National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month

Background Information, Lesson Plans, and Internet Resources for Middle and Senior High School Classrooms

Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Department of Social Sciences
November 2014 (Revised)
Introduction to National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month

What started at the turn of the century as an effort to gain a day of recognition for the significant contributions the first Americans made to the establishment and growth of the United States has resulted in a whole month being designated for that purpose.

Early Proponents

One of the very early proponents of an American Indian Day was Dr. Arthur C. Parker, a Seneca Indian, who was the director of the Museum of Arts and Sciences in Rochester, New York. He persuaded the Boy Scouts of America to set aside a day for the “First Americans” and for three years they adopted such a day. In 1915, the annual Congress of the American Indian Association meeting in Lawrence, Kansas, formally approved a plan concerning American Indian Day. It directed its president, Reverend Sherman Coolidge, an Arapaho, to call upon the country to observe such a day. Coolidge issued a proclamation on September 28, 1915, which declared the second Saturday of each May as an American Indian Day and contained the first formal appeal for recognition of American Indians as citizens.

The year before this proclamation was issued, Red Fox James, a Blackfoot Indian, rode horseback from state to state seeking approval for a day to honor American Indians. On December 14, 1915, he presented the endorsements of 24 state governments at the White House. There is no record, however, of such a national day being proclaimed.

State Celebrations

The first American Indian Day in a state was declared on the second Saturday in May, 1916, by the Governor of New York. Several states celebrated the fourth Friday in September. In Illinois, for example, legislators enacted such a day in 1919. Presently, several states have designated Columbus Day as American Indian Day, but it continues to be a day we observe without any recognition as a national legal holiday.

Heritage Months

In 1990, President George H. W. Bush approved a joint resolution designating November, 1990, “National American Indian Heritage Month.” Similar proclamations have been issued each year since 1994.

The proclamation issued in 2013 by President Barack Obama states:

“From Alaskan mountain peaks to the Argentinian pampas to the rocky shores of Newfoundland, American Indians were the first to carve out cities, domesticate
crops, and establish great civilizations. When the Framers gathered to write the United States Constitution, they drew inspiration from the Iroquois Confederacy, and in the centuries since, American Indians and Alaska Natives from hundreds of tribes have shaped our national life. During American Indian Heritage Month, we honor their vibrant cultures and strengthen the government-to-government relationship between the United States and each tribal nation.

As we observe this month, we must not ignore the painful history American Indians have endured -- a history of violence, marginalization, broken promises, and upended justice. There was a time when native languages and religions were banned as part of a forced assimilation policy that attacked the political, social, and cultural identities of American Indians in the United States. Through generations of struggle, American Indians and Alaska Natives held fast to their traditions, and eventually the United States Government repudiated its destructive policies and began to turn the page on a troubled past.

My Administration remains committed to self-determination, the right of tribal governments to build and strengthen their own communities. Each year I host the White House Tribal Nations Conference, and our work together has translated into action. We have resolved longstanding legal disputes, prioritized placing land into trust on behalf of tribes, stepped up support for Tribal Colleges and Universities, made tribal health care more accessible, and streamlined leasing regulations to put more power in tribal hands. Earlier this year, an amendment to the Stafford Act gave tribes the option to directly request Federal emergency assistance when natural disasters strike their homelands. In March, I signed the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, which recognizes tribal courts' power to convict and sentence certain perpetrators of domestic violence, regardless of whether they are Indian or non-Indian. And this June, I moved to strengthen our nation-to-nation relationships by establishing the White House Tribal Council on American Indian Affairs. The Council is responsible for promoting and sustaining prosperous and resilient American Indian communities.

As we observe American Indian Heritage Month, we must build on this work. Let us shape a future worthy of a bright new generation, and together, let us ensure this country's promise is fully realized for every American Indian.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 2013 as National American Indian Heritage Month. I call upon all Americans to commemorate this month with appropriate programs and activities, and to celebrate November 29, 2013, as American Indian Heritage Day."
An Instructional Note to Teachers about National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month

National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month is celebrated each November to recognize Native cultures and to educate students about the heritage, history, culture, and traditions of the American Indian and Alaska Native people.

To assist schools, staff in the Department of Social Sciences has developed this instructional resource guide which includes background information for both teachers and students, suggested classroom activities, and suggested Internet resources on the history, culture, and traditions of the American Indian and Alaska Native people. The resources in this guide include:

- **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

  This section includes detailed background and reference information for teachers and/or students on American Indians and Alaska Native people.

- **LESSON PLANS**

  This section includes detailed lesson plans with all support materials needed to teach the lessons provided.

- **SUGGESTED INTERNET RESOURCES**

  Additional teacher and student background information, lesson plans, and classroom activities may be found on the web sites listed in this section of the guide.

Content related to American Indians and Alaska Native people are an integral part of social studies instruction, most notably in U.S. history courses. Teachers are highly encouraged to utilize the resources and lessons found in this resource packet to reinforce this content whenever appropriate. Teachers are further encouraged to select and adapt the resources and lessons found in this guide to best fit the needs of their students.
Background Information

- American Indian History (World Book Advanced)
- American Indians Migrate to the Americas
- American Indians by the Numbers – U.S. Census Bureau
- Facts About American Indians Today
- Civil Rights and American Indians
- American Indian Removal – 1814-1858
- Reservations
- American Indian vs. Native American
- Are You Teaching the True Thanksgiving Story?
- Historic Florida Indians
- American Indian Culture Areas, Map, and Representative Photos and Images
- Ideas for Teaching About American Indians
American Indian History

The excerpt below on American Indian history is from the on-line edition of the World Book Encyclopedia (2014) available for students and teachers through the Miami-Dade County Public Schools’ Department of Library Media Services. To access the full article:

1. Visit Library Media Services at http://library.dadeschools.net/ (Password needed. Check with the Media Specialist.)
2. Click the On-line Data Bases and select World Book (Advanced) Online Reference Center
3. Search for “American Indian.”
4. Click on the article entitled “Indian, American.”

The full article is an overview of the many facets of American Indian history and culture. Only the excerpt on early history is included below.

American Indian History

The people now known as American Indians or Native Americans were the first people to live in the Americas. They had been living there for thousands of years before any Europeans arrived.

The Vikings are believed to have explored the east coast of North America about 1000 and to have had some contact with American Indians. But lasting contact between Indians and Europeans began with Christopher Columbus’s voyages to the Americas. In 1492, Columbus sailed across the Atlantic Ocean from Spain. He was seeking a short sea route to the Indies, which then included India, China, the East Indies, and Japan. Europeans did not then know that North and South America existed. When Columbus landed on an island in the Caribbean Sea, he did not realize he had come to a New World. He thought he had reached the Indies, and so he called the people he met Indians.

American Indian cultural areas
Almost every American Indian group had its own name. Many of these names reflected the pride of each group in itself and its way of life. For example, the Delaware Indians of eastern North America called themselves Lenape, which means genuine people.

No people lived in the Americas before the American Indians arrived. Most scientists think the first American Indians came to the Americas from Asia at least 15,000 years ago. Other scientists believe the American Indians may have arrived as early as 35,000 years ago. At the time the Indians came, huge ice sheets covered much of the northern
half of earth. As a result, much of earth that is now underwater was dry land. One such area that was dry then, but is submerged now, is the Bering Strait, which today separates Asia and North America. The American Indians, following the animals that they hunted, wandered across this land, a distance of about 50 miles (80 kilometers). By 12,500 years ago, American Indians had spread throughout the New World and were living from the Arctic in the north all the way to southern South America.

The American Indians spoke hundreds of different languages and had many different ways of life. Some groups lived in great cities and others in small villages. Still others kept moving all year long, hunting animals and gathering wild plants.

The Aztec and the Maya of Central America built large cities. Some of the Aztec cities had as many as 100,000 people. The Maya built special buildings in which they studied the moon, the stars, and the sun. They also developed a calendar and a system of writing.

Many of the American Indians of eastern North America lived in villages. They hunted and farmed, growing such crops as maize (corn), beans, and squash. At the southern tip of South America, the American Indians lived in small bands that moved from place to place in search of food. They ate mainly fish and berries. These American Indians spent so much time searching for food that they seldom built permanent shelters, made clothes, or developed tools.

American Indians or Native Americans?

The history of the New World includes the story of relations between the American Indians and the European explorers, trappers, and settlers. Most of the American Indians were friendly at first and taught the newcomers many things. The European explorers followed American Indian trails to sources of water and deposits of copper, gold, silver, turquoise, and other minerals. The American Indians taught them to make snowshoes and toboggans and to travel by canoe. Food was another of the American Indians' important gifts. The American Indians grew many foods that the newcomers had never heard of, such as avocados, corn, peanuts, peppers, pineapples, potatoes, squash, and tomatoes. They also introduced the whites to tobacco.

The American Indians, in turn, learned much from the whites. The Europeans brought many goods that were new to the American Indians. These goods included metal tools, guns, and liquor. The Europeans also brought cattle and horses, which were unknown to the American Indians.
The Europeans and the American Indians had widely different ways of life. Some Europeans tried to understand the American Indians' ways and treated them fairly. But others cheated the American Indians and took their land. When the American Indians fought back, thousands of them were killed in battle. At first, they had only bows and arrows and spears, but the Europeans had guns. Even more Indians died from measles, smallpox, and other new diseases introduced by the whites.

As the Europeans moved westward across North America, they became a greater and greater threat to the American Indian way of life. Finally, most of the remaining American Indians were moved onto reservations. Today, most American Indians in North America still do not completely follow the ways of white people. In some areas of Central and South America, several tribes have kept their language and way of life. But most of the tribes have become part of a new way of life that is both American Indian and European.

Some Indian groups

Anthropologists, who study human culture, classify the hundreds of North and South American Indian tribes into groups of tribes with strong similarities. These groups are called cultural areas. The cultural areas of Canada and the United States are (1) the Arctic; (2) the Subarctic; (3) the Northeast, often called the Eastern Woodlands; (4) the Southeast; (5) the Plains; (6) the Northwest Coast; (7) California; (8) the Great Basin; (9) the Plateau; and (10) the Southwest. Those of Latin America are (1) Middle America, (2) the Caribbean, (3) the Andes, (4) the Tropical Forest, and (5) the South American Marginal Regions.

American Indians Migrate to the Americas

No people lived in the Americas before the American Indians arrived. Most scientists believe the first American Indians came to the Americas from Asia at least 15,000 years ago. Other scientists believe the American Indians may have arrived as early as 35,000 years ago.

Most scientists for the past 50 years have theorized that the American Indians migrated in one wave to the Americas from Asia during the last Ice Age. The American Indians, following the animals that they hunted, wandered across this land bridge of ice now known as the Bering Strait, a distance of about 50 miles (80 kilometers).

Recent studies now indicate that the American Indians migrated to the Americas in three waves, not one. The following new information on the American Indian migration is from the Boston Globe and is based on a Harvard-led research study.

Native Americans Migrated to the New World in Three Waves, Harvard-led DNA Analysis Shows
By Carolyn Y. Johnson, Boston Globe, July 2012

An exhaustive study of DNA taken from dozens of Native American groups that span from Canada to the tip of South America is helping to settle a question that has long divided scientists: When people arrived in the Americas more than 15,000 years ago, the Harvard-led research shows, they came in successive waves, not all at once. The analysis published Wednesday reveals that while one population of “First Americans” crossed a land bridge from Siberia during the last Ice Age, giving rise to most Native Americans, there were at least two subsequent migrations. These people mixed with the founding group later, leaving traces of their genes in the DNA of present-day populations in Alaska, Greenland, and Canada.

The new findings in the journal Nature highlight the growing importance of cutting-edge technologies that are allowing geneticists to probe the distant past, alongside archeologists, linguists, and paleoanthropologists who have relied on studies of such things as arrowheads and tools, language, skulls, and teeth.

“Geneticists, we’re sort of amateurs—we’re not steeped in the deep understanding of history the linguists and archeologists have, but we do have access to information” they don’t, said David Reich, a genetics professor at Harvard Medical School who led the study, along with a scientist at the University College London. Reich also played a
Native Americans Migrated to the New World in Three Waves, Harvard-led DNA Analysis Shows (continued)

leading role in the surprising discovery in 2010, based on a comparison of DNA from fossilized remains with present-day human genomes, that Neanderthals interbred with humans.

“It's a different type of evidence—not as good at (establishing) dates, but much better about how people relate to each other,” he said. “You can’t tell from remains that are left behind who gave rise to who.”

Scientists not involved in the study said the findings, which involved the analysis of samples taken from nearly 750 present-day Native Americans and Siberians, deepens and enriches the story of migration into the Americas. Previous genetic analyses had indicated Native Americans descended from a single source population.

“The bottom line is there has been this debate: single versus multiple origins or migrations, and this comes down particularly on one side of that,” said Dennis O’Rourke, a professor of anthropology at the University of Utah who was not involved in the study. He said the finding was solid and the interpretation convincing, but that what is most fascinating is the way in which the new data is casting light on precisely how new streams of migrants mixed with existing ones.

“I doubt it’s the final word,” O’Rourke said. “For me it suggests that as the data become richer and we have a better handle on patterns of diversity, we are seeing our reconstructions of past populations become more complex as well.”

To do the work, scientists examined more than 360,000 spots in the genomes of each person where the DNA commonly varies. They used the frequency of genetic variations to construct a kind of family tree showing when groups split off from one another, and when populations might have mixed together.

The researchers found that at least two other Asian populations came to the Americas after the initial migration, though they were unable to date their arrival. Nor is it clear whether these groups would have come across the land bridge or made the voyage aided by boats later, after sea levels rose, according to Andres Ruiz-Linares, a professor of human genetics at University College London who coordinated the research. One wave of new migrants was detected in populations that speak Eskimo-Aleut languages found in Alaska, Canada, and Greenland, who still get more than half of their DNA from the First Americans. Another was detected in a Canadian Chipewyan group, who are 90 percent made up of First Americans’ DNA.
Native Americans Migrated to the New World in Three Waves, Harvard-led DNA Analysis Shows (continued)

The genetic analysis was made more difficult by the fact that since 1492, Native Americans have mixed with European and African populations, so the researchers had to carefully sift out genetic variations that would have appeared due to this later mixing. Ripan Malhi, an anthropologist at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, wrote in an e-mail that the new data add nuance to a consensus view that had emerged that there was a single source population that gave rise to Native Americans. The team’s explanation that there were multiple waves of migration that interbred with the earlier groups in parts of North America helps explain the overall similarity of DNA among all Native Americans as well as some unaccounted for differences in groups from North America, he wrote.

One drawback of the study was the lack of Native American populations from the continental United States. Ruiz-Linares, a Columbian who led the work with Reich, said that is because of the difficulty of obtaining such data, which requires obtaining proper consent and forming relationships within different countries and among specific tribes.

The international team of 64 researchers who collaborated on the project are part of a network he painstakingly built over the last two decades.

“The question has always been the same—basically trying to reconstruct history from genetic data,” Ruiz-Linares said. “What has really changed dramatically is the technology, both the technology in the lab and our ability to collect a large amount of data.”

After the human genome project, for example, researchers have had access to technologies that can rapidly and cheaply measure large amounts of DNA, allowing unprecedented amounts of data to be collected, and enabling new analysis methods. The data also show, in contrast to what scientists have seen on other continents, that there is a clear record of the way people geographically dispersed. The branching family tree that the researchers created suggests people migrated southward rapidly, hugging the west coast, and that there was relatively little mixing as groups branched off.

American Indians by the Numbers – The United States Census Bureau, 2013

Population

5.2 million

The nation’s population of American Indians and Alaska Natives, including those of more than one race. They made up about 2 percent of the total population in 2012. Of this total, about 49 percent were American Indian and Alaska Native only, and about 51 percent were American Indian and Alaska Native in combination with one or more other races.

11.2 million

The projected population of American Indians and Alaska Natives, alone or in combination, on July 1, 2060. They would comprise 2.7 percent of the total population.

437,339

The American Indian and Alaska Native population, alone or in combination 65 and over.

14

Number of states with more than 100,000 American Indian and Alaska Native residents, alone or in combination, in 2012. These states were California, Oklahoma, Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, Washington, New York, North Carolina, Florida, Alaska, Michigan, Oregon, Colorado and Minnesota.

19.6%

The proportion of Alaska’s population identified as American Indian and Alaska Native, alone or in combination, in 2012, the highest rate for this race group of any state. Alaska was followed by Oklahoma (13.4 percent), New Mexico (10.4), South Dakota (10.0 percent) and Montana (8.1 percent).

31.0

Median age for those who were American Indian and Alaska Native, alone or in combination, in 2012. This compares with a median age of 37.4 for the U.S. population as a whole.
Reservations

325

Number of federally recognized American Indian reservations in 2012. All in all, excluding Hawaiian Home Lands, there are 618 American Indian and Alaska Native legal and statistical areas for which the Census Bureau provides statistics.

22%

Percentage of American Indians and Alaska Natives, alone or in combination, who lived in American Indian areas or Alaska Native Village Statistical Areas in 2010. These American Indian areas include federal American Indian reservations and/or off-reservation trust lands, Oklahoma tribal statistical areas, tribal designated statistical areas, state American Indian reservations, and state designated American Indian statistical areas.

Tribes

566

Number of federally recognized Indian tribes.

Families

1,122,043

The number of American Indian and Alaska Native family households in 2012 (households with a householder who was American Indian and Alaska Native alone or in combination with another race). Of these, 54.7 percent were married-couple families, including those with children.

6.2%

The percentage of American Indian and Alaska Natives alone or in combination with other races who were grandparents living with their grandchild(ren) in 2012.

Housing

54.0%

The percentage of single-race American Indian and Alaska Native householders who owned their own home in 2012. This is compared with 63.9 percent of the overall population.
Languages

20.4%

Percentage of American Indians and Alaska Natives alone or in combination 5 years and older who spoke a language other than English at home in 2012, compared with 21 percent for the nation as a whole.

Education

78.8%

The percentage of single-race American Indians and Alaska Natives 25 and older who had at least a high school diploma, GED certificate or alternative credential in 2012. In addition, 13.5 percent obtained a bachelor's degree or higher. In comparison, 86.4 percent of the overall population had a high school diploma and 29.1 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher.

40.9%

Single-race American Indians and Alaska Natives 25 and older whose bachelor's degree was in science and engineering, or science and engineering-related fields in 2012. This compares with 43.6 percent for all people 25 and older with this level of education.

70,532

Number of single-race American Indians and Alaska Natives 25 and older who had a graduate or professional degree in 2012.

Jobs

26.1%

The percentage of civilian-employed single-race American Indian and Alaska Native people 16 and older who worked in management, business, science and arts occupations in 2012. In addition, 25.1 percent worked in service occupations and 22.8 percent in sales and office occupations.

Veterans

161,686

The number of single-race American Indian and Alaska Native veterans of the U.S. armed forces in 2012.
Income and Poverty

$35,310

The median household income of single-race American Indian and Alaska Native households in 2012. This compares with $51,371 for the nation as a whole.

