

National Native American Hall of Fame
2019 Inductee

hattie kauffman

Nez Perce Nation



Journalism

1 - 2 50-minute class periods

SELECTED COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

CCSS Literacy SL 10-1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS Literacy SL 10-1d

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.3

Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

GOALS FOR UNDERSTANDING

Students will understand

- Hattie Kauffman was a groundbreaking journalist who blazed a trail of success for other Native Americans who sought to succeed in journalism
- Hattie Kauffman is an inspirational success story
- Hattie Kauffman is a member of the Nez Perce, or Nimiipuu Nation of Idaho

- Hattie Kauffman's success is tied to her hard work and vibrant, upbeat attitude.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What made Hattie Kauffman's career standout?

Why is Hattie Kauffman such an important role model for young people?

What is Hattie Kauffman's background and what types of challenges did she overcome to achieve success?

How can we learn from Hattie Kauffman's life story, told in her memoir *Falling Into Place*, and her path to becoming a national broadcast journalist?

ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE

Suggested Formative Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Active listening through note taking

Small group discussion

Class discussion

Culminating Performance Assessment of Learning Outcomes

- Students will finish their own small group K/W/H/L charts using Hattie Kauffman's website if they have access to internet in their small groups. Otherwise the written biographies can be printed and disseminated to students in their small groups
- Participate in a small group discussion
- Answer the essential questions when reporting out as a group to the class

ENTRY QUESTIONS

Who is Hattie Kauffman?

What did Hattie Kauffman achieve to become a member of the Hall of Fame?

What Native American Nation was Hattie Kauffman a member of?

MATERIALS

Computer and internet access for the following videos is required. Additional written materials for printing is at the end of this lesson.

Hattie Kauffman's website will provide students with links to watch interviews and other media of Hattie. Students can visit the website and choose two or three videos to watch and learn from. Here is a link to the website that has the videos posted:

www.hattiekauffman.com/falling.html

LEARNING MODALITIES

Audio/Visual: Students will watch videos of Hattie Kauffman and the historic events that she covered as a broadcast journalist for a major news network. These videos will demonstrate the important role that Hattie Kauffman played in society; she was entrusted with providing the nation with the news.

Writing/Recording: Students will take notes while observing the films, identifying key concepts, sentences or statements that Hattie makes during her many interviews. These notes will be used to complete the K/W/H/L chart in the small groups.

OVERT INSTRUCTION

- 1) The instructor will introduce the lesson by creating a "K/W/H/L" Chart, which stands roughly for "What they Know/What they Want to Know/How to Research this topic/What they Learned" chart on the white board for the students contribute their voices in a classroom exercise.
- 2) The instructor will ask the class to read the short biography of Hattie Kauffman and follow that up with a brief discussion to begin the class K/W/H/L chart. Using the information in the bio, the students will help the instructor begin completing the chart.
- 3) The teacher will divide the class into groups of 4, with each person reading the longer biography article individually. Some of the words may be unfamiliar to students and searching for definitions may be a necessary part of this process.
- 4) After the reading, students will then watch the first two videos of Hattie Kauffman to hear his words and learn about his amazing life.
- 5) Following the video, students will spend 20 minutes answering the following questions in their small groups. Every team member will contribute, with one person recording the information on a separate sheet. This information can also be utilized for the group K/W/H/L chart.

Questions

- a. What personal characteristics did Hattie Kauffman display to become a success as a broadcast journalist?
- b. Why is Hattie Kauffman's career success so remarkable?
- c. What personal story does Hattie Kauffman share in her memoir?
- d. What lessons can we learn from listening to Hattie Kauffman's story and seeing her unprecedented success?

6) Following the small group discussions, each group will report out on their answers, and the answers will be included into the K/W/H/L chart. What did we know about Hattie, how did we discover more about Hattie and what did we learn in our research? This is the purpose of the chart.

7) The instructor will open the discussion to include any final thoughts, questions or insights about Hattie Kauffman and her career legacy.

