

Analysis of Primary and Secondary Sources: Miwok Indians

A Lesson Plan for the Middle School History Classroom

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with resources from Dr. Rose Borunda , CSUS

Teaching Objectives:

- Students will read and evaluate a selection of primary and secondary sources.
- Student will cite textual evidence and identify bias in the sources.
- Students will corroborate brainstormed ideas against sources to distinguish between facts, misconceptions and stereotypes.
- Students will garner cultural information about Miwok Indians including where and how they lived, what they ate, and other various elements of Native heritage.

Common Core State Standards:

- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1](#)
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2](#)
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

I designed this lesson to address common core skills that I knew my students in particular needed practice with.

Through earlier lessons on primary and secondary sources, I learned my students assumed that primary sources are “good” sources and secondary sources are “bad” sources.

I wanted to clear up this misconception and have my students practice the close reading skills of sourcing and corroboration.

(And learn about Native Americans in the process!)

Pre-Assessment

Have student table groups brainstorm and record anything they know about Native Americans in California on a sheet of paper. Then solicit student responses and write them on poster paper.

Have students consider: What are the names of tribes who have inhabited California? How and where did they live? What did they eat? How did they dress? What are elements of their culture?

Write down any student ideas, including those you know to be false or stereotypical.

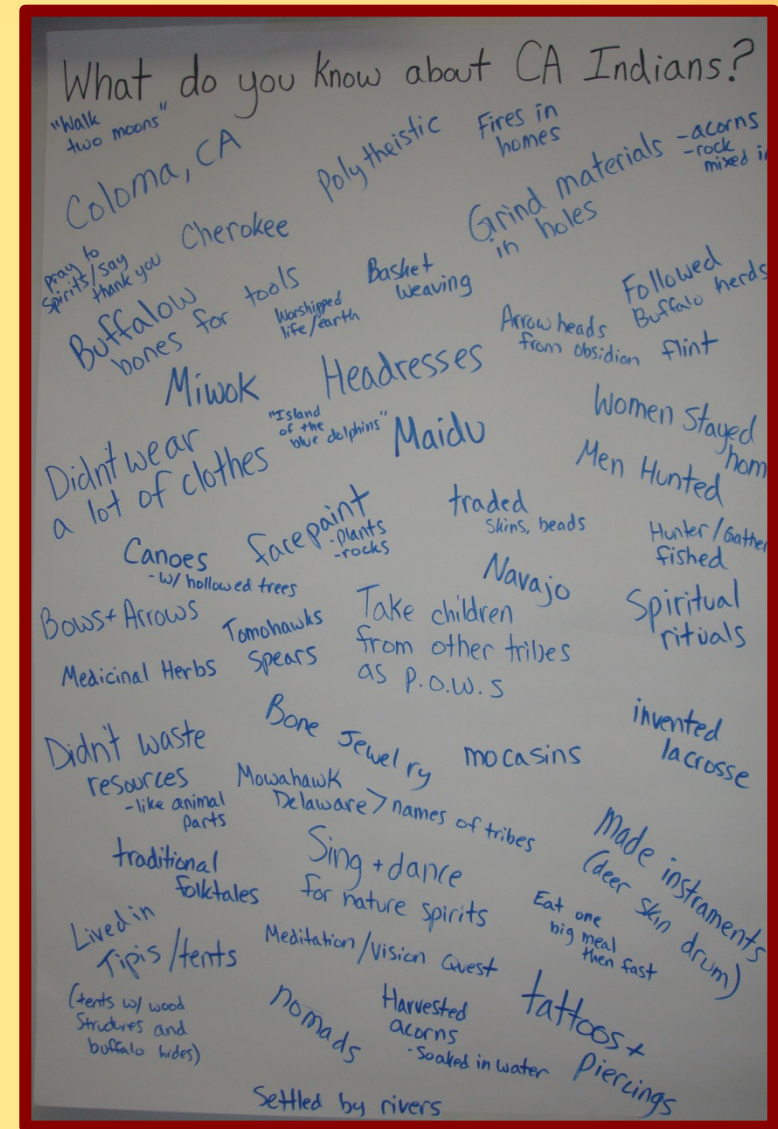
Students will corroborate the ideas they wrote down with the sources used in the main activity.

