



**ELA Common Core Content Standards:**

Reading Standards Informational Text 4, 5, 7, 8  
Reading Standards: Foundational Skills 1, 2, 3  
Writing Standards 2, 3, 8  
Speaking and Listening Standards 2, 4

**Estimated duration:** Two 45-minute sessions, with additional time for writing assignment if needed/desired.

**Goal:** Students will learn about the dietary benefits of traditional Native diet and the detriments of a contemporary altered diet. They will learn the connection between physical health and the incorporation of Native foods into the diet.

**Background:** For the Karuk and other Native Americans, hunting, fishing and gathering activities are not only subsistence living measures, they also are the means of socialization measures that contribute to the perpetuation of indigenous culture. All aspects of food security lent opportunities for teaching and learning tribal values and codes, ecological knowledge, and social mores. The many strenuous activities required to maintain food security also ensured the physical fitness of Native peoples, young and old, as attested by ethnographic and anthropological reports.

Many traditional Karuk social norms are embedded implicitly in modern Karuk attitudes toward a wide variety of activities and social settings, including Native food harvesting, preparation, and distribution. Learning about these social mores on a more direct level, and understanding that many of these are taken out of context and colored by historic events and western interpretation will be helpful for both Native and non-Native students to make sense of their own feelings and attitudes toward Karuk cultural heritage.

This lesson only touches upon the complex system that represents the customs of proper behavior in Karuk society. While the tribal values and gender roles imparted are focused on those pertaining to food harvest and preparation activities, students will learn about some conventional aspects of Karuk values, custom and etiquette, and how these are enforced from gentle social pressure down to relatively strict taboos.

Students may find that there are similar social mores in western culture, but will learn that the customary norms specific to a given society are a defining aspect of the cultural identity of an ethnicity or a nation. Learning to cope with the differences between two sets of cultural conventions will lead to intercultural competence.

<b>Theme/Big Idea:</b>	Every Culture has its Own System of Beliefs, Values and Rights
<b>Big Question:</b>	What assumptions do we make about how our food is acquired and prepared?
<b>Vocabulary:</b>	Verbs learned in context; focus on adaptation and part of speech

**Materials:**

**The Meaning of Social Values**, excerpted from original text by Puja Mondal (included)  
**Karuk Tribal Values and Gender Roles in the Native Food and Health System** (included)  
**Comprehension Worksheet** (included)  
**Vocabulary Worksheet** (included)  
**Writing Assignment** (included)

**Preparation:** Review lesson texts and discussion prompts, with special attention on fundamental concepts and difficult vocabulary. If desired, transfer **The Meaning of Social Values** onto a projectable image format. Print out copies of all materials needed.

**Session 1**

**Discussion:** Begin the lesson by asking students what the standards of behavior are that their families value highly. Ask them if these standards are the same or different from those that their school attaches importance. Then ask if their peers have the same value system. What aspects are different, which are the same? Why do different groups of people sometimes have diverging standards for judging the way we act and behave?

Tell students, if they have not already guessed the answer, that value systems may be very different depending on the social groups compared. Project on a screen or pass out a copy of **Social Values, Definitions and Functions** and have students take turns reading some of the quotations listed. Ask them if they think one of the definitions is better than the others. Have students qualify their statements. Ask them to volunteer their own very simple definition. Sample answer: *Values provide goals for the members to aim for.*

Next, ask them what they think the functions of a social value system can be. Sample answers:

- *Values hold the group together because they share common goals.*
- *Common values help people feel included in the group.*
- *Values bring legitimacy to the governing rules.*
- *Values help to bring about some kind of adjustment between different sets of rules.*

**Preparing to Read:** This text not only discusses the social values of traditional and contemporary Karuk people, but it also talks about what is known as “norms.” While values are sets of beliefs an individual or collective group have to guide behavior, norms are codes of conduct set by a society. In general, there is social pressure to accept values and sometimes punishment for a member who does not abide by a culture’s social norms, but there are sometimes exceptions to these rules.

**Reading:** Have students take turns reading the first two pages of **Karuk Tribal Values and Gender Roles in the Native Food and Health System**, stopping to clarify meaning.

