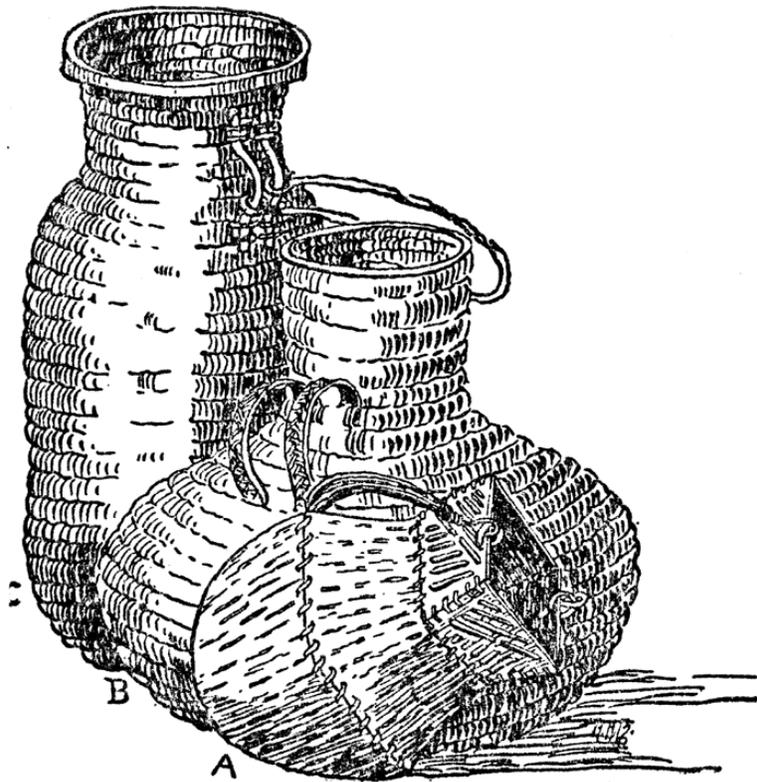




Placer
Nature
Center

Natural & Cultural History



**Native Americans
in the Foothills
3rd Grade**



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For permission or information contact:

Placer Nature Center at
3700 Christian Valley Rd.
Auburn CA 95602
(530) 878-6053

www.PlacerNatureCenter.org
info@placernaturecenter.org

This curriculum guide has been developed by the Placer Nature Center Curriculum Committee:
Linda Desai, Stuart Yaffe, Bob Gloyd, and Dorothy Gloyd. January 1993. Revision 2009

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About Us & Our Programs

Started as a project of the Placer Land Trust in 1990, today Placer Nature Center functions alone as non-profit organization. We share our 60-acre Auburn site, which is owned by the State of California, with the California Conservation Corps.

Placer Nature Center's mission is to provide educational programs that evoke a sense of discovery and wonder about our place on earth. The work of Placer Nature Center helps us understand that our daily choices impact the environmental, social and economic well being of the planet. This is essential, because a healthy world means the world to us.

Upon request, Placer Nature Center will provide schools with field tips to Placer Nature Center's campus, meet you out in the field and/or deliver presentations in the classroom.

Website: www.placernaturecenter.org
 Email: info@placernaturecenter.org
 Phone: (530) 878-6053
 Address: Placer Nature Center
 3700 Christian Valley Road
 Auburn, CA 95602

Program Overview

A team of trained docents use a holistic perspective to present our programs. That is, the total environment – living and non-living – will be studied while students weave together the disciplines in relation to their program theme (represented schematically in Figure 1).

The Placer Nature Center provides a three-part program, including:

- ✚ Pre-visit activities
- ✚ Field trip
 - Exhibit Hall theme orientation
 - Hands-on activities
 - Nature Walk
- ✚ Post-visit activities

Plus other relevant information is also provided to enhance the student's field trip experience.

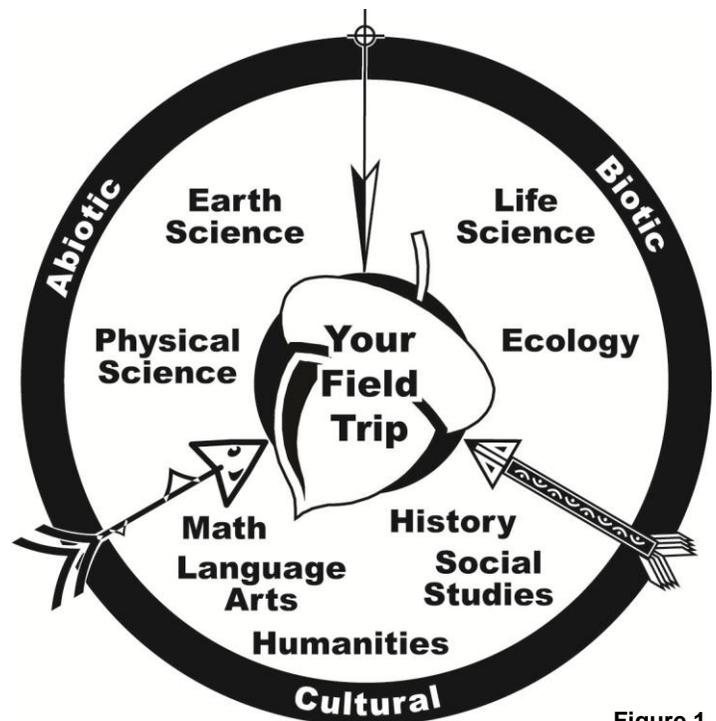


Figure 1.

Poison Oak

Description

Poison oak is a native shrub of the foothills and the Nature Center has many fine examples throughout the nature trail area and even atop the granite outcrop in our courtyard. Because many people react to the plant oil, it is important for our visitors to be able to identify this plant.



New Spring buds on Poison Oak,
pretty but not nice to touch!

Poison oak is not actually an oak although its leaves have an oak-like appearance. It is found commonly among oak trees. Scientifically it is known as *Rhus diversiloba*. The species name was well chosen as it describes the diversity of lobe shapes and sizes one can find on a leaf. Here is an identification checklist for poison oak:

1. Stems are smooth. No spines.
2. Each leaf stem has three glossy leaflets.
3. Where the three leaves meet, there is a red spot.

A Nature Center docent will help you to identify this plant. Get to know the poison oak in all its forms: shrub, vine and seasonal variations (more pictures on the next page).

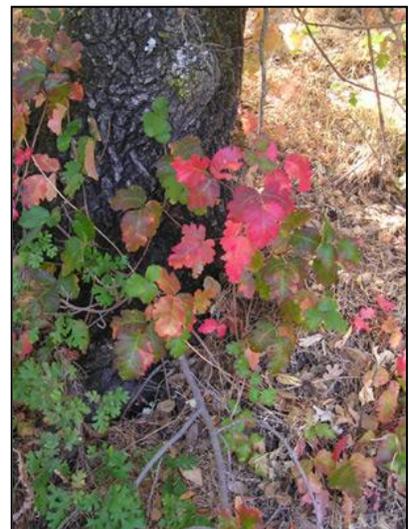
Foothill fauna depend on this native plant: deer browse on it; birds eat its berries; others den, burrow, nest or roost in it. Poison oak is an important part of the foothill ecosystem.

Reactions

Apparently only humans (and not all humans) react to urushiol, an oil found on the plant's stems, leaves, flowers and berries. Contact with this oil can result in a rash. The oil remains active for a long time. Thus, it can pass first onto clothing or animal fur before skin contact and still be capable of forming a rash.

The best prevention against contracting poison oak is to:

1. Learn to identify the plant
2. Avoid touching the plant
3. Wear long sleeves and long pants
4. Stay on the trail
5. Wash thoroughly and immediately upon returning home, both skin and clothes



Leaves of Three, Let them Be!

What Poison Oak looks like in each season



Fall

Mostly red – from bright crimson colors to brown dying leaves.



Winter

A little more tricky to spot! Look for bunches of straight, upright twigs growing near rocks, trees and amongst other shrubbery.



Spring

After the pretty red buds (see previous page), leaves turn a shiny green. May be inter mixed in black berry bushes and other shrubs, hiding under Oak Trees and around rocks.



Summer

Various shades of green, yellow and red all mixed together in the same bush and sometimes on the same leaf!

Pre-Visit Information

Before you arrive... Please take the time to go over the pre-visit information and activities. It helps the students and docents enjoy a more successful program!

In The Classroom.

- 1) If there is a special needs student in your group, let us know how we can best meet her/his needs.
- 2) Divide your class into groups of 10-12 students with one adult each if possible. Make sure the students know which group they are in so they can be divided quickly after exiting the bus/car.
- 3) Make name tags and wear them to the Nature Center. Following is an activity for making name tags. (see activity #1)
- 4) Have students do the Word Search and Word Match (if provided) to familiarize themselves with new vocabulary words. (see activity #2 and #3)
- 5) Review the information and accompanying sketch of poison oak. Although the docent will identify this native shrub for the students, it helps if they are aware of it before arriving.
- 6) Remind students to dress for the weather. The program will be conducted rain or shine. Closed toe walking shoes (no sandals) are a must.
- 7) Have a payment envelope ready to hand the docent as soon as you arrive. If possible, make payment by check. We are not able to make change.
- 8) If you choose to have lunch on site, all related garbage must leave with you. The Nature Center does not have a disposal service.
- 9) Please arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled time.

On The Trail

- 1) The docent will lead the group at all times on the trail, with a parent or other adult taking up the rear.
- 2) Stay on the trail.
- 3) No picking of plants or rocks or anything. Take only memories. Leave only footprints.

We are excited to share an enjoyable, educational experience with you and your students at the Nature Center. Have fun with the pre-visit activities!

Pre-Visit Activities

Activity #1 - Name Tags

OBJECTIVE: To introduce students to an aspect of Maidu culture and to see themselves differently through another culture's interpretation.

MATERIALS:

Crayons/felt tip pens
Index cards or other heavy tag board
String or pins to attach to name tag
Acorns or feathers to decorate name tag
Glue
Scissors

BACKGROUND

Maidu children were named after animals, natural phenomena, or everyday domestic items, depending on family status.

PROCEDURE:

1. Have the students think about a name or phrase from nature (plant, animal, etc...) that best describes them.
2. Cut out following Maidu themed name tags.
3. Write the Maidu name across the top of the tag.
4. In the middle illustrate and color the Maidu name. For example, if the Maidu name was Rabbit-run, the illustration would be of a rabbit running.
5. On the bottom write the student's real name.
6. Decorate name tag with feathers or acorn tops.
7. Punch two holes in the top of tag and weave a piece of string through it so that name tag can be worn as a necklace. It can also be attached to shirt with safety pin.
8. Have students share their chosen names. Be sure to wear name tags to the Nature Center.

Maidu Name Tags

Maidu Name: _____

Picture: 

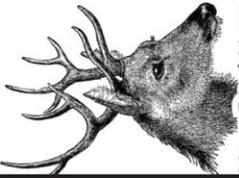
Your Real Name: _____

Maidu Name: _____

Picture: 

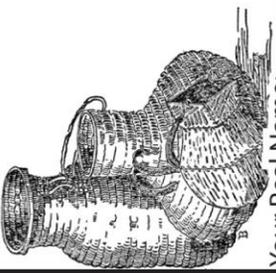
Your Real Name: _____

Maidu Name: _____

Picture: 

Your Real Name: _____

Maidu Name: _____

Picture: 

Your Real Name: _____

Name: _____

Activity #2: Maidu Word Search

See if you can find the words listed below. They can be found vertically, horizontally, diagonally, upside down, and right side up!

S	O	K	P	E	R	R	P	D	N	L	Y	E
F	Q	L	O	F	I	L	N	A	Z	P	M	E
A	E	A	D	A	S	N	M	P	H	Y	A	Z
G	P	M	C	E	Z	A	B	P	A	P	E	O
X	Y	A	E	O	H	T	A	N	H	L	V	A
R	N	N	M	S	R	O	S	M	T	Y	E	S
E	V	Z	O	O	H	N	K	S	C	S	E	S
C	T	A	R	A	X	M	E	B	Q	N	S	R
P	U	N	T	P	A	P	T	A	N	N	I	N
X	L	I	A	R	V	Q	R	U	W	T	B	T
P	E	T	R	O	G	L	Y	P	H	S	E	E
H	N	A	T	O	M	A	I	D	U	A	N	I
C	O	Y	O	T	E	O	N	J	U	E	D	Z

