

Birchbark House Unit Resources

Student Resource	Location
Section 1: Lessons 1-5	
Text: <i>The Birchbark House</i> by Louise Erdrich	Purchased text
Video: <i>Ice Age</i> by Michael J. Wilson	Purchased text
Text: <i>The First Americans: Prehistory to 1600</i> by Joy Hakim	Purchased text
Text: <i>Before Columbus: The Americas of 1491</i> by Charles C. Mann	Grade 5 Unit Reader
Lesson handouts	Pages 2-8
Section 2: Lessons 6-10	
Text: <i>The Birchbark House</i> by Louise Erdrich	Purchased text
Text: <i>Before Columbus: The Americas of 1491</i> by Charles C. Mann	Grade 5 Unit Reader
Lesson handouts	Pages 9-12
Section 3: Lessons 11-15	
Text: "Columbus" by Joaquin Miller	Pages 20-21
Text: <i>The First Americans: Prehistory to 1600</i> by Joy Hakim	Purchased text
Text: <i>Pedro's Journal</i> by Pam Conrad	Purchased text
Lesson handouts	Pages 13-19
Section 4: Lessons 16-17 (Cold Read Task)	
Section 5: Lessons 18-22	
Text: <i>The Birchbark House</i> by Louise Erdrich	Purchased text
Lesson handouts	Pages 23-26
Section 6: Lessons 23-30	
Text: <i>The Birchbark House</i> by Louise Erdrich	Purchased text
Text: <i>The First Americans: Prehistory to 1600</i> by Joy Hakim	Purchased text
Text: <i>Before Columbus: The Americas of 1491</i> by Charles C. Mann	Grade 5 Unit Reader
Lesson handouts	Page 27
Section 7: Lessons 31-35 (Extension Task)	
Text: Excerpt from "A Letter to the Treasurer of Spain" by Christopher Columbus	Grade 5 Unit Reader
Image: "The Columbian Exchange" by the Louisiana Department of Education	Digital Access
Image: "Images of Christopher Columbus and His Voyage" by The Library of Congress	Digital Access
Lesson handouts	Pages 28-29
Section 8: Lessons 36-41 (Culminating Writing Task)	
Text: <i>The Birchbark House</i> by Louise Erdrich	Purchased text
Lesson handouts	Page 30
Section 9: Lessons 42-43 (Cold Read Task)	

The Birchbark House Vocabulary Chart: Words related to the Native American Way of Life

Keep a list of words you have learned throughout the unit.

Word	Definition	Synonyms, Antonyms, and Similar Words (Word Family)	Source Sentence, Source, and Page #	Picture or Image from a Source

***The Birchbark House* Vocabulary Chart: Words related to the European Way of Life**

Keep a list of words you have learned throughout the unit.

Word	Definition	Synonyms, Antonyms, and Similar Words (Word Family)	Source Sentence, Source, and Page #	Picture or Image from a Source

Culminating Writing Task

Student Directions

How do the main events of each season of *The Birchbark House* help Omakayas to develop and gain strength, preparing her to understand and accept her past?

To answer this question:

- Identify the main events of each season in *The Birchbark House*.
- Describe how the main characters interact and respond to each identified event.
- Compare and contrast the different attitudes and interactions surrounding each event.
- Evaluate the differences and the outcomes of each event to determine how they impact and prepare Omakayas.
- Locate evidence to support the points that you make about how events in each season help Omakayas to develop and gain strength to understand and accept her past.

Write a literary analysis in response to the question that demonstrates an understanding of the text. Be sure to use proper grammar, conventions, spelling, and grade-appropriate words and phrases, including words that signal relationships (e.g., *however*, *although*, *moreover*, *in addition*, etc.). Draw on specific details and use direct quotations from the text to support the analysis.

Viewing Guide: "Ice Age"

A Squirrel's Life

Stop at 1:26.

What is the squirrel trying to do?

Why is this important?

What problem is the squirrel facing?

