Meeting of Two Cultures
The Bear River Massacre

Grade: Upper Elementary/Middle School

Purpose/Objective: Students will understand how cultural differences create conflict by studying the events of the Bear River Massacre.

Lesson Plan:
[Use Teacher Resource Information: Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation]

1. Introduction: Explain to students that they are going to learn about how differences in the ways cultures live may create conflict.
    a. **Play Battleship**. This game will be played within partners, with each person playing by a slightly set of different rules. (Do not tell students this at the beginning!)
        i. Explain the Basic Battleship rules and have students divide into pairs. They should sit across each other, with a book or some other barrier blocking the view of the other player's game sheet.
        ii. Within each pair, pass out a different set of rules and game sheet to play the game with. For example, Student 1 will get Battleship Game Sheet A and Student 2 will get Battleship Game Sheet B.
        iii. Explain to students that they must read all rules completely before beginning to play. If students have questions regarding play, have them consult their own instructions and rules on their game sheet. Begin playing the game.
        iv. Notice when students begin to encounter disagreement on rules. Many times students may become frustrated and say that the game is not fair. Other students may come to some sort of compromise on their own about the rules.
        v. Debrief the game with students.
            1. Was it hard to play? Why was it hard?
            2. What happened when you realized you were playing with different rules? Why did this make it hard?
            3. How does this relate to the interaction of different cultures?
            4. If students came to a compromise, you may want to point out that this is the way that working with different sets of "rules" may be overcome.
2. Different Ideas about Property. Explain that many times conflict arose in the West over the disagreement on who "owned" the land.
    a. **Kewenusk's Village vs. John Miller's Town**. While this example comes from Native Americans and settlers in New England, it illustrates a point about ideas of property that apply to the pioneer settlers and the Northwestern Shoshones in Cache Valley as well.

i. Have students divide into pairs again. Pass out a copy of Kewenusk's Village to one student and John Miller's Town to the other.
ii. Students should read the stories and then draw a picture of how each narrative describes the respective village or town. Have students pay particular attention to how the author describes how property is kept, if at all.
iii. Once students have read and drawn their pictures, have them look at their partner's picture and see how it differs. Can they see how conflict may arise?
iv. Explain that the pioneer settlers fenced off land as their own property, much like the town in the story. The Northwestern Shoshone had always hunted animals and gathered food on those lands.

3. Background Information. Give background information on the Northwestern Band of the Shoshones and the Bear River Massacre.
4. Two Different Accounts. (This activity is most likely suited for Middle School students) Students will read two different accounts of the Bear River Massacre. One is from Colonel Patrick E. Connor's report and the other is written by Mae Timbimboo Parry years after the event.
    a. Have students read both accounts of the Bear River Massacre. Explain that each includes different details and that we will discuss perspectives and writing of history.
    b. Hand out the worksheet with discussion questions on it so students may have a guided reading experience. You may have to define some words as you see fit.
    c. Discuss the readings after all students are finished.
5. Possible Extension Activity. Historical Markers. Does it tell the whole story?
    a. Have students view photographs taken from the markers at the Bear River Massacre site. Do you think this is sufficient? Why or why not?
    b. Have students read the texts from the markers and have them compare what is written with what they know. If you didn't know anything else about the Bear River Massacre, do these markers tell the full story? How?
    c. Explain that there are panels further up the road that the Northwestern Band of the Shone Nation has installed that tell their story.
    d. Have students design a historical marker that may be a more fitting memorial to those that died at the site.

Source:
Some parts of this lesson were adapted from the Smithsonian Institution's lesson plan "Two Worlds Meeting Across A Fence" from the Between Fences traveling exhibit http://www.museumonmainstreet.org/admin/fences_admin/fences_local/teachers_guide_fences.pdf

BASIC BATTLESHIP RULES

1. Place the following four ships on your defensive grid by outlining squares (horizontally and/or vertically, but not diagonally) with a colored pen.

