



LESSON 3

History of the Coquille Indian Tribe

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- Since Time Immemorial
- History
- Lifeways
- Genocide, Federal Policy and Laws

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students can identify areas in which the Coquille Indian Tribe lived and places that were significant to them.
- Students can describe features of traditional lifeways and culture of the Coquille Indian Tribe, such as foods, tools, and social dynamics.
- Students can describe how life changed for the Coquille Indian Tribe after Euro-Americans arrived in Oregon.
- Students can identify ways in which the Coquille Indian Tribe celebrates its history and culture today and uses it to help tribal members and others.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What are locations and features of the ancestral homeland of the Coquille Indian Tribe?
- What was traditional life like for the Coquille Indian Tribe?
- What did the arrival of Euro-Americans in Oregon mean for the Coquille Indian Tribe?

(Continued on next page)

Overview

This lesson will give students a general knowledge of the history, ancestral territory, and traditional lifeways of the Coquille Indian Tribe. Working in groups, students will use maps, make predictions, and participate in a close reading of a written text that allows them to check their predictions. The text provides other interesting facts about the Tribe, which should provide information and generate questions that can guide their learning in subsequent lessons about the Coquille Indian Tribe.

Background for teachers

The Coquille Indian Tribe has a deep history and connection to the land and waterways of the coastal region of what is now Southwest Oregon. Coquille ancestors lived in independent villages distributed across more than a million acres from the ocean to the Coast Range that encompassed the Coquille River and its tributaries, the South Slough of Coos Bay, Cape Blanco, and Port Orford. There is no precise definition of the Coquille Tribe's ancestral territory; the Tribe's social complexities, trade practices, and seasonal rounds of hunting and gathering took place over a large geographic area without the need for clearly defined borders.



- How does the Coquille Indian Tribe celebrate and share its history and culture today?

LOGISTICS

- Where does the activity take place?
Classroom with group work for engagement.
- How are the students organized?
 - Whole class Teams: 3 – 5
 - Pairs Individually

TIME REQUIRED

One hour

STANDARDS

Oregon social studies standards

Multicultural Studies – 4.7, 4.11, 4.12, 4.14

Geography – 4.7

Historical Knowledge – 4.11, 4.12, 4.14

Oregon social studies standards

Reading Informational Text – 4.RI.1, 4.RI.2, 4.RI.4, 4.RI.7, 4.RI.10

Research to Build and Present Knowledge – 4.W.7, 4.W.8, 4.W.9

Speaking and Listening – 4.SL.1

Coquille ancestors spoke two languages: Miluk and Athabaskan. Miluk was spoken around South Slough and down the coast to Bandon. Athabaskan was spoken along the Coquille River. By the early 1900s, both languages were nearly extinct because white settlers only spoke English and the Tribes' languages were forbidden by Indian boarding schools. Today, the Coquille Indian Tribe is working to help members learn about the languages their ancestors spoke. The name for the Tribe, pronounced "ko-kwell," originates from a Chinuk word for the lamprey eel, "sco-quel," which was an important part of the Tribe's diet and continues to be harvested by Tribal members to this day.

Coquille people built permanent villages along the tidewaters and lower reaches of streams and rivers where food was abundant and travel by canoe was easy. In these villages, Coquille people

MATERIALS

What will be needed for students to engage in this activity?

- Slide Deck – This provides the maps students will use in the physical geography and lifeways prediction activities and can be displayed on screen for use in a whole-class format or can be printed out as a packet for use in small-group or individual learning.
- Physical Geography of the Coquille Indian Tribe worksheet (one copy per student)
- Coquille Indian Tribe Lifeways Prediction Chart (one copy per student)
- History of the Coquille Indian Tribe Student Reader (at least one copy per group of three to five students, or one copy per student if possible)
- Classroom writing surface (blackboard, whiteboard, chalkboard, or chart paper and markers)



built cedar plankhouses that were home to one or more extended families. The plankhouses were sophisticated structures, with hearths and food storage areas.

From spring through fall, Coquille people moved to seasonal camps in upland areas to harvest game and plants. When Coquille families and other groups gathered for communal hunting and gathering activities, it was often a time of celebration and the renewal of kinship and friendship ties. Special occasions were celebrated with potlatches—feasts or parties meant to show the wealth and prestige of the host but also to share that wealth with others. Today, Tribal events such as the Winter Gathering, the Restoration Day Celebration, Solstice Celebration dances, and salmon bakes all harken back to these traditional celebratory practices.

