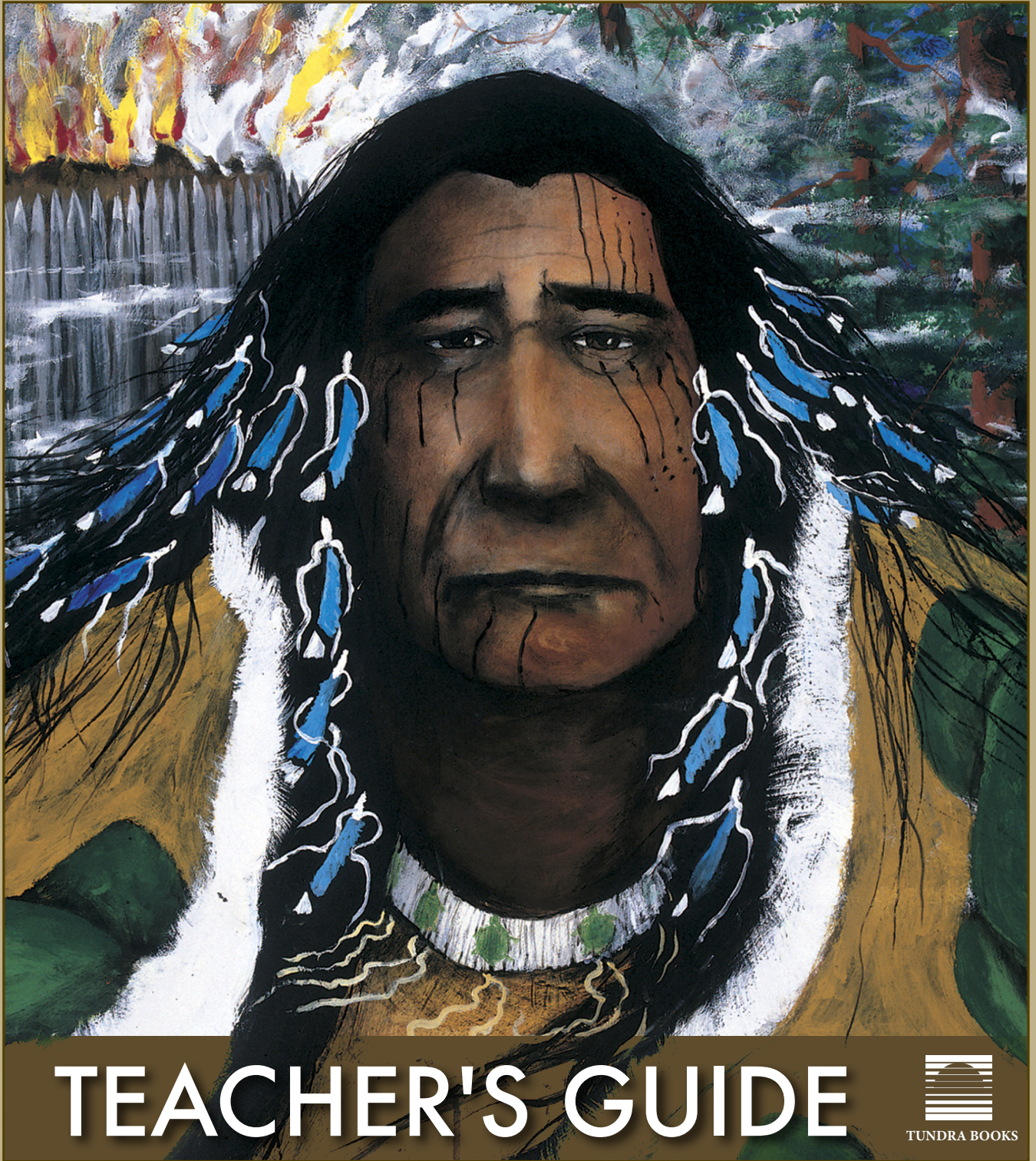


PEACE WALKER

• *The Legend of Hiawatha and Tekanawita* •



TEACHER'S GUIDE



TUNDRA BOOKS

C. J. TAYLOR

DEAR EDUCATOR

In *Peace Walker: The Legend of Hiawatha and Tekanawita*, internationally acclaimed artist and children's author C. J. Taylor tells the story of the Confederacy of the Five Nations, as she learned it from her Mohawk elders.

Teachers can use the text in a number of ways, including

- Exploring conceptual and thematic connections such as democracy, unity, peace, courage, culture, heritage
- Studying oral storytelling and legends
- Focusing on Native Americans units, specifically the Haudenosaunee

This activity guide includes discussion questions, writing activities, and prompts to elicit a meaningful understanding of the text. Where applicable, activities have been aligned with Common Core State Standards. The activities can be used for a Social Studies and Language Arts unit or can be used as stand-alone enrichment in whole class, small group, or independent studies, and can be adapted to suit the needs of your students.

