

Exploring Native Culture



Core Content SS-E-2.1.1 Language, music, art, dress, food, stories, and folk tales help define culture and maybe shared among various groups

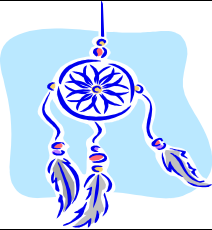
Core Content SS-E-2.1.2 Elements of culture such as language, music, art, dress, food, stories, folktales, etc., serve to define specific groups and may result in unique perspectives

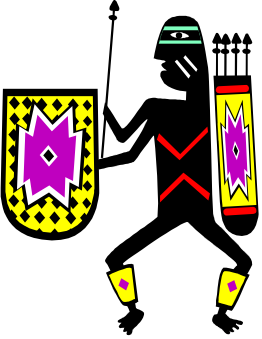


ANTICIPATION GUIDE

Getting Ready to Explore Native Culture

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Write down whether you think these statements are true or false before our field trip. After the field trip and reading about Native culture, take another look to see if you have changed your mind

Before field trip		After field trip
	Native people do not have a written language	
	Native instruments are often crafted from natural things such as trees and animal skins	
	Native music is linked to nature	
	Animals are not as important to Native people as they are to Americans	
	The main purpose of storytelling in the Native culture is to entertain the children	
	There are several different types of Native homes besides the tipi	
	The main purpose for Native dancing is to celebrate	
	Face painting is important in Native culture and has a real purpose	
	The correct name for the American Buffalo is Bison	

What I know about Native People	What I want to know about Native People	What I learned about Native People
 A stylized illustration of a Native American warrior. The warrior is black with red and yellow markings on his body. He is wearing a green and black headband. He holds a shield with a yellow and black checkered border and a purple star in the center. He also holds a bow with a purple and yellow design and a quiver of arrows.	 A stylized illustration of a Native American bird or totem. It has a black body with a red beak. The head and chest feature concentric circles in yellow, pink, and red. The wings are black with white horizontal stripes. The tail is black with white vertical stripes.	 A stylized illustration of a Native American warrior. The warrior is black with yellow and red markings on his body. He is wearing a black and yellow headband. He holds a shield with a yellow and black checkered border and a yellow star in the center. He also holds a bow with a yellow and red design and a quiver of arrows.

As you read this article, can you answer WHO? WHAT? WHERE? WHEN? WHY? HOW?

THEIR NATIVE TONGUE

Children of the *Mohawk* Nation work to save their ancient language and culture

THE KIDS AT THE AKWESASNE Freedom School in Rooseveltown, New York, start their day the same way lots of other kids around the U.S. do-- chatting about their favorite music, the latest video games and sports. But when class begins, their day takes on a different sound.

The kids at the Freedom School are learning Kanien'keha:ka (*Gah-nyah-gay-ha-gah*), the language of their Native American ancestors, the *Mohawk Indians*. The older students won't speak any English again until school lets out in the afternoon. Some children enter the school, for preschoolers through eighth-graders, unable to read or write a word of the language. By second grade, they not only read and write it, but they're also studying math, science and history in the ancient language. "I'm glad I'm learning it," says third-grader Karonhiakwe:kon (*Gah-loon-hyah-gweh-go*), whose friends call him Kwe:kon (*Gweh-go*). "It's fun, and our people are *Mohawk*. We should learn it."

A SCHOOL FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

The Freedom School is on the U.S. side of the St. Regis Reservation, which also has land in Canada. There are about 300 U.S. reservations, land that has been set aside for Native Americans. Hundreds of years ago, they lost a lot of their land to European settlers and later gave up even more to the U.S. Reservations were created by the government beginning in the 1800s as a place for Native Americans to live.

In the 1970s, parents on the St. Regis Reservation became concerned that their children were not learning their native language and culture. Like many Native American languages, the *Mohawk* tongue was in danger of disappearing. Only 1 out of 5 *Mohawks* could speak it. There were no *Mohawk* classes for kids at the time, so in 1979 parents started the Freedom School.

Other Native Americans are making similar efforts to keep their languages alive. "Languages evolve over centuries, and there's a lot of history and

culture built into them," says Doug Whalen, president of the Endangered Language Fund. "When we lose a language, our whole human heritage shrinks."

