

# Lacrosse

## Educational Guide

Grades 9-12 & Higher Education

# SACRED STICK



Subject Areas:

- HISTORY
- SOCIOLOGY
- NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURE



# THE MEDICINE GAME

TWO BROTHERS, ONE DREAM



Corporation  
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Broadcasting

## For Educators

There are key themes in these films that have wide-reaching implications for the peoples represented therein. Take time to familiarize students with the background of Native American history before delving into these lesson plans to cultivate a comprehensive understanding of the themes within each film.

This guide is divided into two sections:

### 1) *Sacred Stick*

- Short Answer
- Essay
- Group Discussion
- Activities

### 2) *The Medicine Game*

- Short Answer
- Essay
- Group Discussion
- Activities



Lacrosse players, Jeremy & Jerome "Hiana" Thompson (Onondaga) practice on the Onondaga Nation. Photo by Erik Korver.

## One-Mindedness

Native Americans believe in the interconnectedness of all things and this should be the mind with which these lessons are approached. In the same way that water and air are boundless, so too are the minds of humanity. For the purpose of this Educational Guide, ask students to imagine if they were in the "moccasins" of the characters represented in the films. Follow up with a group discussion and activities after viewing.



Onondaga road sign. Photo by Erik Korver.

## How to Use This Guide

Educators can use the Lacrosse Educational Guide to support viewing of the documentary films *Sacred Stick* by Michelle Danforth (Oneida of Wisconsin) and Patty Loew (Bad River of Lake Superior Ojibwe), and *The Medicine Game* by Lukas Korver. The guide will help facilitate discussions with students about the power of sport in our communities and its role as both a ceremony and social equalizer. The lessons and discussions also provide a context for understanding and further investigation of the factors that contribute to racial stereotypes of Native Americans and other minority groups. The activities can foster discussion and inspire action around these topics within classrooms, youth-serving organizations, families, and the broader community. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate the *Sacred Stick* and *The Medicine Game* Viewer Discussion Guides as additional resources.

## Grade Appropriateness

- 9-12
- Higher Education

## Subject/Topic Curricula

- Sociology
- Native American Culture
- History

## Lesson Plans

The outlined activities target students at the high-school level, but can be adjusted by the instructor to accommodate the college classroom and informal classrooms, such as after-school programs, clubs, and youth-training programs through community-based organizations. All content aligns with national standards. Each of the activities is designed to last roughly one class period (or one hour total). Together, the lesson plans and film modules constitute a unit that can last one week. All activities aim to incorporate educational content and themes that can be integrated within your existing content curriculum.

## Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

The appropriate common core standards are listed using the nationally accepted labels and include three parts: the first letter(s) refer(s) to the strand (e.g. RL – Reading standard for literature; RI – Reading standard for informational text; W – Writing, etc.); the first number(s) refer(s) to the grade level and the last number(s) refer(s) to the number of the specific standard.

For more information, consult:  
<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy>



## Program Synopses

### *The Medicine Game*

Tucked away in central New York State, the Onondaga Nation has been known to produce some of world's top lacrosse players. Yet, the fear of leaving their community, substance abuse, and poverty have kept far too many of these players from venturing from the "Rez" and into the collegiate or professional ranks.

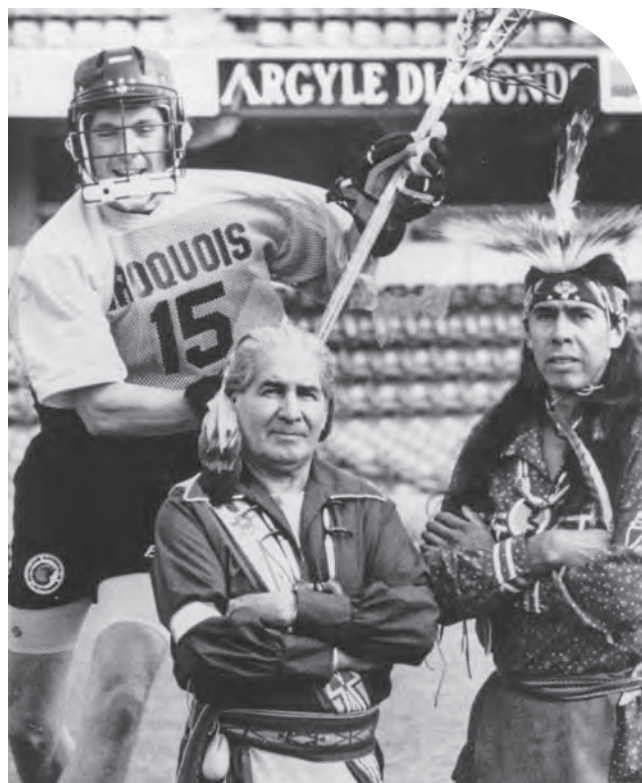
Over six years, filmmaker Lukas Korver follows Jeremy and Jerome "Hiana" Thompson, brothers driven by a single goal, which is to beat the odds and play the sport of lacrosse for national powerhouse Syracuse University. The obstacles in their way are frequent and daunting, but the brothers' love for the game, each other, and their family's unyielding determination propels these youth toward their dream.



