

The Indian New Deal: Continuity and Change for the Havasupai Indians

Duration One to two days

Location Classroom

Key Vocabulary **Progressivism**: a national reform movement that addressed many key issues: ending political corruption, bringing more democratic and efficient methods to governing, and offering a government response to excesses of industrialization between the 1890s and World War I.

“Red Atlantis”: the belief of John Collier that the American Indians of the Taos pueblo were the only people in the Western Hemisphere that possessed a community life which flourished despite “repeated and immense historical shocks.” They built a cultural identity through social institutions.

self-determination: A key concept proposed by U.S. President Woodrow Wilson in his Fourteen Points, a plan for peace outlined in 1918 during World War I. The concept is defined as the freedom of the people of a given territory to determine their own political status or independence from their current state.

assimilation: to absorb and be integrated into a wider culture and society

cultural pluralism: a form of society in which members of minority groups maintain their independent cultural traditions

Trunk Materials

- Master Copy of the *Commissioners of Indian Affairs 1824-1977, “John Collier 1933-45”* by Kenneth R. Philp
- Master Copy of **The Indian Reorganization Act, June 18, 1934**
- Master Copy of **The Constitution and By-Laws of the Havasupai Tribe of the Havasupai Reservation, Arizona**
- Master Copy of **The Dawes Severalty Act, 1887**
- Master Copy of **“A Brief History of Havasupai Formal Political Organization”**

Additional Materials (Not Supplied)

- Student copies of each reading
- Barbara J. Morehouse, *A Place Called Grand Canyon*
- Kenneth R. Philp, *John Collier’s Crusade for Reform, 1920-1954*
- Graham D. Taylor, *The New Deal and American Indian Tribalism*

Enduring Understanding

In 1933 John Collier was appointed commissioner of Indian Affairs. He initiated a number of reforms that became known as the Indian New Deal. As Americans we can understand how federal policies can impact a group of people by studying the effects of this reform movement on the Havasupai. How can past decisions, that created the Grand Canyon, as we know it, guide us to learn ways to make decisions that use the Canyon for the greatest benefit for all Americans? The past is usable. It instructs us in present decisions and in charting a better future.

Essential Questions

- How can the Indian New Deal help us understand the development and impact of federal policies in the Grand Canyon?
- How does the Indian New Deal represent continuity and change in federal government Indian policy?
- Why did federal policies have different effects than intended?

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify characteristics of the Progressive Movement in the life of John Collier, particularly the concept of self-determination. Determine his role in the reform movement called the Indian New Deal.
- Cite evidence of Progressivism in the Constitution and By-Laws of the Havasupai Tribe, 1939.
- List the major objectives of the Indian Reorganization Act.
- Determine if the Indian Reorganization Act impacted the Constitution and By-Laws of the Havasupai Tribe approved in March of 1939.
- Compare the powers of the Tribal Council with those of Congress as stated in the U.S. Constitution. Did the adoption of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Havasupai in 1939 actually result in self-determination for the tribe?

Background

Read any appropriate textbook pages on the Indian New Deal or refer to the resources listed below.

Suggested Procedure

1. Have students read *Commissioners of Indian Affairs 1824-1977, "John Collier 1933-1945."* Have students complete reading guide as homework or guided in-class assignment. Discuss assignment using reading guide and the Essential Questions.
2. Students should then read the preamble of the Indian Reorganization Act, 1934 and **contrast** it to the Dawes Severalty Act, 1887. Explain at least two ways the 1934 act was different. Note any Progressive characteristics in the 1934 law. How does it reflect the reform efforts under the "Indian New Deal?"
3. Direct the student reading of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Havasupai adopted in 1939 with the discussion questions. Discuss as a class after giving the students time to complete the discussion questions with specific and relevant detail.
4. As a class, discuss if the Havasupai achieved a Wilsonian definition of self-determination in 1939. Why or why not?

Evaluation

- Essay question: How did the Indian Reorganization Act represent both continuity and change for the Havasupai? Use the Key Vocabulary in your essay answer. What can be learned from this New Deal experience that can help us make better decisions in the present? Use the Essay Checklist to direct students in the preparation of the essay and assist in teacher grading of the essay.
- Grade Collier reading guide and/or Discussion Questions of Havasupai Constitution and By-Laws. Award two points for each correct answer. Collier worksheet = 24 points. Discussion Questions = 10 points.

Extensions

Assess the problems associated with the Indian Reorganization Act. Determine why the Act did not have the support of 73 out of 245 tribes. Use the reading “A Brief History of Havasupai Formal Political Organizations” to inform students of the tribes’s path to independence and self-determination. A reading guide is included to assist students in this effort.

Resources

- “American Legal History- Dawes Severalty Act.” Thomas D. Russell. 19 Dec. 2006. University of Denver. 30 Jan. 2008 <<http://www.law.du.edu/russell>>.
- “The Indian Reorganization Act.” Indigenous Nations Federal Charter Association. 18 June 1934. 27 Nov. 2007 <<http://www.infca.org/tribes/IRA.htm>>.
- Jacobs, James Q. “A Brief History of Havasupai Formal Political Organization.” James Q. Jacobs. 1999. 3 Dec. 2007 <<http://jamesq.jacobs/net>>.
- Kelly, Lawrence C. The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1983.
- Morehouse, Barbara J. A Place Called Grand Canyon: Contested Geographies. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1996.
- Native American Constitution and Law Project. Ed. Marilyn Nicely and David Selden. 25 Apr. 2005. University of Oklahoma Law Center and National Indian Law Library. 27 Nov. 2007 <<http://thorpe.ou.edu>>.
- Philp, Kenneth R. “John Collier 1933-45.” Commissioners of Indian Affairs 1824-1977. By Robert M. Kvasnicka and Herman J. Viola. Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1979.
- - -. John Collier’s Crusade for Indian Reform 1920-1954. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1977.
- Pyne, Stephen J. How the Canyon Became Grand: A Short History. New York: Penguin Group, 1998.
- Taylor, Graham D. The New Deal and American Tribalism: The Administration of the Indian Reorganization Act, 1934-45. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980.