Grade Level: 3rd and 4th grade  
Unit: Geography Native Americans in Michigan  
Time: 3-4 days

Michigan Historical Center Lesson Plan

Established Goals
3.G1.0.2: Use thematic maps to identify and describe the physical and human characteristics of Michigan.

Understandings: Students will understand that the majority of Michigan was populated by a variety of Native tribes, and that these tribes tended to settle near rivers or major bodies of water and that physical characteristics of Michigan determine human characteristics.

Essential Questions:
1. Where were the major tribes of Michigan located in ca. 1700?
2. What made these locations important or desirable to these tribes?

Students will know . . . Students will be able to...
Students will be able to look at a map of Michigan and describe the physical characteristics of the state. They will be able to create a map of major tribes in Michigan ca. 1700 and understand how the physical characteristics of Michigan affected the settlement patterns of tribes.

Stage 2 – Assessment Evidence

Performance Tasks:
- Identify physical characteristics of Michigan by looking at a map of the state.
- Create a map of settlement of major tribes in Michigan ca. 1700.
- Conclude how the physical characteristics of Michigan affect or determine the settlement of these tribes.

Other Evidence:
- Answer questions about their maps and the conclusions they draw from what they have read.

Stage 3 – Learning Plan

Learning Activities:
Students are to examine a physical map of Michigan and list what physical characteristics Michigan has (lakes and rivers, hilly terrain, two peninsulas, etc). Once a list has been made, have students read the Michigan Mittens on The Huron Indians and The Three Fires. (Please see the “Publications for Students” tab in seekingmichigan.org) Each of these Michigan Mittens discusses the lives of various Native tribes in Michigan as well as their location. Students are to use a Michigan map that shows some of the river systems through the state, and mark the locations of the tribes mentioned in the Mittens. Once the articles are read and the maps completed, discuss with students how the settlements of these tribes is connected to the physical characteristics of Michigan (they should come up with something along the lines of all of the tribes are located near major lakes or where large rivers come together). Have students compare Native settlement patterns to the location of the major cities in Michigan (Detroit, Lansing, Grand Rapids, Flint, Saginaw are all near lakes or major rivers).

NOTE: If you have an advanced group, you can move into a discussion of tribal loss of land due to treaty negotiations. The Treaty Map shows reservation locations. Students might understand how much tribal land was lost and the value of the land tribes were moved to (away from lakes and major river systems).
Directions: First, choose a color for each of the major tribes in Michigan. Next, color the location in the state where that tribe can be found. Use the maps in the Michigan Mittens to help.

Some Major Michigan Rivers

☐ Huron
☐ Ojibway
☐ Potowatomi
☐ Odawa
☐ No major settlement
During a 50-year period, the United States government purchased Michigan from various tribes.