

North American Plains Culture

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Environment

The environment of the great plains cultural area mainly consisted of flat prairies, it also had rolling hills. It did however contain some small ranges like the Black Hills and the Badlands. But it also was very hot and dry in the summer but in the winter it was very cold and dry which is easier than cold and humid or hot and humid. When the people would move around they would mainly move by following the buffalo herds. They lived off the land and would use everything from a kill. From bones to parts of the internal organs everything was used and none of it was wasted.



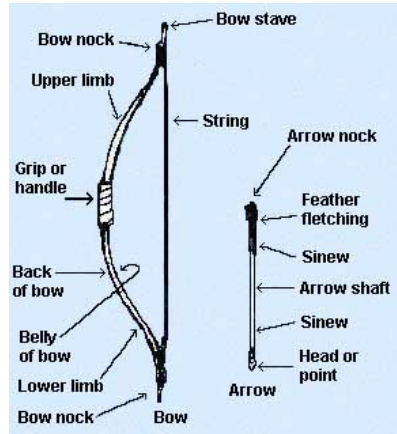
Environment continued

They had many different kinds of tribes and bands with in that. These tribes include Apache, Arapaho, Arikara, Assiniboine, Atakapa, Blackfoot, including two sub-groups, the Blood and Piegan; Brule, Cheyenne, Comanche, Crow, Gros Ventre, Hidatsa, Hunkpapa, Iowa, Kansa, Karankawa, Kiowa, Loup, Mandan, Missouri, Omaha, Osage, Oto, Pawnee, Ponca, Quapaw, Sioux, including five sub-groups, the Oglala, Santee, Sisseton, Teton and Yankton. They also came up with medicine back in the day, like the aloe vera plant which helped with sunburns, and wounds.



Technology

The native americans used many different materials just of what they could get. They used obsidian and other kinds of rock they also used bone and antlers to make arrowheads. They came in various different sizes and shapes, each designed and shape was made for different kinds of animals or native wars. They also made spear heads out of the same materials. They also used and atlatl to get more power off on the arrow. They used bows as well, they string was made out of sinew and the wood was whatever they could use but up north they used the young pine trees cause of their flexibility.



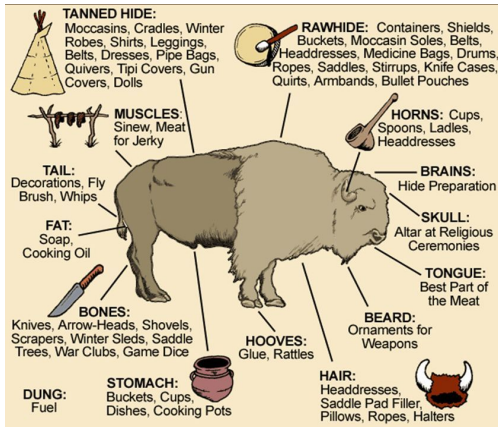
Technology continued

They also used clubs the one that the plains natives used was the stone club. This club had a wooden staff and a stone attached to the top of it with hide. Knives were also used, they were normally made out of antler or bone with a stone blade attached to the handle. They used scrapers to clean hides, they would slide scrapers along the hide to separate meat or fat from the hide. A drift was made out of antler so when they would make arrowheads or spearheads they would flake off pieces of the arrowhead or spearheads to sharpen it and make it into an arrow shape. Their chest plates were made out of hide and bones and or wooden tubes going across the chest plate.



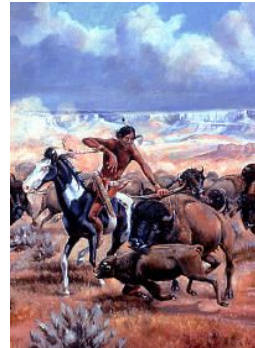
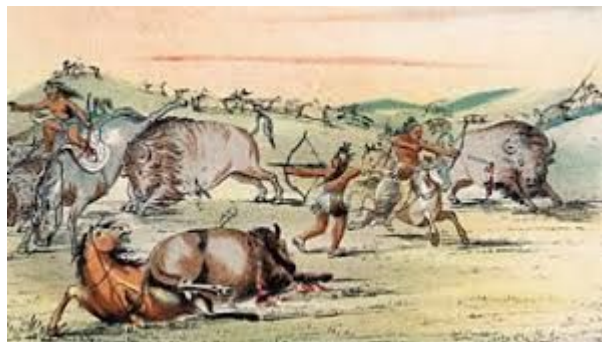
Social

Native American women had many roles and a lot of them were very important. One of their most important roles was to butcher clean gut the animals after a harvest was made. Women were in charge of cooking the animals as well. Cleaning and tanning the hides was yet another very important job. They would also have to pitch their tipis. They could also become elders or medicine women. Men had different jobs. They would go out and do the hunting like running buffalo off of jumps, known as buffalo jumps. Men also participated in tribal wars, and they would also participate in peace treaties. When men were going to marry a woman to seal the marriage, men would have to give the woman a horse sealing the marriage.



Social continued

Kids did not really have any specific roles. They were expected to help out with moving, cleaning carcasses. They mainly ended up playing around, but when they were around the age of twelve to fourteen they would head off by themselves to find their spirit animal, only when they found their spirit animal would they come back. The elders of the tribe were very important to a successful tribe. They would decide when it was time to move camps to follow food. They would also have meetings where they would discuss about a war or a raid they may take. Elders were very important for a successful tribe. Medicine men/women were also very important for to tribes. If a tribe member was wounded or sick, the medicine men or women would use herbs to try and heal the sick or the wounded. They would also call upon spirits asking them in assistance for healing or sometimes a battle so they could win.



Culture

Native American pictographs were paintings to tell a story. These stories could be of battles, hunts, dreams/visions, or even journeys. They did many dances, the Sun-Dance was a way of asking for healing and their was personal sacrifice. They would be skewered and were then forced to dance till the skin gave way or the skewer came out. The Ghost-Dance was performed to ask spirits or lost loved ones back to their tribes. These are just some of the dances there were more and other ceremonies.



Figure 10.11 **Men's Skirt, Buffalo, 18th century**
Men's skirts were made of animal skin and were heavily fringed with long, dark hair or animal skins. They were worn during dances and were often decorated with beads and other ornaments. The skirts were made of animal skin and were heavily fringed with long, dark hair or animal skins. They were worn during dances and were often decorated with beads and other ornaments. The skirts were made of animal skin and were heavily fringed with long, dark hair or animal skins. They were worn during dances and were often decorated with beads and other ornaments.

Figure 10.12 **Men's Skirt, Buffalo, 18th century**
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Culture continued

They valued their children the as one of the top things they cherished, children were watched by the whole tribe because that was the future of their tribe so kids had a lot to learn as well. Elders and the Medicine men or women were the keepers of their culture and religion, and the people of the tribe would look to them for guidance through difficult times. One of their most famous games was called shinny. Shinny is a lot like hockey, they used a hide ball and sticks to hit the ball threw the goals of the opposing team to score points.



Famous Native Americans

Jim Thorpe



Crazy Horse



Sitting Bull



Black Kettle



Black Elk



Chief Joseph



Red Cloud



Pretty Shield



Sacajawea



<http://www.native-languages.org/weapons.htm>

https://www.ducksters.com/history/famous_native_americans.php

<https://native-american-indian-facts.com/Great-Plains-American-Indian-Facts/Great-Plains-American-Indian-Facts.shtml>

<http://people.ucls.uchicago.edu/~snekros/2007-8%20webquests/Daily%20Life%2089/dailylife89.html>