UNIT OF STUDY: Ben Reifel, Native American politician

TITLE OF LESSON PLAN: Constructing a Timeline of Ben Reifel’s Life

GRADE LEVEL: 3-5

SOUTH DAKOTA CONTENT STANDARDS:

World History:

3.W.1.1 Students are able to identify events as past or present.

Reading:

4.R.5.2 Students can research a topic by gathering information from at least two sources.

5.R.5.1 Students can use select information from two or more reference sources to meet a goal.

Listening, Viewing, & Speaking:

5.LVS.1.4 Students can deliver a narrative oral presentation.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES:

- Constructed timelines
- Class discussion
- Observations while groups are working on timelines
- Group presentations to class

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will understand the importance of learning about Native American culture and history.
2. Students will learn teamwork skills by working in groups.
3. Students will learn and practice oral speaking skills.
4. Students will learn art skills by designing a timeline.

**TIME REQUIRED:**

- Two class periods of 45-60 minutes each (May require more depending on time needed for research.)
- One class period for students to present their timelines to the class

**MATERIALS/TECHNOLOGY NEEDED:**

- Students will need to be able to do research via the Internet on Ben Reifel’s life.
- Construction paper, art materials, markers, crayons, copy paper, etc.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Benjamin Reifel was born near Parmalee, South Dakota in 1906. He was born of German-American and Sioux lineage. He was born a member of the Brule or Burnt Thigh tribe of Sioux whose Indian forebears had settled around the U.S. Agency at Rosebud. Ben Reifel was the only enrolled tribal member with a commitment to Sioux heritage ever elected to Congress from the state and the only member in Congress of Native American ancestry during the 1960’s.

**LESSON DESCRIPTION:**

1. Briefly explain to the class who Ben Reifel was and why he is so important to South Dakota history.
2. Explain to the class what a timeline is and how they can be used to represent historical data concerning a person’s life or an event in history. You may wish to have a few examples to show them.
3. Divide the class into groups of 3-4 students per group.
4. Have each group conduct research on Ben Reifel and make a timeline of the most important events of his life. They can create their timelines the way they want as a group but instruct them that they need to be big enough that when finished you can hang them on the wall for all to see.
You may need to provide markers, construction paper, etc. for them to actually make their timelines.

5. Once the groups are finished with their timelines, have each group present their timelines to the class as a group before hanging them on the wall.

ENRICHMENT:

Have the students write a short autobiography of Ben Reifel using their timelines.

BIBLIOGRAPHY/RESOURCES:

- **Benjamin Reifel: Transitional Sioux Leader** by John S. Painter; Badlands Natural History Association.
- South Dakota Art Museum Collection
  - Ben Reifel