

Pawnee Indians

Where Did the Pawnee Live?

- They lived in the Plains Region
- The Great Plains lie in the center of North America. The Plains stretch from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains and from Texas into Canada
- Eastern Plains and Western Plains



Eastern Plains

- Lots of rain that would cause the grass to grow **EIGHT FEET HIGH!**
- Rain allowed Americans Indians, such as the Pawnee, to farm successfully
- They settled their villages near rivers and built earth lodges to live in.
- The lodges house were built out of bark, earth and grass
- They also protected people from cold story weather
- In the spring and fall, the Pawnee farmed and in the summer and winter, they left their villages and hunted buffalo

Earth Lodge



Western Plains

- The dry lands on the western plains made farming difficult
- But this area had one very important resource-
BUFFALO
- Ate Buffalo meat
- Carved bones from the buffalo to make tools and wove hair into rope
- Even used the tail as a fly swatter!
- Used buffalo skin to make teepees
- Western Plains Indians were *NOMADS* (people who moved around from place to place)

What did they eat?

- Pawnee women raised crops like corn, beans, squash and sunflowers
- Pawnee men would hunt buffalo and antelope
- Pawnee hunters would drive the buffalo to marshy land where it was easier to shoot them, but once they acquired horses, they began to hunt buffalo on horseback
- Looking at the region in which the Pawnee lived, do you think they ate fish?

What did the Pawnee Wear?

- 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
- 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

Porcupine Hair Roach



What were the women and men's roles in the Pawnee Tribe?

- Pawnee men were hunters and sometimes went to war to protect their families. Pawnee women were farmers and also did most of the child care and cooking. Only men became Pawnee chiefs, but both genders took part in storytelling, artwork and music, and traditional medicine.

How did the Pawnee travel?

- When they traveled over land, the Pawnees used dogs pulling *travois* (a kind of drag sled) to help them carry their belongings. There were no horses in North America until colonists brought them over from Europe.

What were the Pawnee's arts and crafts like?

- Pawnee artists are famous for their pottery, woven baskets, and hide paintings.
- Pawnee Indians told lots of legends and fairy tales. Story telling is very important to the Pawnee Indians culture.

Bibliography

- Laura Redish and Orrin Lewis; *Native Languages of the Americas*, http://www.bigorrin.org/pawnee_kids.htm, 2009.