

Cultural Waters Program

Exhibit Area: *Grand Fish, Grand River; Anishinabek; Whales: Giants of the Deep*

Staffing: 1 educator, 1 volunteer

Grade Level: Upper Elementary-Middle School

Tour Length: 90 minutes

Key:

Supplies: Inflatable globe, touch-its, concept map activity sheets, clipboards, pencils

Goals of Program

Overview: The program compares the two native cultures of the Maori people of New Zealand and the Anishinabek people of Michigan by examining the prevalence of the whale in Maori culture and the Lake Sturgeon in Anishinabek culture as examples of how different cultures culminate symbols and significance. Students will use the *Grand Fish, Grand River* and *Anishinabek* exhibits to explore how native communities in Michigan define their cultures alongside the *Whales: Giants of the Deep* exhibit to develop an understanding of cultural perspective on a local and worldwide scale.

GOALS AND TAKE-HOME MESSAGES

Learners will:

- Expand understanding of culture and how culture is represented through several aspects of a community by using the concept map.
- Identify similarities and differences between the native culture's representation by examining the Anishinabek people of Michigan and the Maori tribe of New Zealand.
- Recognize how specific animals are given symbolic value different from various cultural perspectives by using the Lake Sturgeon in Anishinabek culture and the whale in Maori culture.

Synopsis

5 Minutes **Map of Michigan 3rd Floor**

Welcome and introduction to program. Bring attention to where native tribes live in Michigan. Move group to Anishinabek exhibit.

10 Minutes **Anishinabek exhibit 3rd Floor**

Educator will lead discussion on the definition of culture and the elements of a culture. Explain and model how to use concept map activity. Class will split; half with museum staff to *Grand Fish, Grand River*, half to stay in Anishinabek exhibit with teacher.



SPLIT GROUP: 30 Minutes total. Half to each exhibit then switch.

15 Minutes Anishinabek Longhouse 3rd Floor

Emphasize how broader motifs besides the Lake Sturgeon are represented in Anishinabek culture. Complete Anishinabek concept map and share findings from exhibit.

15 Minutes Grand Fish, Grand River Exhibit 3rd Floor

Highlight the Lake Sturgeon as a specific cultural symbol in Anishinabek culture. Complete Anishinabek and Lake Sturgeon concept map and share findings from exhibit.

WHOLE GROUP:

30 Minutes Whales: Giants of the Deep exhibit 3rd Floor

Students complete Whale concept map in partners to determine whale representation in Maori culture. Discuss as a class findings and overall impressions of Maori culture.

5 Minutes Anishinabek Longhouse: Conclusion/Recap

Reflect on similarities and differences between the two indigenous cultures. Discuss definition of culture and student's perspective of their own culture.

Program Setup

Equipment & Supplies

- Place *Tour In Progress* signs at the *Sturgeon* exhibit and the *Anishinabek* exhibit.
- Arrive early to collect touch-its for *Sturgeon* exhibit.
- Bring blank concept map activities for students and a concept map with answers for educators and yourself.

Set Up

- Map of Michigan: Inflatable globe
- Sturgeon exhibit: The drum, rattle, wood carving, pottery, basket, beadwork.
- Collect the touch-its, copies of concept map activity and bring to the Sturgeon exhibit.
- Long House: Turn off the TVs and turn up the lights. Collect clipboards with concept maps attached.

After the Tour

Return all materials to the touch-it closet being careful to place them in the correct bins. Let the volunteer coordinator know if the supply of concept map activity sheets is getting low.

Understanding the Tour Script

Questions the educator might ask students and a "script" that would be appropriate will be highlighted and in italic font.

Answers to questions will be marked with a bullet point.

Key words which are part of the tour vocabulary have been signified in **bold type** the first time it appears in the script.

Meet school group at the map of Michigan on the 3rd floor.

