



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1996 Volume III: Race and Representation in American Cinema

“Willie Sunday: A Critical Analysis of Factual Information in Film”

Curriculum Unit 96.03.01
by Geraldine Martin

Introduction

Motion pictures viewed through the critical eye of a puppet and children become the basis for analysis of factual information presented through the art of story telling in film. It is that passive “eye” of the young child that needs guidance and direction as they sit and watch a story via film. Do children bring any thoughts about issues, people or animals as they watch a story on film? Is it true that all Native Americans talk to trees? Is the wolf really a bad “guy” as portrayed in “Little Red Riding Hood?”

With these thoughts in mind, my paper will explore ways in which puppetry and art can be integrated into a unit for helping young children approach film and literature in a more critical manner. As a key component to my unit, I would like to emphasize the active participation of children in using puppetry and art in retelling and analyzing literature through film.

I have chosen two films, “Pocahontas” and “Little Red Riding Hood,” from which I will develop strategies and classroom activities centered around critical analysis of factual information presented in these two stories via cinema. More specifically, the unit would include activities suitable for children in kindergarten through third grades. Along with reading and the language arts, the lesson plans would cover curriculum areas such as math, social studies, science, music and art.

I have been a professional ventriloquist for more than 15 years, having developed many characters with unique personalities, interesting voice variations and a flare for colorful appearances. Many characters have evolved in my first grade classroom, centered around pertinent curriculum areas. For example, Tuesday’s Cup of Sugar and Alphabet Thursday assist in writing and reading stories. Willie and his pal Soundie introduce letters and sounds interwoven into stories. Wednesday Delight introduces poetry, while Friday Fantastic patiently awaits his turn to assist in journal writing. With all of these characters in mind, I will pull the cream of the crop, Willie, call him Willie Sunday and allow him the opportunity to assist the children in their critical analysis of factual information in film.

Willie Sunday is a delightful puppet, appealing to children of all age groups. However, looking at his appearance, one wonders why his character is so compelling. His hair is a mess, his clothes give him a droopy appearance as if something is lacking, and his feet are two sizes too small. Indeed something is lacking—he has no hands. That may bother a few children, but then Willie is so accepting of them, it really doesn’t matter

for very long. In fact, it just adds to his appeal. Perhaps it is his appeal coming through his voice that makes him so charming, urging children to plead for him to stay a little longer before leaving or shout for glee when he makes a re-entry. At any rate, Willie Sunday will be around for awhile, at least four weeks, charming the boys and girls in first grade with all of his magical dust that he can muster to keep them motivated, excited and lured into developing a critical eye for watching stories via film.

I teach first grade in a self-contained classroom at L. W. Beecher School on Jewell Street in New Haven. My classroom contains approximately 26 children from a variety of ethnic backgrounds with varying abilities in the six to eight year old age range. Along with a need for improved vocabulary, many children exhibit poor self-images and have difficulty conveying their thoughts and feelings. I want the children to be able to draw upon their inner strengths, enhance their academic skills and strengthen their overall social-emotional development.

Objectives My overall objectives for the course of my curriculum unit are:

- (1) To provide an interactive experience through the use of puppetry and film in:
 - a. self-expression
 - b. small groups of two or four
 - c. Large group interaction
- (2) To help the children stimulate intellectual and cognitive development in a classroom setting.
 - a. with creative puppetry
 - b. through written works and illustrated art work
 - c. by a play production
- (3) To improve verbal and reading skills of participants through:
 - a. written language
 - b. memorization of scripts
 - c. rehearsal activities
- (4) To encourage confidence and a positive self-image while participating in class activities.
 - a. as listeners
 - b. as narrators
 - c. as actors
 - d. as members of an audience
- (5) To connect the classroom unit with the school curriculum.
 - a. reading and the language arts curriculum
 - b. science and social studies curriculum
 - c. socialization skills

Strategies Willie Sunday is a puppet who resides in a beige, oval sized suitcase perched on top of a classroom closet shelf. You might ask, "What could possibly be so exciting about a puppet, stuffed in an old suitcase, collecting dust in a classroom closet?" Ask a classroom of twenty-six first graders and you may hear high pitched shouts stating: "Willie, Willie, he's our friend; we lo-o-ove him." Their enthusiastic voices are catching and Willie is soon caught up in all of the excitement as he begins to introduce his special "journey box." As the box opens and Willie talks about a Native American craft that he has tucked neatly away in the box, or pulls out a beautifully bound book about wolves, one soon discovers that the children will be introduced to a wealth of information before they are focused with a critical eye for viewing a film in class. Willie Sunday will introduce his journey box along with two films for a total of three or four weeks. Along with the films, "Pocahontas" and "Little Red Riding Hood," several versions of both stories will be presented in class. Many writings were kept in journals by the early settlers from which information can be gleaned about Pocahontas. Willie Sunday will be sure to inform the children where Pocahontas lived, along with information about her father the great Chief Powhatan and how this Native American group, the Algonquians, lived in the early 1600's. Names such as John Smith, Ratcliffe, Parahunt, and others will be studied along with their ties to Pocahontas. Along with factual information about various happenings and people in the story of Pocahontas, Willie Sunday will give suggestions for critical analysis of the story in the film. One example might be: "See if you can determine in the story of the film who were members of Pocahontas' family. Did these family members fit into the Pocahontas story told in class?" Follow-up activities will include cooperative learning activities where children are paired and discuss themes from the film then report back to class. Journal writing will be included where the children report their critical feelings about the story.

The children will retell or write their own version of Pocahontas using their puppet creations and illustrated art work. For example, the children will make a Pocahontas puppet, write their own version of the story recalling factual information then retell the story using their puppet.