**Discussion – Drawing Conclusions/Making Judgments:** To close this session, begin discussion of the text by asking modified versions of some of the questions that you opened this lessons with: Does your family share some of the same traditional Karuk tribal values? How about your peers? Does your culture have taboos with regard to food, too? What about eating horse meat, or cats? Are there consequences to eating up some little kid's Halloween candy?

## Session 2

**Reading:** Have students take turns reading the last two pages of **Karuk Tribal Values and Gender Roles in the Native Food and Health System**, stopping to clarify meaning.

**Discussion – Drawing Conclusions/Making Judgments:** Begin discussion of this session's text by asking students how they feel about the gender roles with regard to food harvest, preparation, and consumption? Do their own social groups have formal or informal gender roles? Who normally does the cooking in your home? Who takes out the trash? Are these fixed rules, or are there exceptions to the rules? What makes it okay to deviate from the norm?

**Vocabulary:** Explain to students that list of words are used in the text, but are sometimes found as a different part of speech than the verbs listed in the worksheet – not just past tense, like “adhering” or “adhered,” or first person versus third person, like “I adhere to my Tribe's value system,” or “It adheres to the bottom of the desktop.” In addition, students will have to find the relevant definition for each word must be found in the text's context. Assign the **Vocabulary Worksheet** for independent or group work.

**Reading:** Assign **Karuk Tribal Values and Gender Roles in the Native Food and Health System** once again for either independent reading, or have the class read the text aloud. Stop at the words student highlighted in their text and ask students which verb definition they marked as being the most context relevant. If needed, clarify any final questions on the word definitions.

**Comprehension:** Assign **Comprehension Worksheet** for in-class completion.

**Writing:** Pass out and clarify the directions to the writing assignment. Assign as homework.

**Optional Activity:** Invite someone to talk about their own feelings about gender equality, or someone from a different culture or tribe to come and speak to the class about their own social values, norms, gender roles and, if applicable, taboos.

## The Meaning of Social Values

By Puja Mondal<sup>1</sup>

Social values form an important part of the culture of the society. They account for the stability of social order and provide the general guidelines for social conduct. Values such as fundamental rights, respect for human dignity, sacrifice, individuality, equality, justice, etc., guide behavior in many ways. Values are the criteria people use in assessing their daily lives; arranging their priorities and choosing between alternative courses of action.



“Values are group conceptions of the relative desirability of things”.

“Values are [the] assumption, largely unconscious, of what is right and important”.

“A value is a belief that something is good and worthwhile. It defines what is worth having and worth striving for.”

<sup>1</sup> Excerpted from the online sociology article on “Your Article Library” website:  
<http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/sociology/the-meaning-and-functions-of-social-values-sociology/8522/>,  
 retrieved 07/19/2016

## Karuk Tribal Values and Gender Roles in the Native Food and Health System

By Lisa Hillman

Traditionally, the Karuk way of life is based on hunting, fishing and gathering. Each of these, in turn, is structured by a sophisticated system of ceremony and prayer, socialization of youth, and **adherence** to tribal and family values. While many traditional families still practice some or all aspects of this way of life, others have **adapted** their culture to one that includes features of a western lifestyle.



Dipnet fishing at Ishi Pishi Falls, 1974  
- Willis Conrad, Jr.

The traditional Karuk food system requires **dedication** to harvesting resources, and to maintaining and enhancing habitat in order to ensure the survival and **prosperity** of a host of dependent species. Harvesting calls for prime physical condition - endurance, skill and strength to climb mountains and trees, swim and navigate swift rivers, carry heavy loads long distances, crouch and balance in difficult terrain, and withstand periods of fasting. Hunting, fishing and gathering also demands patience, internal and external tranquility, keen eye sight, wide-ranging attention span, and excellent hearing. In addition, skilled providers must have knowledge of the sciences, such as astronomy, biology and botany.