Stop at 3:17.

What do you notice about the ground where the squirrel lands?

Make a connection to "Before Columbus: The Americas of 1940."
What is happening?

The Big Chill?

Stop at 3:52.

Where are the animals going? Why?

Stop at 5:53.

Syd says, "We're going to miss the migration... They do this every year."
How does this scene support your response to the question above?

All Alone

Stop at 9:25.

Although this is a fictional film, Michael Wilson includes factual elements about the Ice Age. What do you learn about food and survival from viewing this scene?

Viewing Guide: "Ice Age"

A Great Team

Stop at 11:24.

Describe the scene.

Make a connection to "Before Columbus: The Americas of 1940." What is happening?

Stop at 3:54.

What is falling from the sky?

Tigers on the Prowl

Stop at 17:45.

Consider how people and animals lived off of the land to survive. Jot down your thoughts.

Save the Child

Stop at 19:23.

How did the mother ensure the safety of her child?

What happened to the mother?

Extension Task
Student Directions

Reread the excerpts from “A Letter to the Treasurer of Spain.”

1. Discuss the author’s choice of words and phrases:
 - a. Are the words generally positive or negative?
 - b. How does the word choice help us to understand the author’s point of view?
 - c. How does the author’s point of view help us to understand the message of the letter?
2. Write a one-sentence summary of each paragraph.
3. Add information from this letter to your Columbus Cause and Effect graphic organizer.
 - a. Identify Christopher Columbus’ actions as he describes them in the letter and the effect of those actions on the Native Americans.
 - b. Incorporate direct quotations with personal explanations of why those quotations were selected.
4. What is Columbus’s general opinion of the land and people in the Americas based on this letter? What details from the letter most reveal his opinion?

Review notes and handouts from throughout this unit of study. Use additional research sources, as needed.

5. Compare and contrast the information in the texts that we have read and the information provided in the excerpts from “A Letter to the Treasurer of Spain.”
 - a. Identify the similarities and differences in point of view in each.
 - b. Focus on identifying the points Columbus makes and the reasons he provides versus the points the other texts make and the reasons they provide.

Write a typed, two-page essay in response to the following prompt: “Describe the changes as a result of Christopher Columbus’s arrival in the New World. What effect did Columbus have on the New World?”

Finally, read your individual essays to your collaborative group. Then, as a group develop and deliver a presentation that answers the same question as the essay.

During the presentations, summarize and record the information presented by each group, including the points each group makes and the reasons and evidence they provide to support each point. Following the presentations, reflect on similar ideas among groups, clear up any misconceptions, and discuss new ideas and/or remaining questions about the topic of Columbus’s effect on the New World.

The First Americans Chapter 9 Summary Template

Use this template to write a summary of an informational text.

Write the text title and author.			
Write one or more main ideas of the chapter.			
Where did the Plains Indians live? Describe the land that they lived on.	Describe their homes.	What did the Plains Indians hunt and eat?	What natural resources did the Plains Indians use?
<p>Use these sentence stems, as needed, in your summary to introduce quotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the text, "....." • The text states, "....." • The author wrote, "....." • On page ____, the author says, "....." 		Write a summary of chapter 9 including the central idea statement and details above.	

The Birchbark House Seasons Graphic Organizer

Neebin (Summer)	Identify the challenges that Omakayas faces.	Explain how Omakayas responds to the challenges that she faces.	Other characters and Omakayas' interaction with them.	Summarize the chapter.	In what ways does Omakayas grow and gain strength in this chapter?
"The Birchbark House"					
"Old Tallow"					
"The Return"					
"Andeg"					
Notes about stories in the story: <i>"Deydey's Ghost Story"</i>					
Identify the main events of the season:					

The Birchbark House Seasons Graphic Organizer

Dagwaging (Fall)	Identify the challenges that Omakayas faces.	Explain how Omakayas responds to the challenges that she faces.	Other characters and Omakayas' interaction with them.	Summarize the chapter.	In what ways does Omakayas grow and gain strength in this chapter?
"Fishtail's Pipe"					
"Pinch"					
"The Move"					
"The First Snow"					
Identify the main events of the season: 					

