How Did Regional Environment Affect How American Indian Tribes Lived?

Supporting Questions

1. How does the climate and available resources of each of the 6 US Regions (Arctic, Northwest, Southwest, Plains, Northeast, and Southeast) affect what choices American Indian Tribes Made for Food, Clothing and Shelter?

2. What are some key differences in how the American Indians of each region lived?

3. What impact does environment have on how people in a region live?
American Indian by Region Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connection to Connecting Theme/Enduring Understanding</th>
<th>The cultures of people are often a reflection of their location and the resources available to them. American Indian cultures were very different depending on the regions of the US they lived in.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Essential Question</td>
<td>What was lifelike for the American Indian tribes that lived in the 6 geographical regions of the US?</td>
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### Standard Alignment

#### Connection to Literacy Standards for Social Studies and Social Studies Matrices

**Standard:** SS3H1 Describe early American Indian cultures and their development in North America.

- b. Compare and contrast how American Indians in each region used their environment to obtain food, clothing, and shelter.

#### Map and Globe Skills
- compare and contrast the categories of natural, cultural, and political features found on maps
- use map key/legend to acquire information from historical, physical, political, resource, product, and economic maps
- use a map to explain impact of geography on historical and current events
- draw conclusions and make generalizations based on information from maps
- compare maps of the same place at different points in time and from different perspectives to determine changes, identify trends, and generalize about human activities
- compare maps with data sets (charts, tables, graphs) and/or readings to draw conclusions and make generalizations

#### Information Processing Skills
- compare similarities and differences
- identify and use primary and secondary sources
- interpret timelines, charts, and tables
- identify social studies reference resources to use for a specific purpose
- construct charts and tables
- analyze artifacts
- draw conclusions and make generalizations
- analyze graphs and diagrams
- determine adequacy and/or relevancy of information
Materials Needed / Prerequisite Knowledge

Materials

- 1 piece chart paper for each group (6 groups – 1 for each region: Arctic, Northwest, Southwest, Plains, Northeast, and Southeast.)
- Flipchart Markers
- Envelopes (6 – one for each region) with photo representative of one of the regions taped on front and research inside for each group/region (see resources at the end of this lesson).

Prerequisites

This lesson assumes prerequisite lessons on the climate, geography, and resources of the regions of the US have been taught. The resources below can be used to aid students in activating that prior knowledge and to provide them with artifacts to justify their reasoning as they work through the activity.

Additionally, the Geographic Regions of the United States graphic organizer (below) can be used to help students organize and access this knowledge and allow for greater accessibility across all differentiated groups.

Instructional Design

Preparation:

- The teacher will create 6 groups and assign each group a region of the United States.
- The teacher will prepare a map packet and region envelope for each group using the resources below.
- The teacher will provide each group with a piece of chart paper and markers.

Opening: If needed, the teacher will conduct a quick review of the major geographical regions of the US and what the climate and geography is like there and what natural resources may be found. The teacher will then provide each group with a map packet to help them answer questions about what their particular region would be like to live in and what resources would be available. Additionally, each group will receive a 10 x 13 sealed region envelope with a large color image taped to the outside that is representative of one of the US regions and informational resources on the region sealed inside (see envelope resources below).

Explain to students that they have been dropped into the specific region depicted in the photo on the outside of their envelope in the time before electricity, railroads, phones, etc. They have absolutely nothing. Review the things people need to survive: food, clothing, shelter, and water. Students may analyze and discuss the resources that the photo would indicate might be available, but they may not open the envelopes until told to do so (not until after they have completed the “What we would do” half of the chart paper.).
Students can assume that the types of creatures that would live in their pictured ecosystem are there but no more. If the photo does not show trees, then they will not have wood to build with, and large creatures that live in forests will not be present. (If desired, you can allow students to research what organisms would live in that ecosystem).

**Activity** – Students work in collaborative groups using only the photo on the outside of the envelope to determine what they would do for food, clothing, and shelter, filling in the chart as they make decisions. Once they have filled this out thoroughly, they will ask the teacher if they can proceed. If so, they will open their envelope and take turns reading or jigsaw read about what the American Indians of the region did for those 3 things and fill in the chart as they go with the information they find. Resources for inside the envelope are below.

