Grade Level: 3rd grade  
Title: Michigan History on a String

Stage 1 - Desired Results

Goals:
1) Students will be introduced to a timeline for understanding the relationship between past, present and future,
2) Students will understand the time-depth of Michigan pre-contact history,
3) Students will be introduced to the three main periods of Michigan pre-contact history and the main differences and commonalities between them,
4) Students will appreciate that Michigan Native peoples adapted to the changing environment in creative, resourceful ways.

(GLCEs) H3.0.1, H3.0.2, H3.0.7 G1.0.2, G2.0.1, G5.02

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding(s):</th>
<th>Essential Questions(s):</th>
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<tr>
<td>Students will understand that…</td>
<td>1) How long is Michigan’s history?</td>
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<td>1) The history of Michigan’s people goes back 12,000 years.</td>
<td>2) How long have Native peoples lived in Michigan?</td>
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<td>2) Recent history (500 years) is quite short in comparison to the length of time Native peoples have live in Michigan.</td>
<td>3) Has Michigan always looked this way?</td>
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<td>3) In the pre-contact period Michigan’s environment was significantly different than today: there were different trees, plants and animals.</td>
<td>4) How did pre-contact Native people live?</td>
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<td>4) The paleo-environment changed over time to become the environment we see today.</td>
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<td>5) Michigan’s pre-contact peoples adapted to their environment, to not just survive, but thrive.</td>
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<td>6) The adaptations of pre-contact people to the changing environment were different, not primitive, compared to ours.</td>
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<th>Students will know…</th>
<th>Students will be able to…</th>
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<td>1) Tell the relation and duration of events and trends on a timeline;</td>
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<td>2) Place the three periods of Michigan prehistory in relation to each other;</td>
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<td>3) Explain three significant points about each period;</td>
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<td>4) Explain the progression of environmental change, i.e. say what features change.</td>
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Stage 2 - Assessment of Evidence

Performance Tasks(s):
1) Make a team timeline: teams of 3-4 each responsible for presenting a period on the timeline. Should be able to find the beginning and end of their period and explain a few significant points about it (environment, lifeways).
2) Write a paragraph about a pre-contact period incorporating significant points.

Other Evidence:
Stage 3 – Learning Activities

“Michigan History on a String”
Dr. Dean Anderson, Office of the State Archaeologist

When I talk to kids about archaeology, I ask them to tell me – or guess – how long ago people first arrived in what is now Michigan. After they offer what is usually a broad range of estimates, I tell them that people first came to Michigan approximately 12,000 years ago. Such a large span of time is hard for kids to grasp, and it isn't easy for adults either! So, I like to use a string timeline to give them a visual sense of what 12,000 years looks like.

For my timeline, I use a piece of yellow nylon string that is 100 feet long. The length of the string is determined by the scale for the timeline; I use 1 inch = 10 years for my timeline. There is no “correct” scale for a timeline; I like using 1 inch = 10 years because it gives me some space to work with on the recent end of the timeline, and doesn't squeeze the dates I want to talk about too closely together.

I have several dates marked on my timeline, and I ask the kids if they can tell me what happened on those dates. Each date marks an event in history; some of the dates are related to Michigan history, others to U.S or North American history. I mark the position of each date on the string with a piece of masking tape with the date written on it. The first piece of tape, however, is a little different from the others. It is one inch – or ten years - from the “today” end of the string. I usually do this presentation with 4th graders, and when I ask them to tell me what important event happened ten years ago, someone always has the answer: “That's when I was born!” For 3rd grade, I will ask what happened nine years ago.

The next piece of tape on my timeline marks the year 1957. I tell the kids that this date marks an event in Michigan history. I often end up giving them another clue or two on this one. The answer is the completion and opening of the Mackinac Bridge.

The other dates I have on my timeline are:

1837 Michigan became a state
1776 Declaration of Independence was signed
1620 Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock,
and French explorer, Etienne Brule arrives in Michigan
1492 Columbus arrived in the western hemisphere
ca. 1000 Leif Erickson arrived on the coast of Newfoundland
12,000 years ago Native American peoples first came to Michigan
These are the dates that I use, but there are, of course, lots of other possibilities for dates that could be used on a timeline.

