to Washington D.C. “There were a number of truly dedicated people,” Glaze recounts, “Trudy Mollier, Mildred Donahue, Jack Sanderson, Willy Colegrove, Beatrice and Mavis McCovey, Renee Stauffer...”

Throughout this time and beyond the Tribe’s eventual federal recognition in 1979, Glaze spent decades as a promoter and organizer of basketweaving. She is now 83 years old, but she is still working hard with an eye on the future.

She likes to talk about her relations - her cousins, nieces, nephews, grand kids and more – and she likes to talk about making baskets.

One of her early teachers was Ella Johnson, a renowned weaver from Weitchpec. Glaze said Johnson was a good teacher and very strict. One of Johnson’s standards for the new weavers was to take their acorn soup baskets down to the river to see if they leaked.

Glaze gave her first successful basket to her mother. She remembers that her grandmother, who was blind, felt it for bumps.

When asked about collecting good materials, Glaze said: “It’s a lot of work, all that collecting. I’m so proud of the girls learning to weave.”



Karuk Activist Laverne Glaze, photo by Angela McLaughlin.

In earlier times, regular tribal burning kept the plant materials needed for baskets healthy. Glaze understood this and worked hard to build cooperation with the US Forest Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs so that they could learn from Native wisdom. She helped organize a series of camps called Following the Smoke, where weavers from all over the country came to camp and share stories and skills.

“I’ve gone through two sifting baskets already. My life is getting pretty darn short,” she explained. “I still need to teach some of these young girls how to sew dresses.”

This article was originally published in the Two Rivers Tribune and adapted and expanded for this lesson by Lisa Hillman with permission from the editor, author and Laverne Glaze. See more at:
<http://www.tworivertribune.com/2014/12/an-eye-on-the-future>