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The following lessons were created by Bill Eckerstorfer, a teacher participating in a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute for Teachers entitled Touch the Past: Archaeology of the Upper Mississippi River Region.

Tailoring Two Cultures to adapt to Wisconsin's Biotic Zones

Overview: The Ice Age affected more than the shape of the land and the creation of lakes; it directly influenced how people managed to live in Wisconsin. Wisconsin is divided into two biotic zones. The northern half of the state is in the **Canadian Zone** and the southern half of the state is in the **Carolinian Province**. The area separating the north from the south is called a **Tension Zone**. Students will examine both biotic provinces and then create a culture to live in each zone. Students will then compare and contrast their created cultures to cultures that exist/existed in the two biotic regions.

Time Period to be examined: Oneta-Late Woodland

Students will work in cooperative groups of four students. Each group will consist of two teams.

Cartographic Unit:

In your group create a map displaying the five geographic regions of Wisconsin:

- 1) Lake Superior Lowlands
- 2) The Northern Highlands
- 3) The Central Plains
- 4) The Western Uplands
- 5) The Eastern Ridges and Lowlands.

Along with your map give a description of each region. Place a grid system over the geographic regions map. Lightly place this same grid on a poster board. Use three lines horizontally and three lines vertically to form a grid. Double, or triple the size of the grid sections in between the lines when you create the grid on the poster board. Free hand draw the outline of Wisconsin and draw in each geographic region. Be creative, you must include a description of each region on this poster board.

Sources: "*Geography of Wisconsin*" Robert W. Finley and
<http://www.wisconsinline.com/wisconsin/geoprovinces.html>

In your groups reproduce a map of the Glaciation of Wisconsin. Use onion skin paper. Label each glacial lobe and the Driftless Area. Reproduce a map of Early Vegetation of Wisconsin. Use onion skin paper. These maps must be approximately the same size as the regions map and be overlaid that map.

Source: "*Geography of Wisconsin*" Robert W. Finley, page 15, Figure 1-4 and page 152, Figure 11-1.

Create a map of the Biotic Zones of Wisconsin. Label this map: the Tension Zone. Again make this map the same approximate size as the others. On this map label the Canadian and Carolinian Provinces and describe their differences in detail. Compare and contrast vegetation cover, soils, climate, water systems, fauna, and growing seasons.

Source: "*Introduction to Wisconsin Indians*" Carol I. Mason, pages 15-22.

Exercise **Designing a Culture**

A distinct human society is referred to as a "culture" by anthropologists and archeologists. The Lakota and the Iraqi Kurds are each a distinct culture. As you recall, in general, human culture is structured (a system) that is observed through acts and artifacts and is held together with shared ideology. Over the long term, it is patterned, learned behavior that is adapted to particular local and natural environment. Your assignment is to **make two distinct cultures each residing in one of the two biotic zones located in Wisconsin**. You must consider a number of components to two distinct human cultures (there will be some similarities because of proximity). These include the following:

- 1) **ENVIRONMENT:** You must place both cultures in one of Wisconsin's two Biotic zones. You must describe the rainfall, growing season, soils, vegetations, animal life, waterways and climate.
- 2) **TECHNOLOGY:** The type of technology must fit with the environment, social organization, and settlement type. You must be specific in describing what type of technology is used, how it relates to the social organization, settlement and subsistence base. Most cultures that make a living by hunting and gathering wild resources move often, possess few objects, and have simple, portable technology.
- 3) **SUBSISTENCE PATTERN:** Are these people hunters and gatherers of wild resources, gardeners (horticultural), agriculturists (who have field systems), or some mixture. Describe the plants and animals harvested. Describe the annual cycle of subsistence.
- 4) **SETTLEMENT TYPE:** are these people sedentary (year round in one spot) or semi-sedentary (move once or twice a year), or nomadic (move many times a year). What type of housing do they have? What type of facilities (storage, wells, production areas) do they have?
- 5) **SOCIAL ORGANIZATION:** The social organization must fit in a logical way with the subsistence and settlement patterns. Is your culture egalitarian (with all people born equal, but distinct by age and sex roles typical for hunters and gathers and tribal peoples), or ranked (in

ranked societies people are born into elite or common groups regardless of ability). In ranked societies, also called stratified societies, status is ascribed at birth. In ranked societies, members are based on birth not ability. Hunters and gathers are egalitarian and agriculturalist may be egalitarian or ranked.

6) **IDEOLOGY:** This will include beliefs in the spirit world (religion and ritual). What is the religion-ideology and how does it relate to subsistence, technology, settlement, and social organization?

Your group must design each of these six points into a logical and distinct culture that would reside in Wisconsin's biotic zones. They must interrelate in a reasonable way. You may work together as a group, or assign individual tasks. It is a requirement that each member reflect on a daily basis and journal these reflections daily. You will earn, or lose points on quality, or lack of effort on these journal entries. Each person must make serious contributions to add their name to a project. Peer review is required in the daily logs. Date your journal entries. The instructor will be required to observe group interaction and log relevant information regarding group progress. Grading is based on individual journal assessment, peer review, teacher observation, attendance, and the interrelatedness of a sound and logical structure of the six parts as well as originality. You must use outline format for the final product. Make your first draft on notebook paper.

**NEXT ASSIGNMENT:
COMPARE THE CULTURES YOU CREATED TO EXISTING HISTORICAL
CULTURES RESIDING IN THE BIOTIC ZONE.**