KEEPING THEIR CULTURE ALIVE

Students at the Freedom School learn about *Mohawk* traditions and history as well as the language. Each morning they gather to recite the "Thanksgiving Address," which opens traditional ceremonies. "They give thanks to all the things that help them live," explains a parent.

The kids have Native names their clan mother gave them when they were born. A clan mother is a respected older woman. Her job is to name babies and help the clan's children learn and grow.

There are three clans in the *Mohawk* Nation: Turtle, Bear and Wolf. Children belong to their mother's clan, and their Native names come from that clan. The names are special: no two living people are supposed to have the same one.

"Mine means 'She Sways with the Grass,'" says fourth-grader Kahentawaks (Gah-hon-dah-walks).

"My little sister can't say it, so she says 'Wah-Walks.'"

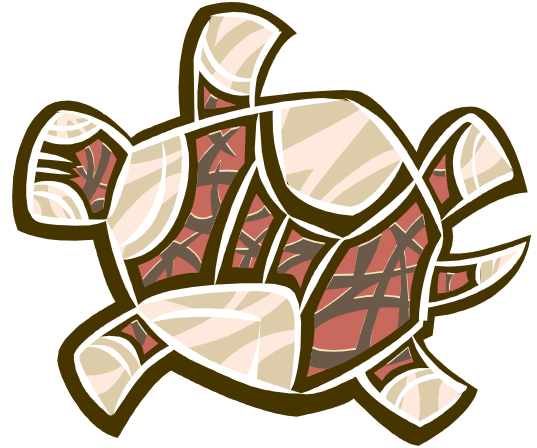
"My name means 'The Whole Entire Sky,'" says Karonhiakwe:kon. "That's why it's so long."

"If someone called me by my English name--Alicia--I wouldn't answer," says third-grader Kahentenhawe (Gah-hon-dah-ha-weh).

Although their pride in their heritage is strong, these students can't neglect English. Seventh- and eighth-graders at the Freedom School study in English to get ready to attend high schools outside the reservation. The students' knowledge of *Mohawk* language and culture helps them appreciate what it means to be Native American. "What they're taught here, they'd never learn anywhere else," says their teacher, Iakotsi'tsiaka:ion (Yah-go-jee-jaw-gah-une). "They're taught to be proud of who they are."

DID YOU KNOW?

- Historians estimate that there were between 12 million and 15 million Native Americans in what is now the U.S. and Canada before any European settlers arrived. Today there are between 2 million and 3 million.
- Only about 1 in 5 Native Americans live on a reservation.
- There were 281 known Native American languages that originated in the U.S. and Canada. Almost half are extinct or nearly extinct.
- About one-third of the country's Native Americans live in poverty.
- California, Oklahoma, Arizona, New Mexico, Washington and Alaska have the largest Native American populations.



The Earth itself is represented by Turtle Island a giant turtle whose shell features thirteen plates, each of which represent one of thirteen moons that make up an entire year. North-America (Mother Earth) is often represented as a turtle.

Source: Time for Kids;
01/26/2001, Vol. 6 Issue 15, p4
(adapted)

My personal responses...

During our Native Nations field trip,

I wondered...

I remembered...

I wished...

I felt...

I enjoyed the most...

