

## Lesson 6: Peace - Native American Story

Welcome back to our Via Transformativa Peace unit!! So far, we've shared an Introductory Lesson where kids had opportunities to think about what "peace" means. And last week, we shared an Earth Day-themed lesson plan called Peace On Earth.

This week, we'll move on to a peace-related story from the Native American tradition. We usually start with an introduction to Native Americans and their faith practices. Here are some points you can make.

- The term Native American refers to people who lived on this land first - before settlers from other places arrived. Sometimes, you'll also hear people use the term "American Indian."
- No matter where you live in the U.S., Indigenous people lived on the land before you did. This [interactive map](#) from Native Land lets you see which tribes lived in which parts of the country. For us, the primary tribe was the Cherokee, now known as the Eastern band of Cherokee. They are the descendants of Cherokee tribe members who remained here, often hiding in the mountains, instead of being forced westward during the Trail of Tears. This [site](#) from AVL Today provides some great info. about the Indigenous history of our area.
- We also make the point that Native Americans sometimes wear traditional dress, but that's generally for ceremonies or rituals. In everyday life, Native Americans wear whatever clothes they want - just like everyone else.
- In terms of religious practice, we also make the point that Native Americans (as well as other Indigenous peoples) often look to nature and/or the animal world for life's lesson and guidance. And, their deity figures are often gods and goddesses who represent various characteristics of nature.
- Tribal elders - who are highly regarded as healers, wisdom-keepers, and story-tellers - are important spiritual leaders in Indigenous traditions.

### Stories/Readings

We couldn't find a good video version of this story, so you'll have to read this one aloud on your own. It comes to us from the Pacific Northwest and tells the tale of three mountains: Mount Hood, Mount Adams, and Mount St. Helens. In fact, some tribes in that region still refer to Mount Adams as Mount Klickitat. You'll know why after you read the story. 😊 Here's an [on-line version](#) of the story that's similar to the one we've written for the kids in the Nurture Program.

## Crafts

### Three Mountains Craft

For younger kids, we often do a version of this craft which requires very few supplies.



We give the kids a background sheet of paper, a paper bag, and a glue stick. They tear out three mountains - to represent the mountains in the story - and glue them onto the background sheet.

They are free to add a fire, the names of the mountains, and any other details they might want.

### Teepee Craft

For the older kids, we often do this slightly more complicated teepee craft. Native Americans traditionally built homes that fit their lifestyles and used materials from their natural environment. This [site](#) has some great info. on that.

We use our own craft template, but First Palette offers some circular templates [here](#) and some instructions [here](#).



This teepee was made by one of our Middle Schoolers using our template. As you can see, she decorated it, folded along the dotted lines, taped it at the back, and cut open a small door.

She also added some little sticks (made by breaking thin, wooden cooking skewers) and glued them at the top using liquid glue.

## Activity

A good activity for this lesson plan is some version of a Native American game. One of the simpler ones is the Moccasin Game, which also gives us an opportunity to teach a bit

about moccasins and other typical Native American footwear. This game uses three shoes, which ties in nicely with our story since there are three mountains!

For this activity, simply take a small object - like a stone or a bottle cap. Have the kids count to 10 while you wave the object over the three "moccasins." On "10," place the object in one of the shoes or keep it in your hand. Then, let the kids figure out where you hid the object.

There are various score-keeping methods, but we usually just play for fun.