HISTORICAL EVENTS OF THE TIME

Overview
In Episode 3, students continue to learn about life in and around old Celilo. They create a community museum for their village and collect and make artifacts for display that represent the way of life in the area.

• Students will listen to Dorothea Nordstrand's memoir about living in old Celilo.
• Students will discuss key concepts from the memoir with a partner and share ideas with the whole group.
• Students will create a community museum and collect and make artifacts for display.
• Students will write a memoir from the point of view of their character, using Nordstrand's memoir as a model. They will try to incorporate one of the artifacts they create into the memoir.

Materials
Texts:
• Memoir: “Dorothea Nordstrand Recalls Old Celilo Falls” (from HistoryLink.org)

Reproducibles:
• Discussion Worksheet (Versions 1 and 2—1 per student)
• Answers for Discussion Worksheet (for teacher)
• Memoir Planning Worksheet (1 per student)
• Memoir Checklist (1 per student)
• Glossary (1 per student)

Episode 3 Lesson Plan

Read and Discuss: Day 1
1. Read aloud Dorothea Nordstrand’s article on Celilo. Point out that this is a memoir, or personal account, written by someone who lived at Old Celilo. NOTE: The ending of the article describes the loss of Celilo. The article is marked with a stopping point if you prefer not to have your students know the fate of Celilo at this point in the Storypath. The worksheet that accompanies the memoir has two versions, one which includes a question based on the ending of the memoir and one that does not.

2. After reading the memoir, provide each student with a copy of it (either the complete memoir or up to the stopping point) and either Version 1 or Version 2 of the Discussion Worksheet. Have students work with a partner to discuss and answer the questions and then share their responses with the whole group.

Create Artifacts: Days 2–3
3. Have students create artifacts for a museum in their community. The artifacts can be photographs students find online of tribal fishing and life in Celilo (see http://content.lib.washington.edu/ or http://historylink.org/) or photos their families may have to share. Or they may want to draw their own “photos.” They could create portraits and biographies of the members of the community. Other suggestions include:

• Rocks from the area
• Salmon skeletons (made out of toothpicks and skewers or construction paper)
• Wood from a fishing scaffold, or students could make a model of a scaffold
• Dip nets made from netting (Teachers may want to invite a tribal fisher in to demonstrate how nets were made and repaired.)
• A recorded podcast of part of Nordstrand’s memoir
• Photos of artwork printed from tribal and museum websites
Episode 3: Building Context

HISTORICAL EVENTS OF THE TIME

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- A recorded podcast of part of Nordstrand’s memoir
- Photos of artwork printed from tribal and museum websites
4. Provide references for students as they put together their museum display. If possible, visit a museum, such as those listed below, or have students check out the museum’s website.

- Maryhill Museum in Goldendale, WA
  [http://www.maryhillmuseum.org/Collection/Highlights/indian.html](http://www.maryhillmuseum.org/Collection/Highlights/indian.html)
  (To view the exhibits at Maryhill Museum, click on the featured artifact to get background information about it, along with a photo showing the artifact in use.)
- Támasklilt Cultural Institute in Pendleton, OR
- Oregon Historical Society in Portland, OR

5. Students could also create an online exhibit using tools such as Glogster, Microsoft PowerPoint, podcasts, vodcasts, Microsoft Publisher, or Microsoft Photo Story.

6. After students have created their artifact, have them write a few sentences on an index card that describes the historical significance of the artifact to the community. Place the index card with the artifact.

7. Display students’ work in a place where other students in the building can see it. Unused cubbies out in the hall make for an excellent exhibit area. This activity can be extended by having students in the class serve as docents for museum visitors. Invite other classes in to view the museum’s collection. This will involve other classes in your unit of study and make your students feel they are doing something very important.

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**Write a Memoir: Days 4–5**

8. If time allows, explore Nordstrand’s writing as a good example of a memoir. Provide students with the [Memoir Checklist Worksheet](#) and use it to find and discuss examples of how her memoir meets the criteria. For example, for the characteristic “focuses on specific time period, place, object, or event,” students should point to examples in the text showing that the author writes about salmon fishing in 1936 at Celilo Falls. Nordstrand writes in such a way as to “leave the reader with an impression of the subject” and to “make the subject come alive.” With students, explore the language she uses that demonstrates this, for example, “boiling whirlpools that hiss and roar, whipping and splashing high into the air.”

Although a memoir is meant to be based on a personal experience, ask students to write a made-up memoir for their Celilo character, making sure to keep the memoir authentic to the characteristics and situation of their character. Discuss ideas for a memoir, such as writing about their character’s first experience with fishing for or preparing salmon or their association with one of the artifacts from the museum exhibit they have created. Students can use the [Memoir Planning Sheet](#) to help them plan and organize their writing. They can also use the [Memoir Checklist Worksheet](#) to remind them of things they need to include as they write. Encourage them to use words from their Word Banks as they write.

