



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 4: Module 1

Overview



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This module supplements the Social Studies content many fourth-grade teachers introduce at the start of the year. It ensures that students read, write, listen, and speak to learn the history and contributions of Native Americans in New York State, particularly the Iroquois Confederacy. Module 1 focuses on reading and listening to primary and secondary sources to gather specific details and determine central ideas, and to reinforce reading fluency and paragraph writing. Students will read literature to develop an understanding of setting, characterization, theme, and informational writing. In the first unit, students will read a recounting of the Native American story of The Great Peacemaker, read short sections of the Iroquois Constitution, or “Great Law of Peace,” and begin to focus on writing explanatory paragraphs. In Unit 2, students read additional informational text about Native Americans in New York with a focus on determining main ideas, and read and hear an extended narrative text (*Eagle Song* by Joseph Bruchac, 840L) that reinforces

knowledge about the Iroquois culture and describes the importance of lessons from that society in the lives of New Yorkers today. At the end of Unit 2, students draw evidence from the literary text to support an analysis of the main character (W.4.9). In Unit 3, students connect the past with the present by studying data designed to help them think about places in their school where agreements like those found in the Iroquois Constitution would benefit the school community. They then develop their own constitution, drawing on their knowledge of the original Iroquois Constitution, ideas from *Eagle Song*, and specific details from magazine articles about conflict resolution. Then students independently write a paragraph in which they explain to others how their constitution will resolve or prevent issues at school. As a final on-demand assessment, students will revisit data and then write a problem/solution style paragraph in which they explain how their constitution could resolve or prevent issues at school.

Guiding Questions And Big Ideas

- **How can our school community benefit from the beliefs and agreements of the Iroquois?**
- *Peace can be created and sustained through agreements and actions.*
- *Clear communication improves communities.*

Performance Task

A Constitution for Our School Community

This performance task gives students a chance to apply their understanding about the beliefs and agreements made by the Iroquois people as evidenced in the Iroquois Constitution, and explain how those beliefs and actions could benefit their school community. After reading texts regarding conflict resolution and data regarding school bullying, students complete two tasks. First, they collaborate with their peers to design a constitution that can help support peace in their school community. Then students independently write a paragraph in which they explain to others how their constitution will resolve or prevent issues at school. **The two-part performance task centers on NYSP12 ELA Standards W.4.2, W.4.5, W.4.9, and L.4.3.**



Content Connections

- This module is designed to address English Language Arts standards. However, the module intentionally incorporates Social Studies content that may align to additional teaching during other parts of the day. These intentional connections are described below.

NYS Social Studies Core Curriculum

- Native Americans—specifically the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee, People of the Longhouse) and the Algonquian—were early inhabitants of the New York region and state, and contributed to the region’s history.
- Systems of government exist to create and enforce laws to protect people and communities.
- Native American groups developed political practices, including a consensus model, that influenced the development of the United States democracy.