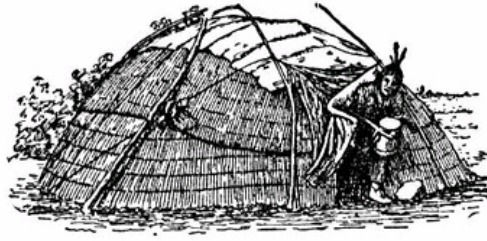


Name _____ Date _____

THE ABENAKI TRIBE



The people called the Abenaki originated in the northeastern part of the present-day United States, extending into Canada and going as far south as present-day Massachusetts.

The Abenaki lived in small groups spread throughout this vast area. There are estimated to have been over 40,000 people settled in the area before European colonists began to arrive. A series of deadly influenzas, smallpox, and diphtheria arrived with the colonists and reduced the population by more than half.

The Abenaki are considered one tribe because they all spoke the same language, had similar lifestyle and customs, and lived in the same region. However, they did not have a single leader, and lived in very small groups fairly independently from one another.

For the most part, the Abenaki lived in villages of about 100 people during the summer, and separated into even smaller family groups to live in scattered wigwams, hunting and gathering during the winter. During their summers of village life, they usually settled near rivers or the shore and farmed corn, squash, and beans.

Living in small groups, the Abenaki leadership was headed by a **sachem**, a respected figure who helped organize and advise the people when needed. Sachems did not have any special authority to command others, and worked with the rest of the tribe—major decisions would be made in a meeting of adults in the tribe.

As French and English settlers began setting up colonies in the area, the Abenaki formed relationships with the new groups moving in. They had a relationship of trade with the French because of the rich beaver pelts in the region. Throughout the mid- to late-1600s and the 1700s, the Abenaki were involved in multiple wars with other tribes and the English settlers, and also became involved in territorial wars between the French and English.

During these periods of war, many Abenaki were able to abandon their villages, retreat to Canada, and return, even years later. During periods of war with New England colonists, they organized raids from the Canadian border. This has made it difficult for the tribe to become Federally Recognized by the United States government, although some smaller sub-tribes have received recognition.

Name _____ Date _____

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ABOUT *THE ABENAKI TRIBE*

1. What current U.S. states did the Abenaki reside in?
 - a. Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont
 - b. South Carolina, Florida, and Georgia
 - c. Rhode Island, Maryland, and Virginia
 - d. Washington, Oregon, and California

2. What kind of houses did most of the Abenaki live in during the winter?
 - a. teepees
 - b. yurts
 - c. wigwams
 - d. grass huts

3. What did the Abenaki trade with the French?
 - a. corn, squash, and beans
 - b. jewelry
 - c. beaver pelts
 - d. gunpowder

4. How many people were in a typical summertime village?
 - a. 10
 - b. 50
 - c. 100
 - d. 250

5. What happened to reduce the population of the Abenaki by half?
 - a. King Phillip's War
 - b. war with the French
 - c. a winter famine
 - d. diseases brought by colonists

6. How were important decisions made among the Abenaki people?

Name _____ Date _____

THE POWHATAN TRIBE



Among the first groups of Native Americans to encounter European settlers were the Powhatan people of eastern Virginia. This tribe lived along the waterfront and off of many waterways that come into the low river valley.

The Powhatans lived in long houses made out of slender bent pieces of wood. They kept a fire burning inside all year—during the winter to stay warm, and during the summer so that a little smoke would keep mosquitoes away. They were excellent farmers and had different varieties of corn, beans, squash, and melons that they grew. Unlike many other tribes who had to move when the seasons changed, the Powhatans usually stayed in one place until they had to move their crops when the soil lost its nutrients.

The men spent their days hunting, fishing, or building dugout canoes and setting traps. They also were warriors at times, fighting with neighboring tribes, and later with the English settlers at Jamestown. The women built houses, farmed, cooked, and made baskets and clay pots. Early English settlers were impressed by how hard Powhatan women worked in their villages.

The word “Powhatan” is the name of a confederacy of tribes who made agreements to fight together under a chief, also named “Powhatan”. This chief took his name from the village he was born in, which was the village of Powhatan. The chief’s real name was actually Wahunsunacock, but most people still remember him as Powhatan.

