

**A FIRST  
LOOK AT  
HISTORY**

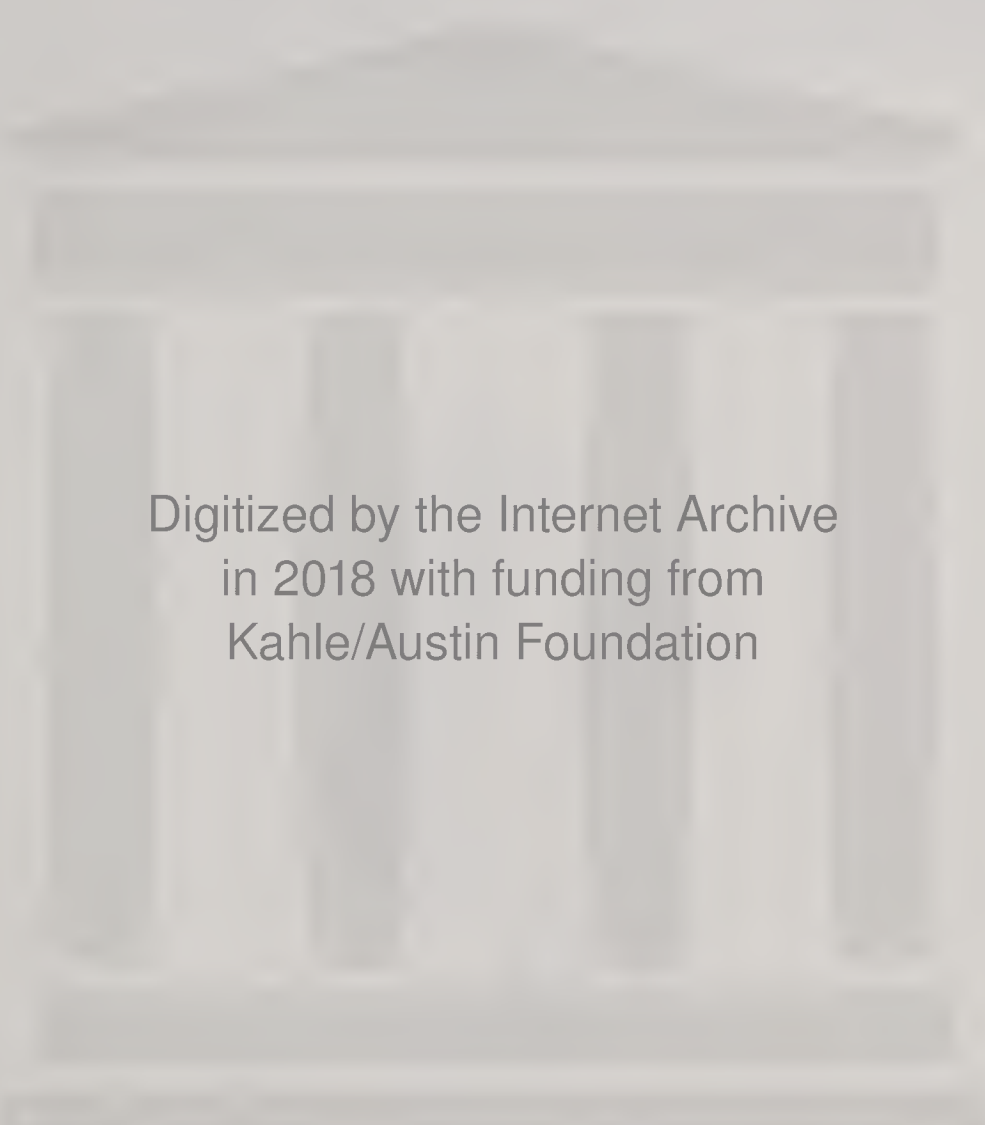
# **Native Americans**



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**A FIRST  
LOOK AT  
HISTORY**

# **Native Americans**



**by Evelyn Wolfson**  
Consultant: Peter Whiteley

**GARETH STEVENS**  
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# Contents

This book looks at  
four Native groups:  
the Iroquois, Cherokee,  
Sioux, and Hopi people.

