EULOGY TO CELILO: IF THE FALLS COULD TALK

Overview
In Episode 7, students experience the destruction of their frieze and view a video of the inundation of Celilo Falls. They decide on a way to commemorate the falls and its people.

• Students will experience the loss of their frieze and write a journal entry, expressing their feelings. They will then share entries in a class discussion.
• Students will define and explain rituals and share examples of mourning rituals from their cultures.
• Students will view a video of the last salmon feast in Celilo Village and compare their feelings of loss to those of the tribal people in the video.
• Students will read the article “The People Speak about Celilo Falls” and highlight passages to use in their commemoration of Celilo Falls.
• Students will read about and discuss Celilo today, the fifty-year commemoration of the inundation, and the sculpture of Maya Lin as part of the Confluence Project.
• Students will create a way to commemorate Celilo Falls and its people.

Materials
Article:
• “The People Speak about Celilo Falls” (extracts from “Celilo Legacy” in Wana Chinook Tymoo, the magazine of CRITFC)

Fact Sheet:
• The Confluence Project and Maya Lin

Video:
• “The Last Salmon Feast of the Celilo Indians” (used with permission of the Oregon Historical Society Research Library’s Moving Image Collection)

Reproducibles:
• Feelings of Loss Worksheet (1 per student)
• Feelings of Hope Worksheet (1 per student)
• Commemorating Celilo Falls Worksheet (1 per student)

Episode 7 Lesson Plan

Celilo Disappears
1. It is now time for the students’ frieze to be destroyed, symbolizing the inundation of Celilo Falls. You will need to think about how your students will react to having their work destroyed, and perhaps come up with other options to simulate the destruction rather than destroying the actual frieze. One way might be to project the time lapse video of the inundation of the falls on top of your students’ frieze.

2. Whichever way you decide to simulate the end of Celilo Falls, you will need to allow time for students to voice their feelings and concerns. One thing you may want to do is to provide time for students to discuss their feelings in a talking circle so that everyone can be seen and heard. Students can pass a talking rock to focus the speaker.

Rituals
3. Involve students in a think-pair-share activity about rituals. Ask them to first think about what a ritual is, discuss their ideas with a partner, and then have all partners share their ideas with the class. As a group, compose a definition for the word ritual. Have students check the dictionary definition and compare it with their definition.

4. Repeat the think-pair-share process with students, having them discuss the purpose of rituals in our society, especially rituals that are done for the purpose of mourning. Some ideas might be to satisfy emotional needs, to strengthen the bonds of family and community, and to show respect.

5. Ask volunteers to share mourning rituals from their family or culture.

6. Show students the video of the last salmon feast at Celilo Falls (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UY_GO0kgYkE). Discuss the ways that the people of Celilo mourned the loss of their village. Remind students that the village was not just a collection of houses to the people of Celilo. The people were tied spiritually, culturally, and physically to the falls. The loss of Celilo Falls was like the death of a loved one.

Give students the Feelings of Loss Worksheet. Have them compare their feelings with those of the people of Celilo. They will most likely need to view the video again to complete the worksheet.
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Commemorating Celilo Falls
7. Read the article “The People Speak about Celilo Falls” with students and talk about the strong emotional ties the people have with Celilo. Students will select sections of the article to use in their commemoration of Celilo Falls.

8. Use the Confluence Project Fact Sheet to provide information about Maya Lin and the Confluence Project, which is a project that commemorates sites all along the Columbia River, including Celilo Falls. Students can find out more about the project at http://www.confluenceproject.org. They can also research Maya Lin’s design for her commemorative statue. Provide students with the Feelings of Hope Worksheet. After students have completed the worksheet independently, ask them to share their thinking with the class.

9. Through the Storypath episodes, students have learned about Celilo Falls and its importance to the people who lived and worked there and to those who continue to live and work there. Students have experienced the loss of the village that they worked to create and have shared their emotions about it. Now is the time for students to work together to create a way to commemorate Celilo Village and the people who lived there. Students could work together with their Celilo Village groups, together with the whole class, or independently. The Commemorating Celilo Falls Worksheet may be helpful to your students as they think about ways to commemorate Celilo. Have them reread the article “The People Speak about Celilo Falls” to find quotes they would like to use in their commemoration.