29.1%

The percent of single-race American Indians and Alaska Natives that were in poverty in 2012, the highest rate of any race group. For the nation as a whole, the poverty rate was 15.9 percent.

Health Insurance

27.4%

The percentage of single-race American Indians and Alaska Natives who lacked health insurance coverage in 2012. For the nation as a whole, the corresponding percentage was 14.8 percent.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
Facts About Our Nation’s American Indian and Alaska Native Citizens

The following information is provided by Indian Affairs (IA), the oldest bureau of the United States Department of the Interior. Further information can be found at http://www.bia.gov/

- Indian Affairs (IA) was established in 1824. IA currently provides services to approximately 1.9 million American Indians and Alaska Natives. There are 566 federally recognized American Indian tribes and Alaska Natives in the United States.
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is responsible for the administration and management of 55 million surface acres and 57 million acres of subsurface minerals estates held in trust by the United States for American Indian, Indian tribes, and Alaska Natives.
- Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) provides education services to approximately 42,000 Indian students.

Who is an American Indian or Alaska Native?

As a general rule, an American Indian or Alaska Native person is someone who has blood degree from and is recognized as such by a federally recognized tribe or village (as an enrolled tribal member) and/or the United States. Of course, blood quantum (the degree of American Indian or Alaska Native blood from a federally recognized tribe or village that a person possesses) is not the only means by which a person is considered to be an American Indian or Alaska Native. Other factors, such as a person's knowledge of his or her tribe’s culture, history, language, religion, familial kinships, and how strongly a person identifies himself or herself as American Indian or Alaska Native, are also important. In fact, there is no single federal or tribal criterion or standard that establishes a person's identity as American Indian or Alaska Native.

There are major differences, however, when the term “American Indian” is used in an ethnological sense versus its use in a political/legal sense. The rights, protections, and services provided by the United States to individual American Indians and Alaska Natives flow not from a person's identity as such in an ethnological sense, but because he or she is a member of a federally recognized tribe. That is, a tribe that has a government-to-government relationship and a special trust relationship with the United States. These special trust and government-to-government relationships entail certain legally enforceable obligations and responsibilities on the part of the United States to persons who are enrolled members of such tribes. Eligibility requirements for federal services will differ from program to program. Likewise, the eligibility criteria for enrollment (or membership) in a tribe will differ from tribe to tribe.
How large is the American Indian and Alaska Native population?

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the nation’s estimated population of American Indians and Alaska Natives, including those of more than one race, is 5.2 million. In 2012, they made up about 2 percent of the total population. The projected population of American Indians and Alaska Natives, alone or in combination, on July 1, 2060, is 11.2 million. They would comprise 2.7 percent of the total population.

Why are American Indians and Alaska Natives also referred to as American Indians?

When referring to American Indian or Alaska Native persons, it is still appropriate to use the terms “American Indian” and “Alaska Native.” These terms denote the cultural and historical distinctions between persons belonging to the indigenous tribes of the continental United States (American Indians) and the indigenous tribes and villages of Alaska (Alaska Natives, i.e., Eskimos, Aleuts, and Indians). They also refer specifically to persons eligible for benefits and services funded or directly provided by the BIA.

The term “American Indian” came into broad usage in the 1970’s as an alternative to “American Indian.” Since that time, however, it has been gradually expanded within the public lexicon to include all Native peoples of the United States and its trust territories, i.e., American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, Chamorros, and American Samoans, as well as persons from Canada First Nations and indigenous communities in Mexico and Central and South America who are U.S. residents.

What is a Federally Recognized Tribe?

There are more than 560 federally recognized tribes in the United States, including over 220 village groups in Alaska. “Federally recognized” means these tribes and groups have a special, legal relationship with the United States government. This relationship is referred to as a government-to-government relationship.

What are Reservations?

In the United States, there are only two kinds of reserved lands that are well-known: military and Indian. An Indian reservation is land reserved for a tribe when it relinquished its other land areas to the United States through treaties. More recently, Congressional acts, Executive Orders, and administrative acts have created reservations. Today, some reservations have non-Indian residents and land owners.

There are approximately 325 Indian land areas in the United States administered as Indian reservations (reservations, pueblos, Rancherias, communities, etc.). The largest is the Navajo Reservation of some 16 million acres of land in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. Many of the smaller reservations are less than 1,000 acres with the smallest less
than 100 acres. On each reservation, the local governing authority is the tribal
government.

Approximately 56.2 million acres of land are held in trust by the United States for
various Indian tribes and individuals. Much of this is reservation land; however, not all
reservation land is trust land. On behalf of the United States, the Secretary of the
Interior serves as trustee for such lands with many routine responsibilities delegated to
BIA officials.

The states in which reservations are located have limited powers over them, and only
as provided by federal law. On some reservations, however, a high percentage of the
land is owned and occupied by non-Indians. Some 140 reservations have entirely
tribally owned land.

**Must all American Indians and Alaska Natives Live on Reservations?**

No. American Indians and Alaska Natives live and work anywhere in the United States
(and the world) just as other citizens do. Many leave their reservations, communities or
villages for the same reasons as do other Americans who move to urban centers: to
seek education and employment. Over one-half of the total U.S. American Indian and
Alaska Native population now live away from their tribal lands. However, most return
home to visit relatives; attend family gatherings and celebrations; participate in religious,
cultural, or community activities; work for their tribal governments; operate businesses;
vote in tribal elections or run for tribal office; retire; or to be buried.

**How Does One Trace Indian Ancestry and Become a Member of a Tribe?**

The first step in tracing Indian ancestry is basic genealogical research if one does not
already have specific family information and documents that identify tribal ties. Some
information to obtain is: names of ancestors; dates of birth, marriages and deaths;
places where they lived; brothers and sisters, if any; and, most importantly, tribal
affiliations. Among family documents to check are Bibles, wills, and other such papers.
The next step is to determine whether one's ancestors are on an official tribal roll or
census by contacting the tribe.

**Are American Indians and Alaska Natives wards of the Federal Government?**

No. The Federal Government is a trustee of Indian property, not a guardian of all
American Indians and Alaska Natives. Although the Secretary of the Interior is
authorized by law to protect, where necessary, the interests of minors and adult persons
deemed incompetent to handle their affairs, this protection does not confer a guardian-
ward relationship.
Are American Indians and Alaska Natives citizens of the United States?

Yes. As early as 1817, U.S. citizenship had been conferred by special treaty upon specific groups of Indian people. American citizenship was also conveyed by statutes, naturalization proceedings, and by service in the Armed Forces with an honorable discharge in World War I. In 1924, Congress extended American citizenship to all other American Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States. American Indians and Alaska Natives are citizens of the United States and of the individual states, counties, cities, and towns where they reside. They can also become citizens of their tribes or villages as enrolled tribal members.

Do American Indians and Alaska Natives have the right to vote?

Yes. American Indians and Alaska Natives have the right to vote just as all other U.S. citizens do. They can vote in presidential, congressional, state and local, and tribal elections, if eligible. And, just as the federal government and state and local governments have the sovereign right to establish voter eligibility criteria, so do tribal governments.

Do American Indians and Alaska Natives have the right to hold public office?

Yes. American Indians and Alaska Natives have the same rights as other citizens to hold public office. Over the years, American Indian and Alaska Native men and women have held elected and appointed offices at all levels of federal, state, and local government. Charles Curtis, a member of the Kaw Tribe of Kansas, served in both houses of Congress before holding the second highest elected office in the nation – that of Vice President of the United States under President Herbert Hoover. American Indians and Alaska Natives also serve in state legislatures, state judicial systems, county and city governments, and on local school boards.

Do American Indians and Alaska Natives have special rights different from other citizens?

Any “special” rights held by federally recognized tribes and their members are generally based on treaties or other agreements between the tribes and the United States. The heavy price American Indians and Alaska Natives paid to retain certain rights of self-government was to relinquish much of their land and resources to the United States. U.S. law protects the inherent rights they did not relinquish. Among those may be hunting and fishing rights and access to sacred sites.

Do American Indians and Alaska Natives pay taxes?

Yes. They pay the same taxes as other citizens with the following exceptions:
1. Federal income taxes are not levied on income from trust lands held for them by the U.S.
2. State income taxes are not paid on income earned on a federal Indian reservation.
3. State sales taxes are not paid by Indians on transactions made on a federal Indian reservation.
4. Local property taxes are not paid on reservation or trust land.

**Do laws that apply to non-Indians also apply to Indians?**

Yes. As U.S. citizens, American Indians and Alaska Natives are generally subject to federal, state, and local laws. On federal Indian reservations, however, only federal and tribal laws apply to members of the tribe, unless Congress provides otherwise. In federal law, the Assimilative Crimes Act makes any violation of state criminal law a federal offense on reservations. Most tribes now maintain tribal court systems and facilities to detain tribal members convicted of certain offenses within the boundaries of the reservation.

**Do all American Indians and Alaska Natives speak a single traditional language?**

No. American Indians and Alaska Natives come from a multitude of different cultures with diverse languages, and for thousands of years used oral tradition to pass down familial and cultural information among generations of tribal members. Some tribes, even if widely scattered, belong to the same linguistic families. Common means of communicating between tribes allowed trade routes and political alliances to flourish. As contact between Indians and non-Indians grew, so did the necessity of learning of new languages. Even into the 20th century, many American Indians and Alaska Natives were bi- or multilingual from learning to speak their own language and English, French, Russian, or Spanish, or even another tribal language.

It has been reported that at the end of the 15th century over 300 American Indian and Alaska Native languages were spoken. Today, fewer than 200 tribal languages are still viable, with some having been translated into written form. English, however, has become the predominant language in the home, school, and workplace. Those tribes who can still do so are working to preserve their languages and create new speakers from among their tribal populations.

**Do American Indians and Alaska Natives serve in the Armed Forces?**

Yes. American Indians and Alaska Natives have a long and distinguished history of serving in our nation’s Armed Forces.
During the Civil War, American Indians served on both sides of the conflict. Among the most well-known are Brigadier General Ely S. Parker (Seneca), an aide to Union General Ulysses S. Grant who recorded the terms of Confederate General Robert E. Lee’s surrender at Appomattox Courthouse in Virginia that ended the war, and Brigadier General Stand Watie (Cherokee), the last of the Confederate generals to cease fighting after the surrender was concluded. American Indians also fought with Theodore Roosevelt in the Spanish-American War.

During World War I over 8,000 American Indian soldiers, of whom 6,000 were volunteers, served. Their patriotism moved Congress to pass the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924. In World War II, 25,000 American Indian and Alaska Native men and women fought on all fronts in Europe and the South Pacific earning, collectively, at least 71 Air Medals, 51 Silver Stars, 47 Bronze Stars, 34 Distinguished Flying Crosses, and two Congressional Medals of Honor. Alaska Natives also served in the Alaska Territorial Guard.

Starting in World War I and again in World War II, the U.S. military employed a number of American Indian servicemen to use their tribal languages as a military code that could not be broken by the enemy. These “code talkers” came from many different tribes, including Chippewa, Choctaw, Creek, Crow, Comanche, Hopi, Navajo, Seminole, and Sioux. During World War II, the Navajos constituted the largest component within that elite group.

In the Korean Conflict, one Congressional Medal of Honor was awarded to an American Indian serviceman. In the Vietnam War, 41,500 Indian service personnel served. In 1990, prior to Operation Desert Storm, some 24,000 Indian men and women were in the military. Approximately 3,000 served in the Persian Gulf with three among those killed in action. American Indian service personnel have also served in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom) and in Iraq (Operation Iraqi Freedom).

While American Indians and Alaska Natives have the same obligations for military service as other U.S. citizens, many tribes have a strong military tradition within their cultures, and veterans are considered to be among their most honored members.

**Major Source:** U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Indian Affairs, [http://www.bia.gov/FAQs/index.htm](http://www.bia.gov/FAQs/index.htm)
Civil Rights and American Indians

American Indians are those peoples who were on the North American continent before the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1492. There were hundreds of different tribes native to both North and South America. Historically, we have called these native peoples Indians by mistake - Columbus thought he had reached the Continent of India. Today, we use the term American Indian because that is the term used in the Constitution. Indian tribes call themselves many names. They might be known by both an English name and a name in their tribal language. The Navajo call themselves Dine’, which means “the People.” The Tohono O’odham (People of the Desert) were known for many years by the name Papago.

The Constitution of the United States specifically refers to Indian tribes where it says that “Congress shall have the power to regulate Commerce with foreign nations, among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.”

There are five hundred and sixty American Indian tribes that have tribal governments that are recognized by the United States in a government to government relationship. There are also approximately 325 federal Indian reservations in the United States. On an Indian reservation, the tribal government performs many of the same functions that State governments do. There are tribal court systems, departments of justice and police forces on most reservations.

Indian reservations are usually lands that the tribes kept when they entered into treaties with the federal government. Indian Treaties have the same recognition under federal law as do treaties with foreign governments such as France or Germany. Some Indian reservations are land bases that are larger than some states. The Navajo Reservation is approximately 14,000,000 acres of land. The State of Massachusetts is only 5,284,480 acres. The Wind River Reservation in Wyoming is 1,888,000 acres. The State of Rhode Island is 776,960 acres. There are twelve Indian Reservations that are larger than Rhode Island and nine reservations larger than Delaware (1,316,480 acres). The Navajo Reservation, which is the largest, is larger than nine States (Maryland, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Hawaii, Connecticut, Delaware and Rhode Island.)

American Indians are also a racial group who sometimes face discrimination the same as African Americans do. In fact, before the civil rights laws were enacted, in some states you could find three separate drinking fountains labeled “whites,” “Colored” and “Indian.” There were also three sections in some movie theaters. All of the civil rights laws that protect people from discrimination because of race or color or national origin also protect American Indians.
Recently, the Department of Justice sued a school district in Utah for not having a high school in the remote community of Navajo Mountain. The Navajo and Paiute high school age students who live in this community all had to go more than 90 miles from home and live in dormitories or with relatives and attend boarding schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The school district had built high schools in communities where non-Indians lived. The school district argued that because the Indians lived on a reservation, they didn’t have a right to a public school built and operated by the district. American Indians are citizens of the United States and of the States where they live. The court ruled that even though they live on an Indian reservation, American Indians have a right to receive all of the same services that state and county governments offer to all other citizens of the state. The settlement of this lawsuit required the school district to build a new high school in this community. A temporary high school program began in September, 1997. This lawsuit was the first time the Civil Rights Division had ever enforced the education statutes on behalf of American Indians. This lawsuit was originally filed by Indian students and their parents. Both the Navajo Nation and the United States joined in the lawsuit to support the students and their parents.

Source: http://www.policyalmanac.org/culture/archive/native_americans.shtml
American Indian Removal

1814-1858

Early in the 19th century, while the rapidly growing United States expanded into the lower South, white settlers faced what they considered an obstacle. This area was home to the Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw and Seminole nations. These Indian nations, in the view of the settlers and many other white Americans, were standing in the way of progress. Eager for land to raise cotton, the settlers pressured the federal government to acquire Indian territory.

Andrew Jackson, from Tennessee, was a forceful proponent of Indian removal. In 1814, he commanded the U.S. military forces that defeated a faction of the Creek nation. In their defeat, the Creeks lost 22 million acres of land in southern Georgia and central Alabama. The U.S. acquired more land in 1818 when, spurred in part by the motivation to punish the Seminoles for the practice of harboring fugitive slaves, Jackson’s troops invaded Spanish Florida.

From 1814 to 1824, Jackson was instrumental in negotiating nine out of eleven treaties which divested the southern tribes of their eastern lands in exchange for lands in the west. The tribes agreed to the treaties for strategic reasons. They wanted to appease the government in the hopes of retaining some of their land, and they wanted to protect themselves from white harassment. As a result of the treaties, the United States gained control over three-quarters of Alabama and Florida, as well as parts of Georgia, Tennessee, Mississippi, Kentucky and North Carolina. This was a period of voluntary Indian migration, however, and only a small number of Creeks, Cherokee and Choctaws actually moved to the new lands.

In 1823, the Supreme Court handed down a decision which stated that Indians could occupy lands within the United States, but could not hold title to those lands. This was because their “right of occupancy” was subordinate to the United States’ “right of discovery.” In response to the great threat this posed, the Creeks, Cherokee, and Chicasaw instituted policies of restricting land sales to the government. They wanted to protect what remained of their land before it was too late.

Although the five Indian nations had made earlier attempts at resistance, many of their strategies were non-violent. One method was to adopt Anglo-American practices such as large-scale farming, Western education, and slave-holding. This earned the nations the designation of the “Five Civilized Tribes.” They adopted this policy of assimilation in an attempt to coexist with settlers and ward off hostility. But it only made whites jealous and resentful.
Other attempts involved ceding portions of their land to the United States with a view to retaining control over at least part of their territory, or of the new territory they received in exchange. Some Indian nations simply refused to leave their land - - the Creeks and the Seminoles even waged war to protect their territory. The First Seminole War lasted from 1817 to 1818. The Seminoles were aided by fugitive slaves who had found protection among them and had been living with them for years. The presence of the fugitives enraged white planters and fueled their desire to defeat the Seminoles.

The Cherokee used legal means in their attempt to safeguard their rights. They sought protection from land-hungry white settlers, who continually harassed them by stealing their livestock, burning their towns, and squatting on their land. In 1827, the Cherokee adopted a written constitution declaring themselves to be a sovereign nation. They based this on United States policy; in former treaties, Indian nations had been declared sovereign so they would be legally capable of ceding their lands. Now the Cherokee hoped to use this status to their advantage. The state of Georgia, however, did not recognize their sovereign status, but saw them as tenants living on state land. The Cherokee took their case to the Supreme Court, which ruled against them.

The Cherokee went to the Supreme Court again in 1831. This time they based their appeal on an 1830 Georgia law which prohibited whites from living on Indian territory after March 31, 1831, without a license from the state. The state legislature had written this law to justify removing white missionaries who were helping the Indians resist removal. The court this time decided in favor of the Cherokee. It stated that the Cherokee had the right to self-government, and declared Georgia’s extension of state law over them to be unconstitutional. The state of Georgia refused to abide by the Court decision, however, and President Jackson refused to enforce the law.

In 1830, just a year after taking office, Jackson pushed a new piece of legislation called the “Indian Removal Act” through both houses of Congress. It gave the president power to negotiate removal treaties with Indian tribes living east of the Mississippi. Under these treaties, the Indians were to give up their lands east of the Mississippi in exchange for lands to the west. Those wishing to remain in the east would become citizens of their home state. This act affected not only the southeastern nations, but many others further north. The removal was supposed to be voluntary and peaceful, and it was that way for the tribes that agreed to the conditions. But the southeastern nations resisted, and Jackson forced them to leave.

Jackson’s attitude toward American Indians was paternalistic and patronizing – he described them as children in need of guidance and believed the removal policy was beneficial to the Indians. Most white Americans thought that the United States would never extend beyond the Mississippi. Removal would save Indian people from the depredations of whites, and would resettle them in an area where they could govern
themselves in peace. But some Americans saw this as an excuse for a brutal and inhumane course of action, and protested loudly against removal.

