Native Americans of the Southwest

Culture of the Southwest Native Americans
The land, climate and natural resources that were available to the Southwest Native American tribes resulted in the adoption of the culture shared by the Southwest Native Americans. This section on the Southwest Native Americans group provides facts and information about their languages, the Geography and Environment which was a massive desert region.

The animals and the Plants, Trees and Crops provided their food, clothing, shelter and decorations - the Hopi, Zuni and Yuam tribes were farmers whereas the Apache and Navajo tribes were nomadic hunters. Their Houses therefore depended on the materials available to them and whether the home was permanent or temporary.

There are also facts and info about the Traditions, Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs of the Southwest Native Americans group.

Southwest Native Americans - Lifestyle (Way of Living)
The climate, land and natural resources that were available to the Indian tribes resulted in the adoption of the Southwest Native Americans culture.

- Name of Group: Southwest Native Americans
- Languages: Siouan, Algonquian, Caddoan, Uto-Aztecan and Athabaskan
- Geography of the State of Southwest Native Americans: Dry, rocky land with cactus. Hot and arid. Little rain, crops required irrigation
- Animals: Desert animals such as reptiles and snakes
- Livestock: Sheep and Goats
- Natural Resources: Corn, beans, squash, sunflower seeds
- Culture and Lifestyle adopted: Farmers and some Nomadic hunters such as the Navajo
- Types of housing, homes or shelters: Farmers lived in Adobe (pueblo) houses. Hunters lived in Hogans, brush shelters or wickiups
- Famous Tribes of Southwest Native Americans: Hopi, Pueblo, Zuni, Yuam, Apache and Navajo.
- The Native Indians who lived on the borders of lands often reflected two different types of lifestyles.

Southwest Native Americans Culture groups
The Indian tribes who are categorised in the Southwest Native Americans culture group fall into three main categories:

- The Farmers - The Yuma and Pima
- The Villagers - The Zuni, Pueblo and Hopi
- The Nomads - The Apache and Navajo
Southwest Native Americans - Languages
The languages of the Southwest Native Americans included Siouan, Algonquian, Caddoan, Uto-Aztecan and Athabaskan

Southwest Geography and Environment
The Geography and Environment can be generally described as inhospitable desert land covered with cactus. Dry, rocky land. Hot and arid. Little rain, crops required irrigation

Southwest Native American Tribes
- Hopi
- Pueblo
- Navajo
- Zuni
- Pima

Southwest Native Americans - Animals
The animals available to the Southwest Native Americans included desert animals such as reptiles and snakes. There was also wild turkey which supplemented their diet.

Southwest Native Americans - Crops
The crops included corn (maize). The tribes grew 24 different types of corn. They also grew beans, squash, melons, pumpkins and fruit. Huge cactus called the organ pipe and the saguaro grew in the desert.

Southwest Native Americans - Houses, Shelters and Homes
The different types of Houses, Shelters and Homes depended on the materials available and whether the home was permanent or temporary. The homes of the Southwest Indians included Adobe (pueblo) clay houses and Hogans. Wooden or bone ladders were used to reach higher buildings and rooms. Brush shelters or wickiups were also commonly used.

Southwest Native Americans - Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs
The Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs were based on Animism. Animism was a commonly shared doctrine, or belief, of the indigenous people of North America and Canada including the Southwest Indian tribes. Animism is based on the spiritual or religious idea that the universe and all natural objects have souls or spirits. In this religion it is believed that souls or spirits exist not only in humans but also in animals, plants, trees, rocks etc. This belief is also extended to natural phenomena such as thunder storms and rain and geographic features such as mountains, caves or rivers also possess souls or spirits. Kachina figures - sacred spirits of dead ancestors who bring the rain. The Shaman or Medicine Men of the tribes also use objects called Prayer Sticks. The ceremonies of the Southwest Native Americans included the winter and summer solstice festivals of the Niman during which the Snake Dance was performed and the Soyal festival.

