

Territorial Children

Objective

Students will read about child play and games pioneer and Indian children played during the pioneer days—mid 1800s through early 1900s. Students will play some of the games and conduct math activities with one of the games. Students will make prairie dolls.

Background

From the mid 1800s through the early 1900s, American Indians and pioneer settlers were the primary residents of what is now Oklahoma. Most of the settlers lived on farms, and everyone had to work hard so the families could survive. Pioneer children were expected to help the adults with the farm work. Milking cows and gathering cow or buffalo chips for fuel in the cook stove was a duty for both girls and boys. Girls helped with the cooking, cleaning, mending, gathering eggs, and taking care of the younger children. Boys helped with the planting and harvesting of crops and also helped hunt for food to feed the family.

When they had time to play, pioneer children had to find amusement from everyday life. Toys consisted of whatever they or their parents could make for them from whatever they had around the home. Pioneer children played many games that children still play today— “Drop the Handkerchief,” “Blind Man’s Buff,” “Leap Frog,” “Hunt the Shoe,” “Duck, Duck, Goose,” “Button, Button, Who’s Got the Button?,” “Croquet and Shuttlecock.”

The lives of Indian children were a little different from those of pioneer children. Many of the tribes in Oklahoma were more accustomed to hunting than farming as a means for survival. Some of the tribes grew corn, beans, squash, pumpkins and melons in small gardens tended mostly by the women. Some tribes had larger fields that belonged to the entire community. The men provided meat by hunting. In time, more of the tribes began to raise cattle as the bison herds grew smaller and more settlers moved in to occupy former hunting grounds.

Indian children were encouraged to run and play so they would grow strong and agile. Neither boys nor girls were allowed to carry burdens. The boys roamed through the woods, shooting bows and arrows at birds and small animals. They wrestled and participated in feats of skill. The games that Indian children played were designed to teach hunting skills and to foster courage and competitive attitudes.

Social Studies

1. Read and discuss background and vocabulary.
2. Provide copies of an Oklahoma road map and the “Indian Territory Map” included with this lesson.
—Students will locate their town on the Oklahoma road map.

Oklahoma Academic Standards

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Geography: 3,4. History Literacy: 3

KINDERGARTEN

Geography: 3,4. History Literacy: 4

GRADE 1

History Literacy: 4
Measurement: 2.1,4. Data & Probability: 1.1,2,3

GRADE 2

Geography: 3, 4. History Literacy: 4
Physical Science: 1-1,4
Data & Probability: 1.1.2,3,4

GRADE 3

Geography: 1BC, 2A. History Literacy: 3,5,11
Measurement: 2.2,3,4. Data & Probability: 1.1,2

GRADE 4

Physical Science: 3-2,4. Earth Science: 3-1
Measurement: 2.4,5. Data & Probability: 1.2,3

GRADE 5

Physical Science: 1-2. Life Science: 2-1
Measurement: 2.2,3,4. Data & Probability: 1.2

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Cont.)

Materials

- Oklahoma road map (available free by request from Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation, www.travelok.com)
- dried cow patties
- ball, 8" diameter
- counting sticks
- blindfold
- button
- thimble
- ball, 8' inch diameter
- 300 counting sticks
- muslin
- fabric scraps
- ingredients for butter (See instruction sheet.)

- Students will use rivers and other geographical clues to find which Indian tribe occupied the area where their school is currently located.
- Students will research the tribe and determine farming and/or hunting practices.

Science

1. Early settlers didn't find much wood to burn for firewood. When they did find wood, they had to use it to make shelter. One thing that was plentiful was animal dung—manure left by cows, horses and bison. The settlers found that cow manure dries into hard chips, which could be used in place of wood or coal for fuel. Gathering these chips was one of the jobs of settler children.
 - Acquire DRIED cow chips from a local farmer.
 - Ask students to predict what will happen if it is burned.
 - Burn cow manure on a lab surface, or take it outside to burn.
 - Let the manure burn completely down.
 - Wave the smoke in different directions so students can smell it.
 - Ask, "What does it smell like?" "Is there an odor?"
 - Students will examine the ashes with a hand lens.
 - Students will record their observations in a journal.
 - Students will write papers in which they discuss the following questions: "Would burning manure be a practical energy alternative? Why? Why not?"
2. Making butter was another task for pioneer children. Students will follow the directions for making butter included with this lesson and record observations of what happens before during and after the process.

