

CHICKASAW CURRICULUM

ELEMENTARY

TRIBAL SOVERIGNTY

Chickasaw

Student Curricula



Tribal Sovereignty

TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY

Elementary Lesson Plan

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- What does it mean for a nation to exercise its sovereignty?
- How do nations demonstrate their sovereignty?
- How might sovereign nations work together?

LEARNING GOALS/OBJECTIVES:

- To define the terms sovereignty and sovereign
- To explain that tribal nations in Oklahoma, one of which is the Chickasaw Nation, have the right of sovereignty expressed through self-government
- To illustrate the art of compromise

BACKGROUND:

The Chickasaw Nation has been sovereign since time immemorial (*or extending or existing since beyond the reach of memory or record*). Sovereignty is the ability of a group (or nation) to make decisions for themselves. It refers to the legal right of a group of people to govern themselves free from interference of other governments. A sovereign nation establishes its own government, creates agreements with other nations and protects its lands, resources and citizens. For thousands of years, the Chickasaw Nation has exercised its sovereignty, and it continues to exercise its sovereignty today.

The Chickasaw Nation's original Homeland was in northern Mississippi and parts of Alabama, Kentucky and Tennessee. The Chickasaws had encounters with the Spanish, British, French and Americans. The Chickasaws' first encounter with Europeans was in December 1540. The Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto and his army of men came to Chickasaw lands and stayed for the winter. The Spanish were disrespectful, mean and not understanding of the Chickasaw culture. Because of this, the Chickasaws decided the Spanish must leave. During the spring of 1541, the Chickasaws launched a surprise attack against De Soto and his men, which resulted in the Spanish leaving Chickasaw lands.

Approximately 150 years after the Chickasaws' first encounter with the Spanish, the tribe began entering into European trade networks (*or a route for exchanging items*) for trade goods, weapons, ammunition and to make sure that European intruders did not come into their lands without permission.

The Chickasaw people were forcibly removed from their Homeland in present-day Mississippi, beginning in 1837, to Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma). There, they established a new government as they adapted to radical cultural changes. [Note: *From 1837 to 1855, the Chickasaw people resided within the Chickasaw District within the Choctaw Nation, governed by the Choctaw Constitution and laws*]. The new Chickasaw Nation government had three departments: executive, led by an elected Governor; legislative, which had a legislature

made up of a Senate and House of Representatives that made laws; and the judicial, which enforced the law.

In 1983, the Chickasaw people reformed their constitution, which retained a three-department form of government and secured political participation and other rights to every Chickasaw citizen. The Chickasaw Nation today provides services and programs to its citizens, both within its boundaries and throughout the United States.

MATERIALS/RESOURCES:

Welcome Sign
North America Map
Assessment
Sorting Activity
Treaty of Hopewell Map
Treaty Template
<https://www.unitedforoklahoma.com/videos/>
Chickasaw Nation: An Invaluable Community Partner
Oklahoma Thrives Together
Chickasaw Nation: Roads and Bridges
Oklahoma Values

VOCABULARY:

Sovereignty/Sovereign	Self-government
Country	Nation
Boundary	Services
Deerskin Map	Cardinal Directions
Constitutions	Executive
Legislative	Judicial
Chickasaw Nation	United States
Treaty	Compromise

ENGAGE:

To engage students, display a map of North America and ask discussion questions that will help students build a strong foundation for the sovereignty lesson:

- If you wanted to go to another country, such as Mexico or Canada, are there rules or laws that must be followed?
- What is the process of entering into Mexico/United States/Canada?
- What are some of the services that a country provides its citizens?

Display a picture of the sign found on the entrances of Chickasaw Nation facilities and tell students that if a person visits a Chickasaw Nation facility it may have the sign on the door. That sign indicates that a facility or office is under the jurisdiction or is part of the Chickasaw Nation. Our goal today is to determine what it means for a country or nation to be sovereign. In addition to tribal nations, Mexico, Canada and the United States are all sovereign nations.

EXPLORE:

Activity 1: “Recognizing the Boundaries of the Chickasaw Nation”

Place students in groups of three and distribute a map of Oklahoma to each group. Post a map of Oklahoma on the whiteboard and quickly review some of the key cities in the state with the students.