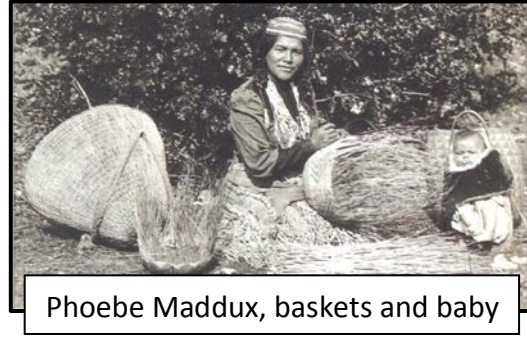
As given to the Karuk by the First People (**ikxaréeyav**<sup>1</sup>), tribal code commands that food providers prepare themselves mentally, make an offering and give prayer before harvesting, and that they extend gratitude to these Spirit People after the harvest. According to Karuk Elder Phoebe Maddux, there is a rock near the old Orleans schoolhouse that Indians used to call merely the old man (**pihnīich**<sup>2</sup>), and that this rock was one of the First People before the great transformation, when the Spirit People turned into rocks, mountains, people, fish, plants, stars – all our natural world. In the spring of the year, when the Indian potatoes are about four feet high, it was customary to take several raw Indian potatoes and deposit them under that rock as an offering to feed the old man<sup>3</sup>. Food providers harvest only after ensuring that enough of the species will be left to reproduce and that their habitat is healthy. Further, food providers take only as much as needed, leaving enough for their relations – the plants, animals, birds, other humans, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced, Ick-xah-RAY-yahv – the “x” is a strong “h” sound made at the very back of the throat.

<sup>2</sup> Pronounced, peh-NEEch.

<sup>3</sup> Ferrara, J. (2004). *ananakupheekxúnnikich: Karuk Ethnographic Notes*, p. 211

Traditionally, providing for the People is not simply the domain of the mature and physically active. Both the young and the very old have their place in a functioning food and health system. Carried strapped into baby baskets to gathering places or propped up next to mothers as they weave baskets or prepare food, even infants learn by watching their older siblings and female relations in action.



Phoebe Maddux, baskets and baby

Older folks are integral in caring for small children in order to allow more able bodied family members to partake in the many arduous tasks associated with food and medicine provision. As soon as these children learn to walk, they are gathering, cracking, selecting, and carrying foods alongside the others. Children showing an aptitude for medicinal plants traditionally apprentice under medicine women, learning to identify, cultivate, and harvest plants needed for teas, salves and medicinal healing waters. Elders work at tasks that demanded less physical strength and endurance, yet are nonetheless needed in order to transform food sources into edible meals. Even those who can no longer see have an uncanny expertise in singling out poor from high quality resources.

Personal qualities highly valued in traditional Karuk families include hard and productive labor, attention to detail, respect for and dedication to all relations, commitment to tribal code and ceremonies, endurance without complaint, and restraint in appetite and sexual activity. One example of this kind of value system can be found in the term for married women: “When a woman makes acorn soup all the time, they call her **ihrooháyav**<sup>1</sup>, ‘a good married woman.’”<sup>2</sup> While both sexes have some degree of decision-making power and these valued qualities are generally shared by indigenous groups, gender roles are differentiated depending on whether a particular tribe is predominantly matrilineal or patrilineal. Many indigenous groups, such as the Hopi, Chickasaw and Iroquois, have matrilineal societies, in which property and hereditary leadership are controlled by and passed through the maternal lines. The children are considered to belong to the mother's tribe or clan. In Cherokee culture, women own the family property. When traditional young women of these types of matriarchal societies marry, their husbands may join them in their mother's household.

In the patrilineal tribes, such as the Karuk, hereditary leadership passes through the male line. Women showing valued qualities fetch a high “buying” price from a male suitor, and upon agreed marriage arrangements, generally move to the home of her husband. Even today, traditional Karuk men not only ask a father for his daughter's hand in marriage, but also bring gifts as a symbol of his intentions. In former times, the children of this union belonged to the father's family, yet the importance of the maternal grandparents is reflected linguistically by the differentiation between the maternal grandmother and grandfather (**kiit** and **kúut** respectively) versus the one term used for both paternal grandparents (**áttish**).

