

# Mini-Lesson: Arizona's Native Americans-- Prehistoric to Now

|                            |              |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Author:</b>             | Noel McClure |
| <b>Grade Level(s)</b>      | 3-4          |
| <b>Duration in Minutes</b> | 40           |

## Overview

In this mini-lesson, students gain historical and geographical knowledge from discussions and a series of maps showing the location of prehistoric Indigenous tribes to the current location of tribal nations in Arizona.

## National Geography Standards

### Element 1: The World in Spatial Terms

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information

### Element 4: Human Systems

9. The characteristics, distribution and migration of human populations on Earth's surface

13. How the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of the Earth's surface

### Element 6: The Uses of Geography

17. How to apply geography to interpret the past

18. How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future

## Materials

- Art supplies: colored pencils, crayons, or markers
- Computer, internet access, and projector
- Arizona and its Neighbors (labeled) map  
[http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/map/s/az\\_state\\_labeled.pdf](http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/map/s/az_state_labeled.pdf)
- Prehistoric Cultures of the Southwest map.  
<http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/map/s/sw-prehistoric.pdf>
- Native Land Digital <https://native-land.ca/>
- Arizona's Indian Reservations map  
[http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/map/s/AZ\\_Reservations.pdf](http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/map/s/AZ_Reservations.pdf)

## Procedures

*Prior to this mini-lesson: Become familiar with Native Land Digital <https://native-land.ca/> It has buttons to turn off and on as well as zoom in to anywhere in the world to learn about the Indigenous peoples of that area. Using this website with students is very powerful, so if it is possible for*

*students to experience this map, please allow them to access the site and explore.*

1. Distribute the art supplies and the Arizona and its Neighbors (labeled) map to the students and then project the map.  
[http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/map/s/az\\_state\\_labeled.pdf](http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/map/s/az_state_labeled.pdf) Instruct students to use the map like a notetaking sheet. As you ask a question or give them a direction, they will respond by drawing or writing on the map.
  - What is 1 thing you know about the geography of Arizona?
  - Circle the names of the states that border Arizona.
  - Circle the compass rose.
  - In which direction is New Mexico?
  - In what direction is California?
  - Circle the country that borders Arizona.
  - What is the name of 1 river in Arizona?
  - Draw in the location of some mountains in Arizona.
  - Put dots for 2 cities in Arizona and write the names of the cities near the dots.
  - What are the names of 2 groups of Indigenous people who have reservations or tribal nations in Arizona.
2. Have students pair-share their maps with a neighbor.
3. Share this background information: Over 2,000 years ago, many Native American tribes lived in California and in the Baja near the Gulf of California. Between the two locations, there were three large Indigenous cultures living on the land that we now call Arizona. Much trading went on between these cultures, with one of the major trading centers being near Casa Grande, AZ, just south of Phoenix. Altogether, there were over a million Native Americans living in this geographic area.
4. Distribute and project the Prehistoric Cultures of the Southwest map.  
<http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/map/s/sw-prehistoric.pdf> Again, instruct students to use the map as a notetaking sheet.
  - Color the areas for the 3 prehistoric cultures shown on the map.
  - Write one thing you notice about where the three Prehistoric Cultures were located in the Southwest.

- What is 1 thing you know about what they left behind that we can still see and experience today?
  - Write one thing that you think they did to survive.
  - Are these cultures still in that area of the map today? Yes or No
5. Discuss the students' answers/observations. Be sure to talk about archeology (archeologists) and how artifacts give us clues as to what life was like for these people. Prehistory means there is no written record, so we look to artifacts for clues. Etc.
  6. Tell the students that people migrate. Sometimes it was to seek safety, food, water, or to avoid dying out so they blended with other cultures.
  7. Project Native Land Digital <https://native-land.ca/> and type in the search bar "Arizona." The map will zoom into show the various Native American cultures found in Arizona. Click on OpenStreetMap Labels which adds modern day boundaries and names of cities. Point out Arizona's rich Indigenous landscape.
  8. End the mini-lesson by projecting Arizona's Indian Reservations map [http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/s/AZ\\_Reservations.pdf](http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/s/AZ_Reservations.pdf) and discussing the tribal nations found in Arizona today.

9. Closure: Have students stand up and partner with a neighbor: Partner A asks B: What happened to the Indigenous Tribes in Arizona? Partner B asks A: How do you compare the areas of land between original settlement areas and current reservations?

## Assessment

While there is no formal assessment for this mini-lesson, the mapwork can be collected and graded for completeness. A post-it or index card at the end of the lesson can be used to gather "3 things I learned today".

## Sources

Arizona and its Neighbors (labeled) map  
[http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/az\\_state\\_labeled.pdf](http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/az_state_labeled.pdf)  
 Prehistoric Cultures of the Southwest map.  
<http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/sw-prehistoric.pdf>  
 Native Land Digital <https://native-land.ca/>  
 Arizona's Indian Reservations map  
[http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/AZ\\_Reservations.pdf](http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/AZ_Reservations.pdf)