Spreading Across the Land	4
Important Lessons	6
The Iroquois Confederacy	8
People of the Longhouse	10
The Cherokee	12
The Trail of Tears	14
The Sioux	16
Life on the Plains	18
The Hopi	20
Desert Farmers	22
Glossary	24

Words in the glossary  
are printed in **boldface**  
type the first time they  
appear in the text.

# Spreading Across the Land

Most experts believe that the first Americans came from Asia to North America between twelve and sixty thousand years ago.

These people probably spread across North America in small groups. Some settled in the cold north, while others made their homes in the forests of the northeast. Some people chose to live in the southeast, where it is warm all year round. Others chose the hot deserts of the southwest.

Over thousands of years, Native people developed hundreds of **nations**, each with its own **culture**.





# Native Culture

## MAP OF NORTH AMERICA

This map shows the homelands of only a few of the hundreds of Native American nations.



Every Native culture has its own kinds of art. Some Native people made drawings in caves and on the sides of **canyons** and rocks. These types of drawings are called petroglyphs.



The eagle has long been an important **symbol** to many Native people.

# Important Lessons

Long ago, not everyone had a written language. People learned things in many other ways. For Native people, it was very important that both children and grown-ups listen and remember.

Boys started hunting and fishing with the men when they were ten years old. Some boys learned how to grow crops.





A Navajo baby in a cradleboard.

Girls helped the women care for younger sisters and brothers. Young girls often helped their mothers prepare cradleboards.



Native culture and traditions, such as this **powwow** in Washington State, are an important part of modern life.

## Native Artifacts



Some members of Great Plains tribes wore warbonnets. Each feather represented an important achievement.



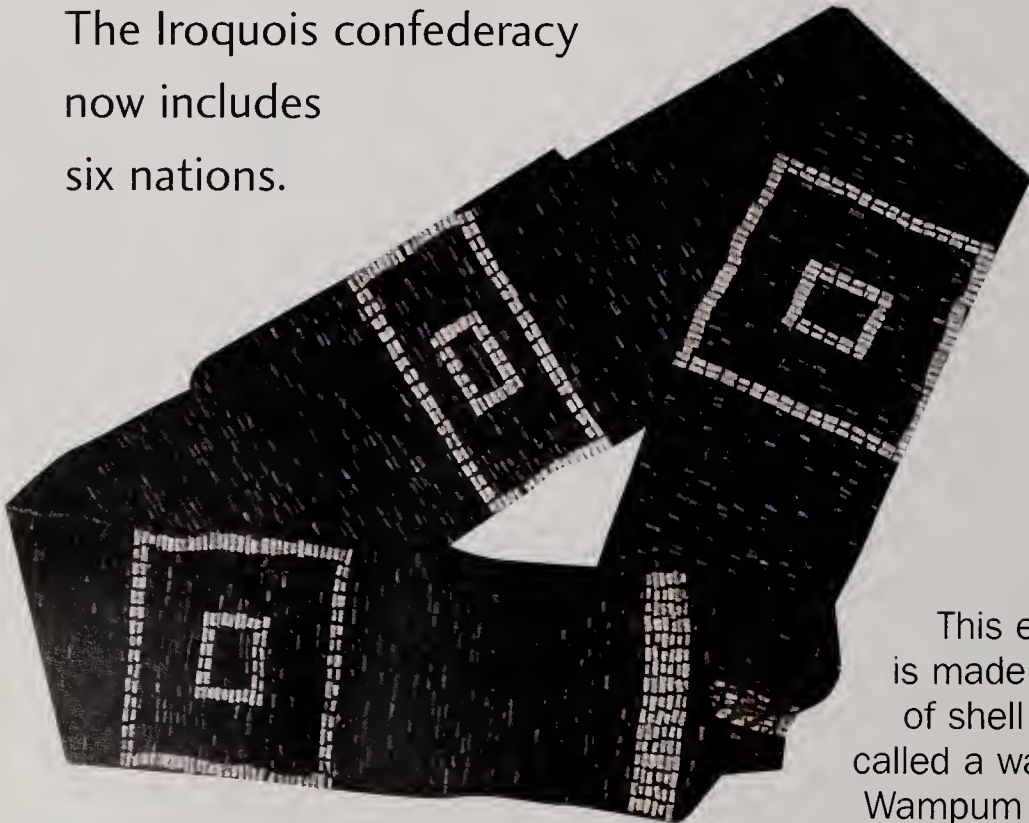
Many tribes of the Northwest Coast carved stories on wooden totem poles.

