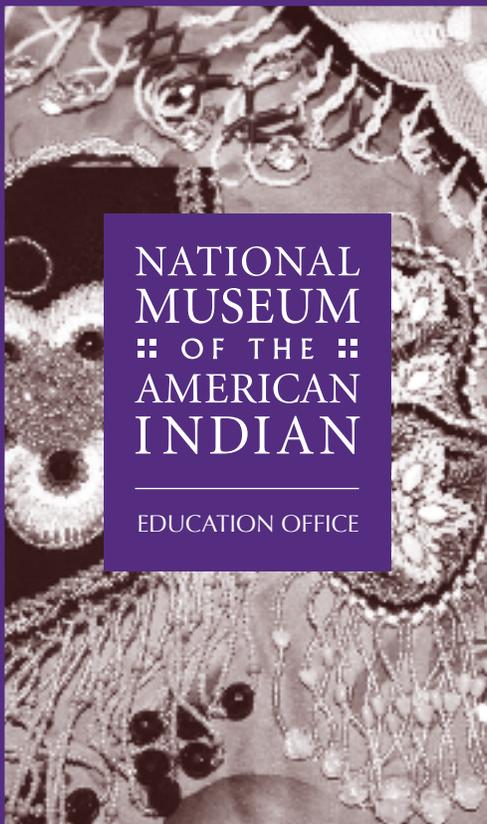
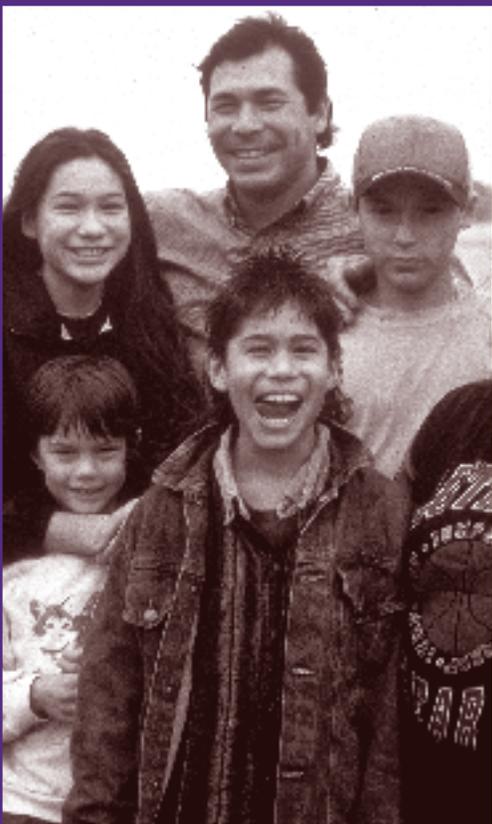


HAUDENOSAUNEE GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS



NATIONAL
MUSEUM
OF THE
AMERICAN
INDIAN

EDUCATION OFFICE



We gather our minds to greet and thank the enlightened Teachers who have come to help throughout the ages. When we forget how to live in harmony, they remind us of the way we were instructed to live as people. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to these caring Teachers. Now our minds are one.

From the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address



Jake Swamp (Tekaroniankeken), a traditional Mohawk spiritual leader, and his wife Judy (Kanerataronkwas) in their home with their grandsons Ariwio, Aniataratison, and Kaienkwironkie. Jake and Judy feel that it is very important for grandparents to ensure the future of their people by instilling their beliefs and traditions in their grandchildren.

NMAI photo by Katherine Fodgen, P26530

Dear Educator,

The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian is pleased to bring this guide to you. It was written to help provide teachers with a better understanding of the Haudenosaunee. It was written by staff at the Museum in consultation with Haudenosaunee scholars and community members. Though much of the material contained within this guide may be familiar to you, some of it will be new. In fact, some of the information may challenge the curriculum you use when you instruct your Haudenosaunee unit. It was our hope to provide educators with a deeper and more integrated understanding of Haudenosaunee life, past and present. This guide is intended to be used as a supplement to your mandated curriculum.

There are several main themes that are reinforced throughout the guide. We hope these may guide you in creating lessons and activities for your classrooms. The main themes are:

- The Haudenosaunee, like thousands of Native American nations and communities across the continent, have their own history and culture.
- The Peacemaker Story, which explains how the Confederacy came into being, is the civic and social code of ethics that guides the way in which Haudenosaunee people live — how they are to treat each other within their communities, how they engage with people outside of their communities, and how they run their traditional government.
- Haudenosaunee people give thanks everyday, not just once a year. The Thanksgiving Address, or Gano:nyok, serves as a daily reminder to appreciate and acknowledge all things. The Gano:nyok reinforces the connection that people have to the world around them. Portions of this address are introduced in this guide.
- Haudenosaunee culture, like all cultures, is dynamic and has changed over time.