Jerome "Hiana" Thompson (Onondaga).  
Photo by Luke Korver.

### *Sacred Stick*

*Sacred Stick* is a documentary that explores the history and culture of lacrosse intertwined with the Iroquois Nationals and their journey to the 2007 World Indoor Lacrosse Championships. Much more than just a Native American ball and stick game, lacrosse is a cultural window into Native American communities and their historical relationship with each other and the dominant culture.



Oren Lyons with an Iroquois lacrosse member.  
Photo by Michelle Danforth (Oneida).

## SECTION 1 - SACRED STICK

## LACROSSE EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

### Lesson 1: Iroquois & the Sacred Game

#### **(The Game Begins – 0:00)**

Ask students to take notes while they are watching the film. Draw at least three key themes from the film with evidence to support these themes.

#### **Short Answer:**

##### **1. Why is the lacrosse stick considered sacred?**

- More than a sport, it is a part of Iroquois identity.
- The stick holds the power of the Creator's Game. It is medicine which ties back to the Creation story.

##### **2. What does lacrosse player, Brett Bucktooth, mean when he says, "In my mind, I think you can almost go out there and play fearless."**

- You are playing with "family" or your brothers.
- Teammates always have "your back before you can get up."
- Bonds are created through playing the game.
- "You have an entire force behind you."

##### **3. Gewas Schindler says that Iroquois players have a competitive edge over non-Native players. Why?**

- The game is part of their history and spirituality (religion).
- The Creator helps the players along the way.
- The players seemed to be intuitively connected to each other.
- The game is almost instinctual to them.

##### **4. Traditionally, why was the game of lacrosse played?**

- For the Creator and the elders.
- The game was played as a Medicine Game if someone in the community was sick.
- To settle disputes with other nations.

##### **5. In ancient times, the Mayans played this game to the death. Why was it considered to be such a great honor?**

- Winners lost their heads. Losing your life for the game was considered to be the ultimate gift to the Creator by making the ultimate sacrifice.

##### **6. Explain the differing opinions of the games emergence into modern times.**

- The game may have originated with the Mayans and been carried north along the trade routes of Indigenous peoples.
- It may have emerged from the north and evolved as it was played down south. This explanation assumes that it originated with the Iroquois.
- Each nation had their own version of the stick and ball game but rules of play are commonly associated with the Iroquois version.

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2007 World Indoor Lacrosse Championships in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Players line-up for Iroquois National Anthem and American anthem.  
Photo by Michelle Danforth (Onedia) and Patty Loew (Ojibwe)

### Lesson 2: Modern Lacrosse

#### **(Gold Quarter & Medicine – 0:00-14:38)**

Ask students to take notes while they are watching the film.

#### **Short Answer:**

**1. During the Gold Medal game (Iroquois Nationals versus Canada), their national anthem, called “Standing Quiver,” is played. What is the significance of this?**

- They are representing their nation, therefore, their national anthem is appropriate.

**2. Oren Lyons says, “You can’t use a wooden stick in the Medicine Game.” Why is this? Why is the game played?**

- Plastic is foreign.
- The wooden stick is a part of the earth. It represents the trees and animals.
- All participants are spiritual beings working on behalf of the Creator; playing the game

for the healing of everyone involved.

**3. What does lacrosse player, Brett Bucktooth, give his son just after he is born? What is the significance of this?**

- A lacrosse stick.
- It is symbolic of handing down a legacy, and is part of his heritage.