The Birchbark House Seasons Graphic Organizer

Biboon (Winter)	Identify the challenges that Omakayas faces.	Explain how Omakayas responds to the challenges that she faces.	Other characters and Omakayas' interaction with them.	Summarize the chapter.	In what ways does Omakayas grow and gain strength in this chapter?
"The Blue Ferns"					
"The Visitor"					
"Hunger"					
Notes about stories in the story: <i>"Grandma's Story: Fishing the Dark Side of the Lake"</i>					
Notes about stories in the story: <i>"Nanabozho and Muskrat Make an Earth"</i>					
Identify the main events of the season:					

The Birchbark House Seasons Graphic Organizer

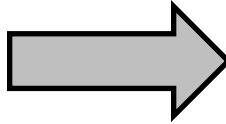
Zeegwun (Spring)	Identify the challenges that Omakayas faces.	Explain how Omakayas responds to the challenges that she faces.	Other characters and Omakayas' interaction with them.	Summarize the chapter.	In what ways does Omakayas grow and gain strength in this chapter?
"Maple Sugar Time"					
"One Horn's Protection"					
"Full Circle"					

Identify the main events of the season:

Cause and Effect: Graphic Organizer

Columbus' Action

Effect on Native Americans



Pedro's Journal Independent Reading Record Log

What section do I read?	What words and phrases am I having trouble with?	What challenges does the crew face?	How does Pedro interact with the crew?	What emotions does Pedro have (and why) during this section?	Describe the relationship between the Europeans and the Native Americans.
August 3 - September 3					
September 10 - September 18					

What section do I read?	What words and phrases am I having trouble with?	What challenges does the crew face?	How does Pedro interact with the crew?	What emotions does Pedro have (and why) during this section?	Describe the relationship between the Europeans and the Native Americans.
September 21 - September 26					
September 30 - October 8					

What section do I read?	What words and phrases am I having trouble with?	What challenges does the crew face?	How does Pedro interact with the crew?	What emotions does Pedro have (and why) during this section?	Describe the relationship between the Europeans and the Native Americans.
October 10 - October 11					
October 12 - November 6					

What section do I read?	What words and phrases am I having trouble with?	What challenges does the crew face?	How does Pedro interact with the crew?	What emotions does Pedro have (and why) during this section?	Describe the relationship between the Europeans and the Native Americans.
November 19 - December 3					
December 13 - December 27					

What section do I read?	What words and phrases am I having trouble with?	What challenges does the crew face?	How does Pedro interact with the crew?	What emotions does Pedro have (and why) during this section?	Describe the relationship between the Europeans and the Native Americans.
January 2 - January 8					
January 16 - February 14					

“Columbus”

Joaquin Miller

BEHIND him lay the gray Azores,

Behind the Gates of Hercules;

Before him not the ghost of shores,

Before him only shoreless seas.

The good mate said: "Now we must pray, 5

For lo! the very stars are gone.

Brave Admiral, speak, what shall I say?"

"Why, say, 'Sail on! sail on! and on!' "

"My men grow mutinous day by day;

My men grow ghastly wan and weak." 10

The stout mate thought of home; a spray

Of salt wave washed his swarthy cheek.

"What shall I say, brave Admiral, say,

If we sight naught but seas at dawn?"

"Why, you shall say at break of day, 15

'Sail on! sail on! and on!' "

They sailed and sailed, as winds might blow,

Until at last the blanched mate said:

"Why, now not even God would know

Should I and all my men fall dead. 20

These very winds forget their way,

For God from these dead seas is gone.

Now speak, brave Admiral, speak and say" --

He said, "Sail on! sail on! and on!"

They sailed. They sailed. Then spake the mate: 25

"This mad sea shows his teeth tonight.