Establishing Context

Good morning, welcome etc. My name is Mr./Ms., and we are excited you are here with us at the museum today to learn all about two indigenous cultures and the animals which are an important part of their separate cultures. We will be learning about the Maori people of New Zealand who value whales very much. Secondly we will learn about the Anishinabek people of Michigan who value the Lake Sturgeon that swim just outside in the Grand River. First, show students on the globe where the Maori people are from in New Zealand. Show students where on the map the Anishinabek people are located throughout Michigan.

The Anishinabek people are a collected group of indigenous peoples who in Michigan belong to twelve federally recognized tribes. We will focus on three of those tribes: the Potawatomie, the Ottawa, and the Chippewa. The Potawatomie lived south of the Grand River Valley and were farmers. The Odawa, or Ottawa, lived in the center of West Michigan and were known for their trade relations with other Native groups. The Ottawa lived here in present-day Grand Rapids along the banks of and on an island in the Grand River. The island is no longer there. The river was essential for finding food, transportation and trading. Finally, the Ojibwa or Chippewa lived in Northern Michigan and up into Canada and were hunter/gatherers.

Proceed to *Anishinabek* exhibit. Instruct students to sit on the floor inside the longhouse. Introduce the exhibit and briefly explain the significance of the longhouse. Clarify how an actual longhouse would only have two entrances; one to the East to see the sunrise, and another to the West to see the sunset.

This exhibit displays a perspective of the Anishinabek people of Michigan which we can use to better understand their culture through. People can study and learn about how this indigenous culture has changed over time by examining these various artifacts and listening to their oral histories. Where you are sitting is a representation of the type of shelter the Anishinabek primarily used called a longhouse. Before we can learn from the Anishinabek and Maori cultures, we need to define what a culture even is. Staying in the longhouse, prompt students to look for artifacts in the exhibit which represent their idea of "culture". Have students share the artifacts they believe represent culture and their reasoning. An example answer could include: the silk shawl can represent culture, because it shows the type of clothing worn in the Anishinabek culture. Using student answers, define what a culture is, and who is part of a culture.

What is a culture?

- Possible student answers could include: a group of people with similar backgrounds live together; a way of life that is passed down from generations; traditions which many people have practiced in the past and in the present.

Who is part of a culture?

- A shared community of people who have similar living patterns, behaviors, and values make up a culture.

Culture is a broad perspective of how many people can have shared similarities and connections between the present and the past. And one person can be part of many cultures at once, depending upon their lifestyle. What are some of the cultures that you are part of?

Ask students to give examples of a culture or cultures they are part of and/or are aware of. Some examples could include: sport teams, extracurricular groups, the city/town they are from, ethnic or racial cultures. Once students have shared, use the group's school mascot as an example of how something becomes part of a culture.

The mascot from your school is good example of how cultures use symbols or ideas to represent an entire group of people. Everyone from your school has the same mascot which represents all the same values that your school upholds. Prompt students as to how something, such as their mascot, becomes representative of a culture.
How does a symbol or an idea become part of a culture?

- A symbol or idea becomes part of a culture by having value or significance which everyone in the culture can identify with. The value of a culturally significant item can be represented through the several elements of culture. The elements of a culture can include: art, trade, the names given to land regions, survival needs, and cultural histories.

Introduce the concept maps to emphasize the elements of culture. Explain and model how to use the concept map activity to the group. Model how students will find artifacts to use as examples of each element of culture then write that artifact onto the concept map in relation to the associated element. Use the Quilled Bark Canoe in the exhibit as an example.

Read aloud the artifact text card to provide context. Below is the text from the card as well:

This model canoe is made of birch bark, spruce root, and porcupine quills. The model canoe is believed to have been made by the son of Chief Petoskey, after whom the city of Petoskey, Michigan is named. The canoe was made as a gift for Daniel C. Lamberton, a Grand Rapids resident in return for his help during a Petoskey family illness. Built in 1880.