Southwest Native Americans - Kachina Dolls
Kachina dolls are made from wood and had masks and costumes to look like the men who dressed up as Kachina spirits.
Native Americans of the Southeast

Culture of the Southeast Native Americans
This section on the Southeast Native Americans group provides facts and information about their languages, the Geography and Environment which was basically a humid, fertile agricultural region. The animals of the area and the Plants, Trees and Crops provided their food, clothing, shelter and decorations. Their Houses, Shelters and Homes depended on the materials available to them and whether the home was permanent or temporary.

The Southeast area was perfect for growing many crops including maize, beans, squash and tobacco. There are also facts and info about the Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs of the Southeast Native Americans group. The language of the Southeast Native Americans was Muskogean which was spoken by indigenous tribes including the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek and Seminole who are often referred to as the Five Civilized Tribes.

Southeast Native Americans - Lifestyle (Way of Living)
The climate, land and natural resources that were available to the Indian tribes resulted in the adoption of the Southeast Native Americans culture.

- Name of Group: Southeast Native Americans - The Five Civilised tribes
- Languages: Siouan, Algonquian, Caddoan, Uto-Aztecan and Athabaskan
- Geography of the State of Southeast Native Americans: River Valleys, mountains and swamps
- Animals: Rabbits, wild hogs, turkeys, eagles, opossums, raccoons, squirrels and deer
- Natural Resources: Corn, beans, dried fruit, pumpkins and nuts
- Culture and Lifestyle adopted: Nomadic Hunters, Fishers and farmers
- Clothing: Deerskin clothes, rabbit fur and porcupine quills
- Transport: Canoes
- Art: Pottery and baskets
- Types of housing, homes or shelters: Caddo 'Beehive' Thatched Grass Houses, Chickees and Wattle and Daub Houses
- Famous Tribes of Southeast Native Americans: Natchez, Yuchi, Caddo, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek and Seminole
- The Native Indians who lived on the borders of lands often reflected two different types of lifestyles.
- **Southeast Native Americans - Languages**
The languages of the Southeast Native Americans included Siouan, Algonquian, Caddoan, Uto-Aztecan and Athabaskan. Discover facts about each of these Southeast Indian Tribes.

Southeast Native Americans – Tribes
Southeast Native Americans - Geography and Environment
The Geography and Environment can be generally described as a humid, fertile agricultural region. The region offers mountains, rivers and forests in the north and grasses and swamps in the south including the Everglades swamp in what is now the State of Florida. The climate is hot in the summer and mild in the winter.

Southeast Native Americans - Animals
The animals were very important to the Southeast Native Americans. The animals available to the Southeast Indians included rabbits, wild hogs, turkeys, eagles, opossums, raccoons, squirrels and deer. The uses of the animals were varied and included food, clothing, shelter and decorations.

Southeast Native Americans - Food
The food eaten by the Southeast Native Americans included corn bread, hominy grits, tomatoes, potatoes and sweet potatoes. Turkeys also supplemented their diets.

Southeast Native Americans - Houses, Shelters and Homes
The different types of Houses, Shelters and Homes depended on the materials available and whether the home was permanent or temporary. The homes of the Southeast Indians included Wattle and Daub houses and chickees. The Seminole tribes often lived in small villages consisting of chickees, a communal eating house and storage facilities. The Caddo lived in the famous 'Beehive' Thatched Grass Houses.

Southeast Native Americans - Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs
The Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs were based on Animism. Animism was a commonly shared doctrine, or belief, of the indigenous people of North America and Canada including the Southeast Indian tribes. Animism is based on the spiritual or religious idea that the universe and all natural objects have souls or spirits. In this religion it is believed that souls or spirits exist not only in humans but also in animals, plants, trees, rocks etc. This belief is also extended to natural phenomena such as thunder storms and rain and geographic features such as mountains, caves or rivers also possess souls or spirits. Tricksters feature in the legends and mythology of the Southeast peoples as do heroic figures or "transformers" who transform, or change, the world into its present state. They also have stories about councils of animals.