Physical Education

1. Select one or more of the games included with this lesson for students to play.
2. Are any of the American Indian games similar to those played by pioneer children?
3. Discuss what lessons might be taught by playing any of the games—pioneer or American Indian.

Math

1. Play the game "Cheyenne Ball Game," listed under "American Indian Games" below.
 - Students will develop strategies for marking how far each student traveled during his/her turn, using various standard and nonstandard measuring tools (yard sticks, meter sticks, their feet, string, etc.)
 - Students will develop alternative strategies for keeping count of points (tally marks, etc.).
 - After one round of play students will graph scores after determining the most appropriate graph type.
 - Students will determine the relationship between the score and the distance each player moved during his/her turn.

—Students will use data in the graph above to formulate questions and design investigations related to the probability of the number of times each participant will successfully kick the ball in “Cheyenne Ball Game.”

Visual Art

1. Children in the early days of statehood often had to make their own toys. Students will make prairie dolls, as follows:
 - Measure and rip one 14- by 8-inch piece of muslin into a rectangle.
 - Measure and mark 16 1/2-inch increments along the length of the muslin
 - Rip 16 1/2-inch strips
 - Fold 15 of the strips in half, and use one strip to tie off a doll’s head. The tie also serves as arms.
 - Cut a 1/2-inch hole in the center of two 3- by 9-inch scraps of fabric.
 - Place the scraps over the head of the doll.
 - Tie the arms on top of both layers of the dress in the front.
 - Use your imagination to trim the dress, or make a heart cutout on the top layer
 - Tie on a 4- by 4-inch triangle of fabric as a bonnet.

Extra Reading

Anderson, William, *Laura Ingalls Wilder: A Biography*, Harper Collins, 1992.

Connor, Leslie, and Mary Azarian, *Miss Bridie Chose a Shovel*, Houghton Mifflin, 2005.

Greenwood, Barbara, and Heather Collins, *A Pioneer Sampler: The Daily Life of a Pioneer Family in 1840*, Ticknor Fields, 1999.

Vocabulary

agile—able to move quickly and easily

amuse—occupy with something pleasant

burden—something carried

community—a group of people with common interests especially when living together