**Student directions:**

**Step 1:** Decide who will be the group’s recorder (you may wish to have a process for this).

**Step 2:** Draw a vertical line down the middle of your chart paper (see sample at right).

**Step 3:** Draw three horizontal lines to divide your chart paper into 3 sections (see sample).

**Step 4:** Label the sections as shown in the sample.

The left side is labeled “What we would do” with a section for food and water, clothing and shelter. The right side is labeled “What the American Indians did” and also has the same 3 sections (see example at right).

**Step 5:** Do not open the envelope. Look at the picture on the front of your envelope. In your group, discuss what resources you see that you could use to survive here. Log your ideas in the correct place on your chart paper. Be sure you are working on the left side column only. Do not write anything in the right-side column yet and do not open your envelope.

Once your group has completed all of the boxes for what you would do to survive (check with your teacher), you may open the envelope and continue.

**Step 6:** As a group read the resources included in your envelope. Discuss what the American Indians that lived in your region did for food clothing and shelter.

**Step 7:** Use these resources to fill out the right-side column of your chart.

**Step 8:** Discuss how what your group chose to do to survive compares with what the American Indians did to survive.

**Closing:** Each group presents what they came up with and compares it to what the American Indians that lived in that region did for food, clothing, and shelter. Students should conclude that their solutions and the American Indians’ solutions were so similar because they had the same resources available to use. The teacher should lead a group discussion pointing out how different the various regional solutions were and how differently the various American Indian tribes lived because of the resources that were available to them.
Considerations for English Learners:
This lesson is rich in SWIRL opportunities. The teacher should consider groupings carefully to be sure English Learners can take full advantage of these opportunities. Consider how comfortable children will be sharing in the groups you create or whether you can group them with bilingual peers.

SWIRL strategies
Speaking: English Learners should be encouraged to share their ideas with their groupmates using images and texts both before and after the envelopes have been opened
Writing: Chart paper allows for short, simple writing and list making. Consider having a word bank available or allow ELs to illustrate their ideas as well as writing them
Illustrating: Allow ELs to illustrate ideas and concepts while explaining them – illustrations may be included on the chart paper and many illustrations and photos are included in the packets
Reading – The packets contain a wealth of information in kid friendly language. Additionally, there are links to kid friendly web sites for more research
Listening: The group work in this lesson is all about the exchange of ideas among group mates to complete the tasks. Be sure to model appropriate group skills so ELs have a chance to listen and be heard.

Accessing background knowledge – Depending on the composition of your class, you may want to allow time for a closing discussion of student’s home lives and cultures and what resources their families traditionally used to solve the problems of food, clothing, and shelter.

Assessment – The chart paper and group findings presentation allow for oral, written, and illustrated presentation of evidence and learning

Comprehensible Input:
Consider a large group analysis of the map resources below giving ELs (and all students) the opportunity to use the colors and legends with some guiding questions to help them understand the content. Some sample questions are provided with each map to help guide discussions.

Academic Language Resources:

Word Wall words for this unit:

Shelter
Food
Clothing

Buffalo

Elk

Moose

Igloo

Chickee

Teepee

Breechcloth

Coast

Forest
Evidence of Student Success

The teacher will measure success through observation of group conversations as students work to complete their chart paper, and through the presentation of the group’s findings during the closing.

Consider the following criteria:

- Did all members engage and participate in the discussion?
- Did all members contribute ideas?
- Did group members listen and speak respectfully to each other?
- Did group members share responsibility?
- Did the group present their findings and make comparisons between what they did and what the American Indian groups did?
- Did the group make reasonable decisions based on the resources available to them?
Climate is how we describe an area’s weather over a longer period of time (years or more). For each region below, fill in what the region’s climate is like in terms of temperature (very cold, cold, mild, warm, hot) and humidity (Very wet, somewhat wet, somewhat dry, very dry):

**Northwest:**
- Temp: __________
- Humidity: __________

**Northeast:**
- Temp: __________
- Humidity: __________

**Southwest:**
- Temp: __________
- Humidity: __________

**Southeast:**
- Temp: __________
- Humidity: __________
Map Packet Resources:

Arid America / Humid America

If green represents how moist, humid or “damp” the air is, what can you say about the Eastern half of the US?

