



The Cherokee Indian

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Introduction

This unit will complete a study of the Cherokee Indians and their struggles to survive as a people. It is hoped that on the completion of this unit, each student will have a better understanding of the Cherokee people.

The Cherokee are a group of American Indians who live in the Southeast section of the United States of America.

They were the only group of American Indians who were not Nomadic. Most of their permanent villages were located near streams, usually where a smaller stream came into the larger one. The towns were built near the bank of the stream so that the villagers would have ready access to fish and fresh water. The outer edge of the town was surrounded by a stockade that was built by placing good-sized posts in the ground about six inches apart. This space between the posts was woven with saplings and vines. The stockade served as a protection against surprise attacks by enemies. Usually there was an elaborate entrance way that could be closed or effectively defended during an enemy attack.



Later, the houses of the villages began to be constructed of logs which were placed vertically as closely together as possible in a kind of rough square. These walls were reinforced by weaving vines and pliable pieces of wood between the upright posts. A thick coat of mud was then plastered over the framework to form an airtight wall.

The roof was constructed of saplings interwoven so that they formed a kind of dome over the four plastered walls. The dome was then covered with mats of long grasses and reeds. At first, all the cooking facilities were out in the open but later, fireplaces were built in the center of the structures with a fire hole that allowed the smoke to escape.

When the white men arrived in the Cherokee culture, the Cherokees experienced pressures that caused them to change their way of life. Their rituals and ceremonies were influenced by the new culture that was introduced to them.

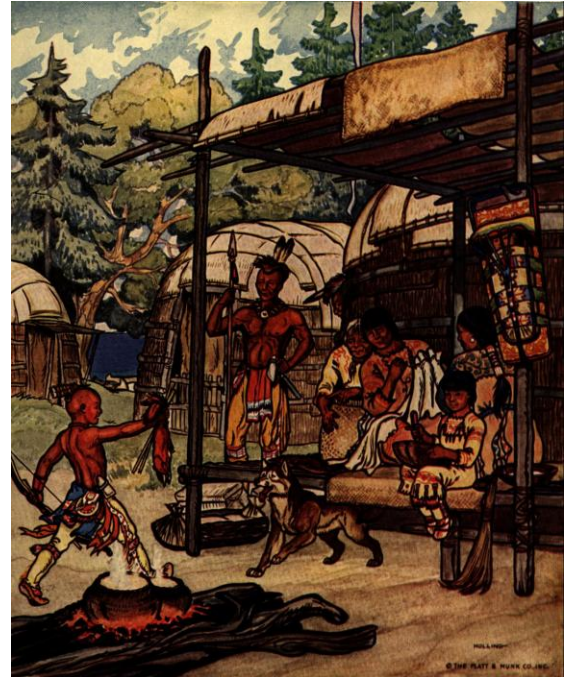


GOVERNMENT OF THE CHEROKEE PEOPLE

The Cherokee people were governed by chiefs. There were two chiefs, namely the Peace Chief and the War Chief. The Peace Chief was the most influential person in the village. He headed the village council and was in charge of handling village matters. He served while the tribes were at peace. If war should take place, the War Chief was in command.

The responsibility of the War Chief was to lead the warriors when it was decided that a battle should take place. He handled supervision of dances and games. He also was responsible for the safety of the town. The War Chief sometimes acquired great power. His high place in town business was signified by special featured robes. All chiefs were allowed to have more than one wife if they chose to do so.

The center of family life was the clan; each clan was named after an animal. There were seven recognized clans. The seven-clan system, along with many other developments around the number seven, made the Cherokee distinctive from many of the other Native American tribes. The seven clans are frequently mentioned in the sacred formulas used by the Cherokee Indians and in some of the laws issued within the last one hundred years. All members of a clan were considered blood brothers and sisters, and were bound by honor to defend each member of the clan from wrong.



Each clan was represented in the civil council by a counselor or counselors. The chief of the tribes was selected from one of clans and did not inherit his office from his kinsmen. The names of the clans were *Bird*, these were keepers of the birds, skilled in using blowguns and snares for bird hunting. *Paint*, these made red paint and were the sorcerers and medicine men. *Deer*, these were the keepers of the deer and were known as fast runners and deer hunters. *Wolf*, this was the longest and most prominent clan, providing most of the tribe's War Chiefs. They were the keepers of the wolf and the only clan who could kill a wolf. *Blue*, they made a medicine from the bluish colored paint to keep the children well. They were sometimes known as the *Panther*, or *Wild Cat* clan. *Long Hair*, also known as the *Twister*, *Hair Hanging Down*, or *Wind* clan. They wore their hair in elaborate hairdos, walked in a proud and vain manner twisting their shoulders. The Peace Chief was usually from this clan. *Wild Potato*, is the clan that gathered the wild potato in swamps along streams for food. They were also known as the *Bear*, *Raccoon*, or *Blind Savannah* clan. The clan into which a child was born was that of his mother.

