



LESSON 2

Native uses of Acorns.

GRADE LEVEL

Preschool-
Kindergarten

SUBJECTS

Environmental
Science

TIME FRAME

30 minutes

MATERIALS

- ❖ Map of CA Tribes
- ❖ Paper strips for vocabulary words
- ❖ Class T Chart from previous lesson
- ❖ Coloring page

SKILLS

- ❖ Observation
- ❖ Vocabulary
- ❖ Coloring

RESOURCE PAIRING

- ❖ Ooti: A Maidu Legacy
- ❖ Grinding Rock Exhibit
- ❖ Tending the Wild

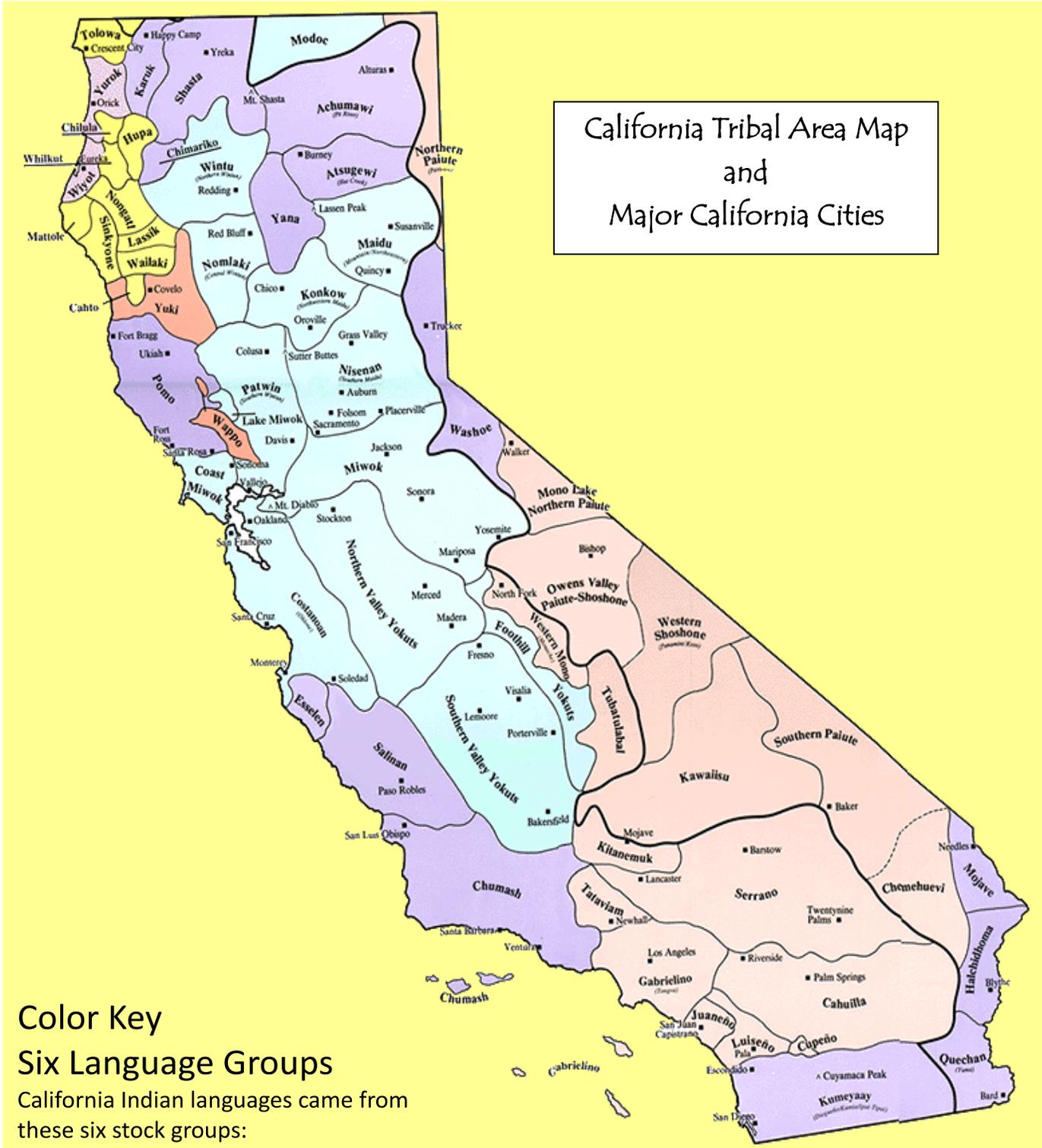
Lesson Plan.

