Elders Predict Snow

Overview:

During this lesson, students interview Elders to learn Native ways of predicting and measuring snowfall.

Objectives:

The student will:
- listen respectfully;
- learn native ways of predicting and measuring snowfall; and
- practice native ways of predicting and measuring snowfall.

GLEs Addressed:

Science
- [3-4] SA1.1 The student demonstrates an understanding of the processes of science by asking questions, predicting, observing, describing, measuring, classifying, making generalizations, inferring, and communicating.
- [3] SF1.1-SF3.1 The student demonstrates an understanding of the dynamic relationships among scientific, cultural, social, and personal perspectives by exploring local or traditional stories that explain a natural event.
- [4] SF1.1-SF3.1 The student demonstrates an understanding of the dynamic relationships among scientific, cultural, social, and personal perspectives by connecting observations of nature to a local or traditional story that explains a natural event (e.g., animal adaptation, weather, rapid changes to Earth's surface).

Materials:

- Snacks or beverages for Elders
- STUDENT WORKSHEET: "Elders Predict Snow" (Level I)
- STUDENT WORKSHEET: "Elders Predict Snow" (Level II)

Activity Preparation:

1. Find out if there are any Elders in the community who are known for their weather expertise. Invite these Elders (and others) to discuss native ways of predicting and measuring snowfall with students. Students may make invitations, or invite Elders in person. Prepare snacks or beverages to share with Elders during their visit. Be flexible; some Elders cannot visit the classroom due to health problems or busy schedules. If this is the case, consider asking students to visit their Elders after school to ask about predicting and measuring snowfall.

Activity Procedure:

1. Before the Elders arrive for their visit, set out beverages and snacks. Prepare comfortable places for them to sit and remind students about good listening skills. Distribute the STUDENT WORKSHEET: "Elders Predict Snow" to level II students and ask them to come up with questions for the Elders that will help students learn about native ways of predicting and measuring snowfall.

2. During the elder visit, welcome Elders and briefly describe what students have been studying related to clouds and precipitation. Explain that students have built a snow collector and are planning to use it to measure snowfall during a week when snow is predicted. Ask Elders if they can tell students about some traditional ways of knowing that snow is coming soon, and/or some traditional ways of knowing how much snow has fallen.

3.   After Elders have finished discussing traditional ways of predicting and measuring snow, ask if they have time for student questions. If so, encourage students to ask their questions.

4.   Thank Elders for visiting. Level I students may wish to present Elders with popsicle stick snowflakes as a thank you gift. Make thank you cards or gifts for students to deliver to Elders after their visit.

Answers to Student Questions:

Answers to Level I and Level II student questions will vary depending upon Elders interviewed.

Name:_____

Elders Predict Snow
Student Worksheet

Draw a picture that shows clues Elders use to predict snow.

Name:_____

Elders Predict Snow
Student Worksheet

1. Draw a picture that shows clues Elders use to predict snow. Label the clues in your picture.

2. What are some traditional ways of knowing how much snow has fallen?

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