

Activity 10: Mary Louie

Meets EALR: Social Studies, Social Studies Skills

Social Studies Skills 5.1	Uses critical reasoning skills to analyze and evaluate positions.
---------------------------	---

Objective: Compare historical information, the age of Native American Mary Louie, and think about why interpretations of her age differ from source to source.

Materials: three articles: *On the shores of Lake Sammamish, Aunt Louie lived*, found in *This Was Issaquah*, page 47; *The People of the Moon*, found in *A Hidden Past*, page 2; *Mary Louie 1798-1917*, found in *Eastside Heritage News* (see attached), Power Point pictures of Mary Louie

Procedure:

1. Pose the question, “Should we believe everything we read?” “How do we know that what we read or hear is true?” Discuss how newspapers, books and articles are usually reliable resources, but readers should always be careful not to believe something just because it is written down. It is important to find out who has written the information, what that person’s background is (do they know a lot about the subject, do they have biases), and what their purpose was for sharing the information.
2. Sometimes, even people who are trying to provide reliable information cannot get all of the facts, or they might get what they think are facts but these facts vary. Here is an example of three articles that tried to provide correct information. Read the portions of the articles about Mary Louie that discuss how old she lived to be. (She is reported to have lived to be 115, 120, and 119 years old.) Show the pictures of Mary Louie. Ask students why they think there is a difference between how old the authors thought Mary Louie lived to be. (Maybe they interviewed two different people who each believed something different. Maybe no one actually knew how old she was. In the past, Native Americans did not write down their histories, or write birth certificates, so this information is difficult to find. Mary Louie has passed away so the writers of the articles couldn’t ask her.)
3. Pose the following questions to the class, “Imagine you are a reporter. If you were asked to write a follow-up article attempting to clarify how old Mary Louie was, where would you start? Who would want to interview? What other resources could you use to find out?”