The clan provided many important functions, including care for orphans and the destitute, hospitality for visiting clan members from other towns and, most important, the avenging of wrongs committed against other clan members. If a member of a clan needed help in any manner, his clan would take care of him, and if a clan member was injured or killed by another clan, his clan was responsible for revenge. There were often times when the clan of the offender would perform the revenge on a selected member of their clan to eliminate the possibility of an innocent sufferer.



GOVERNMENT OF THE CHEROKEE PEOPLE

Name: _____

Date: _____

After reading about the government of the Cherokee People, answer each of the following questions in complete sentences.

1. How were the Cherokee people governed?

2. What was the responsibility of each chief?

3. Name the seven clans of the Cherokee Indians and what each name signified.

4. List three responsibilities of each clan.

5. What made the Cherokee people distinctive from other Native American tribes?



CHEROKEE WOMEN



The greatest honor that could come to a Cherokee woman was to become the sacred one. This deed had to be recognized as one of major importance to the tribe and to its people. Once a woman was recognized as the sacred woman, she had many privileges. She sat in council as an equal to other counselors. Important members of the tribe listened to her, and she could also decide whether or not a prisoner or captive lived or died.

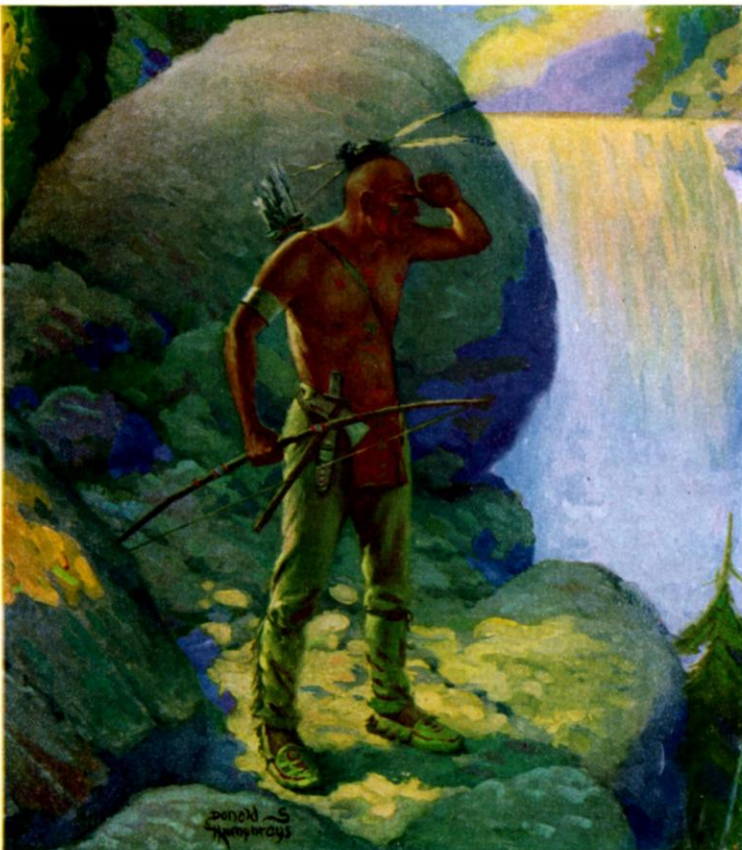
The women were not considered slaves as they were in some of the other tribes. Women participated in almost all the social events of the tribe, and often were the main attraction in various types of ceremonies. They were responsible for providing food except for the killing of wild game. They grew the crops and made the clothes, did the cooking, and helped build the houses.



CLOTHING OF THE CHEROKEE PEOPLE

Clothing worn was like that of other native groups. The men wore moccasins and breechcloths of skin, fiber, or cloth. The women wore skirts of buckskin or fiber, and both men and women wore buckskin leggings in cold weather. For special occasions, the men wore feathered crowns on their heads. Some men shaved or plucked the hairs from their heads leaving a scalplock as a challenge to the enemy. Women always wore their hair long. Almost everyone wore tattoos—the more the better. The men wore paint when they went on the warpath. Everyone wore jewelry or ornaments of feathers, bones, shells, and beads.

Women sometimes wove a highly prized cloth from nettle, silk grass, and mulberry bark. They made cradleboards from the swamp cane, and they also made split cane and wicker baskets. The men hollowed out cypress logs and made them into canoes which they used to travel the streams and rivers.