Southeast Native Americans - The Shaman
The Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs of the Southeast Indian tribes were also dominated by
Shamanism in which a religious leader called a Shaman acted as a medium between the visible and spirit worlds.

**Southeast Native Americans - The Green Corn Festival**
The Green Corn Festival was one of the most important ceremonies of the Southeast Indians. The festival was celebrated in the fall. Chanting shamans and dancing warriors circled a cooking fire, carrying corn as can be seen by the above picture. After cooking the corn it was presented as a sacred offering to the Great Spirit. A new fire was built and enough corn for the entire village was made whilst people danced in celebration.
Native Americans of the Northwest

Culture of the Northwest Coast Americans
The way of life of the Northwest Coast Native Americans Indians was dictated by climate, land, natural raw materials available and the animals, fish, birds, plants, nuts, berries and trees. This was a plentiful area consisting of forests, rivers and oceans and runs along the Pacific Ocean coast from southern Alaska to Washington state.

Their subsistence of the tribes was related to agriculture and hunting. The natural resources and materials available provided the food and the clothing of the Northwest Coast Native Americans. The weather and the changing seasons also affected their way of life at different times of the year.

Their language, weapons, trading currencies, beliefs, ceremonies and religions were also important elements of their way of life. The Northwest Coast Native Americans who lived on the borders of lands often reflected two types of lifestyles.

Northwest Coast Native Americans - Lifestyle (Way of Living)
The climate, land and natural resources that were available to the Indian tribes resulted in the adoption of the Northwest Coast Native Americans culture.

- Name of Group: Northwest Coast Native Americans
- Languages: Chinookan, Athapaskan and Penutian
- Geography of the State of Northwest Coast Native Americans: Heavy rainfall, tall dense forests, oceans, mountains and rivers.
- Animals: Mountain goats and sheep, deer, moose, bear and elk.
- Fish: Fish and Sea animals including seals, whales, salmon and shell fish
- Natural Resources: Red cedar trees, forests, mountains, rivers and the Pacific Ocean
- Culture and Lifestyle adopted: Fishers
- Clothing: Raincoats were made from the inner bark of the cedar tree
- Types of housing, homes or shelters: Plankhouses
- Famous Tribes of Northwest Coast Native Americans: Haida, Chinook, Eyak, Coast Salish, Tlingit, Tillamook and Chimakum
- The Native Indians who lived on the borders of lands often reflected two different types of lifestyles.

Northwest Native Americans - Location
The mild climate, fertile land and a large variety of natural resources that were available to the Indian tribes resulted in the adoption of the hunter fisher culture shared by the Northwest Coast Native Americans along the Pacific coast from British Columbia to the top of Northern California. The Northwest Coast culture area is 1,500 miles long and about fifty miles wide. The location of the Northwest Native Americans consists primarily of the coastal areas of Oregon,
Washington, Southeast Alaska and British Columbia. The area also includes many islands, the most important being Vancouver Island and the Queen Charlotte Islands.

**Northwest Indians - Other Tribes of the Northwest**
The other tribes of the Northwest Indians known to inhabit the area were the Calapuya, Chehalis, Chinook, Chastacosta, Chelamela, Clallam, Clatsop, Kuitsh, Lummi, Nooksack, Snake, Tillamook, Willapa and Yamel.

**Northwest Native Americans - Lifestyle (Way of Living)**
This section on Northwest Coast Native Americans group provides facts and information about their languages, the Geography and Environment. The animals and the Plants, Trees and Crops provided their food, clothing, shelter and decorations. Their Houses, Shelters and Homes depended on the materials available to them and whether the home was permanent or temporary but the most usual type of accommodation was the Plankhouse. There are also facts and info about the Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs of the Northwest Coast Native Americans group. Tribes included those who spoke the Athapaskan language including the Haida and Tlingit and those who spoke the Penutian language including the Chinook and the Coos.