# The Iroquois Confederacy

About one thousand years ago, five tribes living in what is, today, the northeastern United States and southeastern Canada formed a **confederacy**.

The five tribes of the confederacy called themselves the *Haudenosaunee*, which means “people of the longhouse.” The English called them the Five Nations. The French called them the Iroquois, which became the name they are known by today.

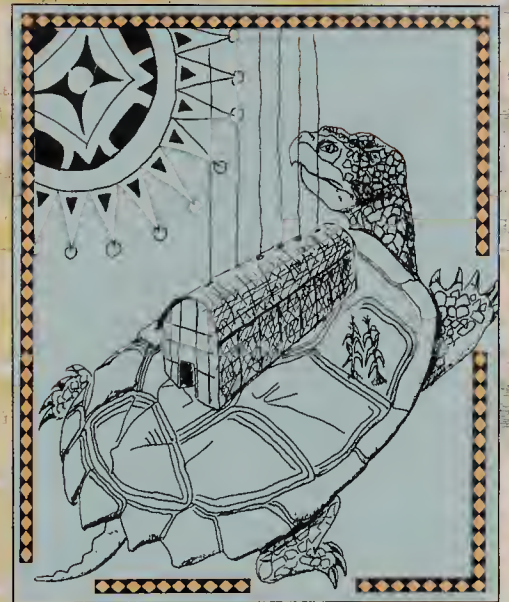
The Iroquois confederacy now includes six nations.



This elegant **sash** is made from strings of shell beads. It is called a wampum belt. Wampum belt designs are a record of important agreements and events.



# Iroquois Culture



According to an Iroquois **origin story**, life began when Skywoman fell from the sky. Skywoman landed on a turtle's back. The turtle grew to become Turtle Island. That name, even today, is used to describe Earth.



Lacrosse is an **ancient** game played by the Iroquois and other Native groups. It is played with a ball and a stick that has a net attached to it.

Iroquois tribes get together at powwows and festivals. These Mohawk children are performing a **smoke dance**.

# People of the Longhouse

The Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca nations agreed to live in peace under one imaginary longhouse that stretched across their territory. Later, the Tuscarora moved into Iroquois territory and joined the confederacy.

The Iroquois lived in wooden longhouses, which were made by covering a frame of young trees with elm bark. Each longhouse might be home to ten or more families from the same family group, or clan. Most clans had animal names, such as Bear, Turtle, Beaver, and Deer. Inside a longhouse, fires for cooking and heating divided the families' living spaces.



A **reconstruction** of a longhouse.



Iroquois families harvesting corn.



The Iroquois planted large gardens of corn, beans, and squash. Often, the beans climbed up the cornstalks, and squash grew around the bottoms of the stalks. Growing together like this, these plants were called “the Three Sisters.”

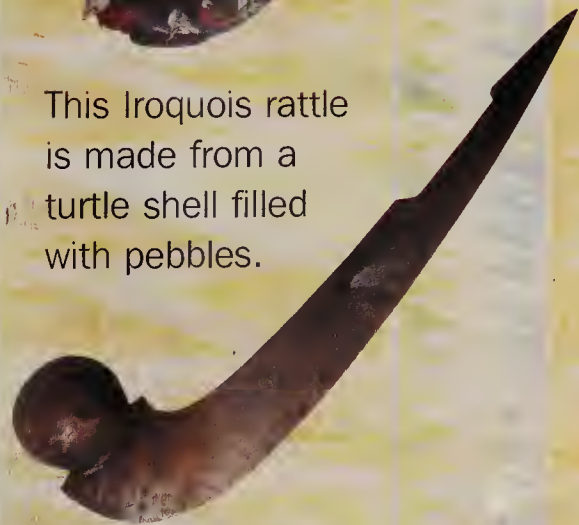
## Iroquois Artifacts



The drum is an important musical instrument in Native cultures.



This Iroquois rattle is made from a turtle shell filled with pebbles.



This Iroquois club is carved out of wood.

# The Cherokee

The traditional homelands of the Cherokee were in the Southeast. There, they settled in small villages along rivers and streams and grew crops in the rich, dark soil.