The western half?

The Northwest?

What areas would be easy to grow crops in?

What areas would be difficult to grow food?
What parts of the US are relatively warm?

What parts are cold?

How would the temperature of an area effect what kind of shelter you would need to live there all year round?
What parts of the US have a lot of trees?

How would this natural resource effect how the people who lived here make shelters?

Tools?

Hunt?
What areas of the US get a lot of rainfall?

What areas stay very dry?

How would this effect how people here live?

**Region Images for the Outside of the Envelope:**
Envelope Resources:

Region Pictures for the outside of the envelope:

Southeast Region:

Northeast:
Southwest:
Pacific Northwest:
Arctic
Plains

Resources for inside envelopes:
Southwest:
Hopi: https://www.legendsofamerica.com/na-hopi/

What were Hopi homes like in the past? Hopi people built multi-story houses out of adobe (clay or mud and straw that was baked into hard bricks) and stone. Their homes were stacked on top of each other much like modern apartments. Ladders were used to get to the upstairs apartments. These ladders could be pulled up in case of an attack by enemies.

Hopi Food: the Hopi live in a part of the country that is very dry so you may be surprised to learn that the Hopi were amazing farmers of the desert. They grew crops of corn, beans, and squash.
They also grew cotton to make cloth and thread, and even raised turkeys. Many of the “dry farming techniques developed and used by the Hopi are still in use today. The Hopi also hunted in the desert for deer, antelope, and small game like lizards, snakes, rabbits.

Hopi Clothing What were Hopi clothes like? Because of the desert heat, Hopi men wore very little clothing. Breechcloths (somewhat like shorts) or short kilts (men's skirts) were usually all they wore. Hopi women usually wore mantas – a knee-length dress made out of cotton.

Men and women both wore moccasins (similar to a soft boot) made out of deerskin on their feet. For dances and special occasions, women painted their moccasins white and wrapped white strips of deerskin around their shins as leggings.
Where do the Kwakiutls live?
The Kwakiutl Indians are original people of the Pacific Northwest Coast. They live in British Columbia, Canada.

Food
Mostly hunter gatherers - with fishing a large part of their food hunting Kwakiutl men hunted deer and moose, but their main source of food was fish. The women gathered shellfish, seaweed, and berries. Large canoes were built of wood and used to relocate between seasonal camps when following the migrating fish and game.

Shelter
Multifamily houses were made of wood and consisted of large wooden frames with thin cedar-bark as covering. The roofs were slanted allowing for easy drainage.
Clothing

Clothing was made of cedar-bark (a kind of tree) and fur robes for both males and females. Kwakiutl women wore aprons made of bark bound together with goat-hair. They also developed wooden capes and hoods made from cedar-bark. These hoods and capes were waterproof and allowed for work in the rain.

**Chickee houses**

- Consisted of thick posts supporting a thatched roof and a flat wooden platform raised several feet off the ground. They did not have any walls.
- During rainstorms, Florida Indians would lash tarps made of hide or cloth to the chickee frame to keep themselves dry, but most of the time, the sides of the structure were left open.

Chickees are good homes for people living in a hot, swampy climate. The long posts keep the house from sinking into marshy earth, and raising the floor of the hut off the ground keeps swamp animals like snakes out of the house.

**Food**

- Seminole are farming people who grew corn, beans, and squash. They hunted deer, rabbit, turtle, alligator, and turkey and they also ate fish. They liked cornbread, soups, and stews.
when hungry. Throughout the course of the day a pot of hot soup or sofkee would be kept on the fire.

The Seminole grew crops in addition to hunting game and collecting wild plants. They successfully grew beans, squash and corn—their staple crop. They hunted deer, turkeys, alligators and other local game.

**Clothing** - The Seminole patchwork All of the garments previously mentioned were made predominantly of cotton material obtained from trading posts. Calicos were most common, but stripes, solids and plaids were also used.