duty—conduct due to parents and superiors

feat—a deed notable especially for courage

harvest—the gathering of a crop

mend—to put into good shape or working order again

pioneer—one of the first to settle in an area

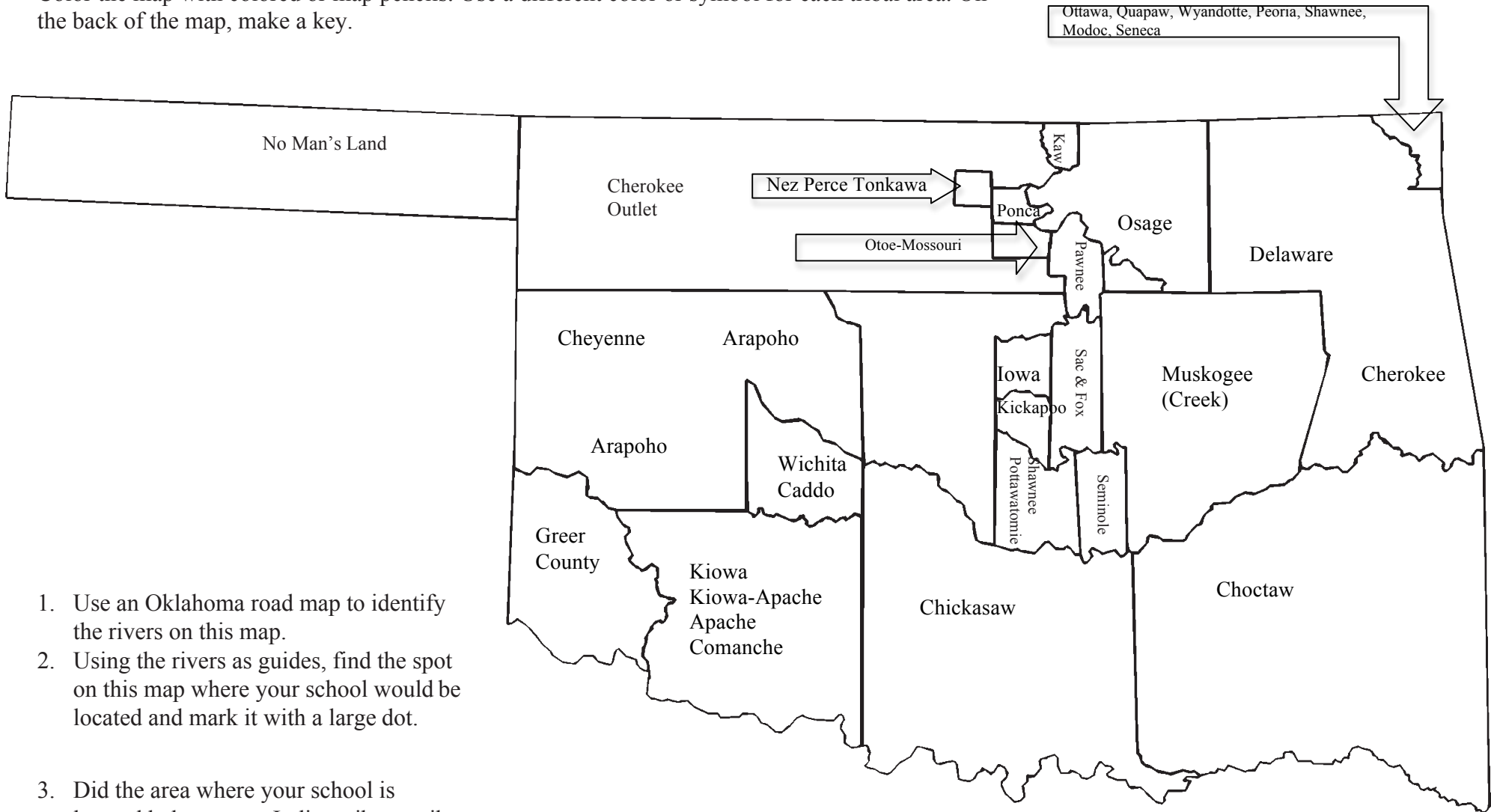
settler—a person who settles in a new region

survive—to remain alive; continue to exist

Name _____

Indian Lands, Indian Territory, 1889

Color the map with colored or map pencils. Use a different color or symbol for each tribal area. On the back of the map, make a key.



1. Use an Oklahoma road map to identify the rivers on this map.
2. Using the rivers as guides, find the spot on this map where your school would be located and mark it with a large dot.
3. Did the area where your school is located belong to an Indian tribe or tribes in 1889? ____ If so, which one(s)?

Name _____

Butter, Butter, Shake, Shake, Sha

Materials

- Pasteurized heavy whipping cream at room temperature (one pint for 18-20 students)
- Condiment cups with lids (Ask at fast food restaurants. Clear containers work best.),
- Container for pouring off buttermilk.
- Crackers or stick pretzels

1. Fill condiment container about 1/2 full of whipping cream and fasten lid securely.
2. Shake horizontally to prevent leakage.
3. Chant the following rhyme as you shake. Go around the group, replacing “Mary” with the name of a student in turn:

Butter, butter, shake, shake, shake
Mary’s waiting at the gate
Mary’s waiting for her cake
Butter, butter, shake, shake, shake.

4. Keep the lid on the container until the butter is ready and keep the container moving at all times.

The butter goes through three stages.

Liquid stage—In the beginning you should hear a sloshing sound.

Solid stage—When it stops sloshing it has become a solid. The particles of fat and milk solids are sticking together.

Solid and liquid—The solution separates and becomes solid and liquid. You should be able to hear a sloshing sound and the butter thumping against the side of the container.

5. Pour the liquid off the butter into a container. The liquid is actually buttermilk.
6. Eat your butter with crackers or stick pretzels.

Pioneer Games

Blind Man's Bluff

1. One person is blindfolded.
2. The other players call out to the "blind man" while trying not to be tagged.
3. When the blindfolded player tags another player, he must guess who the player is.
4. Then a different player is blindfolded.

Hunt the Shoe

1. Each player removes one shoe.
2. Players form a circle.
3. One player is selected to be in the middle.
4. The shoes are passed from player to player (behind their backs).
5. The player in the middle says, "stop" and tries to guess who has the match to the shoe he has on.

