

# TRIBAL LIFE IN ILLINOIS

Native Americans as First Naturalists

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## Teacher's Guide

Winter Program: Tribal Life in Illinois

Grade Level: Second – Sixth Grade

Program Length: 1 hour

### INTRODUCTION

To know our history as a sense of place is to better understand ourselves in relationship to nature in today's world. This in-school program introduces students to the history of clans and tribes of Native Americans in Illinois and their important lessons as naturalists and stewards of the land.

Through storytelling, sharing of native handcrafted artifacts, playing some favorite Native American games, and learning more about the biology and geography of Illinois land, students will gain a better understanding of the first people of North America and how they have greatly influenced the relationships between cultural and natural history. From the twelve strong tribes of the Illiniwek Nation in the 1600s to the only two remaining tribes of the early 1800s in Illinois, the Kaskaskia and the Peoria, native people and their environmental contributions will be discussed and examined in relationship to our environmental ethic of today.

### OBJECTIVES:

1. To become familiar with the tribes of the first people of Illinois and recognize their contributions to cultural and natural history relationships.
2. To examine more closely the ways in which native people lived in harmony with nature in their early years in Illinois.
3. To learn how Native Americans of Illinois met their fundamental needs for food, drink, clothing, shelter, entertainment, art, and spirituality in the natural world without exploiting the land on which they depended.
4. To strengthen students' appreciation for the natural world through learning more about our first naturalists and environmentalists.

**THIS PROGRAM HAS THE POTENTIAL TO MEET THE FOLLOWING ILLINOIS STATE STANDARDS:**

Learning Area	Goal	Standard	Benchmark
Language Arts	4	A	1a, 1b, 2b
		B	1b, 2b
Science	11	A	1b, 2a
Science	12	B	1a, 2a
Social Sciences	16	C	1a, 1b
Social Sciences	16	D	5
Social Sciences	16	E	1, 2a
Social Sciences	17	C	1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 2c
Social Sciences	18	C	1, 2

**SUGGESTIONS FOR PREVISIT ACTIVITIES**

1. Ask students to brainstorm a list of fundamental needs of people (food, shelter, tools, defense, art, religion, etc.) and how they believe Native Americans in Illinois met each of the needs through the natural environment.
2. Ask students to work in small groups to research more about the tribal life in Illinois by choosing one of the twelve tribes of the Illiniwek.
3. Gather artifacts from children's families collections of Native American art, tools, clothing, etc. to display and to study in the classroom.
4. Read and learn Native American legends and stories to create a storytelling festival event for the school. Students in the class can travel to other classes of younger students to share stories or a special afternoon of Native American storytelling can be offered for other classes to attend.

**DESCRIPTION OF LINCOLN MEMORIAL GARDEN PROGRAM**

The history of clans and tribes of Native Americans in Illinois is presented through storytelling, sharing of handcrafted artifacts, playing some favorite Native American children's games, and studying relationships between the land and the people's needs. Geography, biology, and the cultural history of Illinois from the 1600s to present time

will be examined to draw relationships between the environmental ethic of native people and today's diverse population in the state of Illinois.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR POST VISIT ACTIVITIES

1. Create posters or dioramas that depict life of Native American tribes of Illinois. Design and create a village of Native people's life in Illinois during pre-European settlement times. Remind the students to include as much of the natural environment as possible when developing their artwork to integrate social and natural sciences.
2. Read any of the books listed in the Resource List to reinforce concepts of Native Americans in Illinois.
3. Plan a field trip to a natural area to give students an opportunity to find plants and animals that might have been important food sources for Native Americans in Illinois in the past. During the field trip, observe natural materials that might have been used for shelter and tools.
4. Plan an afternoon of Native American games for fun on a cold afternoon. Include games of chance, strength, and coordination. Find games that can be played inside and outside and demonstrate the diversity of skills and knowledge practiced by different tribes, first as games, then in real-life situations.

### RESOURCE LIST FOR TRIBAL LIFE IN ILLINOIS: Native Americans as First Naturalists

Ashrose, Cara. *The Very First Americans*. Grosset & Dunlap. 1993

Bruchac, Joseph. *The Earth Under Sky Bear's Feet*. Putnam Berkley Group. 1995

Bruchac, Joseph. *Between Earth and Sky: Legends of Native Americans' Sacred Places*. Voyager Books. 1996

Bruchac, Joseph. *Tell me a Story: A Book About Storytelling*. Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1997

Bruchac, James and Bruchac, Joseph. *Native American Games and Stories*.

Bruchac, Joseph and Caduto, Michael. *Keepers of the Animals: Native American Stories and Wildlife Activities*. Fulcrum Publishers.

Bruchac, Joseph and Caduto, Michael. *Keepers of the Earth*. Fulcrum Publishers.

Bruchac, Joseph, and Caduto, Michael. *Keepers of Life: Discovering Plants Through Native American Stories and Earth Activities for Children*. Fulcrum Publishers.

Carlson, Laurie. *More Than Moccasins: A Kid's Activity Guide to Traditional North American Indian Life*. Chicago Review Press, Inc. 1994

Dennis, Yvonne Wakim. *A Kid's Guide to Native American History*. Chicago Review Press, Inc. 2000

March, Carole. *Illinois Native Americans: A Kid's Look at Our State's Chiefs, Tribes, Reservations, Powwow, Lore & More from the Past and the Present*. Gullopade Publishing Group. 1999

Phillip, Neil. *A Braid of Lives: Native American Childhood*. Clarion Books. 2000

Sentella, Andrew. *Illinois Native People*. Chicago Review Press. 2002

Taylor, Colin F. *The Native Americans: The Indigenous People of North America*. Thunder Bay Press. 1991