

Classroom Teachers,

Here are some do's and don't when teaching Native culture.

Here are some things to consider from Native American Today, A. Hirschfelder and information gathered from Tribal members:

1. **No using of masks** – Masks are used for religious traditions.
2. **Drums are seen as sacred object** and are regarded as alive. It represents the heartbeat of the Indian Nation. No making or playing should take place unless a master drum maker is there.
3. **No Headdresses!** Children never wore headdresses. They were only used for war dances, battles, and ceremonies. It was a sign of being honored.
4. **No Kachinas, sandpainting, or pipes** should be made or used. They are part of the religious ceremonies.
5. **No Thanksgiving Day Pageants!** This distorts the past.
6. **No giving Indian (Indigenous) names.**
7. Don't assume that you don't have Indian (Native) students! Not everyone is identifiably Indigenous, some students don't want to be singled out.
8. Don't use terms like, **"them" and "us"**.
9. The **term Indian** has been replaced with Native American, Native or Indigenous.
10. **Native regalia is not a costume!** Regalia is clothing worn during times of celebration and for spiritual reasons.
11. **Please teach correct Native history** through out the year not just in November.
12. **Be careful with the book you use.** Look for inaccuracies. Example: Carol Marsh books on Native American and the states. These books are very general and have inaccurate information. As a Native teacher I would never use them.
13. It is important to share with students that in Native history and traditions, **Thanksgiving** could be celebrated up to 6 or more times a year depending on the tribe. Many Thanksgiving ceremonies were after planting and a harvest. The first Native/Pilgrim Thanksgiving was not a celebration that the Natives were just invited to, but planned and shared with the Pilgrims. It happened after the final harvest. It's important that students know that Natives had lived and celebrated Harvest Ceremonies of Thanksgiving for thousands of years.

Please contact me for resources, if you want me to come in and teach something or need information.

Other resources:

\*Thanksgiving: A resource for Elementary Teachers (Denver Public Schools Indian Ed. Program) by Dr. K. Harvey

\*National Museum of the American Indians

\*Thanksgiving a Native Perspective by Oyate

\*The True Story of Thanksgiving, Denver Post: Wednesday, November 1, 2000. (A must have) 1621, A new Look at Thanksgiving by National Geographic

Movie – Squanto A Warriors's Tail by Walt Disney

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