



Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center
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The following lessons were created by **Lori Norton-Welz**, 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.

Plants and People

Grade Level 2-5

Subjects Science

Objectives Students will develop awareness of interdependence within an ecosystem—specifically to plants and people within that system. Students will connect the experience of horticulture to edibles Mother Nature has to offer.

Standards Directly connects to IB units “Who we are, Where we are in place and time, How the world works, How we organize ourselves, and Sharing the planet”.

Duration 3-4 hours plus follow-up

Materials/ Supplies Parent permission to leave campus, copies of field guides for all students, writing utensils

Vocabulary Indigenous, interdependence, ecosystem, environment

Background Students have examined the concepts of culture (including ancient cultures) and interdependence through the IB curriculum units in their classrooms. Also, students are assigned jobs in the community garden at school---food grown is served for lunch at school.

Setting the Stage After students explore native peoples, way of life and horticulture, I will introduce the concept of foraging and uses. This could be done in small groups with samples of foods that grow wild. Students can predict what they think the uses are and how the food could be stored through the winter.

Procedure On a guided hike, students will find food specimens growing in the wild by comparing plants to their field guides. Once students have identified the specimens of focus, a short, whole group, guided lesson will be delivered to cover identification correctness, edible parts, and the correct way to gather specimens. Students will work to complete the sections of identification in their field guides.

Closure Press leaves and attach to field guides, encourage students to examine what human need the plant fulfills, determine basic needs of the ancient cultures, and develop a list of ideas of skills that would be necessary if the natural environment were their main source for goods.

Evaluation Completion and review of field guide, peer share

Links/Extension This activity can be referenced several times throughout the school year in connection to many of the IB units (see Standards section). Since food matures at various times in the season, hikes can be timed so that students can view various species. Through regular contact with the classroom teacher, I will determine appropriateness for insertion. Extensions can include a scavenger hunt outside, matching game with specimens, peer instruction, recipe creations, etc

References Mother Nature's Mercantile guidebook

<p>Common name of plant _____</p> <p><i>Insert plant image</i></p>	<p>Sketch the edible portion of this plant, add a picture for scale.</p>	<p>Sketch or collect, press, dry and attach leaf here.</p>	<p>List identifying features of this plant.</p>	<p>List facts about the plant and what it can be used for.</p>
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