Willie Sunday's journey box will contain a potpourri of crafts, pictures and artifacts from Native American culture. Such things as dolls, pottery, miniature housing, food, jewelry, etc. will be used to teach lessons about early Native American life and contributions to our present society. Many basic food staples that we enjoy today are directly connected to early Native American life. First graders love to eat and we would certainly be remiss if we did not include a Native American lunch. Of course, our main strategy for using the journey box will enable the children to use their knowledge gleaned from our lessons and critically analyze the information presented via stories and illustrations in film. For example, generally speaking when first graders are asked about tribal dwellings, their first impression is that all Native Americans live or have lived in a teepee. Various habitats will be studied with particular emphasis on the woodland housing and its social structure in relationship to the village. We may be brave and build our own village. Certainly a trip to Washington, Connecticut to visit a simulated village will be appropriate for our unit. Comparisons will be made with our study and the illustrations in the film.

Our journey box will not end with the beautiful Pocahontas story. Although it is not clear just how much influence or what part wolves played in the lives of the Powhatan tribes, we know that many Native American tribes from centuries past were greatly influenced by these often misrepresented animals. Willie Sunday's journey box takes another turn in our travels as the children learn about these very stately creatures whose family's social structure maybe more complex and intact than their own. As the children gather information in their wolf book, they will soon view the film "Little Red Riding Hood." What could be more fun than re-writing the story, "Little Red Riding Hood?" Well, the children may have some suggestions, only to be forgotten in a moment, as Willie Sunday enthusiastically guides them in rewriting their own stories.

As a culminating activity, one child's story will be chosen and developed into a play suitable for filming on stage in the school's All Purpose Room. Actual rehearsal times for the development of characters, memorization of scripts, preparation of background scenery, etc. will be accomplished during the after school program. That particular program meets once a week for a period of ninety minutes. The class, generally consisting of fifteen children, is more restrictive in size than the regular classroom. As a result, the after school class becomes more manageable and conducive for the development of a drama production. With fewer children more concentrated effort can be put into the development of characters for the play.

My unit is a part of a team effort including five teachers from L. W. Beecher School. A school-wide celebration day will culminate our team's efforts. On this day our class will display their books and crafts made during our study unit. Our play will be performed on stage for the entire school, parents, grandparents, and community at large.

Stories VIA Film

"Pocahontas"

In the dark woods of Virginia a young princess was born to a stern old Indian chief who ruled over thirty tribes. His name was Powhatan and he named his daughter Pocahontas, a name which signified she would be allowed to play most of the time. Pocahontas became quite agile in the woods as she ran and played with her brothers, Parahunt and Tatacoope, two of her many brothers along with the other boys from her village. She most probably loved to gather berries and herbs, often bringing treats for her family, especially her father which may have led to additional favoritism within the clan. Then one day Powhatan's people encountered the pale faces—from that moment on the course and history of the Algonquian tribe would be interwoven and affected with the intrusion of the Jamestown settlement. Pocahontas' meeting with the prisoner, John Smith, and the "adoption" ritual which may have saved his life also played an important aspect in the history of both the Algonquian tribe and the settlement of Jamestown. In fact, not only was John Smith's life possibility spared, but Jamestown's survival at times became dependent upon the young princess and her generosity of food sent by her father when their storehouses were empty. The kidnapping of Pocahontas by an English sea captain in the hopes for peace became a turning point in the life of Pocahontas. Not only did she learn and adapt many of the English ways, but her marriage to John Rolfe took her on a voyage to England where she met and was admired by the royal family. Had they seen her running swiftly through the forest, dressed only in a deerskin apron, their views of Pocahontas as a princess may have changed. Pocahontas never returned to her home land, she contracted a bronchial infection and died shortly after. Her young son, Thomas, reared by relatives and friends in England, returned to the Chesapeake Bay area later in life as a grown man and became the successor of a large family.

(Week One—Days 1, 2 and 3—"Monday," "Tuesday" and "Wednesday")

As an introduction to our unit, Willie Sunday, (i.e. a classroom puppet) will introduce his journey box. The journey box will be an integral part of our project, bringing a new item each day pertaining to the daily lesson. Willie will announce our study of Pocahontas and tell the class that she and her people lived in the Chesapeake (meaning "Place of Many Shellfish") Bay area of Virginia. The children will find an inflatable ball which happens to be a globe in Willie's journey box. After helping the children find their home state and the Chesapeake area, Willie tells the children to bounce the ball around the circle. Those catching the ball have to find, first, their home state and then the area where Pocahontas was born. Classmates on either side of the "catcher" have to make sure the children have identified the areas correctly.

Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire have written a young reader's edition of *Pocahontas* that will be used for a

guided reading lesson along with several chapters in Mari Hanes' book *Pocahontas: True Princess*. The d'Aulaire's present a beautiful book of colored pictures and factual information that can be easily understood by first graders. Because the life of Pocahontas entails many interesting accounts, the story will be told in three parts over a time period of three days. Part one will relate to her family life as a princess in the Algonquian tribe; part two will include the capture of John Smith; and, part three will deal with the kidnapping of Pocahontas and her marriage to John Rolfe. Although Hanes' book is more suitable for children in grades third through fourth, there are several chapters pertaining to family members that are omitted in the d'Aulaire's book. Therefore, those chapters will be interwoven into part one, relating to the social and family life structure of Pocahontas.

Discussion questions will be interspersed throughout the story over the three day period. For example, we will discuss Pocahontas' position of being in charge of her elder adopted brother, John Smith. According to the story, what activities did Pocahontas engage Captain John Smith in during his stay in her village? Pocahontas was most probably around ten years old at this time and John Smith may have been sixteen years older. Do you know of anyone who is twenty-six years old, possibly an aunt or uncle, or perhaps your mother or father? How would you entertain an elder brother in your home? Would you feel uncomfortable? Why or why not?

