



The Great Law Of Peace

Resource Guide

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THE GREAT LAW OF PEACE or The Basis of Our Democracy

THE GREAT LAW OF PEACE has many Iroquois words and names that the students need to be very familiar with in order to better understand the performance. The actor says these names as easily as we say names like *John* and *Mary*, therefore it could be helpful if the audience knew the pronunciation of the names and a little bit about each character or nation. In the following pronunciations, the syllable in capital letters is stressed.

Native American word	Pronunciation	Meaning_
IROQUOIS	<i>ear-uh-KWA</i>	Confederacy of five Native American tribes that joined together to form a united nations.
HIRO-KOUE	<i>hear-oh-KWA</i>	What great Indian speakers said at the end of a speech meaning: I have spoken. When the French heard them say this, they thought it was the name of their tribe, hence the word Iroquois.
MOHAWK	<i>MOE-hawk</i>	one of the 5 Iroquois nations
ONEIDA	<i>oh-KNEE-da</i>	another of the nations
ONONDAGA	<i>uh-nah-DAWG-uh</i>	another of the nations
CAYUGA	<i>khy-YOU-gah</i> (khy=why)	another of the nations
SENECA	<i>SEN-nah-kah</i>	another of the nations
SACHEM	<i>SAY-chem</i>	chief
HIAWATHA	<i>hi-uh-WAH-tha</i>	Onondaga who tries for peace (NOT in Longfellow's poem) family dies as he tries for peace, great speaker
DEGANAWIDA	<i>day-gone-uh-WE-dah</i>	Huron peacemaker who has the vision to form a confederacy, stutters when afraid
TADODAHO	<i>tah-doe-DAH-hoe</i>	Onondaga warrior sachem enjoys fighting, refuses peace, believed to be deformed.

Here are some other historical figures that the artist will portray during THE GREAT LAW OF PEACE. Watch for slight vocal changes/accents, body alterations, visual focus points and the use of props (hats, canes, handkerchiefs) to represent each of the following characters and delineate whom is talking to whom. Note that sometimes, the character is addressing the audience.

CHRISTOBAL COLUMBUS: Italian sailing for Spain (King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella), discovers the Bahamas while aboard the Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria, circa 1492.

JUAN PONCE DE LEON: Spaniard, founder of land in Florida, circa 1513. (Spanish explorers who are mentioned: Francisco Coronado, Francisco Pizarro, Hernando De Soto, Pedro Menendez)

JACQUES CARTIER: Frenchman, discoverer of the St. Lawrence River in 1534. (French explorer who is mentioned: Samuel de Champlain)

WALTER RALEIGH: Englishman, founder of the Roanoke colony of North Carolina in 1585. His brother, received patent from Queen Elizabeth I to colonize the New World.

HENRY HUDSON: Englishman who sailed for the Dutch in 1609, explored New York City.

BEN FRANKLIN: Senior Statesman from Pennsylvania.

KING GEORGE: King of England who the English colonists revolted against.

THOMAS JEFFERSON: Writer of the Declaration of Independence.

JOHN RUTLEDGE Of South Carolina, signer of Declaration and chairman of the committee that was to write the Constitution.

FRAU MARTIN WALDSEMULLER Fictional, wife of great German cartographer (map maker who named America after Amerigo Vespucci).

During THE GREAT LAW, the artist represents Native Americans from 700 years ago as well as many other characters from our history. The dance, at the start of the play, represents the Native American comfortable in their world, at one with nature, until the explorers, from various European nations, arrived and took over their land. The dance then remembers the deadly cycle of revenge and retribution among the feuding Indian nations and prepares for battle against their neighboring tribes.

With masks, the artist plays the different characters of Hiawatha, Deganawida and Tadodaho. Hiawatha and Deganawida are on different sides of one mask. The evil Tadodaho is on one side of another mask and the reformed Tadodaho is on the other side. Listen for slight vocal changes as the artist plays the various characters.

