

Domestic Dependent Nations: Tribal Governments in the United States

Author	Carol Carney Warren
Grade Level	8
Duration	2 class periods

National Standards

GEOGRAPHY

Element 4: Human Systems

12. The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement
13. How the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth's surface

AZ Standards

ELA

Reading

Key Ideas and Details

8.RI.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Writing

Production and Distribution of Writing

8.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Arizona Social Science Standards

GEOGRAPHY

Examining human population and movement helps individuals understand past, present, and future conditions on Earth's surface.

8.G3.1 Evaluate the impact of economic, political, and social decisions that have caused conflict or promoted cooperation throughout time.

HISTORY

Economic, political, and religious ideas and institutions have influenced history and continue to shape the modern world.

8.H3.4 Investigate a significant historical topic from United States History that has significance to an issue or topic today.

CIVICS

An understanding of civic and political institutions in society and the principles these institutions are intended to reflect including knowledge about law, politics, and government is essential to effective citizenship.

8.C3.3 Compare the structures, powers, and limits of government at distinct levels in the United States.

Process, rules, and laws direct how individuals are governed and how society addresses problems

8.C4.3 Analyze the purpose, process, implementation, and consequences of decision making and public policies in multiple settings and at different levels including the national, state, local (county, city, school board), and tribal.

Overview

There are over 300 Indian reservations across the United States, each with their own unique tribal government. Many students live near or will visit an Indian reservation during their lifetime and so it is important that they understand the role of tribal governments in the political organization of our country.

Purpose

In this lesson students will compare the structure and role of a tribal government to the federal government. They can extend the lesson to compare the tribal government to their own state government. They can also create a response to the idea of "domestic dependent nations."

Materials

- Arizona's Indian Reservations map
- Projection device
- Words to Reflect Upon
- Student Reading

Domestic Dependent Nations: Tribal Governments in the United States

- Student Worksheet and Answer Key
- Student Writing Assignment

Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Compare the structure of a tribal government with the federal government.
2. Explain the role of tribal governments in the political organization of the United States.

Procedures

Prerequisite Knowledge: *Students have been taught the structure of the federal and their state governments.*

SESSION ONE

1. Introduce the lesson by asking students to identify the various types or levels of governments with which they are familiar (etc., federal, state, county, city/town, tribal).
2. Ask students to identify ways in which the types of governments they mentioned are similar and different in what they do, whom they serve, the powers they have,
3. Project the Arizona's Indian Reservations map. Have students turn to a partner and comment on the map. Point out that 22 tribal nations are recognized in Arizona. These tribal lands account for about 27% of Arizona's land.
4. Ask students which of the levels of government they believe have jurisdiction or authority over tribal members living on the Indian reservations? Ask for any other information they may know or believe about tribal governments. If desired, display information in a chart for discussion later in the lesson.
5. State that they will learn more about the structure and role of tribal governments by looking at one example, the Navajo Nation. Identify the location of the Navajo Reservation on the projected map.
6. Explain that tribal governments are not all alike; the structure of their government is determined by their own constitution as well as the treaty or other agreements they made with the United States government. Indian tribes are considered to be "domestic dependent nations" and have the right to govern their own people on their reservations.
7. Project Words to Reflect Upon. Clarify vocabulary words such as domestic dependent nation. In Cherokee Nation v. the State of Georgia, 1831, Chief Justice Marshall wrote, "They may, more correctly, perhaps, be denominated domestic dependent nations. They occupy a territory to which we assert a title independent of their will, which must take effect in point of possession when their right of possession ceases. Meanwhile they are in a state of pupilage. Their relation to the United States resembles that of a ward to his guardian." http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/historics/USSC_CR_0030_0001_ZO.html and use this summary statement: The Marshall trilogy, a series of three Supreme Court cases decided by Chief Justice John Marshall beginning in the 1830's, set forth the legal framework for defining tribal sovereignty. In defining tribal sovereign powers, Justice Marshall described tribes as "domestic dependent nations," meaning that although tribes were "distinct independent political communities," they remained subject to the paternalistic powers of the United States. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cherokee_Nation_v._Georgia
8. Have students turn to a partner and discuss (in their own words) what this court ruling means. Then have them reflect on their thoughts about domestic dependent nations—still acceptable to label tribal lands as such? Tell students that they will be returning to these ideas at the end of the lesson.
9. Distribute and project the Student Reading. Read as a class or as individuals. Go over vocabulary as needed.
8. Tell students they will now use their prior knowledge of the structure of the federal government to compare it to the Navajo Nation government. Hand out the Student Worksheet and have students complete it.
9. Collect for assessment purposes.

SESSION TWO

1. Review Session One activities by asking students to identify ways the U.S. and the Navajo Nation governments are alike and different. Discuss the role of tribal governments in our country (e.g., why do we have them, who do they serve, what is their relationship to the federal government).
2. Explain that today they will use information on their charts from Session One to write a summary that explains the role of tribal governments in the United States and compares the Navajo Nation government to the U.S. federal government.
3. Hand back student charts from Session One and give each student a Writing Assignment sheet. Go over the expectations of the writing assignment before students begin their task.

Domestic Dependent Nations: Tribal Governments in the United States

4. Collect summaries for assessment.
5. Ticket Out the Door: Project Words to Reflect Upon and have students write 1-2 sentences about how they feel about the idea of “domestic dependent nations.” Is it time to revisit this term?

Assessment

ELA and Social Sciences

The Student Worksheet can be scored for completeness and accuracy. Students will score at least 80% to merit mastery.

The Writing Assignment can be scored using the grading system provided. Mastery will be considered a score of at least 80 points out of 100.

The Ticket Out the Door can be graded for a 1-2 sentence reflection on how they feel about the term “domestic dependent nations” and should the term be changed. Mastery will be considered logical answers to the prompt.

Extensions

Use the Student Worksheet from Session One and have students compare the Navajo Nation government to that of their state.

Have students compare their state or federal Constitution to that of the Navajo Nation Code.

Have students research information about other tribal governments to compare with the Navajo Nation. See the website:

<https://www.ncsl.org/research/state-tribal-institute/list-of-federal-and-state-recognized-tribes.aspx> to see a list of tribes in each state.

Have students research the type of government the Navajo had historically to compare with that of today.

Sources

Diné Bibeeshaz'Áanii: A Handbook of Navajo Government by David E. Wilkins. Navajo Community College Press. Tsaile, AZ. 1987.

Focus on Navajo Tribal Government by Sylvia Pacheco. Department of Curriculum Materials Development. Central Consolidated School District No. 22. Shiprock, New Mexico. 1984.
<http://eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED265992.pdf>

Navajo Nation Government <https://www.navajo-nsn.gov/history.htm>

Navajo Nation Code <http://www.nnols.org/navajo-nation-code.aspx>