**4. What is the Cherokee word for the game? What does it mean and how is it prepared?**

- “Little Brother of War.”
- It would help them prepare for war or act as a substitute for war.
- The players would prepare themselves physically and spiritually before a game.
- Marking of the skin and washing of their sticks in ceremony.



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Levi Johnson (Odawa Nation) speaking about the Michlimackinaw Fort take-over in 1763.  
Photo by Michelle Danforth (Onedia) and Patty Loew (Ojibwe)

### Lesson 3: Cultural Appreciation

#### **(Quarter 2 & Early Years – 23:33)**

Ask students to take notes while they are watching the film.

#### **Short Answer:**

#### **1. Describe the battle and how lacrosse was used.**

- Chief Pontiac (Odawa) conceived an idea on the King's birthday. Each Indian nation was to attack a local fort so the British would not have a chance to call for reinforcements.
- At one fort, lacrosse was used as a type of Trojan Horse—the men playing lacrosse signaled an attack and rushed the garrison gate. The Native women waiting nearby provided them with weapons, which they concealed in their blankets.

#### **2. Why was this an effective strategy?**

- Element of surprise was used to overtake a well-fortified British garrison.

#### **3. How was the game adapted after the Europeans began playing? Why?**

- George Beers created rules (number of players, field size, uniforms, etc.).
- The game would go on for days and was intricately tied to Native American culture and ceremony.
- It had to be adapted for the white man to play in a shorter time span.

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Iroquois National Team archive photo.  
Photo by Oren Lyons Collection.

### Lesson 4: Impact on Communities

#### **(Quarter 3 & Game Evolution – 31:33)**

Ask students to take notes while they are watching the film.

#### **Short Answer:**

1. **One of the historians mentions “uncertainty of sport” with regard to the competition between white players and Native American players. What tactics were used to ensure there was “uncertainty of sport”?**
  - The Native Americans proved to be quite competitive for the white people and could defeat them easily. Therefore, they needed to be eliminated.
  - They created exclusive rules to ensure that Native Americans couldn’t compete including a) barring Indians from competing b) disallowing professionals from playing (deciding who was).
2. **How was lacrosse an economic benefit on some reservations?**
  - In the 1960s, there were high unemployment rates.
  - If you didn’t want to travel or were unemployed, you could work at the lacrosse factory to earn some money.
3. **Alf E. Jacques explains why he started making lacrosse sticks. Explain the impact of plastic sticks on his craft.**
  - He could not afford them as a child, so he and his father began to make them. He continues to make them today.
  - Each stick is a legacy handed down from ancestors.
  - The impact of the plastic sticks greatly impacted his business.



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### Lesson 5: Nationhood

#### **(Iroquois Nationals vs. Canada Qtr 4 – 42:31)**

Ask students to take notes while they are watching the film.

#### **Short Answer:**

**1. At the end of the last quarter, the narrator says the Iroquois have already won. Discuss.**

- The challenges they faced in recognition of their sovereignty.
- In 1987, they were officially allowed to compete as a nation in the International Lacrosse Federation.

- They understand their history and their culture.

**2. Oren Lyons says the game of lacrosse is to be played fair and with a “good mind” because it is the Creator’s Game. What does this tell us about the Iroquois?**

- They are spiritual people and it is more than just a game to them.
- It is played to honor the Creator.

### Lesson 6: Universality of the Sport



Face-off between Iroquois Nationals and USA.  
Photo by Michelle Danforth (Oneida) & Patty Loew (Ojibwe).

#### **(Unites Community – 46:12)**

Ask students to take notes while they are watching the film.

#### **Short Answer:**

**1. Explain how lacrosse is more than just a sport for the Iroquois.**

- It brings people together to watch the matches.
- It is handed down from father to son. It is a family and community affair.

**2. In talks with the International Federation of Lacrosse, despite disagreements there seems to be a universal connection between the Iroquois and the non-Natives. What was it?**

- The sport—they are all lacrosse players regardless of nationality.

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### Lesson 7: The Game of Life

#### **(OT & Final Thoughts – 51:53)**

Ask students to take notes while they are watching the film.

#### **Research & Short Answer:**

1. **Within the Iroquois, there are six different nations referred to as the Six Nations Confederacy. Provide a short background for each nation including its role within the confederacy.**
  - Answers will vary.
2. **Historically, why might forming a confederacy have been a good decision?**
  - They form a stronger allegiance together. It is the arrow analogy that a single arrow can be broken but six bound together cannot.
3. **The Iroquois Confederacy has been described as the “oldest living democracy.” Describe what this means and how this complex form of government might have influenced the United States government structure.**
  - Answers will vary.