ABOUT THE BOOK

The Iroquois Confederacy was one of the world's great democracies, serving as a model that inspired the founders of both the United States and Canada. C. J. Taylor tells the story of the Confederacy of Five Nations (which became six after European contact) and of the heroic peace walker, Hiawatha, in powerful prose and dramatic art. *Peace Walker* is the story of how peace and unity emerged from a time of chaos when the nations suffered under the brutality of Chief Atotahara – a man so evil that he drank potions from the skull of a small child.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

C. J. Taylor is an internationally acclaimed artist and children's author of Mohawk heritage. She has traveled extensively throughout North America helping make the rich cultural history of native people accessible to the young. Her paintings are in many private collections across Canada and the US. She is a self-taught artist and storyteller who has organized exhibitions of Native art across North America. *Peace Walker* is C. J. Taylor's tenth book. She lives near the Kahnawake Reserve outside Montreal.



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PRE-READING DISCUSSION / ACTIVITIES

1. Introduce the title of the story, *Peace Walker: The Legend of Hiawatha and Tekanawita*. Do any of the students recognize the names Hiawatha and Tekanawita? If so, what do they know? If not, what are their best guesses as to who they might be?
2. As a class, make a list of the different types of stories the students are familiar with. *Peace Walker* is a type of story called a legend. What is a legend? Make a list of well-known legends. What characteristics do all of these stories have in common?
“A legend is a semi-true story, which has been passed on from person-to-person and has important meaning or symbolism for the culture in which it originates. A legend usually includes an element of truth, or is based on historic facts, but with ‘mythical qualities.’ Legends usually involve heroic characters or fantastic places and often encompass the spiritual beliefs of the culture in which they originate.”
(<http://myths.e2bn.org/teachers/info311-what-are-myths-legends-and-folktales.html>)
3. The Iroquois nations have a strong oral tradition. What does this mean? Read a short story aloud to the class. The next day, in partners, take turns retelling the story orally. Were the retellings consistent with one another? Were any facts or details omitted from one partner’s retell that were included in the other?

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. In the Beginning

- “There remains today evidence of great mound cities that once flourished throughout central North America.”

What do you think a “mound city” is? Research the history of mound cities, considering the following questions:

- Where were mound cities built?
- Who built the cities?
- How were they built?
- How were mound cities similar and different to the type of modern day city you are familiar with?

(*RL.4.4*)

2. Clans

- Each of the five (and later six) Iroquois nations is unique and has their own language. Name the five Iroquois nations involved in the original migration to the Great Lakes. On a map of the Oswego River region, locate and label where the five nations settled.
- Visit <http://www.iroquoismuseum.org/ve7.htm> to learn more about the clan system referred to in Chapter One. In your own words and using what you learned from the story and the Iroquois Museum website, write a brief description of the clan system.
- The author writes, “But it is difficult to be fair in revenge.” What does the word “revenge” mean? How did the concept of revenge contribute to the discord amongst the Iroquois nations?
- Do you think there is a situation that ever warrants taking revenge on another person? Why or why not? Write a persuasive paragraph explaining your thoughts and ensure you include at least three reasons to support your thinking.

(*RL.4.4, W.4.1*)

LEARNING ACTIVITIES (continued)

3. Chief Atotarho

- There is a vivid description of Atotarho and his dwelling in Chapter One. Using this description, sketch out what you think Atotarho would have looked like. Show him in his lodge, using details from the text. Share your sketch with a partner and show them the different details you included from the book in your sketch.
- How does the author convey Atotarho's cruelty to the reader in Chapter One? Consider his described appearance, actions, and stated intent. What was your reaction to Atotarho as you read of his cruel ways?
- Compare and contrast Atotarho and Hiawatha's lives as chiefs. Discuss how they chose to deal with their personal pain and suffering.

(RL.4.1, RL.4.3, RL.5.3)

4. Defiance

- Atotarho was enraged to learn of Hiawatha's defiance. What does the word "defiant" mean? Why and how had Hiawatha become defiant?
- What negative consequences did Hiawatha suffer for his defiance? What positive consequences did he experience? Why did Atotarho opt not to kill Hiawatha for his defiance?
- Can you think of a character in another book or movie that has acted defiantly? Why and how were they defiant? Would you have acted defiantly if you had been in the same position? Why or why not?

