

7th Grade Fall Overnight: Columbia Gorge



It was truly a joy to be with your students on the trip this week. This trip tells a story. This story started on Tuesday, when we were greeted by Carol Craig, a Yakama Nation Elder and journalist, at the Yakama Nation Cultural Center. Carol gave us an incredible tour of the Cultural Center, sharing the perspective of tribal people who called this place home thousands of years before the arrival of settlers. We learned about the importance of natural resources to the Yakama Nation, especially Celilo Falls. Most students were deeply respectful during this tour, and asked spectacular questions.

On Wednesday we ventured into Oregon to tour the Dalles Dam. This dam provides enough electricity to power all of the homes in Seattle. We learned that hydroelectricity is a carbon-neutral form of electricity, something that is critically important in the midst of a changing climate. That said, the building of the Dalles Dam flooded Celilo Falls, forever drowning this sacred place that dozens of tribes had relied on for time immemorial. During our post-tour reflection, many students were clearly trying to reconcile the story of Celilo Falls with the story of the Dalles Dam.



Thursday we visited the Olmstead Place Historical State Park, the location of one of the oldest homesteads in Washington state. After a brief "lesson" on homesteading, students all participated in a "Rose, Bud, Thorn" circle. Each student shared thought-provoking and diverse reflections about the trip. This circle highlighted the learning

that occurred on this trip, and after the circle, the adults all agreed that this reflection was our "Rose" (highlight) of the trip.



Check out some wonderful photos on the 7th Grade Overnight [SmugMug](#)
password: Billings!