It is up to the instructor to decide whether any of these questions are to be written as an essay-type short response or a typical multi-paragraph essay.

#### **Essay & Discussion:**

1. **Describe the Creation story. What does the Creation story tell us about Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) people? How does this relate to the film?**
  - Some key concepts: Begins with Skywoman - matriarchal; close connection to nature.
2. **Explain how the residential schools affected the sport. What are some other examples of assimilation that occurred in residential schools?**
  - Children’s lacrosse sticks were taken away and they were discouraged from playing such a “savage sport.” They were encouraged to play other (gentler) sports.
  - Children were taught English and discouraged from speaking the Native languages and practicing their culture.
  - Being taken away from parents was a significant breakdown in family and community.
3. **Explain why the Iroquois fight for recognition of their nationality. What is a modern day obstacle the Iroquois Nationals had to face?**
  - They had to forfeit the World Lacrosse Games in 2010 because they could not travel on their nations’ own issued passports.

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The personal reflection portion is where students summarize what they have learned and how the processes of describing, interpreting, and evaluating have informed their understanding of the film.

### **Personal Reflection:**

**1. Explain the significance of having your own nation's anthem played before a game.**

- Pride.
- Patriotism.
- Sovereignty and the ability to choose your identity.

**2. Sport, music, and humor are universal concepts. Describe how universality bridges gaps and brings nations closer. Use examples from the film and modern society.**

- Answers will vary.

**3. Gregory Cajete describes lacrosse as a metaphor for life. How is this true in your own life?**

- Everyone wins and loses. Take your losses the same way you take your wins and play again.
- Ups and downs of life and the emotions that one feels while playing.
- "Play the game. The bench is no place to be."

### **Group Discussion & Activities:**

**1. What types of stereotypes are discussed in the film? How were they perpetuated? Why do you think this was? Where do you see stereotypes in contemporary cultures? Do you see anything morally wrong about stereotypes in modern sports?**

- Native Americans were discouraged from speaking English even though most knew the language. They had to wear headdresses, make noises, and become somewhat of a tourist attraction.
- The non-Native teams would always maintain favor, particularly in England, via a marketing scheme to gain popularity in the sport.
- In team names, for example, Washington Redskins, or mascots.

**2. Have students prepare a mock article for their daily newspaper. While discussing questions, list some of the major stereotypes seen in mainstream culture on the blackboard. The news article should address one or more of these stereotypes and why or why not it should matter to their audience. The article should also address how the situation can be improved, for example, renaming of teams.**

- Answers will vary.



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3. Lacrosse is just one of the things that have been borrowed from Indigenous culture. Describe other examples of cultural appropriation into western culture.

- Answers will vary.

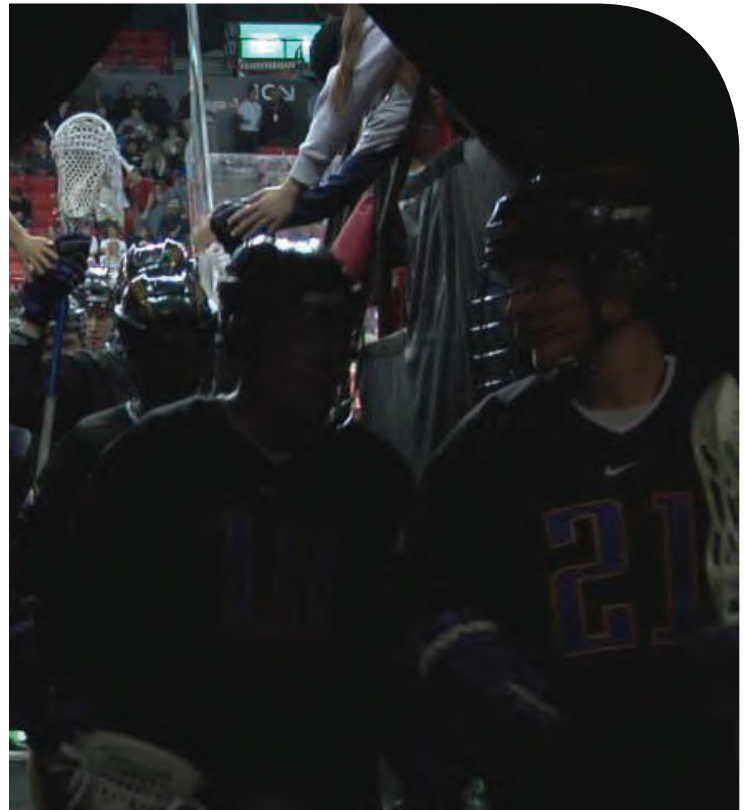
4. Have students research the game of lacrosse, including at least two of the following subtopics: history, types of play, rules and regulations, and current status of the sport in the United States.

