

Garden Lesson Template

Title: 4th Grade Native Plants to Washington – part 2 harvesting what was planted in fall.

Standards addressed: Social Studies EALR 4 HISTORY

- 4.1.2 Understands how the following themes and developments help to define eras in Washington State history from time immemorial to 1889:
 - Growth of northwest coastal and plateau tribes prior to treaties (time immemorial to 1854).

Unit connections: Social Studies WA State History (Native Americans) Unit

Description: The students will observe or harvest the camas that they planted in the fall. They will discover how camas was harvested and used by the Native Americans who lived in this area.

Objective:

- 1) The students will read Lewis & Clark's descriptions of camas, discuss uses for it, and discover how the native peoples harvested it.
- 2) The students will examine the camas that they planted in the fall.
- 3) The students will create their own digging tool and will harvest the camas (if it is ready) or practice digging in a garden plot.

Time Required: Pre-garden time (can take place in the garden as well): **30-40 minutes** Garden time: **50 min -1 hour**

Date: If you will be harvesting camas, it needs to be harvested after the flowers have withered, which is usually later in the summer or fall. If you are just observing, anytime in the spring will work.

Materials:

- 1) Excerpts from Lewis & Clark's journals.
- 2) Camas that was planted in the fall or a sample camas flower.
- 3) Sticks (two for each student), string or yarn, and scissors
- 4) Camas to dig or a garden plot to dig
- 5) copies of the Garden Observation Sheet

Preparation: Print the Lewis & Clark journal excerpts and the picture of the digging stick in color. Laminate them so they can be reused if you wish. Talk to the teacher about dividing the class into 6 groups. Make sure the camas is ready to be harvested. If not, the students can just observe it's progress and pretend to harvest it as they dig.

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Class Discussion:

- Tell the class that you are going to tell them a true story. Tell them a short version of the Corps of Discovery. Use these main points:
 - In 1803 President Thomas Jefferson helped the USA buy a lot of land called the Louisiana Purchase.
 - He wanted to discover Native American tribes, animals, and plants that the Americans had never seen before.
 - He sent a group of people with Lewis and Clark to explore the western half of the United States and go all the way to the Pacific Ocean.
- Ask the students what they know about Lewis and Clark. Allow a few students to share.
- Tell them that one of the plants Lewis and Clark encountered on their journey was the camas plant.

Action:

- 1) Split the class into **6 groups**. Give each group one of the **Lewis and Clark journal excerpts**. Tell them to take turns reading in their groups. When they finish, each student should share something they thought was interesting with their group.
- 2) After all groups are finished reading their journal excerpt, have the group choose one or two people who will **quickly tell the rest of the class** what theirs was about.
- 3) Discuss all the uses for camas root. Show the picture of the **digging stick**. Tell them that it was normally the women's job to dig up camas roots and that they had to wait until after the flowers withered for the bulbs to be ready. Discuss whether or not the digging stick was a good tool to use.
- 4) Take the students outside near the camas garden. Observe the progress of the camas plant and discuss whether or not it is **ready to harvest**.
- 5) Have the students **create their own digging stick**. We don't have bone, so they will use a stick for the handle as well. They can carve a notch in one stick with scissors and tie the sticks together with string. Give the students about 15 min to make their digging stick. Let them figure out how to tie it together on their own.
- 6) As the students finish, allow them to **harvest the camas or dig in the dirt** and pretend to harvest camas.
- 7) If students finish early, they can fill out a Garden Observation Sheet.

Wrap Up: Have the students discuss how they would like to prepare the camas and eat it.

Extension Activity: Once the camas garden gets going, here is a recipe that could be used to cook the bulbs so that the 4th graders can try them! (See below)

Resources:

http://www.mnh.si.edu/lewisandclark/resources/Camassia_quamash.pdf

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<http://www.mrcamas.com/index.html>

http://columbiariverimages.com/Regions/Places/camas_root.html

<http://honest-food.net/2011/07/26/cooking-blue-camas/> (recipe)



camas bulbs, cooked two ways *Serves 2 as a side dish.*

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Cook Time: 12 hours

- 1/2 pound blue camas bulbs, about a dozen
 - 1 tablespoon olive oil
 - 1 tablespoon verjus, lemon juice or white wine vinegar
 - Smoked salt
1. Remove the papery sheath off the bulbs and put them in an ovenproof container with a lid. Pour in just enough water to cover the bottom of the container by about 1/4 inch or so. Cover the container and bake the camas bulbs at 220-230 degrees for 12 hours. (If they cook faster than this, the inulin will still be present and everyone you serve them to will have bad gas! They must be cooked slowly!) Check on them after 8 hours or so. You want them to look anything from pale gold to full golden.
 2. Slice the bulbs into rings and lightly dust them with fine salt. Sauté them in olive oil, butter or some other fat until they brown. They will be a little sticky, so keep the pan moving for the first minute or so to prevent the bulbs from sticking to the pan. Keep an eye on them, as the sugars in the camas will caramelize fast.
 3. To finish, toss with the verjus and dust with the smoked salt. Eat at once.