These five nations did not get along. They were involved in blood feuds that lasted for hundreds of years. These feuds were over land, differences or wrong-doings. The only way they thought to get justice was to fight. Consequently, they lived in a constant state of war. Strength was the law. The Great Law of Peace tells how Deganawida and Hiawatha united the five warring nations and formed a government that the founding fathers of our country used as the basis for our democracy. Once united, the five nations of the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga and Seneca controlled over 300,000 square miles from Canada to Georgia and from the Hudson River to the Mississippi River.

Here are some questions that the audience should be able to answer after the performance. At the end of the performance, the artist will do a Q and A.

1. What is a Blood Feud and why did the five Indian nations have them?
2. Who did Hiawatha ask for peace?
3. What happened to Hiawatha's family and why did he leave his village in sorrow?
4. What kind of man was Tadodaho at first?
5. Who had a vision of a great law of peace?
6. Why was Deganawida afraid to speak to large crowds and needed Hiawatha to speak for him?
7. Why didn't Tadodaho want peace at first?
8. How did peace finally come?
9. What is the symbolism of the Great White Pine Tree? The bound arrows? The eagle?
10. What modern day body of the US government conceded that the Great Law of Peace is indeed the model for our Constitution?
11. Why do you think the Great Law's contribution to our constitution has been kept out of our history books? (What is the importance of women in Iroquois society?)
12. Here are only some of the tenets of the Great Law of Peace, notice the similarity to our constitution:
 - Government of the people, by the people and for the people.
 - Life, property and liberty must be preserved in order to find happiness.
 - Union of 5 nations, the people established unchangeable laws that constitute justice.
 - Sachems discuss matters of mutual importance and differences will be resolved.
 - All opinions are respected and decisions for the united nations are made by consensus.
 - Each nation determined its own system of Government, gave up the right to take justice into their own hands and voluntarily joined together to consider the problems of the whole.
 - A Sachem had a council to help him out, also a supreme court where the women chose the leaders and could remove them from office if they did not serve the best interests of the people. Sachems or Leaders had to have consideration for the will of the people and had to have the approval of the people for every law or decision they would make.
 - Right to speak freely and to assemble.
 - No enforced draft, warriors had to be convinced a cause was worth fighting and dying for before they would join in a battle
 - Women had veto power to stop wars.

- Executive branch of government (Tadodaho), a senate (Older Brothers) and a house of representatives (Younger Brothers).
13. What did the European explorers plan to do for laws in the New World?
 14. Why didn't the Americans want their government to be like England's? (What is the difference between the Kings of Europe and the Sachems of the Iroquois?)

ASK THE ARTIST:

Where did the word "savage" come from and what was its' original meaning?

INFORMATION ABOUT THE EARLY IROQUOIS:

Confederacy of Six Nations

made up of the Mohawk-keepers of the eastern door, Seneca-keepers of the western door, Onondagas-fire keepers, Oneidas and Cayugas-the younger brothers. The Tuscaroras became the adopted brothers.

The Iroquois call themselves the Haudensaunee (hoe-dee-no-**show**-knee) or People of the longhouse. The Iroquois lived in houses that were 80-120 feet long and housed several families. Each longhouse was divided into 10-12 foot individual family units. A fire was built in the passageway and shared by all. A large meal was served before noon and at all other times, food was kept simmering on a fire and available when needed. Their villages were protected by wooden palisades.

The Iroquois were a matrilineal society, meaning the descent was traced through the female ancestors. Some people believe this is because a woman was the first to accept Deganawida's *Great Law of Peace*. Women would fish, farm and take care of the home. Their voices were strongest in Tribal and family decisions. Women also named chiefs. Land passed through the female line. The men were hunters, warriors and defenders who would help at harvest time and also fish. Children would learn by watching and helping. The clan was the family unit. Deganawida had the same clans in each of the 5 nations so there would be a sense of unity.

Life was based on respect for each other and a feeling of communal purpose. All took pride in each other's contributions to the life of the community. The Tribes considered they had rights to the territory they occupied but no one owned the land. It could not be bought or sold. Like the sky, land was free and part of the universe in which the Indians lived.

There were celebrations and festivals for every change in season or life event. Since they had no written language, their history was kept alive through the telling of myths and legends, as well as through the weaving of wampum belts. Stories usually taught the importance of leading a good life, respect for others and to uphold the community values.

