

Wildcrafting and Weaving Grade 5

Tla'Amin Culture and Traditional Plants



FIELD EXPERIENCE LEARNING PACKAGE

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Introduction

Wildcrafting is the practice of collecting plants from their natural, or "wild" habitat, for food, medicinal, or utilitarian purposes. It applies to uncultivated plants wherever they may be found, and is not necessarily limited to wilderness areas. The Wildcrafting and Weaving Curriculum Package is designed to introduce all Grade 5 students to Tla'Amin Culture with a focus on Traditional Plants and their many applications. The lessons in this package are experiential and will promote place-based connections through a Tla'Amin Cultural lens.

How to Use this Resource

The Wildcrafting and Weaving Curriculum Package has 3 Components:

Part 1. Classroom Beginnings: Recommended for use in the classroom prior to the Wildcrafting and Weaving Field Experience.

Part 2. The Wildcrafting and Weaving Field Experience Curriculum: A facilitated experience.

Part 3. Classroom Culminations: Recommended for use in the classroom following the Field Experience.

Wild-Crafting and Weaving Grade 5: Curricular Competencies

Science	Make observations in familiar or unfamiliar contexts. Experience and interpret the local environment. Identify First Peoples perspectives and knowledge as sources of information. Express and reflect on personal, shared, or others' experiences of place.
Social Studies	Use Social Studies inquiry processes and skills to — ask questions; gather, interpret, and analyze ideas; and communicate findings and decisions
Language Arts	Explain the role of language in personal, social, and cultural identity Demonstrate awareness of the oral tradition in First Peoples cultures Identify how story in First Peoples cultures connects people to land Use writing and design process to plan, develop, and create texts for a variety of purposes and audiences Use oral storytelling processes
Arts Education	Intentionally select artistic elements, processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools, techniques, and environments to express meaning in their work Explore a range of cultures, and the relationships among cultures, societies, and arts
Physical Education	Develop and demonstrate safety and leadership in physical activities Participate daily in physical activity designed to enhance and maintain health components of fitness

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About the Wildcrafting and Weaving Field Experience

During this day long field experience, students will experience Tla'Amin culture through stories, language, forest exploration, wildcrafting, and weaving. This experience will provide learners with the opportunity to identify, to harvest, to process, and to create using traditional plants. Furthermore, students will explore other traditional applications of plants including dye making. This Field Experience Curriculum on Wildcrafting and Weaving will focus namely on Tla'Amin culture and a selection of medicinal, edible, and utility plants.

Field Experience Goals

During the Wild Crafting and Weaving Field Experience, students will:

- Apply some basic Tla'Amin vocabulary to the plants and animals of the Pacific Northwest
- Learn to identify plants found in the Pacific Northwest that are significant to the Tla'Amin people
- Understand some of the traditional Tla'Amin practices related to wildcrafting traditional plants
- Experience the practice of harvesting and processing Cedar bark and Oregon Grape root
- Use the process of inquiry to explore native plants and their capacity to make dyes for wool and cloth
- Make plant-based dyes
- Weave a mixed medium bookmark made from Cedar bark and wool dyed with Oregon Grape Root
- Develop a broad appreciation for the connection between people, plants, and culture

Day at a Glance

9:30-9:45	Site Introduction & Welcome
9:45-10:00	Storytelling: Mink and Salal
10:00-11:00	Stations: Cedar Harvest & Plant Walk
11:00-12:00	Stations: Cedar Harvest & Plant Walk
12:00-12:15	Lunch
12:15-1:00	Stations: Weaving & Plant Dyes
1:00-1:45	Stations: Weaving & Plant Dyes
1:45-2:00	Closing Circle: Sharing Student Learning

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Tla'Amin Culture and Traditional Plants

Welcome & Background Information

Tla'amin people use trees and a wide range of forest plants for many cultural purposes. Many members are highly skilled in the art of working with plant materials and regularly go out into the forests to gather roots, bark, berries and other plants with medicinal properties. The use of plant resources by Tla'amin people has been an important part of the annual cycle of harvesting for thousands of years. There are hundreds of species of plants harvested, from many locations throughout the territory. Some plants are commonly found; others have specialized habitats, and are found only in a few locations. Tla'amin Elders and gatherers have an intimate knowledge of where to find plants, for many different purposes, and at different times of the year.