**Northwest Native Americans - Animals and Fish**
The animals were very important to the Northwest Coast Native Americans. There was a variety of many different animals including mountain goats and sheep, deer, moose, bear and elk. Fish and Sea animals including seals, whales, salmon and shell fish. The uses of the animals were varied and included food, clothing, shelter and decorations. Dogs were the only domesticated animals and they were used to pull dog sleds.

**Northwest Native Americans - Houses, Shelters and Homes**
The different types of Houses, Shelters and Homes depended on the materials available and whether the home was permanent or temporary. The homes of the Northwest Coast Indians included Plankhouses. Plank Houses were common and were permanent houses built as homes by the fishing tribes of the Northwest Coast, such as the Chinooks. Plank houses are made from long, flat planks of cedar wood lashed to a wooden frame and made good houses for people in cold climates who lived in areas with lots of tall trees.

**Northwest Native Americans - Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs**
The Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs were based on Totemism and Animism. Animism was a commonly shared doctrine, or belief, of the indigenous people of North America and Canada including the Northwest Coast Native American tribes. Animism is based on the spiritual or religious idea that the universe and all natural objects have souls or spirits. In this religion it is believed that souls or spirits exist not only in humans but also in animals, plants, trees, rocks etc. This belief is also extended to natural phenomena such as thunder storms and rain and geographic features such as mountains, caves or rivers also possess souls or spirits. The famous customs and traditions of these people included the use of Totem Poles and the Potlatch ceremony which often featured masked dancers. Tricksters feature in the legends and
mythology of the Northwest peoples as do heroic figures or "transformers" who transform, or change, the world into its present state. There are also many legends about the Clans.

**Northwest Native Americans - Potlatch**
The along the north-west coast there existed the curious custom known as potlatch. A Potlatch is an opulent ceremonial feast held by some Indians of the northwestern coast of North America to celebrate a great occasion such as a marriage or birth. The host of the Potlatch gives gifts to tribesmen and others to display his superior wealth. Personal property is also destroyed in another show of wealth and generosity. Those who gave away or destroyed the most property earned the greatest social prestige. Potlatch is a way for people to share their wealth with the community, to strengthen their leadership claims and to earn the respect of the tribe. In accordance with this custom a man might save for half a lifetime in order to acquire the rank of chief by finally giving away his entire goods and belongings at a grand public feast.

**Northwest Native Americans - Totem Poles**
Totem poles were important to the North Coast Native Americans. Family history was visually displayed outside the home of every Native Indian via a Totem Pole. Totem poles were made of logs which were carved with various symbols including animals, plants, birds, and religious spirits.

**Northwest Native Americans - Languages**
The languages of the Northwest Coast Native Americans included Chinookan, Athapaskan and Penutian languages. Penutian encompassed a large division of languages spoken in the Pacific northwest, near the Columbia River basin, including Chinookan, Tsimshianic and Utian.

**Northwest Native Americans - Geography and Environment**
The Northwest area includes the States of Oregon and Washington. The Geography and Environment can be generally described as a region with heavy rainfall, tall dense forests, oceans, mountains and rivers. All the Native Americans lived near the water, either the Pacific Ocean or an inland river or lake, and relied heavily on water for their survival. A combination of the cedar tree forests and salmon filled rivers provided a good living in an area which was rich in natural resources.
The Culture of the Great Plains Indians

The way of life of the Great Plains Indians was dictated by climate, land, natural raw materials available and the animals, fish, birds, plants, nuts, berries and trees. Their subsistence was related to agriculture and hunting. The natural resources and materials available provided the food and the clothing of the Great Plains Indians. The weather and the changing seasons also affected their way of life at different times of the year. Their language, weapons, trading currencies, beliefs, ceremonies and religions were also important elements of their way of life.

The European settlers introduced the horse to North America and the Great Plains Indians became expert horsemen and hunters. The horse enabled them to adopt a nomadic lifestyle following the great herds of animals.

