

Title

Mitakuye Oyasin and the Creation of the Universe.

Grade Level

6th grade.

Theme

The relationship of all creation.

Duration

3-6 days.

Goal

I want students to begin to think about and understand the depth of the term *Mitakuye Oyasin*, the philosophy which asserts that a person is related to all Creation. Through the introduction of *Otokahekagapi (First beginning): Sioux creation story* by Thomas E. Simms, students will be reminded that we all come from the blood of Inyan, are related to each other and all of Creation, and must treat all that is with respect. The students will use journal writing to continually redefine their understanding of *Mitakuye Oyasin*.

Objectives

1. Students will define *Mitakuye Oyasin*.
2. Students will read (listen to) *Otokahekagapi (first beginning): Sioux creation story* by Thomas E. Simms, based on Walker, J. R. (1983). [Excerpt from Creation of the universe]. In E. A. Jahner (Ed.), *Lakota myth* (pp. 206-220). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
3. Students will illustrate the Lakota creation story.
4. Students will connect Lakota creation to *Mitakuye Oyasin*.

South Dakota Standards**Cultural Concept**

Mitakuye Oyasin rests at the center of Lakota culture/spirituality and is the philosophy upon which all aspect of life of the *Oyate* rests.

Cultural Background**Student Activities**

1. Teacher will introduce the term *Mitakuye Oyasin*, using the literal translation, “all my relatives”.
2. Teacher will briefly discuss the philosophy of *Mitakuye Oyasin*.
3. Students and teacher will brainstorm how and why we could all be related, accessing student prior knowledge of *Mitakuye Oyasin*.
4. Students will journal about their own concept of *Mitakuye Oyasin*.
5. Teacher will darken the room
6. Students will be asked to close their eyes, experience the darkness, experience the silence, imagine the nothingness, think about and remember their feelings.
7. Teacher tells the creation story in the darkness until the creation of light – then the teacher turns on the lights and reads the remainder of the story with the lights on.
8. Students will illustrate the creation story as they heard it.

9. Students will participate in a teacher led discussion of the creation story.
10. Students will refine their story illustration.
11. Students will share their illustrations with a partner.
12. Students will journal about how what they know so far about Lakota Creation confirms or redefines their original journal assessment of *Mitakuye Oyasin*.
13. Students will use their illustrations to create a folded book.

Resources

Assessment

References

Simms, T. E. (1987). *Otokahekagapi (first beginnings): Sioux creation story*. Chamberlain, South Dakota: Tipi Press.

Walker, J. R. (1983). [Excerpt from Creation of the universe]. In E. A. Jahner (Ed.), *Lakota myth* (pp. 206-220). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Developer

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Additional Information

Note—This is the first lesson plan in this section. Lesson plans that follow will continue to relate humanity to the four legged animals, the winged animals, animals that swim, plants, and the stars.