Leapfrog

1. Players stand in a line, bent over with their hands on their knees.
2. The person in the back of the line is the leaper.
3. The leaper leaps over the other players until he is in the front of the line.
4. Then the new leaper goes over the line.

Duck, Duck, Goose

1. Players sit in a circle facing inward with one player (the fox) standing outside the circle.
2. The fox walks around the circle, touching each player in turn and naming him/her "duck."
3. If at any point the fox names somebody "goose," that player has to catch the fox before the fox can reach the space the goose has just vacated.

Ducks Fly

1. Players face the leader.
2. The leader says "Ducks fly," and flap his/her arms.
3. The players also flap their arms.
4. The leader continues with other actions like "cows moo," "pigs oink," etc.
5. The leader also tries to trick participants by saying "sheep oink," or similar. When this happens the players must remain quiet until the leader says it correctly.

Button, Button

1. Children sit in a semi-circle with palms of hands together.
2. "It" holds a button between the palms of his/her hands and goes from one player to another passing his/her hands between those of the seated players and finally leaving the button in someone's hands.
3. "It" continues the play after leaving the button so the others will not know who has it.
4. "It" says, "Button, button who has the button?"
5. All the children guess, not waiting for turns.
6. The one who guesses correctly becomes "It."

Hunt the Thimble

1. "It" sends all the others from the room.
2. "It" places a thimble in an inconspicuous place in plain sight.
3. "It" calls the others into the room, and they begin to search for the thimble.
4. As each one sees the thimble he/she says, "I spy" and sits down.
5. If it is rather difficult to find, the one who hid it says "warm" when a searcher is near the thimble and "cold" when he goes away from it.
6. After all have found the thimble, the one who first saw it becomes "It."

Variation: Send only one child or half the children from the room while the others hide the thimble. Then the group who hid the thimble sings a song, and as a searcher gets nearer or further

American Indian Games

Run and Scream

1. Children start running and get a big breath of air.
2. As they cross a line on the ground, they start screaming.
3. Children continue to run and scream as long as they can.
4. Then they mark the place where they stop.
5. The one who runs the farthest while screaming is the winner.

Cheyenne Ball Game

Traditionally a ball was made of hide and stuffed with grass or animal hair. A ball of about 8" in diameter and about 300 counting sticks are needed for this game.

1. Players are divided into two teams.
2. The first player goes to the center.
3. The ball is balanced on the instep of one foot.
4. It is then kicked into the air, caught with the foot and kicked into the air again.
5. This continues until the player misses and the ball falls to the ground.
6. The number of times the ball is kicked before it is missed is counted. The player gets that number of counting sticks.
7. Then a player from the other team takes a turn.
8. The teams continue to take turns sending a player to the center until all of the counting sticks are gone.
9. Then the teams total their counting sticks. The team with the most counting sticks wins.

Little Sticks

1. A bundle of thin cedar sticks is dropped from the hand.
2. Players then take turns trying to remove one stick at a time from the tangled heap without moving any of the other sticks.
3. The player that removes the most sticks wins.

Comanche Game of Button

1. Divide the class into two equal groups aligned parallel to each other, approximately six feet apart.
2. Place 21 counters made of small sticks between the two groups.
3. Provide background music so players may move in time to the rhythm.
4. The player with the button makes various motions in time with the music to try to conceal which hand is holding the button.
5. The player thrusts out both hands in a closed position.
6. If the opponent guesses the correct hand, he/she takes a counter for the group. If no, the other group takes the counter.
7. The button is passed to a member of the group, which received the counter.
8. The game is played until one group has all the counters.

Reed Game

1. Divide the class into groups of three. Two of the group members are players. The third member is the scorekeeper.
2. Give each group a set of 51 straws, cut in half.
3. Direct each pair to stand about four feet apart, with one member of each pair holding the bundle of straws.
4. At a signal from the scorekeeper, the person holding the reeds gently tosses some of the reeds toward his/her partner's feet.
5. The partner immediately calls out the number of straws he/she thinks has landed at his/her feet. The partner holding the straws calls out an estimate of the number of straws remaining in his/her hands.
6. The player who estimates a number closest to the correct number wins a point for the round. If both guess correctly, each gets a point.
7. Play continues with the three team members