This concludes the first 50 minutes of the Lesson

Extension Exercises

- 1) Students who wish to continue their research on Hattie and/or American Indian journalism can read her memoir, *Falling Into Place*, and write a personal reflection about the book and Hattie's remarkable journey.

CRITICAL FRAMING

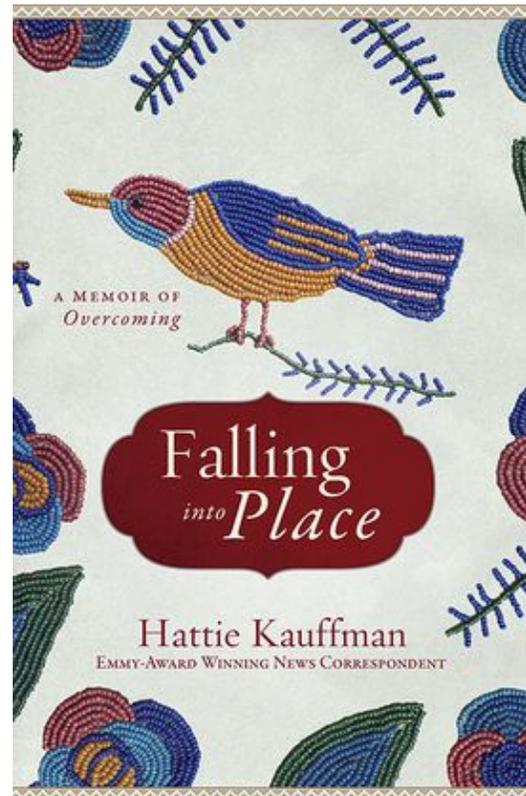
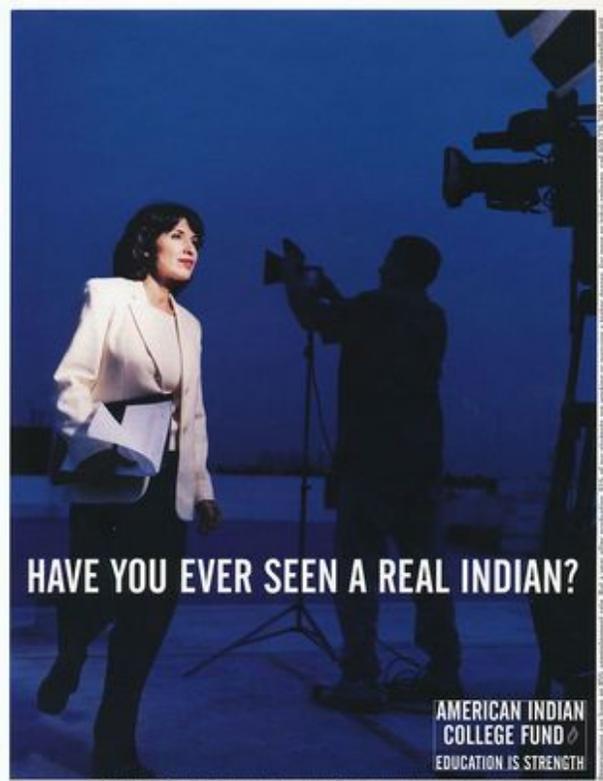
Hattie Kaufman's presence on national television must be considered in the context of culture and history. As a first in her field, she broke barriers of American culture that still continue to resonate.

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION FOR ADVANCED AND EMERGING LEARNERS

Hattie's memoir is written at a level that is best suited for advanced learners. Higher level students may choose to read the memoir and then provide an insightful review. Advanced learners can address the question of why it is important to include diverse voices in the field of journalism. Why is Hattie Kauffman's background as a Native American important to her perspective as a journalist? Why not?

Hattie Kauffman's 23-year career as a broadcast journalist has provided many interviews and news segments available for viewing online, which is a powerful means to provide multi-sensory learning to emerging learners. Students may provide oral responses to Hattie's news segments. What did they learn from Hattie's reporting?