When they have completed their research, have them create a one-page newsletter summarizing the issues. The newsletter should contain text, illustrations, and at least one chart or graph. To get them started, have them visit the websites listed under Additional Resources.

- Answers will vary.

### **Additional Resources:**

- <http://iroquoisnationals.org/1.7>
- <http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/vault/article/magazine/MAG1172077/1/index.htm>
- <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2013/04/26/iroquois-nationalspenalized-again-being-native-149049>
- <http://www.haudenosauneeconfederacy.com>
- <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tag/redskins-racist-history>
- <http://www.oneidaindiannation.com/history/creationstory/26346134.html>



Iroquois Nationals team high-fiving fans after the game.  
Photo by Michelle Danforth (Oneida) & Patty Loew (Ojibwe).

## SECTION 2 - THE MEDICINE GAME

## LACROSSE EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

### Lesson 1: Family & Tradition



Ask students to take notes while they are watching the film. Draw at least three key themes from the film with evidence to support these themes.

Jerome “Ji” Thompson, Sr. (Mohawk) watches his boys practice in the yard. Photo by Erik Korver.

#### **Short Answer:**

1. During the narration at the beginning of the film, what does Chief Oren Lyons say is the primary purpose of the game of lacrosse?
  - To entertain the Creator (timecode 00:40).
2. Why does the narrator say the game of lacrosse is a medicine?
  - It is a medicine for its ability to help (timecode 00:30).
3. According to the narrator, when was the game of lacrosse given to the Native American people?
  - The game was given to the people long before there was an earth (timecode 00:15).
4. Who is the boys’ first lacrosse coach?
  - Their father, Jerome “Ji” Thompson, Sr.
5. How is the approach to the sport of lacrosse different for the Thompson brothers than for their non-Native teammates?
  - Jeremy and Hiana play to make the Creator happy; to entertain him. For them, it is a game that has a spiritual purpose. For their teammates, it is an interscholastic sport that is fun and allows them to represent their school (timecode 14:25).
6. Did the father ever play lacrosse?
  - Yes, the father played professional lacrosse (timecode 04:10).

## SECTION 2 - THE MEDICINE GAME

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### Lesson 2: Conflict

Ask students to take notes while they are watching the film.

#### **Short Answer:**

1. **What does the mother say is the principle difference in study habits between the two boys?**
  - Jeremy seems to always be studying while Hiana never studies. (timecode 32:00).
2. **Why was Hiana taken to the hospital?**
  - Jeremy had hurt his brother badly enough in a fight, so Hiana had to be taken to the hospital (timecode 20:45).
3. **Why does Jeremy say they lost the championship game in senior year of high school?**
  - Jeremy learns that he relied on Hiana during all of the other games. He realized that they were a team within a team. Without Hiana being allowed to play, the chemistry was not there (timecode 21:10).
4. **What is the reason one of the other students gives for not wanting the Native students to wear their traditional regalia to graduation?**
  - She felt that high school graduation should be a time of unity, so they should all wear the same cap and gown. She also felt that they were not on the reservation, so they should not be wearing Indian regalia and should only wear it when on the reservation (timecode 18:05).
5. **Why are there television cameras from the local television stations at the school towards the end of the senior year at Lafayette High School?**
  - They were there to document the conflict of some of the Native seniors wearing their Indian regalia at the high school graduation while many non-Natives protested by walking out of school (timecode 17:30).



Jeremy Thompson (Onondaga) being interviewed after high school graduation. Photo by Erik Korver.



## SECTION 2 - THE MEDICINE GAME

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### Lesson 3: Lessons Learned



Lafayette High School Lacrosse Team. Photo by Erik Korver.

Ask students to take notes while they are watching the film.