In the 1850s, faced with violence and starvation, Tribal leaders of some of the Coquille villages signed a series of treaties with the U.S. government that resulted in the ceding of their rights to much of their ancestral territory. Congress never ratified the treaties, however, and the U.S. government later refused to federally recognize the existence of Coquille people as a distinct and individual tribe or to acknowledge the Tribe's rights to its ancestral homeland.

The U.S. government ultimately forced many Coquille people and other coastal tribes to move to the Coast Reservation (later known as the Siletz Reservation), despite the fact that the U.S. government had not ratified the treaties or lived up to any of its obligations under those treaties. Many

KEY VOCABULARY

Potlatch – The redistribution of wealth through gift giving and sharing with neighbors; a traditional practice of the Coquille Indian Tribe and other tribes in the Pacific Northwest.

Sacred – Worthy of great reverence and respect.

Extinct (language) – No longer in existence; no longer spoken by people. There are no fluent speakers of Coquille traditional languages alive today, and a full dictionary was not recorded.

Reservation – Land set aside by the U.S. government for Native Americans to live on after they were violently and forcibly removed from their traditional homelands. Reservation lands often were, and are, without adequate resources to sustain the population.

Coquille people died on the way to the reservation. Some remained on the reservation or in the general area when the U.S. government later disbanded it, mixing with and marrying members of other displaced tribes. Others escaped the reservation and returned to live near their former homes. Still others, primarily women, married white immigrants and remained in or near the ancestral territory. The modern Coquille Indian Tribe represents Coquille people whose ancestors never left or who were moved to but later returned from the Siletz Reservation.

The federal government terminated its formal relationship with the Coquille Tribe and several other tribes in Oregon in 1954. After several decades of legal action and persistence, the Tribe regained its federal recognition in 1989. The Coquille Restoration Act restored the Tribe's eligibility to pursue economic development and receive federal funds for health, education, and housing assistance for its members. The act also reaffirmed the sovereignty of the Tribe and its political and legal jurisdiction over its lands and people. Subsequent legislation and land acquisition efforts resulted in the return of small portions of the Tribe's ancestral homelands, including thousands of acres of forest land. This has enabled the Tribe to restore some of the cultural traditions that are connected to these landscapes.

Today, the Tribe has more than a thousand enrolled members, many of whom live within Coos County. The Tribe provides health and other services to its members, sponsors research and cultural preservation efforts and other projects to create income and jobs for its members, and partners with other Native and non-Native cultural and educational groups and institutions. The Tribe also sponsors seasonal trips to harvest traditional foods and materials and to celebrate on the land that was, is, and always will be central to its identity as a people.

Resources

- Coquille Indian Tribe
 - Tribal website: <https://www.coquilletribe.org/>
 - Hockema, D. (2010). *Omashi's baskets: A picture book for kids*. North Bend, OR: Coquille Indian Tribe, Cultural Resources Department.

- Hockema, D. (2011). *Tah's tools: Another picture book for kids*. North Bend, OR: Coquille Indian Tribe, Cultural Resources Department.
- Coos History Museum <https://cooshistory.org/>
- Bulman, T. A. & Rice, G. H. (2009). *Student atlas of Oregon: A classroom atlas for elementary and middle schools*. Portland, OR: Portland State University, Center for Geography Education in Oregon. Retrieved from <https://www.pdx.edu/geography-education/table-of-contents-student-atlas-of-oregon-english>

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- Friends of the South Slough. (2006). *South Slough adventures: Life on a southern Oregon estuary* (2nd. Ed.). Palm Springs, CA: Watchmaker Publishing.
- Hall, R. L. (1991). *The Coquille Indians: Yesterday, today and tomorrow*. Corvallis, OR: Words & Pictures Unlimited.
- Hall, R. L. (1995). *People of the Coquille Estuary: Native use of resources on the Oregon Coast*. Corvallis, OR: Words & Pictures Unlimited.
- Tveskov, M. A. (2000). *The Coos and Coquille: A Northwest Coast historical anthropology*. (Dissertation). Eugene, OR: University of Oregon.
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- Wasson, G. (2001). *Growing up Indian: An emic perspective*. (Dissertation). Eugene, OR: University of Oregon.
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Zybach, B. & Ivy, D. (2013). *Coquille trails: Early historical roads and trails of ancestral Coquille Indian lands, 1826–1875* (2 vols.). Philomath, OR: Coquille Indian Tribe, Inc., North Bend, Oregon and Oregon Websites and Watersheds Project, Inc. Retrieved from http://orww.org/Coquille_Trails/index.html