Explain further how porcupine quills are used for decoration in the canoe piece. Prompt the group how we could include the quilled bark canoe onto the concept map.

How does the quilled bark canoe represent Anishinabek culture?

- Art: The craftsmanship and creativity used to make the canoe shows distinct artistic technique which the Anishinabek people identify with and have passed down through generations. These details include the use of birch bark and spruce roots native to the area, and the porcupine quills used to decorate the canoe.

- Land Region: The proposed maker of the canoe had distinct ties to the Petoskey area. The maker's family name was used to name the town of Petoskey in fact, integrating Anishinabek culture into the places we visit today.

Instruct students to place the quilled bark canoe onto their concept map for Art or Land Region. Emphasize how some artifacts can have more than one cultural connection, which further emphasizes how important a certain symbol or item is to a culture.

Break the students into two groups: *Grand Fish, Grand River* exhibit and the *Anishinabek* exhibit.

For the *Anishinabek* group:

Students will explore the exhibit for artifacts which broadly show examples of Anishinabek culture. Have students partner up and complete the Anishinabek culture concept map. Students should aim to have at least two items connected to each element of culture.

The volunteer or school group teacher will be provided a key for the Anishinabek exhibit's concept map. If students are struggling to find examples to connect on their concept maps, the volunteer or school group teacher can prompt students with the following questions:

- How do the Anishinabek people represent **art** in their culture? What types of art are used?
- What **land regions** or places are significant to the Anishinabek?
- How is the Anishinabek **cultural history** seen or told within their culture?
- What items are important to **trade** in Anishinabek culture? How are certain items given value?
- In what ways do the Anishinabek meet their **survival needs**?
- What reoccurring symbols or ideas can be seen throughout the exhibit?

For the *Grand Fish, Grand River* group:

Students will learn how the Lake Sturgeon as a specific symbol is represented throughout Anishinabek culture. Students will complete the Anishinabek and Sturgeon concept map. Set a time with the teacher on when the two groups will switch.

1) The Anishinabek Culture and Lake Sturgeon Script

Lead group to *Grand Fish, Grand River* exhibit. Before entering the exhibit, instruct students to look at the artifacts in the exhibit for items which represent Anishinabek culture. Allow students 2 minutes to explore the exhibit, then have them sit on the floor facing the Anishinabek mural. Make sure all students are have the Anishinabek and Sturgeon concept map out.

Prompt students what artifacts they saw which represent Anishinabek culture, and the element of culture the artifact represents. Examples could include: the buckskin dress represents culture, because it shows what some Anishinabek people wore to survive; the drum and drumstick represent culture, because they represent how the Anishinabek enjoy music and art.

Make a list of the artifacts the students share, should be between 5-7 items. Once students have shared, prompt them whether there is a common idea throughout the artifacts.

What cultural connections do Lake Sturgeon have throughout these artifacts?

- There are cultural connections through the representation of Lake Sturgeon on many artifacts in this exhibit.

Most of the artifacts in this exhibit all represent Lake Sturgeon in some shape or form. Lake Sturgeon are valued highly in Anishinabek culture, similarly to how the Maori in New Zealand value whales. In the Anishinabek exhibit, there are many different ideas and symbols which are part of their culture. In this exhibit, we are going to focus on one symbol, the Lake Sturgeon, and how one symbol becomes part of a culture and how the Lake Sturgeon specifically are represented all throughout Anishinabek culture.

While remaining seated, prompt students to look around the exhibit and share information about Lake Sturgeon. *Let's first look at just the Lake Sturgeon by themselves. Based on what you can see in the exhibit, what can you tell me about the Lake Sturgeon?*

- Can grow to be 7'4"
- Live in the rivers and lakes of Michigan, specifically the Grand River and the Manistee River
- Can live to be 150 years old
- Have fossil ancestors dating back to the Early Jurassic period

Based on what information the students share, use the text below to further inform students on Lake Sturgeon.

