

HISTORY COMES ALIVE

Interactive Programs that Meet Ohio's State Standards

Grades 2, 3, 4, 5

Jack Blosser is an archaeologist and educator with 35 years of experience as the former site manager at Fort Ancient Earthworks and Nature Preserve. He had provided educational programs between 1988 to 2020, educating thousands of school children regarding Native American lifeways spanning over 10,000 years. He is now promoting new and exciting programs designed to meet specific state guidelines for your classroom. Each program is aligned with a specific state standard that applies to the grade level of each class and promises to be a hands-on activity your school children will never forget. A speaker has approximately 5 minutes to connect with the students. If the educator cannot connect with the students, the excitement to learn is diminished. Jack is an exciting, animated, funny, and enthusiastic storyteller who connects with students of all ages, and who genuinely enjoys interacting with children.

Many school children do not have the opportunity to touch and examine artifacts that are over one thousand years old. Authentic and reproduced artifacts are displayed on 18+ feet of table space where students can touch and feel (and wear) a bear or deer pelt along with many other fur bearing animals that live in Ohio today.

In addition, children will learn about, and touch, tools and ornaments made from the natural resources of bone, stone, shell, clay, shell, wood, and animal furs providing everything required to survive and often thrive throughout the year. Children will learn about subsistence strategies, tool manufacturing, jewelry, and hunting tools, average life expectancy and learn how their lives changed through time.

Near the end of each program, if time allows, Jack will play the native flute and tell a moral based story. At the end of the presentation, children will have the opportunity to touch and explore and will be amazed by the artifacts and furs on display.

Applicable State of Ohio Social Studies Standards

2nd Grade

Geography Strand

Spatial thinking and skills

Places and regions

* The work that people do is impacted by the distinctive human and physical characteristics in the place where they live.

Human systems

* Human activities alter the physical environment, both positively and negatively.

* Cultures develop in unique ways, in part through the influence of the physical environment.

* Interactions among cultures lead to sharing ways of life.

Heritage

* Science and technology have changed daily life.

World Languages and Cultures

Interpretive Intercultural Communication (E.INT-C)

* Investigate Intercultural products, practices and perspectives from other cultures.

* Recognize a few typical products and practices related to familiar, everyday life in native and other cultures.

* Identify typical cultural products and practices related to familiar, everyday life in native and other cultures to help understand perspectives.

* Identify and compare typical products and practices related to familiar, everyday life in native and other cultures to help understand perspectives.

* Compare intercultural behaviors, recognize a few very simple behaviors in other cultures.

* Identify familiar or everyday behaviors in other cultures.

* Identify and compare familiar or everyday behaviors in native and other cultures.



3rd Grade

History Strand

- * Historical Thinking and Skills.
- * Primary and secondary sources can be used to show change over time.

Heritage

- * Local communities change over time.

Places and Regions

- * Daily life is influenced by agriculture, industry, and natural resources in different communities.

Human Systems

- * Evidence of positive and negative human modification of the environment can be observed in the local community.
- * Technology demonstrates how applying human knowledge using tools and machines extends human capabilities to meet our needs and wants.

4th Grade

History Strand

Historical thinking and skills

- *Various groups of people have lived in Ohio over time including American Indians.

Human Systems

- * People have modified the environment throughout history resulting in both positive and negative consequences in Ohio.
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Grade 5

History Strand

Historical thinking and skills

* Events can be arranged in order of occurrence using the conventions of B.C. and A.D. or B.C.E. and C.E.

Early civilizations

*Early Indian civilizations (Maya, Inca, Aztec, Mississippian) existed in the Western Hemisphere prior to the arrival of Europeans.

* These civilizations had developed unique governments, social structures, religions, technologies, and agricultural practices.

Heritage

* European exploration and colonization between 1650 -1730 had lasting effects which can be used to understand the Western Hemisphere today.



PREHISTORY VERSES HISTORY

Program Summary

This program will compare the differences between prehistoric tools and jewelry with their historic counterparts, and how this drastic change affected the lives of the Native Americans forever. In contrast students will learn about the first Europeans who contacted the “Prehistoric People” and how the people became “Historic”. Students will learn about the first European contact and the profound effect due to the transition from prehistoric to historic, and how Native Americans adapted to change.

Prior to European contact, Native Americans who lived in what is now in Ohio had no written record; they could not read or write. Children learned through their oral traditions, and adults actively taught children how to thrive using the abundance of mother nature’s resources. Students will be introduced to specific tools made from wood, bone, and stone. Axes, knives, spears, darts and stone arrowheads. Jewelry is made from bone, shell, wood, and stone. Gourds, turtle shells, clay, bark, plant fiber and wood were made into woven baskets, clay pottery, and bowls. A variety of animal furs will be presented to describe subsistence strategies.

During the program, children use their imagination as they hear, “Last night when you went to bed, you were called prehistoric people. Today you wake up and see people who look differently, dress differently and they are writing words that depict what the Europeans were seeing.” When the Europeans put their first words on paper, the prehistoric population suddenly became historic Native Americans overnight. The Europeans brought with them items to trade, objects the native people had never seen metal axes, hammers, knives, arrowheads, glass and metal jewelry and eating utensils. Glass objects are made into beads, bottles and mirrors. In exchange for these new items, Europeans received beaver and other pelts from the Native Americans to bring back to Europe. This changed the lives of the Native Americans forever. Within a generation of European Contact, the Native Americans became dependent upon the trade goods, forgetting how to make traditional stone tools.