The Cherokee grew corn, beans, squash, and tobacco. Corn could not be eaten until the yearly Green Corn Ceremony. This great festival was celebrated in autumn after the last corn crop had ripened.

Cherokee families often had two houses — a rectangular summer house, made of wood and grass, and a cone-shaped winter house, **insulated** with clay or woven mats.



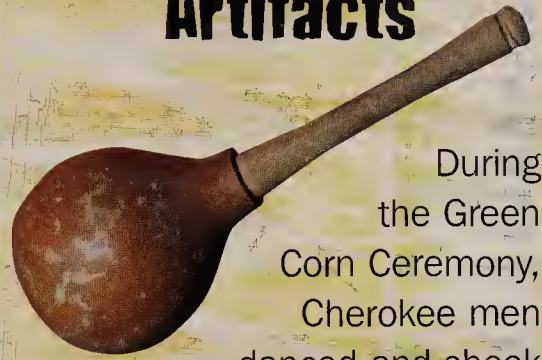


Cherokee women tended the fields and made clothes from deerskin. Cherokee men hunted for deer and bears with bows and arrows.



A Cherokee wearing traditional, **ceremonial** clothing.

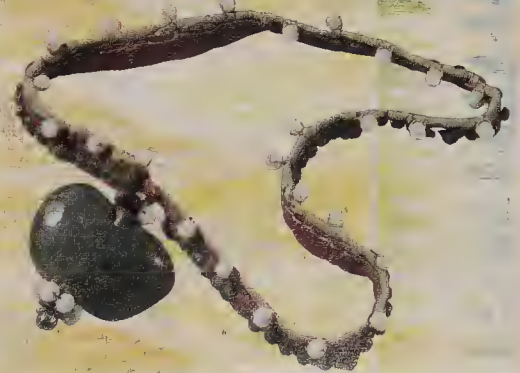
## Cherokee Artifacts



During the Green Corn Ceremony, Cherokee men danced and shook **gourd** rattles to thank the **spirits** for the year's harvest.



Tribal leaders smoked tobacco in clay pipes during important ceremonial events.



This emerald **amulet** was worn by a Cherokee chief.



# The Trail of Tears

In the 1800s, non-Native settlers wanted Cherokee farmland for themselves. In 1838, the government of the United States made fifteen thousand Cherokee people give up their land and leave their homes. Along with other Native people from the Southeast, they were forced to march west to what was called **Indian Territory**.



U.S. soldiers and Indians who were working for the U. S. government guarded the Native people on the journey west. Thousands of people died of disease and starvation on this long, terrible march, which is known as The Trail of Tears.

This painting by Robert Lindneux is called "The Trail of Tears."



# Cherokee History



A Cherokee man named Sequoyia invented an alphabet for the Cherokee spoken language.

The alphabet turned all the different Cherokee sounds into eighty-five written characters.

Cherokee Alphabet.					
D.	R.	T.	ḍ.	Ḇ.	i.
S <sub>oo</sub> Q <sub>oo</sub>	K <sub>oo</sub>	Y <sub>oo</sub>	A <sub>oo</sub>	J <sub>oo</sub>	E <sub>oo</sub>
W <sub>oo</sub>	P <sub>oo</sub>	Ḍ <sub>oo</sub>	F <sub>oo</sub>	L <sub>oo</sub>	C <sub>oo</sub>
W <sub>oo</sub>	C <sub>oo</sub>	Ḃ <sub>oo</sub>	G <sub>oo</sub>	M <sub>oo</sub>	A <sub>iv</sub>
S <sub>oo</sub>	Ch <sub>oo</sub>	Il <sub>oo</sub>	S <sub>oo</sub>	Y <sub>oo</sub>	
O <sub>oo</sub> U <sub>oo</sub> G <sub>oo</sub> A <sub>oo</sub>	L <sub>oo</sub>	Z <sub>oo</sub>	Ḡ <sub>oo</sub>	C <sub>oo</sub>	
T <sub>oo</sub>	Q <sub>oo</sub>	P <sub>oo</sub>	V <sub>oo</sub>	C <sub>oo</sub>	E <sub>oo</sub>
U <sub>oo</sub> U <sub>oo</sub>	A <sub>oo</sub>	b <sub>oo</sub>	E <sub>oo</sub>	E <sub>oo</sub>	R <sub>oo</sub>
U <sub>oo</sub> W <sub>oo</sub>	S <sub>oo</sub> U <sub>oo</sub>	A <sub>oo</sub> J <sub>oo</sub>	A <sub>oo</sub>	S <sub>oo</sub>	P <sub>oo</sub>
Ḍ <sub>oo</sub> L <sub>oo</sub>	L <sub>oo</sub>	C <sub>oo</sub>	J <sub>oo</sub>	V <sub>oo</sub>	P <sub>oo</sub>
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**GWY**      **Jc.ḂUO.Ḃ.**