The Lake Sturgeon are a native species of fish in Michigan, and are the largest indigenous fish in the Great Lakes system. Lake Sturgeon can be recognized by their bony plates called scutes along its sides and its whiskers and pointed snout. They can grow to be nearly seven feet long, and live long lives, upwards of 100 years. Before European settlement took place, the Lake Sturgeon were plentiful in the Great Lakes, and came to be an imperative part of Anishinabek life, both in the past and in the present.

The early Anishinabek lived off the land here in West Michigan. Their way of life included hunting, fishing, trading, and growing and gathering food. They used mostly native plants and animals and stones to make their tools, clothing, and to gather food. During the first half of the 1600s the Anishinabek were loosely organized and moved from place to place. Since Lake Sturgeon had a large impact on the lifestyles of the Anishinabek in Michigan, the Lake Sturgeon became a significant idea and symbol to their culture.

When we first came into this exhibit, we made a list of the artifacts you saw best expressed Anishinabek culture. Let's go back through that list and see out of those artifacts how Lake Sturgeon are symbolized throughout Anishinabek culture.

Go through the list of artifacts the students said represented Anishinabek culture, and connect them to the Lake Sturgeon concept map. For each artifact on the list, prompt students with two questions:

- Does this artifact represent Lake Sturgeon as part of the culture?
- What part of the Anishinabek culture does this artifact represent?

If an artifact from the list does not represent Lake Sturgeon, ask students whether the artifact belongs on this specific concept map. The artifact should not be included on the concept map as this map specifically organizes where Lake Sturgeon are represented in Anishinabek culture.

For example, the **drum and drumstick** belong on the concept map because a Lake Sturgeon is carved into the drum and the drumstick. They show how Lake Sturgeon are represented through art. However, the **cradleboard** would not be included on this concept map as it lacks a connection to Lake Sturgeon. The cradleboard is an example of the overall Anishinabek culture, rather than the specific representation of Lake Sturgeon within their culture.

Point out other parts of Lake Sturgeon cultural connections if not mentioned through the students' artifacts list. Specifically discuss Cultural History and Land Regions as these are not explicitly connected to artifacts using the questions and text below.

Cultural History:

Part of the reason the Anishinabek moved from place to place was to follow the animals they hunted so to survive. One of the primary animals they followed were the Lake Sturgeon. The Lake Sturgeon migrate throughout the year from the Great Lakes basin then move upstream to spawn at the beginning of summer. Since the movements of the Anishinabek people were greatly influenced by the Lake Sturgeon, it became part of the Anishinabek people's cultural history. Small sections of the Anishinabek people, or clans, came to identify as the Sturgeon clan. Seasonal ceremonies would be held to encourage the higher powers to provide a large bounty of Lake Sturgeon during their annual return to the Grand River. At these ceremonies, there would be song, prayer, and fasting.

What artifacts in this exhibit connect to this idea of Anishinabek cultural history? How can these artifacts be connected to Lake Sturgeon?

- Model of Anishinabek camp; The model can be connected to how Lake Sturgeon were used for survival, and also the Anishinabek need to live nearby the river.
- The life cycle wheel; Lake Sturgeon can be symbolized in the seasonal cycle and also Anishinabek seasonal ceremonies.

Land Regions:

The Anishinabek people tended to stay in the land regions near where the Lake Sturgeon migrated. To follow the lake Sturgeon, the Anishinabek had to stay close to the river so they could fish and maintain their lifestyle.

What land regions or places have the Lake Sturgeon made more significant to the Anishinabek?

- Grand River
- Manistee River

Art:

After completing the art portion of the concept map, introduce the touch-its. Below is the touch-it script.