    1 Battleship 4 squares
    1 Cruiser 3 squares
    2 Destroyers 2 squares each

2. Players take turns calling out shots (e.g., F4). When a shot is called, the opponent tells the caller whether it is a hit or a miss. If the shot is missed, the caller places an "O" on her offensive grid. If the shot is a hit, the caller places an "X" on her offensive grid, and the opponent places an "X" on his defensive grid.

3. When a ship receives enough hits to sink it, the opponent must say, "Hit, you sunk my Cruiser" (or whatever type of ship has been sunk). The player who sinks all of her opponent's ships first is the winner.

BATTLESHIP GAME SHEET A

A	B	C	D	E	D	
						1
						2
						3
						4
						5
						6
						7

Defensive Grid

A	B	C	D	E	F

Offensive Grid

Rules

1. You may place your ships on the grid horizontally, vertically, but **not** diagonally. Ships cannot overlap (only one ship can occupy each square).

2. If you make a hit on your opponent's ship, you get to take another turn immediately.

3. If your opponent hits your ship, you must announce what kind of ship has been hit. For example, "Hit on a Battleship."

Reminder

1 Battleship 4 squares
1 Cruiser 3 squares
2 Destroyers 2 squares each

BATTLESHIP GAME SHEET B

A	B	C	D	E	D	
						1
						2
						3
						4
						5
						6
						7

Defensive Grid

A	B	C	D	E	F

Offensive Grid

Rules

1. You may place your ships on the grid horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. Ships cannot overlap (only one ship can occupy each square).

2. No player may take two turns in a row.

3. If your opponent calls a square that is next to one of your ships, you must say "Near miss."

Reminder

1 Battleship 4 squares
1 Cruiser 3 squares
2 Destroyers 2 squares each

KEWENUSK'S VILLAGE

My name is Kewenusk. I live with my family in a village of about 200 people. Our village is part of a tribe that includes many other villages. My village changes with the seasons of the year. Sometimes we all gather together in one place. Other times, we spread out in small groups. This allows us to make the best use of the different plants and animals that grow in our territory at different times of the year.

Let me tell you what a year in my village is like. Every spring we move our homes to the fields where we plant our crops. I work with my mother and the other women to plant little mounds containing corn, beans, and squash. The men in our village hunt animals that are plentiful in the spring, like the migrating birds that fill the salt marshes. Spring is also a time when many fish return to the streams to spawn. It seems like you can't put your hand in a river without touching a fish!

Once the crops are planted and weeded, they don't need as much attention until harvest time. During the summer, small groups of families make camps along the coast. The women check on the crops from time to time. They also gather seafood, like clams, cut cattails for making mats, and pick delicious berries as they ripen. The men fan out from camp on longer hunting and fishing trips. Sometimes they take canoes out into the sea at night to hunt sturgeon by torchlight or run river rapids in search of salmon or eels.

In early fall, we harvest the crops from the fields. We also gather acorns, chestnuts, cranberries, and many other wild plants. I love fall because it is a time for festivals. Many of our neighboring villages join us for huge feasts, dancing, and ceremonies.

In October we store our harvest of corn and beans and begin the fall hunt. The deer and bear are fattest in the late fall. We break into small groups so we can cover a wide hunting territory. After the men kill an animal, the women bring it back to camp to butcher it. We cook some of the meat and smoke some of it for use later in the winter.

When the heavy snows begin to fall in late December, our village gathers in a wooded valley. Here we are protected from the weather and can find plenty of firewood. We eat the foods we harvested, gathered, and hunted in the fall. The men hunt and fish nearby using snowshoes to walk in the deep snow. The late winter can be a hungry time for the village.

In the spring, we return to our fields. They may not be the same fields we used last year, though. When the soil grows tired in one field after eight or ten years, we leave it and start a new one. The people in our village use the same forests, salt marshes, beaches, and meadows each year. They are in our territory. Other villages have their own territories. The people in our village share the resources in our territory with each other. They belong to the village. No one in the village can tell another member of our village, "This is my salt marsh! You can't hunt here!"

If there is more than enough for us, we might share the resources in our territory with the people of another village. For example, when the alewives are spawning in the streams, there are more fish than any village could catch. We gather with other villages at the best fishing spots to trap the fish.