This part of the lesson plan took a lot longer to facilitate than I had previously planned. Students came up with many different ideas about natives and it took a while to solicit and record their answers.

Right away I could tell most students had a very generalized view of Native Americans. "Tipis, headdresses, totem poles, buffalo"

A few students provided more specific or accurate information. "Maidu, grinding rocks, and hunter/gatherers"

I expect they remembered learning about Indians in elementary school. Some students also said they knew information because they have traveled to places like Coloma, Ca and Indian Grinding Rock State Park.



Introduction

Lead a short class discussion on primary vs. secondary sources.

Have student table groups discuss and record pros and cons of primary and secondary sources on the pro/con chart. Then ask for volunteers to share out and display student answers on the board.

Explain to students they should evaluate the trustworthiness and consider the pros and cons of each source in the following activity.

Pros and Cons of Primary and Secondary Sources

Although historians often rely on primary source documents to provide trustworthy information about a subject, secondary sources, if properly examined, can also be utilized. In your group, discuss the pros and cons of each type of source and complete the chart below.

Primary Sources

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Came from time in history• People who created it experienced the event themselves• Artifacts are hands on, we can experience them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Could be damaged from age• Might be in a language we don't know• Could have been interpreted wrong• There are fewer primary sources• Person who wrote it might be biased• Sometimes difficult to read• Could contain opinions instead of facts

Secondary Sources

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developed and researched• We have internet to easily access information• Often more detailed info• Could be created by scholars and experts• Could have been created using primary sources• Can compare multiple accounts to check for accuracy• Might be easier to read/understand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Could be untrue• Person wasn't there to witness for themselves• Person who wrote it might be biased

Main activity

Ask for a student volunteer to define the word “stereotype”.

Show video Clip

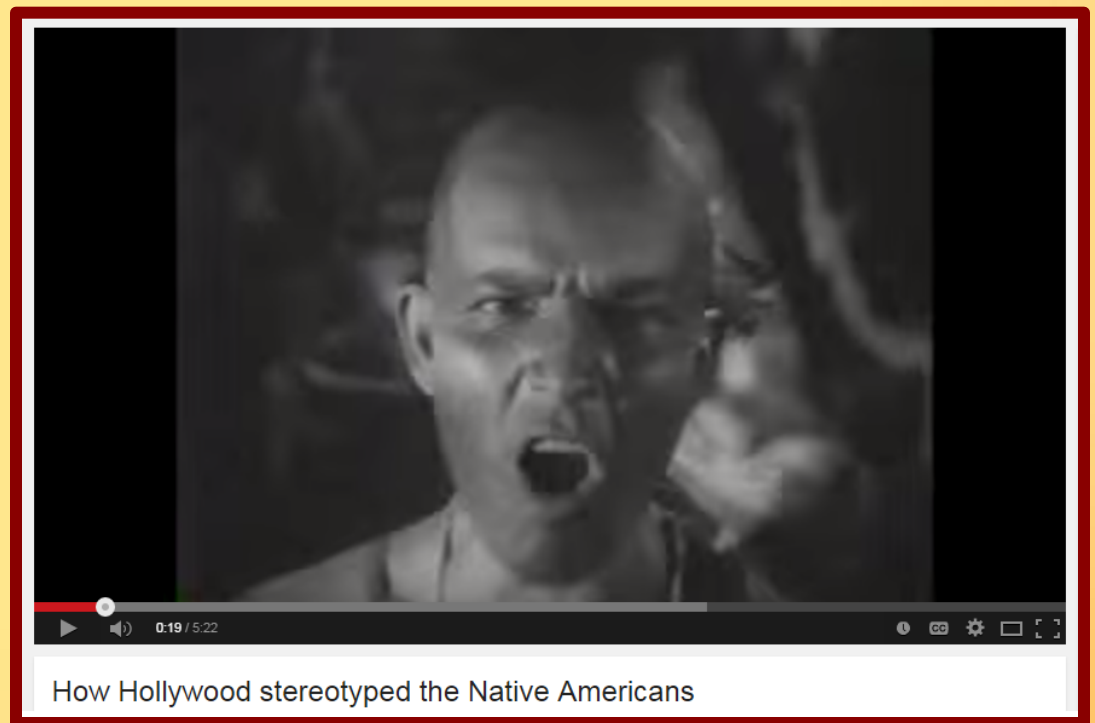
[How Hollywood Stereotyped the Native American](#)