This basket is an example of the craftsmanship used by the Anishinabek long ago and still practiced by the Anishinabek today. A basket like this could be used for collecting food and storage, but also provided an opportunity to show the creativity and skill of the basket weaver. While a basket like this could be used for day to day tasks, the Anishinabek integrate a part of their cultural heritage into every part of their lives. The Anishinabek used beadwork for decorative purposes which also represented passing on of tradition and values. Beadwork like this would not have been used with the same day to day purposes as the basket, but its representation of the indigenous culture was equally as strong. You will be able to see in the Whales exhibit how the Maori tribe created different kinds of art representing their cultural ties to whales.

In this exhibit, how are Lake Sturgeon represented to show their significance in Anishinabek culture? (All these items are found in the case in the far corner of the exhibit.)

- Wood carving
- Pottery
- Drum, rattle, and drumstick

Trade:

How are Lake Sturgeon useful for trading? What examples of Lake Sturgeon being used as a commodity to trade are in the exhibit?

- Sturgeon harvest
- Isinglass
- Caviar- Pickled or salted Lake Sturgeon eggs which are eaten.

Survival Needs:

How do Lake Sturgeon fulfill the survival needs in Anishinabek culture?

- Food

Once the Anishinabek and Lake Sturgeon concept map is completed, have students gather into groups of 3 or 4. In small groups, have students predict how whales will be represented in the Maori culture in the *Whales: Giants of the Deep* exhibit.

After seeing how Lake Sturgeon are represented in the Anishinabek culture, try and predict how the Maori people represent one important animal in their culture. Predict how whales in Maori culture are symbolized throughout Maori culture. Will whales be represented similarly or differently from Lake Sturgeon?

Give groups a few minutes to brainstorm ideas for each area to make predictions for each element of culture. Have groups share their predictions. Record student predictions to use at the end of the program.

Switch groups from *Grand Fish, Grand River* between *Anishinabek*. Have either the volunteer or school group teacher stay in the Anishinabek exhibit.

Once both small groups have explored both exhibits, all students will return back to the longhouse in the Anishinabek exhibit. Give brief instructions on the next activity, and as whole group visit the *Whales: Giants of the Deep* exhibit.

Now that we have explored both the Anishinabek and Grand Fish, Grand River exhibits, we have seen the many ideas and symbols Anishinabek culture broadly consists of, and also how one symbol like the Lake Sturgeon is repeated throughout their culture. The concept maps have helped us help break down what a culture is built with, and the ideas and values that can hold it together.

Before we go see the Whales exhibit, let's look back at what information we've found. What have you gained from your concept maps so far? What perspective have you gained about the Anishinabek with these maps? What do you expect to gain from the Maori map?

- Allow a few students to share what they've learned with their maps so far, and what they expect to learn in the Whales exhibit.

Using what we have learned about the Anishinabek culture in Michigan, we are now going to learn about the Maori culture and its connections to whales. Throughout the exhibit, we are going to use our Whales concept map to examine how whales as a singular symbol are represented within Maori culture.

2) *Whales: Giants of the Deep* and Maori Culture

Lead whole school group to the *Whales: Giants of the Deep* exhibit. Before entering, instruct students to turn to the Whales concept map on their clipboard. Instruct students they will be using what they learned about the Anishinabek in relation to the Lake Sturgeon and apply their skills to the *Whales* exhibit in understanding Maori culture in relation to whales. Have students connect at least two artifacts to each cultural element bubble.

After instructions, allow students time to go through the exhibit and complete their concept map. Once students complete the concept map, have them begin considering the similarities and differences between the Anishinabek and Maori cultures on the Venn Diagram on the back.

In the exhibit, try to find at least two artifacts representing each cultural element. There are many artifacts throughout the exhibit which show the connection between Maori culture and whales. Once you have finished the concept map, feel free to explore the rest of the exhibit or else you can begin considering the similarities and differences between the two cultures we have looked at. To determine the similarities and differences, use the Venn Diagram in your packet. If you need help or have question, you are more than welcome to ask myself and the teacher(or volunteer) about the exhibit or the concept map.