My people have always lived in this territory and always will. We know how to live here.

Source: The information in this fictional narrative is drawn from *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists and the Ecology of New England* by William Cronin (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983).

JOHN MILLER'S TOWN

My name is John Miller. My family sailed from England to settle in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. We live and farm in the town of Hipswich. Let me tell you about our life.

The King of England gave us our farm in a roundabout way. The King claimed all the lands in New England. He granted some of this land to the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The colony granted some land to the town of Hipswich, and the town granted us the land for our house and farm. My family owns these lands now.

We built our wooden home on our house lot in Hipswich. My mother plants a vegetable garden and keeps chickens here. Nearby we have a small barn where our cattle, oxen, pigs, and sheep can spend the winter. We also have fenced lots where we can feed our animals when they are not out grazing in the pastures.

Our planting fields are located on the outskirts of town. My father plows these fields with the oxen each spring and then plants corn. I help him keep the corn weeded and maintain the fences around the fields. A strong fence is all that stands between our tasty corn and the many pigs and cows that graze freely outside town. The pigs are particularly bothersome because they are so good at getting through fences. The laws of Hipswich allow a farmer to kill any pig he finds in his corn.

In the summer, our cattle and sheep graze in a fenced pasture. We let our pigs run in the woods for most of the summer since they are very good at taking care of themselves. To feed our animals during the winter, we must cut and dry hay. We have a large pasture along a stream where the grass grows well. In the late summer, we mow this grass for hay.

In the fall, we harvest, husk, and store our corn for the winter. We also slaughter some of our cattle and pigs that have gotten fat on the summer grass. If we have any animals to spare, we drive them to Boston to sell.

In the winter, our woodlot is the most important part of our farm to me. This is where we cut firewood to keep us warm. We also cut timber for building fences here.

Not all the food we eat comes from our farm. In the summer, my father and I fish and hunt. I also love to pick the juicy wild berries in the forests.

I am glad my family came to Hipswich. Life here hasn't always been easy. Starting a new farm is incredibly hard work, and we were often hungry our first few winters. But in Hipswich, my family can own land that belongs to us and nobody else. In England, we could never hope to own a farm.

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Excerpts from Col. P. E. Connor's full and official report

On my arrival on the field I found that Major McGarry had dismounted the cavalry and was engaged with the Indians who had sallied out of their hiding places on foot and horseback, and with fiendish malignity waved the scalps of white women and challenged the troops to battle, at the same time attacking them. Finding it impossible to surround them, in consequence of the nature of the ground, he accepted their challenge.

The position of the Indians was one of strong natural defenses, and almost inaccessible to the troops, being in a deep, dry ravine from six to twelve feet deep and from thirty to forth feet across level table-land, along which they had constructed steps from which they could deliver their fire with[out] being themselves exposed. Under the embankments they had constructed artificial covers of willows thickly woven together, from behind which they could fire without being observed.

After being engaged about twenty minutes I found it was impossible to dislodge them without great sacrifice of life. I accordingly ordered Major McGarry with twenty men to turn their left flank, which was in the ravine where it entered the mountains. Shortly afterward Captain Hoyt reached the ford three-quarters of a mile distant, but found it impossible to cross footmen…Up to this time, in consequence of being exposed on a level and open plain while the Indians were under cover, they had every advantage of us fighting with the ferocity of demons. My men fell fast and thick around me, but after flanking them we had the advantage and made good use of it.

I ordered the flanking party to advance down the ravine on either side, which gave us the advantage…At this point I had a company stationed, who shot them as they ran out. But few tried to escape, however, but continued fighting with unyielding obstinacy, frequently engaging hand to hand with the troops until killed in their hiding places.

The most of those who did escape from the ravine were afterward shot in attempting to swim the river, or killed while desperately fighting under cover of the dense willow thicket which line the river bank…

The enemy had about 300 warriors, mostly well-armed with rifles and having plenty of ammunition…The position of the Indians was one of great natural strength, and had I not succeeded in flanking them the mortality in my command would have been terrible.