He curls his lip, he lies in wait,

With lifted teeth, as if to bite!

Brave Admiral, say but one good word:

What shall we do when hope is gone?" 30

The words leapt like a leaping sword:

"Sail on! sail on! sail on! and on!"

Then pale and worn, he kept his deck,

And peered through darkness. Ah, that night

Of all dark nights! And then a speck -- 35

A light! a light! at last a light!

It grew, a starlit flag unfurled!

It grew to be Time's burst of dawn.

He gained a world; he gave that world

Its grandest lesson: "On! sail on!" 40

This poem is in the public domain.

TP-CASTT Poetry Analysis

T	<p>Title: Before reading the poem, make a prediction about what the poem is about based on the title.</p>
P	<p>Paraphrase: Translate the poem line by line into your own words. Look for complete thoughts and look up unfamiliar words.</p>
C	<p>Connotation: What words or phrases stick out to you? Look for patterns and figurative language, imagery, and sound elements.</p>
A	<p>Attitude/Tone: Notice the speaker's attitude toward the subject of the poem. This is the author's tone.</p>
S	<p>Shifts: As you look for patterns, also look for contrasts or shifts/changes in poem. Look for changes in language, attitude, setting/imagery, mood, punctuation, other literary devices.</p>
T	<p>Title: Examine the title again. What does it mean now that you've read the poem? Did the meaning of the title change?</p>
T	<p>Theme: State what the poem is about (subject) and what the poet is trying to say about subject (theme).</p>

Conversation Stems¹

Clarifying

- Is it your position that...
- To be clear, you're saying that...
- I'm confused when you say X. Can you elaborate?

Paraphrasing

- Put another way, you're saying...
- So you're saying that...
- Is it fair to say that you believe...
- I hear you saying that...

Agreeing

- I agree with ___ because...
- ___'s point about ___ was important because...
- The reasons you provided support what I am saying because...
- You and I are coming from the same position.

Disagreeing

- I see it differently because...
- The reasons and details ___ provided better support ___ because...
- There is no evidence to suggest that is true.
- I agree that ___, but we also have to consider that...
- We see ___ differently.

Elaborating

- ___ mentioned that...
- Yes, and furthermore...
- Adding to what you said,...
- I agree, and I want to add that...

Summarizing

- Overall, what I'm trying to say is...
- My whole point in one sentence is...
- More than anything else, I believe that...
- Ultimately, my goal is to demonstrate that...

¹ Adapted from te@chthought at <http://www.teachthought.com/learning/sentence-stems-higher-level-conversation-classroom/>

Analyzing Figurative Language in chapter 5 of *The Birchbark House*

Example of figurative language in the text	What is the literal meaning of the phrase?	What does the author want you to know?	How does this language make you feel? Why?
Omakayas thought with a sinking stomach (74)			
To him, it was a living thing (75)			
Opened their ears (76) In a growling tone (76)			
Overcome with the weight of his vision (78)			
When the waves of white people lapped his feet (79)			
They are like greedy children (79)			
Add an example of figurative language you found:			
Add an example of figurative language that you found:			

The Birchbark House Chapter 6 Text Dependent Questions

Directions: Respond to the following questions. Cite evidence from the text to support your responses.

1. Reread pages 85 - 88, beginning with “Pinnnnnch!’ It was Mama’s threatening voice.” and ending with “With that, she and Omakayas left him to Angeline and went off into the woods seeing Andeg.”

In this section of the text, Mama says to Pinch, “There is no medicine but enduring the consequences of your greed.” Explain what this means. Support your explanation with evidence from the text.

2. In this chapter, Omakayas speaks to the bear in front of her mother. What does this tell us about Omakayas?

3. Reread page 97, beginning with “Here,” said Two Strike Girl, dumping hers off.” and ending with, “As the rice cooked, it gathered the taste of the maple.”

How does Erdrich show us the importance of obedience in Native American culture through this scene?