Great Plains Indians - Lifestyle (Way of Living)

The climate, land and natural resources that were available to the Indian tribes resulted in the adoption of the Great Plains Indians culture.

- Name of Group: Great Plains Indians
- Languages: Siouan, Algonquian, Caddoan, Uto-Aztecan and Athabaskan
- Geography of the State: There was enough rain for a thick layer of grass, which attracted large herds of grazing animals like the bison (buffalo). There was not enough rain to grow many trees which were only found by rivers
- Animals: Bison (Buffalo), deer, elk, bear, beaver, porcupine, antelope and wolves
- Culture and Lifestyle adopted: Nomadic Hunters and farmers
- Transport: Horse and travois
- Types of housing, homes or shelters: Tepees were used by the nomadic hunters. The semi-nomadic Mandan used tepees but also maintained permanent earth lodge villages situated along rivers.
- Famous Tribes of Great Plains Indians: Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Sioux, Pawnee, Crow, Comanche and Arapaho
- The Native Indians who lived on the borders of lands often reflected two different types of lifestyles.

Great Plains Indians - Languages and Way of Life

The languages of the Great Plains Indians included Siouan, Algonquian, Uto-Aztecan, Caddoan and Athabaskan. The introduction of the horse in the 1750's enabled many Indian tribes from other regions to travel to the Great Plains to hunt buffalo. The Great Plains hunting culture was relatively short lived as it was replaced in the 1880's by the European settlers who became the farmers, cowboys and cattlemen. In the 1870's the deliberate great slaughter of the northern bison herds began designed to prevent the Native Indians continuing the Great Plains lifestyle.
Great Plains Indian Tribes

- Arapaho
- Arikara
- Assiniboine
- Blackfoot
- Comanche
- Cheyenne
- Crow
- Gros Ventre
- Hidatsa
- Ioway
- Kaw
- Kiowa
- Kitsai
- Missouria
- Mandan
- Omaha
- Osage
- Otoe
- Pawnee
- Plains Ojibwe
- Plains Cree
- Plains Apache
- Ponca
- Quapaw
- Sarcee
- Sioux
- Stoney
- Tonkawa
- Wichita

Great Plains Indians - Geography and Environment
The Great Plains area includes the States of Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota. The Geography and Environment can be generally described as hot summers and cold winters. Grass covered prairies. Some streams and rivers.

Great Plains Indians - The Great Spirit
Plains Indians believed in a great god, the Sioux called that god the ‘Wakan Tanka,’ which means the Great Spirit.

Great Plains Indians - Vision Quest
A vision quest was an attempt to achieve a vision of a future guardian spirit often through the process of fasting or self-torture.

Great Plains Indians - The Sun Dance
The Sun Dance was a ceremonial dance performed by North American Plains Indians in honor of the sun at the summer solstice. This mystic ceremony was to prove bravery by overcoming pain. It was typically marked by several days of sleepless fasting and group dancing. Ritualized self-torture was undertaken as a penance or to induce a trance state or vision.

Great Plains Indians - The Blackfoot Confederacy
The Blackfoot Confederacy consisted of the Piegan people, the Blood people called the Kainai, the Blackfoot People also called the Siksika which means ‘Blackfoot’ and the Sarcee tribe.

Additional Facts

- Many of the tribes of the Great Plains were nomadic and followed the buffalo migrations which provided their food. These tribes spent a good part of the year living in camps that could easily be dismantled and moved to follow the buffalo migrations. Other tribes of the plains were more sedentary. These tribes lived in permanent villages year round. They hunted but also relied on farming for their food supply.
- Buffalo were extremely important to the Native Americans of the Great Plains. It was their main food source, the hide was used for shelter and clothing, the bones were used to make
weapons and tools, the horns were used for various items including spoons and cups, tails were used as whips, and the buffalos stomach was used as a container to hold water.