Together, these four themes are reminders that the Haudenosaunee worldview is guided by specific principles that have endured through the generations.

Finally, though each of the Six Nations speaks a distinct language, there are many words that are the same in all languages. We have included several Haudenosaunee words throughout this guide. We have also provided pronunciations. Please note that all pronunciations are in Seneca, though the words sound similar in the Mohawk, Cayuga, Tuscarora, Oneida, and Onondaga languages.

WHO ARE THE HAUDENOSAUNEE?

Haudenosaunee (hoe-dee-no-SHOW-nee) means “people who build a house.” The name refers to a **CONFEDERATION** or **ALLIANCE** among six Native American nations who are more commonly known as the Iroquois Confederacy. Each nation has its own identity. These nations are known as:

- **MOHAWK** (MO-hawk) or **Kanien’kehaka**, which means “People of the Flint.” The Mohawk are also called “Keepers of the Eastern Door” since they are the easternmost nation in Haudenosaunee territory. They were responsible for protecting and defending the eastern boundaries of Haudenosaunee territory.
- **ONEIDA** (o-NY-da) or **Onayotekaono**, which means “People of the Standing Stone.”
- **ONONDAGA** (on-nen-DA-ga) or **Onundagaono**, which means “People of the Hills.” The Onondaga are also called “Keepers of the Central Fire” since the Onondaga Nation is considered the capital of the Confederacy. As the Peacemaker promised, the Haudenosaunee council fire burns at the Onondaga Nation.
- **CAYUGA** (ka-YOO-ga) or **Guyohkohnyoh**, which means “People of the Great Swamp.”
- **SENECA** (SEN-i-ka), or **Onondowahgah**, which means “People of the Great Hill.” The Seneca are also known as “Keepers of the Western Door” because they are the westernmost nation in Haudenosaunee territory. They were responsible for protecting and defending the western boundaries of Haudenosaunee territory.
- **TUSCARORA** (tus-ka-ROR-a) or **Skaruhreh**, which means “The Shirt Wearing People.” In 1722, members of the Tuscarora Nation, who were living in what is now North Carolina, traveled north to seek refuge among the Haudenosaunee. They were invited to join the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, becoming its sixth nation. Since that time, the Confederacy has also been known as the Six Nations.

Haudenosaunee people refer to themselves as Ongweh’onweh (ongk-way-HON-way), which simply means “real human being.” Although many cultural similarities and family connections unite the six nations, each one is also unique and has its own distinct language.



IROQUOIAN LANGUAGES

The six nations that comprise the Haudenosaunee speak Iroquoian languages. The Iroquoian language group comprises over ten languages including Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Tuscarora and Seneca. Cherokee is also an Iroquoian language, though the Cherokee are not part of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. There are over 20 indigenous language families and over two hundred indigenous languages spoken in the United States. Iroquoian languages are spoken by Native nations whose original homelands were located in the eastern United States, primarily New York State and the Great Lakes region, as well as Southern Appalachia, which includes North and South Carolina and Georgia.

PEACEMAKER STORY

One of the most important events that shaped the Haudenosaunee was the creation of the Gayanesshagowa (gaya-ness-HA-gowa), the Great Law of Peace. It guides the Haudenosaunee through all aspects of life. A full rendition of this epic, which takes several days to tell, reveals the ways in which the Peacemaker's teachings emphasized the power of Reason, not force, to assure the three principles of the Great Law: Righteousness, Justice, and Health. The Great Law of Peace provides the Haudenosaunee people with instructions on how to treat others, directs them on how to maintain a democratic society, and expresses how Reason must prevail in order to preserve peace. The following is an abbreviated version of the story.

Long ago, the Haudenosaunee Nations were at war with each other. A man called the Peacemaker wanted to spread peace and unity throughout Haudenosaunee territory. While on his journey, the Peacemaker came to the house of an Onondaga leader named Hayo'wetha (hi-an-WEN-ta), more commonly known as Hiawatha. Hayo'wetha believed in the message of peace and wanted the Haudenosaunee people to live in a united way. An evil Onondaga leader called Tadadaho, who hated the message of peace, had killed Hayo'wetha's wife and daughters during the violent times. Tadadaho was feared by all; he was perceived as being so evil that his hair was comprised of writhing snakes, symbolizing his twisted mind. The Peacemaker helped Hayo'wetha mourn his loss and ease his pain. Hayo'wetha then traveled with the Peacemaker to help unite the Haudenosaunee.