Display questions from graphic organizer and ask student volunteers to answer the questions one by one to practice how they will complete the chart in the next part of the lesson.

Source	Evaluation
What is it?	<div><div>1. Primary or Secondary? (circle) How do you know?</div><div>2. What does the author want you to know?</div><div>3. Does the author show bias? Cite any words that show bias.</div><div>4. Do you trust the accuracy of this source? Why or why not?</div></div>

After watching the video clip, students were immediately able to cite the biased words in the Hollywood films. “savage, injun, primitive”

Students also pointed out that the video clip seems credible because it is Native Americans who offer commentary and give their perspective on the Hollywood films.

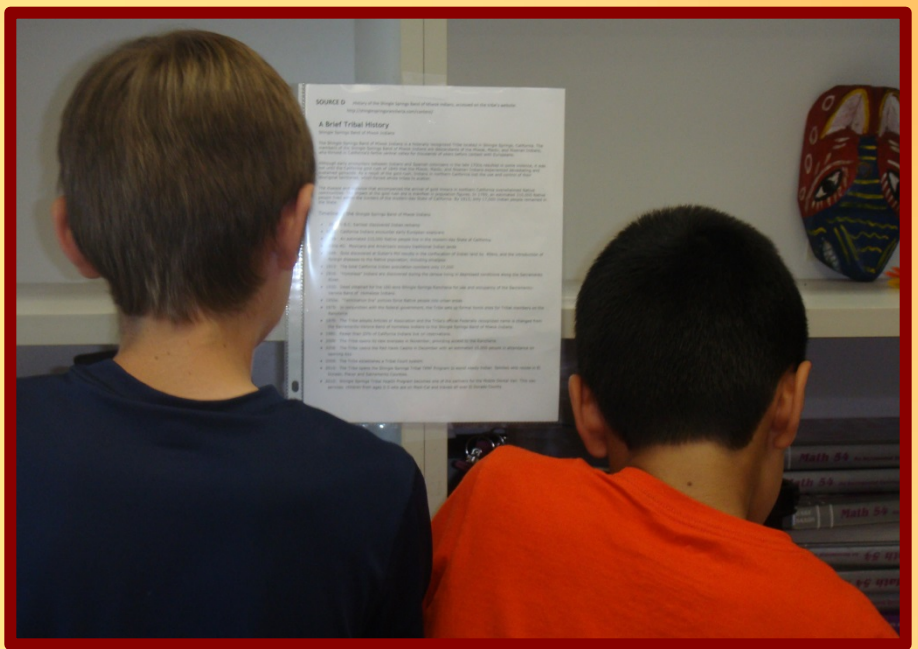


Main activity (continued)

Display sources A-F around the classroom and direct students to rotate to the posted sources, analyzing and completing the graphic organizer for each source.

Remind students to look for information that corroborates the ideas from the brainstorm poster as they analyze the sources.

1. If students are not accustomed to this format, teachers can have groups stay together and move from source to source at set intervals of time. (5-8 minutes per source, rotating when a timer rings)
2. Another option would be to give copies of the sources to each table group and have students analyze the sources without getting out of their seats.



When students have read and analyzed all 6 documents, they should evaluate the trustworthiness of each source and put the sources in order from 1-6, with 1 being the most beneficial source of accurate information, and 6 being the least beneficial source of accurate information.

Students should consider where the information comes from and if it includes bias.

At the bottom of the page, students write one sentence explaining why they ranked the sources how they did.

“I chose Source F for my #1 source because it was from a guy who spent his time with the Miwok and it didn’t show bias” Simran P.

