

Native American Homes

Today, Native American people live in ordinary houses like yours and mine. But long ago, in order to have a place to live, people had to build houses by hand. Depending on where they lived, Native American tribes built different types of homes using materials found in nature. Let's learn about them.

Tipis (or tepees) were one type of home built by Native Americans living in the Great Plains, such as the Sioux. A tipi was built of buffalo hide and thin wooden poles, and was shaped like a cone. Since the Great Plains was a grassy area with few trees, Plains Indians often had to trade horses to get the wooden poles for their tipis. Plains Indians needed to travel a lot as they followed the migrations of the animals they hunted, especially the buffalo. The tipi design was perfect for travel since it was light and could be packed and unpacked quickly.

Longhouses were built by Native Americans in the Eastern United States. Since they lived in the woods, trees were plentiful and could be used to build homes. A longhouse was LONG- about 200 feet! They were built of logs and covered with bark. Unlike a tipi, longhouses could not be moved. The Iroquois call themselves "The people of the Longhouse."

Other Woodland Indians, such as the Ojibway, built **wigwams**. A wigwam was built in a similar way to a longhouse, but was smaller and rounded. Some wigwams were covered with bark while others were covered with animal hide.

Seminole Indians, who lived in the Southeast United States, lived in small open-walled homes called **chickees**. A chickee had a wooden platform for a floor and a roof above. This kept them comfortable in hot weather. If it rained, they hung canvas to make temporary walls.

In the Southwest, Navajo Indians built **hogans**. A hogan was a small, one-room house made of wooden poles covered with tree bark and mud. They did not have windows. Each Navajo family had 2 hogans, one in the desert and one in the mountains, where they lived at different times of the year.

The Pueblo Indians, also in the Southwest, built homes on cliffs and mesas, called **pueblos**. In the desert, wood was scarce, so homes were built of adobe, a mixture of mud and straw. Their homes would be stacked like an apartment building in a cliff wall, with ladders to reach the higher levels.

Let's review!

Native Americans built many different kinds of homes, depending on where they lived.

Today, Native Americans live in ordinary homes like yours and mine.

Name _____

Date _____

1. Why did some Native Americans build wooden houses, while others did not?

2. Match each home to the correct Native American tribe.

Pueblo

Navajo

Longhouse

Ojibway

Chickee

Iroquois

Wigwam

Pueblo

Tipi

Seminole

Hogan

Sioux

3. Draw and label 3 different Native American homes.

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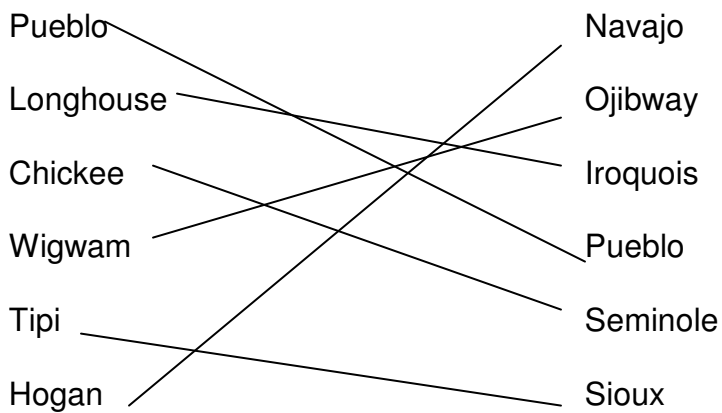
Name _____

Date _____

Answers:

1. Some Native Americans lived in areas where wood was hard to find.
(Extra Credit: Plains Indians built tipis since their design was perfect for a nomadic way of life.)

2. Matching



3. Answers will vary.