- The Indians used the natural resources available to them wisely. They only killed the number of buffalo they needed and did not waste what they killed. White settlers however hunted buffalo for sport and brought them to near extinction by 1884.
- Buffalo was the Plains Indians made food source but they also hunted other animals like antelope, and elk.
- The Indians of the Great Plains were known for living in tepees while on their hunting trips. Tepees were easy to assemble, disassemble, and transport; making them excellent housing for the nomadic tribes of the plains. They were assembled by leaning long poles together and then placing buffalo hides over them.
- The Plains Indians would transport many of their processions by using the long poles of their tepees, with animal hides strung between them, to create a sled. This sled was named a travois. The travois would be dragged behind horses or dogs.
Native Americans of the Eastern Woodlands

Woodland Indians - Culture
The climate and natural resources that were available resulted in the adoption of the culture shared by the Woodland Indians. This section on the Woodland Indians group provides facts and information about their languages, the Geography and Environment which featured inland rivers, streams and lakes.

The animals and the Plants and Trees including Poplars, birches, elms, maples, oaks, pines, fir trees and spruces and fir trees. provided their food, clothing, shelter and decorations. Their Houses, Shelters and Homes depended on the materials available to them and included fortified villages.

There are also facts and info about the Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs of the Woodland Indians group whose tribes included the Algonquian speaking Fox, Shawnee, Wampanoag, Delaware, Pequot and Menominee tribes.

Woodland Indians - Lifestyle (Way of Living)
Learn about the life of the people of the Northeast Woodland Indians. Discover facts and information about the natural resources available, the languages, culture, clothing, their religion, beliefs and ceremonies. Illustrated with Pictures and images of the Woodland Indians culture. The climate, land and natural resources that were available to the Indian tribes resulted in the adoption of the Woodland Indians culture.

- Name of Group: Northeast / Eastern Woodlands Indians
- Culture: Hunter-gatherers, farmers, fishers, trappers
- Languages: Algonquian
- Geography of the State of Eastern Woodlands Indians: Lush woodlands, rivers, ocean
- Animals: Squirrels, white-tailed deer, raccoon, bear, squirrel, beaver, moose, and caribou
- Fish and Sea Mammals: Whales, Seal, Fish and shell fish
- Crops: Corn (maize), pumpkin, squash, beans and tobacco
- Trees: Poplars, birches, elms, maples, oaks, pines, fir trees and spruces and fir trees.
- Transport: Birchbark canoes
- Clothing: Little clothing in the summer, animal skins (Bucksfin) in winter
- Types of housing, homes or shelters: Wigwams aka Birchbark houses and Longhouses
- Famous Tribes of Eastern Woodlands: Miami, Lenape, Iroquois, Massachusetts, Powhatan, Abenaki, Shawnee and Pequot, Fox, Sauk, Wampanoag, Delaware, Huron (Wyandot), Mohawk, Mohican and Menominee
The Native Indians who lived on the borders of lands often reflected two different types of lifestyles

**Woodland Indians - Houses, Shelters and Homes**
The different types of Houses, Shelters and Homes depended on the materials available and whether the home was permanent or temporary. The homes of the Eastern Woodlands Indians included Wigwams aka Birchbark houses and Longhouses. Inter-tribal warfare was harsh and frequent so that people of some tribes lived in villages which were fortified by fencing and reinforced with dirt. They tended to live near water.

**Woodland Indians - Languages**
The languages of the Woodland Indians included the Algonquian and Iroquoian languages. Discover facts about each of these Woodland Indian Tribes.

**Woodland Indians - Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs**
The Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs were based on Animism. Animism was a commonly shared doctrine, or belief, of the indigenous people of North America and Canada including the Woodland Indian tribes. Animism is based on the spiritual or religious idea that the universe and all natural objects have souls or spirits. In this religion it is believed that souls or spirits exist not only in humans but also in animals, plants, trees, rocks etc. This belief is also extended to natural phenomena such as thunder storms and rain and geographic features such as mountains, caves or rivers also possess souls or spirits. Face paint or War paint was applied by the Woodland tribes to intimidate their enemies but also to give them protection against evil spirits. There were various ceremonies and festivals relating to the corn crops including the Green Corn festival. These ceremonies and festivals included feasting and music using rattles and drums. Heroic figures or "transformers" who transform, or change, the world into its present state feature in the legends and myths of the Woodland peoples.

