



LESSON ONE: ALGONQUIN

A Pre-school Lesson Plan

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Lesson Plan: Exploring the Algonquin People

Grade Level: Preschool (Ages 3-5)

Duration: 45 minutes (with optional extension activities)

Theme: "Learning About Our Neighbors: The Algonquin Way of Life"

Objective: Students will explore key aspects of Algonquin culture—such as their connection to nature, storytelling, and community—through interactive activities, fostering an appreciation for Indigenous Peoples and their traditions.



Learning Goals

1. Cultural Awareness: Understand that the Algonquin people are a real group with a rich history and unique way of life tied to the land.
2. Social-Emotional Skills: Practice listening, sharing, and working together, reflecting Algonquin values of community.
3. Fine Motor and Cognitive Skills: Engage in hands-on activities like crafting and sorting to connect with Algonquin practices.

Materials Needed

- Picture book: *The Rough-Face Girl* by Rafe Martin (an Algonquin Cinderella story) or a similar Algonquin tale adapted for young children.
- Nature items: leaves, sticks, small stones (real or craft versions).
- Craft supplies: paper, crayons, glue, string, brown construction paper (for birchbark canoe craft).
- Audio or video clip of a forest soundscape (e.g., birds, wind, water) – optional.
- Map or globe showing northeastern North America (optional for circle time).
- Basket or bowl for "sharing circle" activity.

Lesson Plan Breakdown

1. Welcome and Circle Time (10 minutes)

Purpose: Introduce the Algonquin people and set a respectful tone.



- Activity: Gather students in a circle. Explain, “Today, we’re learning about the Algonquin people, who have lived for a long, long time in the forests and near rivers, in places like Canada and parts of the United States. They’re experts at living with nature!”
- Show on Map (Optional): Point to the general area (Ontario, Quebec, northeastern U.S.) on a globe or map. Say, “This is where many Algonquin people live, surrounded by trees, water, and animals.”
- Discussion Prompt: “What do you see outside when you play? Trees? Birds? The Algonquin people know all about those things!” Encourage simple answers.
- Transition: “The Algonquin love stories, so let’s listen to one of theirs!”



2. Storytelling (10 minutes)

Purpose: Share an authentic Algonquin story to highlight their oral tradition and values.

- Activity: Read *The Rough-Face Girl* (or a similar Algonquin tale). Before reading, explain, “The Algonquin people tell stories to teach lessons and share ideas, just like we do at school!”
- Engagement: Pause to ask simple questions like, “What do you think Rough-Face sees in the woods?” or “How does she show she’s brave?”
- Key Takeaway: After the story, say, “This story shows us how the Algonquin people value kindness and seeing the world in a special way.”

3. Hands-On Activity: Birchbark Canoe Craft (15 minutes)

Purpose: Connect to Algonquin daily life and their use of natural resources.

- Background: Explain, “The Algonquin people travel on rivers in canoes made from birch trees—trees with white bark. They use them to fish, visit friends, and explore!”
- Activity Steps:
 1. Give each child a piece of brown construction paper (pre-cut into a canoe shape if needed).
 2. Let them decorate it with crayons (e.g., draw water, fish, or trees).
 3. Add sticks or string as “paddles” with glue.
- Teacher Role: Help with glue and talk about how canoes are important to the Algonquin, saying, “They’re like the Algonquin’s cars, but for water!”



- Clean-Up Transition: Sing a simple clean-up song while collecting supplies.
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4. Sharing Circle: Nature and Community (10 minutes)

Purpose: Reflect Algonquin values of community and respect for nature.

- Activity: Pass around a basket with nature items (leaves, sticks, stones). Each child picks one, holds it, and says something they like about nature (e.g., “I like leaves because they’re green!”).
 - Teacher Prompt: “The Algonquin people take care of nature because it’s their home. What do you like about the outside world?”
 - Wrap-Up: Say, “The Algonquin teach us to share, listen, and love the earth. We can do that too!”
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Assessment

- Observation: Watch for participation in storytelling (e.g., answering questions) and the sharing circle (e.g., listening respectfully).
 - Craft Check: Notice if children connect the canoe to the Algonquin (e.g., mentioning water or trees while decorating).
 - Informal Questions: Ask a few kids, “What did the Algonquin use canoes for?” or “What’s one thing they like about nature?”
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Optional Extension Activities

1. Nature Walk (15 minutes): Take a short walk outside to “explore like the Algonquin,” pointing out trees, rocks, or water.
2. Forest Sounds Game (10 minutes): Play a forest soundscape and ask, “What do you hear? Birds? Wind? The Algonquin hear these too!”
3. Dramatic Play (Ongoing): Add toy canoes and nature props to the dramatic play area for free exploration.

Notes for Teachers

- Cultural Sensitivity: Avoid generic “Native American” stereotypes (e.g., war bonnets, which are not Algonquin). Focus on specific, accurate details like their woodland life and birchbark crafts.
- Adaptation: For younger preschoolers, simplify the craft (e.g., just coloring) or shorten the story.

Resources:

The Rough-Faced Girl: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/1097330265457107351/>

Nature Sounds: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNN7iTA57jM>

Map showcasing Algonquin Territory: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/1097330265457107506/>

Craft Inspiration:

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/70437487347453/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/1097330265456353789/>