WEAVE A CHEROKEE CLOTH

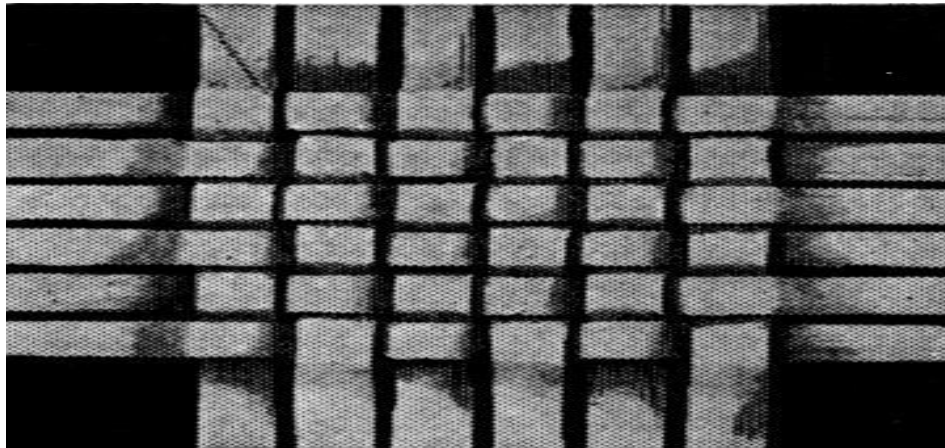
The Cherokee wove a highly prized cloth from nettle, silk grass, and mulberry bark. Use the directions below to weave a place mat.

Materials

1. 12" X 18" (30.5 X 48 cm.) Construction Paper
2. Natural materials:
Vines
Tall, thick grass or weeds
Stalks of corn or other plants

Steps to Follow

1. If you have a field nearby where you can gather materials, take a field trip to gather the materials.
2. Fold the construction paper in half.
3. Measure sections one and one half inch apart and mark with a pencil.
4. Cut on the fold along each marked line. Stop one inch from the open edge. When the paper is opened it will form a loom.
5. Take one piece of vine or grass and weave it over and under the paper rows. Do a second row the same way, except start under, then over, etc.
6. Keep weaving this way until you reach the end of the loom.





MAKE A CORN DOLL

Native American girls from many parts of the country loved to play with corn husk dolls. Sometimes called harvest figures, they represented the corn spirit that ensured a plentiful harvest. They are easy to make. To make one yourself, follow these directions.

Materials:

Fresh or dried corn husks
Water
String
Soft cotton

Directions:

1. If you are using dried husks, soak them in water to soften.
2. Place cotton in the center of a piece of husk, and tie it down to make the head.
3. Make arms by rolling one piece of husk and tying it near the ends for hands. Slide the arms through the husk under the head.
4. Tie around the husk with the string to make the waist.
5. Arrange five or six husks around the waist and tie them in place. Carefully fold them down to make a skirt. Cut the skirt straight across the bottom for a girl doll. Divide the skirt in two and tie each half at the ankles for a boy doll.
6. Let the husks dry completely. The doll is ready.



TRAINING OF THE CHILDREN

Because children were born into the clan of the mother, the mother's brothers were the ones who served in the capacity of "father" and head of the family. A child's own father would serve as head of his sister's families also. The clan system is what is known as *matrilineal system*. The "family line" passed through the mother. A Cherokee mother would always have children who were considered Cherokee, no matter what the father's lineage was. The clan was also *matrilocal*. This means that when a couple married, the husband went to live with the family of his wife, and she or her family owned all the property where they lived.

Most of the training of the children was done by the women, at least until the boys became young men. A relative was then assigned to train the boy to track, to shoot the bow and arrow, and defend himself against aggression. A young boy, who wanted to become a warrior, had to be able to perform certain feats before he could win his feather. He also had to prove himself in battle. Once a boy won his eagle feather, he wore it the rest of his life to prove he was a warrior.

Sometimes, parents wanted their children to become priests or medicine men. When they did, these children were turned over to older medicine men who did the entire upbringing of these chosen ones. Such children were not allowed to associate with other children in the ordinary manner. They had to go through vigorous training that would try every part of their minds and bodies. They always attended the long talks of the medicine men and always listened to tales of the distant past. They were taught the use of herbs and barks, also the rituals of cleansing and the art of purification. They were required at all times to retain an air of mystery about themselves.





TRAINING OF THE CHILDREN

Name: _____

Date: _____

Use the narrative entitled **Training of the Children** to help you answer the following questions.

1. In the Cherokee society, how is the responsibility of the uncle different from the responsibility of your uncle?

2. What does the term **matrilineal** mean?

3. Who was responsible for the training of the children?

4. What does the term **matrilocal** mean?

5. The children who were selected to be medicine men had to learn many things. Name two of these things.



FESTIVAL/CELEBRATIONS OF THE CHEROKEE PEOPLE

Ceremonies and dances were very popular among the Cherokee people, especially the *Green Corn Ceremony*. This celebration took place as soon as the corn began to ripen. At this time, everything was made new. The old was thrown out. Houses were cleaned, old clothing and pottery were thrown away, leftover food discarded, and fires were put out. Prisoners were freed. Men drank a mixture called **black drink**, an emetic made from the leaves of a local plant, so their bodies could be cleaned from the inside out.

After the elaborate *Green Corn Ceremony* in which all seven clans were involved, the sacred fire in the council house was lighted to signify the beginning of the new year. The fires in the villages were then relighted from this sacred fire so that everyone may have the benefits of its magical properties. This marked the beginning of the *Fire Ceremony*. As a part of the *Fire Ceremony*, the village participated in an Indian ball game called the **little war**. It probably got its name from the fact that it was as rough as any game without going to war.