Their protests did not save the southeastern nations from removal, however. The Choctaws were the first to sign a removal treaty, which they did in September of 1830. Some chose to stay in Mississippi under the terms of the Removal Act. But though the War Department made some attempts to protect those who stayed, it was no match for the land-hungry whites who squatted on Choctaw territory or cheated them out of their holdings. Soon most of the remaining Choctaws, weary of mistreatment, sold their land and moved west.

For the next 28 years, the United States government struggled to force relocation of the southeastern nations. A small group of Seminoles was coerced into signing a removal treaty in 1833, but the majority of the tribe declared the treaty illegitimate and refused to leave. The resulting struggle was the Second Seminole War, which lasted from 1835 to 1842. As in the first war, fugitive slaves fought beside the Seminoles who had taken them in. Thousands of lives were lost in the war, which cost the Jackson administration approximately 40 to 60 million dollars – ten times the amount it had allotted for Indian removal. In the end, most of the Seminoles moved to the new territory. The few who remained had to defend themselves in the Third Seminole War (1855-1858), when the U.S. military attempted to drive them out. Finally, the United States paid the remaining Seminoles to move west.

The Creeks also refused to emigrate. They signed a treaty in March, 1832, which opened a large portion of their Alabama land to white settlement, and guaranteed them protected ownership of the remaining portion, which was divided among the leading families. The government did not protect them from speculators, however, who quickly cheated them out of their lands. By 1835, the destitute Creeks began stealing livestock and crops from white settlers. Some eventually committed arson and murder in retaliation for their brutal treatment. In 1836, the Secretary of War ordered the removal of the Creeks as a military necessity. By 1837, approximately 15,000 Creeks had migrated west. They had never signed a removal treaty.

The Chickasaws had seen removal as inevitable, and had not resisted. They signed a treaty in 1832 which stated that the federal government would provide them with suitable western land and would protect them until they moved. But once again, the onslaught of white settlers proved too much for the War Department, and it backed down on its promise. The Chickasaws were forced to pay the Choctaws for the right to live on part of their western allotment. They migrated there in the winter of 1837-38.

The Cherokee, on the other hand, were tricked with an illegitimate treaty. In 1833, a small faction agreed to sign a removal agreement: the Treaty of New Echota. The
leaders of this group were not the recognized leaders of the Cherokee nation, and over 15,000 Cherokees – lead by Chief John Ross – signed a petition in protest. The Supreme Court ignored their demands and ratified the treaty in 1836. The Cherokee were given two years to migrate voluntarily, at the end of which time they would be forcibly removed. By 1838, only 2,000 had migrated; 16,000 remained on their land. The U.S. government sent in 7,000 troops, who forced the Cherokees into stockades at bayonet point. They were not allowed time to gather their belongings, and as they left, whites looted their homes. They began the march known as the Trail of Tears, in which 4,000 Cherokee people died of cold, hunger, and disease on their way to the western lands.

By 1837, the Jackson administration had removed 46,000 American Indian people from their land east of the Mississippi, and had secured treaties which led to the removal of a slightly larger number. Most members of the five southeastern nations had been relocated west, opening 25 million acres of land to white settlement and to slavery.

Reservations

Reservations were first created by seventeenth-century English colonizers and imposed on American Indian nations to remove them from the path of white settlement. Reservations also provided a place where missionaries could show Indians how to live, work, and worship like themselves. The United States took up this practice, employing military might, fraud, and deception to create hundreds of tribal reserves established by treaty, executive order, or congressional decree. Despite the reservations’ grim origins, Indian people have been able to adapt to reservation environments while preserving many of their traditional values, beliefs, and customs. In fact, many Indians now regard reservations as homelands.

The interplay of Indian aspirations and outside interests is central to an understanding of reservations. Notwithstanding the oppression and land loss associated with their founding, reservations also represent a valiant struggle on the part of Indians for autonomy, self-sufficiency, religious freedom, and cultural identity.

Before Europeans arrived, Indians occupied all of what became the United States. They practiced self-government, lived in accordance with revered customs, and worshiped as they saw fit. The English immigrants who began to arrive in North America in the seventeenth century lacked the strength to dislodge and subjugate the more powerful Indian nations. As a consequence, the newcomers established two fundamental land policies with regard to Indians. First, they established borders between themselves and native people. After clearly delineating which areas were “Indian country,” the British allowed residents on both sides of the boundaries to maintain their own laws, customs, and institutions. Imported diseases, however soon shifted the balance of power in favor of the Europeans, giving rise to the second policy: as they pushed inland, the invaders placed remnant native groups that had been decimated by pestilence and warfare on small reservations and in settlements of Christian converts called “praying towns.”

After the founding of the United States, federal officials continued these earlier practices. Treaties established borders between “Indian country” and the new nation. During the early nineteenth century, these borders were frequently moved as government agents used bribery, coercion, and trickery to “remove” tribes from lands east of the Mississippi. And, although the removed tribes were promised new, permanent borders in lands in Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma, in 1854 federal officials preparing to “open” Kansas and Nebraska to “settlement” began relocating tribes again, this time to Oklahoma. Local Plains nations such as the Pawnees, Poncas, and Otos retained, at least temporarily, small reservations in their homeland, but many new tribes were resettled nearby. After the disruption of the Civil War, this process continued. The official goal of deadly military campaigns against nations such
as the Sioux, Cheyennes, Arapahos, Navajos, Comanches, and Apaches was to confine them to permanent reservation homes.

Expected by federal officials to become Christian farmers, reservation Indians encountered policies that restricted their movement, autonomy, and religious freedom. Bureau of Indian Affairs agents called on U.S. troops and federally supported reservation police to quash native religious movements, arrest traditional religious leaders and healers, and place children in distant boarding schools. The Indian Office established the Court of Indian Offenses on many reservations in order to undermine traditional mechanisms of resolving disputes and administering justice. Missionaries also operated on reservations with federal approval, and often with federal funds.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, the passage of the General Allotment Act and the Curtis Act began the process of dividing reservation lands into individual homesteads. These laws had a profound impact on reservations. Economically, many Indian nations - particularly those on the Great Plains, in Oklahoma, and in the Pacific Northwest - lost most of their land. After allotting reservations to tribal members, federal officials sold the “surplus tracts” to non-Indians, and Congress amended the allotment acts to facilitate the sale of allotments. As a consequence, and because reservation residents were often compelled to sell their allotments for income or to pay delinquent state taxes or mortgages, many Indians became landless. Reservation holdings shrunk from 138 million acres in 1887 to 48 million acres in 1934.

Politically, the allotment policy undermined tribal sovereignty. Federal agents began dealing primarily with individual Indians rather than with their governments, with the result that outsiders assumed control over many functions once provided by traditional leaders. Socially, the policy encouraged federal agents to pressure Indians into moving from their traditional towns to isolated allotments. Thus, rather than living in tribal settings, many Indians began to reside in culturally mixed environments, where racism often heightened discrimination and antagonism. Facing a bleak future under these conditions, some Indians educated in non-Indian schools began migrating from their home areas to distant cities in search of work and other opportunities.

Tribes began to reassert their authority over reservation lands after Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) in 1934. Among other things, the new law discontinued the allotment policy, allowed reservation residents to form their own governments, provided funds for economic development, protected Indian culture, and promoted traditional arts and crafts. It also enabled Indian governments to purchase small amounts of land they had lost during the allotment era. Eventually, about half the reservations adopted IRA governments, but many of those that refused to change their existing governing bodies also became eligible for IRA benefits.
The IRA was neither a panacea for Indian problems nor an unconditional endorsement of Indian sovereignty. It did little to alleviate the problems created in the allotment era: poverty, deprivation, shoddy housing, and poor health. Nor did it prevent additional assaults on reservation life during the termination era of the 1940s and 1950s. Termination deprived thousands of people access to Indian Health Service medical care, educational assistance, and other services and led to a direct attack on several reservation governments that federal officials should be “free” of federal protection. Because their private state holdings became subject to state taxation, terminated tribes such as the Menominees and the Klamaths became even more impoverished and virtually landless. Termination policies also extended state criminal and civil law to reservations under the terms of Public Law 280, passed in 1953. Under its terms, most reservation Indians in Minnesota, Nebraska, California, Oregon, and Wisconsin lost the right to police their own communities.

Termination proved to be disastrous for reservation residents. In its wake, the Kennedy and Johnson administrations began listening to American Indian calls for a return to the earliest notion of reservations: areas where self-governing tribes could live undisturbed. With reservations plagued by continuing problems of poverty and despair, Congress supported presidential initiatives by opening antipoverty programs to reservation participation. Congress also passed legislation that enabled Indian governments to contract educational programs and services formerly provided by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to determine the disposition of children in adoption and placement cases, and to compete for federal grants.

Reservation leaders responded quickly to these government initiatives and also embarked on economic-development programs ranging from tourism to attracting industry. Unfortunately, the results of these efforts have been less than successful in many instances. Strings attached to federal contracts and grants required Indian governments to spend money and administer programs in accordance with federal guidelines rather than local priorities and customs. Business partners were not always willing to make long-term investments in reservation businesses, and tribes often lacked the necessary training to fulfill their goals.

During the 1970s and 1980s, Republican and Democratic administrations alike reduced federal appropriations for reservation development, and federal opposition to Indian rights increased. At the same time, federal and state agencies often restricted Indian access to off-reservation sacred sites and opposed the extension of Indian government jurisdiction to non-Indians who commit crimes on reservation land. U.S. officials have also shown a willingness to employ force to resolve disputes on reservations. In 1992, for example, armed federal agents raided six Arizona reservations, confiscating hundreds of video gambling machines and ignoring protests of the tribal governments.
Today, Indian lands, whether called reservations, rancherias, communities, or pueblos, comprise less than 2 percent of the original area. These reservations also vary widely in size and demographic composition. In 1990, the federal government recognized 278 Indian land areas as reservations. The Navajo (Diné) Reservation consists of some 16 million acres in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah, while others contain less than a hundred acres. Some 950,000 Indians, slightly less than 50 percent of all Indians, lived on or near reservations. About half of the land on contemporary reservations belongs to Indians; significant portions are owned and inhabited by non-Indians. The Indian-owned land is usually held “in trust” by the federal government, meaning that this property is exempt from state and county taxes and can be sold only in accordance with federal regulations.

Although both paternalism and anti-Indian racism persist, Indian governments have reinvigorated their reservations by adopting tax codes, establishing profitable enterprises, organizing courts, drafting law-and-order codes, controlling their resources, and demanding a right to worship in customary ways. Nonetheless, many small, landless, and isolated native nations have been able to gain few benefits. As a result, economic, health, and social problems still haunt many reservations. The challenge facing Indian governments and federal policymakers continues to be to devise ways of improving reservation living conditions in ways that support tribal self-government, traditional culture, and religious freedom.

Source: The following webpage resource is no longer available.
American Indian Versus Native American
A Once-Heated Issue Has Sorted Itself Out by Borgna Brunner

Are the terms American Indian and American Indian essentially synonyms, in the same way that the terms black and African American are often used interchangeably? Or is using the term American Indian instead of American Indian the equivalent of using Negro instead of black—offensive and anachronistic? Is the insistence on using American Indian to the exclusion of all other terms a sign of being doctrinaire?

Culture Wars

While these were once raging questions in the culture wars, they have now happily sorted themselves out. Over the years, the people whom these words are meant to represent have made their preference clear: the majority of American Indians/American Indians believe it is acceptable to use either term, or both. Many have also suggested leaving such general terms behind in favor of specific tribal designations. As the publisher and editor of The Navajo Times, the largest American Indian–owned weekly newspaper, puts it, "I . . . would rather be known as, 'Tom Arviso Jr., a member of the Navajo tribe,' instead of 'Arviso, a American Indian or American Indian.' This gives an authentic description of my heritage, rather than lumping me into a whole race of people."

A Medieval Misnomer

As we learned in grade school, Indian was the name Columbus mistakenly applied to the people he encountered when he arrived in what he believed was the "Indies," the medieval name for Asia. Introduced in the 1960s, the term American Indian offered a way of eradicating confusion between the indigenous people of the Americas and the indigenous people of India. The term American Indian also served that purpose, but raised other problems: the use of Indian in any form had begun to be seen by some as pejorative.

Doing Away with Cowboy-and-Indian Stereotypes

Particularly in academic circles, the term American Indian became the preferred term of respect, and a remedy for avoiding dehumanizing stereotypes, whether of the bloodthirsty savage or the Tonto-like Noble Savage. For a time, using American Indian signaled a progressive and enlightened consciousness, in much the same way that using Asian instead of Oriental does. Use of Indian struck some as out of touch, or worse—a mark of ignorance or bigotry.
A "Generic Government Term"

But objections to the term American Indian also arose. The term struck many as dry and bureaucratic, in much the same way that some dislike the Census Bureau's use of Hispanic as an umbrella term to cover the whole of the U.S.'s diverse Spanish-speaking population. As the Bureau of Indian Affairs elaborates:

The term, 'American Indian,' came into usage in the 1960s to denote the groups served by the Bureau of Indian Affairs: American Indians and Alaska Native (Indians, Eskimos and Aleuts of Alaska). Later the term also included Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in some Federal programs. It, therefore, came into disfavor among some Indian groups. The preferred term is American Indian.

Russell Means, the late Lakota activist and founder of the American Indian Movement (AIM), strongly rejected American Indian in favor of Indian: “I abhor the term American Indian. It is a generic government term used to describe all the indigenous prisoners of the United States. These are the American Samoans, the Micronesians, the Aleuts, the original Hawaiians, and the erroneously termed Eskimos, who are actually Upiks and Inupiat. And, of course, the American Indian. I prefer the term American Indian because I know its origins . . . As an added distinction the American Indian is the only ethnic group in the United States with the American before our ethnicity . . . We were enslaved as American Indians, we were colonized as American Indians, and we will gain our freedom as American Indians, and then we will call ourselves any damn thing we choose.” (From "I am an American Indian, Not a American Indian!," a statement by Russell Means.)

Peaceful Coexistence

As The American Heritage Book of English Usage points out, "the acceptance of American Indian has not brought about the demise of Indian. Unlike Negro, which was quickly stigmatized once black became preferred, Indian never fell out of favor with a large segment of the American population."

Now almost every style and usage guide describes these terms as synonyms that can be used interchangeably. In recent decades, other terms have also come into use, including Amerindian, indigenous people, and Native, expanding the vocabulary for referring to indigenous people of the United States rather than circumscribing it. Many people will no doubt favor one appellation over another—and will have strong reasons for doing so—but such choices are (or should be) no longer accompanied by a sense of righteousness that one term is superior to the other. This simply isn't true.
"We Will Call Ourselves Any Damn Thing We Choose"

No doubt the most significant reason that an inclusive attitude toward these terms of identity has developed is their common usage among Native peoples. A 1995 Census Bureau Survey of preferences for racial and ethnic terminology (there is no more recent survey) indicated that 49% of Native people preferred being called American Indian, 37% preferred American Indian, 3.6% preferred "some other term," and 5% had no preference. As The American Heritage Guide to English Usage points out, "the issue has never been particularly divisive between Indians and non-Indians. While generally welcoming the respectful tone of American Indian, Indian writers have continued to use the older name at least as often as the newer one."

“The criticism that Indian is hopelessly tainted by the ignorant or romantic stereotypes of popular American culture can be answered, at least in part, by pointing to the continuing use of this term among American Indians themselves. Indeed, Indian authors and those sympathetic to Indian causes often prefer it for its unpretentious familiarity as well as its emotional impact, as in this passage from the Kiowa writer N. Scott Momaday's memoir The Names (1976): 'It was about this time that [my mother] began to see herself as an Indian. That dim native heritage became a fascination and a cause for her.' (From "Names and Labels: Social, Racial, and Ethnic Terms: Indian", The American Heritage Book of English Usage. A Practical and Authoritative Guide to Contemporary English. 1996.)

As Christina Berry, a Cherokee writer and producer of the website All Things Cherokee, counsels: “In the end, the term you choose to use (as an Indian or non-Indian) is your own personal choice. Very few Indians that I know care either way. The recommended method is to refer to a person by their tribe, if that information is known. The reason is that the Native peoples of North America are incredibly diverse. It would be like referring both a Romanian and an Irishman as European. . . . [W]henever possible an Indian would prefer to be called a Cherokee or a Lakota or whichever tribe they belong to. This shows respect because not only are you sensitive to the fact that the terms Indian, American Indian, and American Indian are an over simplification of a diverse ethnicity, but you also show that you listened when they told what tribe they belonged to. When you don't know the specific tribe simply use the term which you are most comfortable using. The worst that can happen is that someone might correct you and open the door for a thoughtful debate on the subject of political correctness and its impact on ethnic identity. What matters in the long run is not which term is used but the intention with which it is used.” (From What's in a Name? Indians and Political Correctness by Christina Berry, All Things Cherokee.)

Source: http://www.infoplease.com/spot/aihmterms.html
Are YouTeaching the True Thanksgiving Story?

by Gary Hopkins,

Education World ® Editor-in-Chief

Are you teaching the True Thanksgiving story or is the version you're passing on to your students a blend of fact and myth? Are you ready to set the record straight?

"I propose that there may be a good deal that many of us do not know about our Thanksgiving holiday and also about the 'First Thanksgiving' story," says Chuck Larsen in the introduction to Teaching About Thanksgiving. "I also propose that what most of us have learned about the Pilgrims and the Indians who were at the first Thanksgiving at Plymouth Plantation is only part of the truth."

"When you build a lesson on only half of the information, then you are not teaching the whole truth," Larsen adds.

Larsen seems to know of what he speaks. As a public school teacher, a historian, and an American of Indian heritage, Larsen has always had a difficult time teaching about the Thanksgiving holiday.

"Every year I have been faced with the professional and moral dilemma of just how to be honest and informative with my children at Thanksgiving without passing on historical distortions, and racial and cultural stereotypes," Larsen says in his introduction.

"The problem is that part of what you and I learned in our childhood about the 'Pilgrims' and 'Squanto' and the 'First Thanksgiving' is a mixture of both history and myth," Larsen continues. "But the theme of Thanksgiving has truth and integrity far above and beyond what we and our forebears have made of it. Thanksgiving is a bigger concept than just the story of the founding of Plymouth Plantation."

Larsen goes on to try to sort out the myth from the true history in his introduction to "Teaching About Thanksgiving," a project of The Fourth World Documentation Project of The Center for World Indigenous Studies. The project includes an accurate telling of "The Plymouth Thanksgiving Story" along with study and discussion questions, ideas for enrichment, art projects, and authentic recipes -- all intended to enable teachers to accurately portray the events surrounding the first Thanksgiving.
In closing his introduction, Larsen provokes with a question: "What started as an inspirational bit of New England folklore soon grew into the full-fledged American Thanksgiving we now know... But was [that 'First Thanksgiving'] really our first Thanksgiving?"

