

Grade 7 -- Informational

Native Americans in Early Nebraska

In the 1800s, multiple Native American tribes—including Pawnee, Ponca, Omaha, Otoe, Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Lakota (Sioux)—were located in what is now Nebraska. Since these groups lived in the same region, they had many similarities. However, differences existed in their ways of life—some lived in permanent villages, while others roamed the plains to hunt buffalo. Each tribe had its own culture, which made it unique.

Organization

Native Americans in Nebraska had many similar values. They respected the rights of their people and admired bravery. The groups were organized in similar ways.

Each tribe had a form of government. A chief was the leader of the government. Sometimes a person inherited the position of chief, and sometimes a person earned this position. No matter the circumstances under which a person became chief, the leader was respected for wisdom and bravery. In some cases, a council helped the chief make decisions.

Location

The Pawnee were the largest Native American culture in Nebraska in the early 1800s. At their height, they numbered 10,000 to 12,000 people. The Pawnee established villages near the Platte River Valley and the Republican River Valley.

The Ponca lived in the northern part of the state, along the Niobrara River. The Omaha and Otoe were located in the eastern part of Nebraska along the Missouri River. The Omaha settled in northeastern Nebraska north of the Platte River. The Otoe lived south of the Omaha, and their territory extended to the present-day Missouri border.

The Cheyenne, Sioux, and Arapaho lived in western Nebraska. The Cheyenne could be found in the northwest section of the state; the Sioux lived in the north central part; and the Arapaho lived in the southwestern part, bordering what are now Oklahoma and Colorado.

Housing

Some Native American tribes lived in permanent houses called earth lodges. As many as thirty people might live in one lodge. The lodges were mainly domed-shaped structures built with logs and earth. Logs provided the framework for walls and support beams. The roof was covered with grass and earth. The center of the roof was left open to allow smoke to escape from the fire pit dug in the floor. The Pawnee, Ponca, Omaha, and Otoe lived in these types of structures.

Native American tribes in central and western Nebraska lived in tepees. Long poles were crossed to form the frame of the cone-shaped structure. Animal skins were sewn together and positioned over the frame. A fire pit was dug in the center of a tepee. A hole was left in the center of the roof to allow the smoke to escape. The Cheyenne, Sioux, and Arapaho lived in tepees year round. At times, the Pawnee, Omaha, Ponca, and Otoe traveled to hunt buffalo. During these times, they lived in tepees, which were easy to construct and to disassemble.

Clothing

Native Americans in Nebraska dressed in a similar manner. Their clothes were mainly made from deer, elk, antelope, or buffalo skins. Women wore dresses or skirts made from animal skins.

Men wore breechcloths and leather leggings in colder weather. Shirts and blouses were also made from animal skin.

Most women and men wore their hair long and often braided. Ponca and Pawnee men, however, were known to wear a scalp lock—a long lock or tuft of hair grown from the crown of an otherwise shaved head.

Men and women wore moccasins to protect their feet. Cheyenne women usually wore high, fringed boots instead of moccasins.

The Ponca, Pawnee, and Arapaho decorated some of their clothing with porcupine quills, beadwork, and elk's teeth. Other Native Americans also decorated some of their clothing with meaningful designs. Most groups painted their faces for special occasions.

Ways of Life

The Pawnee, Ponca, Omaha, and Otoe were farmers. They planted a variety of vegetables, such as squash, corn, and beans. Many also gathered fruit that grew near rivers. They learned how to dry some types of fruits and vegetables for future use. They placed the dried food in a cache that had been dug into the earth.

The Cheyenne, Sioux, and Arapaho were nomadic people. They traveled with the buffalo. The buffalo were used as a food source and for clothing, blankets, shoes, and tools. Native Americans traded buffalo skins for other goods.

After horses were introduced on the plains, some tribes became seminomadic. The Omaha, Pawnee, Ponca, and Otoe kept their agricultural ways of life, but they also went on buffalo hunts twice a year. Each group had a similar way of traveling. A travois was used for moving possessions. A travois was created with two long tepee poles. A buffalo skin was fastened between the poles to produce a carrier. The poles were placed over the shoulders of a dog or a horse, with the carrier trailing behind on the ground.

