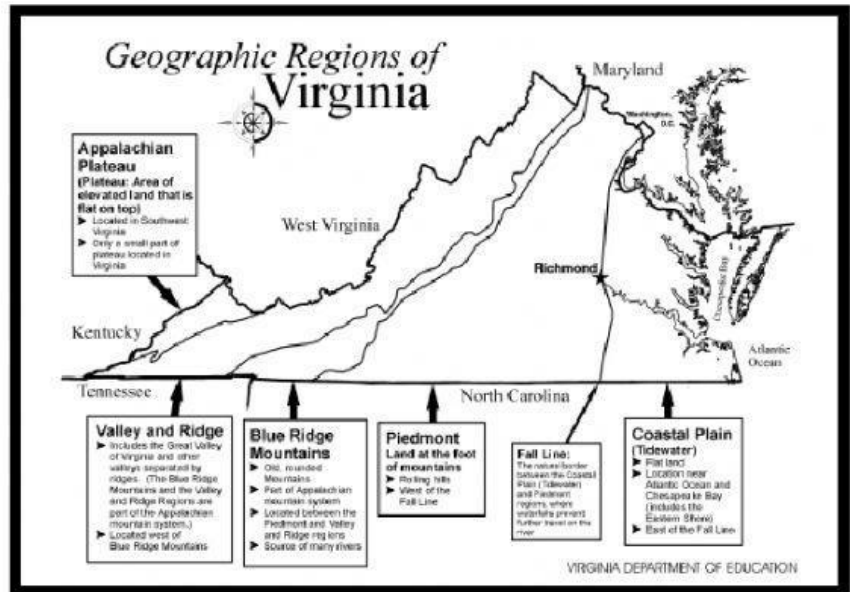


American Indians of Virginia

1. Today, more than 8 million people live in Virginia. These people were not the first ones living in the state, though. Did you know that the American Indians were the first people who lived in Virginia? American Indians lived in all areas of the state. The American Indians in Virginia were divided into three language groups. They were the Algonquian, Siouan, and Iroquoian languages.



2. The Algonquian language was mainly spoken in the Coastal Plains. This area is near the Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay. The Powhatan tribe lived in this region. Powhatan Indians lived in long-houses made of wood and bark. They traveled the waterways in canoes dug out from trees. Settlers in Jamestown relied on the Powhatan to help them survive the winter. They taught them how to farm and hunt. Pocahontas was a girl who was famous for helping the settlers in Jamestown. She was the daughter of Chief Powhatan.
3. American Indians lived in the Piedmont Region as well. This region is located at the foot of the Appalachian Mountains. This area has rolling hills and is west of the James River. The Monacan tribe lived in this part of Virginia. They spoke the Siouan language. The area near the river was good for farming and trade. The Indians also hunted. They grew crops such as corn, tobacco, and squash. They also ate shellfish.
4. In the Appalachian Plateau Region, the Iroquoian language was used. It was spoken by the Cherokee Indians. This region is in southwestern Virginia. Part of a plateau is in this region. A plateau is a piece of elevated land that is flat on top. The Cherokee Indians hunted and farmed like the Powhatan and Monacan tribes.
5. Why were there so many American Indians living in Virginia? The main reason was the climate. The climate in Virginia is mild with four distinct seasons. The American Indians had access to a variety of vegetation throughout the four seasons. A variety of trees and forests covered most of Virginia as well. Due to the forests, the Virginia Indians are also referred to as the Eastern Woodland Indians.

6. The American Indians in Virginia used their environment to meet their basic needs. Their food, clothing, and shelter changed with the seasons and with what was available in the environment. In the winter, they hunted animals and lived off food they had stored. In spring, they hunted, fished, and picked berries. In the summer they grew crops such as beans, corn, or squash. When fall came, they harvested crops and hunted animals to preserve and keep for the winter. Animal skins and fur were used for clothing. The American Indians used materials from nature to build shelters. Today, most American Indians live like other Americans. Their culture has changed over time.
7. When the settlers arrived in Virginia, they began to change the way of life of the American Indians. Their settlements, such as Jamestown, caused American Indians to relocate to other places. The settlers spread disease and took land from the American Indians. Because of this, the lives of the American Indians - the first people living in Virginia - changed forever.

Name _____ Date _____

Main Idea

6. What is the passage mostly about?

- A. Many American Indians were farmers and hunters.
- B. The culture of American Indians has changed over time.
- C. There were several groups of American Indians living in Virginia.
- D. Pocahontas was a Powhatan girl who helped settlers.

7. A student wrote these notes about Indians.

The Coastal Plains Indians
• lived near the ocean and bay
• _____
• traveled by canoe
• Algonquian language

Which of the following completes the list?

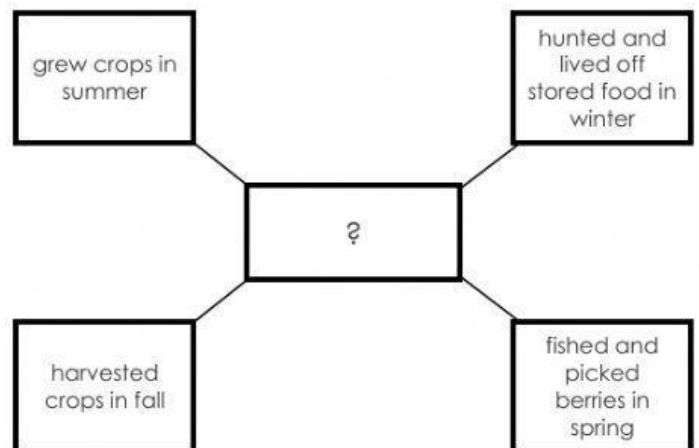
- A. lived in tepees
- B. lived on a plateau
- C. lived in long-houses made of wood
- D. farmed at the base of the mountains

8. What is the main idea of paragraph 5?

- A. The winters are very harsh in Virginia.
- B. The Cherokee lived in the Appalachian Plateau Region.
- C. The settlement of Virginia had a negative impact on the Indians.

D. The climate of Virginia made the area good for Indians to live in year round.

9. Complete this web.



- A. The American Indians adapted to each season.
- B. The American Indians hunted for food.
- C. The American Indians used a variety of materials to build houses.
- D. The American Indians were farmers.

10. The author wrote paragraph 1 -

- A. to tell how settlers affected American Indians
- B. to tell you who the first Americans in Virginia were
- C. to tell you about the regions of Virginia
- D. to tell you how the climate changes in Virginia