The Peacemaker used arrows to demonstrate the strength of unity. First, he took a single arrow and broke it in half. Then he took five arrows and tied them together. This group of five arrows could not be broken. The Peacemaker said, "A single arrow is weak and easily broken. A bundle of arrows tied together cannot be broken. This represents the strength of having a confederacy. It is strong and cannot be broken." The Mohawk, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca, and Onondaga accepted the message of peace. With the nations joined together, the Peacemaker and Hayo'wetha sought out Tadadaho. As they approached Tadadaho, he resisted their invitation to join them. The Peacemaker promised Tadadaho that if he accepted the message of peace, Onondaga would be the capital of the Grand Council. Tadadaho finally succumbed to the message of peace. It is said that the messengers of peace combed the snakes from his hair. The name Hayo'we:tha means "he who combs," indicating his role in convincing Tadadaho to accept the Great Law of Peace. Joined together, these five nations became known as the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

When peace had successfully been spread among the five nations, the people gathered together to celebrate. They uprooted a white pine tree and threw their weapons into the hole. They replanted the tree on top of the weapons and named it the Tree of Peace, which symbolizes the Great Law of Peace that the Haudenosaunee came to live by. The four main roots of the Tree of Peace represent the four directions and the paths of peace that lead to the heart of Haudenosaunee territory, where all who want to follow the Great Law of Peace are welcome. At the top of the Tree of Peace is an eagle, guardian of the Haudenosaunee and messenger to the Creator.



The Peacemaker then asked each nation to select men to be their leaders called *hoyaneh* (plural, *Hodiyahnehsonh*). The Peacemaker gave the laws to the Haudenosaunee men, who formed the Grand Council. The Grand Council, made up of fifty hoyaneh, makes decisions following the principles set forth in the Great Law of Peace. When decisions are made or laws passed, all council members must agree on the issue; this is called **CONSENSUS**.

Today, Haudenosaunee communities continue to live by the principles of the Great Law.

The Great Law of Peace is one of the earliest examples of a formal democratic governance structure. The Great Law of Peace was known to some of the Founding Fathers and has been compared — in terms of designated authorities and balances of power — to the U.S. Constitution. The Haudenosaunee Grand Council is the oldest governmental institution still maintaining its original form in North America.



Art by David Kanietakeron Fadden (Mohawk)

Read the chart below and learn how the U.S. Governmental structure is similar to and differs from the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

PROCESS OF SELECTION FOR OFFICE

HAUDENOSAUNEE GRAND COUNCIL AND CLAN MOTHERS

The Onondaga Nation the Heart of the Confederacy

Hodiyahnehsonh are chosen because the men possess honorable qualities and are concerned with the well-being of the Confederacy. Their positions are unpaid and for life. They are selected by the clan mothers. Fourteen Onondaga hoyaneh serve on the Grand Council.

Mohawk and Seneca the Elder Brothers of the Confederacy

Hodiyahnehsonh are chosen because the men possess honorable qualities and are concerned with the well-being of the Confederacy. Their positions are unpaid and for life. They are selected by the clan mothers. Nine Mohawk and eight Seneca hoyaneh serve on the Grand Council.

Oneida and Cayuga the Younger Brothers of the Confederacy

Hodiyahnehsonh are chosen because the men possess honorable qualities and are concerned with the well-being of the Confederacy. Their positions are unpaid and for life. The Tuscarora are represented by the Oneida. The Grand Council is made up of ten Cayuga and nine Oneida hoyaneh.

Clan mothers and Women's Council

Clan mothers serve for life. They are appointed by consensus of the clan members. Clan mothers have the authority to remove from office any hoyaneh who does not serve the best interests of his nation.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

President U.S. Executive Branch

The U.S. president runs for office and is chosen by the electoral college. The criteria for his candidacy are age, citizenship and residency. The president serves a four-year term.

The U.S. Senate

The senators run for office and are chosen by popular election. They serve a six-year term. Each senator must be at least thirty years old, must have been a citizen of the United States for at least the past nine years, and must be (at the time of the election) an inhabitant of the state they seek to represent. Two senators represent each state.