The dramatic visual aspect of the timeline is that from the “today” end of the string to Columbus’ voyage of 1492 is only about 4 feet. But from there to the 12,000-years-ago mark is about 96 feet! It shows that the last 500 years or so, which is what gets the most attention in terms of our history, is a small part of our total history. It helps us recognize that human history in Michigan goes back much, much further, and demonstrates how big a part Native American history plays in Michigan history.

**Other Timeline Tasks:**

- Have students compare a timeline for a century, a year and a day (schedule). What looks different about them? What similar purpose do they serve? All timelines help us order our thoughts and ask questions about our past and future. What thoughts might be organized with each type of timeline? What different questions might we ask of each? (e.g. a century for history, a daily schedule to order our daily activities).

- As another way for students to grasp the huge timeframes of pre-contact history, and to add in some mathematics, have students calculate how many days in a pre-contact time period. The Paleo-Indian period lasted about 2,000 years, so 2,000 x 365 days = 730,000 days! For the whole 12,000 years since Native Americans first came to Michigan, 12,000 x 365 = 4,380,000 days!!
Background: Pre-Contact Basics

The pre-contact (or prehistoric) period in Michigan began with the arrival of Native Americans, and ended with the arrival of Europeans (in this case, French) in Michigan about 1620.

Archaeologists divide the pre-contact period into three periods:
• the Paleo-Indian period,
• the Archaic period,
• the Woodland period.

The Paleo-Indian period extends from the arrival of Paleo-Indian peoples at about 12,000 years ago to about 10,000 years ago.

• When Paleo-Indian peoples arrived, there were still glaciers covering parts of Michigan.

• When Paleo-Indian peoples arrived, the climate and environment in Michigan were much different from today. Much of Michigan was grassland with scattered patches of trees. During the Paleo-Indian period, the climate warmed, and forests began to expand.

• During the Paleo-Indian period, large mammals like mammoths and mastodons were found in Michigan. Paleo-Indian peoples hunted these animals for food, along with caribou, elk, and moose.

• By the end of the Paleo-Indian period, mammoths, mastodons, and some other species of large mammals were extinct.

• The “signature” artifact of the Paleo-Indian period is the fluted spear point.

The Archaic period extends from about 10,000 years ago to around 3,000 years ago, or roughly 7,000 years.

• The beginning of the Archaic period was marked by the complete retreat of glaciers from Michigan, the extinction of some large animal species, and the continuation of changing climate and expanding forests.
At the beginning of the Archaic period, water levels in the Great Lakes were significantly lower than they are today. Lake Superior was 240' lower, Lake Huron was 390' lower, and Lake Michigan was 350' lower. During the Archaic period Great Lakes’ water levels rose.

The lengthy Archaic period was characterized by changing environmental conditions that offered a wider range of food resources for Archaic peoples.

During the Archaic period, Native Americans began mining copper in the Upper Peninsula and on Isle Royale.

Archaic peoples participated in widespread trade networks. For example, on Archaic period sites, archaeologists find stone tools made from good quality chert from Indiana and Ohio, and shell that came from the Gulf of Mexico.

The Woodland period extends from about 3,000 years ago (about 1000 B.C.) to the arrival of Europeans at about 1620.

Two important developments marked the beginning of the Woodland period: making pottery and constructing burial mounds.

During the Woodland period, a very important cultural development occurred. Through the Paleo-Indian and Archaic periods, Native American economy was based on hunting and gathering. While the hunting and gathering way of life continued, the Woodland period saw the beginning of agriculture as Native peoples planted and harvested crops.

The bow and arrow was introduced during the Woodland period, around A.D. 800, which is about 1200 years ago.

When the French arrived in the 1600s, they met Native peoples of the Woodland period. Over the next 250 years or so, interaction between Native Americans and Europeans contributed to sweeping changes in Native peoples’ way of life. The arrival of Europeans effectively ended the Woodland period and marked the beginning of the historic period.