



Savanna Portage: Readers Theater

Overview: The Savanna Portage was the crucial link between the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Gulf of Mexico. Its discovery and usage created an interesting and important mix of cultures between Native Americans, Voyageurs, fur trading companies, and other explorers.

Subject Areas: Language Arts, Social Science/History

Grade Levels: K-5

Topics: Economics, Human Culture, Water

Great Lakes Literacy Principles:

1. The Great Lakes, bodies of fresh water with many features, are connected to each other and to the world ocean.
6. The Great Lakes and humans in their watersheds are inextricably interconnected.
8. The Great Lakes are socially, economically, and environmentally significant to the region, the nation and the planet.

Materials

Items below can be borrowed from Savanna Portage State Park:

Fur pelts

Trunk

“NWC-90#” pack

Wool blankets

Hats

Fur trade game materials (puff balls and play-trade items)

Name signs for characters

Posters/crafts made by kids for decorating (canoes, mosquitos, fur-bearing animals....)

Power Point presentation with setting and character images.

Background Reading: Savanna Portage Southwest by Nancy and Alan R. Woolworth, 1969

Procedure:

1. This lesson was written for kindergarteners however it can be used with early elementary students also. It is adapted via additional content depth and detail.
2. As a means to learning about the Savana Portage prior to a field trip to Savanna Portage State Park, students will learn the attached play.
3. Teacher will provide instruction on the different people involved with the Savanna Portage and what their goals were in using it.
4. Teacher will provide instruction on the connection between the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Gulf of Mexico and its importance.

5. Teacher will provide instruction on some of the wildlife in the region and its importance for the Savanna Portage.
6. Resources for the background information is included in the supporting files for this lesson.

Teacher Reflection:

Please find "comments" section on the curriculum page.