The House of Representatives

Each state elects a number of representatives based on the population of the state. Representatives must be at least twenty-five years old, have been a citizen of the United States for the past seven years, and be (at the time of the election) an inhabitant of the state they represent. Representatives serve two-year terms.

The Supreme Court, Judicial Branch

The Supreme Court consists of nine justices including the Chief Justice, all nominated by the president of the United States. Once confirmed by Congress, justices serve for life.



CONTRIBUTION OF THE GREAT LAW OF PEACE TO THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

The Haudenosaunee Confederacy was founded on the Great Law of Peace. This law declares a basic respect for the rights of all people. The Haudenosaunee shared this belief with Benjamin Franklin, who was very interested in the structure of the Confederacy. Franklin wrote, "It would be strange if [the Haudenosaunee] could execute a union that persisted ages and appears indissoluble; yet a like union is impractical for twelve colonies to whom it is more necessary and advantageous." Greatly influenced by the symbols of the Great Law of Peace, the Founding Fathers adopted the representation of a bundle of thirteen arrows to indicate the newly formed unified government. In 1987, the U.S. Senate formally acknowledged, in a special resolution, the influence of the Haudenosaunee Great Law of Peace on the U.S. Constitution.



HOYANEH

A HOYANEH (ho-YA-ne), meaning “Caretaker of the Peace,” is the chief of his clan and it is his duty to represent his clan in the Haudenosaunee government and to help make decisions that affect the Six Nations. A hoyaneh is selected for life, and not for a defined segment of time. A hoyaneh is not a paid position and no one can run for office. Traditionally, clan mothers watched young boys as they grew. They chose men to serve as the clan’s hoyaneh after years of observation. It is important that a hoyaneh has the nation’s best interest at heart when he serves. If the hoyaneh does not represent the nation well, the clan mothers have the authority to remove him from power. Hodiyahehsonh (HOE-dee-yah-neh-sonh) is the plural of hoyaneh.

Oneida family portrait, 1907.
Ontario, Canada.

NMAI photo by Mark R. Harrington. N2641

HAUDENOSAUNEE CLAN SYSTEM

Each of the six nations of Haudenosaunee is comprised of extended family groups called **CLANS**. A **CLAN MOTHER** heads each clan. In the past, a clan mother was usually the oldest woman of the clan. Today, clan mothers are chosen for their cultural wisdom and dedication to the Haudenosaunee people. Clan mothers have been given the honor of their duties because of a woman who lived long ago called the Mother of Nations.

- Clans are extended families. Haudenosaunee clans are **MATRILINEAL**. This means they follow the line of descent of the mother. Children belong to their mother’s clan.
- The clans are named after animals and birds.
- Before European contact, the mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents of a clan lived together in one house called a longhouse. This arrangement created a strong cooperative family unit with the clan mother as the head.
- When a couple got married, the husband moved into his wife’s family’s longhouse. Though men moved into their wives’ homes, they did not change their clans. Each man retained responsibilities to his mother’s family and helped raise his sisters’ children.
- People belonging to the same clan are related, regardless of their community location. When people traveled to other Haudenosaunee communities, they were welcomed by relatives of their same clan.

The clan mother has an important role. Some of her responsibilities are to:

- Make all the major decisions that affect the clan.
- Assign names to people in her clan.
- Nominate the male leader of the clan. The male leader is called the **HOYANEH**.
- Help ensure that all members of her clan are fed.



LONGHOUSES AND VILLAGE LIFE

Extended families belonging to the same clan lived together in houses called **LONGHOUSES**. Typically, sixty people would live in a longhouse. As the clan grew, the houses were expanded to accommodate the families. On average, longhouses measured approximately eighty to one hundred feet in length and twenty feet wide. Roofs were either rounded or triangular. Men were responsible for building longhouses and the entire community participated in their construction. The longhouse frame was made from cedar or hickory poles. They may also have used elm. Bark lashing was used to hold the poles together where they intersected. Tree bark was used to cover the frame to make the walls and roof of the house. Bark lashing was also used to tie the bark onto the frame. Smoke holes were located at intervals in the roof, above the fireplaces. The holes could be easily closed during bad weather. Doors were located at either end of the house. Inside the longhouses, families had separate sleeping areas, that were separated by wood screens, and shared several cooking areas. Two platforms ran the length of both sides of the longhouses. A low platform served as a sleeping and sitting area. Another platform, located approximately seven feet high, served as a storage area.

