

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

Lesson Title –Dekanawidah- A Forgotten Founding Father

Grade Level-7/8

Length of class period – Two 45 minute classes

Inquiry – (What essential question are students answering, what problem are they solving, or what decision are they making?)

1. How was the Constitution of the Iroquois a harbinger for another future nation?
2. What does this document from 1500 say about the culture of the Five Nations?
3. How does the existence of this document dispel stereotypes about Native Americans prior to the European arrival?

Objectives (What content and skills do you expect students to learn from this lesson?)

1. Students will research what aspects of life seemed most important to the tribes
2. Students will make comparisons to our culture and what we find important
3. Students will reflect on Madison's famous quote, "If all men were angels, no government would be necessary", and how the Five Nations address that concept in this Constitution
4. Students will find similarities in our Constitution and the Iroquois Constitution that display a common theme

Materials (What primary sources or local resources are the basis for this lesson?) – (please attach) 1. The Constitution of the Iroquois around 1500 available at

http://odur.let.rug.nl/%7Eusa/D/1776-1800/constitution/iroq_const.htm

2. The Constitution of the United States of America (available in most history texts)

Activities (What will you and your students do during the lesson to promote learning?)

1. The class will be divided into five (5) small groups with each student receiving a copy of the Iroquois Constitution and their textbook with the US Constitution included in an appendix
2. The Iroquois Constitution is twenty five pages long. Each group of students is assigned five (5) pages to analyze. To reduce the volume of material, teachers may wish to highlight sections before distributing to students.
3. Each group will examine their copies of the document and make a list of items that identify important cultural features, governmental functions, procedural regulations, and citizenship

4. Each group will report to the class as a whole on their findings.
5. On the second class day, the groups will take their findings and draw parallels and point out differences between the two Constitutions

How will you assess what student learned during this lesson?

1. Monitoring of the groups as they perform their investigations.
2. Evaluate the findings presented to the class
3. Have the students write a reaction paper of five paragraphs describing their conclusions from the activity.

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards –

Formulate historical questions based on primary and secondary sources, including documents, eyewitness accounts, letters and diaries, artifacts, real or simulated historical sites, charts, diagrams, graphs, diagrams and written texts.