Powhatan was a strong ruler, who expanded his territory tremendously during his lifetime by defeating other tribes. He had a territory of approximately thirty sub-tribes when European settlers began arriving along the waterfront of Virginia.

The first English settlement in the New World was called Jamestown. Initially, the settlement began with over 100 English settlers, but after one difficult winter, only 38 remained. They started off with a fairly peaceful relationship of trade with Native people living in the region.

Name _____ Date _____

THE POWHATAN TRIBE, part 2

The people of Jamestown had trouble adapting to their new surroundings, and were constantly short of food because of problems farming and hunting in their new home. They relied on the local tribes to give them food when they were starving.

Chief Powhatan pledged peace with the settlers in 1607 and said he would protect them if any of his people attacked. He sent them regular deliveries of corn during difficult times. However, after several misunderstandings and broken promises between the settlers and the Native Americans, Powhatan encouraged his people to conduct raids against the English.

In 1609, 400 more settlers arrived at the colony. They discovered that growing tobacco to sell in Europe was a way to keep money coming into the settlement. Tobacco fields need to be rotated often, and this process took up so much space that Native American tribes were driven to abandon their villages and move inland so that they had land to hunt and grow their crops on.

The famous relationship between John Smith and Pocahontas is one of the best-known stories about the Powhatan people. Pocahontas was one of Chief Powhatan's daughters. John Smith was taken prisoner by the chief and stayed with them for almost a month in the winter of 1607. Later, John Smith wrote that Pocahontas, who was 10 or 11 years old, had saved his life by asking her father not to kill him. Some historians are not convinced that this really happened, and that Pocahontas actually disliked John Smith. Pocahontas was either given to or captured by the settlers of Jamestown in 1613, where she learned about English language and culture and married a tobacco merchant named John Rolfe. She died during a trip to England when she was only 21 years old.

Chief Powhatan died in 1618. One of his brothers, Opechancanough, became a leader to the Powhatans. Wars broke out between the English and the local tribes, with entire villages being destroyed, including all the inhabitants. Opechancanough led raids against Jamestown from 1622-1644 in the hopes that the English would leave the area. In 1644, as a very old man, he was carried into his final battle on a litter. He was taken prisoner and shot in the back by an English soldier.

After years of disputes over land, the Powhatan people dispersed, some moving into other Native American tribes, others into other cultures including European settlements or free slave colonies, and the Powhatan culture was nearly lost. Their language is now unknown except for some notes taken by early settlers. Disease and war with the English colonists had reduced their numbers so much by the early 1700s that the people nearly died out; however, some Powhatan tribes have managed to keep their culture alive today on reservations in Virginia and in New Jersey.

Name _____ Date _____

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ABOUT *THE POWHATAN TRIBE*

- 7. Where did the Powhatan people live?
 - a. West Virginia
 - b. Eastern Virginia
 - c. North Carolina
 - d. South Carolina

- 8. What did the English need most from local Powhatan villages?
 - a. blankets
 - b. firewood
 - c. clothing
 - d. food

- 9. What crop did the English begin growing to improve Jamestown's economy?
 - a. tobacco
 - b. corn
 - c. melons
 - d. wheat

- 10. Which of the following tasks below was usually done by Powhatan women?
 - a. building dugout canoes
 - b. fishing
 - c. building houses
 - d. setting traps

- 11. How did the Powhatans keep mosquitoes away in the summer?
 - a. using a natural pesticide
 - b. keeping a fire burning in their homes
 - c. using mosquito swatters
 - d. by eating corn

- 12. Explain how there are three definitions of the name "Powhatan".

Name _____ Date _____

THE WAMPANOAG TRIBE



The Wampanoag tribe is a community of Native Americans who, at one time, occupied much of southeastern Massachusetts, the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, and western Cape Cod.

In the early 1600s, before many European settlers began colonizing the present-day United States, there are estimated to have been 12,000 people belonging to this community. The Wampanoag lived in villages spread throughout the region, and hunted and farmed for their livelihoods. Fishing and whaling were also part of early Wampanoag life.

The Wampanoag people emigrated with the seasons. During warmer months, they lived by the shore, planting food, including corn, and fishing. When the weather changed and they could no longer farm, they moved inland and set up small camps of family groups. These small groups spread out and hunted the land surrounding their camps.