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Indian Country profile: Journalist Hattie Kauffman impacts media world

by [Beverly Bidney](#) - August 1, 2014

Hattie Kauffman has the distinction of being the first Native American television reporter to file a story on a national evening news broadcast, but she hopes she won't be the last.

"Our culture is vibrant with storytelling; that's what reporting is," said Kauffman, a four-time Emmy Award winning journalist and member of the Nez Perce Tribe. "I often talk to Native American kids and encourage them to go into the news business. That's our culture; we are storytellers."

The story by Kauffman in 1989 that turned out to be historically significant reported on an airliner whose fuselage peeled back after taking off from Hawaii. It aired on ABC's evening newscast. Unknown to Kauffman, she had broken a barrier for Native American journalists, and the story was later featured in a display of firsts at the Newseum in Washington, D.C.

"I was just doing my job. I didn't know I had broken that barrier until they called me years later," she said.

During her childhood, Kauffman's parents moved the family of seven children between the Nez Perce Reservation in Idaho and Seattle. Those years gave her a strong work ethic.

"We were a poor, urban Native American family," Kauffman said. "I always knew I had to work. I didn't want to go back to poverty."

Her journalism career began with a scholarship to the University of Minnesota, an internship at WCCO-TV in Minneapolis and an apprentice program at KING-TV in Seattle, which led to jobs as general assignment reporter and news anchor.

Kauffman said she learned to report without bias. As a reporter covering a fishing dispute between Native American Tribes and Washington state in the 1970s, she had to remain objective.

"I went into it as a reporter, not a Native American," she said. "I interviewed both sides and told the story objectively. I couldn't take my culture into the job."

After leaving Seattle, Kauffman became a correspondent for ABC's "Good Morning America" and then went to CBS, where she had an esteemed 22-year career.

She was a correspondent and substitute anchor on “CBS This Morning,” as well as a reporter for “48 Hours,” “Street Stories,” “Sunday Morning,” “CBS Special Reports,” “The Early Show,” “CBS Evening News” and CBS Radio.

Throughout her career, Kauffman volunteered for assignments other people didn’t want; she credits that for her success.

“I became the go-to gal because I was always saying yes,” she said. “It opened doors; one door leads to the next. You don’t know what saying yes at this moment will lead to down the road.”

Kauffman learned from the people she reported on, including an impoverished woman in Mexico City. On assignment for “Good Morning America,” she told the story of 30,000 people who lived at the Mexico City garbage dump.

“It was the worst poverty I could imagine and it changed my perspective on the poverty of my childhood,” Kauffman said. “I asked a woman what was the most valuable thing she owned and she said it was her family. It changed my life.”

The encounter prompted Kauffman to always have a balanced view her work and the people she interviews.

“I always attempt to treat everyone with the same type of dignity and tell their stories in the most honest way I can,” she said.

Watching Tanna Beebe, of the Cowlitz and Quinault Tribes, report the news on KIRO in Seattle inspired Kauffman as a child.

“She was a role model for me,” Kauffman said. “She showed me an American Indian woman could be on TV.”

While frequent travel meant time away from her two children, Kauffman found strength through her faith and her family.

“My son says he grew up in an editing room,” Kauffman said. “But it gave them a worldly view, a bigger picture of what America is and who we are in it. There are sacrifices and rewards in all the choices we make.”

Kauffman retired in 2012 and returned home to Seattle to write her memoir “Falling Into Place: A Memoir of Overcoming,” which was published last year.

The book is available on the websites of Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Christian Book and IndieBound.

On May 31, she was the commencement speaker at College of Menominee Nation, where she gave the graduating class of 2014 a recipe for success.

"I told them they can succeed," Kauffman said. "It's just showing up and doing more than is expected of you."

Falling into Place

A television newswoman finally finds peace

By Jim Uttley



CBS This Morning

Hattie Kauffman became the first Native American on-camera correspondent on a national TV network. She went on to report for CBS' This Morning, ABC News Tonight and Good Morning America.

"The woman in front of me was in no shape to be on television. Her face was lifeless-her eyes red, swollen, vacant. She met my gaze as if begging to be told what to do, but I had no idea how to help her and felt every bit as lost as she looked."