(RL.4.1, RL.4.4)

5. Giving Thanks

- In Chapter 4, the Seer performed a cleansing ritual of thanks before meeting with the elders at council. What was he giving thanks for? Who was he thanking?
- Giving thanks is a part of the Iroquois culture and plays an important role at social and ceremonial gatherings. What kinds of things do you think the Iroquois would be thankful for at the time of the story? How might this have changed and/or remained the same over the years?
- What is the value of taking the time to give thanks for the important things in your life and the world around you? Make a list of at least five things you are thankful for. Try to avoid including materialistic wants on your list (vs. essential needs). Share your lists in small groups and explain the importance of the items you included.

(RL.4.1)

6. Shells of Condolence

- Hiawatha journeyed far after the death of his daughters, having been driven from his village. He hung three strands of shells, known as a wampum, and could be heard saying, "Should I see anyone in grief, I would console them. I would lift the blanket of sorrow from their hearts." Why didn't anybody from Hiawatha's village console him after he lost his daughters? Do you think it was fair for Hiawatha to have suffered the losses he did in order for peace to ultimately reign across the nations? Explain your thinking in writing.
- Visit <http://www.iroquoismuseum.org/ve11.html> to research the significance of the wampum for the Iroquois. Design/sketch your own wampum and explain the significance of the colors you used in your design.
- Tekanawita tells Hiawatha, "We need clear minds and hearts if we are to have peace." What is he referring to? What did Tekanawita's mother give him that he was able to use to mend Hiawatha's heart and mind?

(W.4.1)

LEARNING ACTIVITIES (continued)

7. A Great Peace

- Tekanawita and Hiawatha wished to “establish a union of all nations.” How would this differ from the way the different territories had been existing?
- Tekanawita announced that, “Each nation will be represented by chiefs of great virtue, honesty, and patience.” These qualities remain important to the Iroquois people to this day. Write a definition for each word. How did Hiawatha show that he possessed all three of these qualities in the story?
- If you had to choose one of the three qualities (virtue, honesty, patience) as what you consider to be the most important to ensure a peaceful existence, which one would you choose and why?
- How long did it take to establish that all but Atotarho had agreed to the union of nations? Why do you think it took this much time?
- What was the plan to convince Atotarho to join the union of nations? What do you imagine the Peace Song to sound like? If you were to write your own peace song that was meant to bring together two warring nations, what would it sound like? Would you use any musical instruments?
- As the Peace Song was sung to Atotarho, he is transformed. Draw a before and after picture using the description in the story as a guide.

(RL.4.4, W.4.1)

8. Tree of Peace

- The tree that the chosen leaders of the united nations sat underneath had not always been a tree. What did it used to be? How is this significant?
- Tekanawita states, “To establish this unity of peace among the brothers and sisters of these five nations, we ask the women to present their chosen leaders.” Women played an important role in the newly established unity of peace. Do you think it was unusual for women at the time to have such power? Why or why not?

(W.4.1)

9. The Confederacy

- What are some of the common types of government? (democracy, republic, monarchy, aristocracy, dictatorship) Look up the word democracy in the dictionary and explain how the Great Confederacy was a democracy.
- The author states that some of the people responsible for drafting the United States constitution used many of the principles of the Confederacy. Using what you know about the U.S. constitution, what aspects of the Confederacy may have been most influential?
- Imagine your class is working together to establish its own Great Peace. Write a list of rules that will ensure your classroom is a peaceful place. All rules must be agreed upon unanimously.
- What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of everybody having to agree on a rule for it to be passed?
- In small groups, design a symbol or logo that would be an ideal representation of your peaceful classroom. Present each group’s design to the class and vote on which one should become the class’s symbol.

(RL.4.4)

WRAP-UP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The Iroquois nations have a strong oral tradition. Important stories are passed down from generation to generation. For this reason, not all are in agreement about the details of this story. Research the story of the Peacemaker and find at least two versions told by different storytellers. How are they the same and different from C. J. Taylor's version?
2. How did the illustrations influence your understanding of the story? How has the artist included symbolic and spiritual elements in the paintings?
3. The story does not actually name anybody as the Peace Walker mentioned in the title. Who was the Peace Walker? How do you know?

(*RL.4.7, RL.5.7*)

OTHER BOOKS BY C. J. TAYLOR:

All the Stars in the Sky

Bones in the Basket

The Ghost and Lone Warrior

How We Saw the World

Spirits, Fairies, and Merpeople

PRAISE FOR C. J. TAYLOR

"Taylor's version of this legend is a powerful one..."

– *The Globe and Mail*

"The events surrounding the collaboration of two chiefs...are related simply and abound with graphic details of Native life...the writing is eloquent and poetically rhythmic."

– *School Library Journal*

LINKS

<http://iroquoismuseum.org/>

<http://www.ganondagan.org/Learning/Educators-Resources>

APPENDIX: Common Core State Standard

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.1** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.3** Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.7** Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.3** Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.5.7** Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.