

USA[®]
LACROSSE



PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

LESSON PLAN

Handouts

Three printable handouts to support the cultural and historical lessons in the unit: the Origins of Lacrosse, the Spirit of the Stick, and the Keepers of the Game. Each handout includes a QR code linking to a short companion video.

HANDOUT 1

ORIGINS OF LACROSSE

All grades

An introduction to the Indigenous origins of lacrosse, North America's oldest team sport with deep cultural significance.



The Creator's Game sculpture by artist Jud Hartmann at USA Lacrosse headquarters in Sparks, MD

Respect. Honor. Peace. Unity.

These are just a few of the values that are ingrained within the culture of lacrosse. As you read the passage below, think about how the game has changed over hundreds of years — and about the parts that have stayed the same.

Origins of lacrosse

Lacrosse is a dynamic and fast-paced team sport that has been played for centuries. Originating among various Indigenous nations across North America, lacrosse holds deep cultural and spiritual significance. The game was initially played as a means of settling disputes, as a form of recreation, and as a way to honor the Creator. Early versions of lacrosse varied greatly in rules and structure, with some games involving hundreds of players and spanning miles of playing field. Despite its evolution into a mainstream sport, lacrosse continues to maintain and honor its deep connections to its Indigenous roots.

**WATCH THE VIDEO****The Great Ball Game by Oren Lyons**

Scan the code, or visit youtu.be/jFGE4-6Xx-A

HANDOUT 2

SPIRIT OF THE STICK

All grades

A conversation to help frame lacrosse as a spiritual practice. Students are asked to uncover and share a game from their own culture.



*What does the word **spiritual** mean to you? Lacrosse was, and still is, a spiritual practice for many Native American people — and the stick itself carries that meaning.*

Traditional and modern lacrosse sticks illustration by artist Vincent Ricasio

What the stick represents

Traditional sticks are made from hickory wood, which represents all trees, and the gut hide netting represents all animals. Many people around the world have their own culturally significant games, carrying meaning in much the same way.

Take home

Talk with a family member about a game connected to your own culture. Be ready to share it with the class later in the unit — what the game is called, how it is played, and what it means to your family.



WATCH THE VIDEO

Spirit of the Stick

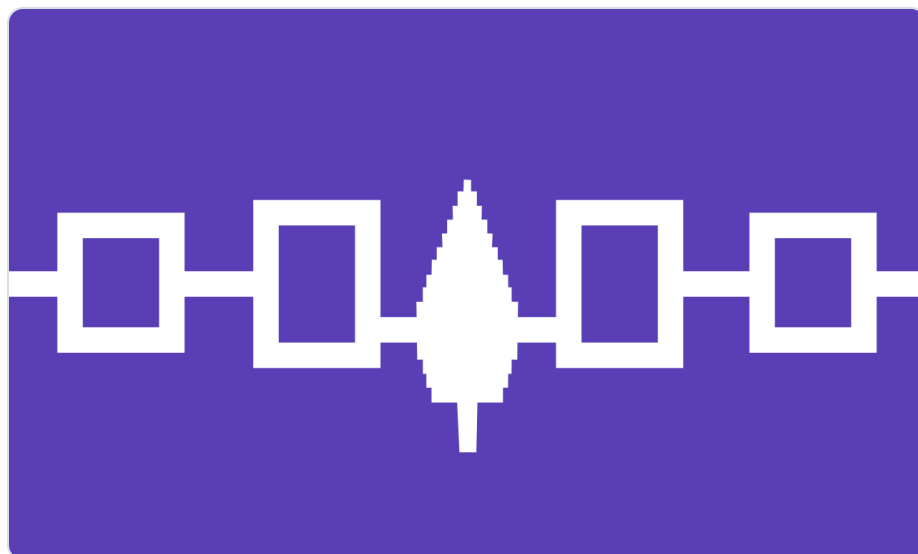
Scan the code, or visit youtu.be/SIBzSuVxJDg

HANDOUT 3

KEEPERS OF THE GAME

All grades

An introduction to the Haudenosaunee (hoe-dee-no-SHOW-nee) people, who have played lacrosse for centuries and continue to compete at major international events.



The flag of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy

The Haudenosaunee flag represents the five nations that came together in a peaceful democracy in the 12th century. From left to right, the Seneca; the Cayuga; the Onondaga; the Oneida; and the Mohawk. A sixth nation, the Tuscarora, joined in 1722.

Keepers of the game

Modern day lacrosse descends from and resembles the stickball games played by various Native American communities. The modern field game most closely resembles the version played among the Haudenosaunee (hoe-dee-no-SHOW-nee), or Iroquois people, who also refer to lacrosse as the Creator's Game. The Haudenosaunee Nationals represent the Native American community in World Lacrosse events and compete under their own flag, which depicts the Hiawatha Belt on a purple background.



WATCH THE VIDEO

Lacrosse: More than a Game, Native Origins and Values

Scan the code, or visit vimeo.com/708181870