Massacre at Bia Ogoi
By Mae Timbimboo Parry

Chief Sagwitch, being an early riser, got up just as usual on the morning of January 29, 1863. He left his teepee and stood outside surveying the area around the camp. The hills to the east of their camp were covered with a steaming mist. The mist crept lower down the hill and all of the sudden Chief Sagwitch realized what was happening. The soldiers from Camp Douglas from Salt Lake City had arrived. The chief was not surprised. He started calling to the sleeping Indians. They quickly gathered their bows and arrows, tomahawks and a few rifles. Some of the Indians were so excited that they gathered up whatever was in sight to fight with. Some picked up their woven willow winnow pans and baskets and stuck their few rifles through them…

Chief Sagwitch shouted to his people not to shoot first. He thought that perhaps this military man was a just and wise man. He thought that the colonel would ask for the guilty men, whom he would have immediately turned over to the soldiers. He felt that the rest of them would be saved by doing this. He told his people to be brave and calm. Many of the Indians ran toward the river and dropped into the snow. They knew that they were not all guilty but they had no choice but to fight for their lives if attacked. Some had dropped into the holes the children had dug along the river bank. Never did the grown men realize they would be using the children's play fox holes to await real military soldiers.

Without so much as asking the Indians for the guilty party, the colonel and his men began to fire on the Indians. But what was an arrow compared to the muskets of the army? The Indians were being slaughtered left and right. No butcher could have murdered any better than Colonel Connor and his vicious California volunteers….

The massacre started early in the morning, according to the Indians, and lasted all day. The Bear River that was solid a few moments before was now starting to flow. The

Northwestern Shoshones were jumping into the river and trying to escape by swimming across the river. The blazing white snow was now brilliant red with blood…
Many Indian women also jumped into the river and swam with babies on their backs. Most of them died. One Indian lady, Anzie Chee was being chased by soldiers. She jumped into the river and went under an overhanging bank. By keeping her head up under the bank she was saved…

The Indians who were still alive were calling to their chief to escape so he could be saved. Chief Sagwitch escaped with a wound in his hand, after having two horses shot from under him. Another Indian escaped by holding onto the tail of the horse Chief Sagwitch rode across the Bear River.

Source: Excerpts taken from *The Bear River Massacre* by Newell Hart

Name: _____ Date: _____

Comparing Accounts from the Bear River Massacre: Discussion Worksheet

Account: _____

Tips for reading a primary document: Read the complete document slowly and carefully. If there are any unfamiliar words, look them up in a dictionary. As you read, underline or highlight points that seem particularly important.

A: Who is writing this account?

B: Summarize what happened according to this account.

C: List three things the author said that you think are important.

D: Why do you think this document was written?

E: What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? (Quote from the document)

F: Writers carefully choose the words they use to tell a story. Sometimes these words show their bias or prejudice. Identify three words in this account that reveal a bias.

Account: _____

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F: Writers carefully choose the words they use to tell a story. Sometimes these words show their bias or prejudice. Identify three words in this account that reveal a bias.

For Both Accounts:

1. What are some similarities in the accounts?

2. What are the differences in the accounts? (Suggestions: who attacked first, position of attack or defense, who was in the Shoshone camp when it was attacked, loss of lives, weapons, and other issues)

