



Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center  
1725 State Street  
La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601  
Phone: 608-785-6473  
Web site: <http://www.uwlax.edu/mvac/>

The following lessons were created by Cathy Bornfleth, 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.

## Introduction to Indians and the First Thanksgiving (Kindergarten)

### Day 1: Time line (whole class instruction):

Use yarn timeline to give students perspective about how long the Indians were living here (in the US), and just how long ago events occurred. Facilitate a brief discussion introducing Native Americans. Use artifacts and pictures of the topics which you'll cover -see list below. Have students walk with you as you unwind yarn and hang labeled and pictured signs on pre-knotted loops at the following intervals\*. Encourage predictions and estimating before you hang each card. Present information on each card as necessary (i.e.: picture of T-Rex; "67 million years ago;" "127 miles - walk to Monterey Bay Aquarium"). Leave yarn hanging in class for duration of unit or longer if possible.

5 years (kindergarten age)

.6" 6 years (kindergarten age)

.72" 37 years (teacher parents age)

4.44" 386 years (first Thanksgiving)

3.86' 800 years (Chungke played at Cahokia)

8' 2000 years (Hopewell pot)

20' 5000 years (cave art)

50' 67 million years (Sue lived in South Dakota)

127 miles (distance to Monterey Bay Aquarium)

\*scale: 1 foot is equal to 100 years - mathematical scale calculations: A. Chamberlain

**Day 2: Intro to aspects of Indian life** (four small group rotations approx 15-20 minutes each)

**1. First Thanksgiving** Using the book, "1621 A New Look at Thanksgiving", lead a discussion/introduction to life during the First Thanksgiving

- Start with brainstorming what the students know about Thanksgiving – what they do now and what they think the first Thanksgiving was like
- Then synthesize 1621 and share information: (some points below)
  - The 52 English people are the survivors of the 101 who came on the Mayflower less than a year earlier.
  - The Native people have lived there for more than 12,000 years – the Wampanoag
  - "Keepunumuk" – time of the harvest
  - The Wampanoag know this village site as Patuxet – the English renamed it New Plymouth

-Additional Thanksgiving supplies/information: [www.plimoth.org](http://www.plimoth.org)

-Download program for computer lab: [www.plimoth.org/education/olc](http://www.plimoth.org/education/olc)

-Books: (All available online from Plimoth Plantation)

Mayflower 1620: A New Look at a Pilgrim Voyage

Giving Thanks: The 1621 Harvest Feast

1621: A New Look at Thanksgiving

Sarah Morton's Day: A Day in the Life of a Pilgrim Girl

Samuel Eaton's Day: A Day in the Life of a Pilgrim Boy

Tapenum's Day: A Wampanoag Indian Boy in Pilgrim Times

On the Mayflower: Voyage of the Ship's Apprentice and a Passenger Girl

## **2. Chunkey/Chungke**

- Show the students the cards with the pictures of the Chunky stone and the Indians playing the game.
- Explain how the game was played (use info on the cards).
- Ask them if they think when we play if we'll use the spears and stone. Why? Why not?
- Show them our version (round wooden block and two kush balls).
- Explain rules (same as before except with different elements) and take them outside to play.

Card 1:

In this game a chunky stone was rolled over the ground or ice while several players threw spears in an attempt to indicate where the stone would stop rolling. The closest to the final location of the stone, without actually hitting the stone, was the winner.

### Card 2:

If you were an Indian child living in Alabama in 1750, your life would have been devoted mainly to helping with domestic chores, planting crops, and driving off birds. However, men, women, and children alike found time for recreation. Games such as shooting arrows, playing a kind of soccer, or guessing which moccasin held a stone or marker were usually based on skill or chance.

One of the most popular Indian games was "chunky" or "chungke" and involved tossing lances at a rolling stone disk. Does this sound like any game you have ever played?

The purpose of this game was to improve an Indian's aim at a running object, in addition to providing relaxation. The chungke stones used in this game were highly prized and kept from generation to generation as town property.

Visit the Indian gallery at the [Alabama Department of Archives and History](#) to see several chungke stones that are over 300 years old.

### Card 3:

"The warriors practice a diversion which they call the game of the pole, at which only two play at a time. Each pole is about eight feet long resembling a Roman f, and the game consists in rolling a flat round stone, about three inches in diameter and one inch thick, with the edges somewhat sloping, and throwing the pole in such a manner that when the stone rests, the pole may be at or near it. Both antagonists throw their pole at the same time, and he whose pole is nearest the stone counts one, and has the right of rolling the stone." -Antoine Simon Le Page Du Pratz, "History of Louisiana"(1758)

Sources and additional info:

<http://www.eiu.edu/~history/ha/exhibits/2006/Game%20of%20Chungke.htm>

<http://www.uwlax.edu/mvac/Knowledge/NAGames.htm>

<http://www.ewebtribe.com/NACulture/games.htm>

## 3. Pottery

- Show students photo samples of a wide variety of Indian pottery. Point out the Cahokia pottery, as that is the pottery we placed on the time line the day before. Present them with samples of already created pots. Then help them each make their pot. As they are working on their pottery talk about how pottery was made traditionally:
- The clay was dug from the ground; water was worked into it and the grass and sand were worked out; sea shells were burnt, crushed into powder and worked into the clay; the pot was made; to make it strong, they then heated it around the edge of a fire and then buried in the ashes.
- Then tell them how we will make the pot:
- Shape the pot; dry for 3 days on the counter; put in a kiln and cooked at very high temps (find out temp of our kiln and insert here); cooled; glazed and then cooked again.

- Be sure to carve their initials on the bottom.

#### **4. Petroglyphs**

- Present students with samples of petroglyphs.
- Let them explore and discuss the different cards.
- Then lead discussion:
  - What is this?
  - Why do you think that?
  - What else could it be?
  - Why did they paint or carve these?
  - Do they tell a story?
  - Are they someone's name?
  - What do you think?
- Then provide students with torn brown paper bags and red & black crayons. Have students draw their own and then best guess spell what they drew underneath.

Additional resources:

- The Jeffers Petroglyphs by Kevin L. Callahan
- Stories in Stone by Caroline Arnold
- Messages on Stone by William Michael Stokes and William Lee Stokes
- Young Goat's Discovery by Arline Warner Tinus