Articles on THE GREAT LAW OF PEACE and THE CONSTITUTION:

New York Times

June 28, 1987, Sunday page 40: *Iroquois Constitution: A Forerunner to Colonists Democratic Principles*

Christian Science Monitor

September 25, 1987 page 17: *How the Founding Fathers took a page from the Iroquois book* by J. Denis Glover

People Magazine

January 24, 1977 pages 20-22 *Historian Gregory Schaaf A Mother Lode of History Among a Neighbor's Keepsakes* by Louis Thompson

TO CONTACT THE MOHAWK NATION:

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E-mail: Mohawkna@winthrop.slic.com

Mohawk Nation Bookstore: 518-358-3381

IROQUOIS CREED:

He believed that it was natural to be honorable and truthful, and cowardly to lie.

His promise was absolutely binding. He hated and despised a liar and held all falsehood to be a weakness.

He honored his father and mother and their fathers before them and believed in reverence for his parents, and in old age supported them, even as he expected his children to support him.

He believed in peace. The sentiment of universal brotherhood was always his policy because all men were equal. There is no caste system, believing in democracy, equality and brotherhood.

He believed in a forgiving spirit, preferring atonement to revenge, converting enemies to friends. Hospitality was a prime virtue among the Iroquois. No people were more generous.

He did not believe in tyranny and treated his wards with justice, tolerance and restraint. He believed in the sacredness of property, theft among early Indians was unknown.

He believed in cleanliness of body and in purity of morals. Chastity was an established principle with him.

He believed that a truly great man was one who had done something for his people, not one who had accumulated much wealth.

He believed that the earth was the mother of all things and therefore, that no one owned the soil and no one had more title than another.

His whole civil policy was averse of the concentration of power in the hands of any individual, but inclined to the opposite principle of division among a number of equals.

He believed in the equality of women, giving them far more rights than did European peoples.

TREE OF PEACE SOCIETY dedicated to the securing of world peace through the sharing of Tree of Peace plantings by which we are able to share our ancient history. The State of California has issued a legislative resolution supporting the tree plantings. These plantings will continue until we are able to secure a peaceful global world. The planting ceremony addresses the need for disarmament and brings awareness about the effects of environmental damage to all people. To arrange for tree plantings or for more information contact: Tree of Peace society c/o Jake Swamp Box 188-C Mohawk Nation via Akwesasne, NY 13655

FURTHER DISCUSSION:

1. Did you know that the US Constitution was based on an Indian ideal? Why do you think that information is not mentioned in our history books?
2. Revisionism is the advocacy of the revision of an accepted, usually long-standing view, theory, or doctrine, especially a revision of historical events and movements. Discuss who really wrote most of our history. Cite examples from history that used to be true but isn't believed to be true anymore. Discuss what "Revisionist History" is and why it is necessary. What is being done today to give a more balanced view of our history?
3. Look up the constitutions of other countries and compare it with the US Constitution. How many of the Iroquois ideals are in these other constitutions?

4. Compare and contrast the following:

Great Law of Peace with the

This is wisdom and justice of the part of the Great Spirit, to create and raise chiefs, give and establish unchangeable laws, provide rules and customs between the Five Nation, the Indians viz. the Mohawks, the the Oneidas, the Onondagas, the the Cayugas, the Senecas and other nations of Indians here in North America. The object of these laws is to establish peace between the numeras nations of Indians, hostility will be done away with, for the preservation and protection of life, property and liberty. This is the Law of Peace.

US Constitution

We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the Common Defence, promote general Welfare, and secure Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the the United States of America

NATIVE AMERICAN FRUIT ROLLS RECIPE

Ingredients

Pears, apricots, any kind of berries or peaches

Equipment

Cookie sheet

Oven OR do it the original way in
the sun Paper bags

Airtight container

Food processor or blender OR do it the original way with a mortar and pestle OR bowl and
clean stone

Instructions

Wash fruit and remove any pits or seeds.

In food processor or blender puree fruit (In olden days the Native Americans would
mash the fruit in a bowl). Spread fruit on cookie sheet 1 inch thick.

Put in oven at 150 degrees for 4 to 5 hours.