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced something like, eh-roo-HIGH-yahv, with the “r” being slightly rolled.

<sup>2</sup> Ferrara, J. (2004). *ananakupheekxúnnikich: Karuk Ethnographic Notes*, p. 151.

Like the social structure of many other tribes, Karuk men have historically hunted, traded and made war while, as life-givers, women have primary responsibility for the survival and welfare of the families and future of the tribe. Their essential role in caring for the future of the tribe is illustrated in the traditional tattoo (**thúkinha**), which is sometimes called the “One eleven” after it’s resemblance to the number 111: Phoebe Maddux reported that since it was an unwritten law never to kill the female of the species, Karuk people used to tattoo the female chin so that they would be spared in times of conflict.<sup>1</sup> In current times, some local tribal women are choosing to tattoo themselves as an act of cultural revitalization, visually representing their tribal identity, or for other personal reasons.



Traditionally, Karuk women gather and cultivate plants, use plants and herbs to treat illnesses, care for the young and the elderly, make the clothing, and process and cure meat and skins from the game. These areas of daily life are generally thought to be the domain of the women, yet are sometimes carried out by men – and vice versa, depending on need, aptitude and ability. Cross-gender roles were historically not uncommon. For example, if a young man showed an inclination to feminine characteristics – even a preference to wearing the elaborate designed clothing or beautifully designed basket caps that are generally reserved for women, he was sometimes thought to have a calling as a healer and would be supported in his learning the art of plant medicine. Support for this can be found in traditional stories, such as “The Doctor,” in ethnographic accounts of women who acted like men – and vice versa, and in contemporary reports. These people<sup>2</sup> are respected in traditional Karuk culture, and have roles to play in protecting the well-being of their people.

Traditionally, certain harvesting and processing activities carry taboos with regard to gender roles; for example, men are said to lose their manhood if they pound acorns or weave certain types of baskets. Yet both in modern and in historic times, some well-respected men have produced the close-weave baskets that are the domain of women, and some are known to have pounded acorn kernels. An old man<sup>3</sup> from Katimiin was reported to have pounded acorns for the deerskin dancers: “They would hire him to pound on such occasions and he would pound more and faster than a woman and would do a good job. At one deerskin dance he pounded up three big **áttikkin**<sup>4</sup> baskets of acorns in five days.”<sup>5</sup> Another taboo concerns women and

<sup>1</sup> *ibid*, p. 155.

<sup>2</sup> **keevárahitih** and **ishvit'ávansa**. Ferrara, J. (2004). *ananakupheekxúnnikich: Karuk Ethnographic Notes*, p. 224

<sup>3</sup> Known as **impakpakkámva'an**.

<sup>4</sup> Pronounced, AHT-tik-kin, which is a rarely used term for an open weave pack-basket/burden basket. The Karuk words more commonly used are **áatikir** or **átimnam**. *Variant*: átimnav

<sup>5</sup> Ferrara, J. (2004). *ananakupheekxúnnikich: Karuk Ethnographic Notes*, p. 155.

hunting: “They say the world will come to an end if women shoot. They would never let little girls play with bows and arrows.” Yet Phoebe Maddux reported that she did shoot some,<sup>1</sup> and many modern Karuk women hunt, albeit with guns: women still respect the taboo on touching men’s ceremonial regalia, such as bows, as well as men’s square-shaped drums. Another traditional Karuk code bars woman from fishing, looking upon those men engaged in fishing activities or touching the instruments needed to complete the task.



Menstruating women know not to eat or touch deer meat. Phoebe Maddux’ mother, who was born long before Euro-American contact, explained to her daughter that it was feared that these women would die as a result, and told the following story: When the deer was still one of the First People before the time of the great transformation, he prayed. “The good people (**yaas’ára**) will not eat me when menstruating, and, if she does, whenever she gets sick, I’ll kill her: I’ll be dancing on top of her head.” Another story, however, shows how even this very strict taboo could be circumvented in times of need: the only sister of a male dominated family used a medicinal formula to prevent her menstrual cycle from affecting her own as well as the health of her family as she prepared deer meat for the family meals<sup>2</sup>.