Considerations for teachers

Assessment

- Students will engage in small-group discussions. The teacher should actively monitor student discussion for correct understanding and should intervene when there are misconceptions or bias.
- Formative assessment can be achieved through teacher observation of student participation in class and group discussions. Summative assessment can be achieved by having students say or write responses to the learning targets, and/or saying or writing a reflection on what they learned about the history of the Coquille Indian Tribe.

Practices

- The teacher must have a grasp of how to read a variety of maps of Oregon (e.g., general reference, physical). This lesson also presupposes that students have familiarity with maps; a review of basic geography and map skills with students may be necessary before beginning the lesson.
- The teacher must have some knowledge of the geography of the southern Oregon Coast, including place names and major mountain ranges and waterways.
- The teacher must be prepared to activate engagement strategies, such as whole-group and small-group discussion.

Learning targets

- I can identify where the Coquille Indian Tribe lives and places that are significant to them.
- I can describe some of what traditional life was like for the Coquille Indian Tribe.

- I can describe how life changed for the Coquille Indian Tribe after Euro-Americans arrived in Oregon.
- I can describe how the Coquille Indian Tribe celebrates and honors its history and culture today.

Reflection/closure

Step 1:

Sum up the lesson by reviewing the learning targets.

Step 2:

Return to the KWL chart (if you created one together) and ask students to share additional questions that arose as they read about the Coquille Indian Tribe. Alternatively, start a “Questions We Have” chart that you can incorporate into other Coquille Indian Tribe lessons and ask students to post their questions on the chart.

Say:

Good work today! We now have some idea of what life was like for the Coquille Indian Tribe in the past and what it is like today. We will be learning more about the tribe in other lessons, so keep up the good thinking and good questions.

Options/extensions

- Have students conduct additional research on the Coquille Indian Tribe using the Tribe’s website (see link in the Resources section).
- If your school is located in or near Coos County, consider taking students to view examples of Coquille Indian Tribe traditional technology at the Coos History Museum or the Bandon Museum. Also, check the museum websites for any educational materials that can be incorporated into this lesson or used by students in follow-up research.

- Have students find images of the plankhouses traditionally used by the Coquille Indian Tribe and other coastal tribes. Have students compare them to their own houses. (Where did people sleep? How were plankhouses kept warm?). If time allows, consider having students draw or construct a plankhouse model using accessible and safe construction supplies.

Activity 1

Warm-Up

Time: 10 minutes

Say:

The Coquille Indian Tribe is one of nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon. As we study a people group, such as this tribe, it's important to understand where they come from. So, today we're going to explore the life and experiences of the Coquille people both past and present. You will work together in groups to investigate the history of the Coquille Indian Tribe.

Step 1: (Optional)

Create a KWL chart with students:

- What do students already know about the Coquille Indian Tribe?
- What do students want to know about the Coquille Indian Tribe?
- What have students learned about the Coquille Indian Tribe?
(Added at the end of the unit).

Step 2:

Post the learning targets and vocabulary words in a highly visible part of the classroom. Briefly review them with students. Clarify the meaning and intent of the learning targets and vocabulary as necessary and add vocabulary words and definitions as needed before or during the lesson.

Activity 2

Physical Geography and Lifeways Prediction Activity

Time: 20 minutes

Step 1:

Assign students into groups of six using your preferred method and have them relocate themselves to work together with their new team.

Step 2:

Distribute copies of the Physical Geography of the Coquille Indian Tribe worksheet to students. Students will be working in groups but should take their own notes on their own worksheets.

Step 3:

Display the PowerPoint slides, if you have not already.

