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The Iroquois

Brief #1

Focus
The Iroquois were native people from the Eastern
Woodlands of North
America.

The Iroquois were a group of five Native American tribes. These tribes were the following:

- Cayuga
- Mohawk
- Onondaga
- Oneida
- Seneca

A tribe is a group of people who have the same ancestors. Tribes usually have a single leader. Tribes also share similar traditions and beliefs.

The Iroquois lived in a cultural region called the Eastern Woodlands. A cultural region is an area where people with similar ways of life live. A cultural region is larger than a tribe.



Iroquois League

There was a time when the Iroquois did not get along. They often fought. Many people died. Deganawidah and Hiawatha were men from different tribes. They came together and convinced all of the tribes to stop fighting and to treat each other with respect. The tribes agreed that it was time to live in peace. They formed the Iroquois League in 1570. A league is a group of people, with a common interest, who form an association.

Vocabulary

- 1. tribe
- 2. cultural region
- 3. league
- 4. longhouse

The tribes in the Iroquois League had 50 representatives. These people met once a year at the Great Council of Fire. The representatives created laws. They also had a constitution. In 1722, the Tuscarora tribe was admitted into the Iroquois League.



The Iroquois

Brief #1 (cont.)

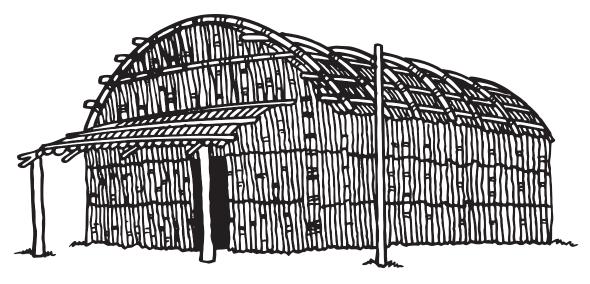


Everyday Life

The Iroquois lived in the area that today we call New York state. Their lands were covered in thick forests. There were also many lakes, rivers, and streams.

- The Iroquois fished.
- They hunted deer and elk.
- They grew corn, squash, and beans.

The Iroquois lived in longhouses. A longhouse is a building made from saplings and the bark of trees. These longhouses were over 100 feet long. Several families lived in one longhouse. An Iroquois village could have dozens of longhouses. The Iroquois often built fences, called palisades, around their villages. This helped to protect them from their enemies.





Religion

The Iroquois had many strong spiritual beliefs. They had six festivals throughout the year. At these festivals they sang and danced. They gave thanks to their crops and to the animals they hunted and killed.

The Iroquois also created masks that they called *false faces*. They were carved from wood and then painted. The Iroquois believed that illness was caused by evil spirits. These masks were used in healing ceremonies to help chase away the evil spirits.



Lacrosse

The Iroquois played the game of lacrosse. The way that they played it was very different from how people play it today. Some teams had over a thousand players. The goals were also miles away from each other. A single lacrosse game could last for three days!

Invention, Industry, and Immigration

Activities



Brief #1—Transportation and the Transcontinental Railroad

- View: Have students look at some old photographs of various stagecoaches and maps of old stagecoach routes.
- Write: To help students understand 19th century communication, have them write letters to students in another classroom. Collect student letters. Wait 10 days and then select an Express Rider to deliver them. Wait another 10 days to deliver responses.
- **Draw a Map:** Have students draw maps of the Transcontinental Railroad. Make sure they include all of the cities and states that the railroad passes through.
- Create a Travel Brochure: Have students design brochures that advertise a coast-to-coast journey on the Transcontinental Railroad. Make sure students include information about various stops along the way and what type of scenery passengers might observe.
- Create a Board Game: Have groups of students create traditional board games about the building of the Transcontinental Railroad. Make sure they include game pieces and a detailed explanation of the rules of the game. Have groups swap games to play.

Keywords: stagecoach, Pony Express, Transcontinental Railroad, first person accounts of the Transcontinental Railroad



Brief #2—Light and Sound

- **Make a Poster:** Have students create posters which illustrate the International Morse Code Alphabet.
- Create a Code: Using flashlights or flags, have students create their own coded alphabets. Ask them to demonstrate a few words of their codes to the class.
- **Give up Technology:** Arrange a day(s) in your classroom where you will not use any 20th century inventions. Have students write about their experiences.
- Make a Booklet: Have students create booklets which show how the telephone has changed since its beginnings. Students should create illustrations of phones from different time periods and information about advances to the phone.

Keywords: Morse Code, semaphore, Aldis lamp, history of telephone



Brief #3—Immigrants and the Industrial Revolution

- Recite: Have students learn "The New Colossus" by Emma Lazarus and recite it to the class.
- Make a Model: Have students create models of the Statue of Liberty.
- **Research:** Have students research the Labor Day holiday.

Activities

Invention, Industry, and Immigration (cont.)



Brief #3—Immigrants and the Industrial Revolution (cont.)

- **Search:** Using the Ellis Island website, have students search for family members who may have come through Ellis Island.
- Make a Graph: Provide students with census and immigration data from the relevant time period. Ask them to make graphs which display statistics regarding immigration to the United States between 1880 and 1920.

Keywords: "The New Collosus," the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, U.S. Census Bureau, Immigration and Naturalization Service, history of Labor Day



Activity Center

Inventions: Create an activity center which focuses on inventions of the 19th century. Include diagrams, photos, books, and articles about inventions and inventors. After students explore the inventions, have them do one of the following: create a time line of important inventions, write a brief biography about an important 19th century inventor, or select one invention and explain how it works.

Keywords: 19th century inventions, 19th century inventors



Internet Resources

http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/kidszone/

Official website of the Federal Communications Commission Kidzone area.

http://www.ellisisland.org/

Official website of Ellis Island.

http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/hine-photos/

The National Archives—photographs and documentation of child labor.

http://cprr.org/Game/Interactive_Railroad_Project/indexy.htm

The Great Railroad Race—an interactive site for kids.