Tla'amin cultural plant harvesting can be organized into three main use groups – edible plants, medicinal plants, and utility plants. Edible plants include plants and plant parts that are consumed whether fresh or preserved. The Tla'amin use 27 main edible plants, 19 of which produce fruit or berries, 6 produce fresh greens, one is a root food, and one is used as a tea. Medicinal plants include all plant product uses, whether ingested or applied externally. There are 9 main medicinal plants. Utility plants include plants used for tools or cultural purposes. There are 10 main plants used by the Tla'amin people for cultural purposes.

The Tla'amin calendar of 13 Moons illustrates the rhythm of Tla'amin life, and seasonal cycle of harvesting plant and wildlife resources. This Field Experience will draw attention to an array of edible, medicinal, and utility plants of significance to the Tla'amin people.

9:45-10:00 Activity 1: Storytelling - Mink Marries Salal

This is a story featuring **Kayk'w** or Mink. **Kayk'w** means 'someone who is always up to something (mischievous).'

Procedure: This is a traditional Tla'Amin story, delivered aurally to a whole group.

- Step 1: Create a set of 40 word cards. Each word card should have a Tla'Amin / Ayajuthum word on one side and the corresponding English word on the other.
 - 8 Chi-Chia / Grandmother Cards = say "chi-chia" (Action: Hip Rub, "Ahhh, Chinna")
 - 8 Qayx / Mink Cards = say "Kaik" (Action: Selfie)
 - 8 T'aqa / Salal Cards = say "Tah-kai" (Action: Swaying Hands Side to Side)
 - 8 Gus-Xem / Noise Cards = say "gus-hem" (Action: Snapping Fingers)
 - 8 Klah – Thla – Woom / Berries Cards = say "klah – tla – woom" (Action: Rub Tummy/ Yum)
- Step 2: While standing in a circle, give each student one word card. Go through each word, asking students to raise their hand in accordance with the word on their card. After each word is said in Tla'Amin / Ayajuthum, demonstrate a corresponding action which will be performed by each person holding that card, every time their word is mentioned during the relaying of the Mink Marries Salal story.
- Step 3: Practice simply saying the Tla'Amin/Ayajuthum words with corresponding actions.
- Step 4: Tell the story and have students do their actions.

Activity 1: Storytelling - Mink Marries Salal (continued)

Mink Marries Salal

Qayx was known to marry often. Qayx wondered who he should marry this time. So he went to his **chichia** for advice, but she wouldn't tell him anything, as he was marrying so often. His **chichia** said, "Qayx, you have got to settle down. If you keep on marrying, no one will trust you." Qayx **chichia** Then Qayx remembered the beautiful **T'aqa** bushes that grew with shiny **Klah-Thla-Woom** along the trail in the woods. He wanted to marry **T'aqa**.

Qayx went to the **T'aqa** bushes. Like some of the other wives, the **T'aqa** bushes could not keep still at night and made tonnes of **Gus-Xem**. They turned over and over, **Gus-Xem**. The **T'aqa** bushes warned Qayx that they were like this and that their **Klah-Thla-Woom** were close together and make a crackling **Gus-Xem**. But Qayx told **T'aqa** that he would hang on to her. If she turned over, then he would too – then she would not be able to make **Gus-Xem**.

T'aqa agreed to marry Qayx. She went with him to his house, but she kept turning over and over at night making lots of **Gus-Xem**. Qayx soon became tired of this **Gus-Xem** and had to leave **T'aqa**. Qayx's **chichia** was in disbelief.

10:00-12:00 Activity 2: Wildcrafting (2, 1 Hour Stations)

Station 1: Cultural Plants and Oregon Grape Root Harvesting

Background: In Tla'Amin culture, like **T'aqa**, Oregon Grape or **Ye'yich** has edible berries. However, the roots of the Ye'yich are also harvested to make a strong yellow dye, traditionally used to dye wool woven into traditional shawls and other regalia.

Purpose: Students will go for a short forest hike. During the hike, they will learn to identify a number of culturally significant plants including both T'aqa and Ye'yich.