(Week One—Days 4 and 5—“Thursday” and “Friday”)

Willie's journey box will be opened with anticipation as he asks the children to guess what he may have stored inside. He will give clues such as: “It contains poles and skin. You can carry it upon your back. You might sleep in it at night.” After the children discover Willie's miniature teepee, we will refresh our memory by going back to d'Aulaire's book and looking at the drawings of Powhatan's village. The children will contrast the two types of housing, making mental notes of the materials used in both types. Feest's book *The Powhatan Tribes* will be used as a reference book for both text and pictures of early dwellings. We will discover that almost 3,000 years ago, the Algonquians migrated from the Great Lakes area, some roaming onto the western plains, hunting bison and using teepees for temporary housing, while others moved into the woodlands further south, using bent saplings and bark or matted weeds for wigwams. (Feest, page 14.) It will be interesting to note that the Masshantucket Pequot Tribes of Connecticut also came from the Algonquian family and that their early dwellings represent this same style of tunnel-shaped frames.

Following a class discussion contrasting Pocahontas' village with architectural style dwellings of Jamestown, we will chart similarities and differences between the early Native American village and our own city. As a cooperative effort with our team unit, children will be paired with third graders and impressions will be illustrated by the children using magic markers and water color. Just for clarification, the first graders will guide the third graders according to the authenticity of the dwellings as they depict their Algonquian villages.

As a follow-up to this lesson, our class will take a field trip to the Native American museum in Washington, Connecticut where we will visit a simulated village, depicting the early woodland dwellings. Here we will learn about the social structure within the early villages. For example, long houses generally housed more than one family and as high as ten families in some instances. From the information gleaned on our field trip excursion and from Nancy Simon and Evelyn Wolfson's book *American Indian Habitats* we will attempt to build our own wigwam. (Depending upon the help we may receive from parents and community resources, the building of our own wigwam may cover a period of several days.)

(Week Two—Days 6 and 7—“Monday” and “Tuesday”)

Willie Sunday begins his lesson by asking the children to close their eyes and imagine that they are running through the woods, jumping over fallen tree trunks, hoping from stone to stone as they cross a small stream,

and, then, rolling down a grassy slope coming to an abrupt stop with head buried in the tall grass while waiting to see which forest animals make their first appearance. He asks the children to tell him about the forest animals they saw in their imaginary forest. Willie tells the children that many of the early Native American children took this journey through the woods and saw many of the animals that they have named. He asks them to tell him about the type of clothing they would wear if they were to take this journey in reality.

Willie looks in his journey box and finds a Native American doll dressed in deerskin clothing. He tells the children that most likely Pocahontas wore deerskin. However, her deerskin was more like an apron and fringed at the bottom. He, also, finds several strings of beads and tells the children that shell beads were used as ornaments, strung onto headbands or necklaces and sometimes used as money in exchange for goods from other tribes. Later, when the English people arrived, they traded the glass beads in exchange for food or other goods that were made within the villages. A note of interest: Grace Steele Woodward tells how Captain Smith was able to tell a convincing story to Chief Powhatan that the glass beads were very rare and used as a sign of nobility, worn only by kings. As a result, Smith was able to convince Powhatan that they were worth more corn in their bartering efforts. (*Pocahontas* , page 80.)

The wearing of beads was a sign of one's importance in Powhatan's villages. Also, hairstyle and dress denoted people's status and role within their village and tribe. Men used a sharp piece of shell and shaved the right side of their heads so that their hair would not entangle in the bow string when they hunted. Young girls cropped their hair to one length while the older women let it grow long in the back. Many of the poorer people, both men and women, clothed themselves with little but leaves woven together leaving their backsides exposed. Deerskin leggings and moccasins were worn for protection during the winter months. Most wealthy people wore robes of deerskin with shells, beads and turkey feathers tied to their clothing. (Feest, pages 25-25.)

Pictures from books and our recollection from our trip to the museum will help us to form a mental picture, depicting the early Native Americans and how they may have looked in Pocahontas' native village. D'Aulaire's book along with Margaret Farquhan's book, *Indian Children of America* and Bernard Mason's book, *The Book of Indian Crafts and Costumes* will be used as reference material.

Impressions will be etched onto stone, using a sharp piece of quartz and then painting the drawing so that we will have our own museum collection of early Native Americans in the classroom. Also, we will want to try our own craftiness in stringing beads, either as necklaces or placing them onto headbands.

(Week Two—Day 7—“Wednesday”)

Willie tells the class that Native American boys were taught to hunt at an early age in games of play. Probably every morning, they practiced throwing stones or shooting arrows at moving targets. Meanwhile, the girls helped their mothers to gather berries and herbs and learned how to cook the meals for their families. He pulls a set of deer antlers from his journey box as he tells the class that venison was a staple meat for the early tribes. We will recall from our trip to the museum how important it was for Native Americans to use most of the animal's parts in their daily village life. For example, the antlers were used to scrape the deerskin for tanning purposes.

Willie's journey box also contains vegetables, such as, beans, corn, squash, and tomatoes. He tells the class that today we are going to be both consumers and scientists. As scientists, we will gather in groups of five or six, study and compare the vegetables that were common in Native American villages as we use a study guide to experiment with the foods. For example, each group will gather information about the color, shape, size and texture of their particular vegetable. After part one is completed along with an illustrated drawing, the teacher

will slice the vegetables and the children will record their impressions about the inside appearance of the food. Recordings will include the appearance of the seeds, (e.g., big or small or lack of seeds), color, smell and taste. At the conclusion of each small group's study, an appointed reader will give their findings to the large group of children. The children will enjoy a tasty dish made from the various vegetables as a closure to this lesson.

(Week Two—Days 8 and 9—“Thursday” and “Friday”)

We have in our storehouses of knowledge many historical facts regarding the life and times of Native American families around the time that Pocahontas grew up in her native village. The children will watch the Disney version of the film “Pocahontas,” taking notes in their journals and coming to their own conclusions about the authenticity of the story and illustrations.