Native Americans are an important part of Nebraska's present and past. An understanding of their ways of life in the past provides insights into Nebraska's various cultures today.

1) What does the phrase "At their height" refer to in paragraph 4? (LA 7.1.5.c)

- a) the height of the Pawnee
- b) the elevation of the Pawnee's camp
- c) the greatest number of population of the Pawnee
- d) the location of the Pawnee in the state

2) Which term best describes a breechcloth worn by Native American men? (LA 7.1.5.c)

- a) coat
- b) gloves
- c) pants
- d) shirt

3) What caused some Native American tribes to become semi-nomadic? (LA 7.1.6.d)

- a) loss of food sources
- b) better farming methods
- c) introduction of the horse
- d) trading other tribes for goods

- 4) What is the primary organizational pattern used in this passage? (LA 7.1.6.e)
- a) Sequence
 - b) Cause and Effect
 - c) Compare/Contrast
 - d) Proposition/Support
- 5) Which quote from the passage presents an opinion? (LA 7.1.6.e)
- a) Each tribe had a culture that made it unique.
 - b) Native Americans in Nebraska had many similar values.
 - c) Native Americans are an important part of Nebraska's present and past.
 - d) The Pawnee were the largest Native American culture in Nebraska in the early 1800s.
- 6) Under which heading would you find Native American tribes that were farmers? (LA 7.1.6.e)
- a) housing
 - b) location
 - c) organization
 - d) ways of life
- 7) Which conclusion about Native Americans in Nebraska is supported by the passage? (LA 7.1.6.j)
- a) Native Americans were located in one central area in Nebraska.
 - b) Clothing worn by Native Americans in Nebraska was very different.
 - c) All Nebraska Native Americans practiced the same lifestyles.
 - d) Understanding the ways of Native Americans helps to understand today's society.

C4L Reading - Item Writing Tally Sheet

Grade 7- Informational

Passage Name: Native Americans in Early Nebraska

Gr7 Vocabulary	DOK Level	DOK 1	DOK 2	DOK 3	Item Total
LA 7.1.5 Vocabulary: Students will build literary, general academic, and content specific grade level vocabulary.					
LA 7.1.5.a <i>Determine meaning of words through structural analysis, using knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots, prefixes, and suffixes to understand complex words, including words in science, mathematics, and social studies</i>	1, 2				
LA 7.1.5.c <i>Select and apply knowledge of context clues (e.g., word, phrase, sentence and paragraph clues, re-reading) and text features (e.g., glossary, headings, subheadings, index, tables, maps, graphs, charts) appropriate to a particular text to determine meaning of unknown words</i>	2				2
LA 7.1.5.d <i>Analyze semantic relationships (e.g., figurative language, connotations, subtle distinctions)</i>	2,3				
Gr7 Comprehension	DOK Level	DOK 1	DOK 2	DOK 3	Item Total
LA 7.1.6 Comprehension: Students will extract and construct meaning using prior knowledge, applying text information, and monitoring comprehension while reading grade level text.					
LA 7.1.6.a <i>Analyze the meaning, reliability, and validity of the text considering author's purpose and perspective</i>	2, 3				
LA 7.1.6.c <i>Analyze author's use of literary devices (e.g., foreshadowing, personification, idiom, oxymoron, hyperbole, flashback, suspense, symbolism, irony)</i>	2, 3				
LA 7.1.6.d <i>Summarize, analyze, and synthesize informational text using main idea and supporting details</i>	2, 3				1
LA 7.1.6.e <i>Apply knowledge of organizational patterns found in informational text (e.g., sequence, description, cause and effect, compare/contrast, fact/opinion, proposition/support)</i>	2				3
LA 7.1.6.f <i>Apply knowledge of text features to locate information and gain meaning from a text (e.g., index, annotations, maps, charts, tables, graphs, headings, subheadings)</i>	1, 2				

<p>LA 7.1.6.g <i>Explain and make inferences based on the characteristics of narrative and informational genres (e.g., textbooks, myths, fantasies, science fiction, drama, periodicals, essays)</i></p>	2				
<p>LA 7.1.6.j <i>Generate and/or answer literal, inferential, critical, and interpretive questions, analyzing prior knowledge, information from the text and additional sources, to support answers</i></p>	1, 2, 3				1