The Seven Festivals/Ceremonies of the Cherokee

1. **First New Moon of Spring** occurs in March to April when the grass begins to grow.
2. **New Green Corn Ceremony** (Selutsunigististi) takes place in August when the corn was first fit to eat.
3. **Ripe Corn Ceremony** (Donagohuni) is celebrated in September when the corn is mature or ripe.
4. **Great New Moon Ceremony** (Nuwatiegwa) occurs in September to October. This is the first new moon of autumn, the Cherokee New Year.
5. **Reconciliation and Friends Made Ceremony** (Atohuna) is celebrated in October to November. This occurs ten days after the previous ceremony ended.
6. **Bouncing Bush Feast** (Elawatalegi) occurs at a time determined at the first new moon of autumn.
7. **The Uku Dance** or Peace Chief's Dance occurs every seventh year. It replaces the Great New Moon Ceremony for that year. The Peace Chief was dressed in yellow and he re-consecrated himself as chief.



FESTIVALS/CELEBRATIONS OF THE CHEROKEE PEOPLE

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. The Cherokee people celebrated many festivals. List the various festivals they celebrated, and what each one signified.

2. List seven special festivals/celebrations in the United States, and state the significance of each one.

3. How are the celebrations of the United States different from those of the Cherokee people?



WARS

War was taken very seriously by the Cherokee. Wars were fought for personal glory, slaves, and revenge. If a village thought that its people had been wronged by another group, it was the signal to go to war.

The warriors prepared for battle by fasting, drinking the black drink, and smoking the war pipe. No one was immune from the slaughter which occurred after that. A village could be attacked at dawn, its thatched roofs set on fire and its inhabitants massacred. Very rarely were the men of the invaded village captured, except when they were used as the subject of public torture, but women and children were usually captured and adopted.

REVENGE

The type of revenge to be carried out could be determined by the clansmen who were selected to carry it out. The blood revenge was usually taken by an older male of the victim's clan if it could not be taken by the oldest brother. It was considered a disgrace if revenge was not taken.

The Ancient Law of blood revenge was abolished by the Cherokee National government on September 11, 1808. This act of abolishment was seen to have advanced the Cherokees in civilization, and it was universally accepted by all tribes.





WAR AND REVENGE

WORD SEARCH

R	T	O	R	T	U	R	E	V	E	N	G	E	I	P
M	M	R	F	C	H	E	R	O	K	E	E	S	N	V
P	Q	I	I	N	V	A	D	E	D	R	S	E	H	S
W	X	H	I	B	R	O	T	H	E	R	N	V	A	C
X	I	C	W	O	E	R	J	C	V	I	E	A	B	A
T	A	B	O	L	I	S	H	M	E	N	T	L	I	N
Q	C	M	J	R	W	E	L	O	L	D	E	S	T	C
I	C	I	V	I	L	I	Z	A	T	I	O	N	A	I
U	E	Q	A	V	H	K	G	U	U	Q	T	P	N	E
X	P	P	C	G	M	M	E	E	L	G	T	H	T	N
Q	T	H	Q	K	R	E	D	X	H	U	H	Z	S	T
A	E	G	W	A	R	R	I	O	R	S	T	T	V	C
M	D	C	L	A	N	S	M	E	N	S	T	V	E	U
J	P	T	H	M	R	A	D	O	P	T	E	D	O	R
U	N	I	V	E	R	S	A	L	L	Y	U	P	P	N

WORD BOX

abolishment	Cherokees	revenge
accepted	civilization	slaughter
adopted	clansmen	slaves
ancient	inhabitants	torture
brother	invaded	tribes
captured	wars	universally
warriors	oldest	



THE ACT OF ABOLISHMENT

SEPTEMBER 11, 1808 IN COUNCIL BROOM'S TOWN

Be it known, that this day, the various clans which compose the Cherokee Nation, have unanimously passed an act of oblivion for all lives for which they may have been indebted, one to the other, and have mutually agreed that after this evening the aforesaid act shall become binding upon every clan or tribe, and the aforesaid clans or tribes, have also agreed that if, in future, any life should be lost without malice intended, the innocent aggressor shall not be accounted guilty.

Be it known, also, that should it happen that a brother, forgetting his natural affections, should raise his hands in anger and kill his brother, he shall be accounted guilty of murder and suffer accordingly, and if a man has a horse stolen, and overtakes the thief, and should his anger be so great as to cause him to kill him, let his blood remain on his own conscience, but no satisfaction shall be demanded for his life from his relatives or the clan he may belong to.

By order of the Seven Clans

Activity

Think about a rule in the school that you think should be abolished. Write an act of abolishment for this rule and present it to the principal.



SEQUOYAH

The Native Americans were fascinated by the “*talking leaves*” which is what they called the books and written documents with which the whites communicated. Although they had their own spoken language, the Cherokees had no written language, apart from the pictographs with which they left messages on cave walls and on rocks.