Once again the children will be divided into groups of five or six and given a study sheet to guide their small group discussion. Based upon the information gathered from the story of Pocahontas told in class and the information from Willie's journey box, the children will come to a consensus about issues related to the film that they have seen the day before. One child will be chosen as recorder, reporting back to the large group, as they discuss such questions as: “Do you think Pocahontas is shown as the correct age in the film? If you feel that Pocahontas is not shown as the correct age, why do you think she is shown as a different age? Describe Pocahontas' clothing while living in her native village. Describe her clothing in the film. Describe the hairstyles of the men and women in Powhatan's tribes? Do you feel they are portrayed accurately in the film? Do you feel that the film portrays Pocahontas' relationship with Captain John Smith the way it really happened? Why or why not? Think about the illustrations of Pocahontas' native village. Do you think that the illustrations are accurate?”

(Week Three—Days 11, 12 and 13—“Monday,” “Tuesday” and “Wednesday”)

Today, Willie's journey box will contain a Pocahontas puppet. Willie will give suggestions for making a puppet, using a paper bag as a base and odds and ends of fabric and yam for the clothing and hair. Each child will write their own version of Pocahontas which will be told in class during a special reading period.

(Week Three—Day 14—“Thursday”)

Willie's journey box takes a turn away from the story of Pocahontas. However, the children soon discover that the study of wolves which they are about to embark on had a significant impact on the lives of early Native Americans. Willie finds a beautiful book of colored pictures entitled, *Wolves* by Seymour Simon, depicting wolves in their natural habitat. After showing the pictures from his book, he tells the children that many Native American tribes learned to hunt by watching the hunting maneuvers of the wolves in their natural surroundings. For example, both wolves and Native Americans in Alberta were found to guide buffalo onto a lake of ice where the animals lost their footing and could easily be killed. Additional correspondences in life-styles include the Native American's eating wild plants for medicinal purposes in correlation to the wolf's eating grass for an upset stomach; both Native Americans and wolves used sign language; in times of scarcity of food, Native American hunters ate first, a similar trait of the wolves. (*Of Wolves and Men* , page 99.)

(Weeks Three & Four—Days 15-19—“Friday,” “Monday,” “Tuesday,” “Wednesday,” “Thursday,”)

Over a period of several days, Willie's lessons will capture the hearts and minds of our first grade class. Generally speaking, wolves seem to hold a bad reputation. Unlike the domesticated dog who is deemed man's best friend, many people dislike wolves. However, through our studies, we discover that dogs have descended from wolves many thousands of years ago. Wolves described in many tales are depicted as “sly and cowardly.” Yet when one studies their character and nature, it is soon discovered that they are ranked with

the most intelligent animals in nature. Like dogs, wolves are very loyal to their family and other wolves that they meet. (*Wolves*, page 4.)

The children will keep a daily “Wolf Journal,” recording information that they have studied during the proceeding lessons.

Part 1—Description

Wolves display coats of many colors. They vary from white to shades of cream, gray browns and pure black. Although, today, wolves are generally found in the northwestern parts of the United States and Canada, at one time wolves roamed nearly all of North America, Europe and Asia. Wolves have different personalities; some are leaders and are very social while others prefer to be loners. (*Wolves* , page 5.) Their jaws are very powerful with large pointed teeth in the front so that they can easily hold their prey and slice food into small pieces. They are capable of running for miles without tiring when they are on a hunting expedition. Wolves look very much like a German shepherd dog with thick shaggy fur and a bushy tail.

Part 2—Family Life

Wolves live in packs which is the name of their family. An average wolf pack consists of a male leader, a female and their young, along with close relatives. A wolf pack may have as few as two members or as high as 25 in their group. A group of babies born to a mother is called a litter. Usually there are three to four pups in a litter, but some may have as high as ten or more. Most of the time they hunt, travel, eat and make noises together. The wolves enjoy playing a game of tag with their young. The play helps to prepare the pups for hunting. Mother squeaks when her pups play too roughly; father squeaks when he wants to call his pups. Howling is very important to wolves; they howl by pointing their noses to the sky. Howling is done to assemble the pack before or after a hunt, to warn other wolf packs of their presence, to locate wolves that have been separated from the pack or for pure pleasure. (*Wolves* pages 16-17.)

Part 3—Dwelling

Most wolf packs live in a den that is usually located in a bank or that is situated in a well-drained area. The mother looks for a good place to dig a den. It is hard work; first, she digs a tunnel about the length of a car. The tunnel is narrow so that bigger animals cannot crawl into it. At the end of the tunnel, she hallows out an area just big enough for her and her pups. (*Nature’s Children: Wolves*, page 35.) The wolves do not use bedding in their dens which are kept very clean from any type of litter or debris.

Part 4—Wolf Hunt

Wolves spend about one third of their life in pursuit of food. Wolves may hunt alone when they are hunting smaller animals such as mice, rabbits, squirrels, etc. However, when hunting larger animals such as deer, moose or elk which travel in herds, wolves hunt in packs so that the animals can be more easily cornered. Wolves travel long distances on a hunt, sometimes as many as 60 miles, going without food for three or four days and then gorging themselves with as much as 10 to 20 pounds of meat at one time. The leader of the pack eats first followed by other members of the group. One wolf, usually an uncle or aunt is designated as baby-sitter and stays with the pups at the den while other members of the pack accompany the leader on a hunting expedition. Pups eat partially digested food regurgitated for them by an adult wolf. (*Of Wolves and Men* page 35.)

(Week Four—Day 20—Friday)

Today, Willie tells his class that he wants them to watch a video containing the fairy tale, “Little Red Riding

Hood.” As they watch the video, Willie asks the children to look for different characteristics portrayed in the wolf. Following the video, Willie will ask the children to describe the wolf in the story. Questions like the following will aid our discussion: “Does the wolf travel alone or with a wolf pack? Do you think that in real life, wolves try and disguise themselves so that they can be deceitful? Do they try to trick their predators on a hunt? How? Can you recall the wolf’s main diet? How does the fact that the wolf eats people in “Little Red Riding Hood” hurt the image of the wolf? Do you think the wolf is portrayed as stupid or intelligent? Why?”

