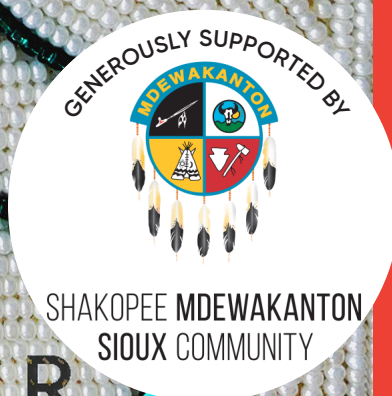


EVERYTHING
YOU WANTED
TO KNOW
ABOUT INDIANS
BUT WERE
AFRAID TO ASK

ANTON TREUER

YOUNG READERS EDITION



Sovereignty & Treaties

In this lesson plan, students will explore the complicated concept of sovereignty and its implications in the context of treaties between the United States government and American Indian Tribes. Through a combination of readings, discussions, and role-playing activities, students will develop a nuanced understanding of how sovereignty has been defined and contested over time, particularly regarding land, resources, and political representation. They will also examine several key treaties and their legacies, analyze how treaty obligations have been honored or violated, and consider the ongoing impacts of historical traumas on Native communities today. By the end of the lesson, students will have a deeper appreciation for the complexities of sovereignty and the enduring significance of treaties in shaping relationships between nations.

RELEVANT TEXT

Treuer, A. (2024). *Everything You Wanted to Know About Indians But Were Afraid to Ask: Young Readers Edition*, pp. 177-183.

OBJECTIVES

- Identify the concept of sovereignty within the context of American Indian treaties (remember)
- Explain the implications of sovereignty in the historical dialogue between the United States and American Indian Tribes (understand)
- Apply knowledge of sovereignty to interpret key treaties between the U.S. government and American Indian Tribes (apply)
- Analyze the adherence and breaches of historical treaties and their ongoing impacts on Native communities (analyze)
- Evaluate the role and significance of treaties in upholding Indigenous sovereignty (evaluate)
- Construct an argument about the importance of treaties in recognizing the sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples (create)

ACCOMMODATIONS TO CONSIDER MEETING STUDENT NEEDS

Visual Aids, Graphic Organizer, Preview Vocabulary, Oral Directions, Repeat/Clarify Directions, Reader, Text to Speech, Note Taker, Large Print, Audiobooks, Memory Aids, Visual Cues, Oral Response, Typed Response, Non-verbal Response, Speech to Text, Increased Wait Time, Verbal Prompts, Manipulatives, Graph Paper, Write in Book, Scribe, and others appropriate for the learner(s).

RELEVANT STANDARDS

MN Tribal Nation Essential Understandings		MN State Standards Social Studies			MN State Standards ELA		
3.3	4.3	9.1.6.1	9.1.6.4	9.3.14.1	9.1.2.1	10.1.2.1	11.1.2.1
3.4	4.4	9.3.15.1	9.3.15.3	9.3.15.6	9.1.2.2	10.1.2.2	11.1.2.2
4.1	4.5	9.3.15.7	9.3.15.8	9.3.17.1	9.1.2.3	10.1.2.3	11.1.2.3
4.2	6.3	9.3.17.2	9.3.17.3	9.3.17.4	9.1.3.1	10.1.3.1	11.1.3.1
		9.4.18.1	9.4.18.2	9.4.18.3	9.1.6.1	10.1.6.1	11.1.6.1
		9.4.18.4	9.4.18.5	9.4.18.6	9.1.6.2	10.1.6.2	11.1.6.2
		9.4.18.8	9.4.18.9	9.4.18.11	9.1.6.3	10.1.6.3	11.2.1.1
		9.4.18.12	9.4.18.13	9.4.18.14	9.1.9.1	10.1.9.1	11.2.1.2
		9.4.18.15	9.4.19.1	9.4.19.2	9.1.9.2	10.1.9.2	11.2.3.1
		9.4.19.5	9.4.19.7	9.4.19.8	9.2.1.1	10.2.1.1	11.2.3.2
		9.4.19.10	9.4.19.12	9.4.20.1	9.2.1.2	10.2.1.2	11.2.4.1
		9.4.20.2	9.4.20.4	9.4.20.5	9.2.1.3	10.2.1.3	11.2.4.2
		9.4.20.6	9.4.20.7	9.4.20.8	9.2.3.2	10.2.3.2	11.1.5.1
		9.4.20.10	9.4.20.12	9.4.20.14	9.2.4.1	10.2.4.1	11.2.5.2
		9.4.21.3	9.4.21.4	9.4.21.6	9.2.4.2	10.2.4.2	11.3.1.1
		9.4.21.7	9.4.21.8	9.4.21.9	9.2.5.1	10.2.5.1	
		9.4.21.11	9.4.21.12	9.4.21.13	9.2.5.2	10.2.5.2	
		9.4.22.1	9.4.22.3	9.4.22.7	9.2.7.1	10.2.7.1	
		9.4.22.8	9.4.22.10	9.4.22.14	9.2.7.2	10.2.7.2	
		9.4.23.1	9.4.23.3	9.4.23.4	9.3.1.1	10.3.1.1	
		9.4.23.6	9.4.24.2	9.4.24.3	9.3.1.2	10.3.1.2	
		9.4.24.4	9.4.24.5		9.3.1.3	10.3.1.3	