In the early 19th century Seminoles wore clothing made from hides or skins
similar to that of other Southeast tribes. Furs and hides provided warmth against the cool climate of the area around Georgia where many Seminoles still lived.

Seminole family wearing “patchwork dresses and long shirts” made of cotton:
Northeast: from

https://www.legendsofamerica.com/iroquois-confederacy/

Iroquois:

Shelter - The Iroquois lived in longhouses, some of which extended more than the length of a football field. However, most of the structures ranged from 50 to 100 feet in length and from 15 to 20 feet in width. The interior was divided into equal size compartments which opened on a central passageway. Each compartment sheltered one family so that as many as 20 families might live under one roof. At the ends of the building were separate rooms for storage and guest purposes. The occupants of the house were usually closely related by clan kinship. In the principal towns, the houses were compactly and regularly arranged and enclosed within strong palisades.

Food: Surrounding the villages were extensive cornfields and orchards. The tribes also cultivated squash, beans, and tobacco, and the women gathered wild roots, greens, berries, and nuts. The men hunted for game and fished.
Clothing - In the summer, the people went mostly naked, with the men wearing only a decorated breechcloth with a belt worn around the waist. The basic item of women’s clothing was a skirt. In the winter, they wore fringed buckskins, leggings, moccasins, and a robe or blanket. Clothing was adorned with moose-hair embroidery and decorated pouches for carrying personal items completed the costumes. The men carefully removed all facial hair and wore their hair in a Mohawk style. Tattoos were common for both sexes.

**Food** - they hunted buffalo mostly for meat and the women raised corn (maize), squash and beans.

**Clothing** - Pawnee women wore deerskin skirts and poncho-like blouses. Pawnee men wore breechcloths and leather leggings. Men did not usually wear shirts, but warriors sometimes wore special buckskin war shirts. The Pawnees wore moccasins on their feet, and in cold weather, they wore long buffalo-hide robes. A Pawnee lady's dress or warrior's shirt was fringed and often decorated with beadwork and painted designs.
Pawnee Indian leaders sometimes wore the long **warbonnets** that Plains Indians are famous for. More often, Pawnee men shaved their heads except for a **scalplock** (one long lock of hair in back) and wore a **porcupine roach** on top. Pawnee women wore their hair either loose or braided. The Pawnees also painted their faces for special occasions. They used different patterns for war paint, religious ceremonies, and festive decoration.

**Shelter** - When hunting buffalo the Pawnee live in skin teepees but in their more permanent villages they lived in lodges

The Pawnee **lodges** tended to be oval in shape; the frame was constructed of 10-15 posts set some ten feet apart which outlined the floor of the lodge. Lodge size varied based on the number of poles placed in the center of the structure. Most lodges had 4, 8 or 12 center poles. The framework was then covered with **willow** branches, earth and sod which inhibited erosion. A hole was left in the center which served as a combined chimney and skylight. The lodge itself was partly underground, the floor was approximately three feet below ground level. A **buffalo**-skin door on a hinge could be closed at night and wedged shut.
The Inuit people live in the arctic region - Across Northern Canada, alaska, Greenland and Russia

The Inuit have been hunters and fishers. They hunted, and still hunt, whales, walruses, caribou, seals, polar bears, muskoxen, birds, and at times other less commonly eaten animals such as foxes. The typical Inuit diet is high in protein and very high in fat (not a lot of vegetables - they eat a lot of meat) - in their traditional diets. Because it is very difficult to grow plants for food in the Arctic, the Inuit were and are not farmers, but they do gather plants that are grown there naturally. Grasses, tubers, roots, stems, berries, and seaweed (kuanniq or edible seaweed) were collected and preserved depending on the season and the location.