Sequoyah, or George Guess or George Gist as he was also known, was a half-blood Cherokee who recognized that the ability to read and write would give them an advantage. He decided that the Cherokee language could be broken down into eighty-six syllables based on sound. Sequoyah is the only man to invent a complete alphabet without being able to read or write any other language. He is regarded as the greatest of all Cherokees.

The story is told that Sequoyah and some of his friends got into a discussion about writing after having heard the Bible translated at a white man’s house. One friend stated that it was a most wonderful thing to be able to put all that wisdom on the *talking leaves* so that they would not be forgotten. Sequoyah heard the remark and decided that he could do the writing like the white men. His friends laughed at him and told him how foolish he was because the gods had not given them that gift. Sequoyah did not hear them because he was already turning over in his mind how he would put his own talk down on the *talking leaves*.

Sequoyah tried to devise a symbol for every Cherokee word. He found this to be impossible. He next tried to devise a symbol for a sentence. This too was not possible. Eventually he began to listen to the different sounds in the Cherokee language and write a symbol for each sound. He soon began to run out of symbols and they all started looking alike. One day, while walking, he found a piece of old newspaper that he discovered was full of symbols. Sequoyah, who knew no English, used the English letters to represent sounds in the Cherokee language.

Through Sequoyah’s efforts, the Cherokees were able to read and write in their own language. In 1824, the council voted Sequoyah a medal of honor and a letter of recognition for his creation of the Cherokee alphabet.

Sequoyah died in 1842 on a journey to Mexico to find out how the Cherokees were doing who were living there. Although there are no gravestones to recognize his passing, he is remembered by his people through the redwood trees which were named for him. The Cherokee alphabet stands as a lasting memorial to Sequoyah.



The Cherokee Alphabet

D _a	R _e	T _i	Ꭰ _o	Ꭱ _u	i _v
Ꭶ _{ga} Ꭷ _{ka}	Ꭲ _{ge}	Ꭳ _{gi}	Ꭴ _{go}	Ꭵ _{gu}	Ꭶ _{gv}
Ꭸ _{ha}	Ꭹ _{he}	Ꭺ _{hi}	Ꭻ _{ho}	Ꭼ _{hu}	Ꭽ _{hv}
Ꭾ _{la}	Ꭿ _{le}	Ꮀ _{li}	Ꮁ _{lo}	Ꮂ _{lu}	Ꮃ _{lv}
Ꮄ _{ma}	Ꮁ _{me}	Ꮆ _{mi}	Ꮇ _{mo}	Ꮈ _{mu}	
Ꮊ _{na} Ꮋ _{hna} Ꮌ _{nah}	Ꮎ _{ne}	Ꮏ _{ni}	Ꮊ _{no}	Ꮋ _{nu}	Ꮌ _{nv}
Ꮍ _{qua}	Ꮏ _{que}	Ꮐ _{qui}	Ꮑ _{quo}	Ꮒ _{quu}	Ꮓ _{quv}
Ꮎ _{sa} Ꮏ _s	Ꮐ _{se}	Ꮑ _{si}	Ꮒ _{so}	Ꮓ _{su}	Ꮔ _{sv}
Ꮐ _{da} Ꮑ _{ta}	Ꮒ _{de} Ꮓ _{te}	Ꮔ _{di} Ꮕ _{ti}	Ꮖ _{do}	Ꮗ _{du}	Ꮘ _{dv}
Ꮖ _{dla} Ꮗ _{tla}	Ꮘ _{tle}	Ꮙ _{tli}	Ꮚ _{tlo}	Ꮛ _{tlu}	Ꮜ _{tlv}
Ꮝ _{tsa}	Ꮚ _{tse}	Ꮛ _{tsi}	Ꮜ _{tso}	Ꮝ _{tsu}	Ꮞ _{tsv}
Ꮝ _{wa}	Ꮜ _{we}	Ꮞ _{wi}	Ꮟ _{wo}	Ꮠ _{wu}	Ꮡ _{wv}
Ꮟ _{ya}	Ꮠ _{ye}	Ꮡ _{yi}	Ꮢ _{yo}	Ꮣ _{yu}	Ꮤ _{yv}



THE WHITE MEN ARRIVE

The white men came to the Cherokee territory and pretended to be friendly. The Cherokee often intermarried with whites, and by the early nineteenth century had developed laws and customs based on those of their new neighbors. Some of the whites remained friendly, but others took whatever lay in their path and call it theirs.

The Indians had no great need for land, because they did no great amount of farming. They, however, did need the forests and rivers. When the trees were cut and the rivers occupied with towns and villages, there no longer remained any wildlife upon which the Indians could live. The Indians asked the officials of the colonies to contain the ever swelling flow of people. When this failed, they tried to control it themselves through Indian warfare. The warfare was savage and ruthless, and it left women and children of the villages without protection or mercy.

During the latter part of 1776, seven hundred Cherokee warriors marched on the Holston settlements in Tennessee but were defeated in a bloody battle at a place called **Long Island**.