"There really was a true Thanksgiving story of Plymouth Plantation," Larsen says. "But I strongly suggest that there has always been a Thanksgiving story of some kind or other for as long as there have been human beings. There was also a 'First' Thanksgiving in America, but it was celebrated thirty thousand years ago...Every last Thursday in November we now partake in one of the oldest and most universal of human celebrations, and there are many Thanksgiving stories to tell."

**Stereotypes, For Example**

"Teaching About Thanksgiving" offers a handful of the "old stereotypes" that are often reinforced in classrooms across the United States. According to the article, "If you enact the story of the first thanksgiving as a pageant or drama in your classroom, here are some things to consider:

- "Indians should wear appropriate clothing. NO WARBONNETS! A blanket draped over one shoulder is accurate for a simple outfit.
- "Squanto and Samoset spoke excellent English. Other Indians would have said things in the Algonkian language.
- "These people were noted for their formal speaking style.
- "Indians in the Woodlands area did not have tipis or horses, so these should not be part of any scenery or backdrop.
- "Any food served should be authentic. The following would be appropriate: corn soup, succotash, white fish, red meat, various fowl (turkey, partridge, duck), berries (including whole cranberries), maple sugar candies, corn starch candy (believe it or not, candy corn is almost authentic except for the colored dyes), watercress, any kind of bean (red, black, green, pinto), squash...."

Larsen has detractors...

Caleb Johnson, creator of the MayflowerHistory.com Web pages, claims that Larsen's "Teaching About Thanksgiving" contains many factual errors. Among the facts above disputed by Johnson is the idea that "Squanto and Samoset spoke excellent English." They spoke broken English at best, Johnson writes.

In Thanksgiving on the Net: Roast Bull with Cranberry Sauce, Jeremy Bangs makes an effort to sift through the "more than two hundred websites that 'correct' our assumptions
about Thanksgiving" and set the record straight. "Setting people straight about Thanksgiving myths has become as much a part of the annual holiday as turkey, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie," he writes.

**The American Indian Perspective**

"Young children's conceptions of American Indians often develop out of media portrayals and classroom role playing of the events of the First Thanksgiving. That conception of American Indians gained from such early exposure is both inaccurate and potentially damaging to others," says Debbie Reese in "Teaching Young Children About American Indians," an ERIC Digest (May 1996).

For example, a visitor to a child care center heard a four-year-old saying, "Indians aren't people. They're all dead." "This child," Reese says, "had already acquired an inaccurate view of American Indians, even though her classmates were children of many cultures, including a American Indian child."

"By failing to challenge existing biases we allow children to adopt attitudes based on inaccuracies," Reese continues.

"Most of the commercially prepared teaching materials available present a generalized image of American Indian people with little or no regard for differences that exist from tribe to tribe," Reese adds. "Many popular children's authors unwittingly perpetuate stereotypes. Richard Scarry's books frequently contain illustrations of animals dressed in buckskin and feathers, while Mercer Mayer's alphabet book includes an alligator dressed as an Indian."

**Teaching Suggestions: Positive Strategies**

A number of positive strategies can be used in classrooms, writes Reese.

1. "Provide knowledge about contemporary American Indians to balance historical information. Teaching about American Indians exclusively from a historical perspective may perpetuate the idea that they exist only in the past.
2. "Prepare units about specific tribes rather than units about "American Indians." For example, develop a unit about the people of Nambe Pueblo, the Turtle Mountain Chippewa, the Potawotami. Ideally, choose a tribe with a historical or contemporary role in the local community. Such a unit will provide children with culturally specific knowledge (pertaining to a single group) rather than overgeneralized stereotypes.
3. "Locate and use books that show contemporary children of all colors engaged in their usual, daily activities (for example, playing basketball or riding bicycles) as well as traditional activities. Make the books easily accessible to children throughout the school year. Three excellent titles on the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico are *Pueblo Storyteller* by Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith; *Pueblo Boy: Growing Up In Two Worlds* by Marcia Keegan; and *Children of Clay* by Rina Swentzell.

4. "Cook ethnic foods but be careful not to imply that all members of a particular group eat a specific food.

5. "Be specific about which tribes use particular items, when discussing cultural artifacts (such as clothing or housing) and traditional foods. The Plains tribes use feathered headdresses, for example, but not all other tribes use them.

6. "Critique a Thanksgiving poster depicting the traditional, stereotyped Pilgrim and Indian figures, especially when teaching older elementary school children. Take care to select a picture that most children are familiar with, such as those shown on grocery bags or holiday greeting cards. Critically analyze the poster, noting the many tribes the artist has combined into one general image that fails to provide accurate information about any single tribe.

7. "At Thanksgiving, shift the focus away from reenacting the 'First Thanksgiving.' Instead, focus on items children can be thankful for in their own lives, and on their families' celebrations of Thanksgiving at home."

"Besides using these strategies in their classrooms, teachers need to educate themselves," Reese continues. "Stereotyping is not always obvious to people surrounded by mainstream culture. Numerous guidelines have been prepared to aid in the selection of materials that work against stereotypes."

"Much remains to be done to counter stereotypes of American Indians learned by young children in our society," writes Reese in the conclusion to her ERIC Digest. "Teachers must provide accurate instruction not only about history but also about the contemporary lives of American Indians."

**Source:** http://www.educationworld.com/aCurr/curr040.
From the beginning, the human race has progressed to higher and more efficient life styles. The various Indian cultures banded together into what we now call tribes. Those that were here when Columbus made his voyage are referred to as historic Indians or pre-Columbian Indians. Therefore, with the arrival of the white man and his written language, out went the prehistoric times and in came the historic times. Fragments of written evidence, such as hand written ships logs and guides (derroteros) began to appear.

At the beginning of the historic period, in 1492 AD, it is conservatively estimated that there were about 100,000 Indians living in Florida. Some estimate as many as 350,000. Accepting the first estimate, the distribution is thought of as this: Timucuans in the northeast, 40,000; Apalachee and Pensacola in the northwest, 25,000; Tocobaga in the west-central, 8,000; Calusa in the southwest, 20,000; Tequesta in the southeast, 5,000; Jeaga, Jobe and Ais in the east-central, 2,000. There were others, as well as sub-groups; i.e., Saturiwa, Santaluces, Boca Ratones, Tocobaga, etc. By the late 1700s, it is thought that all of these indigenous Indians were gone. Also, note that there is no mention of the Seminoles, as they did not enter Florida until the early 1700s.

Please be aware that all these Indian names, and those given later, were names given by their so-called educated new world explorers, primarily Europeans. The presumed names would be recorded phonetically by each writer. Even the Seminoles, who are not indigenous Florida Indians, never did - and still do not – call themselves when speaking privately among themselves.

There exists considerable debate about which historic Indians were the early inhabitants of the Keys. Historians are relatively certain that the Florida West Coast Calusa was dominant and exercised political control over the east coast Tequesta’s. However, the two tribe’s pottery differs and fragments of pottery found in the Keys often indicate presence of the Tequesta, but the living areas (middens) were shell mounds indicating Calusa. There is also mounting evidence that the Caribbean Island Indians may have also inhabited the Keys. The present archaeological evidence is not conclusive, other than the general reference by European travelers to the Matecumbes as the Keys Indians.

Another explanation is that the Calusa was actually a confederation of other tribes including the Tequesta, Ais, Jeaga and others. All of these major tribes are thought to have been composed of sub-tribes usually named after their respective chiefs, possibly giving rise to names like Matecumbe, Bahiahondas and Biscaynos. The latter were the names prevalently used by the early European travelers to the Keys and the former names to those of the mainland. This compares with a person who could be described
as Irish, American, Floridian, Dade Countian and Miamian, but there is still only one person. Ethnology deals with not only the place of origin, but with subsequent divisions and distributions.

I recommend that the serious Florida Keys’ Indian student consult the 1991 and 1994 published books by John Hann titled *Missions to the Calusa, Tacachale* edited by Milanich and Proctor, and *Florida’s First People* by robin C. Brown. One problem that I found was when the Spanish used the word transcribed as “Cayo or Key”, how does one know if it is the Monroe County Keys or some other Florida Key such as those on Florida’s west coast. The only time I feel certain is when they refer to the Martyrs. Often the term “Keys Indians” included the Calusa, Tequesta and other south Florida Indians.

The Spanish did most of the early historic writings of the Keys and the following is presented to introduce the Indian/Spanish attitude in these early times.

When Christopher Columbus made his second voyage to Cuba in 1494 with his son Diego as second in charge, the Indians were absolutely friendly. Seventeen years later, when Diego sent Diego Velasquez to Cuba, he was greeted with a cloud of arrows. Chief Hatuey had crossed the Windward Passage from Hispaniola to Cuba and had informed the local natives how terribly the Spanish in Hispaniola were treating the Indians.

Ponce de Leon was not treated as badly by the Florida Indians on his first trip in 1513 as he was on his second voyage in 1521. It is generally assumed that Spanish slave ships had visited the Florida coast in between de Leon’s voyages and had alienated the Indians.

The slavers were visiting the Americas as early as 1502. It was reported that the Indians screamed Spanish words at Ponce de Leon on his second trip. How else could they have so quickly learned Spanish words?

Anyway, relations between the Indians and the Spanish went from bad to worse as time passed, although it was not always predictable. There were many mixed stories. In 1565, Pedro Menendez on his first trip rescued Spanish survivors who had lived with the Calusa for 20 years. They had survived the supposedly one-a-year sacrifices to the gods. Hernando de Soto, in 1539, found Juan Ortiz near Tampa. Ortiz had been allowed to live by the intercession of Tocobagan Chief Ucita’s daughter and had even been traded among tribes. (This was 68 years before the John Smith-Pocahontas even at Jamestown.) On the east coast of Florida, a silversmith was allegedly spared to fashion silver articles for his captors from salvaged shipwrecks.
It seemed that when European explorers landed on the Florida coasts in the 1500s, the very first thing they did was to kill somebody. The Spanish, French and English killed each other if no one else was available. The Indians came to expect this from the Europeans. This made it very difficult and dangerous for innocent shipwreck victims and missionaries to survive at the hands of the wary Indians.

One of the better documented accounts of the early Indians is found in the memoirs of Hernando d'Escalante Fontaneda, who was shipwrecked around 1549 when he was 13 years old. He was taken captive by the Florida Indians and lived with them for 17 years before being released and returned to Spain. Some seven years later, the mature Fonteneda wrote his memoirs, which have been translated into English.

We are not sure of the located where he was shipwrecked, how he survived and the exact extent of his travels, although they were quite extensive. However, Fontaneda does give an understandable description of the Keys (islands nearer to the mainland) and even names the two villages of Cuchiyyaga and Guarugunbe. (Variations of these two names appear in many early Spanish maritime records.) He gave a few hints of where they were located. He knew the ocean channels and understood the position of the Keys in respect to Cuba and the Bahamas. References were made to the Calusas, the Tequestas and the Lake of Mayaima, et cetera, but he does not name the Keys' group of Indians specifically.

Another account is the Jonathan Dickinson Journal first published by the Quakers in 1699. Jonathan Dickinson, his wife and infant son, and a party of about 20 in all were shipwrecked on the Florida East Coast in 1696. He recounts their harrowing journey from Indian village to village to reach St. Augustine. Copies of both are in most libraries.

For Keys history, the American Indians that were here started the wrecking industry, an industry that was continued into the late 1800s. They salvaged the crews, cargoes and flotsam of wrecked ships. About all that changed when the Bahamians and Americans become involved were the methods and means of disposal.

There is also a petition to Spain by Pedro Menendez in 1573 of an incident with the Matecumbe Indians. Eight Spanish were killed and one was spared. He was kept as a slave and fed by an Indian friend. Who were the Matecumbes? Were they Tequesta, Calusa, or a separate group? One explanation is that every time a Spanish group met a group of Indians, regardless of size, they gave them names.

By the 1600s the word was out and the Indians were smarter. For one thing, they were trading with the Spanish much more. Gonzalez de Barcia reported they were selling cardinals (the red birds) to the Spanish crews for $6 and $10 apiece. European
diseases were by now taking a heavy toll on the indigenous Indians who possessed no immunity, even to the simplest European diseases. Spanish fishermen from Cuba began to fish cooperatively with the Native Floridians. Soon a sizable trade industry existed between the two cultures.

In 1711, the Catholic Bishop in Havana sent two ships under Captain Luis Perdomo to rescue Indians of the Keys. Havana had received word that British backed Indians from North Florida were destroying South Florida villages and selling the Indians as slaves. These northern Indians were most likely portions of the Creek Confederacy, later known as the Seminoles. Captain Perdomo brought back 270 indigenous Indians, but said he would have brought more than 2,000 had he had the vessels. Of the 270 refugees, 200 died of European diseases in Cuba and 18 returned to Florida. In 1743, another attempt was made, but the priests did about as much harm as good. The priests admitted setting fire to an Indian house of worship and to committing other acts against perceived idolatry, but the Indians stood fast in their beliefs.

In 1743, Spain sent Fathers Josephs Alana and Monaco to the Florida Keys as missionaries. After stopping at Cayo de Guessos (Key West) and Cayo Frances (Indian Key), they settled at the mouth of the Miami River. In truth, Virginia Key and Key Biscayne are Florida Keys. The next year the mission was canceled. The Spanish had been bringing “Keys Indians” to Havana since 1704 and they either died of “scattered until they returned to the Keys.”

The last major exodus occurred when the Spanish traded Florida to England. Bernard Romans wrote in 1763 about 80 indigenous Florida Indian families who had fled from the Keys on a ship bound for Havana. Present documentation seems to suggest that the embarkation occurred from St. Augustine. Some of these may have returned later to form the “Spanish Indians.” Some may have hidden in the Everglades.

The Florida Indians, indigenous and immigrant (Seminole), were being annihilated in Florida by disease, by the white man or by their own kind. Over a century later in 1880, it is reported that only 208 Seminoles remained and the Seminoles themselves had been immigrants to Florida for no more than two centuries.

In summary, indigenous natives lived in the Keys until early 1700. They shared the Keys with the Creeks, later to be known as Seminoles, until around 1770. Afterwards, the Keys were primarily used by the Seminoles. NOTE: In 1771, the Florida Creeks and their associates began to be referred to as Seminoles.

Source: http://www.keyshistory.org/histindians.html
In the study of American Indians, it is common to divide the Americas into geographic regions known as culture areas. Since the environment determines many ways of life, tribes within each culture area often share a significant number of cultural characteristics (e.g., methods of obtaining food such as hunting or farming; types of housing; types of clothing).

The number of cultural areas for American Indians in North America varies from one reference to another. The culture areas often include: Eastern Woodlands (often divided by Southeast and Northeast tribes); Plains; Southwest; California Intermountain; Northwest Coast; and Arctic and Subarctic. See the map that follows.

The following pages include background information and representative photos and images of four major culture groups: Southwest, Eastern Woodlands, Northwest Coast and Plains.

Students interested in studying other culture areas and the tribes found within them are encouraged to explore the following websites:

http://www.american-indians.net/cultures.htm
http://www.history.com/topics/native-american-history/native-american-cultures
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award98/ienhtml/tribes.html
Culture Area - Southwest Tribes

The Native Americans from the southwest region of the United States inhabited in the present-day states of New Mexico, South Colorado, Arizona, and northern Mexico. The Apache, Hopi, Navajo, Pueblo, and Zuni tribes were the predominant tribes that made up the Southwest Indians.

Although the environment in the southwest is dry, with occasional droughts, the soil is fertile. This allowed the Southwest Indians to cultivate the land using their indigenous techniques of dry farming and irrigation.

The Zuni population lived mainly in New Mexico. The tribe was renowned for its ceremonial dances. The Pueblo, on the other hand, were primarily sedentary farmers who also excelled in pottery, textiles, as well as construction of underground chambers known as 'Kivas', which they used for religious ceremonies. The Apache Indians were hunters and gatherers who were skilled in horticulture. They were famous for their fighting prowess, and presently, they have a sizable population in Arizona and New Mexico.

The Navajo Indians, or Dine, were by far the largest tribe of them all, and they were some of the first farmers who cultivated melons, beans, and corn. They lived in houses called 'Hogans', which were made of wooden barks and mud. The door of a Hogan always faced east, to welcome the rising sun.

The Hopi Indians descended from the Pueblos, but they have a unique language. Presently, they reside in Arizona's Black Mesa. Traditionally, after a baby was born, the naming responsibility would be given to the village elders. Then, the baby would be carried to a cliff and named when the light of the rising sun touched the baby. The Hopis were also expert craftsmen who were known for their exquisitely crafted 'Kachinas', which were wooden dolls dressed in masks and costumes. The basket-making techniques that they used several centuries ago are still being applied today.

The Southwest Indians used to wear dresses that were made of flowers and feathers. Besides their unique clothing, their skills in pottery, basket-making, and other crafts made them stand out from the other Native American tribes. Turquoise stones were considered sacred objects among the Southwest Indians, and they were used to promote happiness, health, and prosperity.

Source: http://tribaldirectory.com/information/southwest-indians.html
Culture Area - Southwest Tribes continued

Zuni men

Source: http://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/pictures/
Culture Area - Southwest Tribes continued

Navajo woman and children

Source: http://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/pictures/
Culture Area - Southwest Tribes continued

Apache bride

Source: http://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/pictures/
Culture Area - Southwest Tribes continued

Taos Pueblo in New Mexico

Source: http://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/pictures/
Culture Area - Southwest Tribes continued

Apache dwelling

Source: http://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/pictures/
Culture Area - Eastern Woodlands

The Eastern Woodland Indians are Native Americans that inhabit the eastern part of the United States. In some cases, this group of Indians has been known to live in northwestern states such as Tennessee and Kentucky. The lifestyle of this tribe is similar to the life of other Indians. Traditionally, Eastern Woodland Indians live in log homes. Since Native Americans are hard-workers, they build their own homes from trees, bark, and grass. Some homes are also constructed from twigs, branches, and mud-clay. Husbands and fathers are the primary builders. Older children may assist with building, wherein fathers can train their sons. Normally, women do not participate in building homes. However, they may assist the project by gathering materials.

Eastern Woodland Indians kill and prepare their own food. Along with home construction, fathers also teach their sons how to hunt and fish. The typical diet consists of animal meat such as deer, rabbit, bison, and bear. Additionally, the Indians enjoyed a host of delicious nuts, berries, beans, and vegetables (corn and squash). Both males and females worked in the fields. With their young children attached to their back, mothers would plant seeds and harvest the fields. There was no need to water the fields. For this matter, the Eastern Woodland Indians relied on water from the sky.

This particular Indian tribe spoke several different languages and dialects. However, their cultural beliefs and way of life are the same. Some of the different languages include Iroquoian and Algonquian languages. Additionally, there were many groups such as the Cayuga, Mohawk, Onondaga, and Seneca tribes. Since the Eastern Woodland Indians reside in the forest, they have uncovered many different uses for wood. Today, the Woodland Indians take advantage of forest wood, and it is primarily used for houses, canoes, cooking utensils, hunting equipment, etc.