During the first rotation, students will go for a plant walk and will learn to identify the 10 culturally significant plants listed below. Thereafter, they will learn how to respectfully harvest the roots of the Ye'yich plant. During the second rotation, students will go for a plant walk and will learn to identify the 10 culturally significant plants listed below. Thereafter, students will process these roots, making a dye bath which will be later used to dye wool. This dyed wool will be incorporated into individual weaving projects created later in the Field Experience.

Materials Needed:

- 10 Plant Cards
- 5 Sturdy Trowels or Tree-Planting Spades
- 5 Pruning Sheers
- 3 Large Buckets with Handles
- 1 Large Dye Pot
- Tobacco



Activity 2: Wildcrafting (2, 1 Hour Stations)

Station 1: Cultural Plants and Oregon Grape Root Harvesting (continued)

Culturally significant plants that will be identified in this station include:

Red Alder	P'eyXay / p'ixay	Medicinal: Twigs, leaf buds, leaves, catkins all used medicinally; anti-inflammatory, astringent, immune-stimulant Utility: Inner bark used to make a red dye
Skunk Cabbage	Xwukwayn / x'uk'wayn	Medicinal: Leaves as a poultice, Roots as a tea to ail coughs, labour pain, and topically to stop bleeding or surface wounds. Edible: Roots steamed and ground; Leaves used to cook things inside of
Salmon Berry	T'eneq̄w / t'ɛnɛk̄w	Edible: Berries
Thimble Berry	T'oq'wan / t'oqom	Edible: Berries
Red Huckleberry	T'uxwum / t'oʔx'wəm	Edible: Berries
Tuberous Sword Fern	Thukwa / tagək'wayn	Edible: Tuber or Root
Douglas Fir	P'ayinay / payɛnay	Medicinal Pitch: Used for skin irritations and coughs.
Stinging Nettle	Su-Su / sɛwsɛw	Medicinal: Leaves used to treat painful joints, eczema, arthritis, and anemia. Edible: Nutritious Greens Utility: Stems for Twine
Salal	T'aqa / t'aqa	Edible: Berries
Oregon Grape	Ye'yich / yɛʔyič	Edible: Berries Utility: Roots boiled to make a bright yellow dye

Procedure:

Part 1: Introduce the Plants

Tla'amin people have a deep connection to the land. This connection is nourished by Tla'amin teachings, which show how Tla'amin people are bound to the forests and waters of the territory. Tla'amin connection to the land is reflected in the words *jej jeh* – which mean both “relative” and “tree” in the Tla'amin language. There are many plants of cultural significance to the Tla'amin people. Culturally significant plants include those wildcrafted for medicinal purposes, those wildcrafted for edibility, and those wildcrafted for utility. In Tla'amin culture, plants are harvested according to the 13 cycles of the moon. That means there is an appropriate time to harvest specific plants. For example, most berries are harvested during the 7-10th moon cycle, which coincides with the summer months.

Invite students to work in pairs. Give each pair one or two plants cards. As we walk through the forest, point out each of the 10 plants listed on the cards. Each time you arrive at one of the plants, invite the pair of students with the corresponding plant card, to come forward and share the information aloud on the card. Continue on, until all possible plants have been identified.

Activity 2: Wildcrafting (2, 1 Hour Stations)

Station 1: Cultural Plants and Oregon Grape Root Harvesting (continued)

Part 2: Game – Do You Know Me?

Confirm student learning with the following game: Do You Know Me?

- Step 1: Collect all plant cards.
- Step 2: Set boundaries for the game.
- Step 3: Tell students that you will say aloud one of the 10 plant names. When you ring the bell, working in their pairs, students will find that specific plant. When they find that plant, they are to stand beside it. An adult will come around and confirm each finding.

Part 3: Harvesting Oregon Grape Root (Rotation 1 Only)

Safety Note: Tools used in this activity are sharp. Subsequently, tree-planting spades should never be carried above the knees and should never be placed flat on the ground, but should always be leaned against a tree with their blade in the ground.

Respectful Harvesting: Giving Thanks

Before harvesting from the forests, whether it be plants, animals, or earth, it is a Tla'Amin cultural practice to give thanks to the Creator for sharing this plant or animal with the people, by leaving something sacred behind.