**Woodland Indians - The Dreamcatcher**
This group was believed to have created the Dreamcatcher, which was a protective charm or device. The Dreamcatcher was believed to protect a person from the bad spirits that appeared in dreams. The dreamcatcher was constructed in a spider web design. A wooden hoop was attached to a woven web or loose net, like a spider's web. The dreamcatcher is then decorated with personal and sacred items such as feathers and beads. It was said that "Nightmares pass through the holes and out of the window. The good dreams are trapped in the web, and then slide down the feathers to the sleeping person."

**Woodland Indians - Wampum**
Wampum was extremely important to this culture group. Wampum are the traditional, sacred shell beads of Eastern Woodlands tribes used for currency, recording special events and marking exchanges for engagement, marriage, and betrothal agreements.

**Woodland Indians - The Cry Ceremony**
There were several ceremonies which were important to the Woodland Indians. Notably the
Cry Ceremony. When someone in a Woodland tribe died, the tribe would hold a cry ceremony. To prepare for the ceremony five knots were tied in a piece of milkweed. Milkweed was abundant in the longleaf pine forests and were plants with milky sap and light wind-blown seeds. The chief of the tribe performed dances and sang around a fire. The ceremony lasted five days and on each day one of the knots would be untied.
Native Americans of the Arctic

The Culture of the Arctic Indians
Location: The Arctic cultural area extends from the northern edge of Alaska to Greenland as shown on the map. The climate, land and natural resources that were available to the Indian tribes resulted in the adoption of the culture shared by the Arctic Indigenous people, many of whom were nomadic but there were also settled villages of fishers in the South.

This section on the Arctic Indigenous people group provides facts and information about their languages and the Environment. The cold, flat, treeless Arctic region, near the Arctic Circle, in was home to the Inuit and the Aleut tribes of present day Alaska, Canada and Greenland. The animals and the Plants, Trees and Crops provided their food, clothing, shelter and decorations. Their Houses, Shelters and Homes depended on the materials available to them and whether the home was permanent or temporary. There are also facts and info about the Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs of the Arctic Indigenous people group - the Aleut and the Inuit.

Arctic Indians - Lifestyle (Way of Living)
The climate, land and natural resources that were available to the Indian tribes resulted in the adoption of the Arctic Indians culture.

- Name of Group: Arctic Indians
- Languages: Eskimo-Aleut languages and Athabascan
- Geography of the State of Arctic Indians: Present day Alaska, Canada and Greenland. An inhospitable landscape consisting of a flat, cold and treeless, tundra region
- Animals: Seal, caribou, otter, polar bears, whale, walrus and Arctic birds
- Natural Resources: Fish, seasonal berries and plants
- Culture and Lifestyle adopted: Nomadic Hunters and fishermen
- Transport: Dogsleds (qamutik), Leather-covered, watertight canoes and open fishing boats such as Inuit Kayaks and Aleut Baidarkas.
- Clothes: Clothing was made from caribou or other deer hides and they wore snowshoes
- Types of housing, homes or shelters: Igloos, Sod Houses, Igloos, Barabaras and tepee style tents
- Famous Tribes of Arctic Indians: The Alaska Aleut and the Inuit (aka Eskimo) and Tlingit
- The Native Indians who lived on the borders of lands often reflected two different types of lifestyles.

Arctic Indians - Lifestyle (Way of Living)
The 'First Nation' indigenous population of Alaska refer to themselves as Alutiiq (Aleuts), Yup'ik and Inupiaq, whilst the indigenous people of Canada and Greenland prefer the term Inuit. The extreme arctic climate, land and natural resources that were available to the Indian tribes were difficult to live in requiring ingenuity and adaptability to survive in these lands. Alaska is a state
in northwestern North America. The Alaskan tribes included the Chinook, Tillamook, Eyak, Salish and the Tlingit.