Source: http://www.indians.org/articles/eastern-woodland-indians.html
Culture Area - Eastern Woodlands continued

Iroquois men

Source:
Culture Area - Eastern Woodlands continued

Cherokee hunter

Source:
Culture Area - Eastern Woodlands continued

Chippewa mother and child

Source:
Culture Area – Eastern Woodlands continued

Wampanoag wigwam

Source:
Culture Area – Eastern Woodlands continued

Iroquois Longhouse

Source: http://portfolio.educ.kent.edu/mcclellandr/zackthezipper/easternwoodland.htm

Longhouse Interior

Northwest Coast Indians were found in Oregon, Washington, and even as far north as Alaska. Some of the tribes that inhabited those states were the Bella Coola, Haida, Kwakiuts, Makah, Nez Perce, Nisqualli, Nootka, Quinault, Puyallup, Salish, Snohomish, Spokane, Shuswap, Swinomish, Tlingit, and Tsimshian.

The Northwest Coast Indians were considered rich compared to the other Indian nations. They were considered rich because they had both an abundance of food and sturdy shelter. As with most tribes, the women did chores each day. This included weaving baskets and mats, collecting berries, making clothing, and cleaning house. The men’s day consisted of hunting and fishing. The Northwest Coast Indians built canoes from cedar trees. The tribe split trees in two, which was perfect for making a canoe. The canoes were 50 feet long and could hold up to 20 warriors and 10,000 pounds of fish.

The Northwest Coast Indians did not live in teepees like other tribes, but built longhouses out of wide cedar planks. These longhouses could be very large and if it was built by the tribe, the chief was in charge of assigning who lived in each longhouse. If it was built by an individual, he and his family lived in that longhouse. However, if the owner of the house died, it was often burned to the ground for fear of the owner’s spirit haunting the family if they remained in the house.

The Northwest Coast Indians used totem poles to tell stories, but they did not create the first totem poles. Totem poles were brought to them through trade and they loved them so, they started creating their own. Because the Northwest Coast Indians had no written language, the totem poles were a very important part of their culture. The totem poles allowed them to record stories, legends, and myths through images.

**Source:** http://www.indians.org/articles/northwest-coast-indians.html
Culture Area – Northwest Coast continued

Tlingit men in ceremonial dress

Source: http://www.sheldonmuseum.org/_images/_images_Vignettes/potlatch_sitka.jpg
Culture Area – Northwest Coast continued

Chilkat Men

Source: http://media.webbritannica.com/eb-media/25/132625-004-839524AA.jpg
Culture Area – Northwest Coast continued

Tlingit man and woman

Source: http://www.historynotes.info/the-indians-of-american-northwest-coast-1384/
Culture Area – Northwest Coast continued

Tsimshian children

Source:
Culture Area – Northwest Coast continued

Haida house and totem poles

Source: http://i821.photobucket.com/albums/zz139/Ojibwa/Haida_Houses.jpg
Culture Area – Plains Tribes

The Plains Indians got their name because they lived among the Great Plains of the United States. This vast expansion of land extended all the way from Mississippi to the mountains of Canada. In order to survive, the Plains Indians hunted buffalo as their main source of food. They would typically surround the buffalo on horse, until the group of Indians drove it to run off of a cliff. At that point, the buffalo would be dead and ready for consumption. Not only was hunting an integral part of Plains Indians’ life, religion was as well.

The worship of the Great Spirit was key to their beliefs. A dance performed called the Sun Dance was a way to show respect and love for their God. This dance would often take place over the span of four days; much of it spent staring up at the sun.

The use of shamans was also a large part of the Plains Indians way of life. These shamans were like medicine men, which tended to the sick and made up medicinal concoctions. Many times they would simply approach the sick person and try to convince them that were not really sick. Other times, they would attempt to use natural medicines by combining fruits and vegetables into a sort of potion believed to promote healing. The Earth was considered the Plains Indians’ female God, and so all of her rich resources were utilized in some way. Usually the men would be assigned to hunt, traveling in groups wielding shields, arrows, and handmade knives and swords. The men’s shields often had various symbols on them such as animals, feathers, and stones which were used to represent protection. The women would stay back at the camp, watching the children, weaving blankets, and cooking. Overall, Plains Indians life was efficient, spiritual, and integral to Native American history.

Source: indians.org/articles/plains-indians.html
Culture Area – Plains Tribes continued

Sioux Warriors

Source:
http://firstpeoplesofcanada.com/images/firstnations/teachers_guide/plains/siouxwarriors.jpg
Culture Area – Plains Tribes continued

Plains men (tribe unknown)

Source:
Culture Area – Plains Tribes continued

Sioux family in traditional dress

Source:
Culture Area – Plains Tribes continued

Plains woman and children (tribe unknown)

Source:
Culture Area – Plains Tribes continued

Crow mother and child

Source:
Culture Area – Plains Tribes continued

Plains tepee (tribe unknown)

Source:
Culture Area – Plains Tribes continued

Pawnee lodge

Source:
Culture Area – Plains Tribes continued

Plains travois (tepee poles attached to the horse and used as a way of carrying possessions)

Source:
Ideas for Teaching About American Indians

The study of American Indian people and their cultures is a challenge because of the stereotypes that exist, not only in the literature, but in our own minds and in those of the children we teach. Many studies of Indians leave students convinced that all Indians lived in tepees then and still do or that they were all wiped out, not that our ancestors didn’t try.

Displays

Get out all the Indian paraphernalia you can find: the models, the novels, the picture books, the maps, the reference materials, the clothing, the handwork. Make a bulletin board entitled: “Learning About the First Americans.” Put photographs and prints of American Indians today and yesterday on the bulletin board. Later, as the various groups get their research questions formulated, put the questions on and around the bulletin board and display areas. Leave another bulletin board blank except for the title statement, “Did You Know That …?” As the children find interesting facts in their research, they can print the fact on some appropriately decorated sentence strip and place it on the bulletin board.

Picture Book Starters

Start with a picture book at each grade level. Challenge yourself to use a different one with each group, designed to help focus their thinking on American Indians. Some suggestions include:

Where the Buffaloes Begin, Olaf Baker, Penguin ISBN 0140505601, paperback

Buffalo Woman, Paul Goble, Bradbury ISBN 0027377202, library binding

The Gift of the Sacred Dog, Macmillan ISBN 0020432801, paperback

Girl Who Loved Wild Horses, Bradbury ISBN 0027365700, hardcover

The Desert is Theirs, Byrd Baylor, Macmillan ISBN 0689711050, paperback

Hawk I’m Your Brother, Macmillan ISBN0689711026, paperback

When Clay Sings, Macmillan ISBN 0689711069, paperback

Knots on a Counting Rope, Bill Martin, Jr., Holt ISBN 0805005714, library binding


Annie and the Old One, Little ISBN 0316571172, library binding

Look at the art motifs as shown in these books, particularly those by Goble. Compare them to those in pictures and objects of handwork by American Indians. Look at prints of work by Remington and decide how they portrayed the Indian.
The Term “American Indians”

Before we go any further, what about the name, “American Indians”? I know people that prefer that reference and others who prefer the term “Indian.” Who started each name? What do the people near you prefer? What do the various tribes call themselves? For example, the Navajo have no “v” sound in their language. What do they call themselves?

Gathering Information

What do your kids know about America's first people? Get them listing the things they know. Write down everything they give you without comment. You'll get lots of misconceptions as well as some facts and understandings. Display their comments on newsprint or on the overhead so that all can see. Together, categorize the facts into groups. If children point out contradictions, circle the facts in question.

Make a similar listing of things the children want to know about the subject of American Indians. Again, together with the children, organize the questions into logical groupings.

Look at your own area. What tribes lived there? Are there any of that tribe still living? What do they do? Where do they live? Make a list of the places and things in your area that have Indian names.

Nonfiction

Get on with the study by getting out all the good non-fiction on American Indians such as the series on the various tribes published by Chelsea House. Don't neglect other great non-fiction, such as:

Only the Names Remain, Alex Bealer, Econoclador ISBN 0785790640, hardcover

Indian Chiefs, Russell Freedman, Holiday ISBN 0823406253, library binding

The Apache, Patricia McKissack, Childrens ISBN 0516419250, out of print

The Cheyenne, Dennis Fradin, Childrens ISBN 0516412116, paperback

The Choctaw, E. Lepthien, Childrens ISBN 0516012401, library binding

Sitting Bull and the Plains Indians, Watts ISBN 0531181022, out of print

The Story of Wounded Knee, R. Stein, Childrens ISBN 0516446657, paperback

Have some children write to the Council for Indian Education, 517 Rimrock Rd, Billings, Montana 59107. The group publishes books and pamphlets on American Indians by American Indians.

Look at such books as Happily May I Walk by Arlene Hirschfelder (Scribners, 1986 ISBN 0684186241. (Out of Print.), as well as Byrd Baylor's books listed previously for a look at Indians of today to dispel prejudices and misconceptions about American Indians.
Make charts such as the following to organize the information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRIBE</th>
<th>LOCATIONS</th>
<th>TRADITIONAL HOUSING</th>
<th>TRADITIONAL CLOTHING</th>
<th>FAMOUS INDIVIDUALS</th>
<th>POPULATION THEN/NOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Famous American Indians**

Children can research the lives of some famous Indians and make posters on their lives and accomplishments. Some possibilities include: Maria Tallchief, Jim Thorpe, Sitting Bull, Geronimo, Sequoyah, Sacajawea, Crazy Horse, Chief Joseph, Squanto, Black Hawk and Pocahontas. Speaking of the latter, don’t miss Jean Fritz’s *Double Life of Pocahontas* (Penguin, 1987 ISBN 0399210164, hardcover). Look at some while people whose lives impacted on the Indians such as: Andrew Jackson, James Buchanan, Kit Carson, Buffalo Bill, Daniel Boone, William Bradford, Davy Crockett, George Catlin, Marcus Whitman, Peter Minuit, Jim Bridger, and Jedediah Strong Smith. Debate such questions as: Did this person help the white settlers, the Indians, him or herself or a combination of people? Should today’s American Indians be proud of or grateful to this person? Why or why not? How did the railroad, the Civil War and the Pony Express affect the lives of Indians?

**Indian Mythology**

Get out some of the books on Indian mythology such as John Bierhorst’s *The Girl Who Married a Ghost and Other Tales from the North American Indian* (Macmillan, 1978 ISBN 0027097404, paperback) and Gretchen Mayo’s *Star Tales: North American Indian Stories About the Stars* (Walker, 1987 ISBN 0802766730, paperback) and compare some of their tales with those of the Greeks and Romans. Compare creation stories from American Indian cultures as well as others.

**Poetry and Prose by American Indians**

Also have some of the beautiful prose and poetry of American Indian’s such as that in John Bierhorst’s *In the Trail of the Wind: American Indian Poems and Ritual Orations* (Farrar, 1971 ISBN 0374336407, paperback). Children can copy some of them on to paper painted to look like birch bark.

**Novels**

Don’t neglect the longer works of fiction involving American Indians. There are Lynn Banks’ books *The Indian in the Cupboard* (Avon ISBN 0380600129, paperback), *The Return of the Indian* (Avon ISBN 0380702843, paperback), and *Secret of the Indian* (Doubleday ISBN 0385262922, paperback) of course, already wildly popular with children at many grade levels. What do some American Indians think about these books by an English author? Is there a prejudice evident in her making them into tiny plastic characters?
Some children will enjoy Jean George’s *The Talking Earth* (Harper, 1987 ISBN 0064402126, paperback). It’s the story of a young Seminole girl who is sent into the Everglades as part of a rite of passage. The stay turns into an ordeal as the intended three week vigil turns into 13 weeks.

Jamake Highwater has written some wonderful books on American Indian cultures. His *Legend Days* (Harper, 1984 ISBN 0060223030, out of print) is about an Indian girl fleeing from an outbreak of smallpox who has a vision which fills her with power.

Contrast the nonfictional *Only the Names Remain*, listed previously, with Scott O’Dell’s *Sing Down the Moon*, the story of the Navajo’s forced Long Walk as seen through Bright Morning and her husband, Tall Boy.

A different look is given to Joyce Rockwood’s *Groundhog’s Horse* (Holt, 1978 ISBN 0805011730, paperback). When this eleven year old Cherokee boy’s horse is stolen by the Creeks, he resolves to get it back and does so in spite of the lack of support from his tribe.

**Comparing Information**

Compare the information gained in the fictional works with that of the non-fiction. Investigate any discrepancies.

Speaking of discrepancies, hand out copies of that first “report” you did at the beginning. Let children circle any misconceptions or inaccuracies in their first thoughts about American Indians to see what they have learned in the past few weeks.

**Source:** The original article by Carol Otis Hurst, from which this material was taken, first appeared in the Library Corner column of *Teaching K-8 Magazine*. 
Lessons and Activities for
Middle and Senior High School Students
GRADE LEVEL: Social Studies – Middle and Senior High School

TITLE: American Indians Migrate to the Americas

OBJECTIVES: Objectives from the Florida Standards are noted with FS.

1. The students will identify the most recent findings regarding the earliest migrations of American Indians to the Americas.

2. The students will determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; summarize complex concepts, processes, or information presented in a text by paraphrasing them in simpler but still accurate terms. (FS)

3. The students will conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question. (FS)

SUGGESTED TIME: 60 minutes

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Ask if students are aware of when and how the earliest American Indians came to the Americas (i.e., migrated).

   Review the theories put forth to explain the first migrations to the Americas, with particular attention to the Bering Strait Land Bridge theory which has dominated scientific attention for the past 50 years.

   TEACHER’S NOTE: Information on three migration theories follows.

   Bering Strait Land Bridge Theory - The most commonly held theory of migration is the Bering Strait Land Bridge theory. In the forefront of thinking for over 50 years, this theory suggests that during the last ice age, about 20,000 years ago, lower water levels created a frozen bridge of land between Asia and North America. The first settlers of the Americas are believed to have come across this land bridge called Berengia.

   The Bering Strait Land Bridge theory has dominated scientific thinking for a long time, but there are also two other lesser supported theories regarding migration.
Atlantic Theory - Archeologists have found early spear points near Clovis, New Mexico. For a long time they were offered as evidence for the Land Bridge theory because similar points have been discovered in the area the around Beringia. However, these spear points are very similar to points found in Europe, and the oldest examples to be found in the Americas have actually been found in the Eastern U.S. This suggests migration from Europe to the east of the Americas. This migration pattern would mean that the people who made these earliest spear points had to cross the Atlantic by boat.

Oceania Theory - The third theory is the Oceania Theory, which suggests that the earliest American Indians crossed the Pacific Ocean by boat.

2. Explain that students will be reading an article that summarizes new scientific evidence about the migration of American Indians to the Americas.

3. Pass out copies of the reading entitled “American Indians Migrate to the Americas” and the worksheet for the reading (both included).

TEACHER’S NOTE TO MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS: If the article entitled “American Indians Migrate to the Americas” is too difficult for some students, you may consider substituting the article entitled “American Indian History” found in the Background section of this instructional resource guide. New questions would have to be developed to support the reading.

4. Review the answers to the completed worksheet.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY: Completion of the worksheet and participation in class discussion.

MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED: “American Indians Migrate to the Americas” and the worksheet for the reading (both included).

SOURCE: The Boston Globe:
American Indians Migrate to the Americas

No people lived in the Americas before the American Indians arrived. Most scientists believe the first American Indians came to the Americas from Asia at least 15,000 years ago. Other scientists believe the American Indians may have arrived as early as 35,000 years ago.

Most scientists for the past 50 years have theorized that the American Indians migrated in one wave to the Americas from Asia during the last Ice Age. The American Indians, following the animals that they hunted, wandered across this land bridge of ice now known as the Bering Strait, a distance of about 50 miles (80 kilometers).

Recent studies now indicate that the American Indians migrated to the Americas in three waves, not one. The following new information on the American Indian migration is from the Boston Globe and is based on a Harvard-led research study.

Native Americans Migrated to the New World in Three Waves, Harvard-led DNA Analysis Shows
By Carolyn Y. Johnson, Boston Globe, July 2012

An exhaustive study of DNA taken from dozens of Native American groups that span from Canada to the tip of South America is helping to settle a question that has long divided scientists: When people arrived in the Americas more than 15,000 years ago, the Harvard-led research shows, they came in successive waves, not all at once.

The analysis published Wednesday reveals that while one population of “First Americans” crossed a land bridge from Siberia during the last Ice Age, giving rise to most Native Americans, there were at least two subsequent migrations. These people mixed with the founding group later, leaving traces of their genes in the DNA of present-day populations in Alaska, Greenland, and Canada.

The new findings in the journal Nature highlight the growing importance of cutting-edge technologies that are allowing geneticists to probe the distant past, alongside archeologists, linguists, and paleoanthropologists who have relied on studies of such things as arrowheads and tools, language, skulls, and teeth.

“Geneticists, we’re sort of amateurs—we’re not steeped in the deep understanding of history the linguists and archeologists have, but we do have access to information” they
Native Americans Migrated to the New World in Three Waves, Harvard-led DNA Analysis Shows (continued)

don’t, said David Reich, a genetics professor at Harvard Medical School who led the study, along with a scientist at the University College London. Reich also played a leading role in the surprising discovery in 2010, based on a comparison of DNA from fossilized remains with present-day human genomes, that Neanderthals interbred with humans.

“It’s a different type of evidence—not as good at (establishing) dates, but much better about how people relate to each other,” he said. “You can’t tell from remains that are left behind who gave rise to who.”

Scientists not involved in the study said the findings, which involved the analysis of samples taken from nearly 750 present-day Native Americans and Siberians, deepens and enriches the story of migration into the Americas. Previous genetic analyses had indicated Native Americans descended from a single source population.

“The bottom line is there has been this debate: single versus multiple origins or migrations, and this comes down particularly on one side of that,” said Dennis O’Rourke, a professor of anthropology at the University of Utah who was not involved in the study. He said the finding was solid and the interpretation convincing, but that what is most fascinating is the way in which the new data is casting light on precisely how new streams of migrants mixed with existing ones.

“I doubt it’s the final word,” O’Rourke said. “For me it suggests that as the data become richer and we have a better handle on patterns of diversity, we are seeing our reconstructions of past populations become more complex as well.”

To do the work, scientists examined more than 360,000 spots in the genomes of each person where the DNA commonly varies. They used the frequency of genetic variations to construct a kind of family tree showing when groups split off from one another, and when populations might have mixed together.

The researchers found that at least two other Asian populations came to the Americas after the initial migration, though they were unable to date their arrival. Nor is it clear whether these groups would have come across the land bridge or made the voyage aided by boats later, after sea levels rose, according to Andres Ruiz-Linares, a professor of human genetics at University College London who coordinated the research. One wave of new migrants was detected in populations that speak Eskimo-
Aleut languages found in Alaska, Canada, and Greenland, who still get more than half of their DNA from the First Americans. Another was detected in a Canadian Chipewyan group, who are 90 percent made up of First Americans' DNA.

