

Native American Cultures Expedition

Introduction

Many misunderstandings and **stereotypes** exist about American Indians, or Native Americans. Not all Indians lived in tepees, and not all Indians were mainly hunters who used bows and arrows. There were hundreds of Indian nations across North America with many different cultures. They spoke different languages, had their own stories and religious ideas, and made their living in varied ways. Today, many Indian people work to keep their cultural heritage as they live in the modern world. Some Indian people live with other members of their nations on reservations, while others live in our towns and cities among people of various ethnic backgrounds.

As you participate in this expedition, you will become an expert on one Indian nation and share your knowledge with your teacher and classmates. Each group will be assigned a different Native American nation to research. You will take notes as you complete your research, using the outline of questions provided below. I would recommend that you divide up the work amongst team members when researching for information.

Assignment

You will be asked to create a book on your Native American nation. Each page of your book will contain 1 to 2 sets of research questions listed below. Each section (A, B, C, etc.) will be hand written in cursive or typed. Each section should contain a minimum of 1 to 2 paragraphs summarizing what you have learned.

You will also be asked to perform one of the following activities:

Activity 1

Select one craft item to make. You might make a model of the type of home your people lived in, a model of a tool or weapon, or some other item used. You will be asked to explain to the class the item you choose to make, explaining its use, how it was made, etc.

Activity 2

Select a game children used to play. You must be prepared to either teach the class the game or be able to provide an explanation on how the game was played.

Research Questions

A. Read and take notes on the original location of your nation. Where were your people located? Describe the climate and geographic environment. What resources were available? Be able to point out the historic location of your people on a map. I will be happy to make a copy of a map for your book.

B. Based upon your cultural group Southeastern or Northeastern Woodland, Plains, California, Great Basin, Plateau, Southwest, Pacific Northwest, Subarctic, or Arctic, what Native American tribes are located within this region?

C. Take notes on how these people traditionally made their living (farming, hunting and gathering, trade). What kinds of **technology** (tools, weapons, and methods) did they use? What did they grow/hunt/gather/trade or get by trading?

D. Read and take notes on the homes, family life, and education of your people. What materials did they use to build their homes? How was their style of home well suited to their lifestyle and environment? How were their families organized? What were the jobs of men, women, and children? How were children educated? What knowledge and skills were important for them to learn?

E. Read and take notes on the history and government of your nation. What were the responsibilities of the various leaders? How were leaders selected? How were decisions made? What was the role of women?

F. Describe spirits, ceremonies, causes and cures of illness, good fortune, misfortune, etc. Were there any special groups or societies?

G. Find out about arts and crafts. What items did they make? (-baskets, pottery, clothing, blankets, musical instruments, masks, jewelry, decoration of homes, tools, weapons, toys, etc.) What materials were used? Describe typical designs.

H. Use the websites listed to find out about your Indian nation today. Does your nation have a webpage? Where do your people live?

Resources

In addition to the books available in the library, you may also use the following internet resources listed below:

Internet Resources for Native American Research

<http://www.americanwest.com>

Go to this site and type in the name of your Indian nation.

<http://www.yahooligans.com/>

A gateway to information about 80 western Native American tribes visited and photographed by Edward S. Curtis, from 1890-1930

<http://www.curtis-collection.com>

Hopi

<http://www.nau.edu/~hcopo-p/index.html#table> - Hopi homepage

Iroquois (Haudenosaunee: "People of the Longhouse")

<http://www.tuscaroras.com/graydeer/>

Shawnee

http://www.ohiokids.org/ohc/history/h_indian/tribes/shawnee.html - probably the best site to start with

<http://www.sunflower.org/~hdqrs/> (includes a message from Tecumseh, as well as the tribal website; website consists mostly of treaties)

<http://www.tolatsga.org/shaw.html> - Shawnee history and culture, followed by a list of tribes included

Wampanoag - a Wampanoag story

<http://www.comanchelanguage.org/> - Comanche language page

<http://www.texasindians.com/comanche.htm> - Comanche history (Texas)

<http://www.comanchenation.com/> - Comanche nation website (history and current events, issues)

Grading Rubric for Native American Expedition

Native American Book

_____ Were all 8 sections included? (80pts. 10pts. for each section)

_____ Did you use correct spelling and punctuation? (10pts.)

_____ Creativity (pictures, layout) (10pts.)

Activity

_____ Did you include one of the activities listed? (10pts.)

_____ Did you explain the use of your craft or provide an explanation of a game? (10pts.)

Presentation

_____ Did each member contribute in the presentation? (10pts.)

Total: _____ (130 pts.)