While considering that many tribal codes and gender roles have changed since the Euro-American contact, it is also important to recognize that the interpretation of these traditional values are anchored in current social norms and have been shaped by historic events. Listing the taboos with regard to women, especially menstruating females, may seem to exemplify a sexist society by today’s western cultural standards. However, when one considers the reasons why the First People ordained these rules, and learns the history that has led to the loss of clear gender roles, one may appreciate how this interpretation - can be challenged. In general, “life-giving” women were to be protected from the powerful and sometimes destructive medicine, here understood as “otherworldly influences,” that is in play during ceremonial and sacred hunting and fishing activities. Menstruating women are known to have powerful (and sometimes harmful) medicine and are therefore isolated from social gatherings and food preparation in order to protect both themselves and others.

That these tribal codes are now sometimes negatively framed, that is, that Native women are somehow inferior to their male counterparts, or that many Native men are unable to provide for their families, may be attributed to historic events that have led to damaged self-esteem: overt murder of males and rape of women, loss of recognized hunting and fishing rights, unemployment due to racially discriminating hiring practices, children removed from families and sent to Indian boarding schools – all of these conditions and actions led to the inability of several generations of Karuk people to raise their families in ways that abide by tribal code. Today, these issues still contribute to intergenerational trauma, as both males and females

<sup>1</sup> Ferrara, J. (2004). *ananakupheekxúnnikich: Karuk Ethnographic Notes*, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> See Georgia Orcutt’s “Medicine for Good Luck” in Kroeber and Gifford’s *Karok Myths*, p. 293.



struggle with tribal values and traditional roles in ways that reflect positive self-identity and strong families. Key indicators of low self-esteem are tendencies to find fault in others, bullying, domestic violence, and substance abuse.

Beyond importance as direct subsistence and their specific health benefits, traditional food and medicine have great physical, cultural, religious and social values for Karuk people. Food has long been an integral part of daily activities and celebrations. Hospitality and caring for elders are for example, important social obligations that involve food and medicine.

The activities of managing, gathering, preparing and consuming traditional foods, along with sharing traditional stories, serve the functions of passing on traditional ecological knowledge from one generation to the next. Food related activities serve as social glue that binds the community together; they outline social roles that provide a sense of identity and serve as the vehicle for the transmission of values.

The absence of these activities and the decline of Native food, fibers, and medicines lead to further cultural disruption. This is widely understood by Karuk Cultural Practitioners today, and is reflected in the changing gender roles with regard to Native foods and medicines. Modern Karuk families – both the males and females – work together to secure acorns, huckleberries and mushrooms, for example, to sustain them throughout the year. Females often accompany their male relations on non-traditional hunting and fishing excursions, and both work together to process the foods for consumption and preservation.

Karuk People have always described themselves as “Fix the World People,” and this long tradition of practicing *pikyav* is still alive and well.



#### References:

Ferrara, J. (2004). *ananakupheekxúnnikich*: Karuk Ethnographic Notes. Happy Camp, CA. Karuk Tribe.

Kroeber, A.L. and Gifford, E.W. (1980). *Karok Myths*. University of California Press.

Harrington, J.P. (unpublished manuscript). Write up on Karok Material Culture. Smithsonian.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Comprehension Worksheet: Native Food Traditions

Based on the knowledge learned from the lesson text, answer the following questions with at least three verbs in bullet points. The first two questions are answered as examples.

1. What kinds of physical activities are required of good harvesters?
  - *climbing*
  - *swimming*
  - *crouching*
  - *carrying*
  - *balancing*
2. What kinds of mental activities are important for traditional harvesters?
  - *preparing*
  - *praying*
  - *make an offering*
  - *giving thanks*
3. How do children and Elders contribute to food provision?
4. How do traditional Karuk families show good personal character?
5. How do traditional males provide for their people?
6. How do traditional females provide for their people?
7. What are activities associated with tribal taboos?
8. What kinds of actions led to a disruption of positive self-identity?
9. What are ways Karuk people show their dedication to tribal values?
10. **Extra Credit:** Drawing on context clues, translate the verb *pikyav* into English.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Vocabulary: Verbs, verbs, verbs!**

Words come in many forms and can be modified to reflect different meanings. The following list of verbs are used as written or have a different form in the lesson text. Highlight or underline the words in the text, and then highlight or underline the definition in the next column that most accurately reflects the way it is meant in context. Next, write the word as it is used. Extra credit goes to those who can correctly write the part of speech used in the text in the last column. The first four words are completed as examples.