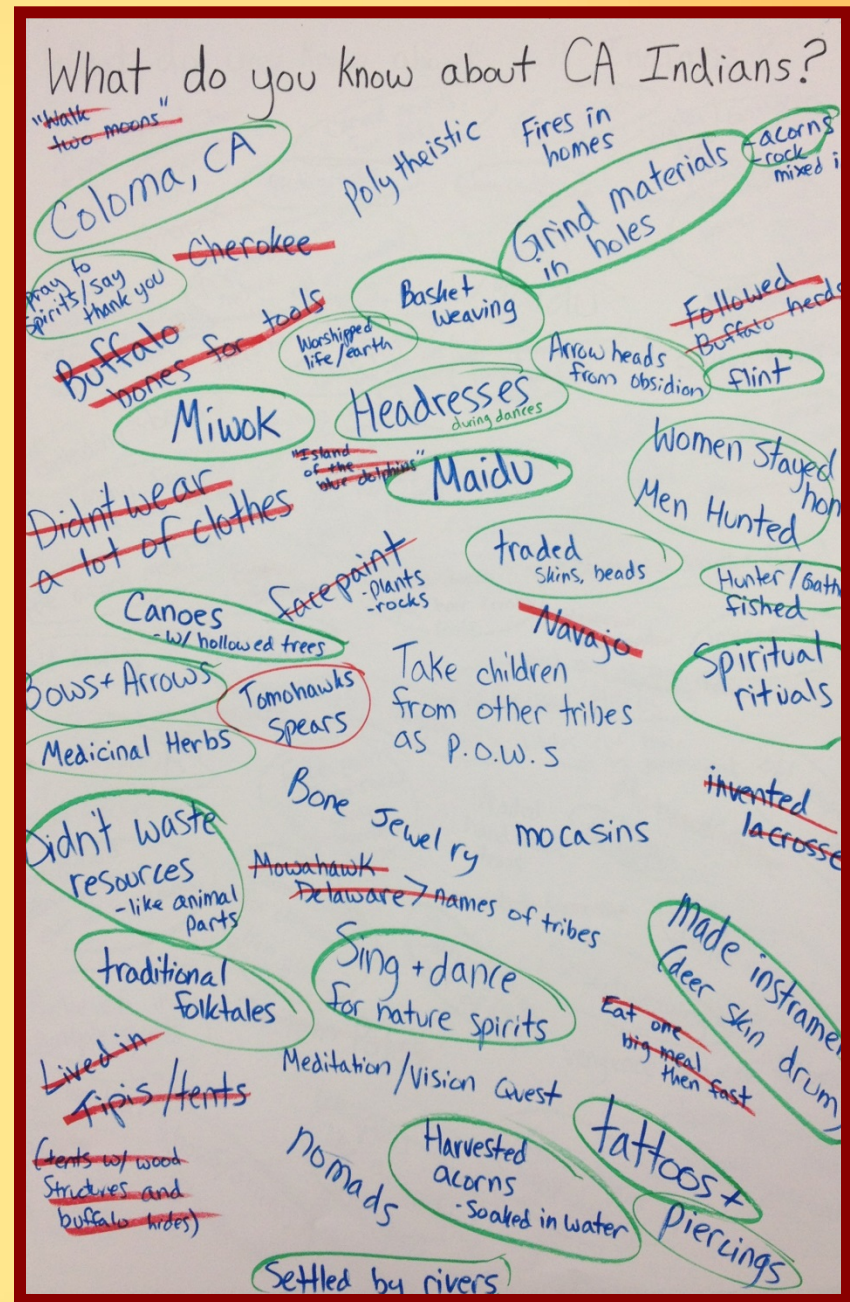
“I chose Source B first because the pictures that were on the doc were very reliable because they are actually a real house from that time period” Clodagh F.

“I chose Source E as most trustworthy because it comes from a historical park” Joe J.

“Source A was a first hand account from an actual Indian, therefore it would be most reliable” Abbie C.