Traditionally, offerings included a prayer of gratitude to the creator or a physical offering. Through trade over time, tobacco became the offering. This tobacco is different from the tobacco in cigarettes. When offered to the creator, tobacco is offered as a cherished and sacred plant, used ceremonially. Today, before we harvest Ye'yich, we will give thanks in our own way, perhaps to God, or the Creator, or to the Earth, for letting us harvest Ye'yich/Oregon Grape roots today.

Respectful Harvesting: Harvesting 1/3

Respectfully harvesting also means only harvesting 1/3 of a particular plant. It also means harvesting only 1/3 of a particular species in an area. This will ensure the viability and reproduction of that species in that place, over-time.

- Step 1: Working in small groups, students will find an Oregon Grape Plant.
- Step 2: Before digging up 1/3 of the roots, students will give thanks in their own way, before harvesting.
- Step 3: Students will choose a Ye'yich/Oregon Grape plant, and will carefully dig into the soil harvesting the root of the plant. They will carefully pull it from the earth, shake off the dirt, and put it in a bucket.

Part 4: Processing the Ye'Yich/Oregon Grape Root for a Dye Bath (Rotation 2 Only)

Processing the root for a dye bath will be done by the second group of students during the second station rotation.

- Step 1: Students will brush off as much dirt as possible from the root system of the harvested Ye'Yich/Oregon Grape.
- Step 2: Students will snip the roots into tiny pieces.
- Step 3: All pieces will be submerged in a pot of water and boiled. The quantity of water is determined by the amount of plant material. There should be enough water to cover the roots.
- Step 4: Boil as long as possible. Then let the plant material steep in the water until you are ready to dye the wool. Dyeing the wool will be done after the program.

Activity 2: Wildcrafting (2, 1 Hour Stations)

Station 1: Cultural Plants and Oregon Grape Root Harvesting (continued)

Paying It Forward

Be sure to tell students that the dye bath they make will be used to dye wool. Show students a sample of wool dyed with Ye'Yich/Oregon Grape. It was Tla'Amin tradition to use Mountain Goat wool. The wool during this workshop is from sheep. The dye bath made during each workshop will be used to dye wool which will be woven by the next group of students. Today's students will be weaving with dyed wool made by the previous group of students.

Station 2: The Cedar Tree - Cedar Bark Harvesting & Processing

Background: Tla'min people and other indigenous peoples of the NWC have been harvesting the bark of the cedar tree for time immemorial. The bark of the cedar tree was used traditionally for things like clothing, hats, baskets, temporary shelter, anchor ropes, and even diapers. Cedar bark is still woven today into many different things both utilitarian in purpose, like hats and baskets, as well as artistic in nature, like jewelry and wall hangings.



Purpose: Students will learn cedar bark harvesting and preparation techniques. They will learn to identify a cedar tree and what makes a tree a good one to consider harvesting bark from.

If it is not a favourable time of year for harvesting, students will be shown a Culturally Modified Tree (if possible) and what the bark looks like after it is harvested from the tree.

They will then learn about processing bark into useful lengths and prepare enough bark for the next class to use.

Materials: Knives, bark stripper, hammer, hatchet or machete.

Procedure: Students will go for a walk in the woods to select a tree to harvest from. After harvesting one length they will take turns removing the outer bark layer. This piece of bark will then be processed through the bark stripper back at the OLC.

The students will learn to split the lengths into the proper lengths, widths and thickness in preparation to weave a bookmark. They will learn how to properly handle the tools associated with the task.

12:15-1:45 Activity 3: Weaving & Plant Dyes (2, 45 Minute Stations)

Station 1: Plant Dyes

Background: Plants store and use sunlight. When we eat or use plants medicinally, we are literally ingesting light from the sun. Each plants comprised of different minerals. As a result, they store sunlight differently. The full colour spectrum can be found in the plants that are part of the Tla'Amin traditional territory as well as the plants that are a part of our everyday lives.

Objective: You will be able to produce a natural dye from plant material, similar to the Ye'Yich / Oregon Grape dye bath.

