Activities

THE IROQUOIS CALENDAR

Grades: 3–5, 6–8

Overview
The Iroquois worked out a calendar long ago by watching both the moon and the sun. Children compare and contrast that calendar to the familiar Gregorian calendar, learn the history of calendars, imagine making a new calendar with new names for the time periods.

Introduction
The Iroquois live in the northern part of New York State and in some parts of Canada. They call themselves the Haudenosaunee. "Iroquois" is the name given them by the French. Long ago they worked out a calendar by watching both the moon and the sun. Their year had 13 moons. Each moon had 28 days.

1. How many days were in the Iroquois year?
2. How many days are in our year?
   Write what you know about the months in the calendar we use.
3. Each Iroquois moon had a name. The first moon was called Nis-ko-wok-neh, the moon of snow and blizzards. The fifth moon was Wen-taa-woo, the flowers. The ninth moon was Ke-to-ok-nee, the harvest. What months in our calendar might have those names?
Extensions

Make a list of our months and give each a name according to the weather or an important activity. Draw pictures to show what happens in each month.

Subjects:

- History, Planets, Moons, Solar Systems, Sun, Peoples and Cultures, Time, Measurement