	Verb	Verb Definitions	Word in Text	Part of Speech
1.	adhere	a. stick or glue to something b. <b>obey a rule</b>	adherence	noun
2.	adapt	a. <b>change behavior to suit a new situation</b> b. change something for a different use	adapted	verb
3.	dedicate	a. <b>use (time, money, energy, etc.) for something</b> b. say something was done to honor someone	dedication	noun
4.	prosper	a. become very successful financially b. <b>become very active, healthy, or strong</b>	prosperity	noun
5.	endure	a. continue to exist in the same condition b. experience pain or suffering for a long time c. deal with or accept something unpleasant		
6.	navigate	a. sail on, over, or through water b. travel on, over, or through an area c. find the way traveling by ship, car, or plane d. control the direction of; steer		
7.	withstand	a. not be harmed or affected by something b. deal with something successfully		
8.	offer	a. give someone an opportunity to accept something b. say that you are willing to do something c. provide or supply something d. say or give something in spiritual worship		
9.	extend	a. make something longer or greater b. continue in a direction or over time c. offer something to someone		
10.	deposit	a. put money in a bank account b. put or leave something in a particular place c. leave something, like sand, on a surface or area		
11.	partake	a. have a part of something along with others b. join with others in doing something		
12.	commit	a. do something that is illegal b. decide to use something for a particular purpose c. give love or support to someone or something		
13.	differentiate	a. make someone or something different in a way b. see the differences between two or more things		

	Verb	Verb Definitions	Word in Text	Part of Speech
14.	restrain	a. prevent a person or animal from doing something b. keep something under control		
15.	illustrate	a. draw b. give examples to make easier to understand		
16.	resemble	a. look like someone b. look like something		
17.	spare	a. choose not to punish or harm someone b. prevent someone from suffering from something		
18.	cultivate	a. grow or raise something b. try to become friendly with someone		
19.	bar	a. put a bar or set of bars up to prevent entrance b. prevent or forbid something		
20.	circumvent	a. avoid being stopped by something b. get around a rule or law		
21.	pray	a. speak to a spiritual being b. seriously ask someone to do something c. hope or wish for something to happen		
22.	interpret	a. explain the meaning of something b. understand something in a specified way c. translate words into another language		
23.	anchor	a. keep a ship or boat from moving b. hold something firmly into place c. read the news on a television broadcast		
24.	isolate	a. keep someone/something separate from others b. find and deal with by removing other possibilities		
25.	frame	a. to put something into a frame b. express something in words c. make a person appear guilty of a crime		
26.	attribute	a. say that something is because of something else b. think of something as being made or created		
27.	transmit	a. send information by signal to a radio, computer b. pass information from one person to another		
28.	reflect	a. move light/sound to bounce off spot to another b. show something c. cause people to think something in a certain way		
29.	sustain	a. hold up the weight of something b. provide what is needed to exist c. state or show that something is true or correct		
30.	consume	a. eat or drink something b. destroy something with fire c. take all of a person's attention, energy, time, etc.		

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Writing Assignment: Food Traditions in Different Cultures

*The goal of this assignment is to reflect on your experience with, and opinion of, either your own food traditions or those of another culture. You may look up information in the library or on the internet to support your statements, but you must use your own words to express your ideas.*

*Begin this **three paragraph** assignment by explaining your culture's food traditions, then show how these traditions are unique to the culture you have chosen to write about. In the final paragraph, restate your main arguments and tell the reader why or why you don't agree with them. Extra credit will be given to students who correctly use 10 or more words from the vocabulary list.*