THE MOUNDBUILDERS OF THE OHIO VALLEY DURING THE HOPEWELL CULTURE 100 BC-AD500

Program Summary

The golden age of prehistory begins around 100 BC through AD 500 when Native Americans built thousands of mounds for ceremonial and burial purposes. In many mounds, artifacts were found that were produced from raw materials found in various regions from what is now the United States and incorporated into their burial practices.



Copper from northern Michigan, quartz from Arkansas, mica from North Carolina, shark teeth from the southeast United States, conch shells from the Gulf of America, and obsidian from what is now known as Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming.

This program will discuss the significance of the Hopewell cultural peoples trading system with other people living in different regions of what is now the United States, and their subsistence practices that allowed the culture to flourish. In addition, participants will learn how Native Americans developed a complex astronomical method that provided a very accurate prediction of both sun and moon rises to coincide with special spiritual ceremonies. Students will also have the opportunity to physically touch authentic and reproduced artifacts made from exotic raw materials. To engage the class with curiosity, students will be asked questions providing insights on how specific tools were manufactured and used, statistics of hunting and gathering versus farming.

MOTHER NATURE'S RESOURCES

K-2

This program is geared towards the little ones from kindergarten to 2nd grade and is similar to a Show and Tell program. Realizing the attention span of the little ones is approximately 20 minutes, the program, including the time to have a hands-on segment, will be 45 minutes to an hour. Depending upon the grade level, students will either sit in a circle on the floor or remain in their chairs. They will be introduced to a variety of animal furs (muskrat, mink, weasel, raccoon, squirrel, skunk, groundhog, fox, coyote, deer, and bear), along with bone, stone, wood, shell and clay tools and jewelry, all items provided by mother nature. Some of the items they explore include bone awls, fishhooks, rattles made from deer hooves, wood, animal skins, antler tools, deer jaws and deer ribs as musical instruments, and bags made of leather.

OHIO VALLEY PREHISTORY

This program spans over 10,000 years of prehistory of the Paleo, Archaic, Woodland (the mound builders) and Late Prehistoric cultures in the Ohio Valley. Many of the same prehistoric tools presented in other programs will be displayed, plus many other lithic tools including grooved and ungrooved stone axes and celts, hammers, projectiles, grinding stones, the spear and atlatl (spear thrower), and a variety of stone tools made from chert (some people refer to it as flint).

The presentation will include a discussion of how cultures changed over time to accommodate the changing environment. This included subsistence strategies varying from nomadic, semi nomadic, simple horticulture to complex agriculture, and living in permanent villages.



STORYTELLING

Program Summary

At the time of European contact Native Americans did not have a written record, nor could they read. Information and education were taught to children through storytelling and hands-on experiences. At times, a storyteller could be a wanderer, traveling from village to village informing others of things going on in other locations, something like a walking newspaper. Other times a storyteller would be an elder who lived in the village. Stories were often told that conveyed a moral or meaning to the story. Children are much more likely to listen to another adult like a storyteller, aunt, uncle, or grandparent rather than a parent. Near the end of the program, Jack will play the native flute and share a motivational story.

Stories from a Storyteller

“A Turkey Will Tell an Eagle, It Cannot Fly” (summarized)

Many times, people often determine who they are by listening to what others say about them. When they hear it repeatedly, they eventually believe it and will have no confidence in themselves, are timid, and may not have many friends. However, that person also has the ability to believe in themselves and do wonderful things. Do not allow other people to decide who you are, but rather, you decide who you are. You can become whatever or whomever you want to be, and you too will one day fly above the mountains to new chapters in your life.

“The Snake Story” (summarized)

This story conveys the message of the dangers of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and people who have negative influences, all of which should be avoided. The moral of the story is that children will one day become teens, and others will tempt them with “snakes” like tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or people you should not associate with. I then discuss my father who passed at 52 from alcohol and tobacco use, and my sister who passed from the consequences of smoking for a lifetime.

The Wooden Bowl (summarized)

The moral, so many times we often place the elderly aside, ignoring the blessing of their stories accumulated during their long lives. Some elders are discarded because others feel they are too old to do anything, and they must rely on other people to help them with their daily lives. The riches stored in a grandparent’s mind and heart are just waiting to be opened by the younger generation. Elders want to share their past for their future to remember. To let others know they may still be 30 years old in their mind, even though their bodies tell them they are 90. Grandparents want to share their life with you, but you never ask, so they will never share. The next time you see your grandparents or an elderly person you may not know, ask them a question like, “What was life like when you were my age”? You will see their eyes light up and a smile on their face.

How the World Was Created (summarized)

Many Eastern Woodland cultural beliefs have a creation story that involves a turtle, and how the entire world grew from a turtle shell. The moral of this story is that we must treat “Mother Earth” with respect. If you ever doubt we live on Turtle Island, simply look at the ground when the soil is dry and cracked, you will see a very small glimpse of the cracks in the turtle’s shell.