

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES
Grades 4-6

“Pre-reading Activities” offer ideas for introductory lessons which will set the stage for the reading of the story. “Pre-reading Activities: I” provides an outline establishing a knowledge base about the Iroquois. This information may be couple with “Pre-reading Activities: II” or may be used alone with adaptations provided by the teacher. The teacher may prefer to skip these Activities and proceed with the Reading Section.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES: I

PURPOSE: To provide a knowledge base about the Iroquois prior to reading the Learning Stories.

Prepare introductory lessons to provide a knowledge base about the Iroquois. The overview lesson(s) might include:

* The travels of some early Native Americans across the Bering Strait to the Northeastern section of what is now the United States. (see bibliography, separate pdf)

*The environment around the Great Lakes in which the Iroquois settled, and their reverence for and use of that environment. (ibid.)

*The importance of the Council Fire and decision by consensus to the Iroquois. (see bibliography, separate pdf; also The Learning Stories. Also “Pre-reading Activities: II” presents an extensive introduction to the Learning Stories.)

*The importance of oral methods used by Native Americans in education and in the preservation of their history, including the use of wampum as a mnemonic aid. (ibid.)

*The importance of balance in Iroquois thought: balance between male and female, between logic and intuition, etc. (For information on balance between clans, between the different Iroquois Nations, between the Iroquois and the western paths, see this guide, “Bibliography” and Grinde, *The Iroquois and the Founding of the American Nation.*”

OR

Turn to the “Reading Section - The First Reading” for a shorter introduction to the Learning Stories.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES: II

PURPOSE: To provide an introduction to these Learning Stories

Prepare an introduction to one of the Learning Stories by providing a synopsis of some of the information provided in *Three Strands in the Braid: A Guide for Enablers of Learning*.

The information you share might include:

*About the Author: Learning Two Ways (p. 13)

*How These Learnings Came to Be (p. 23)

*Central Fire (p. 53)

OR

In a short class discussion, have the students reflect on old family stories they may have heard from their parents or grandparents. Ask the students the importance of sharing family stories. A variety of reasons may be provided and accepted. Focus on preservation of family history and customs shared, learning experiences, and family pride.

OR

Discuss with the students stories they have heard which helped them learn a lesson. Have them share their thoughts about reasons for including lessons within such stories.

Tell the students they will be hearing a Learning Story which had been used by the author's Native American ancestors for centuries to help people learn.