

Sample E-mails from the AISES Virtual Mentoring Project

Dear Mentor,

Hi my name is XXXX. My favorite color is blue. Can you help me do some research about what different Native food you can make using corn? That's my science project? Do you know what I can make? Did your family used to make Native food using corn? Did your family have a cook book using corn? Or do they know somebody that makes Native food using corn? Did other tribes make Native food using corn?

Sincerly XXXX
10 years old
Santa Clara Day School

HI, Xxxxx!

Your project sounds great! You know corn is so important to so many Native peoples. My people (Mvskoke "Creek" Nation) are originally from the southeastern United States. Corn is extremely important to our culture. We make a dish called "Sofke" that is made of corn and lye. We have a lot of other corn dishes but Sofke is the most important one. Let me know what information you need for you project and I will help you find it. Keep me posted on how your project is going.

Later, XXXXX

Dear Mentor,

Hi! My name is Xxxxx. I am 11 years old. How old are you? My mom works @ the building across the street, and my dad works in Albuquerque. I have 2 sisters and 2 brothers. How Many Brothers and Sisters do you have? Well as you probably already know we are going to have a science fair about next month. My science project is going to be WILL YUCCA PLANT SOAP TAKE OUT COLER TREATED HAIR. Can you help me with a few things if so can you answer these questions?

Well they are #1. Can you help me find out how to make yucca plant soap? #2. Which kind of brand should I use against the yucca plant soap? #3. Can you help me also tell the best yucca plant to use? #4. How do some Navajos use yucca plants in there uses? That's all I want to know.

Sincerly,
Xxxx Xxxxxx

Dear Xxxxx,

Here's a recipe I found for Yucca plant shampoo:

"To make your own version of Yucca Shampoo look for fresh young Yucca plants. Cut off a piece of the root and peel the brown off of the root until you have exposed the white root inside. Once clean take a hammer, smash the Yucca root until it breaks in pieces. Wet the Yucca root, while holding the root over a basin of warm water, rub the root like a bar of soap to get mounds of lather from it. Wash your hair with the lather for a few minutes, gently massaging the scalp. Rinse very well in warm water making sure that no Yucca pieces remain in your hair."

From: <http://www.pioneerthinking.com/shampoo4.html>

Here's info on the kinds of plants to use for soap:

"Two other species, Yucca baccata and Yucca glauca, are called soap plant because their roots are especially good for making soap."

From: <http://www.findarticles.com/q2603/0007/2603000747/p1/article.jhtml>

Write back and let me know how your project is going.

Your mentor, xxxxx