As a follow-up to our discussion, the children will write their own version of a story involving a wolf. However, this time we will turn the tables and center our story around a wolf who is more considerate and kind than the wolf in “Little Red Riding Hood.”

From the children’s stories, one or two stories will be chosen and expanded through the help of the entire class. The expanded story will be used as a basis for developing a play that will be produced on stage in the school’s auditorium.

Sample Lesson Plans

Week Two—Days 6 and 7

Lesson Summary : Pocahontas, age ten, dressed in a deerskin apron, with a string of shell beads around her neck, most probably enjoyed running through the tall grasses of the meadows, encountering an abundance of wildlife and wildflowers as she gathered treats of nuts and herbs for her family in the village. With the arrival of the English, glass beads were received in exchange for food and items made in her village. The glass beads became a sign of one’s importance in her father’s villages and were used as ornaments on clothing, headbands or necklaces.

Procedures

1. Willie Sunday, a puppet, will take the children on an imaginary journey through the forest and meadows, asking the children to name the animals they may have encountered.
2. Willie introduces his journey box which contains a Native American doll dressed in deerskin and a string of beads. He explains the type of clothing that Pocahontas most probably wore and tells the children about the significance of the beads. Willie shows pictures from the book *Pocahontas*, along with several other references, giving the children a mental picture of Native Americans in Pocahontas’ day.
3. The children will gather large stones and etch their impressions of children from Pocahontas’ village onto the stones. Magic markers and tempera paint will be used to paint the etchings.
4. The children will string glass beads, forming a pattern that they have learned from a math lesson, (e.g., red, red, white; red, red, white, etc. or any other color pattern they choose.)

Week Two—Day 7

Lesson Summary : Early Native American children were active in their native villages, playing games that taught them skills for later life. Boys participated in a game of throwing stones or shooting arrows at moving targets. Girls were busy helping their mothers gather herbs and vegetables along with preparing meals for their families. Both boys and girls helped to protect the gardens by chasing away any animals that may have strayed into the area looking for a tasty meal.

Procedures

1. Willie Sunday will find a pair of deer antlers in his journey box. He helps the children recall the different animal parts that were used in the daily lives of the early Native Americans. For example, the antlers were used to help scrape the deerskin so that the hide could be tanned and later used for clothing.
2. Willie's journey box also contains foods common to early Native American villages. After introducing the foods, Willie divides the class into groups of four or five, telling them that they will become scientists today as they gather information in their group. Each group will receive a different vegetable (e.g. beans, squash, corn on the cob, tomatoes.) The children will record their information on a fact sheet and report back to class.
3. The children will enjoy a vegetable dish made from the various foods that were studied.

Native American Food Data Sheet

Name of Scientist:

Name of Food:

Where it grows: (vine, stalk, tree, etc.)

Use words to describe what you observe with your food.

1. Outside (skin, peel, etc.)
 - Color
 - Shape, Size
 - Texture (how does it feel)
 - Draw a picture:
2. Inside
 - Color
 - Seeds
 - Smell
 - Taste
 - Draw a picture:

Week Two—Days 8 and 9

Lesson Summary : Pocahontas, a young princess from Chief Powhatan’s tribe, saves the life of John Smith, a Captain of the English who settle in nearby Jamestown. She relies heavily on the wisdom and guidance of Grandmother Willow as she falls in love with the Captain. Together, their lives have the power to bring peace to a troubled land where two different cultures try and live side by side.

1. Willie Sunday will open his journey box containing the Disney version of “Pocahontas.” He will tell the children to listen carefully to the content of the story while viewing the film.
2. The children will take notes in their journals while viewing the film. Each child will give an evaluation of the film at the end of their journal. “Do you feel that the content was portrayed accurately? Why or why not?”
3. The children will gather in groups of four or five, discuss issues related to the film, and, report back to class. Discussion will center around the following questions:
 1. About how old was Pocahontas in the story? Do you think she is older or younger in the film? Why?
 2. Why do you think Disney changed her age in the film?
 3. What type of clothing did Pocahontas wear in the story? What type of clothing is she wearing in the film?
 4. Do you think Pocahontas’ hairstyle is appropriate for her age in the film? In real life do you think Pocahontas would have worn her hair in this style? Why or why not?
 5. Did Pocahontas and Captain John Smith fall in love and get married in real life? Why do you think Disney changed the story?

After School Program

The After School Program meets for a total of six to eight weeks, one day a week for an hour and half session. Children may sign up for this program on a voluntary basis with their parent’s permission. They are chosen on a first come basis until enrollment reaches approximately fifteen children.

The video, “It’s So Nice To Have A wolf Around The House,” will be used as an introduction to our creative drama class. The story centers around a wolf who answers an ad in the newspaper for a house maid. The old man immediately hires the wolf but discovers shortly after that the wolf had posed as a dog. The wolf has a breakdown—everyone cares for him, including the cat, fish and dog. At his trial the fish defends the wolf by telling the judge that it is not fair to judge wolves by their appearances. When the wolf is set free, they throw a big party on the deck. By the end of the story they are all living in Arizona because it is better for the wolf’s health. Discussion will center around questions such as: “Why was the wolf trying to trick the old man? Why

did the fish give a good defense for the wolf?"

The sessions following will be used for rehearsal time for producing a school-wide production on stage. In addition, background scenery and simple costumes will be developed.

A story will be chosen that was written during creative writing in the regular classroom. Either the class or I will help to expand the story and prepare it for a schoolwide play production. One such example that follows was written by first graders, Daniel Byas and Melissa Salinas and expanded by their classmates.