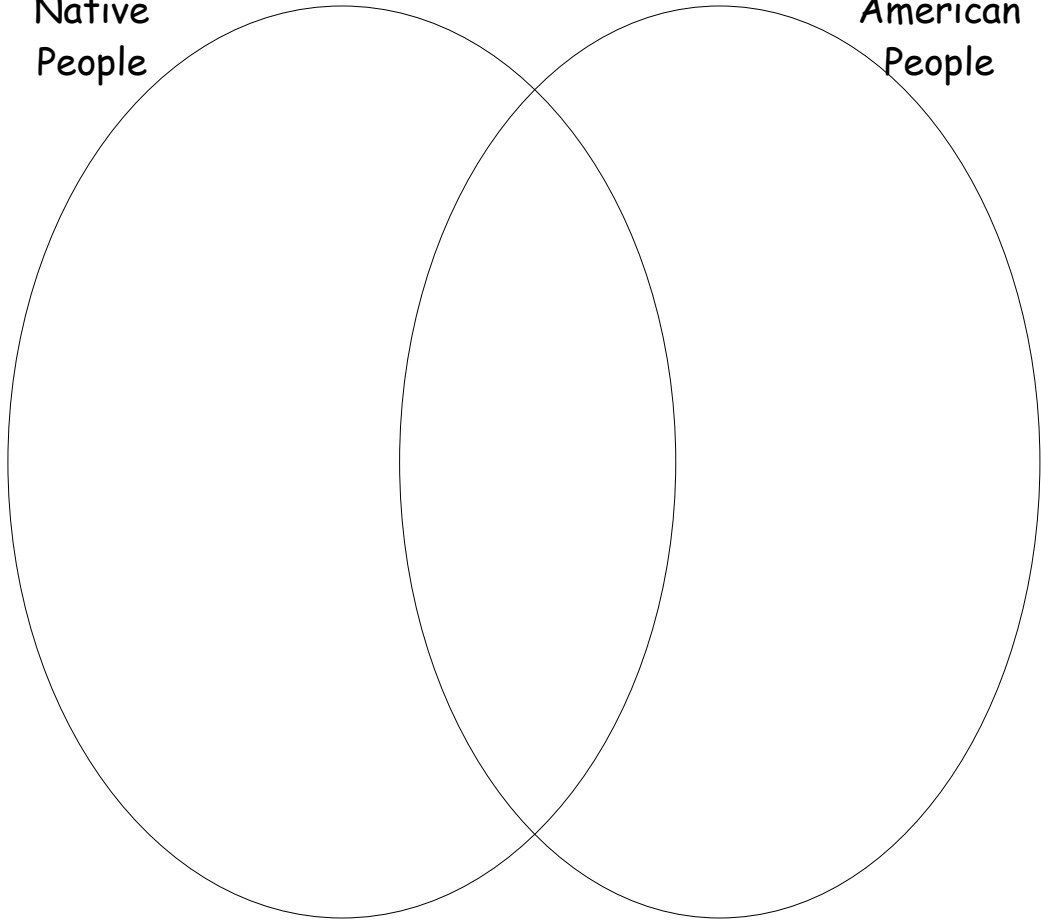
My personal responses...

Our Native Nations field trip has inspired me to draw:



Native
People

American
People



Cultural Similarities and Differences

As you read this article, can you answer WHO? WHAT? WHERE? WHEN? WHY?
HOW?



BEING CHEYENNE

One teen shares her Native American pride

For many years, Native Americans struggled for the freedom just to be who they are. In the 1800s, members of Indian tribes were placed on reservations all across the Western United States. For many years, they had no control over their government or education. Their children were sent to boarding schools where they were punished if they practiced their religion or even spoke their own language.

Today, Jade Sooktis, 17, is free to celebrate her heritage with enthusiasm and pride. She is one of an estimated 8,000 members of the *Cheyenne* [SHY-en] tribe. Here, Jade tells Scope what it means to be *Cheyenne* today.

FAMILY LIFE

Growing up on the reservation, I lived with my grandparents, my mom, my aunt, my uncle, and lots of cousins. I'm an only child, but in the *Cheyenne* way, my cousins are my brothers and sisters.

We're a very close family, and other *Cheyenne* families are like this, too. Most *Cheyenne* are raised to always remember and respect their relatives. That's how I was raised. I am a descendant of Chief Dull Knife, one of the two main chiefs in our tribe's history. A long time ago, our people were taken from Montana and moved to Oklahoma. Chief Dull Knife led our people back home.

There are similarities between the various Native American tribes, but there are differences too. We all have our own religious backgrounds, and our languages set us apart from each other. The *Cheyenne* language has a lot of different sounds to it. It's the main language we use at home.

CULTURAL EDUCATION

Our high school was the first one built on the reservation in Lane Deer. We went through a long

struggle to get a school like this just for us. It's a regular high school, but it offers classes that focus on our tribe. We first learn about our cultures and traditions at home, but the school encourages us to learn even more.

One class teaches us about our tribal government—how it works and how it originated. We also have a culture class. In that, we learn things like how to make foods needed for the feasts. We bead, and we loom. We also have a lot of speakers. Elders from our tribe talk with us about our past, and we have exhibition dancers.

