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Native Americans: The Trail of Tears

Theme

Native American culture and history makes up the backbone of this text set unit. This unit theme was chosen to join with a poetry unit that will be taught to fulfill the of Reading and Writing classroom International Academy-LEAP next year. The EL level of the students is beginning intermediate and they are between the ages of 14-16. Many students come from persecuted native cultures with similar histories it will help to build vocabulary and context for writing and talking about their own experiences, their family's experiences, and the history of their people group.

Explanation of Subjects

I chose to start with folktales because all my students have similar stories learned from their (grandmothers/ great-grandmothers) native cultures. We will compare story elements, etc.

The next subject of texts is non-fiction books about various Native American tribes. They are informational, with similar ideas and structures. I want my students to know that there are a variety of different native cultures in the US, each with their own languages and customs. Additionally, this also provides an opportunity for cross-cultural author study of Angela Johnson's *Driving Home Snow*.

The final goal of this text set is to talk about the history of the Native American interactions with the English-speaking world. The focus of this historical overview will be on the "Trail of Tears" from 1838. There are three picture books that will aid in exploring and discussing this time and its impact on the Native American tribes of the United States.