It is surprising that the Inuit's extremely low-carbohydrate diet (little plant food) had no bad effects on their diet. The Inuit were able to get the necessary vitamins they needed from their traditional winter diet, which did not contain plant matter. In particular, he found that they got enough vitamin C from items in the Inuit's traditional diet of raw meat such as Ringed Seal liver and whale skin (muktuk).
Hunting sea animals

Sea animals were hunted from single-passenger, covered seal-skin boats called *qajaq*[^19] which were very buoyant (able to float), and could easily be turned right-side-up by a seated person, even if completely upside-down. Because of this ability, the Inuit design was copied, along with the Inuit word, by Europeans who still make and use them under the name *kayak*. Kayaks have a special tube like design. Inuit also made *umiaq*, larger, open boats made of wood frames covered with animal skins for transporting people, goods and dogs. In the winter, Inuit would also hunt *sea mammals* by patiently watching an *aglu* (breathing hole) in the ice and waiting for the air-breathing seals to use them, a technique also used by the polar bear, who hunts by seeking out holes in the ice and waiting nearby.
On land, the Inuit used **dog sleds** (*qamutik*) for transportation. The **husky** dog breed comes from Inuit breeding of dogs and wolves for transportation. A team of dogs in either a tandem/side-by-side or fan formation would pull a sled made of wood, animal bones, or the **baleen** from a whale's mouth, over the snow and ice. They used stars to navigate at sea and landmarks to navigate on land and possessed a comprehensive native system of **toponymy**. Where natural landmarks were insufficient, the Inuit would erect an **inukshuk** to compensate.

Dogs played an important role in the annual routine of the Inuit. During the summer they became pack animals, sometimes dragging up to 20 kg (44 lb) of baggage. In the winter they pulled the sled and yearlong they assisted with hunting by sniffing out seal's holes and pestering polar bears. They loyally protected the Inuit villages by barking at bears and strangers. The Inuit generally favoured and tried to breed the most striking and handsome of dogs, especially ones with bright eyes and a healthy coat. Common husky dog breeds used by the Inuit were the **Canadian Eskimo Dog** (*Qimmiq*; Inuktitut for dog), the **Greenland Dog**, the **Siberian Husky** and the **Alaskan Malamute**. When the dog was newborn, the Inuit would perform rituals on the dog to give the pup favourable qualities. Its legs were pulled to make it grow strong and its nose was poked with a pin to enhance its sense of smell.
In the spring and summer, when the ices melts, seals are hunted from boats called kayaks. The kayak holds only one hunter. It is covered all over with sealskin or caribou skin. The hunter sits in it, dressed in tight-fitting waterproof clothing made from seal or walrus intestine. The kayak moves silently through the water. The hunter can get very close to seals without being heard.

Caribou are also hunted for food, as well as for their skins for clothing and antlers for tools.

Clothing - Only fur clothing was warm enough in such a cold place. The Inuit preferred the fur of the caribou, though they sometimes used fur of other animals such as seals and polar bear.

Clothing consisted of coat, trousers, stockings, shoes or boots. In very cold weather two of each garment were worn. The inner one had the fur against the skin, the outer one had the fur outside. Boots are called kamiks. They are made from sealskin because it lasts long, is warm, and isn't hurt when it gets wet.
One Inuit garment, the hooded coat called the parka, has been adopted by skiers and others who spend time in the cold. An atiqik is a Inuit parka made with goose down.

Shelter

The word igloo actually means any type of house, not just a snow house. The snow-block house that we usually think of when we hear igloo was not used by all Inuits. There were no snow-block houses in Alaska. The Alaskan Inuits lived cabins made from driftwood and covered with soil.
To make an igloo, hard-packed snow was cut into blocks with a long knife made of bone, ivory, or metal. A man could build an igloo in an hour. In the igloo, Inuit slept on a low snow platform covered with twigs and caribou furs. Each igloo had a skylight made of freshwater ice. When summer arrived the igloo melted, and the family had to move into tents made of animal skins.
Web Resources:

**Plains:**
Pawnee: [https://msgmail.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/pawnee-students.pdf](https://msgmail.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/pawnee-students.pdf)

**Southwest - Hopi:**
https://www.legendsofamerica.com/na-hopi/

**Pacific Northwest:**
Kawikiutl:

**Southeast: Seminoles**

**Arctic - Inuit:**

**Northeast – Iroquois**
[https://www.legendsofamerica.com/iroquois-confederacy/](https://www.legendsofamerica.com/iroquois-confederacy/)