

Walking The Path: Lesson Two **Learning from Others' Successful Journeys**

“Everything on the earth has a purpose, every disease an herb to cure it, and every person a mission. This is the Indian theory of existence.”

Mourning Dove (Christine Quintasket), Salish, 1888-1936

Guiding Question:

What can I learn about myself from the personal journeys of others?

Lesson Goal:

Students will understand that by listening to the journeys of others they will learn more about their own.

Short Summary of Lesson:

This lesson will present a panel of successful Native Americans in various careers who will tell the story of how they got where they are in the world. Panelists will discuss their journey of self-identity and self-worth in their lives. The students will be able to ask questions, then follow-up by listening to an audio interview and interviewing a family member/tribal elder who made a successful journey to college.

Skills Emphasized:

- Listening for specific purpose
- Taking notes
- Interview skills
- Analyzing trends across multiple sources
- Letter and report writing
- Oral presentation skills

Materials Needed:

- Panel of 3-4 professional Native American people
- Note-taking guide

Background

Prepare panel members in advance with questions such as the following:

1. Briefly discuss your chosen career and why you decided to enter your field. Be sure to point out people/events from your childhood that had a direct impact on your journey.
2. Think back to the classes you took in high school and college. What courses were most important to you? How did they help you pursue your future goals? What advice would you give to students about their high school and college classes?
3. Think back to the dreams you had when you were in high school. What did you think your future would hold?
4. Tell the class about personal characteristics you possess and the expectations you demand of yourself that made you successful in college.

5. What challenges did you face as a Native American in college? In the work world? How have you overcome those obstacles?
6. What would your life be like if you hadn't gone to college?
7. Based on what you know now, if you could go back to high school and college, what would you do differently?
8. If you were to write your life's story, who would you want to read it and what important lessons would you want them to learn?

Lesson Design

Begin the lesson by reminding students that everyone's life is a journey and that by listening to others we can learn and add to our own.

Introduce the panel by telling students that they have been asked to think back to their high school and college years and talk about what they learned that was most important to their success. Have students take notes and be prepared to ask questions of panel members.

After the panel presentations are complete, ask small groups to use their notes to discuss what they have learned that will help in their journey. Use discussion questions such as:

- What similarities are there in the responses of the panel?
- What obstacles should we be on the look out for?
- According to the panelists, how should we be preparing for our college journey?

Finally, ask students to write an entry in their journals for this part of their journey. Use prompts such as the following:

Day Two

Today we passed several people on our journey. We asked them to share tales of their own journeys. I learned...

It makes me think ...

Questions their stories raised in my mind...

Follow-up

Have students interview a tribal elder or family member using the same questions the panel answered. Students can present their interview notes to the class.