I love to dance myself. For me, dancing is everything. It's a way to show my heritage. When I'm out there, it's a wonderful feeling. I travel with other dancers to powwows all over the state. One summer I even went to Germany. My uncle arranged it. He asked my

relatives and me to go there with him and demonstrate our dances. We danced every day. It was really thrilling to be in a different country and dance in front of lots of people.

LOOKING AHEAD

I plan to take more Native American culture classes when I go to college. There's still a lot for me to learn about my heritage. Being *Cheyenne* is a feeling nothing could ever replace. It's a feeling of pride, honor, and respect for yourself as a Native American. It's knowing that you are a unique individual who is surrounded by rich culture and traditions. I know that when I grow older, I will continue to live this way of life and will pass it on to generations yet to come.

Reasons to write...

Choose from one of the following reasons to write or write about another topic that the field trip made you think about.

Exploring other cultures through our social studies helps us to know more about our own culture. Write a thank you letter to your principal for the opportunity to participate in the Native People field trip. Be sure to explain what you learned.

Field trips give us opportunities to learn new things in a pleasurable way. Write a letter to your teacher explaining what you learned from this field trip and suggesting another field trip you would like your class to take this year.

Students in other countries like to know what life is like where you live. Write an article for a kids' magazine explaining what it is like to live in your region of Kentucky. To give you some ideas, re-read the article Jade Sooktis wrote about being *Cheyenne*.

Some students don't seem to understand the benefit of field trips and their behavior is not as good as it could be. Write an article for your school newspaper explaining the benefit of field trips and why it is important to behave.

Some questions to help your writing...

<p>PURPOSE/AUDIENCE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you thought about who the reader is, what responsibility that person has, and what that person or group would like or need to know? • Have you narrowed the topic? • Have you stayed focused on the reason for writing? • Have you looked at models of the form you are writing? • Is your voice and/or tone appropriate for the reader, your purpose, and the form you have chosen for your writing?
<p>IDEA DEVELOPMENT/SUPPORT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your writing have a main idea? • Have you supported that idea in a variety of ways? • Have you used idea development strategies appropriate for the form you are writing? • Have you anticipated and taken care of readers' needs/questions?
<p>ORGANIZATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you organized the writing so the reader can make sense of the piece? • Does your organizational plan match the form you have chosen? • Did you give the reader some "reststops" (paragraphs)? • What organizational strategies have you used to help the reader move through the piece?
<p>SENTENCES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do your sentences start in different ways? • Are some long and some short? • Are they complete?
<p>LANGUAGE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the words interesting? • Are the verbs lively and the nouns specific? • Are the words used correctly? • Have you used language appropriate for the content, purpose, and reader?
<p>CORRECTNESS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you spelled the words correctly? • Have you used capital letters where they are needed?

KENTUCKY WRITING ASSESSMENT
Scoring Guide for Single Pieces
(NAPD reserved for complete portfolios)

NOVICE QUALITIES	APPRENTICE QUALITIES	PROFICIENT QUALITIES	DISTINGUISHED QUALITIES
Limited awareness of audience and/or purpose	Some evidence of communicating with an audience for a specific purpose; some lapses in focus	Focused on a purpose; communicates with an audience; evidence of voice and/or suitable tone	Establishes a purpose and maintains clear focus; strong awareness of audience; evidence of distinctive voice and/or appropriate tone
Minimal idea development; limited and/or unrelated details	Unelaborated idea development; unelaborated and/or repetitious details	Depth of idea development supported by elaborated, relevant details	Depth and complexity of ideas supported by rich, engaging, and/or pertinent details; evidence of analysis, reflection, insight
Random and/or weak organization	Lapses in organization and/or coherence	Logical coherent organization	Careful and/or subtle organization
Incorrect and/or ineffective sentence structure	Simplistic and/or awkward sentence structure	Controlled and varied sentence structure	Variety in sentence structure and length enhances effect
Incorrect and/or ineffective language	Simplistic and/or imprecise language	Acceptable, effective language	Precise and/or rich language
Errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization are disproportionate to length and complexity	Some errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization that do not interfere with communication	Few errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization relative to length and complexity	Control of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization