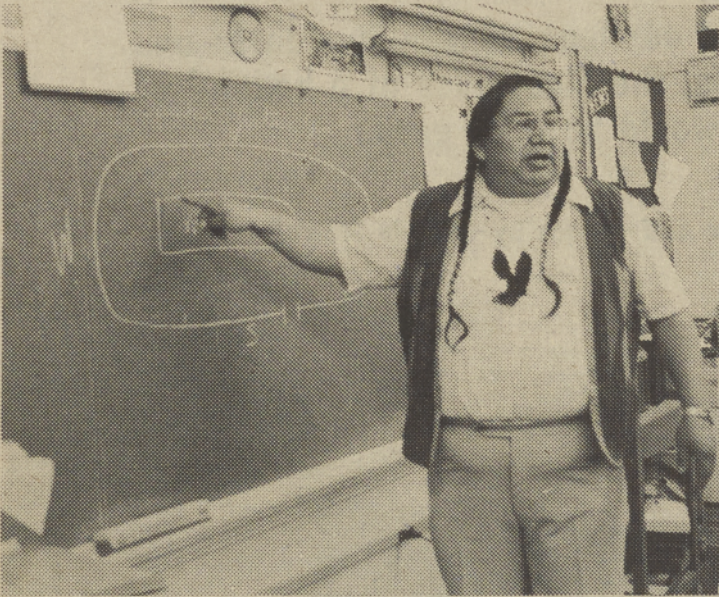


Indian Literature Class Brought Culture To Life



by Cynthia Stowell

A teacher at Madras Junior High has stretched the meaning of literature and come up with a unique course entitled "Indian Literature Appreciation." The 55 students in Mrs. Tunison's two sessions have learned that even a culture without a written tradition can be rich with history, poetry and stories.

Both Indian and non-Indian students have discovered such richness in the culture of the Warm Springs Reservation. And the information has come less from the sparse written materials available at the junior high level than from the oral tradition. Speakers from Warm Springs accepted invitations to share their knowledge and wisdom by means of legend-telling, poetry, and first-hand accounts

of boarding school and prejudice.

The pilot nine-week course that ended last week was conceived by Lorena Tunison, who has had a longtime interest in the community and culture of her Indian students. Several years of individual exploration received support from the school administration this past year and resulted in the full credit elective course.

Mrs. Tunison admits that the available reading materials are few, consisting largely of whatever poems and legends she could get her hands on and the slim offerings of the Junior High Library. Hand-outs and pamphlets brought by the weekly speakers and materials from the Northwest Regional Educational Lab comprised the bulk of the reading, while films and filmstrips from local I.E.D.'s provided a backbone for the course. Students were also responsible for reading at least two outside sources.

Speakers popular

The six speakers were, for students and teacher, the highlight of the course. Contacted by community liaison Marie Calica according to Mrs. Tunison's needs, speakers presented a crosssection of Warm Springs life. But Mrs. Tunison noted, "I reminded students that these speakers did not represent all views on the reservation — that there are many different views and opinions in the community."

The class's first speaker Mike Clements recounted the history of the Confederated Tribes, explaining the treaty-signing and later boundary disputes. Rudy Clements, comfortably seated on the floor, offered students a glimpse into the cultural traditions of the Tribes, using himself as an example of an Indian who had to learn about his culture as an adult.

Charles Calica discussed the problems of prejudice and stereotyping, citing his own experiences working at institutions. Students then gathered examples of stereotyping from newspapers, magazines and advertising and brought them into the class for viewing and discussion.

Isabel Keo came in despite a late night at a funeral and told legends to the students. Billie Jo McConville had students spellbound with her reading of original poetry and her accounts of

boarding school life.

Last on the course schedule was Nathan Jim, Sr., whose presentation generated so many questions that he was invited back for a second visit. Jim told students about Indian religion, highlighting the story of creation, the longhouse and Washat practices, the sweatlodge, and stick Indians.

A special event in the course was the video taping of two junior high students performing the Lord's Prayer in Indian sign language. After practicing for days ahead, Allie Smith and Lucille Gilbert dressed in native costume and signed the prayer for the camera. The tape was shown in both classes.

Student response positive

Mrs. Tunison feels that both Indian and non-Indian students have benefited from the exposure to Warm Springs culture. Ms. Calica added that Indian students were learning right along with the others, since they often didn't learn their culture at home. "Warm Springs kids were reticent about asking questions because they felt they should already know it all," said Mrs. Tunison. But they enjoyed the course, as evidenced by one student who asked the teacher how he could go about flunking — because he wanted to take it again.

