Overview

Students often have little concept of life “before them.” How did people communicate before cell phones and mass media? How did people purchase items before credit cards and electronic transfers of money?

Purpose

In this lesson, students will read background information about wampum, a string of beads used by American Indians as a form of currency and...
**Wampum: Money vs. Communication**

Students will also calculate lengths in metric and the customary units.

**Materials**
- Wampum Pictures
- Wampum Background Information Sheet
- Math Assessments (meters and customary units) and Answer Keys
- Geography Assessment and Answer Key
- Grading Rubric for Mathematics Questions

**Objectives**
The student will be able to:

1. Identify the uses for wampum.
2. Calculate units of measurement within the metric or customary system.
3. Continue a pattern following a given rule.

**Procedures**
*Prerequisite skill: Students should have experience changing units within the metric system.*

1. Project the Wampum Pictures. Discuss the variety in shells and styles of weaving or stringing the beads.
2. Distribute Wampum Background Information Sheet. Read, and discuss the uses and history of wampum for American Indians and European colonists.
3. Distribute the geography assessment. Have students complete the assessment.
4. Project the Wampum Pictures again. Distribute the Math Assessment (customary units). Have students complete the assessment.
5. Distribute the Math Assessment (meters). Have students complete the assessment.

**Assessment**

**Geography and History**
The Geography Assessment can be graded for accuracy. Mastery will be 5 out of 6 correct answers on the geography assessment.

**Mathematics**
The calculations of the math assessment will be evaluated using the grading rubric (4 points possible for each problem). Competency is 25 points out of 32 possible points for each system of measurement.

**Extensions**

Students could make their own strings of beads using small glass beads. They could determine the value of the strings of beads.


**Sources**

**Active Websites**
- [http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~jcahill/wampum.htm](http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~jcahill/wampum.htm)
- Barbara Gray-Kanatiiosh, series of books, [https://www.google.com](https://www.google.com)

**Inactive Websites**
- [www.thebeadsite.com](http://www.thebeadsite.com)
- [www.peace45turtleisland.org/pages/wampum2.htm](http://www.peace45turtleisland.org/pages/wampum2.htm)
- [www.slider.com/enc/55000/wampum.htm](http://www.slider.com/enc/55000/wampum.htm)
- [www.wampumworks.com/history.html](http://www.wampumworks.com/history.html)