Step 4:

Review with the class the information provided on the Important Things to Know About Maps slide. It provides some cautions about the limitations of maps in understanding the history of the Coquille people and other Native Americans. Native Americans had a more fluid sense of boundaries between people groups that evolved and shifted over thousands of years. Lines on maps were introduced by Euro-American settlers.

Say:

We're going to be looking at some maps that show the area where the Coquille people lived in the past and still live today. The Coquille people lived and traveled through a large area, so we don't know for sure how large the Tribe's territory was. The maps we look at are best guesses based on research from the Tribe and others who have worked with the Tribe.

Activity 2 *(Continued)*

Step 5:

As a class, examine the various maps provided in the PowerPoint slides (described below) to explore the physical characteristics of the homeland of the Coquille Indian Tribe. After examining each map, have students work together with their groups to answer the questions on the worksheet. This map exploration is intended to support students as they make predictions about the lifeways of the Coquille Indian Tribe in the next step of the activity.

- The Physical Regions of the Pacific Northwest map shows the physical geography within the Coquille Indian Tribe's ancestral homeland. If necessary, prompt students to identify the box on the map indicating the approximate homeland.
- The General Reference Map of Oregon shows present day-settlements and roads in and around the Coquille Indian Tribe's ancestral homeland.
- The Coos County, Oregon map provides a more-detailed look at present-day cities and towns in the Coquille Indian Tribe's ancestral homeland, as well as important waterways such as Coos Bay and the Coquille River.
- The Coquille Historical Villages and Special Places map shows approximate locations of Coquille settlements prior to contact with Euro-Americans, as well as other locations that were and are of importance to the tribe.
- The Pre-Contact Indigenous Cultural Regions of Oregon map shows groupings of Native American Tribes in Oregon based on similarities of culture and lifeways shaped by physical landforms and climate and ecological factors. The Coquille Indian Tribe was a part of a larger grouping of Pacific Northwest coastal tribes who shared some features of daily life, culture, and traditional belief systems.
- The Oregon Ecoregions and Oregon Ecoregions in Pictures map provide a sense of the type of climate and vegetation found in the Coquille Indian Tribe's ancestral homeland.

Activity 2 (Continued)

Step 6:

Distribute the copies of the Lifeways Prediction Chart to students. Students will work in groups but should take their own notes on their own copies of the chart.

Step 7:

Have student groups work together. They should use their recorded information from the map examination to make predictions about the food, shelter, crafts, and culture of the Coquille Indian Tribe and provide their justifications for it on the first page of the handout.

Step 8:

Monitor group activity. If student groups get stuck or have a hard time getting started, prompt them to consider the correlation between the land and the environment and the lifestyle of the Coquille Indian Tribe using a think-aloud method such as one of the following examples:

Example 1: *OK, so we know that Coquille Indians used to live in villages on the Oregon Coast, in and around the current towns of Myrtle Point, Coquille, Powers, and Bandon. That area is cool and wet, so people would probably want a house that is sturdy and warm. We also see from the ecoregion pictures that Coquille people lived in and around forests. We're going to predict that they built houses out of wood, and our justification is that they lived in a forest where they could get lots of wood.*

Example 2: *We see that Coquille families lived along the Pacific Ocean, so we think they probably got food from the ocean. We predict that they would eat fish, crabs, mussels, and clams because those are foods that can be found in the Pacific Ocean.*

Activity 2 *(Continued)*

Step 9:

Give student groups about 10 minutes to work on their predictions and justifications, then transition to the next activity.

Say:

Good work using maps and pictures to make predictions! Now, let's read some information about the Coquille Indian Tribe and see if our answers were close or not.

Activity 3

Close Reading Activity

Time: 20 minutes

Step 1:

Distribute copies of the Coquille Tribal History Student Reader, either one copy per group or one copy per student, if possible.

Step 2:

Review the vocabulary list again to explain new or unfamiliar words students may encounter in the article.

Step 3:

Invite groups to read the Tribal History Student Reader together and check and record whether their predictions about aspects of the Coquille Indian Tribe's culture and lifeways were correct. Invite them to also record other interesting facts they learn about the Tribe or questions they have as they read, using the spaces provided on the second page of the handout.

Step 4:

If time permits, invite each group to briefly share whether their lifeways predictions were correct or not and what other interesting things they learned about the Coquille Indian Tribe from the student reader.