Traditional Games Model Lesson Plan
Ring Games – Grade Three

Stage 1 Desired Results

Established Goals

The health education content standards for third grade are that each student will:

19. express ways to show respect for self and others, including those of traditional and contemporary American Indian cultures and practices.

The health education content standards for third grade are that each student will:

1. perform a combination of motor skills in various contexts.
3. discuss the origin of a game, sport or dance, including traditional and contemporary American Indian contributions and cultures.

***Essential Understanding 1*:** There is great diversity among the twelve sovereign tribes of Montana in their languages, cultures, histories, and governments. Each tribe has a distinct and unique cultural heritage that contributes to modern Montana.

Essential Understandings 3: The ideologies of Native traditional beliefs and spirituality persist into modern day life as tribal cultures, traditions, and languages are still practiced by many American Indian people and are incorporated into how tribes govern and manage their affairs. Additionally, each tribe has its own oral histories [beginning with their origins] which are as valid as written histories. These histories pre-date the "discovery" of North America.

Understandings

- There were similar Indian games with different values for the outcomes of the games.

Essential Questions

- What is the main idea of games of ring and pin?
- How can the skills of ring and pin be used in the modern world?

Students will be able to…

- move through four stations of manual dexterity (eye-hand coordination) and learn concepts of tribal values and origination.

Students will know…

- four examples of ring and pin games (Assiniboine, Sioux, Northern Cheyenne, Zuni).
- the values associated with playing ring and pin games.

Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

Performance Tasks

1. Practicing each of the four games, rotating through stations.
2. Explaining the differences in rules.
3. Telling what values “winning” meant in the historical playing of the games.

Stage 3 Learning Plan

Teaching Area

(indoors or outdoors or in a gym) 50’ x 50’ for 24 students in pairs, six per station

Station 1: Assiniboine Ring & Pin (Tashea)

Station 2: Sioux Ring & Pin (Tasiha unpi)

Station 3: Northern Cheyenne (netȯhenestȯtse or love game)

Station 4: Zuni (Tsikonai ikoshnikia or ring play)

Equipment Needed

Station 1: Three Assiniboine Rings and Pins called Tashea which are seven phalangeal bones, perforated and strung on a thong, with a bone needle at one end and a triangular piece of buckskin, perforated with holes, at the other end.

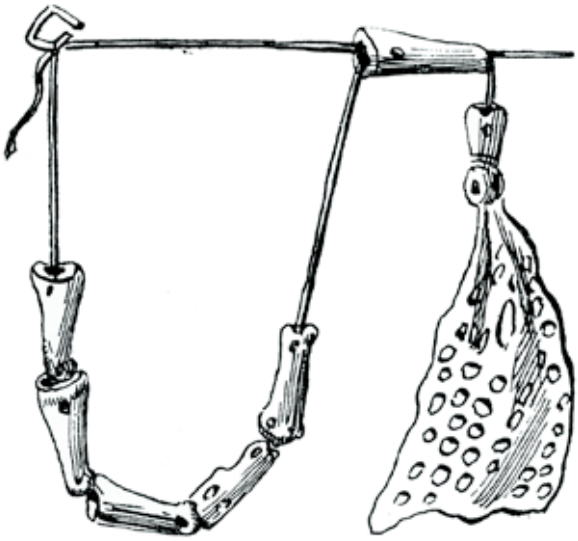

FIG. 737. Taseha; Assiniboin Indians, Montana; cat. no. 60205, Field Columbian Museum.

US. 305.8 SI 11 BAE, Vol. 24 (1902--1903). Holmes, W.H., *Twenty--Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution 1902--1903,* Washington Government Printing Office, 1907. Montana Historical Society Research Center, Archives.

Station 2: Four Sioux Ring and Pins called Tasiha unpi which are six phalangeal bones of deer, strung on a thong 11 inches in length, with a brass needle, 5” in length, attached at one end of the thong, and seven loops of variegated glass beads at the other end. The bones are fluted at the upper edge, except the one nearest the needle, which has small holes around the edge.

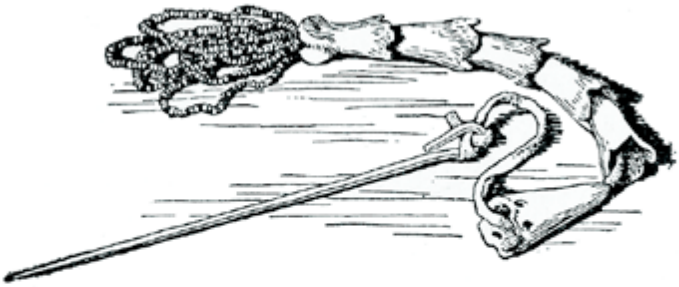

FIG. 739. Tasiha; length of implement, 23½ inches; Oglala Dakota Indians, South Dakota; cat. no. 22122, Free Museum of Science and Art, University of Pennsylvania.