**CHEROKEE**      **PHENIX,**

**VOL. I.**      **NEW ECHOḂ, THURSDAY FEBRUARY 31, 1828.**      **NO. 1.**

<p><b>PRINTED BY ELLIS BOWDITCH,</b>  <b>TRADE PUBLISHER,</b>          No. 100 N. 2nd St. Phila.          No. 100 N. 2nd St. Phila.</p>	<p><b>CONSTITUTION OF THE CHEROKEE NATION.</b>          Passed by a Convention of Delegates from the several Tribes, on the 28th of July 1827.</p>	<p>...the Cherokee Nation, in the year 1828, shall have power to admit such laws and regulations, as they shall deem expedient and proper, in respect to the foreign trade, navigation, and intercourse, with the view of promoting the same.</p>
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In 1828, the Cherokee people published the first Native American newspaper. It was called the Cherokee Phoenix.



# The Sioux

The Sioux have lived in the Great Plains region of North America for thousands of years. Until non-Native settlers and hunters began killing off the buffalo, the Sioux relied on these animals for food and for **hides** to make clothes and **tepees**.



An American buffalo.

Sioux hunters chasing buffalo.



To the Sioux, the buffalo was the most respected creature on the plains. Every year, large herds of buffalo **migrated** across the plains in search of food. When the buffalo moved, the Sioux followed. Sioux horses could outrun buffalo and were trained to run close beside these mighty animals.

## Sioux Hunters



The Sioux people performed dances to give thanks to the buffalo for providing food and clothing.



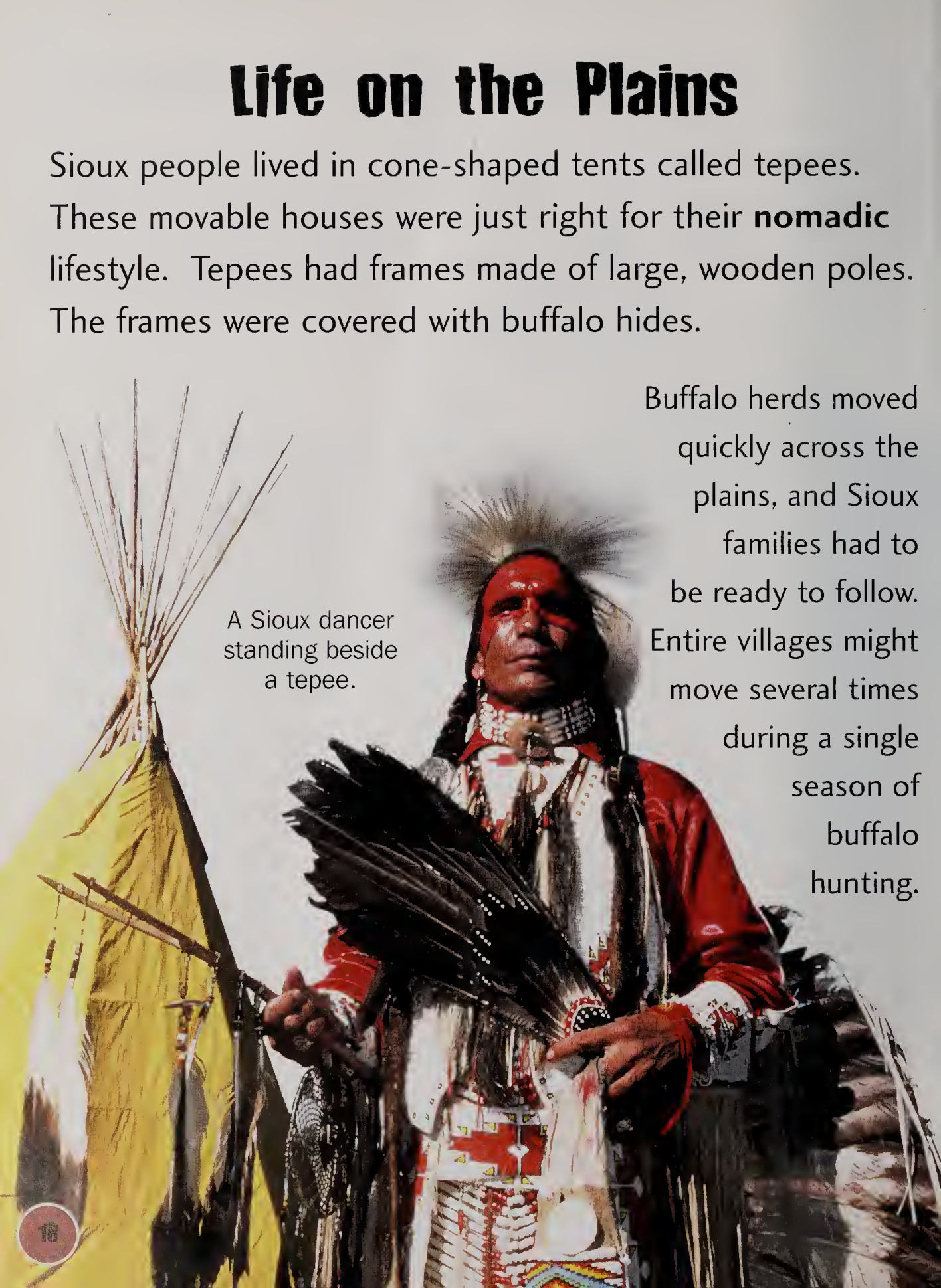
The Sioux were expert riders and horse **breeders**. **Appaloosas** are still bred by Native people of the Great Plains.