Fearful of the constant attacks from the Indians, the American leaders in South Carolina, Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia attacked the Indian Country from four sides. Under General Griffith Rutherford, they struck at the heart of the Cherokee homeland. Towns were completely destroyed. All the Indian towns along the Oconaluftee and Tuckasegee Rivers felt the impact of the battle. The Indians recognized that they could not succeed, so they sent the important men of the tribe to negotiate a settlement. This was done and peace was finally established.

Due to their dissatisfaction, many of the Cherokee moved out of their original home territory and settled far down the Tennessee River.

1838 was a terrible time for the Cherokee. Fifteen thousand Cherokee were forcibly moved over a thousand miles, many without notice. They were not even allowed to take clothing, food, or personal belongings. Four thousand Cherokees were believed to have died along the trail from cold, disease, or starvation. Some Cherokees managed to escape the removal, however, by hiding out in the Great Smokey Mountains of their homeland. Later they were given permanent permission to remain there.



THE WHITE MEN ARRIVE

Name: _____

Date: _____

Complete the following sentences related to the section on *The White Men Arrive* by choosing a word that best completes each sentence.

1. The Cherokees developed _____ based on those of their new neighbors.
sleeping habits methods of discipline laws and customs
2. The Cherokees needed _____ to supply them with food and water.
peas and corn forests and rivers lakes and hills
3. As the _____ arrived, the Cherokees gradually lost their means of food and water supply.
Indians white men Sequoyah
4. The _____ asked the white men to contain the flow of people to the reservation.
white men Indians government
5. Governor _____ led in one brutal attack on the Cherokees, because the people feared for their lives.
Lee Grant Rutherford
6. Many Cherokees voluntarily moved from their homes and settled far down the _____.
State of Georgia Tennessee River deep into the woods
7. In the year _____, the Cherokees were forcibly removed from their homes without notice.
1838 1776 1864
8. As many as _____ Cherokees died from cold, disease, and starvation on the **Trail of Tears**.
fifteen thousand six thousand four thousand



THE TRAIL OF TEARS

Between May and August 1838, soldiers encircled the cabins of the Cherokee people. They were forced into stockades and gathering places so that could start on the nine hundred mile exodus across the Mississippi into Oklahoma. This was the removal of a peaceful tribe of people who wanted only to be left alone in peace and understanding. They were arrested and dragged from their homes. The long painful journey to the west ended on March 26, 1839, with about four thousand silent graves reaching from the foot of the Smokey Mountains to what is known as Indian Territory in the West.

Not all whites thought the Indians should be removed. Men like Noah Webster, John Adams, Sam Houston, and Davy Crockett defended the Cherokees, and the Federal Government did nothing. A missionary named Samuel Worcester, who had worked for years with the Cherokees was arrested and imprisoned. He appealed to the United States Supreme Court which declared Georgia's legislation null and void, but President Andrew Jackson defied the court and told the members of the Georgia Legislature to enforce the decision against the Cherokees.

Three hundred Cherokees remained on the Smokey Mountains, however, and their descendants still live there on the land called Qualla Reservation. Every year they put on a Pageant of the Trail of Tears to ensure that no one will ever forget how their people were treated by the United States Government.

The wife of Chief John Ross, was sick with pneumonia, but she gave up her blanket to a child who was cold, and soon died and was buried along the trail.

Trail of Tears Activity

Every year the Cherokee people have pageants depicting the **Trail of Tears**. Research all additional information you can find about the Cherokee Nation. Write and produce your own **Trail of Tears** skit.





THE CHEROKEE TODAY

The present-day Cherokee people are those who hid in the North Carolina Mountains and a few who were allowed by the army to stay during the removal in 1838. They are a strong, intelligent people who have triumphed over adversity. Today, they own about fifty-five thousand acres known as the Indian Reservation or Qualla Indian Boundary. It is located in the heart of Western North Carolina in Swain, Jackson, and Graham Counties.

There are about five thousand people on the Cherokee roll. Of this number only seven or eight hundred are full blooded Cherokee. The Cherokee government recognized any resident who has one thirty second part of Cherokee blood. But by the Cherokee constitution, no member of the tribe can become a council member unless he is one quarter blood. He may not be elected Chief unless he is at least one half Eastern Cherokee.

The Cherokee council is made up of twelve council men, two from each township, with the chief elected from at large on the Reservation. The council members are elected for two years each. These members meet once each year in general council and may meet as many times as necessary for called sessions. The council functions as eleven voting members and one President or Speaker for the body. The speaker does not vote except to break a tie.

The Cherokees may lease their lands to outsiders for up to twenty-five years. All leases must have approval of the tribal business committees. This is made up of members of the Tribal Government and Superintendent of the Reservation.

The Government maintains one accredited high school and fifty elementary schools on the Reservation. These schools are operated by the Federal Government. Most of the Cherokee students go to these schools.

A Cherokee may leave the Reservation at any time and return as he chooses. The Reservation has its own public health officers and police force. Cherokees pay all taxes except local land taxes. They work just like any other American. Some of the older Cherokee people still do not speak English. They may understand the language but refuse to speak it.

