

Peace Poles

Grade Level: 3-6th Grade

Duration: 3–4 class periods (45–60 minutes each)

Objective:

Students will explore the history and significance of peace poles, research global peacemakers, and create a collaborative peace pole representing diverse cultures and languages.

Guiding Questions:

- What role do peace poles play in global communities?
- How can symbols and words inspire peace and unity?
- Who are some individuals who have worked toward peace, and how can we learn from them?

Materials Needed:

- Wooden stakes, cardboard tubes, or other materials for peace poles
- Paint, markers, or collage materials
- Research materials (books, online sources)
- Chart paper and markers
- A world map or globe

Lesson Outline

Day 1: Introduction to Peace Poles & Cultural Connections

- 1. Discussion and Inquiry (15 min):**
 - Show examples of peace poles from around the world.
 - Ask students: *What messages do they convey? Why might people place them in public spaces?*
 - Introduce the phrase “May Peace Prevail on Earth” and discuss why it's written in multiple languages.
- 2. Historical Context (15 min):**
 - Explain that the first peace pole was created in Japan after WWII by Masahisa Goi.
 - Discuss its connection to the desire for global peace after conflict.
- 3. Choosing Four Languages (30 min):**
 - In small groups, students research and propose four languages to include.
 - They must justify their choices based on cultural significance, geographic diversity, or personal connections.
 - As a class, mark chosen countries on a world map and discuss the global reach of peace poles.

Day 2: Researching Peacemakers

- 1. Introduction to Peacemakers (15 min):**
 - Define a "peacemaker" and discuss characteristics of influential peace leaders.
 - Provide examples: *Nelson Mandela, Malala Yousafzai, Dalai Lama, Rigoberta Menchú, Wangari Maathai.*
- 2. Independent or Small Group Research (30–40 min):**
 - Each group selects a peacemaker from one of their chosen language regions.
 - They research their life, contributions to peace, and legacy.
 - Groups prepare short presentations or written reflections.

Day 3: Designing and Creating the Peace Poles

- 1. Symbolism and Design Planning (20 min):**
 - Discuss how art conveys messages (e.g., color psychology, symbols of peace like doves, olive branches).
 - Groups sketch their peace pole, incorporating their chosen languages and artistic elements.
- 2. Building and Decorating (40 min):**
 - Students write "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in their four languages.
 - They decorate with symbols, images, and colors representing peace.

Day 4: Reflection and Community Engagement

- 1. Presentation and Reflection (30 min):**
 - Each group presents their peace pole, explaining their language choices, design elements, and peacemaker research.
 - Class discussion: How do symbols and words contribute to peace?
- 2. Extending the Impact (15–20 min):**
 - Students brainstorm ways to share their message (e.g., displaying the peace poles in school, writing a letter to local leaders about placing them in the community).
 - Consider creating a school-wide peace ceremony.

Assessment & Extension

- **Assessment:** Evaluate based on participation, research depth, and creativity.
- **Extension:** Invite guest speakers (activists, educators) to discuss peace efforts in different cultures

Peace Pole Project: Student Worksheet

Part 1: Peacemaker Research

Peacemaker's Name: _____

Country/Region: _____

Language Spoken: _____

1. What challenge did this person face?

2. How did they promote peace in their community or country?

3. What can we learn from them today?

Part 2: Peace in Our Community

4. What is one issue in your school or community that could be improved through peacebuilding?

5. How do you think your peacemaker would respond to this issue?

Part 3: Peace Pole Design

6. What four languages will you include on your peace pole, and why?

Language 1: _____

Reason: _____

Language 2: _____

Reason: _____

Language 3: _____

Reason: _____

Language 4: _____

Reason: _____

7. What symbols, colors, or words will you use to represent peace on your pole?