Buffalo hides had many uses. This shield is made of buffalo hide.

# Life on the Plains

Sioux people lived in cone-shaped tents called tepees. These movable houses were just right for their **nomadic** lifestyle. Tepees had frames made of large, wooden poles. The frames were covered with buffalo hides.

A photograph of a Sioux dancer in traditional regalia, including a large feathered headdress and a red and white beaded garment. He is holding a large fan of black feathers. To his left is a yellow tepee with wooden poles. The background is a plain, light-colored surface.

A Sioux dancer standing beside a tepee.

Buffalo herds moved quickly across the plains, and Sioux families had to be ready to follow. Entire villages might move several times during a single season of buffalo hunting.



Sioux children riding on a travois.

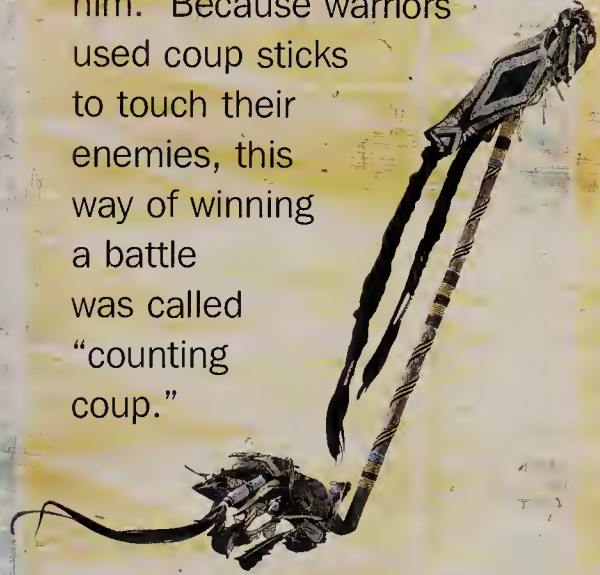
A Sioux family could take down a tepee in only fifteen minutes. By attaching the narrow ends of tepee poles to the back of a horse, a family could make a travois, or carrier, to help them move from place to place.



In a Sioux camp, families arranged their tepees in a circle.

## Sioux Artifacts

In battle, Sioux warriors often tried to get close enough to an enemy to touch him but not kill him. Because warriors used coup sticks to touch their enemies, this way of winning a battle was called "counting coup."