"Little Red"

By Daniel Byas and Melissa Salinas

Once upon a time there was a rabbit called "Little Red." He lived in the woods with his mother and six brothers and sisters. They had a big house in a bunny hole by a big oak tree. Of course, their bunny hole came equipped with a refrigerator and stove along with eight bunny beds.

One day Little Red and his six brothers and sisters were having a breakfast of carrot soup sprinkled with nice green clover grass. After breakfast, Mother asked Little Red to take some nice fresh carrots and juice to Grandma's house. She heard by way of Squeaky Mouse that Grandma had the rabbit flu.

Mother told Little Red to be careful and stay on the path. She knew how curious Little Red could be. She heard through Squeaky Mouse that the big wolf was seen close by the path to Grandma's house.

Now Grandma lived on the other side of the woods by a stream in Farmer Brown's meadow. As Little Red started down the path, he spied some tracks by the side of the path. They were giant tracks. Little Red followed the big tracks. As Little Red looked at the tracks, a big shadow fell over him. He was scared because he did not know who was behind him. As Little Red sat very still, Mr. Wolf looked down on him. Mr. Wolf's stomach began to growl as he thought about a nice rabbit stew that he could have back in his wolf den. Just as Mr. Wolf was about to grab Little Red for his rabbit stew, he thought about the promise that he had made to all of the forest animals. He had promised that he would be a kind wolf and would not cause anymore trouble. So Mr. Wolf offered to help Little Red back on the path and take him to Grandma's house.

When Little Red and Mr. Wolf came to Grandma's house, they found Grandma Rabbit in bed with bubble gum stuck to her mouth. She had just blown a big bubble and when Little Red and Mr. Wolf knocked at the door, the bubble burst all over her face. Mr. Wolf and Little Red helped her to remove the bubble gum. Little Red gave the carrots and juice to Grandma Rabbit. Grandma Rabbit was so excited that she jumped out of bed and gave a piece of bubble gum to Little Red and Mr. Wolf. Then they had a party.

By this time, Little Red's mother was worried because Little Red did not come home. So she and Little Red's six brothers and sisters went looking for Little Red. When they arrived at Grandma Rabbit's house, they saw the party and decided to dance with Little Red, Grandma Rabbit and Mr. Wolf.

Now, if you ever see a wolf at a rabbit party call 911.

Sample Script

"Little Red"

Scene 1—This scene opens with a wolf dressed as the wolf character may have appeared to Little Red Riding Hood when they met at Grandma’s house. The wolf walks back and forth on stage, gesturing as he talks to the audience.

Howly Prowly Wolf: Hello ladies and gents. I am so glad to be here with you today. It gives me great pleasure to introduce myself as Howly Prowly Wolf. (He takes a bow.) Now . . . you maybe asking why I am dressed in this modest attire. (Wolf gestures towards his clothing and then places hands on his hips before pacing back and forth again. He stops intermittently and speaks directly to the audience.) Well, you see I was just visiting Grandma’s house waiting for Little Red Riding Hood. I just had a nice tasty meal with Grandma—left over chicken in her refrigerator. I was waiting for Little Red Riding Hood so I could share the goodies in her basket—you know . . . those nice cakes and cookies that her mother packed. (Pauses, puts both hands on hips and looks intently at the audience.) Some of you look like you don’t believe me. Do you really think that we wolves like to eat people? Come, come now, they are much too tough! At least that’s what some of my past relatives reported when they tried a few people steaks. Seriously, I would much rather share a chicken or deer steak with you any day. Really, I do like to share—I have to share or how do you think my wolf pack gets fed. By the way, wolf pack means my family—me, the father, my wife, the mother, our young cubs along with aunts, uncles and cousins. Our pack has ten members, but we could have as many as fourteen or as little as seven or eight. Of course, since I am the leader of the pack, I eat first . . . Well . . . I am the biggest in my pack—in fact, I am the king and everyone knows it. After I’m finished then my other wolf hunters join in the feast. Did you know that we carry some of our fine food back to the den for our cubs where they are being baby sat by another wolf. Would you like to know how we carry food and feed our cubs? (Wolf looks at the audience for a moment with a big grin on his face.) We have a built-in sack called the stomach and we regurgitate or bring our food up for them to eat. Disgusting—yes, but it is very convenient—saves a lot of washing dishes and going to the store for new carrying bags. By the way, going to Grandma’s house was a real treat—we wolves don’t get the chance to raid a refrigerator—just like I told you, we have to get out there and hunt our own deer steak. Do You know how I got my name, Howly Prowly Wolf? Before we go on a hunt, we love to howl and sing songs. We do that after a hunt too so that we can all travel back to the den together. Sometimes we howl just for the fun of it or to let another pack know that we are close by. Did you know that we use to live all over North America—yes—everywhere—today most of us live in the wilderness parts of Canada and Alaska. I prefer the big wooded areas.

(“Jazz Wolf,” a cassette of contemporary jazz using guitar and saxophone along with howls of wolves is played while rabbit dancers come on stage and perform in the background)

Howly Prowly Wolf: (Howly Prowly walks back and forth in front of the rabbit dancers while they perform their dance routine.) Gol . . . lie, I better be going or I’ll miss the play “Little Red.” (He pauses and looks at the audience.) I really enjoyed my chat with you—I hope you learned something interesting about my family.

(Rabbit dancers end their dance and exit.)

Narrator: Once upon a time there was a rabbit called “Little Red.” He lived with his mother and six brothers and six sisters at the edge of the forest. They had a bug burrow by an old oak tree. Of course, as you can see their burrow was the finest in all of the forest.

Scene 2 (Scene opens with Little Red in bed while his six brothers and sisters are eating breakfast.)

Mother: Let’s see . . . are all of my little bunnies here? (Mother serves breakfast while she counts.) One, two, three, four, five, six . . . I do believe someone is missing . . . now who could that be . . . or, perhaps I miscounted the bowls of carrot soup . . . One, two, three, four, five, six, seven . . . Oh dear, I have seven bowls . . . Did I miscount my bunnies?

