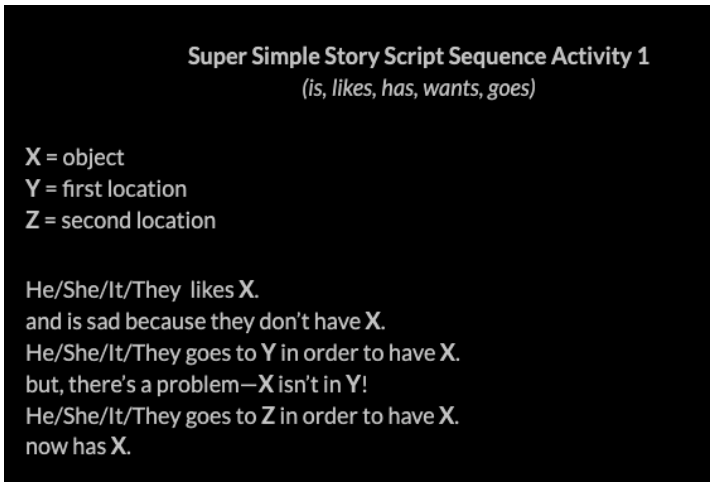
Salish Land and People

Past, Present, Future

Created by: Heather Hibbard

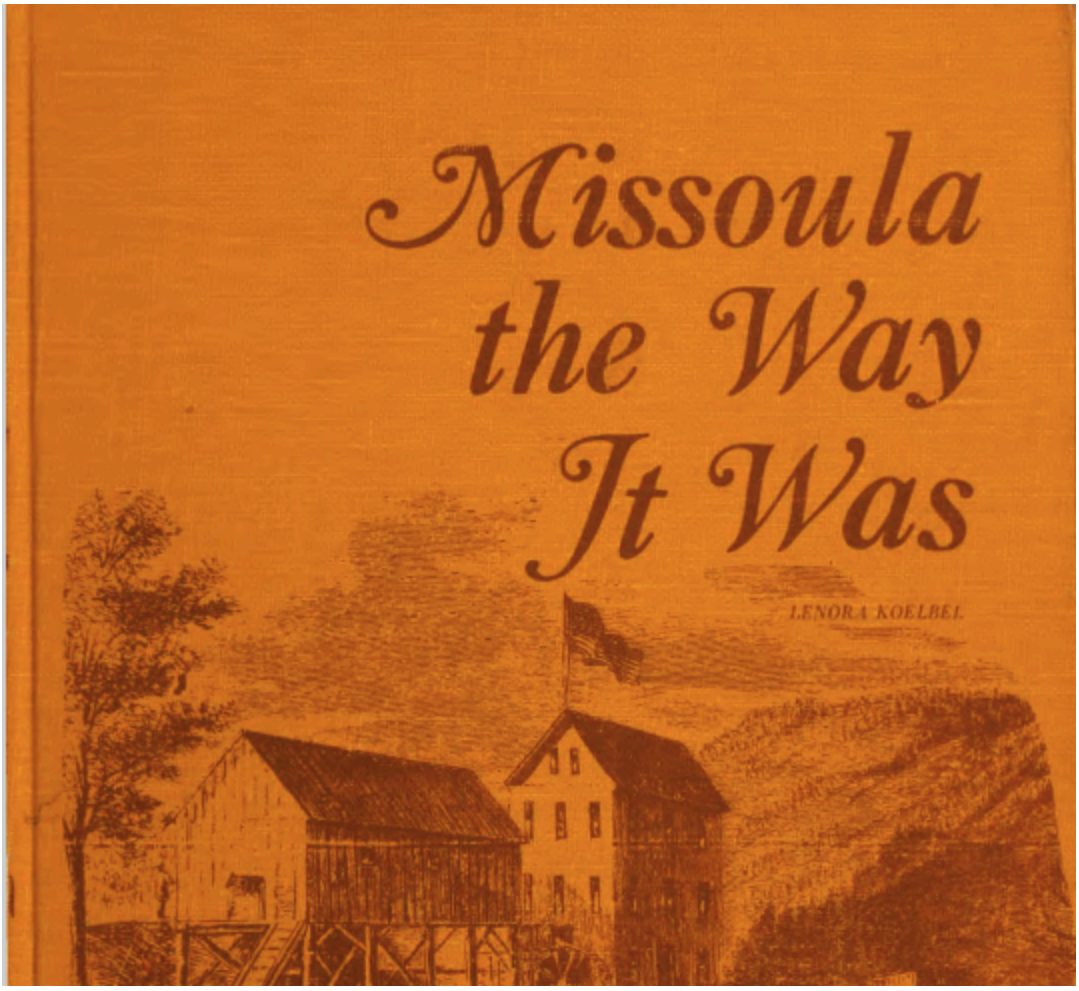
Flathead Reservation Timeline

Review the timeline of the Salish and Kootenai tribes in what is now western Montana, from time immemorial to the arrival of Europeans, introduction of guns, trade, smallpox, missions, boarding schools, and treaties, to the present day. Use the key questions below to reflect on some of the events that transpired over this documented history.



Super Simple Story Script Sequence

This land had a lot of history that came before the moment we are standing here today. Write your own story about the future of this land. It could be the next week, year, or decade. It could be broad (larger community) or narrow (individuals or families) or not related to people at all.



Missoula the Way it Was from the Montana State Library

Cross-reference historical accounts in this PDF book with information in the Flathead Reservation Timeline. Do you find anything contradictory or mismatched?

Contextual Paragraph

This activity is meant for fifth or sixth grade students who have already been learning about the geologic, cultural, tribal, ecological, and agricultural history of the land. Ideally, prior to this activity, there will have been a field trip to important landscapes for the tribes where students will learn, via oral history, about the importance of those places.

Key Questions

1. What do you think everyday life looked like in different seasons for Salish people during the “traditional life” period of this timeline?
2. How did the introduction of firearms, horses, and disease impact the Salish people?
3. How do you think the opening of the fur trade in Salish land impacted the Salish people?
4. How do you think execution of the treaties could have been approached differently from either side to ensure tribes could keep their land and sovereignty?

Assessment

Reflect on what you’ve learned about the past and present for Salish people in Montana, and specifically in the Missoula and Flathead valleys. Now, using the Super Simple Story Script Sequence, write an outline of a story for the future of the Salish or other local tribal people. Start with a very basic story script, and use that as an outline to elaborate upon.

1. How does your story about the future of the Salish or other tribes in western Montana differ from their past?
2. How is your story similar to the past?
3. What do you think are the most important things that were taken from the Salish people, and do you think there is any way to make up for or compensate for those losses?