US. 305.8 SI 11 BAE, Vol. 24 (1902--1903). Holmes, W.H., *Twenty--Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution 1902--1903,* Washington Government Printing Office, 1907. Montana Historical Society Research Center, Archives.

Station 3: Four Northern Cheyenne Ring the Sticks (called love game or netȯhenestȯtse in the Cheyenne language). The sticks should be 26” to 28” long with a fake sinew string 28” long attached to the narrow end of the stick. A 2” to 3” willow ring is tied to the other end of the string.

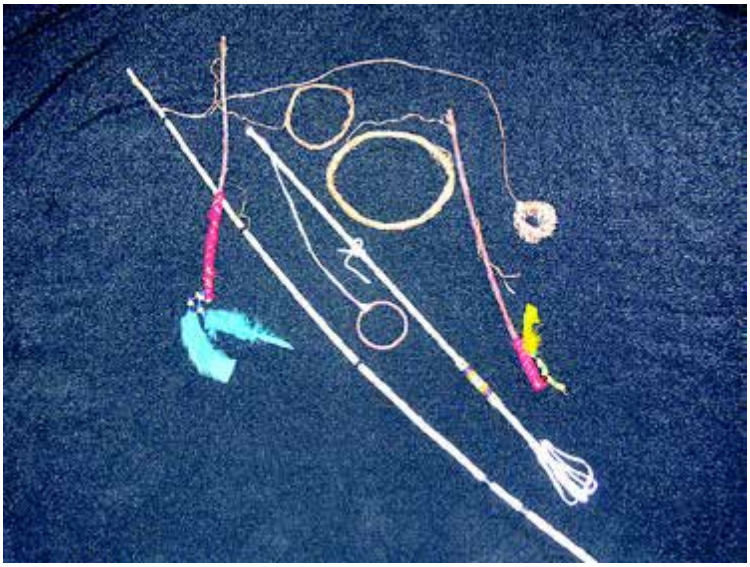

Photo courtesy of DeeAnna Brady-Leader

Station 4: Four Zuni ring play sticks called Tsikonai ikoshnikia Ring wrapped with blue yarn, 2 1/2" in diameter, having three smaller rings, 1 1/2" diameter (red, green, & black) suspended from it, and attached to the end of a twig, 17" or 18" long, by a blue yarn cord.

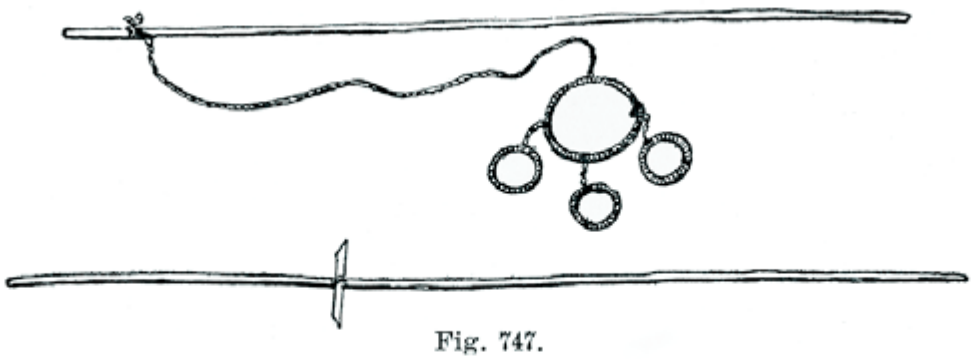

Fig. 747.

FIG. 747. Ring game; length of stick, 17⅛ inches; Zuñi Indians, Zuñi, New Mexico; cat. no. 3059, Brooklyn Institute Museum.

US. 305.8 SI 11 BAE, Vol. 24 (1902--1903). Holmes, W.H., *Twenty--Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution 1902--1903,* Washington Government Printing Office, 1907. Montana Historical Society Research Center, Archives.

