*“Sa Hi Pa Ca (Once Upon a Time)”*

**Resource Summary:** This lesson can be used with ***Sa Hi Pa Ca (Once Upon a Time)*** in the film **West of the West: Tales from California’s Channel Islands.** The tale focuses on the original inhabitants of the islands, the Chumash people, and the archeological and anthropological study of the islands and California Mission records. We know that the Chumash were hunters and gatherers who relied on all that the land and the sea could provide them. This lesson is comprised of activities that will illuminate for students, the abundant native plant resources that were available to the Island Chumash people for food, medicine, tools, household objects, building materials, etc. Students will conduct their own research, read, and write informative/explanatory text.

**Subject Areas:** English Language Arts & Literacy/History/Social Studies

**Grade Level Range:** Grade 4

**Standards:**
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.2
Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2
Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

**Resource Provided By:** Barbara LaCorte, Principal, Hope School, Hope School District

**Resource Details:**

Academic Language: Archaeology, anthropology, native vs. non-native, scientific vs. common name, habitat

The teacher will introduce this activity by explaining that students will be watching a segment of the film **West of the West: Tales from California’s Channel Islands** and that the tale tells the story of the first inhabitants of the Channel Islands – the Chumash people. While viewing the tale, students will be directed to note: 1.) How the Chumash people were able to survive on the islands and 2.) How archaeologists and anthropologists have learned about what life was like for the Chumash on the Channel Islands. After viewing the tale, the teacher will ask the students to share what they saw.

The teacher will then explain that the students will imagine they are the first inhabitants of the Channel Islands as they study the native plants of the Channel Islands and how they were utilized by the Chumash.

Each student will become an expert on one of the native plants utilized by the Chumash people.

Sample List of California Native Plants

| SCIENTIFIC NAME | COMMON NAME |
|---|---|
| | |
| Achillea millefolium | Common Yarrow |
| Arctostaphylos | Manzanita |
| Asclepias fascicularis | Narrow-leaf Milkweed |
| Berberis | Barberry |
| Ceanothus | California Lilac |
| Cercis Occidentalis | Western Redbud |
| Coreopsis gigantean | Giant Coreopsis |
| Dendromecon rigida ssp. harfordii | Island Bush Poppy |
| Dudleya | Britton's Live-forever |
| Epilobium | Elegant fuchsia |
| Eriogonum | Santa Cruz Island Buckwheat |
| Eriogonum crocatum | Saffron Buckwheat |
| Erigonum grande var. rubescens | Red-flowered Buckwheat |
| Eschscholzia californica | California Poppy |
| Galvezia | Snapdragon |
| Heteromeles arbutifolia | Toyon |
| Heuchera | Coral Bells |
| Heuchera "Canyon Delight" | Canyon Delight Coral Bells |
| Iris Canyon | Canyon Snow Iris |
| Iris Canyon Sunshine | Canyon Sunshine Iris |
| Lavatera assurgentiflora | Island Bush Mallow |
| Layia platyglossa | Tidy-tips |
| Lupinus succulentus | Succulent Lupine |
| Mimulus | Monkeyflower |
| Muhlenbergia rigens | Deer Grass |
| Nemophila menziesii | Baby Blue Eyes |
| Penstemon | Penstemon |
| Penstemon | Foothill Penstemon |
| Phacelia argentea | Sand Dune Phacelia |
| Polypodium | Polypody |
| Rhus intgrifolia | Lemonadeberry |
| Salvia leucophylla | Pt. Sal Purple Sage |
| Salvia spathacea | Hummingbird Sage |
| Sisyrinchium bellum | Blue-eyed Grass |
| Solanum | Potato Flower |
| Solidage californica | California Goldenrod |
| Spaeralcea | Desert Mallow |
| Thalictrum | Meadow-rue |
| Verbena | Verbena |

Students will be directed to research their plant using Internet resources and complete the following Research Organizer.

Native Plant Research Organizer and Sample

| Common Name/ Scientific Name | Picture | Family | Plant Type | Light/Soil/ Water Needs |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| California Lilac *Ceanothus thyrsiflorus.* |  | Rhamnaceae Buckthorn Family | Evergreen Shrub or small Tree; can grow more than 20 feet tall | Full to partial sun<br>Alkaline soils with good drainage<br>Very drought tolerant |

| Growing Season | Natural Habitat | Habitat Value | Human Uses | Other Interesting Facts |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Blooms May to June | Chaparral habitat, ridges and slopes | Loved by deer; popular with birds, esp. hummingbirds, butterflies, and other pollinators | Branches used to make digging sticks for harvesting edible plants; also to make baskets.<br>Dried leaves to make tea; also to treat inflammation and infection | Shiny green leaves, fragrant deep blue lilac flowers |

After they have completed the Organizer, the students will draft a paragraph of informative/explanatory text that they will each contribute to a class book.

Sample Text :

Lemonade Berry (*Rhus integrifolia*)

Lemonade Berry is a native California evergreen shrub or small tree in the cashew or sumac (*Anacardiaceae*) family. It naturally grows on ridges, canyons and slopes in chapparal and coastal sage communities. It likes well-drained soil, needs lots of sun, and can survive in drought conditions. Lemonade Berry blooms from February to April with pinkish white flowers and shiny light green leaves which are attached to chocolate brown branches. Its flowers are attractive to butterflies, and its red berries are preferred by birds. The Chumash used the plant to make a lemonade flavored beverage and a medicine.

Extension Projects: If possible, the teacher could seek grants or community support to obtain plants and other materials for a school Native Plants Garden. California Native Plants are generally drought tolerant plants and require less attention than other school garden varieties. The class book could then be adapted to be a field guide to the school's Native Plants Garden. For classes outside of California, this activity could be adapted to other early cultures that lived close to the land and utilized local plants for similar purposes as the Chumash.

**Additional Resources:**

Timbrook, J. (1984). Chumash Ethnobotany: A Preliminary Report. *Journal of Ethnobiology*, 2(3), 141-169.

The Santa Barbara Botanic Garden website, http://www.sbbg.org

The Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History website: http://www.sbnature.org/research/anthro/chumash/daily.htm