1. Show the *map of California Native tribes*. Point out where you live. Have students pronounce the name of the tribe. Write the name of the tribe on a vocabulary list/paper strip, to post in the classroom.
 - ❖ Ex: Maidu, Pomo, Miwok, Ohlone, etc.
2. Show students the *Acorn Growth diagram*.
 - i. Tell students that oak trees are very common in California.
 - ii. Ask students if they remember what the nut of an oak tree is called: acorn.
3. Show provided *Acorn Preparation images*.
 - i. Ask students what they notice/see. Add to the class **T Chart** (from previous lesson).
 - ii. Ask students what questions they have. Add to the class **T Chart**.
4. Show provided *Acorn Foods images*.
 - i. Ask students what they notice/see. Add to the class **T Chart**.
 - ii. Ask students what questions they have. Add to the class **T Chart**.
5. Explain that for the local Native people (to the Butte Co. area), the word for acorn is *Ooti*. Write the vocab work on a paper strip and post it on the wall in the classroom.
6. Pass out **coloring page**. Provide students time to color and share their art with the class.

Extras:

- ❖ Bring in a mortar and pestle to have students practice grinding the acorns.
- ❖ Find acorn flour or a food made with acorns and bring in for students to see.
- ❖ Invite a Native person from the community to come in and talk about acorns.

California Tribal Area Map
and
Major California Cities



Color Key

Six Language Groups

California Indian languages came from these six stock groups:

- Hokan**
- Penutian**
- Algonkian**
- Yukian**
- Uto-Aztekan**
- Athapascan**

Acorn Preparation.

STEP 1: GATHERING



In the fall months, Native families collect acorns that will be used to feed the community. Acorns are stored in granaries woven from plant materials for a year before they are processed. During this time the acorns dry out. Many communities have songs, ceremonies, and rituals they might practice while gathering. Families often have specific places or trees that they return to in order to gather. **This means that families have strong relationships with the trees from which they harvest their food.**

Acorn Preparation.

