

Connecting the Past and the Present: Celebrating North Carolina's American Indian Heritage

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for the 2021-2022 World View Global Fellows Program

Overview of Unit or Module: To gain an understanding of American Indian and Ancient North Carolinians prior to the great changes wrought by the arrival of European settlers, students will begin by studying archaeological work done in the state since the 1980s, especially centering on the virtual exhibit at the North Carolina Museum of History entitled [North Carolina's Earliest Peoples and European Contact](#) and the University of North Carolina's Research Laboratories of Archaeology virtual museum, [Ancient North Carolinians: A Virtual Museum of North Carolina Archaeology](#). From information gathered through these online resources, students will make connections between artifacts and how they might have been used to create a framework for understanding daily life for American Indians. The second part of the project will focus student attention on several key areas of American Indian life in North Carolina, to include foodways, health, dance, spirituality, games, and other topics related to day-to-day existence. Students will work in research groups, using their findings to: create working three-dimensional models, host cooking demonstrations, teach a traditional game, showcase interviews with tribal representatives, or other creative projects that provide hands-on, practical illustrations of a key aspect of their chosen research concentration. Students will showcase their interactive projects in an open house to allow the larger school community to join in the atmosphere of learning.

About the Project: American Indians lived in the area we now call North Carolina for at least 15,000 years. Archaeologists study the remnants of their communities to learn who these people were and how they lived and prospered for thousands of years. The lesson presented below was developed as part of the 2021-2022 UNC World View Fellows Program, [Exploring Indigenous Cultures: Ancient North Carolinians, Past and Present](#). It is one in a series of lessons that the Fellows created for K-12 schools and community colleges to help students learn about the ancient peoples that lived here and those who represent today's vibrant American Indian populations. Lessons connect past to present day by exploring multiple resources within the [Ancient North Carolinians: A Virtual Museum of North Carolina Archaeology website](#) to examine how communities changed over time and what influenced these changes. Understanding past Indigenous lifeways—their complexity, resiliency, and vitality—allows for a greater appreciation of the contributions American Indians made to the past and continue to make to the present and future of North Carolina.

Note to K12 educators:

This unit is intended to be adaptable to your grade level, time constraints, and requirements. A shortened version might involve simply researching a few aspects of American Indian life in North Carolina prior to European contact and writing a reaction paper to how the online resources addressed one or more of those topics. Or it might involve both research and a practical demonstration or model. Depending on time and funding, a field trip to a pow wow, Town Creek Indian Mound State Historic Site, The Museum of the Cherokee Indian, Oconaluftee Indian Village, Unto These Hills Outdoor Drama, or to the North Carolina Museum of History could be a productive extension opportunity.

Course: North Carolina History, Native American History, Multicultural Education, History of the South, American Women’s Studies, American History I (1400s-1877)

Length of Lessons:

- Unit 1: It’s More Than Indiana Jones: How Digging Up the Past Really Works
 - Lesson 1 – 60 minutes: Learning the Basics of Archaeology
 - Lesson 2 – 60 minutes: Hands-on Learning – Archaeological Thinking
 - Lesson 3 – 60 minutes: Archaeological Digs in North Carolina & Ancient North Carolinians

- Unit 2: You’ve Gotta Try This! Celebrating American Indian Life and Culture
 - Lesson 4 – 60 minutes: Hands-on Learning – Decoding Artifacts
 - Lesson 5 – 60 minutes: Exploration
 - Lesson 6 – 60 minutes: Group Work Brainstorm Session for Open House

- Final Reflection: 60 – 180 minutes
 - Open House

Learning Objectives and Student Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to identify the names of the eight state-recognized contemporary American Indian tribes in North Carolina, and describe their locations in both modern and ancient times.
2. Students will be able to identify archaeological artifacts, describe their function, and interpret possible associations between artifacts.
3. Students will be able to determine the use of objects recovered from American Indian archaeological sites throughout North Carolina and speculate on the lived experiences of the American Indian people that used or created those items.
4. Students will be able to identify key terms in archaeology and describe the relationship between archaeology and history.
5. Students will be able to identify how archaeologists use typology to interpret artifacts.
6. Students will be able to analyze objects, interpret their use, and record findings in an archaeological report.
7. Students will be able to use findings to develop historical questions that could be used in research.
8. Students will be able to investigate aspects of American Indian culture in North Carolina to include: foodways, recreation, gender roles, clothing, housing, and health.
9. Students will demonstrate, in groups, elements of American Indian culture in an open house setting, explaining aspects of origins and evolution over time.
10. Students will be able to summarize the relationships between North Carolina’s American Indians and non-American Indian populations over time.