**Word Bank**

9. Have students add new words from this Episode to their Word Bank. They can use the [Glossary](#) at the end of the Episode to check their definitions.
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  http://www.maryhillmuseum.org/Collection/Highlights/indian.html
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  http://www.ohs.org/exhibits/online/index.cfm

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Old Celilo Falls

By Dorothea Nordstrand

This is Dorothea Nordstrand’s reminiscence of Celilo Falls, near The Dalles on the Columbia River, before the dam built in 1957 changed everything. It first appeared in Columbia magazine, Vol. 15, No. 3. In 2009, Dorothea Nordstrand was awarded the Association of King County Historical Organizations’ Willard Jue Memorial Award for a Volunteer, for contributing these vivid reminiscences to various venues in our community, including HistoryLink.org’s People’s History library.

Just east of The Dalles, Oregon, in the towering grandeur of the Columbia River Gorge, stands a small, roadside sign carrying the single word, “Celilo,” a sadly inadequate marker for the rugged beauty that once dominated this place. Before The Dalles Dam was built in 1957, Celilo Falls was a spectacular series of cataracts that disrupted the swift, strong flow of the mighty Columbia River. The old Celilo Falls of the late 1930s became a scene of great drama every autumn during the annual “run” of home-coming salmon. Sixty-five years later, my heart beats faster as I look back on that exciting day.

Let me take you back. It is 1936. Celilo Falls is a jumble of huge rock piles and sheer drops over which the untamed Columbia hurls itself in thundering abandon. Below the falls, boiling whirlpools hiss and roar, whipping and splashing high into the air. Into this cauldron swim the home-coming salmon, in instinct-driven desperation to reach their historic spawning grounds many miles upstream. Thousands of silver fish fling themselves against the tumbling cascades of rushing water, whose roar, and the violent motion of the salmon, fill one’s senses.

Since ancient times, Celilo Falls has been an important fishing ground for the native tribes who dwell along the big river; the Umatilla, Yakima, Nez Perce, Warm Springs, Wasco-Wishram, and many others. In the autumn of the year, when the salmon come home to spawn, the People of the River gather here to perform the act that is, for them, both spiritual and practical; to accept what they believe to be their annual gift from the river, and to ensure themselves of food for the long, winter months ahead. Several tribes are presently encamped nearby for the yearly ritual.

Rickety platforms hang in midair above the turbulent water, flimsy structures of wood attached to the rocks in seemingly makeshift fashion. On these frail-looking perches, men of the tribes take turns at the fishing. Each uses a net with a twenty-foot handle, thrusting it upstream as far as he can reach and allowing the current to carry it downstream with its open end facing the fish that are swimming up. Salmon are in such plenty that there’s not a break in the action, but a constant rhythm of thrust, drift, and capture the silver monsters.

Each netted fish is herded toward the riverbank, where another fisherman removes it, clubs it, and tosses it into a large basket; then turns to wrestle with the next one. On other platforms, too far out over the water to allow for help from shore, the fisherman pulls his laden net up, hand-over-hand on the long handle, to secure his catch. These are mature salmon, four or five years old and weighing 20 to 50-or-more pounds apiece, a real test of strength for their captors. Near the shore, in the shallow rapids where fish are clearly visible, tribesmen spear or harpoon the huge creatures and haul them ashore, while the mighty river thunders by within a few feet.

Nor are the women of the tribes idle. Several wooden smokehouses stand on the bank with long poles propped lengthwise for drying racks. Sheltering shake roofs force the rising smoke from a series of smoldering fires back down through the rows of split fish hanging from the racks. Women move from rack to rack, changing the position of the salmon to best take advantage of the acrid smoke which stings our eyes and twitches our noses while we watch in fascination. The quality of their work will make the difference between starvation and plenty in the months ahead. It is a scene charged with great purpose and excitement.

Many fish are taken, but many more win their way to the base of the Falls, from where they fling themselves free of the water to fly in great silver arcs; some to land above the falls, and some to fall back; and, resting, try again. Some, with mighty effort, swim up the vertical curtains of water to join the ranks of home-going salmon above. Here the river is almost as alive with fish as are the pools below. For their heroic effort, thousands will complete their journey to fulfill their destiny.

Possible Stopping Point

Vocabulary List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cataracts</td>
<td>series of cataracts that disrupted the swift flow of the Columbia River.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cauldron</td>
<td>place where the salmon are swimming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encamped</td>
<td>encamped nearby for the yearly ritual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reminiscence</td>
<td>Dorothea Nordstrand’s reminiscence of Celilo Falls.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spawn</td>
<td>act of laying eggs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shake</td>
<td>roofs of the fish smokehouses.</td>
</tr>
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Possible Stopping Point

Vocabulary List
- cataracts
- cauldron
- encamped
- spawning grounds
- reminiscence

Photo by Dorothea Nordstrand

Reproduced with permission from HistoryLink.org under Creative Commons License Deed.
Today, in 2003, this stretch of the Columbia is part of the placid lake formed by The Dalles Dam, one of the chain of hydroelectric power plants that tame the once unfettered and free-flowing river. It is still a lovely place, with its smooth-running expanse of water flowing silently along between the towering basalt cliffs of the Gorge, but I cannot view it without mourning the loss of the wild turbulence of the old Columbia River’s Celilo Falls. I sympathize strongly with the River People, who lost an irreplaceable part of their heritage, and I grieve for the rest of us who will never again see and feel the spellbinding drama of the Celilo Falls that used to be.

