

NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURAL GROUPS 1

Below are some Native American nations. These five nations are examples of how people lived in the eight geographic regions of North America before Europeans arrived.

INUIT – SUB-ARCTIC REGIONS

The Inuit lived in what is now northern Canada and Alaska. Temperatures in these Arctic areas are below freezing much of the year. The Inuit used the natural resources from this frozen environment to live.

Their lives depended on the animals that lived in this region. They followed the roaming herds of caribou, seals, fish, and migrating birds such as ducks and geese. These animals were their main source of food and were also used for clothing and shelter.

Their homes were often a simple tent made out of animal skins and plant materials. They would also make igloo structures made out of ice and snow.

KWAKIUTL – PACIFIC NORTHWEST

The homeland of the **Kwakiutl** includes the Pacific northwest coast in the Coastal Range region of North America. The climate in this area is mild. Warm winds bring a lot of moisture from the ocean. As much as 100 inches of rain can fall each year. The land in this area is covered by vast forests of giant cedar trees and abundant rivers, streams and springs. The Kwakiutl used the natural resources from this rich environment to meet their basic needs.

The men hunted deer and moose in the forests, but their main source of food was fish and seals from the rivers, streams, and ocean. The women gathered shellfish and berries to add to their diet.

Many Kwakiutls lived in longhouses - also known as plank houses. Plank houses were similar to the longhouse except they were taller. These houses and canoes were made from cedar wood. Their clothing was made mainly using animal skins and furs, but they also made many articles of clothing from the bark of the cedar trees.

NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURAL NOTES 1

INUIT

Where: _____

Climate: _____

Food: _____

Shelter: _____

Clothing: _____

KWAKIUTL

Where: _____

Climate: _____

Food: _____

Shelter: _____

Clothing: _____

NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURAL GROUPS 2

LAKOTA – PLAINS REGION

The **Lakota** lived in the interior of the United States called the Great Plains region. This region has hot summers and long, cold winters with very little rainfall. The land is covered by huge areas of grasslands, rolling hills, and flowing streams. The Lakota used the natural resources from this dry environment to meet their basic needs.

They hunted buffalo and antelope, grew crops such as maize, beans, and pumpkins, and gathered wild berries and fruits.

Their homes included teepees made of buffalo skins held up by wooden poles and domed-shaped lodges covered by earth or grass. The Lakota people made much of their clothing from the skin of deer and antelope. Men wore animal skin leggings and buffalo furs over their shoulders while women wore dresses made of deerskin. On their feet they wore animal skin moccasins.

PUEBLO – SOUTHWEST REGION

The **Pueblo** lived mainly in the southern Basin and Range region of North America, in the present-day states of New Mexico and Arizona. The climate of this area is hot and dry. The land is covered by desert areas, bordering cliffs, and mountains. The Pueblo used the natural resources from this hot, dry environment to meet their basic needs.

In the past, the men hunted wild animals like deer, rabbits, antelope and bear for food, while women and children collected wild berries. The Pueblo also farmed. They raised corn, beans, and squash and used irrigation – or bringing water to farmland – to grow food in the desert.

Their homes were built out of a mixture of sun-dried earth and straw called adobe. Many of their pueblos, or villages, were located on the flat tops of mesas, which were elevated areas of land with a flat top, or in natural caves located on the steep sides of canyon walls. The clothes of the Pueblos were made of leather, fur, and cotton. They were one of the few Indian groups who knew how to grow cotton and weave it into cloth.

NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURAL NOTES 2

LAKOTA

Where: _____

Climate: _____

Food: _____

Shelter: _____

Clothing: _____

PUEBLO

Where: _____

Climate: _____

Food: _____

Shelter: _____

Clothing: _____

NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURAL GROUPS 3

IROQUOIS – EASTERN WOODLANDS REGION

The homeland of the **Iroquois** includes the northeastern part of North America called the Eastern Woodland. This area is covered by thick forests, mountains, hills, rivers, lakes, and streams. It has cold winters with snow and warm summers with plenty of rain. The Iroquois used the natural resources from their environment to meet their basic needs.

In the past, they hunted deer and black bear, fished, grew corn, beans, and squash, and gathered nuts and berries.

Their homes were called longhouses and were made of bent wooden poles and sheets of elm tree bark. They made most of their clothing from deerskin including long skirts, vests, leggings, moccasins and fur capes.

TODAY

Today some members of these nations still live in their homelands where they continue to observe or follow ancient traditions. Other Native Americans, however, have chosen to leave tribal lands and now live in many areas across North America.

NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURAL NOTES 3

IROQUOIS

Where: _____

Climate: _____

Food: _____

Shelter: _____

Clothing: _____

TODAY

Native Americans still live in their _____.

Some have decided to live throughout the

_____.