ACTIVITY 1

Introduction— Exploring the Concept of Sovereignty

READINESS LEVEL: Awareness

Overview: Introduce the topic by presenting a brief overview of sovereignty in the context of American Indian treaties. Use an interactive digital board to share visuals and key terms such as “sovereignty,” “land rights,” and “political representation.” Host a class discussion on these topics, allowing students to share their initial thoughts. The aim is to gauge their prior understanding and spark interest in the subject.

- A. Begin by presenting succinct context about the topic to provide a foundational understanding of sovereignty and American Indian treaties.
- B. Display relevant terms and discuss their meanings, focusing particularly on “sovereignty,” “land rights,” and “political representation.”
- C. Stimulate a class discussion revolving around these terms and the overarching concept of sovereignty within the context of American Indian treaties. This aims to help pupils grasp the knowledge and build on their current understanding.
- D. As the conversation develops, be sure to redirect the focus to American Indian treaties to keep the discussion aligned with the presentation topic.
- E. Allow learners to share their preliminary thoughts. It’s important to gain insights into their current understandings while igniting their interest in the subject.
- F. Once initial thoughts have been articulated, encourage exploration of how sovereignty has influenced the historical dialogue between the United States and American Indian Tribes, fostering their skill of curiosity.
- G. Also, enhance their communication skills by providing opportunities to articulate their thoughts and ideas and engage in fruitful discussions throughout this activity.
- H. Finally, segue into the structural learning phase where the pupils should deepen their understanding of the topic and go on to identify the concept of sovereignty in American Indian treaties more concretely.

SKILLS

- Communication
- Curiosity

ACTIVITY 2

Demonstrate and Explain— Analyzing Key Treaties

READINESS LEVEL: Understand

Overview: Present a selection of key American Indian treaties and explain their contents, contexts, and implications. This demonstration activity will guide students through the complexities of these historic documents and enable them to apply their knowledge of sovereignty in a practical context.

- A. The learners must first familiarize themselves with a chosen key treaty between the U.S. government and an American Indian Tribe. They should carefully analyze the document, taking note of its content, context, and implications.
- B. Following their initial analysis, the learners are expected to apply their knowledge of sovereignty to interpret the treaty. They should determine the Tribes' viewpoint in terms of how their sovereignty rights may have been affected.
- C. The next step involves an examination of both adherence and breaches of the selected treaty historically. Students should consider the effects on the Native communities both immediately after the treaty's establishment and in the years that followed.
- D. Learners should then analyze and evaluate how, and to what extent, that treaty impacted upholding or inhibiting Indigenous sovereignty.
- E. With their findings, they are required to construct a well-structured presentation. This presentation should clearly demonstrate their understanding of the selected treaty and its implications.
- F. Lastly, the learners will present their analysis and findings to the class. The presentation should effectively communicate the complexities and nuances of the treaty.
- G. During the presentation, encourage the learners to engage their audience by posing thought-provoking questions and in-depth discussions. Furthermore, they should be prepared to answer questions from their classmates and teacher, elaborating further on their findings if necessary.

