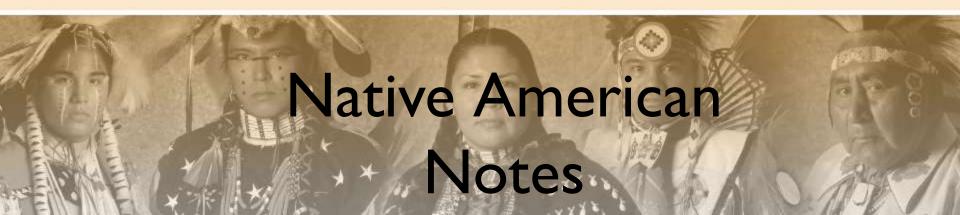Listen to the wind…It talks…
Listen to the silence…For it speaks…
Listen with your heart…
And you will learn and understand.

Native American Notes

General Facts

- Native Americans lived in North America an estimated 30 times longer than the first Europeans.

- Widely dispersed tribes had their own languages, governments, social organizations, customs, housing, and methods of survival.

- All literature was entirely <u>oral</u>—no developed writing systems established.

Conflict

- Once the Europeans came to America, many viewed Native Americans as "threats and obstructions to the possession of rich farmland and potentially valuable mineral rights" (51).

- Europeans moved inland from the coast and started to fight with the Natives.

Conflict Cont.

- Andrew Jackson's administration forced treaties on the Natives because the whites wanted the Native land.

- Thousands of Native Americans were marched across the U.S. into Oklahoma; many died en route.

Native Americans Today

- Many Indians live in Canada or the U.S., mostly in places where they were "assigned" decades ago.

- Although some Natives are immersed into cities and towns, many live on Indian Reservations, mostly in the Midwest.

- Indians living on reservations abide by federal laws (i.e. they vote, serving in the armed forces, etc.), but they are also subject to tribal laws and have their own political leadership within the reservation.

Native Americans Today

- Schools are set up on the reservations for children.

- Native Americans are not banned to these reservations; it is their choice to stay there.

- Common Stereotypes: Casinos, drunks, lazy, temperamental, nature worshippers, teepees, whooping

Types of Native American Literature

Origin Myths:

- Symbolic tales that dramatize the tribal explanation of the origin of the earth and its people

- Establish the central relationships among people, the universe, and other creatures of the earth

- Distinguish gender roles and social organization for the tribe

- Tell of the origins of the tribe's most significant social institutions and activities

Reviewing Terms

- Tone: The attitude of the author toward the audience, characters, subject of the work itself (I.e. serious, humorous, etc.)

- Mood: The emotions or atmosphere of a work derived from literary devices such as dialogue and literary elements such as setting. The mood of a work is not as always might be expected based on its subject matter.

- Style: The author's choices regarding language, sentence structure, voice, and tone in order to communicate with the reader.

Culture Hero Stories:

- Dramatize a people's belief about how a remarkable individual altered the original world and social order to its culturally accepted norm

- The events in the stories account for the origin of distinctive cultural beliefs, values, and practices

Motif

- An element that recurs significantly in diverse literary works

- Can be an image, idea, theme, situation, or action

- In cultural hero stories, a motif is a despised orphan who is given sacred knowledge

Trickster Tales:

- Illustrate a testing of the limits of cultural formation and practice

- Trickster characters (people in the form of Coyote, Raven, or Rabbit), feature humorous and often scandalous attempts to violate the established customs and values of the tribe

- Trickster figure is stereotyped as alone and wandering on the margins of the social world, and the tales offer cultural lessons

Warning Tales:

- Some legends have been passed down to make younger people understand the dangers of certain situations (i. e. disrespecting elders, not following the rules of the tribe, etc.)
- Used to teach lessons

- Bias- Bias occurs when a writer makes a one-sided presentation. They do not give all of the facts, or else they try to persuade the reader by using emotional or unfair language.

- Diction-refers to the words a writer chooses and the way he or she uses these words.

- Conflict- a struggle between opposing forces

- External conflict- pits a character against nature, society, or another character

- Internal conflict- between opposing forces within a character