The genetic analysis was made more difficult by the fact that since 1492, Native Americans have mixed with European and African populations, so the researchers had to carefully sift out genetic variations that would have appeared due to this later mixing. Ripan Malhi, an anthropologist at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, wrote in an e-mail that the new data add nuance to a consensus view that had emerged that there was a single source population that gave rise to Native Americans. The team’s explanation that there were multiple waves of migration that interbred with the earlier groups in parts of North America helps explain the overall similarity of DNA among all Native Americans as well as some unaccounted for differences in groups from North America, he wrote.

One drawback of the study was the lack of Native American populations from the continental United States. Ruiz-Linares, a Columbian who led the work with Reich, said that is because of the difficulty of obtaining such data, which requires obtaining proper consent and forming relationships within different countries and among specific tribes.

The international team of 64 researchers who collaborated on the project are part of a network he painstakingly built over the last two decades.

“The question has always been the same—basically trying to reconstruct history from genetic data,” Ruiz-Linares said. “What has really changed dramatically is the technology, both the technology in the lab and our ability to collect a large amount of data.”

After the human genome project, for example, researchers have had access to technologies that can rapidly and cheaply measure large amounts of DNA, allowing unprecedented amounts of data to be collected, and enabling new analysis methods. The data also show, in contrast to what scientists have seen on other continents, that there is a clear record of the way people geographically dispersed. The branching family tree that the researchers created suggests people migrated southward rapidly, hugging the west coast, and that there was relatively little mixing as groups branched off.

American Indians Migrate to the Americas Assignment

Directions: Read the article entitled “American Indians Migrate to the Americas” and answer the following questions.

1. What theory have scientists generally supported for the past 50 years to explain the early migration of American Indians to the Americas? Briefly describe the theory.

2. Describe the newest findings from the research study led by Harvard University.

3. What type of scientific evidence was used to support the new research study?

4. What made the genetic study more difficult?

5. Explain the following quote from the article:

   “The new findings…highlight the growing importance of cutting-edge technologies that are allowing geneticists to probe the distant past, alongside archeologists, linguists, and paleoanthropologists who have relied on studies of such things as arrowheads and tools, language, skulls, and teeth.”
GRADE LEVEL: Social Studies – Middle and Senior High School

TITLE: American Indian Stereotypes

OBJECTIVES:

1. The students will define “stereotype” and recognize the stereotypes that are used to portray American Indians.

2. The students will identify American Indian tribes and research their lifestyles.

3. The students will analyze charts, graphs, maps, photographs and timelines; analyze political cartoons; determine cause and effect.

SUGGESTED TIME: 60 minutes

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

TEACHER’S NOTE: This lesson addresses the stereotypes often associated with American Indians. A stereotype is defined as an oversimplified image of a person or group. Stereotypes are often used to describe a person or group’s gender, race, national origin, culture, and other factors. However, these characteristics tend to be oversimplifications of the groups involved. For example, someone may see images of Plains Indians of the 1800s hunting buffalo and living in teepees and wrongly conclude that all tribes lived similar lifestyles. Stereotyping such as this doesn’t account for diversity within groups and may result in stigmatization and discrimination of groups if the stereotypes linked to them are largely negative. Even so-called positive stereotypes can be harmful due to their limiting nature.

1. Begin this lesson by asking students to draw a picture of an American Indian, their home and their surroundings. The students will likely draw pictures that include many stereotypes and over generalizations about American Indians.

2. Ask several students to share their drawings and make a list on the board of the similarities seen in the students’ drawings.

3. Ask students where they learned to depict American Indians this way. Answers will likely include television and movies.
4. Explain that many of the images we see are not accurate or only accurate to a limited number of tribes; i.e., the nomadic Plains tribes whose nomadic cultures ended in the late 1800s.

5. Discuss the concept of stereotyping and use the students’ drawings to illustrate how we have learned to stereotype most American Indians from our television and movie experiences. Among the stereotypes and overgeneralizations students might have included in their drawings include:

- Warriors/Hunters – American Indians are often incorrectly depicted as only warriors and hunters.
- War bonnets -- Some tribes wore war bonnets, but not all. Not all war bonnets looked alike.
- Headbands – Headbands were not typical of most tribes' dress.
- Bows and arrows -- Some tribes hunted and fought with bows and arrows, but most tribes used a wide variety of tools and weapons.
- Teepees -- Teepees were common to some Plains Indian tribes, but not to many other tribes.
- Horses or buffaloes - Horses and buffalo hunting were common to only the Plains tribes.

6. To illustrate the wide variety of cultures that exist among American Indians, show students pictures of other American Indian culture groups; e.g. Southwest, Eastern Woodlands, Northwest Coast. Be sure to include pictures of the natural environments that affected/impacted the culture of the tribes.

TEACHER’S NOTE: Several pictures depicting the cultural diversity of American Indians are included in the Background section of this instructional resource guide.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY: Ask students to locate at least 3 pictures of American Indians that clearly show the diversity that existed among the tribes and cultures.

MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED: Drawing material; Photos/drawings of various American Indian tribes
GRADE LEVEL: Social Studies – Middle and Senior High School

TITLE: American Indian Culture Groups

OBJECTIVE(S):

1. The students will define culture and list the five institutions found in all cultures; i.e., family, religion, education, government, and economics.

2. The students will identify the common cultural characteristics of a region; e.g., methods of obtaining food, types of housing, types of clothing.

3. The students will evaluate the impact climate and the environment has on the development of culture.

4. The students will identify the major American Indian culture areas and chart the major cultural characteristics of each.

5. The students will use maps to explain physical and cultural attributes of major regions throughout American history.

6. The students will identify the physical elements and the human elements that define and differentiate regions as relevant to American history.

7. The students will analyze how images, symbols, objects, cartoons, graphs, charts, maps, and artwork may be used to interpret the significance of time periods and events from the past.

SUGGESTED TIME: 2-3 class periods

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Ask students to list the common institutions of all cultures. Record the students’ responses on the board. Student answers should be guided to include references to family, religion, education, government, and economics.
2. Discuss how culture develops. Emphasize the role played by geography and the environment in influencing the development of culture.

3. Pass out the American Indian culture groups map included in the Background section of this instructional resource guide.

To give the students a brief orientation to the map and the concept of culture areas, discuss the following questions:

a. What type of climate did the tribes in the Southwest culture area experience? How might that affect their way of living (culture)? Give examples.

b. In which culture areas could American Indians depend on the ocean, lakes or rivers for food? How might that affect their way of living (culture)? Give examples.

c. What type of climate existed where the Inuit lived? How might that affect their way of living (culture)? Give examples.

d. Based on the answers to the previous three questions, what conclusions can you draw about the influence climate and geography has on the development of culture?

e. Thinking about the map, what is the definition of a culture area?

As a follow up to the brief map activity, explain that in the study of American Indians, it is common to divide the Americas into geographic regions known as culture areas. Since the environment determines many ways of life, tribes within each culture area often share a significant number of cultural characteristics (e.g., methods of obtaining food such as hunting or farming; types of housing; types of clothing). Tribes also possess unique characteristics even though they share the same culture area.

4. Divide the students into small groups and explain that students will study the cultural characteristics of American Indians in the respective culture areas. Assign each group an American Indian culture area from the map to research. Complete the attached assignment entitled, “American Indian Culture Areas.”
TEACHER’S NOTE: A brief, general description of the Southwest, Northwest Coast, Plains, and Eastern Woodlands culture groups is included in the Background section of this instructional resource guide. Photos of these culture groups illustrating the cultural diversity of American Indians are also included.

5. **Optional:** Have each group create a PowerPoint or presentation board regarding the cultural traits commonly shared by tribes in the culture area.

**MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED:** American Indian Culture Groups Map (included in the Background section of this instructional resource guide); “American Indian Culture Areas” assignment (included);

**ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:** Completion of the “American Indian Culture Areas” assignment; completion of the group presentation, if assigned.
**Introduction:** The environment (including geography and climate) influences the development of culture. American Indian tribes within each culture area often share a number of cultural characteristics (examples: methods of obtaining food such as hunting or farming; types of housing; types of clothing). This is not to say that all tribes in the culture area are exactly the same. Tribes also have individual characteristics that are not shared with other tribes.

**Assignment:** Complete the following chart regarding your assigned American Indian culture area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List 5 tribes in the culture area:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe the geography and climate of the culture area:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do tribes typically obtain food? (Example: farming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the housing that is typical in the culture area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the clothing that is typical of the culture area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe one other cultural characteristic that is generally shared by the tribes in the culture area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe at least two cultural characteristics that are unique to a particular tribe in the culture area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GRADE LEVEL: Social Studies – Middle and Senior High School

TITLE: Compare and Contrast the Miccosukee and Seminole Indian Tribes of Florida

OBJECTIVES: Objectives from the Florida Standards are noted with FS.

1. The students will compare and contrast the history and cultures of the Miccosukee and Seminole Indian tribes of Florida.

2. The students will conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question. (FS)

SUGGESTED TIME: 60 minutes

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Review the concepts of comparing (finding similarities) and contrasting (finding differences). To illustrate the concepts, have students compare and contrast the functions/uses of a desk top computer to a Smartphone as a whole group activity. Record responses using the Venn Diagram graphic organizer (included).

2. Explain that students will be using the same Venn Diagram graphic organizer to compare/contrast the histories and cultures of the two tribes located in South Florida – the Miccosukee and Seminole Indian tribes.

   TEACHER’S NOTE: These tribes are often incorrectly identified to be one and the same. The primary difference between the two tribes is language.

3. Using the readings on the Miccosukee and Seminole Indians (included), have students work in pairs to develop the Venn Diagram.

4. Following the activity, debrief by having students share the results of their work. Develop a master Venn Diagram on the board for students to see. Correct student inaccuracies during the discussion.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY: Completion of the Venn Diagram compare/contrast activity.

MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED: Reading Passages about the Miccosukee and Seminole tribes (included); blank Venn Diagram (provided)
Venn Diagram
The Seminoles

The Seminoles of Florida call themselves the "Unconquered People." They are the descendants of only 300 American Indians who were able to avoid capture by the U.S. army in the 19th century. Today, more than 2,000 Seminoles live on six reservations in Florida – located in Hollywood, Big Cypress, Brighton, Immokalee, Ft. Pierce, and Tampa.

The Seminole were originally part of the Creek Confederation of tribes. In the 1700's, they moved into Florida to escape from slavery in the 13 British colonies to the north. They came to Florida because it was controlled by the Spanish, who had no interest in returning slaves to the British. They shared land with a group of American Indians that spoke a different language - the Mikasuki language. The two groups banded together and became known as the Seminoles, meaning "runaways". Later, the second group of American Indians would become the Miccosukee Tribe.

Originally, the Seminoles were hunters who used muskets (guns) to hunt deer, turkey, and other game and who fished. They gathered fruits, nuts, and berries. Later, however, they settled down and became excellent farmers. They grew corn, sugarcane, guava and bananas. They also were successful in raising stock, including horses and cattle. Joining the Seminole in Florida were runaway black Africans escaping from slavery in North and South Carolina and Georgia. They came to Florida and built settlements near the Seminoles. They formed a union with the Seminoles because both groups feared slavery.

The struggle by several nations to take control of Florida would have a great effect on the Seminole Tribe. In the 1700s and 1800s, Florida was first controlled by Spain, then by Great Britain, then by Spain again, and finally by the United States! A brief summary of the struggle to gain control of Florida is outlined below.

- In 1763, Florida was taken from the Spanish by Britain.
- In 1784, the treaty ending the American Revolution forced Britain to give Florida back to Spain. (The American Revolution was won by the 13 American colonies creating the United States of America.)
- When the United States defeated the British in the War of 1812, the British were forced to leave North America.

How did the struggle to control Florida affect the Seminole Tribe?

Following the War of 1812, American slave owners came to Spanish Florida in search of runaway African slaves and Seminole Indians. The Seminole, and the
The Seminoles (continued)

runaway slaves had been trading weapons with the British throughout the early 1800s and supported Britain during the War of 1812.

- From 1817-1818, the United States Army invaded Spanish Florida and fought against the Seminole and their African American allies. Collectively, these battles came to be known as the First Seminole War. Future U.S. President Andrew Jackson invaded then-Spanish Florida and defeated the Seminoles.

- The Second Seminole War was one of the most costly of the United States-Indian wars. After defeating the U.S. in early battles of the Second Seminole War, Seminole leader Osceola was captured by the United States in Oct. 20, 1837, when U.S. troops said they wanted a truce to talk peace. The majority of the tribe surrendered and moved to Oklahoma. They settled on the western area of the Creek reservation.

- The Third Seminole War started from renewed efforts to find the Seminole remnant remaining in Florida. This war caused little bloodshed. However, it ended with the United States paying a troublesome band of refugees to go west. After the wars ended, over 3,000 Natives had been forced into the western territories of Arkansas and Oklahoma. As few as 300 remained in Florida.
The Seminole Wars

The First Seminole War

Following the War of 1812 between the United States and Britain, American slave owners came to Florida in search of runaway African slaves and Indians. These Indians, known as the Seminoles, and the runaway slaves had been trading weapons with the British throughout the early 1800s and supported Britain during the War of 1812. From 1817-1818, the United States Army invaded Spanish Florida and fought against the Seminole and their African American allies. Collectively, these battles came to be known as the First Seminole War.

Florida Becomes a United States Territory

Americans reacted to these confrontations by sending Andrew Jackson to Florida with an army of about 3,000 men. Jackson was successful in his attacks and left many dead and dying Seminole behind in their destroyed villages. He went on to attack Spanish settlements and captured Spanish forts at St. Marks and Pensacola. Spaniards began to realize that they could no longer keep their territory. Spain negotiated a treaty with the United States in 1819. The agreement was signed by John Quincy Adams (Secretary of State) and Luis de Onis (Spain’s Minister) and was called the Adams-Onis Treaty. The Adams-Onis Treaty gave Florida to the United States and nullified the $5,000,000 debt Spain owed to the United States. Florida now belonged to the United States.

The Second Seminole War

Andrew Jackson had the responsibility of setting up Florida's government, and he had a government up and running within weeks. He quickly divided Florida into two parts called counties. Jackson established county courts and mayors in the cities of St. Augustine (East Florida) and Pensacola (West Florida). Afterwards, Jackson left Florida, and empowered William Pope DuVal to lead Florida as governor. Florida became an official territory on March 30, 1822.

Northern settlers were invading Tallahassee, a Seminole settlement. These settlers often clashed with the Seminole. In an effort to end these conflicts, the governor asked the Seminole to move. The Seminole refused. In 1823, it became necessary for the governor to offer the Seminole a treaty, which was called the
The Seminole Wars (continued)

Treaty of Moultrie Creek. This treaty required the Seminole to give up their land and move south. It also made them agree to discontinue hiding runaway slaves. The Seminole were given four million acres of land in the area south of present-day Ocala. This area was called a reservation. This reservation, however, did not suit the needs of the Seminole. Meanwhile, their former home in Tallahassee became the new capital of the territory.

In 1829, Andrew Jackson became President of the United States. He worked to have the Indian Removal Act passed by Congress. It became law in 1830. The purpose of this act was to move all Indians to land west of the Mississippi River. The Seminole did not want to leave their Florida home, but agreed to send some chiefs to look at the new land where they would be relocated. While they were viewing the land, the chiefs were persuaded to sign a treaty agreeing to move. When they returned back to Florida, however, they claimed they had been tricked. They refused to leave.

A warrior named Osceola led the Seminole in surprise attacks against the Americans. The first battle of the war was known as the Dade Massacre. It occurred when Major Dade was leading a combined army from Fort Brooke (Tampa) and Fort King (Ocala). In an attack by Osceola and his men, over a hundred soldiers were killed near what is now Bushnell.

The United States sent many troops into Florida to defeat the Seminole. They were successful in pushing the Seminole further south into the wilderness. Several agreements were made by Seminole chiefs to leave the area, but the agreements continually fell through. Finally, Osceola was captured and he died in prison in 1838. Following his death, the Seminole began to decline. Many were killed; others were captured and relocated out west. On August 14, 1842, The Second Seminole War officially ended. As a result, many Seminole were sent to reservations in the west.

Florida Becomes the 27th State

Floridians had continued to take steps toward statehood throughout the confrontations with the Indians. In December 1838, the year Osceola died, Florida held a convention to write a constitution. The constitution contained the laws that the citizens of Florida
The Seminole Wars (continued)

had agreed on to rule the territory. A council voted on and approved the constitution in 1839. At that time, the United States Congress would not approve Florida as a new state because it wanted to join as a slave state. Florida was eventually admitted to the United States as a slave state on March 3, 1845.

The Seminole Withdraw to the Everglades

The few Seminole that remained, after most were sent to the reservations in the west, periodically fought the Americans again, from 1855 to 1858. After this final confrontation, the handful of Seminole that were still in Florida withdrew into the Everglades rather than surrender. Some Seminole Indians still live in the Everglades.
The Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida

The Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida has a proud history which dates back prior to the arrival of Columbus to the New World. The Miccosukee Indians were originally part of the Creek Nation, which was a group of clan villages that inhabited the areas now known as Alabama and Georgia.

The Miccosukee have had centuries of relations with the Seminole tribe, but maintain a separate identity today, mostly due to language. Unlike the Creek-speaking Seminole, they speak the Mikasuki language.

The original home of the Miccosukee was in the Tennessee Valley. They later migrated to North and South Carolina and northern Alabama. They moved to North Florida during the 18th and 19th centuries, forming a major part of the Seminole tribe. They moved again to the Everglades after the Seminole Wars (1817-1818 and 1835-1842). During this time, they mixed heavily with the Seminoles, but many of them kept their Mikasuki language.

The tribe separated from the Seminole in the 1950s to become the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida. On January 11, 1962, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior approved the Miccosukee Constitution and the Tribe was officially recognized as the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida. This legally established the Miccosukee’s tribal existence with the United States Government. The tribe today occupies several reservations in Southern Florida.

Source: Adapted from the official site of the Miccosukee nation at http://www.miccosukee.com/tribe.htm
Miccosukee Culture - Questions and Answers

How do you pronounce the word "Miccosukee"? What does it mean?

It's pronounced "mick-uh-SOO-kee." It comes from the Miccosukee word for "chief." Sometimes it is spelled Mikasuki instead.

How is the Miccosukee Indian nation organized?

The Miccosukee tribe has four reservation areas in Southern Florida. This land belongs to them and is legally under their control. Not all Miccosukee people live on these reservations, however.

The Miccosukee Indian tribe has its own government, laws, police, and services, just like a small country. However, the Miccosukees are also United States citizens and must obey U.S. law.

What language do the Miccosukees speak?

Most Miccosukee people speak English today, but some people, especially elders, also speak their native Mikasuki language. A few easy Mikasuki words include: chehuntamo (pronounced chee-hun-tah-moh) is a friendly greeting and shonabish (pronounced shoh-nah-bish) means "thank you."