**Arctic Indians - Languages**
The languages of the Arctic Indians included an Eskimo-Aleut language. The word "Eskimo" is an Algonquian word meaning 'those who eat their meat raw.' The word "Inuit" means "We people." The Inuit ate approximately half their meat raw. The Athabascan language was spoken by nomadic hunters who travelled long distances to hunt herds of caribou and moose and fish the rivers for salmon.

**Arctic Indians - Geography, Location and Environment**
The Geography and Environment can be generally described as cold, flat and treeless (tundra). It could be described as a desert of snow. The Inuit tribes lived on the western and northern coasts along the Bering Sea and the Arctic Ocean and the Aleut tribes lived in the southwest, along the Alaska Peninsula and on the Aleutian Islands.

**Arctic Indians - Animals**
The animals were very important to the Arctic Indians. The uses of the animals were varied and included food, clothing, shelter and decorations. The animals of this region included the whale, seal, caribou, otter, polar bears, walrus and Arctic birds.

**Arctic Indians - Clothing**
Any clothing made from animal skins were made by turning the fur inside the garment in order to hold the body's warmth. Practical clothing was made from the skins of the caribou and the seal. The anorak or parka was originally made from caribou or seal and was invented by the Caribou Inuit, Inuit (Eskimo) of the Arctic region. It is a type of heavy, hooded jacket often lined with fur as protection from a combination of freezing temperatures and wind.

**Arctic Indians - Food**
Many Arctic Indians hunted whale and sea lions using open boats and were prolific fishermen. Due to the difficulties caused by the bitterly cold climate they usually confined their fishing to the summer. The fish was died and smoked in smoke houses for their winter food.

**Arctic Indians - Houses, Shelters and Homes**
The different types of Houses, Shelters and Homes depended on the materials available and whether the home was permanent or temporary. The Aleut constructed partially underground houses or lodges called Barabara. To construct a Barabara a pit was first dug which was covered with logs and poles and then sealed by earth and moss. The Inuit (aka Eskimo) often lived in igloos. Igloos are dome-shaped snow houses constructed of blocks cut from snow. Some Inuit tribes also lived in sod houses which were made by digging a pit and using rocks and sod to make walls. Pieces of wood or whalebone were used as a frame for the roof, which the Inuit then covered with sod (pieces of turf). Temporary tents, similar to tepees, were used in the summer constructed from caribou hides and wooden poles.
Arctic Indians - Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs
Animism was a commonly shared doctrine, or belief, of the indigenous people of North America and Canada including the Aleut and Inuit Arctic Indians. Animism is based on the spiritual or religious idea that the universe and all natural objects have souls or spirits. In this religion it is believed that souls or spirits exist not only in humans but also in animals, plants, trees, rocks etc. This belief is also extended to natural phenomena such as thunder storms and rain and geographic features such as mountains, caves or rivers also possess souls or spirits. The Religion, Ceremonies and Beliefs of the Arctic Indians were also dominated by Shamanism in which a religious leader called a Shaman acted as a medium between the visible and spirit worlds. The Arctic shaman was assisted by many spirits that were represented by masks, displaying human and animal elements, during ceremonies and ritual dances. These masks often were often made with grotesque and frightening features. The myths of the people of the Eastern area of the Arctic centre around a deity called Sedna, a mother of sea animals. The people of the Western Arctic area focused on the Moon God called Igaluck. Tricksters also featured in their legends and Mythology.

Arctic Indians - Arts and Crafts
The Arctic Indians were highly skilled in the art of carving. Figures were carved from ivory (the tusks of the walrus) and whale bone. Various types of tools, wooden containers and dishes. The different shaman masks demonstrate the high level of craftsmanship, imagination and creativity of the Aztec Indians.