

How can I best use these materials to support the Social Studies TEKS for Grade 6?

- **History (6.1B):** Ask for a show of hands from your class to see if anyone is part American Indian; ask those students if they know which nation or tribe their ancestor(s) came from; encourage them to try to find out if they don't. Many Native Americans have an English, Scottish, Hispanic, or other kind of surname. Even students who identify strongly with another culture (Czech, Mexican, African American, etc.) may *also* have a Native American ancestor.

When Americans claim a particular culture, they are usually choosing one from among many—often the culture of their surname, even though they have equal parts of “blood” from each of their parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, etc.

Some values which have strong historical associations with Native American groups are conservation, keeping one's word, respect for animal life. Ask students to *consider* whether or to what extent their present family values related to these issues may have been influenced by a Native American ancestor.

(**Note:** To associate a particular stance on any issue with a Native American—or any culture's—view would create a stereotype. People with vastly different histories can have the same opinion on current issues, just as people as close as brothers and sisters often have vastly different views. Use this question for thoughtful discussion; there is no final correct or incorrect answer.)

- **Geography (6.7A), Economics (6.8A), and Government (6.12A):** Because 6th graders have already studied them in both 4th and 5th grade, use Native Americans to open the subjects of adaptation to the physical environment, trade, and tribal governance as related to indigenous societies in other parts of the world. Some practices which are universal, wholesome, and useful within a small group are almost impossible to carry on in large societies.
- **Culture (6.15A and B; 6.18A, B, C, and D) and Social Studies Skills (6.21C):** Consider folk art motifs in past and present societies. Native Americans may have used animal or plant motifs to decorate pottery, wool or leather clothing, stone or hide habitat. What motifs and symbols have other societies used? Would an archaeologist find a squash blossom necklace made of crystal? A carved ivory parrot? A brass thunderbird? Why or why not? As you see folk art motifs in textbooks and other resources, consider how the symbols and styles associated with present-day countries give clues to the society's ancient roots? (Examples: Animal and floral motifs are indigenous to geographic location; horses important in recent Plains Indian life, in ancient Mongolia, Rome, etc. Also, consider how representation styles vary with a similar subject, as with a fish motif used by ancient Christians/Inuit/Polynesians/Greeks. Use the Animal Effigy Pots word search to consider animal motifs in American pottery while practicing grid and map direction skills.