The Indian ball game is not played anymore. The social get together for the Indian Dance is no more. The last of the medicine men are dying and there are no more trained to take their places. Many Cherokees do not know the name of their own clan nor the clan of those they marry. The old Cherokee are fast dying and the new generation does not seem interested in the old ways.



CHEROKEE COOKLORE

Before the days of modern appliances and supermarkets, the Cherokee mother spent most of her day growing, preserving, and cooking food for her family.

In 1949, Aggie Lossiah, the granddaughter of Chief John Ross, made public some of her Cherokee recipes made by the old ways of cooking. She cooked these foods over an outdoor fire.

Here is a main menu for what would have been a feast long ago:

Yellow Jacket Soup
Baked Squirrel
Succotash
Bean Bread
Sassafras Tea

Succotash

Shell some corn. Skin it with wood, ashes, and lye. Cook corn and beans separately and then together. If desired, you may put in pieces of pumpkin. Be sure to add the pumpkin in time for it to get done before removing the pot from the fire.

Bean Bread

Skin the corn with wood ashes. Sieve the ashes and put them into an iron pot over the fire. Let this boil until it is thick enough to bubble. Take the corn off the fire. Go to the branch. Wash the corn in running water in a sieve by letting the water run through it until it is clean. Let it drip until all the extra water has dripped off. While the corn is still damp, pound it into meal by using an old homemade corn beater. To make bean bread, boil dry beans in plain water until tender. Pour the boiling beans and some of the soup into the cornmeal and stir until well mixed. Have a pot of plain water boiling. Mold the bread flat in your hand and warp it in corn blades. Tie with a stout reed. Drop this into the boiling water, cover, and boil until done. Do not put any salt in bean bread. It will crumble.

Sassafras Tea

Gather and wash the roots of red sassafras. Do this in the early spring before the sap rises. Store for future use. When ready to make the tea, boil a few pieces of the root and serve hot. Sweeten if desired.

Try these tasty recipes. They are delicious. Notice that there is no recipe for Baked Squirrel and Yellow Jacket Soup.



GOVERNMENT OF THE CHEROKEE PEOPLE

Name: _____

Date: _____

After reading about the government of the Cherokee People, answer each of the following questions in complete sentences.

1. How were the Cherokee people governed?

They were governed by two chiefs, the Peace Chief and the War Chief.

2. What was the responsibility of each chief?

The Peace Chief headed the village council and handled village matters.

3. Name the seven clans of the Cherokee Indians and what each name signified.

The Bird clan were keepers of the birds.
The Paint clan made red paint and were the sorcerers and medicine men.
The Deer clan were keepers of the deer.
The Wolf clan provided most of the tribe's war chiefs.
The Blue clan made the medicine.
The Long Hair clan usually provided the chief.
The Wild Potato clan gathered wild potatoes.

4. List three responsibilities of each clan.

Each clan was responsible for caring for the orphans and the destitute, hospitality for visiting clan members, and avenging wrongs committed against other clan members.

5. What made the Cherokee people distinctive from other Native American tribes?

The developments around the number seven made the Cherokee distinctive from all the other Indians.



TRAINING OF THE CHILDREN

Name: _____

Date: _____

Use the narrative entitled **Training of the Children** to help you answer the following questions.

1. In the Cherokee society, how is the responsibility of the uncle different from the responsibility of your uncle?

In the Cherokee society the uncle served in the capacity as father, while our own father performs that role.

2. What does the term **matrilineal** mean?

The term **matrilineal** means that the family line passes through the line of the mother.

3. Who was responsible for the training of the children?

The mother was responsible for the training of the Cherokee children.

4. What does the term **matrilocal** mean?

When a couple married, the husband went to live with the family of his wife, and she or her family owned all property.

5. The children who were selected to be medicine men had to learn many things. Name two of these things.

They had to learn the use of herbs and bark, the rituals of cleansing, and the art of purification.



FESTIVALS/CELEBRATIONS OF THE CHEROKEE PEOPLE

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. The Cherokee people celebrated many festivals. List the various festivals they celebrated, and what each one signified.

First New Moon of Spring signifies the beginning of the growth of grass.

New Green Corn Ceremony signifies when the corn was first fit to eat.

The Ripe Corn Ceremony signifies the ripening of the corn.

The Great New Moon Ceremony signifies the first new moon of the Cherokee New Year.

Reconciliation and Friends Made Ceremony took place ten days after the previous ceremony took place.

Bouncing Bush Feast took place at the first new moon of autumn.

The Uku Dance occurs every seventh year when the Peace Chief re-consecrated himself as chief.

2. List seven special festivals/celebrations in the United States, and state the significance of each one.

Answers will vary.

