

]Thresh[

FIRST VOICES

BAHÁ IPÁ OWÁNĪJA

(They Perished at the Rock Point)



Lesson overview:

In this lesson, students will watch and listen to the Bahá Ipá Owánija (They Perished at Rock Point) story, make observations about what they noticed and remembered and then watch it again to see what details were not remembered—and ask why.

Key Lesson Info:

Subjects covered:

- ◆ Native American studies, specifically Nakóda (Assiniboine) culture and language in Montana Storytelling
- ◆ Storytelling
- ◆ Can be integrated into history, ELA (language arts), visual arts, music composition and sound design, choreography, dance, and film

Grade levels: Grade 8 through college (can be adapted for other grade levels)

Duration: One class period or workshop of 60 minutes or more. This can also be expanded to cover a longer duration. The digital story (video) runs for approximately 6 minutes. Allow at least 45 minutes for viewing the story plus discussion, instruction, creation of student story scenes, sharing of scenes, and concluding discussion.

Preparing for the Lesson

Ensure you have the video, sound, and internet connectivity for all students to view the stories below. If you feel connectivity might be an issue in the classroom, contact First Voices (info@threshdance.org) to request a download option, which you can do in advance of the class.

There's also more advice (including both teaching strategies and technical troubleshooting) available on our website at www.firstvoices.net/teaching-suggestions.

This story is about the smallpox epidemic that struck Montana in the 1830s. As background for this lesson, or for integration with other subjects, consider asking students to research other US and global epidemics.

Discussion Questions Before Viewing

What do you [students] know about the Nakóda (Assiniboine) people or culture? What would you like to share?

- ◆ If the group is familiar with Nakóda (Assiniboine) culture, ask if anyone knows any history, stories, or the language. Where have they learned these things? Who shared the knowledge?
- ◆ If the group is not familiar with the culture, ask students what they know about Indigenous culture(s) in their area or more broadly.
- ◆ If students are unfamiliar with Native cultures, ask where they have gained what knowledge they do have (internet, movies, TV, songs, social media). Do those sources specify a tribe or depict all Indigenous people broadly? Do students think their sources are reliable? Why or why not?

See our website for some helpful resources: www.firstvoices.net/links-and-resources

Watching the Story

The video story can be accessed at the link below. If you have trouble with classroom internet access, please contact info@threshdance.org for help with downloading videos prior to your class.

www.firstvoices.net/they-perished-at-the-rock-point

Discussion Questions After Viewing

Give the students a few moments for reflection. See if they are speaking among themselves, seem eager to share, or are quietly considering the stories. Utilize questions below to start the discussion. Always leave some time for students to think before answering. Those 30-60 seconds of thinking time can often lead to thoughtful responses.

Discussion Questions:

- ◆ What did you think was going on in the Bahá Ipá Owánija (They Perished at the Rock Point) story?
- ◆ What did you see or hear that makes you say that?
- ◆ What else did you notice from the story?
- ◆ Why do you think this story was told in the Nakóda (Assiniboine) language?

Students Remember What They Heard

Ask students, as a group:

- ♦ What is something that you remember from the story? What made that memorable for you?

On a whiteboard, two large sheets of paper, or anywhere that it can be seen clearly by the entire group, write down what the students remember from Bahá Ipá Owánija (They Perished at Rock Point). If you and your students prefer, they can also write this down for themselves. Take a moment to look at everything written by the groups.

Ask the entire group: Did everyone capture all the details? If not, what is missing? Add what students recall but is not written.

Students Explore What was NOT remembered—and ask: Why not?

Watch the story again, and then watch the video of Michael Turcotte providing more context (in English) to the story. The video can be found at the following link:

www.firstvoices.net/they-perished-at-the-rock-point#additional-reflections

Ask students to pay attention to elements that were missing from their recollections. Afterwards, ask why they think some of these elements stand out more than others? What do they think the storytellers (both the performing artists and Michael Turcotte) may want people to remember? Is this story about the past, present, future, or a combination?

Conclusion (or Continuation)

- ♦ How can passing along stories from the past have an impact on the present and the future?
- ♦ Why do students think this story has been remembered and continues to be told?
- ♦ Is this story historical, cultural, personal, or something else?



Assessment

Indicators	Not Engaged	Somewhat Engaged	Extremely Engaged
<p>During the class discussion and afterward, did students recall an element from the story?</p> <p>(Be open to having some students share in ways that may be more comfortable than sharing verbally.)</p>	Students did not recall or chose not to share what they remembered.	Students recalled two elements and shared those elements and why it was memorable.	Students recalled two elements and shared those elements and why it was memorable. This prompted an in-depth discussion.
<p>When watching the story again, did students engage and notice parts of the story that were not remembered by the class?</p>	Students were not engaged when watching the story a second time.	Students were engaged and noticed the difference between their recollections and the full story.	Students were engaged and noticed the difference between their recollections and the full story. Students discussed memory in the context of this class, the story, and more.
<p>Did students discuss how stories function in the past, present, and future?</p>	Students did not share about the role of stories in the past, present, and future.	Some students shared about the role of stories in the past, present, and future.	Students shared about the role of stories in the past, present, and future. In-depth discussion continued.

For more information, please get in touch with us at info@threshdance.org

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