Sister: (Tries to interject while mother is counting.) Mother, mother, Little Red is in bed.

Mother: Little Red is in bed you say. Oh my, well of course, there he is . . . I better call Doc Rabbit and have my mind checked . . . seems I just can’t think anymore . . . (Phone rings, mother answers the phone. it is Squeaky Mouse.)

Squeaky Mouse: Mother Rabbit did you know that Granny Rabbit is sick with the rabbit flu? I was under her table looking for bread crumbs. When I couldn’t find any, I thought I better investigate. I found her in bed moaning for carrot juice.

Mother: Oh dear, thank you kindly Squeaky Mouse. I’ll send Little Red right over with fresh carrot juice. (Mother calls Little Red and tells him to take some fresh carrots and juice to Grandma.)

Little Red: (Little Red leaps out of bed.) Did I hear someone say carrots? Carrot juice, carrot soup, carrot cake, carrot bread . . . I’ll take it any way you fix it mother dear.

Mother: I’m sorry, Little Red, you slept right through your breakfast. Now you must hurry and take these nice fresh carrots to Granny who is sick with the rabbit flu. (Mother grabs Little Red’s coat and helps him into it.) But Little Red do be careful and go straight to Grannys house. You don’t have time to be curious today and wonder off the path. Besides, I heard from Fannie Squirrel that Howly Prowly Wolf was seen the other day playing with his little ones. And you know how those wolf fathers are—they like to teach their small ones to hunt by going after us rabbits.

Little Red : . Now mother dear do not fret. Why, with carrots in my pockets, I’ll be at Granny’s house in 30 seconds.

(Little Red skips down the path—the aisle of the auditorium—while the rabbit family exits from

the stage.)

Scene 3 (Narrator: Granny Rabbit lives on the side of the woods by a stream in Farmer Brown's meadow. This scene opens with Little Red walking down the path to Grandma's house.)

Little Red: (Little Red walks down the aisle of the auditorium. He spies some tracks and stops to investigate before he walks onto the stage.) Whow . . . these are big tracks . . . why I can't imagine who made them . . . boy my science teacher would love a sampling of these. Hey . . . I see a bigger one over there. (He stoops down to investigate and freezes.)

Howly Prowly Wolf: (Wolf has been slowly jaunting down the aisle while Little Red is investigating the tracks. He comes behind Little Red and looms over him with arms outstretched. A rumbling noise is made from the background. The wolf smacks his lips and rubs his stomach. Then he turns to the audience as he gestures toward Little Red who remains frozen.) What I wouldn't give for a nice rabbit stew back in my den. Just think what I could have in that rabbit stew—rabbit, of course, (laughs) peanuts, popcorn, watermelon, potato chips, carrots, rice, frosted flakes and tomato juice all in one big stew. (He turns towards Little Red.) Yeah . . . I think I'm going to eat . . .

Little Red: (Little Red pulls a carrot out of his pocket.) A carrot Mr. Wolf.

(Little Red freezes with carrot in hand.)

Howly Prowly Wolf: Yes . . . yes . . . yes . . . just what I've had in mind. (Turns to the audience.) You see I did promise all of the forest creatures that I would be a kind wolf . . . a helping wolf. Come, come Little Red let's be off to Grandma's house.

(Wolf and Little Red exit to the back of the auditorium.)

Scene 4 (Narrator : . Granny is sick in bed while Little Red and Wolf are on their way to deliver the carrots and juice that mother sent.)

(Granny is in bed moaning for carrots and chewing bubble gum. She blows a big bubble and it bursts. Little Red and Wolf walk down the aisle, onto the stage and knock.)

Granny: (Granny moans but cannot talk because of the bubble gum stuck to her mouth and face.)

Little Red and Howly Prowly Wolf: (Little Red and Wolf help to remove the gum and proceed to give Granny the carrots and juice.)

Granny: (Upon seeing the carrots Granny jumps out of bed and yells.) Whoop . . . ie . . . yall want some bubble gum? We are going to party. (Lively music is played while the wolf, Little Red and Granny dance.)

(The music is lowered while the dancing continues. Mother and Little Red’s brothers and sisters come down the aisle in search of Little Red. They stop about half way, freeze and point toward the stage as the narrator tells the audience that they are out searching for Little Red. When the narrator says that they will join in the party, they will go on stage and dance with the other characters for a few seconds. The whole caste freezes while the narrator speaks the last line.)

Narrator: Meanwhile Mother becomes worried about Little Red. She and Little Red’s brothers and sisters go out in search of him. When they come to Granny’s house they join in the party. (Narrator pauses for a few seconds while the search team joins the others on stage.) And . . . if you ever see a wolf dancing with a rabbit call 911.

Teacher’s Bibliography

Aamodt, Alice and Johnson, Sylvia. *Wolf Pack: Tracking Wolves in the Wild* . Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, Co., 1985. The book gives an informative account along with colored illustrations about the wolf pack and its hierarchy among group members. One section explains and shows how biologists use airplanes and tracking collars.

Bonvillain, Nancy. *The Mohawk* . New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1992. A reference book with pictures—both black and white and colored about the early life and history of the Mohawk Tribe.

Feest, Christian. *The Powhatan Tribes* , New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1990. Excellent material relating the life and times of the Powhatan Tribe with emphasis on the period around the settling of Jamestown. One chapter gives references to Pocahontas “Powhatan, Pocahontas the Peace.”

Fritz, Jean. *The Double Life of Pocahontas* . New York: Penguin Books USA, Inc., 1983. A beautiful book that helps to dispel myth surrounding the life of Pocahontas.

Gerson, Noel. *Survival: Jamestown* . New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1967. A story about the establishment of Jamestown and how the settlers survived with the help of the Chickahominy Tribe.

