

Can You Name the Four Seasons?

Cindy Fry, Sandy Kelnhofer, Barbara Quintasket
Pascal Sherman Indian School, Omak, WA

Summary

Students learn about names, characteristics and traditions of the seasons and observe weather changes throughout the year.

Grade level

Kindergarten

Time required

60 minutes introduction

5 minutes for daily weather observation

15 minutes for monthly graphing

Materials

Chart paper

[Pictures representing each season](#)

[Okanogan Salish words for seasons](#)

Calendar center

Children's books about seasons and weather

Goals

By completing this lesson, students will

- 1) learn the names and characteristics of each season,
- 2) learn the Okanogan traditions, activities and names for each season,
- 3) observe seasonal and monthly weather patterns and
- 4) gain experience in the process skills of inquiry.

Science standards addressed

National Science Standards

- Abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry
- Changes in Earth and sky
- Life cycles of organisms

American Indian Science Standards

- Changes in Earth's surface, weather fluctuations and movements of celestial objects and how they affected historical American Indian community locations, annual migrations, and agricultural and ceremonial cycles

- Objects in the sky as exemplified by historical American Indian lunar calendars, traditional stories, and knowledge of weather patterns, constellations and the habits of birds
- Observations and understandings of nature and ecological relationships traditionally formed an essential base of knowledge among American Indian cultures

Teacher tips

Prior to beginning this lesson, the teacher should do the following things.

- Set up a calendar center to meet the needs of your students.
- Divide the chart paper into four parts and label with the names of the seasons in both Okanogan Salish and English.
- Invite an elder to talk with your class about the seasons and teach them the Okanogan words for seasons.

Background information

In Omak there are four distinct seasons. In earlier times, the Okanogan people's lives were dictated by the seasons. The Okanogans would celebrate the T'etq'asq't at the same time that non-Indians celebrated the New Year. It was the time of the renewal of life.

Okanogan people knew exactly when the Sun was going to journey back north. The men would shoot arrows toward the Moon to try to kill the cold moon as the Sun would come back. It was one of the biggest Indian celebrations and is now being revived by some families in the Omak area.

Procedure

Engagement

- 1) Read a seasons or weather related book, such as *My Favorite Season*, by Dandi.
- 2) Show the class the chart paper divided into four parts. Practice saying the Okanogan Salish words for the seasons, with an elder, if possible. Facilitate discussion about what kind of weather we have in each of the seasons. Record student responses.

Exploration

Set out a variety of pictures representing each season. Allow the students to sort the pictures according to season.

Explanation

Allow students to explain why they sorted the pictures as they did.

Elaboration

- 1) Invite an elder to talk with the students about the seasons and about traditional seasonal activities of the Okanogan people.
- 2) Set up a calendar center. Have a student each day observe and record the weather. Graph the class results each month by weather type. Have students find monthly and seasonal patterns.

Evaluation

- 1) Assess students' ability to name and characterize each season when they report their picture sorting ideas.
- 2) Use informal interview to assess students' abilities to determine weather patterns.

Follow up activities

- 1) Access games and activities about seasons on web sites listed in Resources section.
- 2) Implement the lesson on seasons on the Richland County web site listed in the Resources section.

Resources

Books

Dandi. 1995. My favorite season. Ashland, OH: Landoll, Inc.

Web sites

Carver School Kindergarten - Games and activities on seasons
www.lockhart.k12.tx.us/%7Ecarver/scavhunt/moses/four.html

Richland County School District Teacher Resource Center – Lesson plan on seasons
www.richlandclicks.org/Teacher/connections/kindergarten/seasons.htm