Materials:

- Masking Tape
- Sharpies
- Kettle & Boiled Water / Hot Water
- 1 Jar Per Student
- 5 Different Samples of Plant Materials for Dyes (i.e. Onion Skins, Nut Shells, Orange Peels, Grass, Dandelion Root)
- 15 Clipboards
- Copies of the Plant Dyes Chart
- Pencils
- 30 pieces of 6x6 inch cotton cloth

Procedure:

- Step 1: Ask students if they have ever slid down on grass? What happened to your pants?
- Step 2: Place the select different plant materials in 5 jars on a table. Introduce students to the different plant materials in each jar.
- Step 3: Using the **Plant Dyes Chart (below)**, record the name of the 5 plants, the color of the plants, and your hypothesis about the color of dye that each of those plants will produce.
- Step 4: Using boiling water, fill each jar with enough water to cover the plant materials.
- Step 5: Watch carefully as the dye bath develops a distinct colour.
- Step 6: Invite students to record their observations on their Chart.
- Step 7: Bring out the pre-pared (i.e. pre-strained and with added mordent/vinegar) jars with the same dyes. Show students the final colours that resulted after letting the dye baths steep longer.
- Step 8: Have students record the actual colour that resulted from each plant.
- Step 9: Debrief Questions:
 - What happened to the dye bath the longer it sat?
 - Were any of your hypothesis and the actual colour, not the same?
- Step 10: We've learned about using the roots of Ye'yich / Oregon Grape to make a dye. Ask students if they think there any other plants here on Tla'Amin land that you think could be used to make a dye. Ask students if they can think of any other plants generally, that might make a natural dye?

12:15-1:45 Activity 3: Weaving & Plant Dyes (2, 45 Minute Stations)

Station 1: Plant Dyes (continued)

Procedure:

- Step 11: Invite students forward, 5 at a time, to siphon some dye into a jar, to take back to their schools. Make sure each student put their name on their jar.
- Step 12: Give each student a piece of 100% white cotton cloth to put in their dye bath.

Back at School (See Classroom Culminations Package)

Create a Quilt Block Bulletin Board using the fabric that students dyed.

Add illustrations and names of the plants that were used to produce the dyes.

Include pictures and diagrams and Tla'Amin names of the other plants identified during this Field Experience.

Station 2: Weaving a Bookmark with Cedar and Wool

Background: Two of the most basic ways of weaving bark are the twining weave to hold things together and the checkerboard weave that forms most of the structure. These two patterns are the two most common weaving patterns. While there are many different woven patterns that can form the most intricate designs, these two are considered the foundation of cedar bark weaving.



Purpose: The students will use bark that they have either prepared for themselves or a previous group has prepared for them to weave a cedar bark book mark to learn the very basics of cedar weaving.

Materials: Prepared cedar bark, Oregon grape root dyed wool, scissors.

Procedure: Students will be given 10-15 pieces of bark and learn the checkerboard style weave to make the main part of the book mark.

After they have woven the main bookmark piece they will learn the twine weave with the wool yarn to hold all the pieces together. If they want and have time, they can twine some bark or make a wool yarn tassel.

1:45-2:00

Activity 4: Talking or Sharing Circle

Background:

Talking circles are a foundational in Tla'Amin culture and First Nations culture generally. They provide a model for an educational activity that encourages dialogue, respect, the co-creation of learning content, and social discourse. This model of sharing, listening, and learning provides a sense of communion and interconnectedness. When everyone has their turn to speak, when all voices are heard in a respectful and attentive way, the learning atmosphere becomes a rich source of information, identity, and interaction.

Several varied objects are used by different First Nations peoples to facilitate talking circles. Some peoples use a talking stick, others a talking feather, while still others use a peace pipe, a sacred shell, a wampum belt, or other selected object. The main point of using the sacred object, is that whoever is holding the object in their hand has the right to speak. The circle itself is considered sacred. First Nations people observed that the circle is a dominant symbol in nature and has come to represent wholeness, completion, and the cycles of life (including the cycle of human communication).



Materials: A talking stick or talking feather

Procedure:

1. Introduce the format for the talking circle:
 - It is respectful to introduce oneself.
 - It is important that the circle of people listens respectfully to the person speaking.
 - The person who is speaking should 'speak from the heart'.
 - Shared communications should be kept in confidence, especially if personal.
2. Provide the following prompt: Please share something you learned today that you will take forward from this experience and share with someone in your life.
3. When the talking feather or stick has gone around the entire circle, the circle is complete and can be concluded.

Name: _____

Plant Dyes Chart

Sample	Plant Material	Colour of Plant Material	Hypothesis: Dye Colour	Actual Dye Colour
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

