

Teacher Inquiry Kit: Grades 6-12

Donald Fisher

Title	Chief Three Bears: A Wampanoag Story of Resiliency
Author(s)	U'ilani Chai
Grade Level	6-12
Soldier	Donald Fisher
Tribal Affiliation	Cherokee/Wampanoag (Veteran's biographical form)
Branch of Service	Army
Dates of Service	1950-1967
Essential Question	How did serving in the U.S. Army strengthen Donald Fisher's Native American identity and impact his life after the war?
Contextual Paragraph	Chief Three Bears, Donald Fisher was born on May 27, 1933, in Providence, Rhode Island. He is the youngest of seven siblings. His grandfather is Cherokee and shortened their name from Kingfisher to

Fisher. Fisher's parents were both Native American, his father is Wampanoag, and his mother is from a small tribe from New Jersey. Fisher grew up in Providence and was working as a mechanic when he was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1950. His three older brothers were also drafted into the U.S. Army. Fisher was not exempt from being drafted because the law was created after he was drafted. Fisher was not excited about being drafted because he was always being promoted in his job and was managing thirteen people. After being drafted, Fisher attended basic training at Fort Dix. Out of two-hundred soldiers, only four men were sent to military police school. He then went to Fort Niagara and trained for six months. After his training as a military police officer, he was sent to Korea, where he served in the Korean War from 1950-1953. His main responsibility during the Korean War was to guard and protect a U.S. General while in the combat zone. When not guarding the General, he performed military police duties. Fisher stated, "war is war", when you serve in a war you experience casualties no matter if you are on the frontlines or experiencing combat from a ½ mile away. After Korea, Fisher transferred to Germany. He enjoyed playing the guitar and put together a band, that's where he befriended Elvis Presley. Fisher shared about the discrimination he endured while serving in the U.S. Army for 17 years. During his time going between Korea and Japan, Fisher married a Japanese woman in Japan. After getting married he noticed he was treated differently, during morning inspections he would be reprimanded for no reason. He was passed up for promotions his entire military career, his highest rank was a Specialist Four. Fisher finally could not stand the disrespect and was going to get out of the U.S. Army, but he was court martialed over \$500 and given an honorable discharge. After returning home, Fisher worked as a foreman for two years but then suffered a stroke which left him permanently disabled. He then began to learn Algonquin languages of his Wampanoag people. Chief Three Bears studied under the friendship and mentorship of Spotted Eagle, the Supreme Medicine Man of the Wampanoag Nation. He later became one of the founders of and taught the Nipmuc dialect at the newly established Algonquin School. Fisher established the Dighton Oak Council, was 1st Chief, language teacher for the Eastern Medicine Singers, and Chief of the Healing Spiritual Clan of Providence Veterans Affairs (VA). Chief Three Bears received acknowledgement by the United States Congress for Life's American Indian Achievement Award. In 2006, the Seaconke Wampanoag Tribe, at their Naming Ceremony presented him with the prestigious honor, "The Pipe of Peace. The Seaconke Wampanoag Cultural Committee recognized Fisher for his outstanding and significant contributions to the sustainability of the cultural heritage. Donald Fisher displayed his

	<p>resiliency by never giving up when faced with adversity. Fisher says, “always stand up for what’s right, speak truth even if it hurts”.</p>
C3 Standards	<p>C3 Standards: https://www.socialstudies.org/standards/c3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D2.His.1.6-8. Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts. • D2.His.3.6-8. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are seen as historically significant. • D2.His.14.6-8. Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past
Primary Source 1: Permanent Link 	<p>Interview with Donald Fisher</p>
Title of Primary Source	<p>Veterans History Project: Interview with Donald Fisher (29:52)</p>
Suggested questions for the source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the interview, describe what you notice about Donald Fisher? • What significant events occurred during Donald Fisher’s service in the Korean War that shaped his attitude towards the war or the U.S. Army? • Did his responsibilities during the Korean War shape his attitude towards the war or the U.S. Army? • How Mr. Fisher’s service in the U.S. Army and serving in the Korean War strengthen his identity as a Wampanoag Indian?

<p>Primary Source 2: Permanent Link</p> 	<p>Interview with Donald Fisher</p>
<p>Title of Primary Source</p>	<p>Interview with Donald Fisher: clip: Pulled over by a policeman when giving a Woman’s Army Corps member a ride to Washington D.C.</p>
<p>Suggested questions for the source</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where did this take place? When did this take place? • How do you think Mr. Fisher felt? • What events were happening in the U.S. during this time? • Why do you think Mr. Fisher got pulled over by the police? • How did Mr. Fisher demonstrate resiliency?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a discussion prompt(s) that could be used besides the questions above? • If you were Mr. Fisher, what would you have done if you were pulled over by the police? • Explain about a time when stood up for what wasn’t right? How did it make you feel?

<p>Primary Source 3 Permanent Link</p> 	<p>Donald Fisher Collection</p>
<p>Title of Primary Source</p>	<p>Portrait of Fisher Wearing his Army Military Police Uniform</p>
<p>Suggested questions for the source (3-5)</p>	<p>Describe what you see in the photograph. What people and objects are shown? How is this photo significant to the Korean War? How do you think Fisher is feeling in the photograph? What are your wonderings?</p>
<p>Primary Source 4 Permanent Link</p>	<p>Donald Fisher Collection</p>



Title of Primary Source

Fisher wearing traditional dress

Suggested questions for the source (3-5)

- Describe what you see in the photograph. What people and objects do you see?
- What is happening in the photograph?
- How is the photograph significant to Mr. Fisher’s cultural identity?
- How Mr. Fisher’s cultural identity honored in the photograph?

Possible discussion prompts beyond the questions. (2)

- What culture do you identify with? Share about unique features of your culture.
- Do you think being drafted into the U.S. Army strengthened Mr. Fisher’s sense of cultural identity? Why or why not?

Primary Source 5 Permanent Link

[YouTube: Three Bears Name](#)



Title of Primary Source

3 Bears: Elder Seaconke Wampanoag Tribe

Suggested questions for the source (3-5)

- How did Three Bears get his name?
- What language does he speak?
- Why is his name important to the Wampanoag community? What will happen if he disrespects his name?
- Why is naming important to cultural identity?

Possible discussion prompts beyond the questions. (2)

- What is the story of your name?
- Does your name strengthen your cultural identity? Why or why not?

Primary Source 6: Permanent Link

[YouTube: 3 Bears Respect](#)



Title of Primary Source	First, they have to have respect
Suggested questions for the source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can we learn from this video? • Three Bears says, “Culture is the law of the Indians.”, what does this quote mean? • Why is respect important in culture? Who and what should show respect too? Give examples • Who do the Wampanoag consider elders? • What are you still wondering about the video?
Possible discussion prompts beyond the questions. (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are your elders? How do elders strengthen cultural identity? • How did being in the U.S. Army and serving in the Korean War strengthen Three Bears cultural identity.
Works Cited	<p>Chapincito Media (2015) Chapincito: 3 Bears [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JjrlT5pD3AY</p> <p>Chapincito Media (2015) First they have to have respect [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUB2TOE2tpc</p> <p>Fisher, Donald. Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center. Library of Congress, 2014. Video. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, < https://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/bib/loc.natlib.afc2001001.95625 ></p>