So begins the spiritual memoir of Nez Perce Indian Hattie Kauffman known to millions for her work as a network news correspondent for CBS News and ABC's *Good Morning America*. The surprise for readers is that the woman she is describing-the one with the red eyes and vacant stare-is her own reflection.

"My words bounced off her cold image in the mirror. She wasn't listening.

I turned away, but movement felt nearly impossible under the weight of limbs too heavy to lift. My mind felt as though it were slipping in and out of time and I struggled to stay focused on what I was doing."

Hattie's gripping testimony unfolds in her critically acclaimed book, *Falling Into Place*. She describes growing up in extreme poverty, one of seven children whose parents moved them from the reservation in Idaho to the city of Seattle.

"We kids didn't know it at the time, but our parents' marriage was falling apart. They were fighting, drinking and disappearing. I don't tell this story to denounce them," Hattie explained. "My parents were doing the best they could and eventually their ship would right itself but we had some rough sailing for quite a stretch there... which happened to be my formative years."

The kids were often home alone, sometimes for days at a time. With no adults around to pay the bills, the lights were shut off, then the heat and eventually the water.

"In my book I describe an afternoon in which I'm in charge of my three younger sisters, and there's nothing to eat. After searching through the kitchen cupboards, I eventually find a bit of jam in the bottom of a jar and quickly scoop it into my mouth just as the youngest sister, the one we call 'Baby', starts to cry. Immediately, I'm overwhelmed with a sense of guilt.

"Now of course, I probably couldn't have given you a definition of the word 'guilt' at the time. I was only four. But the sense that I had done something wrong by eating that tiny bit of food rather than saving it for Baby stuck with me. And if you ask, what was a significant event in my childhood, I'd have to say it was the time I ate the jam because it made me feel from then on that I had to somehow make up for my guilt; that I had to try to make things right."

Like many children in alcoholic homes, Hattie tried 'to make things right'... but found she was at the mercy of the adults around her. Excerpts from her book illustrate the chaos.

"I wake at night to the roar of Mom, Dad, and the occasional others who stumble in with them. Like my parents, the drinking buddies appear and then vanish. Bursts of laughter careen into foul words as they battle, weep, pass out and wake up mean. One of them cuts off my hair.

Smear orange lipstick colors her frown.

"Lice," the lips spit at my tangles. "Nits."

Scissors, in unsteady hands, clip back and forth across my head.

I don't know who she is.

"There," the bright lips pronounce. "That's better." She drops the scissors and sways out of the mess that is our living room on a morning after.

There were frequent and unexpected trips back to the reservation.

"Wake up. Hattie, wake up."

I am seven years old and my little sister Carla is shaking me awake. Blinking against the brightness of the light bulb overhead, I give her a cranky face, roll over and close my eyes again.

"Wake up. We're going to Idaho," she urges.

I sit up. It is the middle of the night. Every light in the house is on. Bleary eyed, I see Carla has a paper bag in her hand and is looking for clothes to throw into it, while the youngest two girls are still asleep at my feet. The scene doesn't make sense to my drowsy brain.

"Come on girls," Mom's yell comes from the bottom of the stairs, in the high, nasally pitch that lets me know I'd better jump. It's another After Closing Time Road Trip.

We never know when one might happen. A year could go by or we might have two in one month. It could be in the summer or during the school year. We groggily pile into the back seat of the car. She throws a blanket over us and we speed off into the night. Somewhere in the desert, sunrise will jerk us awake. Mom might have pulled over and be asleep, or she might be squinting hard against the light, still driving, a beer bottle between her knees."

But amid the chaos, there was one adult shining like a light: Hattie's aunt.

"I was seven years old when my Aunt Teddy taught me the 23rd Psalm. I had no idea what the words meant but I repeated them back to her until I had it memorized."

The words 'The Lord is my Shepard' were the first seeds planted. It is a good thing that God is patient because the harvest would be a long time coming. As a hardened teenager, Hattie rejected her Aunt's teaching. The scene from her book is wrenching.