In the 1600s, a typical Haudenosaunee village consisted of between two hundred and three thousand people. Villages were located in clearings near forested areas and near waterways where fresh water could be obtained easily. The forests provided food and shelter for the Haudenosaunee. Villages were often surrounded by tall wooden fences, or palisades.

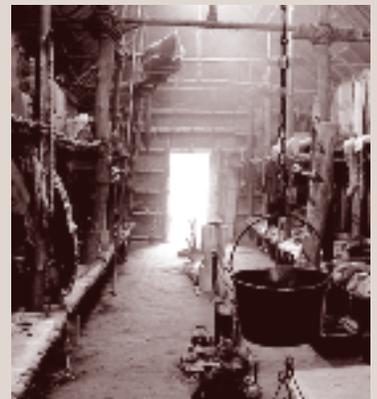
Haudenosaunee people spent most of their time outdoors, except in the cold winter months when the longhouse became the center of community life. In the winter, people repaired clothing and tools and got ready for the busy spring ahead. Winter was also a time when people visited with one another, renewed friendships, and told stories. Through the use of stories, Native communities have passed along their oral traditions including life lessons, histories, and languages.

Haudenosaunee communities moved every twenty to thirty years as firewood became exhausted and bark became scarce for repairing the longhouse roofs. Moving also allowed the soil to replenish from many years of planting crops.



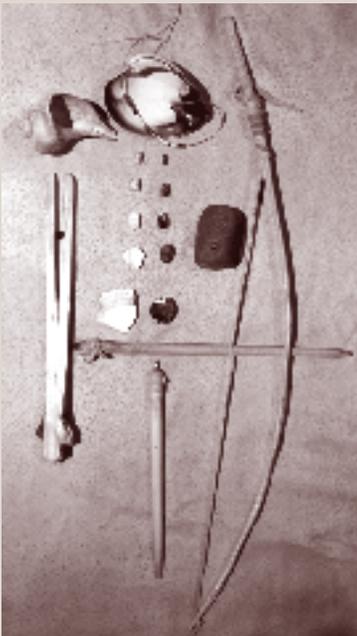
GANONDAGAN

Ganondagan State Historic Site in Victor, New York, was a 17th century Seneca town situated along a major Native American trail running along the top of the Finger Lakes in New York State. The Seneca people abandoned the town in 1687. Today, Ganondagan is a State Historic Site that remains an important place for all people to learn about the history and culture of the Haudenosaunee and particularly the Seneca.



This longhouse is located at Ganondagan State Historic Site in Victor, New York.

Photos courtesy of Friends of Ganondagan



(Top) Quahog shell and wampum beads.

Whelk and quahog shell, wampum beads, and bow drill.

NMAI photos by Stephen Lang

Chiefs of Six Nations with wampum belts, September 16, 1871.

NMAI photo P9784

WAMPUM

Wampum (WAHM-pəm) was introduced to the Haudenosaunee by Hayo'wetha (Hiawatha), who used the beads to console himself from the loss of his family. This was the first Condolence Ceremony, which is still practiced today among the Haudenosaunee.

The word wampum means "white shell beads" in the languages of the Narragansett of Rhode Island and Wampanoag of Massachusetts. Wampum are purple and white beads made from quahog (KWA-hog) clam and whelk shells. Native nations that lived along the Atlantic coast collected the shells from their shorelines and produced beads from them. Long before Europeans came to America, the Haudenosaunee traded with their Algonquian speaking neighbors, who lived along the Atlantic coast, to obtain the highly valued shell beads. In exchange for wampum beads, the Haudenosaunee provided furs, corn, beans and squash. The mostly white quahog shells contain a small amount of purple. The rareness of the purple beads makes them much more valuable than white beads. The process of making the beads is very difficult and time consuming. Today, they are made using power tools but formerly they were created using a bow drill.

A very important use for the wampum was to make belts, consisting of rows of interlaced wampum woven on a bow loom. The placement of the purple and white beads in the belt formed symbolic designs and codes. The designs in the belts recorded the laws of the Confederacy, oral tradition used for ceremonies, and important political interactions between Native nations, and later between the Confederacy and Europeans. Wampum belts were presented at Grand Council meetings or other official gatherings.

Wampum belts were never worn as clothing. Though they are all different sizes, the name alludes to the belt-like shape featuring long and narrow bands. Wampum continues to play an important role in Haudenosaunee society.