The name "Wampanoag" refers to an entire community of Native Americans, and comprised several dozen sub-tribes. The only sub-tribe of Wampanoag that is a Federally Recognized tribe is the "Wampanoag of Gay Head". This sub-tribe has lived on Martha's Vineyard for over 10,000 years. Other sub-tribes are known to have existed historically, and some are still trying to become Federally Recognized. Most sub-tribes have completely disappeared because every member of the tribe died or was killed.

Wampanoag leaders were known as *sachems*, and the title was passed through family lines, including to women if no male could claim the title. The leaders had the respect of others in the tribe, but worked with the rest of the community and did not have special privileges attached to their title, and they did not command others. The Wampanoag tribe also had a Grand Sachem, who provided leadership for the entire tribe. When war began with the English settlers, the Grand Sachem King Phillip organized warriors from all over the region, including tribes that were not were not part of the Wampanoag people.

From 1614-1620, diseases that arrived with early European colonists swept through the region, and some destroyed whole villages. By 1620, there were only about 5,000 Wampanoag people. Over half of them had been killed by disease.

Name _____ Date _____

THE WAMPANOAG TRIBE, part 2



The Wampanoag tribe is well known as the tribe that shared a harvest celebration with the Pilgrims from the Mayflower ship. These settlers arrived in Plymouth and formed a small community in the winter of 1620, following a difficult voyage at sea. They weren't able to plant any food for themselves, and were lost in the new world they had settled in. Some members of the Wampanoag spent time helping the settlers learn how to live in their new home. The two groups of people shared a friendly and cooperative relationship for over ten years, as more English settlers began moving to Plymouth and settling throughout the area.

As more and more English Puritan colonists arrived throughout the mid-1600s, they tried to convert the Native Americans to their faith. They moved groups of Native Americans from their tribes to "Praying Indian" villages and forbade inhabitants of these villages to perform any ceremony from their culture. The relationship between the colonists and the Native Americans wishing to continue their traditional way of life became less friendly as more and more English colonists appeared.

King Phillip traveled to visit with other tribal leaders and gained support for going to war with the English colonies. From 1675-1676, King Phillip's War raged between the English colonies and local Native American tribes. Some Wampanoag sub-tribes, including the Wampanoag of Gay Head, did not want to participate in the war and stayed neutral. By the end of the war, there were only 400 Wampanoag.

There are about three thousand Wampanoag people alive today, most of whom reside in Massachusetts or on Martha's Vineyard. The last of the Wampanoag from Nantucket Island died in 1855 following another outbreak of disease through that area.

Name _____ Date _____

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ABOUT *THE WAMPANOAG TRIBE*

- 13. How could a Wampanoag become sachem?
 - a. By being a strong warrior
 - b. By having a large enough family
 - c. By inheriting it from a parent
 - d. By killing the previous sachem

- 14. How many Wampanoag people were left after the war with the colonists?
 - a. 12,000
 - b. 5,000
 - c. 1,000
 - d. 400

- 15. The Wampanoag are well known for...
 - a. Being great sailors
 - b. Sharing the "first Thanksgiving" with the Pilgrims
 - c. Discovering corn
 - d. Building the pyramids

- 16. What caused the largest number of lives lost for the Wampanoag?
 - a. Disease
 - b. King Phillip's war
 - c. Freezing temperatures
 - d. Starvation

- 17. For at least how long have the Wampanoag's ancestors lived on the island of Martha's Vineyard?
 - a. 1, 000 years
 - b. 5,000 years
 - c. 10,000 years
 - d. 100,000 years

- 18. Why do you think King Phillip wanted to go to war with the English colonies?

Name _____ Date _____

Answers to *THE ABENAKI TRIBE*

1. a
2. c
3. c
4. b
5. d
6. answers will vary although they should include mention of the sachem; accept reasonable answers

Answers to *THE POWHATAN TRIBE*

7. b
8. d
9. a
10. c
11. b
12. It is the name of a group of tribes, it is the name of the man who led this group of tribes, and it is the name of the village that this chief came from.

Answers to *THE WAMPANOAG TRIBE*

13. c
14. d
15. b
16. a
17. c
18. answers will vary; accept reasonable answers

Reading Comprehension/ Native Americans

Name _____ Date _____