As a class, look back at the original brainstorm poster. Solicit student responses to circle items that proved to be accurate (through source corroboration) and cross out items that were misconceptions.

If students brainstormed ideas were not explained in sources A-F, have them use their cell phones, classroom computers, or other sources of information to validate or refute information on the poster.



Assessment

Students choose one of two prompts to answer in writing:

A misconception I had about Miwok Indians was _____ but now I know _____.

One Native American stereotype is _____ but in reality, _____.

“One Native American stereotype is that Natives Americans are very primitive and ‘beast like’ but in reality the Indians are organized and very advanced.” Trent H.

A misconception I had about Miwok Indians is they hunted buffalo, but now I know they can’t because California does not have any.” Sophia A.

“One Native American stereotype is that Native Americans were used in movies to show that they are savages, but in reality, Native Americans are nothing like savages but religious people that respect the Earth very much, even more than the Americans.” Daneah C.

“One Native American stereotype is that they are savages and primitive, but in reality they are the ones who were outnumbered. They were the ones being persecuted by the white people. The stereotype of the Native American is ridiculous.” Grace T.

A misconception I had about Miwok Indians was that they carved totem poles from trees. Though this was done in Washington, it was not done by the Miwok tribe.” Josiah T. ●

Middle school history curriculum standards

6 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th Grade
6.1 Early Man, adaptations and development of tools, Paleo-Indians in US	7.1 (Rome) Compare/contrast types of government including Native American	8.1 Declaration of Independence “all men created equal”, Native role in American Revolution
6.2 (Egypt) River systems that support early civilizations, evolution of language	7.2 (Islam) Compare/contrast Muslim rule through military conquest and treaties with early US government conquest and treaties with Native Americans	8.2 Magna Carta, English Bill of Rights, Constitution (Iroquois Confederacy), Commerce clause and Indians
6.3 (Hebrews) Compare/contrast monotheistic religions to beliefs of Native American tribes	7.6 (Medieval Europe) Compare/contrast spread of Christianity in Europe with spread of Christianity in US and it's affect on Native Americans	8.3 American political system and where Natives fit in, tribal sovereignty
6.4 (Greece) 6.7 (Rome) Compare contrast types of government including Native American	7.7 Explain how the Aztec and Incan empires were defeated by Spanish, describe artistic and oral traditions	8.5 Native role in War of 1812 and Mexican American War, Indian treaties
	7.9 Understand impact of missionaries on Christianity, locate missions on a map	8.8 Andrew Jackson, Indian Removal

“Columbus Day” October 10

Why are we still celebrating Columbus?

I assume a Columbus Day Sale means I can go into that store and take everything I want.



someecards
user card

Let's celebrate Columbus day by walking into someone's house and telling them we live there now.



someecards

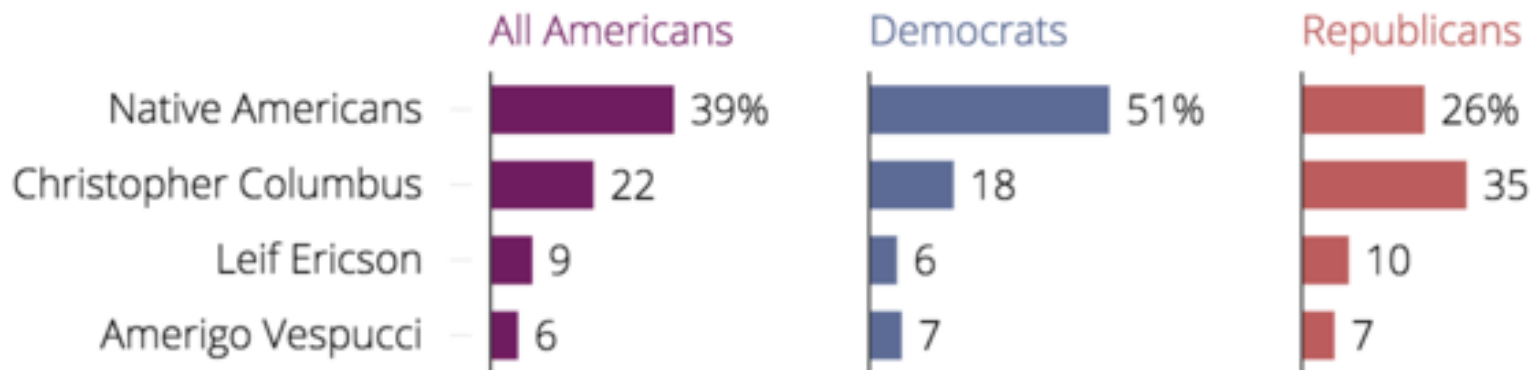
I wasn't sure what to get you for Columbus Day but I settled on genocide. Don't worry, there's plenty for everyone.