"I don't want the white man's God," I whisper harshly into the phone, turning my back so my sisters and brother won't hear me. We are gathered around the phone in the living room, which we do whenever Auntie Teddy calls.

"Oh, Hattie," Teddy begins, her voice thin and tinny over the long distance line.

It is 1970. I am fifteen and disgusted that I was ever taken in by her words. No loving God could have created my world.

"It's not a white man's God, Hattie. Christ died for all people."

"The missionaries just wanted to steal our land," I sneer.

"The government needed to tame the Indians, so they sent in the Christians."

"But..."

"I don't want to hear anymore. I'm finished with it."

I drop the receiver dismissively into the hand of the next sister in line waiting to talk to Aunt Teddy. In rejecting her God, I am pushing away the only person who has consistently been kind to me. I walk away hollow.

And Hattie admits that she remained hollow for decades. Perhaps spurred by that childhood urge 'to make things right' she poured herself into work...getting a scholarship to college, climbing out of poverty and becoming a successful TV reporter and anchorwoman. But she told *Indian Life* that there came a day when she felt the emptiness of her life.

"I was 52 years old and in the middle of an unexpected divorce. I had achieved a lot in my career, earning a big salary and living in a nice home but the upheaval revealed the fragility of it all. I realized there wasn't anything solid underneath me."

It was at that time that she began to feel the pull of God even in the middle of shooting a news story, as she describes in another scene from *Falling Into Place*:

"Our assignment was a feature story on a thriving home business that sold products from Africa. I interviewed the owner, a billowy black woman, who told me God had awakened her one morning with the distinct message that she must help women in Africa.

I gave a routine, disconnected nod-partly in an attempt to mask my annoyance at being dragged all the way up here to talk to a crazy woman who seriously believed God had spoken to her, and partly because no matter what she was saying, I simply could not bring myself to fully engage with her. Her responses sounded like static in my ears. I hardly asked a single follow-up question to anything she said. So she kept speaking and I kept nodding. But as we went on, her dark eyes bored into mine.

"God woke me up," she repeated.

With repeated experiences like that one, it seemed God was waking Hattie up too. Remembering her late Aunt Teddy, Hattie began to recall the words of the 23rd Psalm. And then, she started to pray. One morning, while sitting alone in a hotel room, resting with her eyes closed, she felt the touch of a hand upon the top of her head...

"... the way a parent might touch a child in tender love. The warm pressure of the hand upon my hair cupped me just above my right temple. It was lovely and so real that I opened my eyes to see whose hand it might be..."

She was alone in the room, and yet this was the turning point. Hattie finally began to realize that the Lord was there for her and had been all along. On a publicity tour for her book, she was asked if she found God or God found her.

"God didn't have to find me...He knew where I was all the time. I was the hungry girl, trying to control her world, scrambling to get somewhere and be someone. Later, the woman trying to be

liked, always on guard, never at rest. It was only when I was so broken in spirit that I could no longer even pretend to be in control that I looked up... God? Are you real?"

Hattie was baptized and with the help of the Holy Spirit was able to look back on her life with a new perspective. She explained in this recent interview:



ABC News

[Reporting from the Arctic Circle about reindeer just before Christmas.](#)

"It wasn't just forgiving my parents. It made me aware of how much resentment I had been carrying around. I finally realized I had to forgive me. I had to exhale, unclench my fists, relax my shoulders. I forgave myself for seeking God in all these false roads-ignoring, denouncing, denying.

Today, she is finally at peace and living a new life in the Lord Jesus Christ.

-Hattie Kauffman was the first Native American journalist to ever report on a national network evening news broadcast. For over 20 years, she was an on-camera correspondent and frequent guest anchor for ABC and CBS. She is a tribal member of the Nez Perce of Idaho and also a speaker and writer.

This article was adapted from excerpts from *Falling into Place: A Memoir of Overcoming* by Hattie Kauffman, published by Baker Books ©2013 and used with permission of the author and Baker Publishing Group. Her book is available at local bookstores, through Amazon or Barnes and Noble.