The People Speak about Celilo Falls
On March 10 and 11, 2007, fifty years after the inundation of Celilo Falls, the tribes of the lower Columbia River and others gathered to remember the falls. The event included speakers, ceremonial activities, a salmon feast, a pow wow, and demonstrations relating to Celilo history, tribal salmon culture, and salmon restoration. The expressions below are from people who attended the commemoration and were part of an article that appeared in Wana Chinook Tyroom, the magazine of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. You can find the complete article at http://www.critfc.org/wana/legacy.html.

Linda George Meanus, Warm Springs/Yakama, smiles as she stares wistfully at the large, framed black-and-white photograph showing a little girl standing next to former Celilo Village Chief Tommy Thompson and his wife, Flora. The little girl is Linda—five at the time, she recalls—the granddaughter of Chief Thompson. In the photo, she appears to be trying to cover her face. Her smile evaporating, George, now fifty-six, pauses, then explains.

“I didn’t want to have it taken,” George says of the picture. “I knew something was going to happen. Even as a little girl, I knew something was wrong. You can feel it when you are young, just like animals can feel it when something’s wrong. I think I was already feeling sad.”

“They didn’t want me to watch it on TV or look at it when they flooded it,” George says of her family. “I was in Maryhurst Catholic School. That’s why they put me in there, so I wouldn’t have to watch the flooding. But they had it on TV so I watched it and I cried. I still cry, even when I come here, because I remember so plainly watching it when they flooded it. When my grandmother showed it, she cut my hair. When we lose somebody in the family, we cut our hair. It’s to mourn, to grieve.”

Despite being born three years after the Falls were covered, Celilo Village Chief Olsen “Oly” Meanus says they are difficult for him to talk about because of the pain he sees on the faces of the elders who were there.

“I used to see elders looking at the river, crying because they missed those falls,” he says, taking a break from helping prepare for the Saturday morning commemoration ceremony. “It was something for them every morning to get up, take that first breath of air, and hear the roar of the falls. It was a good awakening for them because they knew they were alive.”

Geraldine Jim, Warm Springs, sits outside her tepee shivering, but still beaming, as a crisp chill wafts up from the water’s edge nearby.

“I remember the falls,” she says. “I remember my mom and dad fishing, and my brothers. They were young.”

Jim didn’t go to school until she was nine years old, when she would attend a boarding school in Warm Springs. The river was her early education.
Commemorating Celilo Falls

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Jim didn’t go to school until she was nine years old, when she would attend a boarding school in Warm Springs. The river was her early education.
“It was a teaching here. A life to live,” she says. “But it was hard. It was really hard. It was hard for us to see the falls go under. That was our life. We lived for the salmon. But we still eat it. We grew up with it, and I’m going to stick with it until the day I die.”

Allen Tahkeal, Yakama, sits in a walker at the river’s edge wearing a large-brimmed brown hat as he waits for the commemoration ceremony to begin. He remembers agreeing to take his wife to Pendleton so she didn’t have to watch Celilo Falls being flooded.

“I came back and this is how it was,” he says, pointing toward the water. “There’s no more left. No more falls. We lost most of our livelihood. It didn’t do us any good.”

Tribal elder Johnny Jackson, Yakama, says that the power of Celilo Falls helped him learn to respect the river. And despite the loss of the falls, new generations of tribal members that had never experienced its roar are developing that same respect.

“I’m proud of our young people,” he says. “I’m glad they’re standing up against the wrongs of the past. You know, a lot of people don’t understand why the fish are so important. That’s what wy-kan-ush is. It’s part of our livelihood. At one time, there were many chiefs up and down the river. They held many meetings here. In my heart, I pray very strongly for our leadership. Their hearts will be for all the people. My people, wherever I travel, they’re important to me. We’ve seen too many hardships.”

Klickitat Chief Wilbur Slockish, Jr. calls the commemorations “a sad time.”

“When Lewis and Clark came here, we were a self-sufficient people,” he says. Plants and animals that grew wild, and which the Indian people relied upon, were abundant. “We didn’t have to put seeds into the ground. When I was young, I remember the people… didn’t need walkers, they didn’t need canes because of the traditional foods” that kept them healthy. “We could gather unlimited [resources] in those days. These things we have lost from the train lines, from the building of the dams.”