#### **Short Answer:**

1. **What does the father say is the most valuable gift a father can give his children?**
  - The most valuable gift from a father is the gift of time, because once it is given, the child will always have it.
2. **Why does the father say that this gift of giving his time to his children is greater than money?**
  - The gift of time is more valuable than money because money will not last, but a child will always have the time spent together.
3. **What are two factors that make school extra difficult for Jeremy?**
  - He started learning to read and write in English in fifth grade in addition to having a learning disability (timecode 11:50).

4. **The father says that he knows the boys' goal of getting into Syracuse University will be one of the greatest accomplishments because of what they have been through. What pressures have they been through?**
  - Dealing with peer pressure, assimilating into the non-Native culture, having to learn to read and write English at the age of 12 when they moved from the Mohawk school into the public school, and learning disabilities (timecode 07:50).
5. **Why was the National Junior College Championship Game a pivotal point for the brothers?**
  - It was a reunification for the family, back to the bonds that originally united them as evidenced by the embrace between them and their father (timecode 30:30).

## Lesson 4: Role Models



Jeremy and Hiana's younger brother, Miles Thompson (Onondaga), aims for the goal. Photo by Erik Korver.

Ask students to take notes while they are watching the film.

### **Short Answer:**

- 1. When Jeremy was talking about alcohol and “mind changers,” what did he mean by the term?**
  - Drugs (timecode 33:15).
- 2. What is the fear that the mother expresses with regards to her sons?**
  - She worries about the brothers getting into drugs and partying since these temptations are around them.
- 3. What does Jeremy see in his role with regards to his younger brothers, Lyle and Miles?**
  - Jeremy is conscious of the fact that he is a role model for them and knows that the choices he makes will have an effect on his younger brothers (timecode 49:00).

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### Lesson 5: Personal Reflection/Essay

It is up to the teacher to decide whether any of these questions are to be written as an essay-type short response or a typical multi-paragraph essay.

#### **Essay:**

1. In Marlene Carvell's novel *Who Will Tell My Brother*, the main character has to deal with the difficult controversy of standing-up for his principles among his peers at his school. Explain how the Thompson brothers had to stand-up for principles in the film.

- Answers will vary.

2. Describe what the high school lacrosse coach, Greg Scott, told the boys during the graduation crisis about standing-up for what you believe in.

- Answers will vary.

3. Near the end of the film, what does the father say the best gift a father can give his children is? After, he says that money is meaningless. Explain what he means.

- Answers will vary.

4. Why does the father seem proud of his son, Jeremy, who is going into a recovery center for alcohol and drug abuse?

- Answers will vary.

5. What do you suppose Hiana meant when he said Jeremy's alcoholism and drug abuse made it hard on "everybody"?

- Answers will vary.

6. Trace the relationship the Thompson brothers have throughout the film. At what points are they close, and what events separate them?

- Answers will vary.

7. There are many instances and examples of customs and traditions that reflect the Thompson brothers' Native heritage. List as least five of these examples from the film *The Medicine Game*.

- Hiana singing an Indian song while beating a small drum.
- The short video clip of the brothers as young children dancing to a drum beat.
- Playing lacrosse with wooden sticks instead of plastic sticks.
- Wearing ceremonial regalia at graduation.
- Braiding hair and keeping it long.
- Putting on face paint before a lacrosse game.
- Jeremy's tattoo on his back.
- Jeremy going to the longhouse to study the Mohawk language.
- Jeremy attending a Native recovery center.
- Jeremy and his mother dressing traditionally and going to the longhouse.



## SECTION 2 - THE MEDICINE GAME

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8. All of us are on our own journeys in life. At the end of the film, Jeremy talks about being on a learning path. He says that the more he learns about the history, the ways, and the language of his people, the better his understanding of who he is.

What does he mean by that?

What do you suppose are some things he has learned on his path?

Why is it important or necessary for each of us to learn about our past to understand our present and who we are?

Can you give some examples of things from your past that help you to understand who you are?

- Answers will vary.
9. In 1903, W.E.B. DuBois coined the term “double consciousness,” a term referring to when individuals had to live in two different cultures at the same time. They had to feel as though they were a part of one culture, while living in and feeling a part of another.

Explain, with evidence from the film, how the brothers seemed to experience “double consciousness,” and how it influenced their search for identity?

- Answers will vary.



Jeremy Thompson's (Onondaga) tattoo is a symbol of Native tradition and culture. Photo by Erik Korver.