Activities or Tasks:

Unit 1: It's More Than Indiana Jones: How Digging Up the Past Really Works

Lesson 1 (60 minutes): Learning the Basics of Archaeology

1. As a fun pop-culture introduction, guide students through Hollywood's representations of archaeologists (Indiana Jones films, Tomb Raider, The Mummy, etc.) over the years and examine the question: why are we so fascinated by archaeology?
2. Draw out basic terms of archaeology in glossaries like [Jargon Commonly Used by Archaeologists](#) and the State of California's Native American Heritage Commission's [Archaeological Terms Glossary](#). Here's a PDF on [basic Archaeology Tools](#), published by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology and a page from [Women in Archaeology's Guide for How Tools Are Used](#).
3. To see examples of those terms and tools in action, view the following resources in class – [Ancient North Carolinians Video Collection](#) and UNC's Research Laboratories of Archaeology site, [RLA Archaeology](#) 3-D Archaeology for North Carolina examples and [Crow Canyon Archaeological Center's Castle Rock Pueblo: A Trip Through Time](#) for a non-North Carolina example.
4. Optional extension: working in groups, students can explore and experience an online dig created by UNC's Research Laboratories of Archaeology called [Excavating Occaneechi Town: Archaeology of an Eighteenth-Century Indian Village in North Carolina](#).
5. Optional extension: working in groups, students can present to the class a summary / slideshow of the four groups of first peoples that made up Ancient North Carolinians.

Assessment: [Take-Away Reflection Questions](#)

Lesson 2 (60 minutes): Hands-On Learning – Archaeological Thinking *

Important note: this portion for the lesson plan was taken from the Smithsonian Institution's Education site [Decoding the Past: The Work of Archaeologists](#) and is one lesson within this plan. The Archaeological Thinking worksheet is page 7. There are other potentially helpful lesson plans on archaeology in that 15-page PDF.

1. Using the Smithsonian Institution's Education unit [Decoding the Past: The Work of Archaeologists](#) in *Art to Zoo* have students follow steps 1-5 as outlined on page 6.
2. Students will need a copy of the [Archaeological Thinking worksheet \(page 7\)](#).

Assessment: [Archaeological Thinking worksheet \(page 7\)](#)

Lesson 3 (60 minutes): Archaeological Digs in North Carolina & Ancient North Carolinians

1. Students will explore the virtual exhibits on the [Ancient North Carolinians website](#), choosing 2-3 artifacts in which they are interested. To investigate the use of those objects, the student will complete a [Virtual Artifact Observation Worksheet](#).

- Optional: Choose one or two sites of past archaeological digs listed on the [Ancient North Carolinians site](#), doing some background research at the sites to provide digital interest and examples of what has been found and historians have learned. Note: choosing a site that is nearer your location might increase the possibility of students' familiarity with it. An additional possibility: [Excavating Occaneechi Town](#).

Assessment: [Virtual Artifact Observation Worksheet](#)

Unit 2: You've Gotta Try This! Celebrating American Indian Life and Culture

Lesson 4 (60 minutes): Hands-on Learning - Decoding Artifacts*

Important note: this portion for the lesson plan was taken from the Smithsonian Institution's Education site [Decoding the Past: The Work of Archaeologists](#) and is one lesson within this plan. The Decoding Artifacts Take Home-Page are pages 11-12. There are other potentially helpful lesson plans on archaeology in that 15-page PDF.

- Using the Smithsonian Institution's Education unit [Decoding the Past: The Work of Archaeologists](#) in *Art to Zoo* have students follow steps 1-4 as outlined on page 10.
- Students will each need a copy of the [Decoding Artifacts Take-Home page \(pages 11-12\)](#).