SKILLS

- Critical Thinking
- Systems Analysis
- Communication

ACTIVITY 3

Student Task— Treaty Review Exercise

READINESS LEVEL: Application

Overview: Set up a review exercise where students work in groups to examine a specific treaty in detail. They will analyze and summarize the treaty and present their findings to the class.

- A. Divide the class into small working groups.
- B. Assign each group a specific treaty between the U.S. government and an American Indian Tribe to examine.
- C. Direct each group to conduct an in-depth study of their assigned treaty. This should involve understanding its context, key provisions, and the parties involved.
- D. Groups should apply their knowledge of sovereignty to interpret key aspects of their assigned treaty.
- E. Students are expected to critically analyze the adherence and breaches of the treaty over time. They must explore and discuss its ongoing impacts on the respective Native communities.
- F. Encourage each group to evaluate the role and significance of their assigned treaty in upholding Indigenous sovereignty. Point out the need for reasoned arguments and evidence-based conclusions.
- G. Have each group summarize their findings in a well-structured presentation to be shared with the class. The presentation should give an overview of the treaty, and the student's findings and conclusions.
- H. During these presentations, encourage students not presenting to actively participate by asking questions and engaging in discussions.
- I. After the presentations, facilitate a class discussion on shared findings, patterns noticed across treaties, and broader implications for understanding Indigenous sovereignty.
- J. Emphasize the importance of both clear communication and active listening during these group discussions to ensure that everyone's ideas are heard and respected.
- K. To conclude, students should reflect upon and articulate their understanding of the importance and role of treaties concerning Indigenous sovereignty. They can express this through a written personal reflection or shared verbally with the class.

SKILLS

- Critical Thinking
- Collaboration
- Communication

ACTIVITY 4

Reflection— Personal Response to a Hypothetical Scenario

READINESS LEVEL: Application

Overview: Present a hypothetical scenario that challenges sovereignty and treaty rights. Ask students to write a personal response detailing how they would navigate the situation based on what they've learned.

- A. Begin by providing students with a clear understanding of sovereignty and its relationship with treaties between the U.S. government and American Indian Tribes. This should include a comprehensive review of key treaties in history.
- B. Present students with a hypothetical situation that challenges both sovereignty and treaty rights. This could be a modern issue or a historical event that calls for an interpretation of a particular treaty.
- C. Ask students to interpret the hypothetical scenario in terms of sovereignty and treaty rights. They should consider the context, the involved parties, and the terms of the applicable treaty or treaties.
- D. Ask students to write a personal response detailing how they would address the situation. They should demonstrate their problem-solving skills by providing a course of action that upholds the sovereignty principles and treaty rights they have learned.
- E. To promote emotional awareness and invoke their growth mindset, encourage students to reflect on the consequences of such breaches. They should consider the long-term impacts this would have on the Native communities involved.
- F. Lastly, students must construct a well-informed argument outlining the importance of treaties for the recognition of the sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples. Guide them to incorporate their understanding of the hypothetical scenario, possible impacts, and their course of action into this argument.
- G. Be sure to remind students that the goal of this activity is not to find a “correct” course of action, but to thoughtfully apply and integrate their knowledge of sovereignty and treaties.

SKILLS

- Problem Solving
- Socio-Emotional Awareness
- Growth Mindset

Resources

Home | Native Knowledge 360°—Interactive Teaching Resources

<https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/>

Explore NK360° Educational Resources. Workshops designed to equip teachers with critical concepts and engaging pedagogy to support a transformation in teaching and learning about Native Americans. School Group Self-Guided Timed Entry Reservations for the imagiNATIONS Activity Center in New York, NY are available for March and April 2024.