3. After reading these two accounts, is it easy to determine which story is true? Is there one true story?

4. Who gets to decide which story goes into the history books? Why?

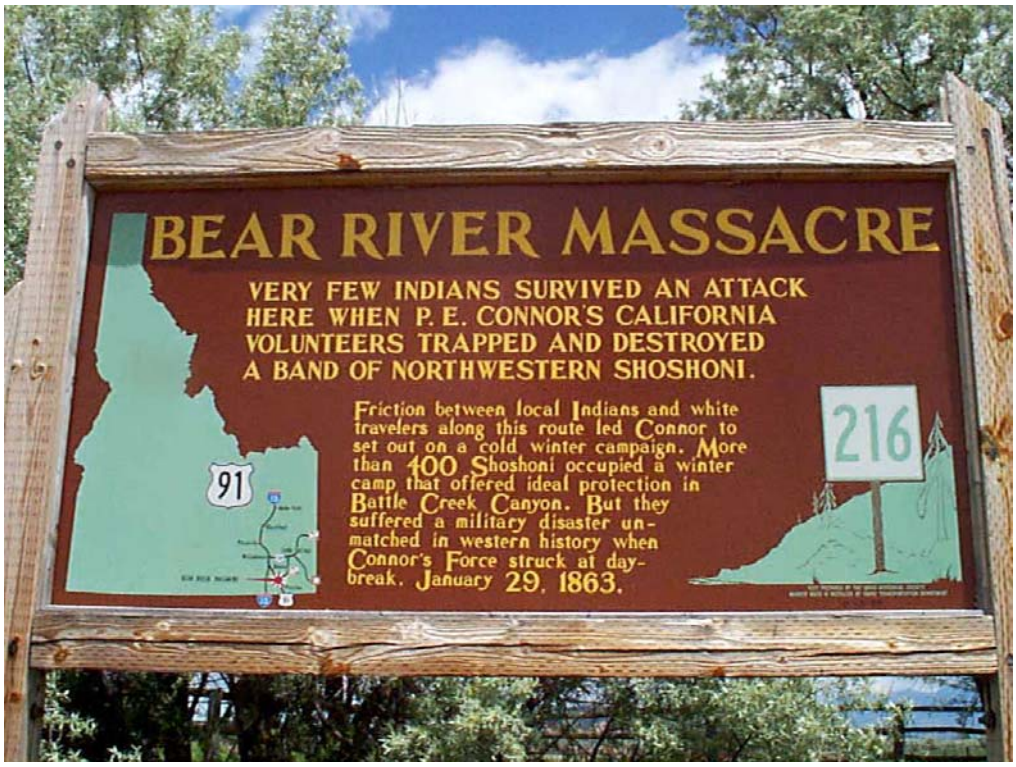
5. Why are primary documents important and beneficial to the process of writing history?

6. How are primary documents problematic to the process of writing history?

7. Do you think there have been a different ending to the story between the pioneer settlers and the Shoshones? How?

Bear River Massacre Site Markers

Idaho State Historical Marker:



Text:
Very few Indians survived an attack here when P.E. Connor's California Volunteers trapped and destroyed a band of northwestern Shoshoni.

Friction between local Indians and white travelers along this route led Connor to set out on a cold winter campaign. More than 400 Shoshoni occupied a winter camp that offered ideal protection in Battle Creek Canyon. But they suffered a military disaster unmatched in western history when Connor's force struck at daybreak. January 29, 1863.

Daughters of the Utah Pioneers Memorial:

Pioneer Women

Battle Bear River

Text of Pioneer Women Memorial:

Daughters of the Utah Pioneers
No. 186
Erected July 1953

Pioneer Women

Attacks by the Indians on the peaceful inhabitants in this vicinity led to the final battle here January 29, 1863. The conflict occurred in deep snow and bitter cold. Scores of wounded and frozen soldiers were taken from the battlefield to the Latter Day Saint community of Franklin. Here pioneer women, trained through trials and necessity of frontier living, accepted the responsibility for caring for the wounded until they could be removed to Camp Douglas, Utah. Two Indian women and three children found alive after the encounter were given homes in Franklin.
Franklin County

Text of Battle of Bear River Memorial:

No. 16
Erected 1932

The Battle of Bear River
was fought in this vicinity January 29, 1863
Col. P.E. Connor, leading 300 California volunteers from Camp Douglass, Utah, against Bannock and Shoshoni Indians guilty of hostile attacks on emigrants and settlers, engaged about 500 Indians of whom 250 to 300 were killed or incapacitated, including about 90 combatant women and children. 14 soldiers were killed. 4 officers and 49 men wounded, of whom 1 officer and 7 men died later. 79 were severely frozen. Chiefs Bear Hunter, Sagwitch, and Lehi, were reported killed. 175 horses and much stolen property were recovered. 70 lodges were burned.
Franklin County Chapter, Daughters of The Utah Pioneers
Cache Valley Council, Boy Scouts of America, and
Utah Pioneer Trails and Landmarks Association.