

LESSON 8

Title: Cast A Clam to the Wind

Subjects:

- Science, ELA, History, ELA

Standard(s):

Maine Learning Results

- ELA. Informational texts (A3.3.c); (A3.3.e); (A3.6.e); A3.9-diploma.b); Listening (E1.3-diploma.c); (E1. 9-diploma.a)
- Science. Scientific Inquiry and Technological Design (B1.3-diploma.a); (B1.3-diploma.b); (B1.3-diploma.c); (B1.3-diploma.d)

Grade level(s): Grades 3 -12+

Brief Description: A brief history lesson will focus on a young boy's memory of a time spent with his grandfather who introduced his grandson to a local tradition of throwing clam shells. The students will have the opportunity to try throwing clam shells. This activity can be organized as a contest or just for fun and can be used any time a class needs to move outside and take a break from some seat work.

Adaptations for different age levels: All students can listen to the story if they are unable to read it by themselves. The other activities can be adapted as well.

Objectives/Goals: After completing this lesson, the students will be able to recall a memory of their own and relate that memories can be an important part of local cultural lore

Time needed: 15 to 20 minutes; a contest could extend this activity's time

Keywords: anterior end, chondrophore, growth rings, hinge ligament, left valve (shell), posterior end, right valve (shell), stress ring, umbo

- "scale a clam" (throwing a clam),
- "shucked it" (cut around the outer edge of one valve of a clam, opened the shell, cut around the outer edge of the remaining valve, scooped out the raw clam meat-a process used to produce raw clam meat for a chowder, fritters, or frying for example)

Materials Needed:

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- Copy (s) of “How to Make A Clam Shell Fly” (Beal, Brian. “. . . how to make a clam shell fly . . .”. Dana E. Wallace Educational Center. University of Maine Sea Grant Advisory Program. Print.
- Clam shells for identifying shell parts and throwing

The Procedure:

Introduction: The Instructor will say something like,

“Today we are going to read (or listen to) a story that recalls a special time for a young boy and his grandfather”.

Key Questions

How can you tell the boy enjoyed being with his grandfather?

What was the name of the boat? How does the boy describe his grandfather’s boat?

How do you know that other people besides the boy have made a “clam shell fly?”

Has anyone in the class thrown shells? Can you remember who did this with you or told you how to do this? (Students may have an opportunity to recall a memory of their own)

Can you describe how to hold the clam before you throw it?

Main Activity

The Instructor will read the short selection to the class (or have them read it silently). Review their listening skills and comprehension skills using the key questions.

Pass out the empty shells and show the students the key parts using the key word list: chondrophore, left valve, right valve, hinge, umbo, etc.

Take the class outside or into a big room and allow them some time to throw shells. Once they learn the “secrets” of throwing (holding the shell properly, inside facing up, etc., as illustrated in the story), the exercise can be made into a competition, by having them measure or mark the distances. The clam shell will flip about part way through its journey and fly similar to a Frisbee. The longest distance could be measured and written down in the classroom for all to see. Throughout the unit, at other opportunities, the competition could continue as someone tries to break “the record.”

Conclusion/ Assessment:

The Instructor can review the clam shell key words.

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The Instructor can wrap up the lesson by referring back to memories of childhood and encouraging the students to think of something they have done with someone older (a relative or older friend) that they remember even though time has passed. These memories could be told to the others or written as an assignment.