Dry until fruit puree is firm and can be lifted easily from cookie sheet (Native Americans
used to dry it in the hot sun for 8 - 10 days or in a warm place for 1 to 2 weeks).

Peel fruit from cookie sheet, while still slightly
warm and roll. Dry fruit roll in paper bag for 4 to
5 days and then eat!

Store fruit rolls in airtight container.

This is healthier than Fruit Rollups!

IROQUOIS GAME:

Snow Snake

Supplies:

The Great Snowy Outdoors and Cold Weather.

A long, flat, slender, smooth, wooden pole.

Directions:

In an open space, pack the snow to make a narrow track with slight walls on each side of the
track.

Track should be at least 18 feet long.

To make track smooth, water may be used to make it icy (once water freezes)

Player runs toward one end of the track and lets the pole glide onto the track.

Each player gets several tries.

The pole that glides the farthest wins.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS:

The Constitution of the Five Nations or the Iroquois Book of the Great Law by Arthur C. Parker
The University of the State of NY, NY State Museum (Albany, NY), 1916.

Exemplar of Liberty: Native America and the Evolution of Democracy by Donald Grinde Jr. and Bruce Johansen

The Great Law of Peace and The Constitution of the United States of America by Chief Jake Swamp
Akwesasne Notes.

White Roots of Peace by Paul Wallace Chauncy
Press, 1986.

Indians of the Northeast by Lisa Sita
Philadelphia: Courage Books, 1997.

The People of Many Faces by Alex Mogelon
Ontario: Waapoone Publishing, 1994.

Spirits of the Earth: Guide to Native American Nature Symbols, Stories and Ceremonies by Bobby Lake-Thom
New York: Penguin Books, 1997.

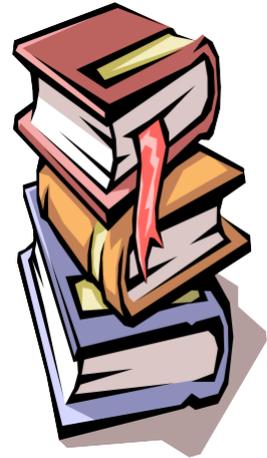
All Roads are Good-Native Voices on Life and Culture Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994.

Before the Storm: American Indians before the Europeans by Allison Lassieur
New York: Facts on File, 1998.

Legends of the Longhouse by Jesse Cornplanter
New York: Lippincott Co., 1938.

New Voices from the Longhouse: An Anthology of Contemporary Iroquois Writing by Joseph Bruchac
Greenfield Center, NY: The Greenfield Review Press, 1989.

The Realm of the Iroquois Time-Life,
1993.



Handbook of the American Indians Vol. 15
Northeast by Bruce G Trigger
Washington, DC: Smithsonian, 1978.

League of the Iroquois
by Lewis Henry
Morgan
Secaucus NY: Citadel Press, 1962.

CULTURAL ACTIVITY

If you have a story, recipe, game, craft or anything that reflects your culture and you would like to share, please send it to:

**Kulture Kids at PO Box 181425 Cleveland Hts, OH
44118**, or E-mail them to: business@kulturekids.org
Check out our website at www.kulturekids.org

We'd love to hear from you! We are especially interested in stories passed down from your family that could help other kids learn how to get along or teach them something. Or, if you'd rather, just answer the following questions and send to Kulture Kids. Thanks!

1. You consider _____ to be your ethnic heritage.
2. Tell us a traditional story or legend, from your family, that is exciting and teaches something. Briefly relate story.
3. Do you know a song and recipe and dance and craft (to make) and games kids around 8-13 might exciting and really like? (It could be something you learned as a child or has been passed down through your family.)
4. Tell us something that is modern and symbolic of your heritage today (e.g. music groups, dances, food, parties, gatherings...). What do you do today to celebrate your heritage? Any holidays? What do you do on these holidays or at family gatherings?

WEB SITES*:

www.kulturekids.org
www.indiancircle.org (*good links to most Native American Nations*)
www.mohawktribe.com
www.native-languages.org/kids.htm
www.firstpeople.us/

** check these sites out before giving to students, as website addresses are subject to change.*