

The Ojibwe Spearfishing Controversy

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Documentary

When I thought of rights and responsibilities, I thought of Native American treaty rights. My teacher pointed out to me the spearfishing controversy that had happened north of where I live. I have always been interested in Native American history, and this event happened in my state, so I decided that it would make a great topic.

For the first week of researching, I used the internet and one book from the school library. My city library didn't have much I could use, so I had them bring in books from other libraries in the county with decent research material. I found out early on, that Ojibwe, Ojibwa, Ojibway, Chippewa, and Anishinabe all represent the same cultural group. I decided to only use Ojibwe consistently in my documentary. Once I knew a bit more about the topic, I could locate sources more easily. I tried to use a wide variety of sources. I was lucky my grandma was a fourth grade teacher. She had books on my subject. One of her books had the quote I used from the Milwaukee Sentinel. I attended an American Indian event at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to interview Ojibwe members. It was very educational and it helped me learn more about my topic from primary sources including an author and a trial witness.

For making my entry, I wrote my script using the notes I had taken and organized the order of the information. I decided to focus on both the legal and moral reasons behind the rights and responsibilities. After going through and editing numerous times, I made an audio recording of myself reading the script. I searched our personal pictures from Northern Wisconsin. Then I started collecting additional photographs and videos for my documentary. It was very slow moving to collect photographs because I either had to scan them using a scanner or copy them off the internet. I made sure to copy down my sources for both. It was really hard to find video that worked with my topic and was downloadable. After moving everything to editing software, I changed the duration and order of the photographs and videos so they would better fit with the narration. I incorporated important parts of my interview to play at crucial moments. I added traditional Native American music to be playing in the background and added the credits.

My project relates to this year's theme because it is about treaty rights of Native Americans, the responsibility of the United States to uphold those rights,

and the Native Americans' responsibility to harvest responsibly. Without treaty rights, the Ojibwe wouldn't have had the means to fish off their reservations and the spearfishing controversy probably wouldn't have happened. I feel it is also the responsibility of other citizens to respect the Native American treaties as legal agreements between nations. The Ojibwe surrendered most of their land and should have the right to preserve their culture.

(498 words)