Assessment: [Decoding Artifacts Take-Home Page \(pages 11-12\)](#)

Lesson 5 (60 minutes): Exploration

In an overview presentation that might include a slideshow, guest speaker(s), and videos, help students bridge ancient artifacts and culture with contemporary elements of American Indian cultures in North Carolina. The following are recommended resources:

- **General Information and Overviews**
 - [Ancient North Carolinians](#)
 - [Excavating Occaneechi Town: An Online Dig](#)
 - [UNC's American Indian Center](#)
 - [North Carolina's First Colonists: 12,000 Years Before Roanoke](#)
 - [The Prehistory of NC: A Basic Cultural Sequence](#)
 - [Museum of the American Indian's Native Knowledge 360](#)
 - [NCPedia: Early Native American Settlement](#)
 - [NC Tribes and Urban Indian Organizations \(printer friendly\)](#)
 - [North Carolina American Indian History Timeline](#) – NC Museum of History
 - [North Carolina Tribal Information](#) – NC Museum of History
 - [2010 Census Data for American Indians in NC, by County](#)
 - [NC DOA Tribal Communities](#), with [an associated map](#)
 - [NC Indian Heritage by Region](#)
 - [About NC Native Communities](#) - UNC

- [American Indian Urban Organizations](#)
- [Q&A With the Smithsonian’s First Curator from the Lumbee Tribe](#)
- [Introduction to the Lumbee](#)
- [Lumbee Voices: North Carolina's Lumbee Indians in Literature, Art, and Music](#)
- [A History of Native Americans in North Carolina](#) – Charlotte Mecklenburg Library
- [American Indians in North Carolina](#) (video) – NC Museum of History
- [The Story of North Carolina – American Indians in Our State](#) (video)– NC Museum of History
- [North Carolina Indians Fact Sheet](#) – NC.gov
- [American Indians of NC](#) - Brunswick Town and Fort Anderson History, NC Historic Sites
- [American Indian Records in the National Archives](#) – search by person, family, tribe, geographic area, time period, and past treaties or laws
- [Trail of Tears, NC Map and Guide](#) – National Park Service brochure
- [North Carolina Trail of Tears Association](#)

Lesson 6 (60 minutes): Group Work Brainstorm Session for Open House

Divide students into small groups. As a small group, students should determine and topic of focus and:

1. What they are interested in showcasing about their topic, making connections to North Carolina’s American Indians’ histories (ancient, where possible, and contemporary).
2. How they can create an interactive project that teaches others about this topic and its historical and contemporary connections.

Students will explore the following recommended resources, according to their chosen topic:

- **Food:**
 - [Celebrating the Cherokee Community with Food](#);
 - [Indian Food and Cooking in Eastern NC](#)
 - [American Indian Food](#) – NCPedia
 - [A Taste of Cherokee Cooking](#)
 - [Cherokee Tribal Food Distribution Program – Recipes](#) (modern day)
 - [Honoring Native Foodways](#) - UNC-Pembroke
 - [Lumbee Indians of NC – Work and Cook and Eat](#)
 - [Lumbee Living](#) - Our State article
 - [Lumbee Tribe Recipes](#)
 - [Lumbee Family Continues Food Preservation Tradition](#)
 - [Get a Taste of NC’s Indigenous Cuisine With These 5 Dishes](#)
 - [Overview of NC Native American Food](#)
 - [NC Native Ethnobotany Project](#) – Featured Recipes
 - [The Importance of One Simple Plant](#) – NC History

- **Health & Healing:**
 - [23 Medicinal Plants Native Americans Used Daily](#)
 - [Indigenous Herbs – Webinar](#) from Orange County Historical Museum
 - [Healing Ways](#) - National Library of Medicine Native American Voices Exhibit
 - [Native American Ethnobotany](#) (Wikipedia page, good starting point)
 - [Notable Native Herbs](#) – NC Herb Society
 - [North Carolina Herbs](#) – NCPedia
 - [NC Native Ethnobotany Project](#)
 - [Medicinal Plants and Herbs](#) - NC Cooperative Extension
 - [Guide to the Medicinal Plants of Appalachia](#) – US Department of Agriculture
 - [The Phytochemistry of Cherokee Aromatic Medicinal Plants](#) – National Institute of Health
 - [Cherokee Indian Hygiene and Medicine](#)

- **Dance:**
 - [Pow Wow Visitor’s Guide](#)
 - [Pow Wow Drum and Singing](#) and [Dance Styles](#)
 - [Watch Pow Wow Videos](#), Browse [photos](#)
 - [Cherokee Indian Traditional Ring Dance](#) (video) – Visit Cherokee
 - [About Cherokee Dance](#) (video) – PBS NC
 - [Cherokee Eagle Dance](#) (video) – PBS NC
 - [Cherokee Beaver Dance](#) (video) – PBS NC
 - [Social Dances](#) (video) – PBS NC
 - [Cherokee Singer](#) (video) – PBS NC