Maidu
Manzanita
Basketry
Petroglyphs

Acorn
Coyote
Shaman
Mortar

Tannin
Soaproot
Tule
Pestle

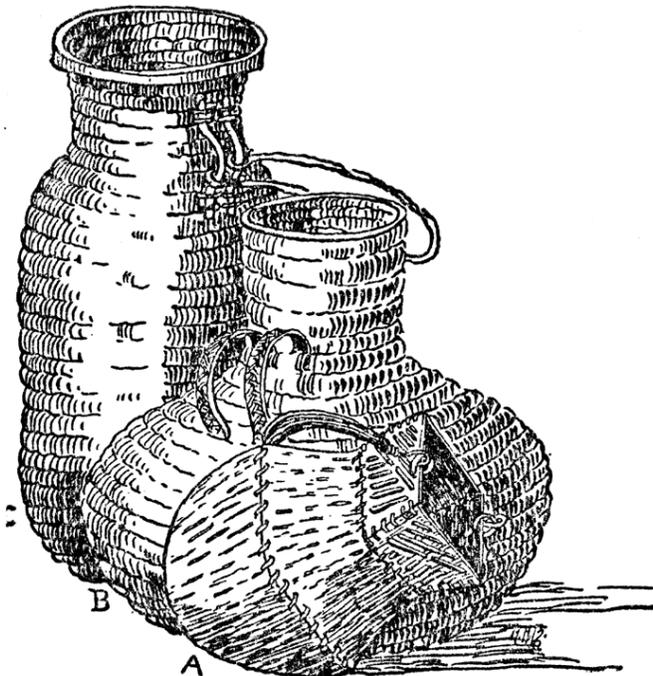


Name: _____

Activity #3: Maidu Word Match

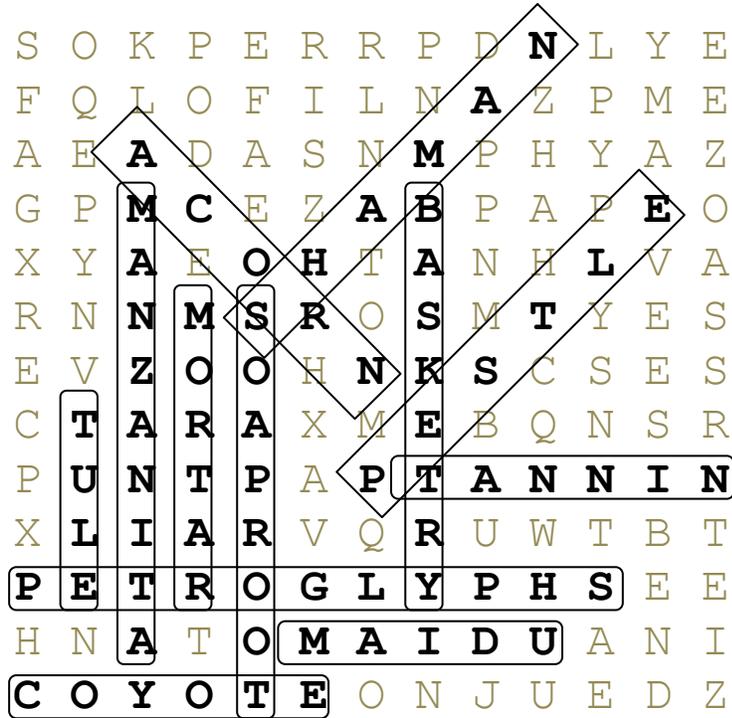
Instructions: The following words were very important to the Native People who first lived in the surrounding area of the Placer Nature Center. Draw a line between the word and its correct meaning.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| ___ 1. Maidu | A. Staple food source which was ground into flour and made into mush, soup and bread. |
| ___ 2. Acorn | B. Coiled clockwise from willows, redbud, grasses and roots. Used as storage and cooking containers. Every individual owned one. |
| ___ 3. Digging Stick | C. Word Meaning "people." |
| ___ 4. Gold Rush | D. Simple tool used to remove edible roots and bulbs from the ground. |
| ___ 5. Soaproot | E. Time period between 1848-1870 which had the greatest negative impact on the Maidu and which is said to be responsible for the decline in Native American populations. |
| ___ 6. Mortar and Pestle | F. Plant used as soap for bathing, ground to poultice for healing sores. Coarse horsehair like outer portion used as brushes. Contains chemicals which paralyze fish. |
| ___ 7. Basket | G. Stone with hollowed impression and accompanying pounding implement used to crush acorns into a fine meal-like flour. |