Ask students to use a marker to put an X on the following locations:

Minco	Comanche	Stonewall
Newcastle	Waurika	Tishomingo
Purcell	Ryan	Thackerville
Byng	Marietta	Ada
Chickasha	Kingston	
Duncan	Colbert	

Ask students to use a marker to connect the Xs. As soon as the students have completed the activity, display a boundary map of the Chickasaw Nation and ask students to discuss how successful they were in outlining the boundaries of the Chickasaw Nation.

To complete the activity, ask students to use a different color marker to mark Tishomingo as the historic capital of the Chickasaw Nation and Ada as the headquarters of the Chickasaw Nation.

**Disclaimer: Please note the boundaries may not be exact according to official Chickasaw Nation treaty territory.*

EXPLAIN:

Activity 2: “An Agreement Between Sovereign Classrooms”

Display the map of the Chickasaw Homeland, as outlined in the Treaty with the United States and Chickasaw of 1786 (also known as the Treaty of Hopewell).

Additional Background Information:

Sovereignty is the right of a nation to make laws and decisions for itself. The Chickasaw Nation creates its own laws and chooses its own leaders. The Chickasaws and other tribal nations have always been independent and sovereign.

England, France and Spain were foreign to the tribal nations of North America. These European countries and tribal nations each determined who they would make treaties with, and they made decisions for their people and interests. Generally, the Chickasaws allied with the British while other tribal nations favored the French or Spanish.

Following the Revolutionary War, the Chickasaws allied with the United States, as identified through the Treaty with the United States and Chickasaw of 1786 (also known as the Treaty of Hopewell). This treaty outlined the original Chickasaw lands.

For this activity, ask students to pretend that their classroom is a sovereign nation and pose the following questions to students:

- Because our classroom is a sovereign nation, what do you have the right to do?
- Assume that the classroom next door is also a sovereign nation. Why might an agreement or treaty between sovereign nations sometimes be difficult to write?
- Does writing an agreement or a treaty sometimes mean that there must be give and take (compromise) by both nations? Why or why not?

To begin the activity, ask students to name their sovereign nation (e.g., “The Nation of Smithville” or “The Thompson Nation”).

Next, ask students to elect a governor or leader of their nation and any other officers or leaders they wish to determine.

Distribute the Treaty Template (Draft). (Note: *The template document simply offers a model for developing a treaty document. Treaties themselves can and do take all sorts of forms.*) Explain that the class will be asked to write a draft of a treaty between their classroom (a sovereign nation) and the classroom next door (another sovereign nation) and that both sovereign nations are going to be allowed to use the same playground. Instruct the students that both nations must come to an agreement as to how the playground should be used. Discuss the parts of the treaty with students, i.e., preamble, terms and conditions and signatures.

Before the groups begin working on the treaty, it may be necessary to give examples of a preamble (an introduction which states the purpose of the Agreement). Inform students that in this activity, their sovereign classroom has the right to determine any terms or conditions on how the school playground should be run. This might be regarding how often and how long their class (sovereign nation) gets for recess, which playground equipment or areas they have the right to use first, any specific rules for the use of the playground and possibly the consequences if one sovereign breaks its promises as set forth in the treaty. Those terms and conditions are the heart of the negotiated treaty and represent the exchange of promises the two separate sovereigns bind themselves to when forming the treaty. The treaty is perhaps best understood as setting out the rules of a new intergovernmental relationship the two sovereigns are forming — a relationship in which each sovereign promises to conduct itself in accord with the promises it has made to the other.

To complete the activity, bring the two sovereign classrooms together to examine the two drafts. The governors of the two classrooms will lead the groups in a discussion about the differences between the two drafts and will encourage a discussion on how compromise might be achieved so that the two sovereigns can agree to a single draft.

After the discussion, develop a final copy of the treaty, and host a ceremony where students are given the opportunity to sign the final treaty.

ELABORATE:

Activity 3: “Sorting Activity”

Put students in groups and provide each group with a pre-cut sorting activity. Students will sort the puzzle to put the correct information with each nation or country. When students are finished, review the activity with the students and have them make corrections, as needed.