Game Rules

Station 1: Assiniboine: Tashea A game formerly much played by young men and women and known as the courting game was played by the Assiniboine as the game of Tashea. The cup (toe bones of the deer, perforated) is swung forward and upward, the buckskin being held by the thumb and forefinger. As the cups descend the attempt is made to catch one or more of them on the end of the toe bones or into the perforations in the triangular piece of buckskin attached to the end of the cord beyond the last cup. The points played are generally 40 with the bones having a numerical value, beginning with the first bone, counting 1; the second, 2, the third, 3, the fourth, 4, the fifth, 5, the six, 6, and the last counted 40 (winning the game instantly). The small holes in the buckskin are worth 4 each, while the large hole (chaute, heart) has a value of 9. At the end of the game, it is important to thank each opponent with a handshake and a respectful nod of the head. The value expressed in this game is kindness and gratefulness for good competition and the fun of playing. (Holmes p. 555).

Station 2: Sioux: Tasiha unpi. Most of the Sioux bands played a version of ring and pin using six phalangeal bones of a deer foot, strung on a thong 11" in length, with a brass needle, 5" in length, attached at one end of the thong, and seven loops of variegated glass beads at the other end. The bones are fluted at the upper edge, except the one nearest the needle, which has small holes around the edge. The strand is swung in the air, and the wire thrust into one of the bones, counting from 1 to 6 for the bones and 1 to 7 for the bead loops, as many loops as the pin hooks through. The total is added for the score of each player. The social skills encouraged in this game are the ability for honesty in keeping scores for other players and for apology if a wrong addition to a score is made. Wagering one's own goods was a part of the old-time game; however, today it is played just for amusement, without any stakes. (Holmes p. 556).

Station 3. Northern Cheyenne: Love Game. Play starts with a ring on the floor or ground. Bringing the stick up, causing the ring to fly up in the air, then end point of the stick attempts to go through the ring.

One point is given for each successful "stick through ring" out of ten tries. (A Northern Cheyenne young man used this game to show his favorite woman he cared for her. If she accepted the game piece or played the game with him, it was an agreement for courting or betrothal.) In modern times, this game is played for fun and to learn eye-hand coordination. The social skill of this game is good humor and "soft" fair teasing" - not to hurt feelings. (Stands in Timber pp. 28 – 30).

Station 4: Zuni Tsikonai ikoshnikia. Players take turns trying to "ring the stick" by getting points according to the end of the long stick passing through one of the four hoops. The large ring, called tsam-mo-so-na, blue, counts 4. One of the small rings, tied with a piece of red yarn and called shi-lo-wa, red, counts 1; another, tied with green, a-shai-na, counts 3, while the third small ring, which is plain black, quin-a, counts 2 points. There are four attempts for each player with the number of points added for each try. The players not attempting the game for that turn are to keep track of the points and (social skill) to offer encouragement or compliments. (Holmes p. 561).

Vocabulary

Wagering - A promise to give something upon the outcome of an event.

Courting - To seek the love or marriage of an admired one.

Forgiveness - To pardon, or to stop being angry with, or giving up the desire to punish.

Humor - The ability to express what is funny.

Fair teasing - Free from meanness . . . in good humor or good nature . . . not mean.

Concepts

"These games are related to the "Hoop & Pole" (where a long arrow is thrown through a rolling hoop) games but are played in a more solitary form. A ring or target is attached to a thong or cord by means of which it is swung in the air, the object being to catch it upon a pin or dart fastened to the other end of the thong or to place the pin through a hoop or a hide piece that is full of small holes. Rings were used less frequently than bones and hides. In a Cree game, there is the flap alone, a disk of stiff buckskin with 23 holes, similar to the concept of the netted hoop of hoop and pole games. In the Siouan games the flap is replaced with strings of glass beads, which count according to the number caught. A cedar-twig and moose hair target of Algonquian tribes is analogous to the archery target of the Crows and the Gros Ventres. Wire needles were used by the end of the 19th century in the Cheyenne, Oglala, and other Siouan tribes, but originally they were all of wood or bone." (Holmes p. 527 – 528)

Some values like "wagering" or "gambling" have positive or negative values in different cultures. It means that "wagering" may not be "right" or "wrong" only "different" in other cultures.

Concepts: thanks, forgiveness, give-away, long nights

Safety

There should be concern for safe distances between all players.

Resources

Books

Culin, Stewart*, Games of the North American Indians*, New York, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 1975.

Holmes, W.H., *Twenty-Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution 1902-1903,* Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1907.

Little Bear, Richard E., *We, The Northern Cheyenne People: Our Land, Our History, Our Culture.* Lame Deer, MT: Chief Dull Knife College, 2008.

Stands in Timber, John. *Cheyenne Memories*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1967.

Traditional Games Video – see the games being played!