**Big Moon Tortilla**

Students learn about Arizona desert features and family traditions.

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<th>Author</th>
<th>Sue Wahlund</th>
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<td>Grade Level</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>2-4 class periods</td>
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**National Geography Standards**

**ELEMENT TWO: PLACES AND REGIONS**

4. The physical and human characteristics of places.

**Arizona Geography Strand**

**Grade 1**

**Strand 4 Geography**

**Concept 2: Places and Regions**

PO 2 Discuss physical features (e.g. mountains, rivers, deserts) in the world.

PO 3 Recognize through images of content studies (e.g. Egypt, Arizona, local community) that places have distinct characteristics.

**Concept 4: Human Systems**

PO 1 Discuss elements of cultural (e.g. food, clothing, housing, sports, holidays) of a community in the areas studied.

**Other Arizona Standards**

**ELA Common Core Standards**

**Reading**

**Literature**

**Key Ideas and Details**

1.RL.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

1.RL.3 Describe characters, settings, and key events in a story.

**Writing**

**Text Types and Purposes**

1.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.

1.W.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

**Production and Distribution of Writing**

**AZ.1.W.4** With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

With guidance and support from adults, produce functional writing (e.g., classroom rules, experiments, notes/messages, friendly letters, labels, graphs/tables, directions, posters) in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

**Language**

**Conventions of Standard English**

1.L.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

   a. Print all upper- and lowercase letters.

   b. Use common, proper, and
Overview

Using the children’s book *Big Moon Tortilla*, this lesson provides students the opportunity to identify physical features in the Arizona desert. It also allows students to recognize and share family traditions. *Big Moon Tortilla* by Joy Cowley, is Governor Napolitano’s 2008 book selection for Arizona first graders.

Purpose

This lesson uses the children’s book *Big Moon Tortilla* to teach about physical features in the Arizona desert and family traditions. The lesson also emphasizes food as a cultural element.

Materials

- *Big Moon Tortilla* book by Joy Cowley
- Chart paper or board for brainstorming

Objectives

1. The student will be able to identify physical features in the Arizona desert.
2. The student will be able to compare the family tradition in the story with his or her own family tradition.
3. The student will be able to solve a problem using the information in the story.
Procedures

Background knowledge needed for this lesson: Students should be familiar with some physical features of the Arizona desert. Suggestions for books include: Don't Call Me Pig by Conrad Storad, Cactus Hotel by Brenda Z. Guiberson, Around One Cactus by Anthony D. Fredericks, The Seed and the Giant Saquare by Jennifer Ward, and C is for Coyote by Andrea Helman.

SESSION ONE

1. Discuss the setting of the story Big Moon Tortilla by using a KWL chart. The story takes place in the southern Arizona desert (Tohono O'odham reservation).

2. Use a map of Arizona to identify and locate where the Tohono O'odham tribe lives.

3. On chart paper brainstorm physical features (natural not man-made) of the Arizona desert including animals, plants, and climate.

4. Discuss key vocabulary before reading the story. Show images if possible. Suggestions may include: tortillas, mountain lion, eagle, desert, and healing. Add vocabulary words to the word wall.

5. Read story to students and ask students if they can add anything to the brainstorming chart concerning the physical features of the Arizona desert.

6. End the session by having students pick a physical feature from the chart and explain what it is to the class.

SESSION TWO

1. Reread the story Big Moon Tortilla to the students. Add any additional desert features to the brainstorming chart.

2. Explain to students that they will be writing their own Arizona desert book using physical features from the brainstorming chart. Model a page with the students before distributing their individual papers.

3. Example: In the Arizona desert I see a cactus. On the extra lines write--Cactus do not need much water so they can live in the desert. Then draw in the blank space, a cactus with a desert landscape surrounding it.

4. Distribute 3 to 5 pages to each student. Add the title page and staple book.

5. End the session by discussing that Marta’s special food was tortillas. (You may want to have a real tortilla to show students.) Introduce the concept of a special food being associated with a “family tradition” (i.e. turkey on Thanksgiving, homemade decorated sugar cookies for Christmas, special dinner for a birthday, etc.).

6. Distribute the Big Moon Tortilla Homework Assignment. Model the homework assignment with students using the story Big Moon Tortilla. Explain that students will have more information than the story since the story only gives limited information.

Sample
Name of Food: Tortillas
Who: Marta, grandmother
What: tortillas are made of ground corn that is rolled (or patted) into a thin round shape
When: anytime, after school
Where: Marta’s home
Why: Marta’s grandmother was making these because tortillas are a special snack for Marta
Other information: (i.e. how are they made, did this food/recipe originate in another country or area of the U.S.)

SESSION THREE

1. As a class, share what food(s) are special to their families based on the homework assignment. List these foods on the board or on chart paper.

2. Explain to students that they are putting together a “Class Menu Book” using the homework assignments.

3. Each student will complete a Menu Page using the information from the homework assignment. After completing the written portions of the page, students will draw/color a picture related to the family tradition.

4. End the class by students sharing their completed Menu Page with the class before the pages are compiled into the class book.

SESSION FOUR

1. Reread Big Moon Tortilla paying close attention to Marta’s problem and her solution for solving the problem.

2. Identify the problem and discuss the possible solutions to the problem. Also explain that Marta’s
grandmother uses a special “healing song/story” to help Marta solve her problem. This healing song/story is based on an old Native American saying. See author’s note at the end of the book.

3. On chart paper write down the problem.

Problem: Marta’s homework is ruined and her glasses are broken.

4. Discuss each possible solution and write them on the chart paper. Write the solutions in 4 sections in a divided circle to model the follow-up activity. “What would Marta do if she solved this problem like a rock?” Or “If Marta was like a rock, what would she do?” Go through each of the 4 solutions with the class. Discuss Marta’s choice (an eagle) and how that solution solved Marta’s problem.

5. Distribute the top and bottom of the problem solving wheel. Students will choose which of the 4 options they would have picked for Marta. Students can write down their choices, share them orally with the class, or share them with a partner. Encourage students to explain their choices.

Directions for the Wheel:
1. Write the four words on the lines (eagle, rock, tree, mountain lion) on the bottom portion.

2. Students illustrate each of the 4 sections, using the artwork provided (coloring & gluing them on the wheel).

3. Students can decorate or just write the title on the top of the problem solving wheel.

4. Students cut out both circles and put the top and bottom together with a brad.

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**Assessment**

The problem solving wheel can be graded for completeness (5 points). Students can orally tell the teacher which solution they selected and why. (5 points)

The Menu Page can be graded for neatness, spelling, and creativity (5 points each).

The Arizona Desert Book can be assessed for complete sentences, correct spelling of common words, illustration matching the sentence description, neatness, and creativity. (5 points each)

A Scoring Guide for Big Moon Tortilla Activities is provided.

**Extensions**

The pages of the “In the desert I see” book could be made into a counting book: In the Arizona desert I see one eagle, In the Arizona desert I see two saguaro cacti, etc.

Students will discuss school or class problems and try to solve them using the problem solving wheel.

**Sources**

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Suggested Books