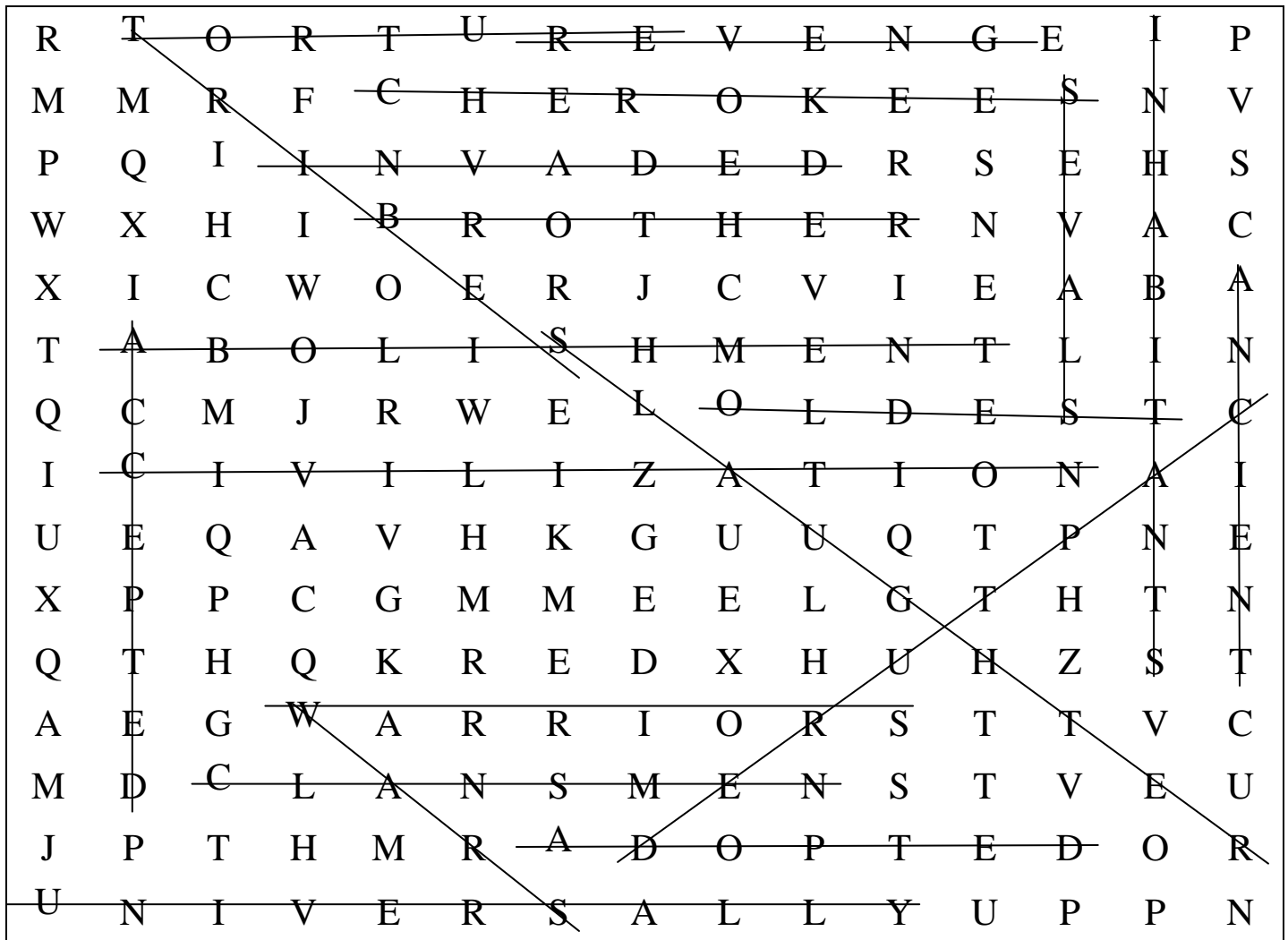
3. How are the celebrations of the United States different from those of the Cherokee people?

Answers will vary.



WAR AND REVENGE

WORD SEARCH



WORD BOX

abolishment	Cherokees	revenge
accepted	civilization	slaughter
adopted	clansmen	slaves
ancient	inhabitants	torture
brother	invaders	tribes
captured	wars	universally
warriors	oldest	



THE WHITE MEN ARRIVE

Name: _____

Date: _____

Complete the following sentences related to the section on *The White Men Arrive* by choosing a word that best completes each sentence.

1. The Cherokees developed laws and customs based on those of their new neighbors.
 sleeping habits methods of discipline **laws and customs**
2. The Cherokees needed forests and rivers to supply them with food and water.
 peas and corn **forests and rivers** lakes and hills
3. As the white men arrived, the Cherokees gradually lost their means of food and water supply.
 Indians **white men** Sequoyah
4. The Indians asked the white men to contain the flow of people to the reservation.
 white men **Indians** government
5. Governor Rutherford led in one brutal attack on the Cherokees, because the people feared for their lives.
 Lee Grant **Rutherford**
6. Many Cherokees voluntarily moved from their homes and settled far down the Tennessee River.
 State of Georgia **Tennessee River** deep into the woods
7. In the year 1838, the Cherokees were forcibly removed from their homes without notice.
 1838 1776 1864
8. As many as four thousand Cherokees died from cold, disease, and starvation on the **Trail of Tears**.
 fifteen thousand six thousand **four thousand**



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