



Museum of the West Exhibit Activity

Ute Creation Story Oral History Analysis

Overview: Students will analyze the oral histories of several Ute creation stories and discuss the importance of such stories.

Grade: 3-5

Connection to Colorado Social Studies Academic Standards:

- 3rd grade: 1.1, 1.2
- 4th grade: 1.1, 1.2
- 5th grade: 1.1, 1.2

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- analyze a variety of oral histories,
- describe the different types of oral histories (video recording, audio recording, transcript),
- summarize various Ute origin stories
- explain why origin stories are important to different cultures

Vocabulary: oral history, video recording, audio recording, transcript, origin story

Before your Visit

Explain to the class that when they go to the museum, they will get to see a small exhibit on the Ute people who originally lived in the area before the settlers came.

Watch the following video:

The Original Coloradans (28 min, 19 sec) <http://www.rmpbs.org/coloradoexperience/early-colorado/original-coloradans/>

Ask the class if they have any questions about the Ute people. Students can write questions to research while at the museum. If the answers are not in the exhibit at Museum of the West, they can ask a historian at the museum.

Oral histories are a way to pass down knowledge or memories and experiences from anything ranging from first-hand accounts of historic events to stories of day to day life, or they can be the sharing of folklore and mythology from one generation to the next. Oral histories come in many forms today: audio recording, video or film, or a written transcript. The following is an oral history that tells the Ute creation story:

Ute Wisdom, Language and Creation Story | Larry Cesspooch | TEDxYouth@ParkCity (21 min 11 sec) <https://youtu.be/gv201ILHXhc>

While the class is watching the video, have students fill out the Oral History Analysis worksheet.

During your Visit

In the Native American Gallery, students can press a button to listen to a different version of the Ute Creation Story

As students listen to the oral history in the museum, they should fill out a new Oral History Analysis worksheet.

After your Visit

The Ute Curriculum put forth by the Ute tribes and History Colorado has several other versions of the Ute creation story. (See Readings 1-4 on pages 23-31 of Nuuciu Strong <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/atoms/files/FINAL.UteResourceGuide.CCIA%20Website.pdf>)

Divide the class into groups and give each group a different creation story. Have each group fill out an oral history analysis for their creation story and share the results with the class.

Finally discuss with the class what the different versions have in common. In what ways are they different? Why does the class think there are so many versions of the Ute creation story? Does it matter that there are so many different versions? Why are stories like the creation story important to different cultures?

Oral History Analysis

Name: _____

Who is telling this story?

What format is this story?
(video/film, audio recording, written transcript)

Why is this story being told?

Who are the main characters in the story?

What happens in the story?

What can you learn from the story?

Do you have any questions about this story?