Treaty-Making and Sovereignty—Lessons of Our Land

https://www.lessonsofourland.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/34_Treaty-Making_and_Sovereignty_-_2016-08-10.pdf

Distribute “American Indian Sovereignty: Vocabulary.” Tell students that all terms on the sheet are related to American Indian sovereignty. Students are to work in groups of three or four to speculate how several items may be linked. Each group needs one pen and one sheet of paper.

Native American Treaties: Northern Plains | Teacher Resource

<https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/plains-treaties>

This online lesson provides perspectives from Native American community members, images, documents, and other sources to help students and teachers understand the difficult choices and consequences Northern Plains Native Nations faced when entering treaty negotiations with the United States. Scroll to begin an exploration of the intentions.

The Importance of Treaties for Teaching American Indian History

<https://education.blogs.archives.gov/2014/11/18/treaties-for-teaching-american-indian-history/>

This resource can help teachers clarify the concept of treaty-making between governments and the original sovereignty and independent nature of Native American Tribes. More

DocsTeach activities will be added soon to further illustrate these concepts and to provide easy materials for classroom use.

Treaties and Sovereignty—Lessons of Our Land

https://www.lessonsofourland.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/33_Treaties-and-Sovereignty-Lessons-of-Our-Land.pdf

Students read about and discuss the relationship between treaties and sovereignty, creating a “treaty timeline.” Teacher Background: A widely held misconception about Native American history is that Tribes were easily conquered and simply swept out of the way to make room for non-Native settlement.

American Indian Treaties | National Archives

<https://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/treaties>

This ended the nearly 100-year-old practice of treaty-making between the U.S. and American Indian Tribes. The online exhibit “Rights of Native Americans” includes a visual timeline of the history of American Indian treaties and Native American activism to defend Tribal sovereignty.

Additional Resources—Tribal Sovereignty: Why it Matters for Teaching...

<https://americanindian.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/education/2022-Summer-Webinar-Series-Day-1-r.pdf>

Treaties—Tribal Treaties Database (okstate.edu) Stream Episode 95: Affirming Indigenous Sovereignty with S. Shear, L. Sabzalian, & L.B. Buchanan

Additional Resources—Tribal Sovereignty: Why it Matters for Teaching and Learning about Native Americans Author: Brennan, Isabel Created Date: 11/22/2022 3:05:30 PM

Teaching American Indian History with

Primary Sources—NPS

<https://home.nps.gov/subjects/teachingwithhistoricplaces/upload/Teaching-American-Indian-History-with-Primary-Sources-Compliant-1-2.pdf>

In *Teaching American Indian History with Primary Sources*, the primary sources make the book a valuable resource for teachers.

TREATIES WITH NATIVE AMERICANS— Decolonizing Education—UMD

<https://lib.guides.umd.edu/c.php?g=1261350&p=9529879>

The original ratified treaties between the United States and American Indian Tribal nations are housed at the National Archives in Washington, DC, as the series, “Indian Treaties, 1722–1869” (National Archives Identifier 299798). Ratified

Indian Treaties, numbered 1–374, were transferred to the National Archives from the Department of State in the late 1930s.

Indigenous Reconciliation in the US Shows How Sovereignty and Constitutional Recognition Work Together | The Conversation

<https://theconversation.com/indigenous-reconciliation-in-the-us-shows-how-sovereignty-and-constitutional-recognition-work-together-54554>

Contemporary Native American nations, on the other hand, invoke their treaty relationships as an assertion of sovereignty that allows them to claim a “Nation-to-Nation” relationship with the United States government.

