



Eastern Woodland Natives

Cross-Curricular Focus: History/Social Sciences

The Eastern **Woodlands** was a Native American cultural region long before colonists came to start settlements. It stretched from the east side of the Great Plains all the way to the east coast. It also reached north to the Great Lakes area and south to the Gulf of Mexico.

The region had climate changes to match the seasons. The winters were cold, and the summers were hot and humid. The Native Americans in these areas learned to adapt to the seasonal changes so they could survive.

The Eastern Woodlands was rich with a variety of resources. It included rich farmland, forests, mountains, rivers and lakes. In addition, it had the oceans of its coastal borders.

Water is the most important resource for living things. The Eastern Woodlands region had many rivers, lakes and streams. These bodies of water met the needs of people and animals for drinking and washing. They also provided a way for people to travel and transport goods. The flexible bark of the birch tree was an important resource. Using it, the natives were able to make canoes. They used canoes for traveling and for catching fish. Natives who lived near the ocean waters also collected seashells. They used them to make jewelry and other ornaments.

The forests of the Eastern Woodlands had many other resources besides birch bark for canoes. Several kinds of plants were woven to make baskets, trays and even sandals. An abundance of animals lived in the forest. They provided plenty of fresh meat for the natives who hunted them. Some animals that were commonly hunted by the natives were deer and rabbits. Native Americans used every part of the animals they hunted. The meat was eaten. The bones were carved into tools or arrowheads. Finally, the skins were used to make clothing and blankets. A bear skin made a nice, warm winter blanket or coat.

Using the large amount of resources in the Eastern Woodlands, the Native Americans were able to survive and thrive. Later, when European colonists arrived, they would also use these resources.

Name: _____

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

1) What resources did the Eastern Woodland natives use for clothing?

2) How were the water resources beneficial for the Eastern Woodland natives?

3) What characteristic of the forest's birch trees made them suitable for building canoes?

4) Many natives were skilled in working with plant materials. Name something that was made out of local plants.

5) How did the coastal Native Americans use seashells?



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Actual wording of answers may vary.

1) What resources did the Eastern Woodland natives use for clothing?

the skins of animals

2) How were the water resources beneficial for the Eastern Woodland natives?

for drinking, washing and traveling

3) What characteristic of the forest's birch trees made them suitable for building canoes?

It was flexible.

4) Many natives were skilled in working with plant materials. Name something that was made out of local plants.

Examples of correct answer: baskets, trays or sandals

5) How did the coastal Native Americans use seashells?

as jewelry or ornaments