Answers to Pre-Visit Activities

Activity #2: Maidu Word Search



Activity #3: Maidu Word Search

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

Your Field Trip at a Glance

Common Core: RL 2, SL1b,c,d, 3

A team of docents will meet your class in the parking lot, lead the group to the Nature Center courtyard, and point out restrooms and drinking fountain. Each docent will take a group of 10-12 students and begin their program at one of the following stations: Exhibit Hall, Discovery Room, Outside Activity, or Nature Walk. The docent will rotate through all stations to complete the program. Following is an outline of what to expect at each station for your program at the Placer Nature Center.

EXHIBIT HALL

20 MINUTES

The docent will introduce the theme of the visit. Students will focus on the Maidu Exhibit as she/he explains the following:

- 1) Maidu village structures
- 2) Maidu territory
- 3) Maidu activities depicted in ceramic models
- 4) Acorn processing

Foothill Treasures

A dozen items are placed on a rug in the Exhibit Hall. Students are instructed to guess how the Maidu might have used the items in their daily life. Creative thinking is encouraged!

Following the docent theme presentation, students will be given 10 minutes to explore and interact with the other exhibits. A docent will answer any questions and/or ask leading questions to enhance student involvement.

DISCOVERY ROOM

20 MINUTES

Discovery Room activities are designed to augment the student's understanding of the Maidu culture. The activities are described below.

- 1) Visit the Maidu Village (replica)
Students will be introduced to the structures found in a Maidu Village and discuss plants used by the Maidu culture.
- 2) Maidu Medicine Cabinet
The docent will guide students in contrasting medicines from the pharmacy that we use today for common illnesses and their counterparts used by the Maidu from the foothill environment.

OUTSIDE ACTIVITY

20 MINUTES

Making a Maidu Rope: Students will be instructed on how to make rope using commercial iris leaves.

NATURE TRAIL

60 MINUTES

- 1) Maidu Village The docent will guide the students to our Maidu village site. Here students will view the cedar bark structures, granary, shade structure, and an outdoor exhibit depicting a Dance House.
- 2) Trail The docent will guide the students on the nature trail examining native plants and animal signs as though viewed through Maidu eyes. The walk will include an explanation of the Maidu uses of native flora and fauna. Plants may vary depending on the season.

Post-Visit Activities

Activity #1: Betting Bones Game

This hand game was played by more than 80 different tribes in North America. The object of the game is to guess which hand has the marked bone. The Maidu often used mountain lion femurs as the “bones” for this game. Both men and women played this game.

MATERIALS:

- 4 chicken leg bones, or ½” dowling cut into 2” lengths
- 2 marked with black felt pen
- 10 sticks (9”) or ¼” dowlings, used as counters
- colored yarn or string for decorating counters
- scarf or cloth for concealing the bones

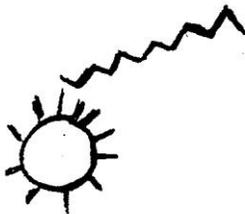
PROCEDURE:

1. Two rows of children line up facing each other.
2. One team has both sets of “bones.” The captain of the team decides which team members will hide the bones.
3. To a rhythm (stick on log, singing, clapping, etc...) one team sways and passes the bones, concealing with a cloth the marked and unmarked bones.
4. The opposite team guesses which team members have the marked bones. If they are right, they win a counter stick. Of they are wrong, the team loses a stick. Guessing continues until both sets of bones are on the other side.
5. The side with the most marked ones wins.

Name: _____

Activity #2: Petroglyphs – What do they mean?

The Maidu used geometric figures and drawings to tell a story. These were often chiseled into large rocks. They are called petroglyphs. The following are some examples of petroglyphs created by Native Americans in California. Nobody knows for sure what they mean. What do you think they mean?



Name: _____

Activity #2: Draw Your Own Petroglyphs!

Tell a story using your own petroglyph-like symbols on the rock below.
Be creative!

