

Unit: Native Plant Knowledge

Activity: Ethnobotany Survival Story

Developed by: Heidi Bohan

Activity Length: 1 hour Prep time: 0-10 (gather fresh material) Review materials: 0-30 minutes (become familiar with plants to be used during this activity and their locations).

Guiding Questions: How did the native people of this area survive using native plants?

Brief Description of Activity: Students will go outside and learn about certain plants and their uses. They will be asked to remember or take notes (teacher choice) about their specific uses. Students will break into three teams and be given a 'survival story' that will direct them to find these plants again for their 'survival'. They will also create a story or song to share with the group about their 'survival day'.

Materials: Survival stories (laminated), Plants and their specific use list, Correct plant and use table, Ethnobotany survival props, Color coded and labeled flags.

Teacher Provided: Live samples of Swamp lantern leaf, and horsetail (if not going to Big Finn Hill)

Activity

- Tell students they will be learning about native plants and their use to native people in this area. They will then be asked to re enact a survival story and find these plants again for their 'survival'.
- Ask them if they have ever watched 'Survivor' on TV. Tell them that those participants were given a brief introduction about the plants in their site before they are left to 'survive'. This is their chance to do the same thing so they better pay close attention.
- Take students to the plants on the 'Plants and their specific use' list. Tell them the specific use (avoid adding more 'use' information as it may conflict with the story).
- Show related objects or plant parts to help students remember and visualize their use.
- Break students into three teams.
 1. Give each team one of the Ethnobotany Survival Stories and a set of color-coded and lettered flags.
 2. Tell students they will read the story (after you give them instructions).
 3. Throughout the story they will encounter a survival need that a certain plant will satisfy.
 4. Students will remember which plant might work (there may be more than one plant, they can choose one they would like to use).
 5. They will find and label that plant with the correct letter tag.
 6. After they have found all the plants they need to survive their story they can create a song or story as indicated in their story.
- Go through each story and locate the plants the students picked. Correct as needed, or locate ones that weren't found.
- Discuss, congratulate, etc.
- Have students present their story or song (or read a Salish legend related to gathering and hunting).