- **Games**
 - [Stickball: How the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Play the Game Known as The Little Brother of War](#) – Visit Cherokee
 - [Cherokee Nation Stickball](#) (video) – Visit Cherokee
 - [Traditional Native Games](#) (video) – Visit Cherokee
 - [Formal Games in the Cherokee Ritual Cycle](#)
 - [Native American Games](#)
 - [Native American Games and Sports](#) – World Atlas
 - [Native American Games](#) – University of Iowa Department of Archaeology

- **Spirituality & Folklore**
 - [Native American Religions](#) – Dialogue Institute
 - [Maintaining Balance: The Religious World of the Cherokees](#)
 - [Cherokee Core Values](#) – Cherokee Preservation Foundation
 - [Sounds of Faith](#) – The Lumbee Indians
 - [Indian Religion](#) – Fort Raleigh National Historic Site
 - [Native American Religion in Early America](#) – National Humanities Center

- [Rivers Held a Spiritual Place in the Lives of the Cherokee](#) – National Endowment for the Humanities
- [Native American Religious Beliefs and Practices](#) – National Humanities Center

- **Other Topics (Language, Housing, Economy, Gender Roles, etc.)**
 - [About the Cherokee Nation](#) - sound clips in Cherokee, with translations
 - [Cherokee Economy](#)
 - [Cherokee Women \(by Theda Purdue\)](#)
 - [What Does it Mean to Be a Cherokee Beloved Woman or Man?](#)
 - [Women’s Rights in Cherokee Society](#)
 - [Women’s Roles in Pre-Colonial and Colonial North Carolina](#) – NCPedia
 - [The Role of Native American Women in Agriculture](#) - NC State blog article
 - [American Indian Women](#) - TeachingHistory.org article
 - [Indian Dress and Ornaments in Eastern North Carolina](#) (National Park Service)
 - [Contemporary North Carolina American Indian Powwow Dress: An Exploration of Tradition, Culture, and Identity.](#)
 - [Blades in VA and NC: From Stones to Steel](#) – Edenton Historical Society
 - [Oconaluftee Indian Village](#)
 - [Unto These Hills](#) Outdoor Drama
 - [Lumbee History](#)
 - [American Indian Discovery Tour](#) – Includes recipes, crafts, activities - NC Museum of History

Assessment: [Group Brainstorming Worksheet](#)

Final Reflection / Group Project - Open House

For their final project, students will host an open house where each group will demonstrate an interactive component of what they researched (cooking, housing, games, spirituality / folklore, dance). Ideas for what to include: a display board with related history of this topic, images, art, objects, books, historical dress, etc. This open house could be conducted in a gym, library, or large open space that allows for movement, cooking, and other activity related to the group projects.

Assessment: The following are suggested resources for individual and group assessment.

[Interactive Project Group Evaluation](#) (by instructor)

[Individual Student Contribution](#) (by instructor)

[Interactive Project Peer Evaluations Rubric](#)

[Interactive Project Student Group Work Self-Reflection and Evaluation](#)

Student Worksheets, Strategies for Student Assessment and Assessment Resources:

Unit 1:

- Lesson 1 – [Take-Away Reflection Questions](#)
- Lesson 2 – [Archaeological Thinking Worksheet](#) (page 7)
- Lesson 3 – [Virtual Artifact Observation worksheet](#)

Unit 2:

- Lesson 4 – [Decoding Artifacts Take-Home Page](#) (pages 11-12)
- Lesson 5 – Quiz or reaction paper, according to specific areas of focus in overview presentation
- Lesson 6 – [Group Work Brainstorming worksheet](#)

Final Group Project / Open House:

The following are suggested resources for individual and group assessment.

- [Interactive Project Group Evaluation](#) (by instructor)
- [Individual Student Contribution](#) (by instructor)
- [Interactive Project Peer Evaluations Rubric](#)
- [Interactive Project Student Group Work Self-Reflection and Evaluation](#)

Bibliography:

Smigielski, Alan. (Nov/Dec 1995). Decoding the Past: The Work of Archaeologists. *Art to Zoo*.

Smithsonian Institution, pp 1-15. Retrieved from:

http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/images/educators/lesson_plan/decoding_the_past/decodingthepast.pdf

This lesson plan was created by Ethan Brooks-Livingston of Catawba Valley Community College as part of the 2021-2022 UNC World View Global Fellows Program. For more information about the program, please visit <http://worldview.unc.edu/>.