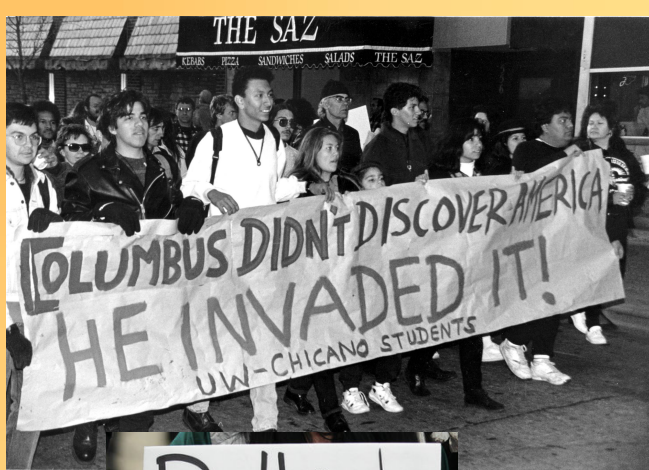
your someecards
someecards.com

In a 2016 Huffington Post article and survey, 38% said we should no longer celebrate Columbus Day

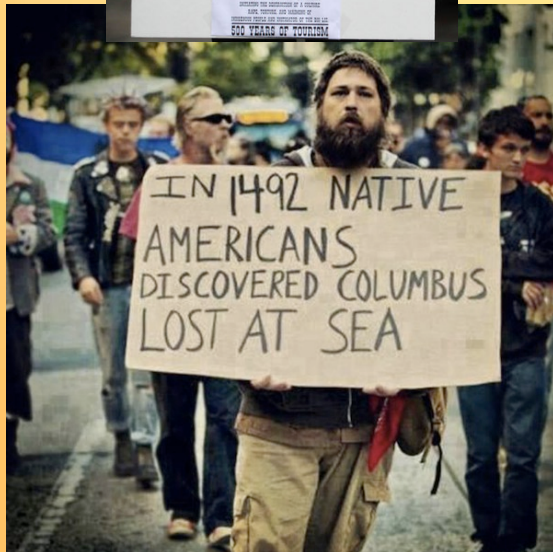
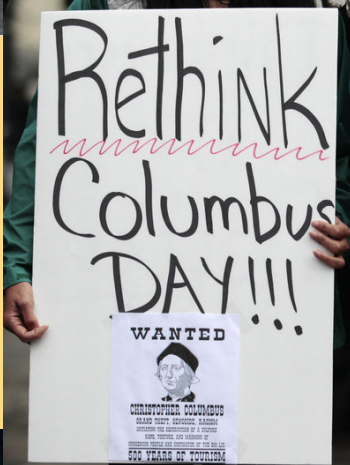
Who Deserves Credit For Discovering America?



Source: HuffPost/YouGov



Many cities are now celebrating Indigenous People's Day



- Started in Berkeley in 1992
- Alaska, Hawaii, and Oregon no longer recognize Columbus Day as a holiday
- South Dakota 1st state to official October 10th Indigenous People's Day
- Minneapolis, Seattle, Anchorage, Portland, Albuquerque, Boulder have all adopted Indigenous People's Day
- 2013 CA AB 55, would have replaced Columbus Day with "Native American Day" but the bill was defeated

One option to teach about Columbus Day:

The People Vs. Columbus
Et. Al

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