

## *Pawnee*

### *Where do the Pawnees live?*

The Pawnee Indians are original people of Nebraska and Kansas. The Pawnee tribe was forced to move to a reservation in Oklahoma during the 1800's, and most Pawnee people are still living in Oklahoma today.

### *What language do the Pawnee Indians speak?*

Most Pawnee people speak English today. However, some Pawnees, especially elders, also speak their native *Pawnee language*.

### *What were men and women'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.

### *What were Pawnee homes like in the past?*

Most Pawnee Indians lived in settled villages of round earthen *lodges*. Pawnee lodges were made from wooden frames covered with packed earth. When the Pawnee tribe went on hunting trips, they used buffalo-hide *tipis* (or teepees) as temporary shelter, similar to camping tents.

### *What was Pawnee clothing like? Did the Pawnees wear feather headdresses and face paint?*

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.

Later,

Pawnee Indian leaders sometimes wore the long Native American headdresses 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.

🍌 *What was Pawnee transportation like in the days before cars? Did they paddle canoes?*

No--the Pawnee Indians didn't live near the ocean. 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 was Pawnee food like in the days before supermarkets?*

The Pawnees were farming people. Pawnee women raised crops of corn, beans, squash, and sunflowers. The men worked together to hunt buffalo and antelopes. Originally, Pawnee hunters would drive buffalo onto marshy land where it was easier to shoot them, but once they acquired horses, they hunted buffalo from horseback.

🍌 *What were Pawnee weapons and tools like in the past?*

Pawnee hunters used bows and arrows. In war, Pawnee men fired their bows or fought with war clubs and spears.

🍌 *What other Native Americans did the Pawnee tribe interact with?*

The Pawnees traded regularly with other tribes of the Great Plains and the Western Plateau, such as the Comanche and Omaha. These tribes usually communicated using the Plains Sign Language.

The Pawnees also fought wars with other tribes. Plains Indian tribes treated war differently than European countries did. They didn't fight over territory but instead to prove their courage, and so Plains Indian war parties rarely fought to the death or destroyed each other's villages. Instead, their war customs included *counting coup* (touching an opponent in battle without harming him), stealing an enemy's weapon or horse, or forcing the other tribe's warriors to retreat. Some tribes the Pawnees frequently fought with included the Apache, Kiowa and Sioux.

🍌 *What are Pawnee arts and crafts like?*

Pawnee artists are famous for their pottery, woven baskets, and hide paintings.

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