## SECTION 2 - THE MEDICINE GAME

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### Lesson 6: Persuasive Essay



Jeremy and Hiana Thompson (Onondaga) on the Onondaga Nation. Photo by Erik Korver.

#### Choose One of the Following Two Options:

1. Prepare an argument supporting the wearing of Native regalia at the brothers' high school graduation. Use persuasive essay format.
2. Prepare an argument that protests wearing Native regalia at the brothers' high school graduation. Use persuasive essay format.

**Paragraph I:** Explain and define the situation.

**Paragraph II:** Offer one reason for wearing Native regalia at the brothers' high school graduation. Fully explain and support this reason.

**Paragraph III:** Offer a second reason for wearing Native regalia at the brothers' high school graduation. Fully explain and support this reason.

**Paragraph IV:** Offer a possible third reason for wearing Native regalia at the brothers' high school graduation. Fully explain and support this reason.

**Paragraph V:** Give a conclusion that can refer to the reasons already given and that can offer a lasting final thought for the reader to consider.

**Paragraph I:** Explain and define the situation.

**Paragraph II:** Offer one reason against wearing Native regalia at the brothers' high school graduation. Fully explain and support this reason.

**Paragraph III:** Offer a second reason against wearing Native regalia at the brothers' high school graduation. Fully explain and support this reason.

**Paragraph IV:** Offer a possible third reason against wearing Native regalia at the brothers' high school graduation. Fully explain and support this reason.

**Paragraph V:** Give a conclusion that can refer to the reasons already given and that can offer a lasting final thought for the reader to consider.

## SECTION 2 - THE MEDICINE GAME

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### Lesson 7: Categorized Analysis Discussion

The following class exercise is designed to help students develop critical thinking and analysis skills. The exercise will foster the kind of discussions that lead to critical analysis, discovery, and deeper understanding. But most importantly, it will help the students come to important, meaningful conclusions on their own. With some modifications, this exercise can be successfully done with any age group. This exercise can be done after viewing the film.

#### **Preparation Procedures:**

**1. On the board, write the following seven labels with space between them to add more later:**

- Questions
- Responses
- Connections
- Inferences
- Symbols
- Themes
- Most Meaningful Lines

**2. Separate students into small groups and give each group a stack of index cards. Have the students in each group divide their stack of index cards into seven piles.**

#### **Questions:**

These can be any question anyone might have on any part of the film. This could be a question of motive, clarification, explanation, etc. Often these questions can spark discussions and lead to better understanding. For example, what could have been the reason for Jeremy's anger that made him hit his brother so violently?

#### **Responses:**

These are any feelings or gut reactions students might have towards any part of the film. For example, "I was sad that Hiana decided not to finish his degree."

#### **Connections:**

These are connections students have found in the film. They fall into several categories:

- Film to Self

For example, "What Jeremy experienced is similar to something I experienced."

- Film to World

For example, "The high school graduation protest seemed similar to the protests in Little Rock, Arkansas, when the schools were first integrated."

- Film to the Film Itself

For example, "The boys played lacrosse together in the beginning of the film and again in the end."

- Film to Literature or Other Film

For example, "The process of assimilating into another culture was done in the film or the journey of self-discovery that Jeremy goes on is similar to the journey of self-discovery that Tom Black Bull goes on in the novel *When the Legends Die* by Hal Borland. Connections could also be similar settings, characters, conflicts, resolutions, endings, or literary techniques."





## SECTION 2 - THE MEDICINE GAME

### Inferences:

An inference is your ability to use facts and details to discover unstated meanings and ideas about what you are reading or looking at. You can make inferences about a character's personality traits, feelings, interactions with others, conflicts, motivation, decisions, outcomes, etc. For example, Hiana was probably disappointed in himself when he did not go to Syracuse like Jeremy did.

### Symbols:

A symbol is a word or object that stands for another word, object, or idea. For example, Jeremy putting on the Native clothing towards the end of the film symbolizes his embrace of his Native culture as part of his identity.

### Themes:

A theme is a symbol, idea, or object that repeats itself throughout the story. Usually, a theme reflects the author's purpose or idea. For example, in *The Medicine Game*, lacrosse is a theme.



Future turtle rattle. Photo by Erik Korver.

## LACROSSE EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

### Important or Meaningful Lines:

These can be lines of dialogue, lines from the narrator, or statistics taken from the title cards. For example, the father says, "The greatest gift a father can give to his children, is his time."