Once all groups have successfully completed the sorting activity, prompt the class with discussion questions.

- Might a sovereign nation have boundaries?
- Does a sovereign nation have its own government?
- What makes the Chickasaw Nation, Mexico, the United States and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma sovereign?
- What services does a sovereign nation provide to its citizens?

CONCLUSION:

Refer to the picture of the sign that is hung on Chickasaw Nation facilities. Demonstrate several of the major accomplishments that have been achieved by the Chickasaw Nation, as a result of its sovereignty. Examples may include Chickasaw Lighthorse Police providing protection to the Chickasaw people, Chickasaw Nation Medical Center providing quality health care to its citizens (and other First Americans), Chickasaw Nation Executive, Judicial and Legislative Departments providing leadership, direction and oversight of the Chickasaw Nation tribal government, much like the United States government.

The Chickasaw Nation is older than the United States. The Chickasaws were removed from their Homeland to Indian Territory (what is now Oklahoma). The Chickasaw Nation did not give up its right to make decisions during Removal.

EVALUATE:

Distribute the assessment for each student to complete. Students' justifications for their answers should show that they are able to explain that tribal nations are sovereign.

The teacher may also choose to develop formative assessments.

**ALIGNMENT TO OKLAHOMA ACADEMIC
STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES**

CONTENT STANDARDS

3.1.2 Explain that tribal peoples, in Oklahoma and elsewhere in the United States, have sovereignty and rights, protected by federal law, to self-government.

SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

1.B Students will demonstrate an understanding of the important institutions of their society and principles that these institutions are intended to reflect.

1.C Students will demonstrate understanding of the processes and rules by which groups of people make decisions, govern themselves and address public problems.

3.B Students will demonstrate an understanding of geographic concepts and develop mastery of geographic tools and ways of thinking in order to become geographically informed.

Map of North America



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A Treaty Between Two Sovereign Classrooms

(Draft)

Date:

Preamble: _____

Terms and Conditions:

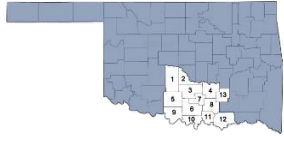


- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Considerations/Compromises:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Signatures:

Sorting Activity

Nation	Map	Services	Government
The Chickasaw Nation		protection education transportation health care	sovereign or self-governing
Mexico		protection education transportation health care	sovereign or self-governing
The United States		protection education transportation health care	sovereign or self-governing
Canada		protection education transportation health care	sovereign or self-governing
The Choctaw Nation		protection education transportation health care	sovereign or self-governing

Welcome

to the sovereign and self-governing lands
of the unconquered and unconquerable

Chickasaw Nation!

Assessment

Name: _____

Define sovereignty:

Sovereignty means the right of a group of people to govern themselves free from interference of other groups of people.

Read each of the following statements. Circle to show if the statement is true or false.

1. The Chickasaw Nation is a sovereign nation.	True/False
2. Tribal nations in Oklahoma have the right to self-govern.	True/False
3. The Chickasaw Nation can make agreements with other governments.	True/False
4. Being sovereign means a foreign government determines laws for another country.	True/False
5. Sovereign means that one group of people have the right to govern themselves without other groups of people interfering.	True/False
6. The Chickasaw Nation and other tribal nations were once sovereign, but now are not.	True/False
7. The Chickasaw Nation, United States, Canada and Mexico are all sovereign.	True/False

Choose one of your answers and explain why it is true or false.

Answers will vary.

Assessment

Name: _____

Define sovereignty:

Read each of the following statements. Circle to show if the statement is true or false.

8. The Chickasaw Nation is a sovereign nation.	True/False
9. Tribal nations in Oklahoma have the right to self-govern.	True/False
10. The Chickasaw Nation can make agreements with other governments.	True/False
11. Being sovereign means a foreign government determines its own laws.	True/False
12. Sovereign means that one group of people have the right to govern themselves without other groups of people interfering.	True/False
13. The Chickasaw Nation and other tribal nations were once sovereign, but now are not.	True/False
14. The Chickasaw Nation, United States, Canada and Mexico are all sovereign.	True/False

Choose one of your answers and explain why it is true or false.