These Sioux moccasins are made of buffalo hide. They are decorated with porcupine quills.

# The Hopi

Hopi people have lived in the deserts of the Southwest for thousands of years. The Hopi still live in northern Arizona today.

The Hopi village of Walpi.



The Hopi live on three mesas, which are flat, tabletop hills with steep sides. In ancient times, the mesas were natural protection against enemy attacks.



The houses in Hopi villages are made out of sandstone and adobe, which is sun-dried clay.



Hopi houses are stacked one on top of another. The roof of a lower house forms a **terrace** for the house above it. People use ladders to climb from house to house.

## Hopi Art



These petroglyphs show the origin story of the Hopi people. In this story, Tawa, the Sun God, and Spider Woman, the Earth Goddess, formed plants, animals, and people from clay and placed them on Earth.



This rock art shows a flute player named Kokopeli. In Hopi **legends**, Kokopeli plays and dances when people are sad.

# Desert Farmers

Corn has always been an important crop in Hopi life. It grows very well in the hot, dry desert climate. The Hopi also grow beans, squash, and pumpkins.

Most crops need rain to grow well. The Hopi have special ceremonies where beautifully dressed performers sing and dance to bring rain.



A Hopi farmer checking the corn plants he is growing in the desert.



At some ceremonies, the dancers perform as **kachinas**. Kachinas are spirits who call the clouds over the cornfields.



A kachina.

## Hopi Culture

The roots of cornstalks can reach 20 feet (6 meters) underground, helping the plant find water in dry desert sand.



The Hopi use gourds to make rattles, cups, and containers.



Young Hopi women traditionally wore their hair in two rolls, called butterfly whorls, until they got married.

# Glossary

**amulet:** an ornament that is believed to have magical powers

**ancient:** from a time early in history

**Appaloosas:** horses that have white or solid-color coats with small spots

**breeders:** people who arrange the mating of animals to produce offspring with particular characteristics

**canyons:** deep, narrow valleys that are usually formed by streams

**ceremonial:** belonging to a ceremony, which is a special activity or event that is often part of a celebration

**confederacy:** a union of groups, states, or nations who have common goals and interests and work together for the good of all members

**culture:** the way of life and beliefs of a group, or society, of people who share the same background

**gourd:** a hard-skinned, seed-filled fruit that, when dried and shaken, sounds like a rattle

**hides:** animal skins

**Indian Territory:** a part of the United States that is now most of Oklahoma

**insulated:** covered or wrapped with material that prevents heat or cold from passing through

**kachinas:** Hopi rain spirits

**legends:** stories or tales handed down from earlier times, which are accepted as true but cannot be proven

**migrated:** moved from one place to another to settle in a new area

**nations:** groups of societies or tribes

**nomadic:** moving from place to place and not having a permanent home

**origin story:** a legend that explains how a group of people came to be

**powwow:** a festival where members of many Native American nations meet to celebrate their cultures

**reconstruction:** anything built to look the same as it did earlier in history

**sash:** a band of fabric that is worn around the waist

**smoke dance:** a dance performing the action of fanning smoke from longhouse fires out through holes in the roof of the longhouse

**spirits:** unseen life forces

**symbol:** an object or figure that stands for something else

**terrace:** a flat, open platform or porch

**tepees:** cone-shaped tents covered with animal hides









## A FIRST LOOK AT HISTORY

History is exciting, and what better way to give young readers “a first look” than with easy-to-read, historic snapshots of the backgrounds and deeds of courageous gladiators, gallant knights, mysterious mummies, resourceful Native Americans, pillaging pirates, and adventurous Vikings. Each book in this dynamic series features fascinating facts, pages loaded with colorful art and photography, and a large glossary to help acquaint budding historians with a variety of historic terms and references.

### Native Americans

The first inhabitants of North America may have arrived as far back as sixty thousand years ago, and ever since then, tribes and nations of Native Americans have been making history.

Who are Native Americans? What are the backgrounds of the Iroquois, Cherokee, Sioux, and Hopi people?

The answers are in this book. Take a look!

Gladiators and Ancient Rome

Knights and Castles

Mummies and Ancient Egypt

Native Americans

Pirates

Vikings

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