He also refers to the animals that lost habitat after Celilo’s flooding as the other “invisible people.”

“No one asked them if they wanted to be flooded,” Slockish says. “Nothing is free, the animals or us as people along the river. Maybe this event will take the cloak of invisibility off the river.”

Olney “J.P.” Patt Jr., Warm Springs, executive director of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, has no doubt the flooding of Celilo Falls was a very traumatic event, and yet there are other issues involved in the flooding of Celilo. Celilo was a premier fishery and they haven’t matched it since. I think a lot of it is looking back at what was, looking forward to what’s yet to come. There’s a hopeful aspect to it.”

Some of that hope may stem from increasing awareness of the availability of alternative power generation methods, making hydroelectric power—and, thus, the dams—less and less necessary. Patt sees a future there.

“You know, a hundred years ago, such things as flight—international flight—were unheard of,” he says. “I think, eventually, technology will replace these dams. I don’t know. I have no idea how that is. But I think conservation is a start, and the tribes have pushed that. Technology, at some point, whether it’s solar, wind, or some other renewable resource, will take the place of the hydroelectric dams and I think they’ll become obsolete. We’ll look back on them someday and think that they’re just draconian.”

For Patt, the weekend Celilo commemoration is bittersweet. “People understand the underlying cause of why they’re here. It’s because of fifty years after a very traumatic event, and yet there are other issues involved in the flooding of Celilo. Celilo was a premier fishery and they haven’t matched it since. I think a lot of it is looking back at what was, looking forward to what’s yet to come. There’s a hopeful aspect to it.”

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Warm Springs Chief Delvis Heath, Sr. stands near the salmon roasting area outside the longhouse with his son, Robert. He says the Wash’ut service is always a great equalizer.

“When you go in there,” he says, motioning toward the longhouse, “it’s like a church. You’re all the same.”

Such services allow the tribes to get back, if only for a few hours, the sense of community that was lost when Celilo Falls was destroyed, Heath believes. The flooding of the falls allowed the federal government to “divide and conquer” the Indian people, he says.

“Before that, we didn’t have any boundaries,” Heath says. Celilo’s destruction “divided us all up. It sent a lot of people different ways. We’re still not together.”

But the commemoration, including the Wash’ut ceremony, has pulled the tribes together to “mend the bad feelings,” learn from the past, and look toward the future, he says.

“It’s a reminder to the people that progress is a good thing, but can destroy a lot. We know it’s gone. We don’t know what’s going to happen tomorrow. But we’re here, we’re equal, and we all have to work together,” he says.
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Olney "J.P." Patt Jr., Warm Springs, executive director of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, has no doubt communities like Celilo Village will bounce back from the adversity brought upon by Celilo Falls' flooding. After all, it's the way of the Columbia tribes.

"Indians have a way of sharing hardship, and hardship never falls on the shoulders of one person or one family," says Patt, leaning against a fishing boat outside the Celilo longhouse. "Whenever we have hardship among our people, it's shared by the larger family group and even among the whole tribe. They come together to help out and that's what I think we're seeing here."

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Fact Sheet: The Confluence Project