### Answers for Discussion Worksheet

1. Draw a sketch that shows how you think people caught salmon at Old Celilo Falls.
   
   (Students’ sketches should reflect the information in the text: platforms, long-handled nets, spears/harpoons closer to shore.)

2. Explain why the salmon is so important to the River People.
   
   (Students should understand that salmon is important spiritually, culturally, and economically.)

3. Why do the fishers not take all of the salmon? What happens to the salmon that make it through the falls?
   
   (Students should understand that the River People appreciate the importance of preserving the salmon for the future. They take only what they need. Salmon that are allowed to spawn provide the next generation of salmon for the people.)

4. Write at least four powerful adjectives/describing words that describe Celilo Falls in 1936 and in 2003 when the memoir was written.
   
   (Answers will vary.)

5. Why does the author think the loss of Celilo Falls is something to mourn?
   
   (Answers will vary but should touch on the idea that the destruction of the Falls meant a death to the way of life of the River People.)

Teacher Note: Version 2 of the student discussion worksheet does not include the description of Celilo Falls in 2003 or Question 5.
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Teacher Note: Version 2 of the student discussion worksheet does not include the description of Celilo Falls in 2003 or Question 5.
“Old Celilo” Discussion Worksheet Version 1

Name: ________________________________ Date: __________________

Directions: Work with your partner to answer the following questions. You will have a chance to share your ideas with the rest of the group and present your point of view.

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2. Explain why the salmon is so important to the River People.

3. Why do the fishers not take all of the salmon? What happens to the salmon that make it through the falls?

4. Write at least four powerful adjectives/describing words that describe Celilo Falls in 1936.

5. Why does the author think the loss of Celilo Falls is something to mourn?

“Old Celilo” Discussion Worksheet Version 2

Name: ________________________________ Date: __________________

Directions: Work with your partner to answer the following questions. You will have a chance to share your ideas with the rest of the group and present your point of view.

1. Draw a sketch that shows how you think people caught salmon at Old Celilo Falls.

2. Explain why the salmon is so important to the River People.

3. Why do the fishers not take all of the salmon? What happens to the salmon that make it through the falls?

4. Write at least four powerful adjectives/describing words that describe Celilo Falls in 1936 and in 2003 when the memoir was written.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1936</th>
<th>2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

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1936 | 2003
---|---

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**Memoir Planning Sheet**

Name: ______________________________________  Date: ____________________

**Directions:** Use this worksheet to help you plan what you will write. Jot down your thoughts in the spaces provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject of Memoir</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Specific Time or Place or Object)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<th>Conflict</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Point of the Memoir</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive Words/Words from Word Bank</th>
<th>Artifacts I Could Include</th>
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**Memoir Checklist**

Name: ______________________________________  Date: ____________________

**Directions:** The checklist lists important characteristics of a memoir. Use it to analyze Dorothea Nordstrand’s memoir. You can also use it to remind you of the characteristics you want to include in your character’s memoir.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Nordstrand’s Memoir</th>
<th>My Memoir</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written in first-person point of view</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually uses past tense verbs to explain something that has already happened</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focuses on relationship of writer with specific time period, place, or event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explains the importance of the relationship with the time period, place, or event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaves the reader with an impression of the subject of the memoir</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Has a climax</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Has a conclusion</td>
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<tr>
<th>High Point of the Memoir</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive Words/Words from Word Bank</th>
<th>Artifacts I Could Include</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Memoir Checklist**

**Name:** ______________________________________  **Date:** ____________________

**Directions:** The checklist lists important characteristics of a memoir. Use it to analyze Dorothea Nordstrand’s memoir. You can also use it to remind you of the characteristics you want to include in your character’s memoir.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Nordstrand’s Memoir</th>
<th>My Memoir</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written in first-person point of view</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses past tense verbs to explain something that has already happened</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focuses on relationship of writer with specific time period, place, or event</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explains the importance of the relationship with the time period, place, or event</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaves the reader with an impression of the subject of the memoir</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes the subject of the memoir come alive</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a conflict</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has rising action</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a climax</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a conclusion</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Glossary: Episode 3**

- **cataracts**: places where water rushes over a steep surface; waterfalls
- **cauldron**: a section of water resembling a boiling cauldron or kettle
- **encamped**: settled or lodged into a camp or campsite
- **reminiscence**: the act of recalling past experiences; a memory
- **shake**: pieces of roofing material that are laid to overlap each other, often made from wood; shingles
- **spawn**: to produce eggs
- **spawning grounds**: a place where salmon deposit their eggs
Glossary: Episode 3

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