

Lesson Plans chosen to complement

Tall Tales and Folklore:

Exploring Michigan's Traditional Stories

The Legend of Sleeping Bear

From: Sleeping Bear Press

Subjects: English Language Arts

Grades: K-5

Find a variety of lessons and activities related to the Kathy-Jo Wargin version of the Legend of Sleeping Bear, including English Language Arts worksheets and coloring pages.

Rouse Simmons Christmas Ship

From: Western Upper Peninsula Center for Science, Mathematics and Environmental Education

Subjects: Social Studies, English Language Arts

Grades: 3

In this lesson, students will explore history and story to identify reasons why the Rouse Simmons was carrying a cargo of Christmas trees, compare and contrast versions of its sinking from articles, stories, and songs, and then write a story or article based on what they learned.

Anishinabeg Oral Traditions

From: Detroit Historical Society

Subjects: Social Studies, English Language Arts

Grades: 3

This lesson helps third grade students understand the life and culture of the Native Americans that lived in Michigan before the arrival of European settlers in the late 17th century. Students will explore how the Anishinabeg learn about the past and the world around them, compare and contrast a modern student's way of learning to that of an Anishinabe child, and apply the oral tradition to the student's own family life.

The Gallagher Boys – The Story of a Great Lakes Ballad

From: Association for Cultural Equity, founded by Alan Lomax

Subjects: English Language Arts, Social Studies, Visual and Performing Arts

Grades: 3-12 (variants by grade level available)

Students listen to different versions of a Great Lakes Ballad and explore the idea of songs as stories and poetry. They also learn about oral traditions, and compare oral histories and songs to real-life events. Multiple other lesson plans drawing on the recordings of Alan Lomax are available at this website.

Native American Folklore

From: Smithsonian Museum of American Art

Subjects: English Language Arts, Social Studies

Grades: 6-12

Legends have always been an important part of Native American religion and culture. In the past these stories were passed down orally, but now many are being written down in order to reach a larger audience. This lesson plan draws on the work of painter George Catlin to explore the idea of oral traditions and asks students to write their own legend.

“Explore Your Community”

From: American Folklife Center

Subjects: English Language Arts, Social Studies, Visual and Performing Arts

Grades: 6-12

With this series of activities, the American Folklife Center and the Rural School and Community Trust offer opportunities for middle and high school students to explore the wide range of living cultural expression that exists in their communities. The folklife and cultural heritage activities and resources included here will guide teachers in developing original research projects with their students. They also offer young people creative ideas for engaging in cultural heritage research outside the classroom.

American Indians in Children’s Literature

This resource, for learners of all ages, includes essays and information about American Indian stories in popular culture from an American Indian perspective.