

Oklahoma C³ Standards for Oklahoma History and Government:

- Content Standard 1: The student will describe the state's geography and historic foundations laid by Native American, European, and American cultures times.
 - Item 3: Compare and contrast cultural perspectives of Native Americans and European Americans regarding land ownership and trading practices.

To help establish a respect for cultural diversity within the early days of the Oklahoma History course, students can study the perspectives on the creation of the world/universe from the traditional stories of four (or more) groups of people who will eventually call the State of Oklahoma home. Such perspectives help to establish each culture's worldview regarding land ownership and/or property rights.

Have students read the traditional creation stories from:

- The Apache and the Yuchi as found in: Edmonds, Margot, and Ella E. Clark. "In the Beginning." *Voices of the Winds: Native American Legends*. New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 2003.
- The Cherokee as found in: Eddoes, Richard. Ed. "Earth Making." *American Indian Myths and Legends*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984.
- The Hebrews (Judeo/Christian account) as found in: The Bible, Genesis Chapter 1
 - This would be the background embraced by Oklahoma's early French & Spanish explorers. Recommended to use Eugene Peterson' paraphrase version of The Bible called *The Message*.

Give students a graphic organizer designed to explore the similarities and differences from each of these four stories. If possible, use an online graphic organizer like www.Mind24.com. Have students complete their graphic organizers independently as they read the four stories. Then use small group and/or full class discussion to further explore the similarities and differences of these four stories. Finally, have the students use their graphic organizers to help compose an essay on the topic of the similarities and differences of three of the stories (students' choice of which three).

Further class discussion can include hypothesizing how Oklahoma's history might have unfolded if the groups of people who embraced these stories (especially the imperializing European powers) would have truly attempted to understand the cultural perspectives of the new group they were encountering and built relationships based upon those points of common bond. Additional discussion can include how might the future from where we (teacher and student) are today be improved if we legitimately seek to understand the perspectives of others and to build relationships (economic, political, or otherwise) on our points of common interest rather than as reactions to the unknown or to that which is different.

This activity can be referred to throughout the course as new eras are studied. "How would this event have been different if people actually sought to understand each other's perspectives and/or worldviews?"