

Tribal Sovereignty and the Indian Reorganization Act

Tribal Governments

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	180 minutes
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	4 periods
Course	Oklahoma History, U.S. Government		

Essential Question

What is sovereignty? What was the impact of the Indian Reorganization Act? How do the tribal governments reflect the culture and values of the tribal people?

Summary

In this lesson, students will research, analyze, and evaluate the history of the Indian Reorganization Act, individual tribal governments, and their impact on Native Americans. Students will watch a short video describing the purpose of tribal governments. Then, they will choose one of the 39 Oklahoma tribes, research its constitution, and create a presentation of their findings. After comparing and contrasting various tribal constitutions with the United States Constitution, students will examine the Major Crimes Act and two court cases (McGirt v. Oklahoma and Oklahoma v. Castro-Huerta) to investigate multiple viewpoints and analyze the complex relationships between the federal, state, and tribal governments.

Snapshot

Engage

Students activate prior knowledge and questions they have about the tribal governments.

Explore

Students research a tribe's constitution and create a visual representation of their government.

Explain

Students compare and contrast tribal governments to U.S. governments.

Extend

Students analyze the situation concerning tribal sovereignty, as well as state and federal interest concerning the McGirt ruling.

Evaluate

Students use the I Think/We Think strategy to synthesize how tribal governments assert their authority.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies: United States Government (9th through 12th grade))

OKH.3.5: Explain how American Indian nations lost control over tribal identity and citizenship through congressional action, including the Indian Reorganization Act.
OKH.5.1C: authority to select tribal leaders as opposed to appointment by the federal government

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies: United States Government (9th through 12th grade))

USG.3.3: Summarize and explain the relationships and the responsibilities among national, state, tribal,and local governments.
USG.3.4: Explain that tribal sovereignty is a tribal nation's inherent power to self-govern, such as challenges made regarding the Major Crimes Act.

Attachments

- History of the Indian Reorganization Act—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA - Spanish.docx
- History of the Indian Reorganization Act—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA - Spanish.pdf
- History of the Indian Reorganization Act—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA.docx
- History of the Indian Reorganization Act—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA.pdf
- I Think, We Think—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA - Spanish.docx
- I Think, We Think—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA - Spanish.pdf
- I Think, We Think—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA.docx
- I Think, We Think—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA.pptx
- Tribal Government Relations Jigsaw—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA - Spanish.docx
- Tribal Government Relations Jigsaw—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA - Spanish.pdf
- Tribal Government Relations Jigsaw—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA.docx
- Tribal Government Relations Jigsaw—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA.pdf
- Tribal Government Research Note Catcher—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA - Spanish.docx
- Tribal Government Research Note Catcher—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA - Spanish.pdf
- Tribal Government Research Note Catcher—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA.docx
- Tribal Government Research Note Catcher—Tribal Sovereignty and the IRA.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Tribal Government Research Note Catcher handout (attached; one per student)
- History of the Indian Reorganization Act handout (attached; one per student)
- Tribal Government Relations Jigsaw handout (attached; one per student)
- Poster paper (optional)
- Student devices with internet access

10 minutes

Engage

Guide the lesson using the attached **Lesson Slides**. Introduce the lesson on **slide 2**, then move to **slide 3** to show the essential questions and **slide 4** to show the lesson objective.

Move to **slide 5** and play the "What Do Tribal Governments Do?" video that is embedded in the slide.

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=b37DnbUwK1I

During or after the video, give students time to articulate their knowledge using the I Notice, I Wonder strategy explained on **slide 6**. Discuss what students noticed first and how it relates to their prior knowledge, then discuss their questions. These questions should be referenced through the lesson/unit.

90 minutes

Explore

Teacher's Note: HIVE Access

To access the HIVE board, students should either use the QR code on **slide 7** or use this link: "Oklahoma Tribes and Their Constitutions."

Display **slide 7** and pass out the attached **Tribal Government Research Note Catcher** handout. In groups, have students choose a tribe and research its constitution (executive, legislative, judicial branches) and economic development.

To begin, ask students to navigate to the HIVE, "Oklahoma Tribes and Their Constitutions." Groups should discuss the map and locations of the tribes and the organization of the tribal constitutions' links.

Allow groups around 10 minutes to peruse and choose a tribe.

Once all groups have chosen a tribe, display **slide 8**. Students will now be given 30 minutes to research the tribe and write down pertinent information in the Tribal Government Research Note Catcher.

On **slide 9**, students will have options for how they want to present their findings: on a poster or using Google Slides as a presentation.

Allow groups 20 minutes to complete their presentations. When everyone is finished, have each group present its poster or slides to the class, giving each group 5 minutes.

40 minutes

Explain

Move to **slide 10** pass out the **History of the Indian Reorganization Act** handout. Provide students 20 minutes to read the handout and 10 minutes to use the CUS and Discuss strategy with it.

While reading, students will **circle** any important vocabulary, **underline** any information that supported tribal sovereignty, and **star** any information that is/was troubling for tribal sovereignty. When everyone is finished, discuss markings as a class.

Sample Student Responses

- **Circle**: Indian Citizenship Act, Meriam Report, Indian Reorganization Act
- **Underline**: The Act allowed tribes to regain their governments and were given opportunities to buy some of their land back with help from the U.S. government.
- **Star**: Tribes had to submit their constitution to the U.S. government for approval. If they were truly sovereign, they wouldn't need approval from another government.

Display **slide 11**. Lead an informal discussion of the similarities and differences between tribal governments and the United States government using the Windows and Mirrors strategy. The window allows one to see into experiences and identities different than their own, while the mirror reflects aspects of one's own identity. Give students at least 5–10 minutes for discussion.

30 minutes

Extend

Teacher's Note: Link Availability

Before providing students with the **Tribal Government Relations Jigsaw** handout, ensure that each link is still available.

Move to **slide 12** and pass out the attached **Tribal Government Relations Jigsaw** handout. Place students in groups of four and explain the Jigsaw strategy.

Each person will have a task on the handout to watch a video about information related to the *McGirt v. Oklahoma* court case. They will need to watch the video and summarize the information in the appropriate box.

When every group member has completed their task, then the entire group will complete the final task together, reviewing all the information and explaining how tribal sovereignty fits in with the federal and state governments. When everyone has finished, lead a discussion about the case with the whole class.

10 minutes

Evaluate

On **slide 13**, evaluate students' understanding of the lesson using the I Think/We Think strategy. Pass out a copy of the **I Think/We Think** handout to each student and pose the question, "How do tribes assert their authority?" This strategy can be used as informational assessment and/or reflection over the lesson as a whole.

Have students individually answer this question on the I Think column of their paper. Then, organize students into larger groups to fill out the We Think column of the handout. When everyone is finished, discuss the question as a whole class.

Follow-Up Activities

For more lessons that include indigenous topics, issues, or lessons, visit the K20 Resources: Native American Lessons document.

Resources

- Native Governance Center. (2020, November 6). *What Do Tribal Governments Do?* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b37DnbUwK1I

- K20 Center. (n.d.). I Notice, I Wonder. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/180
- K20 Center. (n.d.). CUS and Discuss. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/162
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Windows and Mirrors. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/948
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Jigsaw. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/179
- K20 Center. (n.d.). I Think/We Think. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/141
- K20 Center. (n.d.). *Oklahoma tribes and their constitutions.* HIVE. https://hive.k20center.ou.edu/boards/35
- K20 Center. (2022, June 9). *What is the Major Crimes Act?* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEoLs7op6Q4