Today Mikasuki is an endangered language. However, some Miccosukee people are working to keep their language alive.

How do Miccosukee Indian children live and what did they do in the past?

They do the same things all children do including play with each other, go to school, and help around the house. Many Miccosukee children like to go hunting and fishing with their fathers. In the past, American Indian children had more chores and less time to play, just like colonial children. But they did have beaded dolls, toys and games. Lacrosse was a popular sport among teenage boys as it was among adult men. Miccosukee mothers, like many American Indians, traditionally carried their babies in cradleboards on their backs—a custom which many American parents have adopted now.

What were Miccosukee homes like in the past?

The Miccosukee people lived in settled villages of houses called chickees. Chickees
were made of wood and plaster, and the roofs were thatched with palmetto fiber. As the Miccosukee tribe moved south into the Everglades, they began building their houses on wooden stilts. This raised the floor two or three feet off the ground and protected their homes from flooding and swamp animals. Today, most Miccosukees live in modern houses and apartment buildings, just like you.

**What was Miccosukee clothing like? Did they wear feather headdresses and face paint?**

Miccosukee men wore breechcloths. Miccosukee women wore wraparound skirts woven from palmetto fiber. Shirts were not necessary in Miccosukee culture, but the Miccosukees did wear mantles in cool weather. Miccosukee Indians also wore moccasins on their feet. In colonial times, the Miccosukees adapted European costume into their own characteristic styles, including turbans, long tunics, and patchwork skirts.

The Miccosukees didn't wear long headdresses like the Plains Tribes. Miccosukee men usually shaved their heads except for a single scalplock, and sometimes they would also wear a porcupine roach. (These headdresses were made of porcupine hair, not their sharp quills!) Miccosukee women usually wore their long hair in topknots or buns. The Miccosukees wore elaborate tribal tattoos, but rarely painted their faces.

Today, some Miccosukee people still wear moccasins or a patchwork skirt, but they wear modern clothes like jeans instead of breechcloths.

**What was Miccosukee transportation like in the days before cars? Did they paddle canoes?**

Yes, the Miccosukee Indians made flat dugout canoes from hollowed-out cypress logs. They usually steered these boats with poles rather than paddles. Over land, the Miccosukees used dogs as pack animals. Today, of course, Miccosukee people also use cars and other forms of modern transportation.

**What was Miccosukee food like in the days before supermarkets?**

The Miccosukee were farming people. Miccosukee women did most of the farming - harvesting crops of corn, beans, and squash. Miccosukee men did most of the hunting and fishing, catching game such as deer, wild turkeys, rabbits, turtles, and alligators. Miccosukee dishes included cornbread, soups, and stews.
What were Miccosukee weapons and tools like in the past?

Miccosukee hunters primarily used bows and arrows. Fishermen generally used fishing spears. In war, Miccosukee men fired their bows or fought with tomahawks and lances.

What are Miccosukee arts and crafts like?

The Miccosukees were known for their baskets, woodcarvings, beadwork, and patchwork designs.

What other American Indians did the Miccosukee tribe interact with?

The Miccosukees traded regularly with all the other Southeast American Indians, especially the Choctaw and the Cherokee. These tribes communicated using a simplified trade language called Mobilian Jargon. But the most important Miccosukee neighbors were the Creeks. Many Creek and Miccosukee people, along with some individuals from other southeastern tribes, joined together to create the powerful Seminole tribe. The Creeks and Miccosukees formed this alliance to fight against Europeans who were taking their land.

What kinds of stories do the Miccosukees tell?

There are lots of traditional Miccosukee legends and fairy tales. Storytelling is very important to the Miccosukee Indian culture.

Can you recommend a good book for me to read?

You may enjoy The Wonderful Sky Boat, which is a collection of traditional tales from several Southeasten tribes including the Miccosukes. Patchwork: Seminole and Miccosukee Art and Activities is a good book with craft activities as well as cultural information. There are also several good stories for children about the Seminole tribe (which many Miccosukees belonged to.) One is Indian Shoes, a charming collection of short stories about a contemporary Cherokee-Seminole boy and his grandfather. Another is Night Bird, which is historical fiction about the relocation of many Seminoles to Oklahoma. A third is Seminole Diary, which is the compelling story of two escaped slaves who join the Seminole tribe.

Source: Questions and answers adapted from http://www.geocities.com/bigorrin/miccosukee_kids.htm
GRADE LEVEL: Social Studies – Middle and Senior High School

TITLE: American Indian Legends and Myths

OBJECTIVES:

1. The students will define and differentiate between a legend and myth.

2. The students will describe various socio-cultural aspects of American life including arts, artifacts, literature, education, and publications.

SUGGESTED TIME: 120 minutes

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Explain that most American Indian tribes have a long tradition of telling stories about their history and beliefs. These stories are usually passed down orally from generation to generation. A lot of their stories deal with nature and how certain things came to be. Most tribes tell stories that are either myths or legends.

   A myth is a traditional story about the early history of the people. Myths explain a belief or something that occurred in nature. For example, most tribes have a myth that explains how the world and people were created. Myths usually involved gods, heroes and supernatural beings. They cannot be proven as true.

   American Indians also tell traditional stories about real people, heroes and events from the past. These are called legends. Tribes may have legends about how they came to live in a certain part of the country, how they won an important battle, or how an individual chief or warrior became important. Legends, even those based on actual events, are often exaggerated.

2. Introduce students to the legends and myths of American Indian cultures by reading the Lakota creation myth and the Cheyenne legend on the origins of the buffalo (included).

   Further discuss the meanings and differences between the terms legend and myth.
Lakota Sioux Creation Myth

This story is a myth because it deals with creation. Myths usually involved gods, heroes and supernatural beings. In this case, the supernatural being is the Creating Power. Myths cannot be proven as true.

Questions for Discussion:

a. What is the main idea of the myth? (to explain how the Dakota Sioux came to be a people.)

b. Explain how the Creating Power worked with animals to create a new world. (He had various animals that knew could remain under water for long periods of time attempt to dive to the bottom of the water. Only the turtle was able to retrieve mud from the bottom.)

c. What did the Creating Power do with the mud brought to him by the turtle? (He spread the mud around making the land.)

d. Explain how the rivers and streams were created. (Creating Power cried tears.)

e. Explain how animals and birds were placed on earth. (Creating Power took them from his pipe bag and spread them across the earth.)

f. What did Creating Power use to make men and women? (He used the red, white, black, and yellow earth.)

g. How did the Creating Power ask all people to live? (in harmony)

Origin of the Buffalo – Cheyenne Legend

This story is a legend because it deals with an actual occurrence - the dependence of the Cheyenne people on the buffalo as a primary food source. Legends, even those based on actual events, are often exaggerated.
Questions for Discussion:

a. What is the main idea of the legend? (to explain how the Cheyenne found the buffalo as a new source of food.)

b. What did the Chief ask First Brave and the two other braves to explore? (a cave)

c. Who did the braves meet in the cave? (an old grandmother)

d. What did the braves receive as a gift from the old grandmother (buffalo meat)

e. What did the grandmother promise the braves and did her promise come true. (She promised to send the Cheyenne live buffalo. The next day, buffalo surrounded the village. Her promise was kept.)

3. Read and discuss the handout entitled, “American Indian Myths and Legends” (included).

**TEACHER’S NOTE:** The reading introduces students to the differences between myths and legends. Two examples of myths and two examples of legends are included. Additional myths and legends are provided as optional reading.

4. Following the reading, divide the class into small groups. Assign one myth or legend from the readings to each group. **OPTIONAL:** Also assign the myths and legends included in the optional reading so that more myths and legends are introduced.

5. Have each group re-read the assigned myth or legend and then work together to answer the following questions:

   a. Explain why the story is either a myth or legend.
   b. What is the main idea of the story?
   c. Who are the main characters in the story?
   d. What are the important events in the story?
   e. How does the story end?

6. Have student groups explain the myth or legend to the class.
ASSESSMENT STRATEGY: Group work.

MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED: Copies of the reading entitled, “American Indian Myths and Legends” (included)

SOURCES: Lesson adapted from a lesson at Education World; Websites with numerous myths and legends include:

http://www.ducksters.com/history/native_americans/mythology_legends.php
http://www.crystalinks.com/nativeamcreation.html
http://www.warpaths2peacepipes.com/native-american-stories/
http://americanfolklore.net/folklore/native-american-myths/
http://www.legendsofamerica.com/na-legends.html
http://www.firstpeople.us/
A Lakota Sioux Creation Myth

There was another world before this one. But the people of that world did not behave themselves. Displeased, the Creating Power set out to make a new world. He sang several songs to bring rain, which poured stronger with each song.

As he sang the fourth song, the earth split apart and water gushed up through the many cracks, causing a flood. By the time the rain stopped, all of the people and nearly all of the animals had drowned. Only Kangi the crow survived.

Kangi pleaded with the Creating Power to make him a new place to rest. So the Creating Power decided the time had come to make his new world. From his huge pipe bag, which contained all types of animals and birds, the Creating Power selected four animals known for their ability to remain under water for a long time. He sent each in turn to retrieve a lump of mud from beneath the flood waters. First the loon dove deep into the dark waters, but it was unable to reach the bottom. The otter, even with its strong webbed feet, also failed. Next, the beaver used its large flat tail to propel itself deep under the water, but it too brought nothing back. Finally, the Creating Power took the turtle from his pipe bag and urged it to bring back some mud.

Turtle stayed under the water for so long that everyone was sure it had drowned. Then, with a splash, the turtle broke the water's surface! Mud filled its feet and claws and the cracks between its upper and lower shells. Singing, the Creating Power shaped the mud in his hands and spread it on the water, where it was just big enough for himself and the crow. He then shook two long eagle wing feathers over the mud until earth spread wide and varied, overcoming the waters. Feeling sadness for the dry land, the Creating Power cried tears that became oceans, streams, and lakes. He named the new land Turtle Continent in honor of the turtle who provided the mud from which it was formed.

The Creating Power then took many animals and birds from his great pipe bag and spread them across the earth. From red, white, black, and yellow earth, he made men and women. The Creating Power gave the people his sacred pipe and told them to live by it. He warned them about the fate of the people who came before them. He promised all would be well if all living things learned to live in harmony. But the world would be destroyed again if they made it bad and ugly.

Source: firstpeople.us
Origin of the Buffalo - A Cheyenne Legend

Long ago, a tribe of Cheyenne hunters lived at the head of a rushing stream, which eventually emptied into a large cave.

Because of the great need for a new food supply for his people, the Chief called a council meeting.

"We should explore the large cave," he told his people. "How many brave hunters will offer to go on this venture? Of course, it may be very dangerous, but we have brave hunters." No one responded to the Chief's request.

Finally, one young brave painted himself for hunting and stepped forth, replying to the Chief, "I will go and sacrifice myself for our people." He arrived at the cave, and to his surprise, First Brave found two other Cheyenne hunters near the opening, where the stream rushed underground.

"Are they here to taunt me," First Brave wondered? "Will they only pretend to jump when I do?"

But the other two braves assured him they would go.

"No, you are mistaken about us. We really do want to enter the cave with you," they said.

First Brave then joined hands with them and together they jumped into the huge opening of the cave. Because of the darkness, it took some time for their eyes to adjust. They then discovered what looked like a door.

First Brave knocked, but there was no response. He knocked again, louder.

"What do you want, my brave ones?" asked an old Indian grandmother as she opened her door.

"Grandmother, we are searching for a new food supply for our tribe," First Brave replied. "Our people never seem to have enough food to eat."

"Are you hungry now?" she asked.

"Oh, yes, kind Grandmother, we are very hungry," all three braves answered.

The old grandmother opened her door wide, inviting the young braves to enter.

"Look out there!" she pointed for them to look through her window.
A beautiful wide prairie stretched before their eyes. Great herds of buffalo were grazing contentedly. The young hunters could hardly believe what they saw!

The old grandmother brought each of them a stone pan full of buffalo meat. How good it tasted, as they ate and ate until they were filled. To their surprise, more buffalo meat remained in their stone pans!

"I want you to take your stone pans of buffalo meat back to your people at your camp," said the old grandmother. "Tell them that soon I will send some live buffalo."

"Thank you, thank you, thank you, kind Grandmother," said the three young Cheyenne braves.

When the young hunters returned to their tribe with the gifts of buffalo meat, their people rejoiced over the new, good food. Their entire tribe ate heartily from the old grandmother's three magic pans, and were grateful.

When the Cheyenne waked at dawn the next day, herds of buffalo had mysteriously appeared, surrounding their village! They were truly thankful to the old Indian grandmother and to the Sky Spirits for their good fortune.

Source: firstpeople.us
American Indian Myths and Legends

Most American Indian tribes have a long tradition of telling stories about their history and beliefs. These stories weren't written down, but were passed down orally from generation to generation. A lot of their stories had to do with nature and how certain things came to be. Most tribes tell stories that are either myths or legends.

A **myth** is a traditional story about the early history of the people. Myths explain a belief or something that occurred in nature. For example, a tribe may have a myth that explains how the world was created. Myths usually involved gods, heroes and supernatural beings. They cannot be proven as true. The Powhatan myth below is an example of a myth about the creation of the earth.

**Creation Myth (Powhatan tribe from Virginia)**

There were five main gods in the world. The leader of the gods was the Great Hare (rabbit). The other four gods were the winds from each corner of the earth.

One day the Great Hare created people. He made a number of people and animals. He wasn't sure what to do with them so he put them into a large bag. He wanted to make a place for them to live, so he made the forests, rivers, and lakes. He created deer to live in the forests.

The other four gods, however, weren't happy with what the Great Hare had made. They went into the forests and killed the deer. When the Great Hare found the dead deer, he was saddened. He tossed the skins of the deer throughout the forest and many more deer sprang to life. He then let the people out of the bag and spread them around the forest to live together with the deer.

The Inuit of Alaska tell a creation myth that offers a different story about the creation of the earth. It speaks of the Raven as the creator of earth.

**Myth - Raven as the Creator of the World (Inuit Tribe from Alaska)**

Raven made the world and the waters with beats of his wings.

He had the powers of both a man and bird, and could change from one to the other simply by pulling his bead above his head as one lifts up a mask.

His earth was dark and silent. He had created water and mountains, and had filled the land with growing pea-pod plants.
After five days, one of the pea-pods burst open; out popped a fully-grown man, the first to walk on Raven’s new earth.

At first the man was dizzy and confused. He drank from a pool of water at his feet, which made him feel a little better.

Raven had been soaring above his earth when he caught sight of the movement below.

For a long time Raven and the man stared at each other without saying a word.

Finally Raven spoke:

“Who are you and where did you come from?”

“I was born from that pea-pod” replied the man, pointing to the plant.

Raven was astonished. He had made the pea plant himself without any idea that something like this would happen. However, he was pleased that his earth would now have inhabitants.

“Have you eaten?” asked Raven.

“I have had a drink of water...” replied the man.

“Wait here for me,” said Raven, who lowered his beak and took the form of a bird. With a flurry of dark feathers, he flew off into the night sky.

The man waited for Raven for four days.

Raven returned carrying two raspberries and two heathberries.

“These are for you. They shall grow all over the earth to feed you.”

Man devoured the berries in one gulp; Raven realized that berries alone wouldn’t be enough to feed his hungry creation.

Raven then began working clay to form two fat mountain sheep. When he waved his black wings over them, the sheep sprang into life and bounded into the hills.
He made more and more sheep. Man looked at them so hungrily that Raven carefully placed them far up in the mountains so that Man wouldn’t eat all of them at once.

Raven went on making fish, birds and other animals, and waved his wings over each one to bring it to life.

Each one he put someplace out of Man’s reach so that he wouldn’t kill them all – the fish in the rivers and the birds in the air. Already Raven could see other men growing in pea-pods, and they were soon going to emerge hungry too.

Raven created a huge bear from the same clay, to make sure Man had something to fear.

After a few days, Raven noticed that Man was lonely.

Raven went off to a quiet corner of the earth where Man couldn’t see what he was doing.

He started building a figure out of clay. It looked like Man but was smaller and softer. Raven brushed his wings over the new figure, and the lovely being sat up and looked at Man.

“This is Woman, your helper and companion,” said Raven.

Man was very pleased. Together they filled the earth with their children and before long Raven’s earth filled with the sound of many voices, and overflowing with many forms of life.

American Indians also tell traditional stories about real events and heroes from the past. These are called **legends**. For example, tribes may have legends about how they came to live in a certain part of the country, how they won an important battle, or how an individual chief or warrior became important. Legends are often exaggerated. The following legend is about a famous Sioux warrior known as Roman Nose. This legend explains why Chief Roman Nose lost his medicine or power.

**Chief Roman Nose Loses His Medicine (Sioux Tribe from the Plains)**

The Lakota and the Shahiyela -- the Sioux and the Cheyenne -- have been good friends for a long time. Often they have fought shoulder to shoulder. They fought the white soldiers on the Bozeman Road, which we Indians called the Thieves'
Road because it was built to steal our land. They fought together on the Rosebud River, and the two tribes united to defeat Custer in the big battle of the Little Bighorn. Even now in a barroom brawl, a Sioux will always come to the aid of a Cheyenne and vice versa. We Sioux will never forget what brave fighters the Cheyenne used to be.

Over a hundred years ago the Cheyenne had a famous war chief whom the whites called Roman Nose. He had the fierce, proud face of a hawk, and his deeds were legendary. He always rode into battle with a long war bonnet trailing behind him. It was thick with eagle feathers, and each stood for a brave deed, a coup counted on the enemy.

Roman Nose had a powerful war medicine, a magic stone he carried tied to his hair on the back of his head. Before a fight he sprinkled his war shirt with sacred gopher dust and painted his horse with hailstone patterns. All these things, especially the magic stone, made him bullet proof. Of course he could be slain by a lance, a knife, or a tomahawk, but not with a gun. And nobody ever got the better of Roman Nose in hand-to-hand combat.

There was one thing about Roman Nose's medicine: he was not allowed to touch anything made of metal when eating. He had to use horn or wooden spoons and eat from wooden or earthenware bowls. His meat had to be cooked in a buffalo's pouch or in a clay pot, not in a white man's iron kettle.

One day Roman Nose received word of a battle going on between white soldiers and Cheyenne warriors. The fight had been swaying back and forth for over a day. "Come and help us; we need you" was the message. Roman Nose called his warriors together. They had a hasty meal, and Roman Nose forgot about the laws of his medicine. Using a metal spoon and a white man's steel knife, he ate buffalo meat cooked in an iron kettle.

The white soldiers had made a fort on a sand-spit island in the middle of a river. They were shooting from behind and they had a new type of rifle which was better and could shoot faster and further than the Indians' arrows and old muzzle-loaders.

The Cheyenne were hurling themselves against the soldiers in attack after attack, but the water in some spots came up to the saddles of their horses and the river bottom was slippery. They could not ride up quickly on the enemy, and they faced murderous fire. Their attacks were repulsed, their losses heavy.
Roman Nose prepared for the fight by putting on his finest clothes, war shirt, and leggings. He painted his best horse, with hailstone designs, and he tied the pebble which made him bulletproof into his hair at the back of his head.

