



Manoomin (Wild Rice) Salad

Mini-Lesson Ideas: English and Social Studies

1. Watch the Great Lakes Native Culture & Language video *Manoomin*:
<http://theways.org/story/manoomin>
 - a. Do you agree with the saying that “to live here and understand the world, you gotta love it”? What do you think the speaker means when he says it? In what ways do you see Fred loving the world?
 - b. How is tobacco used in the video? What do you think the speaker, Fred Ackley Jr., is doing with his pipe? How does it differ from ways you’ve seen people use tobacco in your life?
 - c. What relationship do the ‘tapper’ and the ‘poler’ share? What relationship do humans have with the wild rice?
 - d. What teachings/lessons can we learn from Fred’s ceremony around collecting manoomin?
 - e. How is manoomin “the Creator’s food”?
 - f. Why is it important for Native people to keep on with their traditions?
2. Older students can read the interview excerpt below the video. In this section, Fred shares wisdom about humans’ interaction with Mother Earth. What lessons does Fred provide on how to live in a good way? How do we see Native peoples exhibiting these values today? What are ways students can live authentically through these values in their lives?
3. Write a letter to Fred Ackley Jr. telling him what you think about the video. Mail it to Mole Lake, known as the Sakaogon Chippewa Community. When Fred isn’t collecting and processing manoomin, he works as Chief Judge at the Sakaogon Tribal Court. Send letters to him at:

Fred Ackley Jr.
c/o Sokaogon Tribal Court
3051 Sand Lake Road
Crandon, WI 54520

4. The manoomin in your salad has had quite a journey to get to you! Using the attached worksheets, put the steps of wild rice harvesting into the correct order.

Here are links to hearing the pronunciation of the words:

- a) Biindaakoojige: <http://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/main-entry/biindaakoojige-vai>
- b) Gaandakii'ige: <http://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/main-entry/gaandakii-ige-vai>
- c) Bawa'am: <http://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/main-entry/bawa-am-vai2>
- d) Gaapizige: <http://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/main-entry/gaapizige-vai>
- e) Bawishkam: <http://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/main-entry/bawishkam-vai2>
- f) Nooshkaachige: <http://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/main-entry/nooshkaachige-vai>
- g) Wiikonge: <http://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/main-entry/wiikonge-vai>

- 5) Identify the reservations in Minnesota. You can learn about them here:

<https://mn.gov/indianaffairs/tribes.html>

Answers:

1. *Manoomin* video:

- a. Fred says that people love all kinds of things, but he has always loved the lake and the rice. He prays with his pipe and offers tobacco before getting on the water. Fred is sure to make a sacred connection to the Earth before gathering rice.
- b. We can see Fred loading his pipe with tobacco and then honoring all of the directions as he smokes the pipe. As well, Fred offers tobacco to the water spirits by putting some in the water. In Ojibwe/Anishinaabe culture (as well as in many other Native American tribes) tobacco acts like a gateway to the Creator. The smoke takes our prayers and good wishes to the Creator. It is a way to transmit our good intentions and offer respect before taking something that is given to us. Fred not only puts tobacco into the water to honor the water spirits, but to acknowledge the gift it provides by caring for the rice. Traditional tobacco use doesn't include smoking for pleasure; tobacco was used for ceremony, giving thanks, and solidifying political dealings.
- c. The poler is steering the canoe; they are constantly looking for ripe rice and navigating the boat to the best rice. As you can see from the video, the tapper has their back to the front of the canoe. There is a shared respect between the two and a trust that they will work together to be safe and have a successful harvest. The poler is responsible for moving the canoe at a rate that is equal to the speed that the tapper is collecting the rice so participants must work as a team. There is a shared responsibility to not cause damage as they collect their harvest. The Ojibwe/Anishinaabe migrated from the eastern side of Turtle Island (North America) because a prophecy foretold of "food that grows on the water." Manoomin has sustained Anishinaabe people for hundreds of years. While tapping the rice, Fred honors and prays for it, and the rice gives itself up so that the people can continue to thrive.
- d. Respect Mother Earth – offer tobacco, take only what you need. Be grateful – acknowledge that the harvest will feed your family. Be humble - recognize that manoomin is giving itself up so that you can survive. Be patient – it takes time to do a good job. Be a good relative – collaborate with others, share, and be part of a community.
- e. According to Fred, the Creator gave us manoomin to help us survive for the time we spend here with them. Mother Earth gives it to us to use and that's why it is known as the food that grows on the water.

- f. Fred was told that if Anishinaabe people stop these traditions, they'll go away. So he feels responsible to do his part to keep the world alive.
2. *What lessons does Fred provide on how to live in a good way?*
- a. **Learning through apprenticeship:** Fred learned how to rice from his Uncle Ray. There is a community of learning in traditional Anishinaabe communities (and in many Native American tribal groups). Fred highlights how he learned through example and practice.
 - b. **Relatedness:** Fred was taught about the significance of ricing through stories, traditional protocol (the “why” and “how” things are done in Anishinaabe culture), and relationships to people and parts of nature.
 - c. **Humility:** Fred was taught that he is related to everything in the world. By believing that everything out there is part of you, one learns to go easy on it.
 - d. **Use everything you take:** you are not simply collecting food, you are collecting the spirit of the plant. Take only what you need.
 - e. **Respect:** good things happen when you show respect. When you harvest it and put down tobacco and show humility, the spirits gift you with a good harvest. By showing our respect, we honor our plant relatives and the Great Spirit.
 - f. **You are part of the Earth (relatedness):** you are never apart from Mother Earth. No matter how we choose to live our lives, when we die, our body goes back into the earth.
 - g. **Be generous:** if you harvest more than you need, you are supposed to give it to others. Share throughout the year.
 - h. **Your words have power:** every word you say is a blessing. Choose to use your words carefully.
 - i. **Be gentle:** do not use force to coerce others.
 - j. **Give thanks:** always thank the spirits for what they have given you. It is through this relationship that we continue to thrive.
 - k. **Respect your elders:** our old people are the best teachers. Learn from them while you have the chance.

How do we see Native peoples exhibiting these values today? Native Americans often make the news when they fight for environmental protection. Currently we can see this happening in North Dakota as indigenous peoples from around the globe (and their allies) have been standing strong in their protection of the Missouri River and the Dakota Access Pipeline project. How does knowing the above values/lessons to live by help inform you about why the protectors are taking a stand?

What are ways students can live authentically through these values in their lives?
Answers will vary.