4. What happened to Two-Strike girl and Omakayas after working together? Support your response with evidence from the text.

Chapter 9 Discussion Handout

Group A Discussion Questions

Provide evidence from the text to support the idea that this is a very cold winter.

“People stopped in at any time of day or even in the deep of the night, and these visitors required constant attention.” Who is Erdrich referring to in this sentence? What evidence from the text supports your response?

How does Erdrich use figurative language to describe how Omakayas feels?

Group B Discussion Questions

Explain the contrast between Angeline’s attitude toward Omakayas in this chapter and her attitude toward Omakayas in previous chapters.

Summarize Nokomis’s story.

- Start your summary by discussing the story.
 - Turn your main ideas into sentences.
 - Include important details from the text in your main idea sentences.
 - Use transition words to connect your sentences.

Debate Planning

Question: Was the European impact on the Native Americans positive or negative?

Directions for Philosophical Chairs

1. Work with your group to develop a response and two reasons. For each reason, locate supporting text evidence.
2. Form two parallel lines so that each group is in a different line facing each other.
3. One group presents their response. Repeat with the other group.
4. Engage in a conversation using accountable talk.
5. During the conversation, as reasons and/or evidence are presented that result in a change of position, visually demonstrate your change in position by switching “sides” and moving to the other line. This can and should happen multiple times throughout the debate.

Response to question



Reason 1	Reason 2



Evidence	Evidence

Analyzing a Letter

As you read, look for these details...		How do you know? Cite specific evidence from the text.
Who is the Speaker ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What can you tell or what do you know about the speaker that helps you understand the point of view expressed? 	
What is the Occasion ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the time and place of the text? What caused this text to be written? Identify the context of the text. 	
Who is the Audience ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To whom is this text addressed? Does the speaker specify an audience? What does the author assume about the intended audience? 	
What is the Purpose ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did the author want the audience to think or do as a result of reading this text? Why did the author write it? How does the main idea reflect the author's point of view and purpose? 	
What is the Subject ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What topic, content, and ideas are included in the text? How does the author present the subject? Does he introduce it immediately or do you, the reader, have to make an inference? 	
Additional Notes about the Letter:		

Presentation Peer Feedback

Group	Summarize the main points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe the changes as a result of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the New World. ● What effect did Columbus have on the New World? 	Supporting Responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Does the response include evidence from the text? ● Are there any points in the response not supported by text evidence? 	Recommendation for Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What revisions would you make to the response? ● What evidence would you include to support the response?

Culminating Writing Task Rubric

	3	2	1	0
Reading and Understanding Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows full comprehension of ideas both explicit and inferential indicated by grade-level reading standards Accurate reasoning is demonstrated through ample textual evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows comprehension of ideas indicated by grade-level reading standards Mostly accurate reasoning is demonstrated through adequate textual evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows limited comprehension of ideas indicated by grade-level reading standards Minimally accurate reasoning is demonstrated through minimal textual evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows no comprehension of ideas indicated by grade-level reading standards Inaccurate or no reasoning is demonstrated with little or no textual evidence
Writing about Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses the prompt and clearly introduces and states an opinion or topic Development is cohesive and logically organized with clear support Language links ideas and consistently demonstrates awareness of purpose and audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses the prompt and states an opinion or topic Development is organized with some support and cohesion Language links ideas and demonstrates awareness of purpose and audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses the prompt and has an introduction Development and support are minimal Response has limited coherence and/or cohesion Language demonstrates limited awareness of purpose or audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not address the prompt Lacks organization, is undeveloped, and does not provide support Language demonstrates no awareness of purpose or audience
Language Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full command of conventions indicated by grade-level standards Few minor errors do not interfere with meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some command of conventions indicated by grade-level standards May have errors that occasionally interfere with meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited command of conventions indicated by grade-level standards Errors often interfere with meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No command of conventions indicated by grade-level standards Frequent and varied errors interfere with meaning