STEP 2: HUSKING & POUNDING

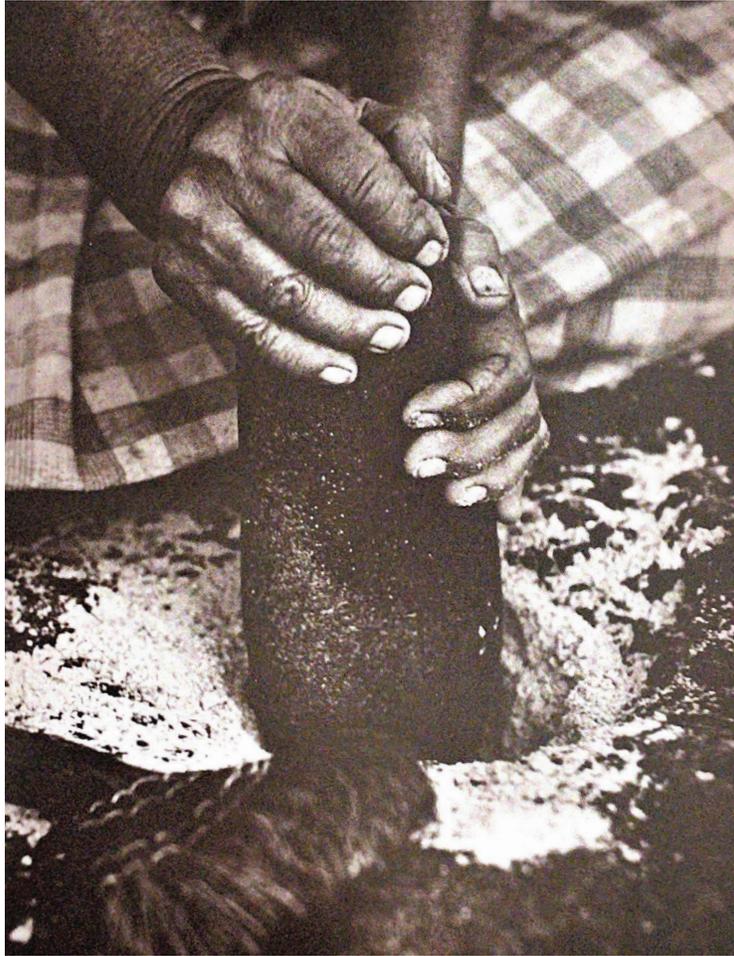


Image from Ooti: A Maidu Legacy by Richard Simpson

After the acorns have been stored for a year, they are cracked and shelled using a small round rock. The acorns are checked for holes from insects and rot.

Acorn Preparation.

STEP 3: LEACHING



Image of Nisenan elder Lizzie Enos from *Ooti: A Maidu Legacy* by Richard Simpson

Once the acorns have been ground into fine flour, they are spread out on a bed of pine needles. Water is poured over the acorn flour repeatedly until the bitter tannins are removed and the flour is sweet and nutty in flavor.

Acorn Preparation.

STEP 4: COOKING

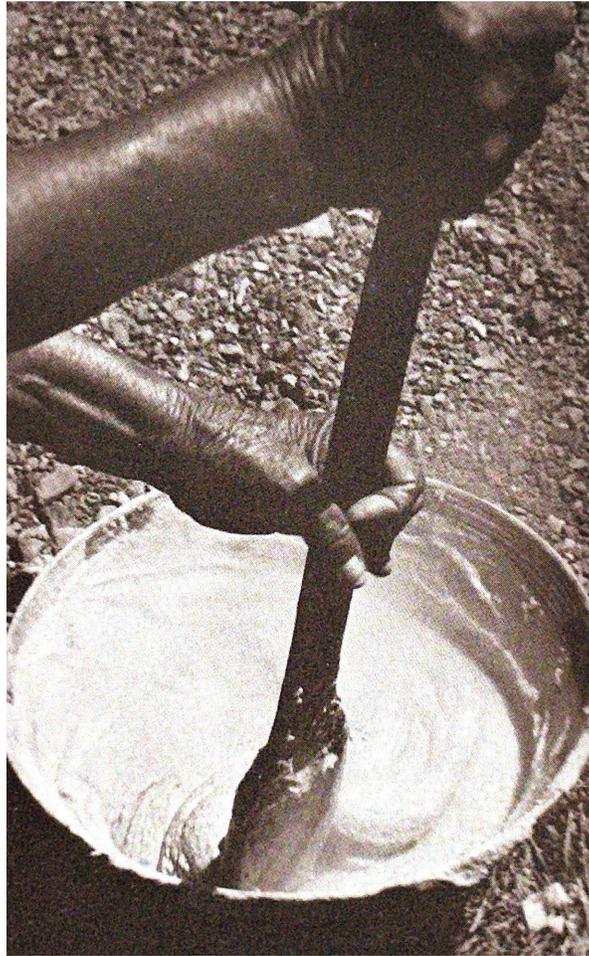


Image from Ooti: A Maidu Legacy by Richard Simpson

Next, the acorn is placed in a large basket. Hot stones are placed in the basket, along with the acorns and water. The hot rocks cause the water to boil. The acorn/water mixture is boiled until it becomes a mush, called cúku. Sometimes, this mush is baked in an earth oven and turned into a bread.

Acorn Foods.

Processed Acorns

Whole Acorns

Acorn Flour



Shelled Acorns

Acorn Foods.

Acorns Bites



Image of Acorn Bites from [California Indian Museum & Cultural Center](#) and can be purchased at the following [link](#).



A California Native girl collects acorns in her basket. She will use her pestle to pound her acorns into flour. With her flour, she will make food to feed her family! Acorns are nutty in flavor, and very healthy.