But an old warrior stepped up to him and said: "You have eaten from a iron kettle with a metal spoon and a steel knife. Your medicine is powerless; you must not fight today. Purify yourself for four days so that your medicine will be good again."

"But the fight is today, not in four days," said Roman Nose. "I must lead my warriors. I will die, but only the mountains and the rocks are forever." He put on his great warbonnet, sang his death song, and then charged. As he rode up to the whites’ cottonwood breastwork, a bullet hit him in the chest. He fell from his horse; his body was immediately lifted by is warriors, and the Cheyenne retreated with their dead chief. To honour him in death, to give him a fitting burial, was more important than to continue the battle.

All night the soldiers in their fort could hear the Cheyenne's mourning songs, the keening of the women. They too knew that the great chief Roman Nose was dead. He had died as he had lived. He had shown that sometimes it is more important to act like a chief than to live to a great old age.

**Natsilane – How the Orca (Killer Whale) Came to Be (Tlingit tribe from the Pacific Northwest)**

In a time before there were any killer whales there lived a very able sea lion hunter and a highly skilled carver named Natsilane. He was from Kake and when he took as his wife the daughter of a chief on Duke Island, he decided to live among her people. He was accepted into her family and because he tried hard to prove himself, he soon had a place of honor as an accomplished hunter and spear carver.

His desire to please won him the admiration of the youngest of his brothers-in-law but the oldest ones misunderstood his intentions and became jealous and so began to plot against him. The men decided to get even with Natsilane on the day of the big seal hunt.

After much preparation, the day of the big hunt arrived and Natsilane along with his four new brothers paddled their canoe toward West Devil Rock, out in the open straits. The wind was blowing fiercely and the waves were high but Natsilane was determined that the hunt would be successful. When the canoe neared the rocks, he leaped toward shore and plunged his spear into the nearest
sea lion before it could escape. Unfortunately, the point broke off and the lion slipped into the water. Worse yet, Natsilane saw that his brothers, over the fierce objections of the youngest, were paddling away- abandoning him on the deserted island with no food or weapons. Their betrayal stung him deeply and after a time, he pulled his cloak up over his head and fell asleep.

Natsilane awoke the next morning to the sound of his name. He saw a sea lion that looked like a man beckoning to him to go with him down beneath the waves into the Sea Lion's House. At the great house he met the chief of the sea lions who asked him if he could help his injured son. Natsilane saw that the young lion had his spear point embedded in his body and with some effort was able to remove it and the son was healed. The chief was very grateful and after granting Natsilane even greater skills, arranged for his safe return to the village.

Natsilane met with his wife and after telling her his story, he made her promise to keep his return a secret. He took with him his carving tools and went into the woods to carry out a plan of revenge on the older brothers-in-law who had betrayed him. Remembering the Sea-Lion Chief's promise, he asked him for help and began carving a large black fish, a killer whale of spruce the likes of which had never been seen before. After three tries and much improvement in his carving skills, he fashioned a whale of yellow cedar and when launched, came to life and swam out to sea.

He called the black fish to him and ordered it to find his brothers-in-law when they returned from their hunting, destroy them and their boat but spare the youngest boy. The black fish set out and found them late that afternoon. Black fish capsized the boat breaking it in two and drowned the older three brothers by keeping them from shore. The youngest made it back safely along with his story of the great black fish and his brothers' treachery.

The villagers now came to wonder if Natsilane had carved the great black fish and given it life. Not long afterward, a strange black fish with teeth was seen near the shore and at times would leave a freshly killed seal or halibut there for the villagers. Natsilane had instructed it never again to harm humans but instead, to help them. As he continued to help the villagers, they realized that the "Killer Whale" was a gift from Natsilane and so they took it for their crest. Natsilane became a legend to their village and some have claimed to have seen him riding the seas on the backs of two great black fish.  

Source: Firstpeople.us
American Indian myths and legends are very important to the culture and traditions of the people they represent. Can you now explain the difference between a myth and legend?

Additional Myths

**Cherokee Creation (Cherokee Tribe from the Southeast)**

Long ago, before there were any people, the world was young and water covered everything. The earth was a great island floating above the seas, suspended by four rawhide ropes representing the four sacred directions. It hung down from the crystal sky. There were no people, but the animals lived in a home above the rainbow. Needing space, they sent Water Beetle to search for room under the seas. Water Beetle dove deep and brought up mud that spread quickly, turning into land that was flat and too soft and wet for the animals to live on.

Grandfather Buzzard was sent to see if the land had hardened. When he flew over the earth, he found the mud had become solid; he flapped in for a closer look. The wind from his wings created valleys and mountains, and that is why the Cherokee territory has so many mountains today.

As the earth stiffened, the animals came down from the rainbow. It was still dark. They needed light, so they pulled the sun out from behind the rainbow, but it was too bright and hot. A solution was urgently needed. The shamans were told to place the sun higher in the sky. A path was made for it to travel—from east to west—so that all inhabitants could share in the light.

The plants were placed upon the earth. The Creator told the plants and animals to stay awake for seven days and seven nights. Only a few animals managed to do so, including the owls and mountain lions, and they were rewarded with the power to see in the dark. Among the plants, only the cedars, spruces, and pines remained awake. The Creator told these plants that they would keep their hair during the winter, while the other plants would lose theirs.

People were created last. The women were able to have babies every seven days. They reproduced so quickly that the Creator feared the world would soon become too crowded. So after that the women could have only one child per year, and it has been that way ever since.
How the Rainbow Was Made - A Creation Tale (The Ojibwe or Chippewa Tribe Near the Great Lakes)

One day when the earth was new, Nanabozho looked out the window of his house beside the wide waterfall and realized that all of the flowers in his meadow were exactly the same off-white color. How boring! He decided to make a change, so he gathered up his paints and his paintbrushes and went out to the meadow.

Nanabozho sat down in the tall grass and arranged his red and orange and yellow and green and blue and violet paint pots next to him. Then he began to paint the flowers in his meadow in many different colors. He painted the violets dark blue and the tiger lilies orange with brown dots. He made the roses red and pink and purple. He painted the pansies in every color combination he could think of. Then he painted every single daffodil bright yellow. Nanabozho hummed happily to himself as he worked in the brilliant daylight provided by Brother Sun. Overhead, two little bluebirds were playing games with each other. The first little bluebird would chase his friend across the meadow one way. Then they would turn around and the second bluebird would chase him back the other way. Zippity-zip went the first bluebird as he raced across the sky. Zappity-zing went the second bluebird as he chased him in the brilliant sunshine.

Occasionally, Nanabozho would shade his eyes and look up...up into the endless blue sky to watch the two little birds playing. Then he went back to work, painting yellow centers in the white daisies. Above him, the two birds decided to see how fast they could dive down to the green fields below them. The first bluebird sailed down and down, and then pulled himself up sharply just before he touched the ground. As he soared passed Nanabozho, his right wing dipped into the red paint pot. When the second bluebird dove toward the grass, his left wing grazed the orange paint pot. Nanabozho scolded the two birds, but they kept up their game, diving down toward the grass where he sat painting and then flying back up into the sky. Soon their feet and feathers were covered with paint of all colors. Finally Nanabozho stood up and waved his arms to shoo the birds away.

Reluctantly, the bluebirds flew away from Nanabozho and his paint pots, looking for another game to play. They started chasing each other again, sailing this way and that over top of the giant waterfall that stood next to Nanabozho’s house. Zippity-zip, the first bluebird flew through the misty spray of the waterfall. The first
bluebird left a long red paint streak against the sky. Zappity-zing, the second bluebird chased his friend through the mist, leaving an orange paint streak. Then the birds turned to go back the other way. This time, the first bluebird left a yellow paint streak and the second left a pretty blue-violet paint streak. As they raced back and forth, the colors grew more vivid. When Brother Sun shone on the colors, they sparkled radiantly through the mist of the waterfall.

Below them, Nanabozho looked up in delight when the brilliant colors spilled over his meadow. A gorgeous arch of red and orange and yellow and green and blue and violet shimmered in the sky above the waterfall. Nanabozho smiled at the funny little bluebirds and said: "You have made a rainbow!"

Nanabozho was so pleased that he left the rainbow permanently floating above his waterfall, its colors shimmering in the sunshine and the misting water. From that day to this, whenever Brother Sun shines his light on the rain or the mist, a beautiful rainbow forms. It is a reflection of the mighty rainbow that still stands over the waterfall at Nanabozho's house.

**Additional Legends**

**How People Got Different Languages (The Blackfoot tribe from the Plains)**

One day a great flood moved through the land of the Blackfoot covering everything. All the people gathered at the top of the tallest mountain. The Great Spirit, or "Old Man", appeared on the mountain and turned the water into different colors. He had each group of people drink a different color of water. They all began to speak different languages. The Blackfoot drank the black water and spoke the Blackfoot language.

**The First Ship (The Chinook tribe from the Pacific Northwest)**

An old woman in a Clatsop village near the mouth of Big River mourned the death of her son. For a year she grieved. One day she stopped her crying and took a walk along the beach where she had often gone in happier days. As she was returning to the village, she saw a strange something out in the water not far from shore. At first she thought it was a whale. When she came nearer, she saw two spruce trees standing upright on it. "It's not a whale," she said to herself, "It's a monster."
When she came near the strange thing that lay at the edge of the water, she saw that its outside was covered with copper and that ropes were tied to the spruce trees. Then a bear came out of the strange thing and stood on it. It looked like a bear, but the face was the face of a human being.

"Oh, my son is dead," she wailed, "and now the thing we have heard about is on our shore."

Weeping, the old woman returned to her village. People who heard her called to others, "An old woman is crying. Someone must have struck her." The men picked up their bows and arrows and rushed out to see what was the matter.

"Listen!" an old man said.

They heard the women wailing, "Oh, my son is dead, and the thing we have heard about is on our shore."

All the people ran to meet her. "What is it? Where is it?" they asked.

"Ah, the thing we have heard about in tales is lying over there." She pointed toward the south shore of the village. "There are two bears on it, or maybe they are people."

Then the Indians ran toward the thing that lay near the edge of the water. The two creatures on it held copper kettles in their hands. When the Clatsop arrived at the beach, the creatures put their hands to their mouths and asked for water. Two of the Indians ran inland, hid behind a log awhile, and then ran back to the beach. One of them climbed up on the strange thing, entered it, and looked around inside. It was full of boxes, and he found long strings of brass buttons. When he went outside to call his relatives to see the inside of the thing, he found that they had already set fire to it. He jumped down and joined the two creatures and the Indians on shore.

The strange thing burned just like fat. Everything burned except the iron, the copper, and the brass. Then the Clatsop took the two strange looking men to their chief.

"I want to keep one of the men with me," said the chief.
Soon the people north of the river heard about the strange men and the strange thing, and they came to the Clatsop village. The Willapa came from across the river, the Chehalis and the Cowlitz from farther north, and even the Quinault from up the coast. And people from up the river came also -- the Klickitat and others farther up. The Clatsop sold the iron, brass, and copper. They traded one nail for a good deerskin. For a long necklace of shells they gave several nails. One man traded a piece of brass two fingers wide for a slave. None of the Indians had ever seen iron or brass before. The Clatsop became rich selling the metal to other tribes. The two Clatsop chiefs kept the two men who came on the ship. One stayed at the village called Clatsop, and the other stayed at the village on the cape.

**Websites for Additional Myths and Legends**

The following websites are good sites to find more American Indian myths and legends.

http://www.ducksters.com/history/native_americans/mythology_legends.php

http://www.crystalinks.com/nativeamcreation.html

http://www.warpaths2peacepipes.com/native-american-stories/

http://americanfolklore.net/folklore/native-american-myths/

http://www.legendsofamerica.com/na-legends.html

http://nativeamericans.mrdonn.org/stories/

http://www.warpaths2peacepipes.com/native-american-culture/native-american-mythology.htm
GRADE LEVEL: Social Studies – Middle and Senior High School

TITLE: American Indian Removal 1814-1858

OBJECTIVE(S): Objectives from the Florida Standards are noted with FS.

1. The students will analyze the positive and negative impact of Manifest Destiny; e.g., acquisition of land and resources, development of the railroad, economic growth, treatment of American Indians.

2. The students will discuss the impact of westward expansion on cultural practices and migration patterns of American Indian populations.

3. The students will determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; summarize complex concepts, processes, or information presented in a text by paraphrasing them in simpler but still accurate terms. (FS)

4. The students will conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question. (FS)

SUGGESTED TIME: 2-3 class periods

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Lead a discussion on the following scenario: Ask students to imagine that a planet similar to earth has been discovered. Many opportunities exist for wealth on this new planet. If you go there, and are willing to work, it is almost guaranteed that you will be rich. The only thing that is a problem is that some aliens already inhabit the planet. They look similar to us but they are blue and speak a language we don't understand. They do not know about electricity, computers, cars or any of the other modern conveniences that exist. It has been proposed that the aliens be moved to another planet that is not as good. Their main food source and means of living do not exist there. They will not die there, but their life will be very difficult and very different. If they are moved to another planet, you stand to gain a great amount of wealth. Do you support forcing the aliens to move?

The discussion should naturally flow toward the issue of fairness and respect.
2. Read the handout about the American Indian removal policies and the Trail of Tears entitled “American Indian Removal 1814-1858” (included in the background section of this instructional resource guide). Be sure that students understand that Indian removal policies in Georgia were declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, but Andrew Jackson continued with the policies.

3. Lead a class discussion on the fairness of Jackson’s policies. You will probably find that even students who favored alien removal think Jackson’s policies were unfair. Make sure to explore the contradiction fully.

4. Divide class into groups. Assign each group the role of either the United States government or American Indians being removed from their land and assign them a Supreme Court case related to Indian removal. Have the group research either Cherokee Nation v. Georgia or Worcester v. Georgia.

5. Have students develop closing arguments for their assigned role and case. Present the best closing arguments from each class to the entire class and then have the class reach a decision on the case.

**MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED:** “American Indian Removal 1814-1858” reading (included in the Background section of this instructional resource guide); references for the Supreme Court cases

**ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:** Completion of group activity.

**SOURCE:** http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4p2959.html
GRADE LEVEL: Social Studies – Middle and Senior High School

TITLE: American Indian Reservation System

OBJECTIVE(S): Objectives from the Florida Standards are noted with FS.

1. The students will define the term “reservation” and analyze whether the relocation of early American Indian tribes was done equitably and fairly.

2. The students will discuss the factors which led to the final settlement of the West.

3. The students will use case studies to explore social, political, legal, and economic relationships in history.

4. The students will conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question. (FS)

SUGGESTED TIME: 2-3 class periods

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Lead a review discussion focusing on fairness and the negative long-term consequences of the American Indian removal policies covered in the previous lesson.

2. Distribute and read the handout entitled “Reservations” (included in the Background section of this instructional resource guide).

3. List on the board the negative consequences to American Indians of the reservation system. List the benefits to white settlers of the reservation system. Discuss the possible impacts on our way of life today had the American Indians not been removed from their lands.

4. Assign students, either individually or in groups, to play the role of the head of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Explain to students that their task is to outline all the issues the government would have faced when deciding what policies to
implement related to American Indians during the late 1700s and 1800s. Each group or individual must come up with five issues. Students must then write a plan to resolve each of the five issues.

If students struggle with defining the issues related to early American Indian policies, direct the discussion towards issues such as:

a. Who should have governed American Indians?

b. Should the early American Indians have been removed from their lands and, if so, how should they have been compensated?

c. What government entity or non-government group should have reviewed and approved the plan?

d. Should American Indians have been forced to change their way of life and assimilate? If so, how should this have been accomplished?

**EXTENSION ACTIVITY:** Have students research a modern issue related to the reservation system (e.g., poverty, alcoholism, casinos) and write an essay showing how the issue is a related by-product of the reservation system.

**MATERIALS/AIDS NEEDED:** “Reservation” reading (included in the Background section of this instructional resource guide).

**ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:** Completion of the plan to address the five issues identified by students.

**SOURCE:**
Suggested Internet Resources on American Indians
Suggested Internet Resources on American Indians

Organizations

U.S. Department of Interior – Indian Affairs
http://www.indianaffairs.gov/

U.S. Census Bureau
www.census.gov

National Congress of American Indians
http://www.ncai.org/

National Museum of the American Indian
http://www.nmai.si.edu/

General Background on History, Tribes and Culture

History Channel – Native American Cultures
http://www.history.com/topics/native-american-history/native-american-cultures

Indians.org
http://www.indians.org/articles/index.html

Tribal Directory
http://tribaldirectory.com/

American Indian Tribes by Culture Areas
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award98/ienhtml/tribes.html

First People of America and Canada
http://www.firstpeople.us/

American Indian Tribes and Languages
http://www.native-languages.org/languages.htm

American Indian Culture Areas
http://www.american-indians.net/cultures.htm

Exploring Florida Early American Indians Web Sites
http://fcit.usf.edu/Florida/websites/links001.htm


Suggested Internet Resources on American Indians continued

Photographs and Images

Images and Photos of American Indians
https://www.google.com/search?q=American+Indians&rlz=1C1RNLG_enUS526US526&es_sm=93&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ei=2IqsVJLXLsWGYAS-4YCwAw&ved=0CAgQ_AUoAQ&biw=1920&bih=979

Native Americans in Florida Gallery
http://fcit.usf.edu/Florida/photos/native/native.htm

Myths, Legends and Other Folklore

Native American Myths and Legends for Kids
http://www.ducksters.com/history/native_americans/mythology_legends.php

Native American Myths and Legends by Tribe
http://www.legendsofamerica.com/na-tribelist.html

Pyramid Mesa – Legends and Myths
http://www.pyramidmesa.com/home.htm

Native American Stories
http://www.warpaths2peacepipes.com/native-american-stories/
Anti-Discrimination Policy
Federal and State Laws

The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and educational programs/activities and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by:

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964** - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

**Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended** - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.

**Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972** - prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender.

**Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA) as amended** - prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40.

**The Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended** - prohibits gender discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment.

**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** - prohibits discrimination against the disabled.

**Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)** - prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations and telecommunications.

**The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA)** - requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons.


**Florida Educational Equity Act (FEEA)** - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, marital status, or handicap against a student or employee.

**Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992** - secures for all individuals within the state freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status.

**Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA)** - Prohibits discrimination against employees or applicants because of genetic information.

*Veterans are provided re-employment rights in accordance with P.L. 93-508 (Federal Law) and Section 295.07 (Florida Statutes), which stipulate categorical preferences for employment.*

**In Addition:**

School Board Policies **1362, 3362, 4362, and 5517** - Prohibit harassment and/or discrimination against students, employees, or applicants on the basis of sex, race, color, ethnic or national origin, religion, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender, gender identification, social and family background, linguistic preference, pregnancy, and any other legally prohibited basis. Retaliation for engaging in a protected activity is also prohibited. *Rev. (05-12)*