- The word *confluence* means, “the coming together of people or things.”
- The Confluence Project is a series of outdoor art installations in public parks along the Columbia River in Washington and Oregon that “explores the intersection of environment, cultures, and a regional history that reaches back many hundreds of years.” The project is the work of Northwest tribes and other people from Washington and Oregon including artists, architects, and landscape designers.
- Seven sites along the Columbia River, stretching from Clarkston, WA, to the Pacific Ocean, are part of The Confluence Project. The sites represent “confluence between nature and art; past, present, and future; and the enduring communities of the Pacific Northwest—its Native People and more recent visitors and residents.”
- The native habitat is being restored at each site, and each site will feature an art installation that represents the area's history. The installations are being created by American artist Maya Lin, known for her sculpture and landscape art.
- Maya Lin’s first public piece of art was the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., that was commissioned when she was only 21 and a student at Yale University. Her design for the memorial came under attack for various reasons, one because she was so young and unknown, and another because of the fact that the work had been awarded to an Asian artist. Many veterans felt this was insulting to the memory of those who had died in the Vietnam War. The memorial has become the most visited memorial in the United States.
- Maya Lin has completed many projects since then, including the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama, and “Silver River” in Las Vegas, which represents the importance of the Colorado River to Nevada in terms of energy and water. Lin was a member of the jury for the selection of the artist for the World Trade Center Site Memorial Competition. She was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Obama in 2009.
- Maya Lin was commissioned to do the art installations for the Confluence Project in 2000. Her first piece, at Cape Disappointment Park in Washington, was completed in 2006. Her piece at Celilo Park is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2012.
- Celilo Park lies at the place where the great Celilo Falls was inundated in 1957. As a tribute to this place, Maya Lin's design is a 300-foot-long walkway that will jut out over the river, inspired by the fishing scaffolds used there before Celilo Falls was lost. Along the arc will be the story of Celilo Falls told through oral histories from tribal members and from excerpts from the journals of Lewis and Clark. The park and the memorial will provide opportunities for people to learn about the culture and environmental history of Celilo. It will honor what has been lost and preserve the culture and heritage of Celilo.

For more information about the Confluence Project, see [http://www.confluenceproject.org](http://www.confluenceproject.org).
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For more information about the Confluence Project, see http://www.confluenceproject.org.

Feelings of Loss

Name: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Directions: After viewing the video of the last salmon feast, compare your feelings of loss to those of the tribal people in the video.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenes from the video</th>
<th>What those scenes say about Celilo and/or the people</th>
<th>Compare your feelings with the people in the video</th>
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Scenes from the video

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Feelings of Hope

Name: ___________________________________ Date: __________________

**Directions:** Find out more about Maya Lin and the Confluence Project. Complete the worksheet before discussing your ideas with the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why is it important to commemorate important events and places?</th>
<th>List positive changes happening at Celilo Village today.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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**Draw Maya Lin’s design for the commemorative sculpture at Celilo Falls.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infer why she made the design decisions she did.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If Falls Could Talk: Commemorating Celilo Falls

Name: __________________________ Date: ______________________

**Directions:** Use this worksheet to plan your commemoration of Celilo Falls.

**Step One:** In Episode 3, you visited several museum online sites as you worked on your village museum. Revisit these sites to see if you can find a symbol that you could use in a piece that represents Celilo. Sketch your symbol idea here.

**Step Two:** Reread “The People Speak About Celilo Falls” and select one or two quotes to use in your commemoration.

Quote 1: ____________________________________________________________________________

Quote 2: ____________________________________________________________________________

**Step Three:** Plan how you will interpret the symbol and use the quote to create your piece.

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**Storypath: Living in Celilo - Episode 7**

**Storypath: Living in Celilo - Episode 7**
### Feelings of Hope

**Name:** ____________________________  **Date:** ____________________________

**Directions:** Find out more about Maya Lin and the Confluence Project. Complete the worksheet before discussing your ideas with the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why is it important to commemorate important events and places?</th>
<th>List positive changes happening at Celilo Village today.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Draw Maya Lin’s design for the commemorative sculpture at Celilo Falls.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infer why she made the design decisions she did.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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Quote 1:____________________________________________________________________

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Quote 2:____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

**Step Three:** Plan how you will interpret the symbol and use the quote to create your piece.
Commemorating Celilo Falls (continued)

**Step Four:** Consider your audience.
What do you want your audience to feel as they look at your piece? _____________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

How will your piece create these emotions? _____________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

What do you want your audience to experience? _____________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

How will your piece create this experience? _____________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

**Step Five:** Now that you have thought through what you want to do, go ahead and create your piece to commemorate Celilo and its people.

Materials needed: _____________________________________________________________
How will you construct it? ______________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

Where will you display it? _______________________________________________________

**Step Six:** Share your creation and experience the creations of others. Consider sharing with local tribes or those tribes involved in the story of Celilo. Write a brief summary of how the commemoration helps you understand the connections tribal people continue to have over fifty-five years after the inundation.

_____________________________________________________________________________
Commemorating Celilo Falls (continued)

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_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

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