Student evaluations of the course revealed that respect for Indian culture had increased. "I learned to appreciate Indians and not put them down," wrote one student. "It cleared up some rumors about Indians" wrote another. One student said that previous to this course all he knew about Indians is that they drank. Some students indicated a desire to learn about other tribes as well as Warm Springs, while also asking for more local material.

Mrs. Tunison plans to offer the Indian Literature class again next year, with a few changes. Based on students' suggestions, the teacher may track down more speakers, invite dancers into the classroom, display more handmade items, introduce some Indian Foods and language, and make a field trip to the reservation. Anything Mrs. Tunison can do to increase awareness and understanding of Indian culture among her students, she will undoubtedly attempt.



TWO VIEWS — Nathan Jim, Sr. (top) and Rudy Clements (bottom) were two of six reservation residents who presented views of Warm Springs culture to Madras Junior High students as part of a semester-long course called "Indian Literature Appreciation." Depending largely on "word of mouth" for local information, teacher Mrs. Tunison invited a crosssection of speakers to the classroom. Jim explained the basics of the Washat religion and Clements told of his experience learning his own culture.

Spilyay Tymoo Photos by Cynthia Stowell and Roger Stwyer

From The High School Counselor

Indian Week Set for April 9-16

by Ron Pinkham

Last week the third quarter ended and began spring vacation. By this time each student should realize his grades and where he is academically. Therefore, if you are in poor shape, it is best that one works hard toward raising grades. Use all your skills and seek assistance whenever necessary to improve your grades.

I would like all students to receive the best marks they're capable of. The fourth quarter will begin after spring vacation and this will be your last chance in which to raise your grades. I want all students to succeed academically.

The first period class needs speakers and I would like to thank those who have spoken to the class: Danny Martinez, F. Browning Pipestem, Margaret Oberly, and Phillip David. Anyone wishing to speak, Tuesday of each week is reserved for outside speakers. You can speak on your area of expertise, talk about your program, what it took

to gain your position education-wise, or any other subject that would be beneficial to the class.

Seniors, remember you must write letters and apply for college, fill out financial aid forms, and apply for tribal and BIA scholarships as soon as possible. Deadlines for these programs will be soon and usually are on a first-come-first-served basis. Would not want any senior to jeopardize their chances for scholarships, basic education opportunity grants, or any other programs. See me as soon as possible and I will assist you as best I can in filling out forms.

The counselors and the guide teachers have or will be assisting you with class schedules for next semester. Please schedule yourself as best as possible according to your needs. Remember, the graduation requirements must be cleared first. Any semester where one has failed a graduation requirement course must be made up. Schedule the failed graduation requirement course for next semester or make up the

course during summer school. Please be warned that not all courses can be made up during summer school.

The Indian Club has decided to have Indian Week from April 9-16 this year. Though plans at best are tentative, I would encourage all students and their parents to become involved. Some suggestions are films, speakers, art work display, contest for Brave and Princess, war dance, disco dance, Buckeroo breakfast, and become involved with the rodeo and the root feast that weekend. Do some fund raising activities for a couple of conferences being held in Klamath Falls, Tacoma, Washington.

The JOM Parent Committee wishes the students to pay for half of the cost by fund-raising. Also, to insure money is spent well and that students who attend learn from the experience, actively participate and disseminate the information to other students.

AFS Students to visit reservation

Over 100-American Field Service (AFS) students are expected to arrive April 6 on a three-day stay at Kah-Nee-Ta. There will be over 20 countries represented. 80 young people attended the function last year.

Their agenda includes tour

of the fish hatchery and Kah-Nee-Ta lodge and a slide presentation by Nathan Jim. Dancing will also be performed by the Mitchell family.

Everyone is welcome to join in the fun during the bonfire planned for Saturday evening.

Textbook Report Available

(Reprinted from T.A Newsletter)

The Oregon Indian Textbook Review Committee has completed the review of social studies textbooks recommended for use in Oregon's public schools and the final report is now available, according to Bruce Bishop, executive director of the Oregon Commission on Indian Services.

Copies of the report are available from: Oregon Commis-

sion on Indian Services, 454 State Capitol, Salem, Ore. 97310.

A copy of this final report has been sent to each of the publishers who submitted social studies textbooks for adoption by the State Board of Education, according to Clement Azure, Indian education specialist in the State Dept. of Education.

Copies have also been sent to all school districts and educational service districts within the state.