Glossary for Sovereignty & Treaties

SOVEREIGNTY: The authority of a country, state, or group of people to govern itself or another state

TREATIES: Formally concluded and ratified agreements between countries

AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBES: The Indigenous Peoples within the territory that is now encompassed by the continental United States

LAND RIGHTS: The rights to control land and its natural resources endowed by Indigenous or international law

POLITICAL REPRESENTATION: The right to participate in the political process through elected officials who represent your values

HISTORICAL TRAUMAS: Painful events and experiences that continue to affect generations of a marginalized group, like American Indians

INDIGENOUS SOVEREIGNTY: The concept that Indigenous groups have the right and authority to

self-govern and make decisions over their affairs

NATIVE COMMUNITIES: Groups of Indigenous people living in a certain area

ADHERENCE: The act following and sticking to a law, rule, or course of action

BREACHES: The act of breaking a law, rule, or agreement

INTERACTIVE DIGITAL BOARD: A large interactive display that connects to a computer and projector

HISTORICAL DIALOGUE: A series of discussions and examination of past events

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE: Information derived from historical research used to support an argument or theory

HISTORIC DOCUMENTS: Written, printed, or inscribed documents or artifacts that provide evidence of historical events

Suggestions for Lesson Extension(s)

Exploring the Concept of Sovereignty

Introduce the topic by presenting a brief overview of sovereignty in the context of American Indian treaties. Use an interactive digital board to share visuals and key terms such as “sovereignty,” “land rights,” and “political representation.” Host a class discussion on these topics, allowing students to share their initial thoughts. The aim is to gauge their prior understanding and spark interest in the subject.

Introduction through Storytelling

Share a story about a selected treaty from the historical perspective of both the Native American Tribes and the U.S. government. This will serve as an introduction to the concept of sovereignty and the historical background of its implications. The students should listen attentively to share later what they understood from the story.

Sovereignty Word Cloud

Create a collaborative word cloud with the class where students contribute their interpretations and understandings of “sovereignty.” This introductory activity promotes engagement and allows learners to see the diverse range of thoughts among their peers on the same concept.

Role-Playing Historical Events

Facilitate a role-play activity on key events or turning points in the historical dialogue between the United States and American Indian Tribes. Divide students into different roles, such as government officials, Tribe leaders, etc. This activity demonstrates the nuances and challenges of these negotiations and agreements.

Analyzing Key Treaties

Present a selection of key American Indian treaties and explain their contents, contexts, and implications. This demonstration activity will guide students through the complexities of these historical documents and enable them to apply their knowledge of sovereignty in a practical context.

Case Study: Treaty Breaches

Discuss a specific case where the treaty obligations were neglected or mishandled. Detail how this impacted relevant Native communities and demonstrated real-world implications when terms aren’t fulfilled.

Creating a New Treaty

Task the students with drafting their own treaty, using their recently learned knowledge of sovereignty. This exercise helps them demonstrate their understanding of political representation and resource allocation.

Treaty Review Exercise

Set up a treaty review exercise where students work in groups to examine a specific treaty. They will analyze and summarize the treaty, then present their findings to the class.

Debate on Land Rights

Organize a mini debate where students argue for or against the compliance with a particular U.S. treaty, based on the sovereignty of Indigenous Tribes and the resulting land rights.

Reflective Journal Entry

At the end of the lesson, ask students to create a journal entry outlining what they’ve learned about American Indian treaties, sovereignty, and their importance. They can also share any shifts in their perception or understanding of the issue.

Reflection through Art

Encourage students to design a piece of art, such as a poster or comic strip, to portray their understanding of treaties, sovereignty, and their ongoing impacts. This activity allows students to express their reflections creatively.

Personal Response to a Hypothetical Scenario

Present a hypothetical scenario that challenges sovereignty and treaty rights and ask students to write a personal response detailing how they would navigate the situation based on what they’ve learned.

PRAISE FOR

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT INDIANS BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK (YOUNG READERS EDITION)

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Anton Treuer, Photo credit: Greene Photography

ANTON TREUER (pronounced troy-er) is Professor of Ojibwe at Bemidji State University and author of many books. His equity, education, and cultural work has put him on a path of service around the nation and the world.

Visit levinequerido.com to buy a copy of
Everything You Wanted to Know About Indians But Were Afraid to Ask:
Young Readers Edition.

Available in hardcover and paperback.

Also by Anton Treuer
[Where Wolves Don't Die](#)

Educator guide developed by Anjanette Parisien.

Designed by Suet Chong.