### Activity:

Each group of students comes up with at least one question, response, connection, etc. You may decide to require two for each.

Students must write their answers on the index cards and place them on the board under the appropriate category. Each paper should be marked to identify the group that wrote it.

When all students are done, either a designated student or teacher will go through the cards, taking them off the board one at a time and reading their contents one at a time. Ask the students to respond to the content after each card is read. Have students discuss each card until the group who submitted it feels it has been addressed thoroughly. The teacher or designated student should focus on one category at a time until all the cards in that category have been read and discussed.

### Additional Resources:

- <http://iroquoisnationals.org/1.7>
- [www.themedicinegame.com](http://www.themedicinegame.com)
- [www.onondaganation.org](http://www.onondaganation.org)
- [www.redhawkslax.com](http://www.redhawkslax.com)
- [www.lukaskorver.com](http://www.lukaskorver.com)
- [www.oneida-nsn.gov](http://www.oneida-nsn.gov)
- [www.sni.org](http://www.sni.org)
- [www.laxhistory.com](http://www.laxhistory.com)
- [www.lacrosse.com](http://www.lacrosse.com)

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Grade Level	Learning Outcomes
Grades 9-10 Sociology, Native American Culture, American Culture, & History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cite specific examples from the film or text, using primary and secondary sources to substantiate that evidence.</li> <li>• Knowledge of dates and origins of the information.</li> <li>• Determine the central themes or ideas from the film or information of a primary or secondary source.</li> <li>• Provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop throughout the film.</li> <li>• Critical analysis in detail a series of events described in the film to determine cause and effect.</li> <li>• Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the context of the film, such as sovereignty, nationhood, etc.</li> <li>• Analyze how secondary sources emphasize themes or advance an explanation within the film.</li> <li>• Compare and contrast the point of view of two divergent perspectives within the film and society.</li> </ul>
Grades 11-12 Sociology, Native American Culture, & History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cite specific evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the film as a whole.</li> <li>• Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.</li> <li>• Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with evidence, acknowledging where the film leaves matters uncertain.</li> <li>• Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how the director uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of the film (sovereignty, assimilation, sacred, matriarchal, regalia).</li> <li>• Analyze in detail how the themes are structured; including visuals such as flags, the game, braiding of hair, etc. contribute to the whole.</li> <li>• Evaluate differing points of view on the same event or issue by assessing the directors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.</li> </ul>

## About the Educational Guide Authors



**Candace Maracle (Haudenosaunee/Anishnaabe)** is an Indigenous filmmaker from Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. She first became interested in media arts as a graduate student in journalism. Her work as a journalist includes reporting for the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network's

National News and producing for CBC Radio programs, "The Current" and "As It Happens."

Candace has noted that our stories often appear one-sided in mainstream media or are picked up at the crest of their development and dropped the next day in favour of the next breaking headline with very little follow up. News stories have very little context, which is why Candace prefers the documentary medium through which to tell stories with depth.

While in graduate school, Candace received the CanWest Scholarship for Aboriginal Youth in Broadcast Journalism (two years in a row) and the James H. Carter Memorial Scholarship both of which recognize substantial achievement in journalism.

The mandate of her production company, Strawberry Moon Productions is: Revitalizing myth through film. It's her desire to bring the wisdom of her culture into a modern context where it is still relevant and film is a wonderful medium in which to do that—the "modern day campfire."

A former high-school dropout, she hopes to inspire and uplift youth through her storytelling. She makes her films readily accessible for community screenings and her feature documentary, *The Creator's Game: The Quest for Gold and the Fight for Nationhood* has accompanying curriculum that she also shares and teaches. She is currently working on her upcoming documentary, *The Grandfather of All Treaties*.



**Rennie Korver** has was born in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, and immigrated to the United States with his family in the late 50's. He worked as a counselor for teens from New York City in a residential treatment center in the Hudson Valley for two years. For 34 years, he taught high school and

middle school English in a school in Upstate New York before retiring in 2009. During his teaching career, he coached soccer, basketball, and volleyball. He also taught in a state prison at night for 26 years, and for several years he taught evening classes as an adjunct professor in a community college.

Currently, Rennie lives in Upstate New York on a small farm where he grows pumpkins, makes maple syrup, keeps sheep and chickens, and is an avid beekeeper. In his retirement, he enjoys working on his timber frame cabin, playing guitar, building furniture, writing, and volunteering.