Hall-Quest Olga. *Jamestown Adventure* . E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1950. A story about the adventures of the early settlers in Jamestown. The story of Pocahontas is interwoven into the story.

Hanes, Mari. *Pocahontas* . Sisters: Questar Publishers, Inc., 1995. An absolutely lovely account of the beautiful Indian woman, Pocahontas. Could be read to first graders.

Heiderstadt, Dorothy. *Indian Friends and Foes* . New York: David McKay Co., 1958. A reference book giving information about renown Native Americans of the past.

Jones, Virgil Carrington. *Birth of Liberty* . New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964. An historical account giving information about early Jamestown. The story of Pocahontas and John Smith are interwoven into the account.

Lawrence, R.D.L. *In Praise of Wolves* . New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1986. A wealth of information resulting in thirty years of observation by a skilled and sensitive field naturalist.

Lawrence, R. D. *Secret Go The Wolves* . New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980. Lawrence, a naturalist, writes about his observations of two wolf cubs that he raised and cared for eventually returning them to their natural environment.

Lawson, Marie. *Pocahontas and Captain John Smith: The Story of the Virginia Colony* . New York: Random House, 1950. An interesting account surrounding Jamestown and its never ending strife with Powhatan's Tribes.

Lopez, Barry Holstun. *Of Wolves and Men* . New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1978. A beautiful text offering a wealth of information, both in picture and text.

Mason, Bernard S. *The Book of Indian Crafts and Costumes* . New York: The Ronald Press, Co., 1946. Although in black and white the book displays excellent pictures and drawings of early Native American clothing and head gear relating to cultural areas of the U.S.

Mech, L. David. *The Arctic Wolf* . Stillwater: Voyageur Press, Inc., 1988. Stunningly beautiful pictures with text giving Mech's story of how he came to live with a pack of wolves in the frozen Arctic.

Pringle, Laurence. *Wolfman: Exploring the World of Wolves* . New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1983. A reference book containing text and photographs about a wolfman's pioneering work in tracking wolves.

Russell, Howard. *Indian New England Before the Mayflower* . Hanover: University Press of New England, 1985. An excellent reference book about Native American life in the early 1600's. Some excellent reference material about Native Americans in Connecticut.

Simon, Nancy and Wolfson, Evelyn. *American Indian Habitats* . Simon and Wolfson present an overview of the dwellings and shelters of the North American Tribes.

Thane, Elswyth. *The Virginia Colony* . New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1969. An informative book containing information, pictures and drawings about the early settlement of Jamestown.

Weinstein-Farson. *The Wampanoag* . New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1989. A reference book with text and colored pictures about a tribe, who settled in the Northeast—Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Woodward, Grace Steele. *Pocahontas* . Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1969. A beautiful book written from a historical perspective about the life of Pocahontas.

Children's Bibliography

Belting, Natalia. *Our Fathers Had Powerful Songs* . New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1974. The book presents lyrics to early Native American songs depicting daily living and beliefs about the origins of life and nature.

Brindze, Ruth. *The Story of The Totem Pole* . New York: The Vanguard Press, Inc., 1951. Short stories about

totem poles giving insight into the early life of the Northwestern Indians.

Campbell, Elizabeth. *Jamestown The Beginning* . Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1974. An adventure story with pictures and text giving vivid descriptions of sea travel in the seventeenth century and natural beauty of the Virginian wilderness.

Deming, Therese. *Red People of the Wooded Country* . Chicago: Albert Whitman and Co., 1932. Having lived among Native Americans, Demin writes a fictional story about the adventures of Indian boys interwoven with facts from her personal diary.

Farquhar, Margaret. *Indian Children of America* . New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964. Pictures and easy text give children an insight into the early life of Native American children in the United States.

Fox, Michael. *The Wolf* . New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, Inc., 1973. A beautiful narrative about wolves and their part in helping to preserve the balance of nature in the wilderness areas.

George, Jean Craighead. *The Moon of the Gray Wolves* . New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1969. An informative book about the wolf pack, describing the leadership role in a prehunt song and a hunt for old and weak caribou. The information is given in story form.

Longfellow, Henry. Wadsworth. *Hiawatha* . New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1983. A beautiful rendition of Longfellow's poem, depicts the traditions of early Native American life, particularly in the Northeast. The book contains beautiful colored paintings that capture the spirit of the poem.

Parin d'Aulaire. *Pocahontas* . New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1946. An historical account in an easy reader relates the story and pictures of Pocahontas for young readers.

Ross, Judy. *Nature's Children*. Ontario: Grolier Educational Corp., 1985. A beautiful reference book for children giving information about habits and habitats of wolves along with colorful pictures depicting wolves in their natural surroundings.

Seymour, Simon. *Wolves* . New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1993. An excellent reference book for children dispelling the misconception of wolves. The book contains beautiful colored pictures of wolves in their natural habitat.

Tanner, Helen Hornbeck. *The Ojibwa* . New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1992. Text and pictures, some in color, tell of the coming of the Native Americans to the Great Lakes. Also, presented in the book is present day life on the reservation.

Wellman, Manly Wade. *Jamestown Adventure* . New York: Ives Washburn Inc., 1967. A fictional story interwoven with historical facts.

Teacher Resources

Film Title:

Produced by:

IT'S SO NICE TO HAVE A Learning Corp. of America

WOLF AROUND THE HOUSE

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD Haim Saban and Shuki Levy

POCAHONTAS

Walt Disney

FUN WITH

Liz VonSeggen

CHARACTER VOICES

For more information contact:

One Way Street, Inc.

P. O. Box 2398

Littleton, CO 80161

(303) 790-1188

*One does not have to be a ventriloquist to implement this unit in the classroom. If you want to use a puppet for introducing the lessons, an inexpensive puppet using your own voice variation would be effective.

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

©2019 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University

For terms of use visit <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/terms>