Recap/Conclusion

To conclude the program, gather the group and leave the *Whales* exhibit, returning to the longhouse in the *Anishinabek* exhibit. Have students sit on the floor inside the longhouse. Students should have their Venn Diagram sheet out on their clipboard at this time.

First, discuss a few of the predictions made by the students before seeing the *Whales* exhibit. Discuss whether the predictions they made beforehand were correct or not. Follow with discussion on whether there were any similarities or differences between the way Maori people represented whales in their culture compared to the Anishinabek. Students should refer to their Venn diagrams for similarities and differences.

Were your predictions about Whales: Giants of the Deep correct?

- There will be various answers. Ensure students explain why their original prediction was correct or incorrect.

How are whales represented in Maori culture similarly or differently compared to the Lake Sturgeon in Anishinabek culture?

- Similarities:
 - Both sturgeon and whales were used as food for survival
 - Sturgeon and whales are both used to give significance to land regions
 - Both animals are important to each culture's history: the legend of the whale riders, sturgeon as part of seasonal ceremonies.
- Differences
 - Maori use whale bone for tools and various artworks; sturgeon are used primarily for food, but also in goods such as isinglass.
 - Types of art: Maori created the storehouse bargeboards, whale-bone pendant; Anishinabek created sturgeon drum and rattle.
 - Maori trading needs met through commercial whaling. Sturgeon were not traded commercially.

As students share their observations between Maori and Anishinabek culture, instruct students to write any similarities or differences they have not written down already on their Venn Diagrams. Once Venn Diagram is completed, direct discussion about how these similarities and differences relate to greater cultural perspectives.

Looking at both your concept maps and the Venn Diagrams, there are many differences, but there are also some similar ideas between the Anishinabek and the Maori people. Pairing two cultures next to each other can help us better understand how a culture chooses to define itself and how people outside of a culture can authentically perceive them.

I want you to look at both your Anishinabek concept map and your Maori concept map. Both these maps show you some of the defining elements of their given cultures. Now imagine if we tried exchanging symbols from these two cultures. What if we introduced the Lake Sturgeon to the Maori and introduced whales to the Anishinabek as new symbolic animals to add to their culture.

What perceptions would these cultures have of the symbolic nature of either animal? Would these cultures perceive either animal as equally important to the animals already part of their culture? Has your idea of culture become bigger or smaller?

- Have students explain the result of this cultural exchange, and whether either culture would or would not perceive each animal as significant.
- Students should recognize the animals will lose their cultural significance outside the context of their cultural environment.

Why would both the Lake Sturgeon and whales lose their cultural significance in the context of different cultures?

- The cultural connections between the native group at the symbolic animal would not be as strong.
- The Anishinabek would not perceive the same kind of significance in their culture for whales as they do for the Lake Sturgeon, and vice versa.

Culture changes the way we see the world around us, and even the animals and places around us. The way we perceive the world and understand it is through a cultural perspective. What the whales in Maori culture and the Lake Sturgeon in Anishinabek culture prove is how important and all-encompassing these kinds of symbols can be within the perspective of that culture. Outside of the Maori or Anishinabek cultures, these animals might not have the same kind of significance.

After examining both Anishinabek culture and Maori culture in great detail, let's step back and reconsider our idea of culture overall. Based on what you learned about the Anishinabek and Maori cultures, what will your perspective of their cultures entail? How will you add your understanding of these cultures to your own definition of culture?

Students will share their definitions of culture, and why they have changed or remained the same. There should be a variety of definitions, but similar themes should be present in each student's own definition.

Even now there are differences in how we all define culture. It's a difficult thing to have an exact concept of, but after our investigation of Anishinabek culture and Maori culture you will be able to seek out how a culture is formed and the ideas which hold many people together.

Thank them for coming, and encourage them to return. Return the touch-it materials to the closet, taking the time to put them in the correct bins. If the concept map activity sheets are in short supply, please let the volunteer coordinator know.

Thanks!