The Haudenosaunee never used wampum as money. However, due to the scarcity of metal coins in New England, Europeans and Americans recognized the value of wampum and began producing wampum in factories to use for trade among themselves and with Native people. The Narragansetts and Pequots played a critical role in the manufacture and exchange of wampum in the New England area in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The two tribes collected the shells and produced the beads, which they traded to Europeans in exchange for newly introduced goods. By the 1700s, Dutch settlers established wampum factories, including the Campbell Wampum Factory, founded in Bergen, New Jersey, in the 1780s. The Campbell Wampum Factory continued to operate until the 1880s.



HIAWATHA BELT

The Hiawatha Belt symbolizes the unity of the original five Haudenosaunee nations, connected by the Great Law of Peace. Each white square and the tree in the center represents one of the original five nations.



SENECA NATION	CAYUGA NATION	ONONDAGA NATION	ONEIDA NATION	MOHAWK NATION
Keepers of the Western Door		Keepers of the Central Fire and the heart of the Five Nations loyal to the Great Law of Peace		Keepers of the Eastern Door

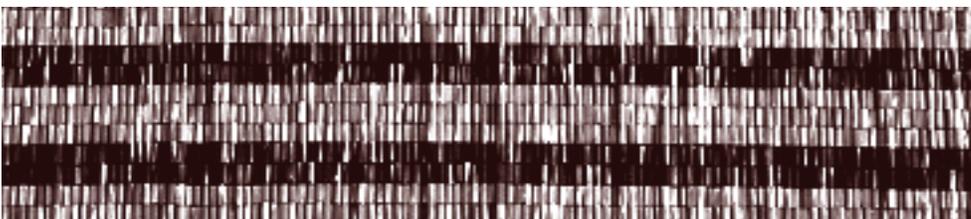
The white lines extending from one end of the belt to the other represent the path of peace, welcoming other nations to take shelter under the Great Law of Peace and join the Confederacy. The Tuscarora Nation, the sixth nation in the Confederacy, joined after this belt was created.

TWO ROW WAMPUM

Haudenosaunee exchanged wampum belts with Europeans to recognize treaty agreements. The Two Row Wampum records the agreement made in 1613 in upstate New York between the Haudenosaunee and the Dutch government. This belt represents the first peace treaty between the Haudenosaunee and Europeans in which the two sides agreed to respect each other's cultures and to never interfere in each other's affairs.

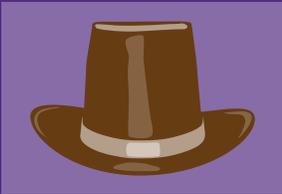
The two parallel lines of purple beads represent the two parties to the agreement — one for a Haudenosaunee canoe and the other for a European ship — traveling, side by side. Each boat contains the owner's culture, traditions, laws, language and ways of life. The white parallel lines illustrate that the two would travel in peace and friendship without interference.

Today, the Haudenosaunee consider the wampum belts symbols of principles established by treaties.



G. Peter Jemison (Seneca, Heron Clan) Site Manager of Ganondagan State Historic Site and Faithkeeper to the Cattaraugus Seneca Nation, speaks about the importance of wampum to the Haudenosaunee people.

Photos courtesy of Karen Kaz



FELT HATS

In the late 1500s, felt hats made from beaver fur were the height of fashion in Europe. Haudenosaunee territory was home to thousands of beavers and starting in the 1600s the Haudenosaunee played a central role in providing beaver and otter furs to Europeans. In 1624, the Dutch reportedly shipped 1500 beaver skins from New York to Europe to be made into hats. In exchange for furs, the Haudenosaunee received guns, axes, knives, cooking pots, needles, scissors, wool and linen cloth, mirrors, and glass beads. The Haudenosaunee replaced their former possessions with many of the new trade goods.

George Pierce and family
(Seneca), 1905.

NMAI photo P12477

THE EUROPEAN ENCOUNTER: THE FUR TRADE



Europeans encountered the Haudenosaunee in the 1500s, and the ensuing relationship forever changed Native communities. Initially, relations between the Haudenosaunee and Europeans were based on trade. As European expansion encroached on Haudenosaunee territory, however, relations grew strained.

The market for fur brought great wealth and power to the Haudenosaunee. With the help of their new European trade allies and the weapons they received through trade, the Haudenosaunee were able to greatly expand their territory. (See map, page 17).

The fur trade ended in the nineteenth century because beaver were hunted to near extinction and because European fashions changed.

FROM LONGHOUSES TO LOG HOUSES

Life for the Haudenosaunee changed dramatically after the Revolutionary War. Much of their land in New York was seized by the American government and sold to settlers, who constructed houses, highways, reservoir dams, railroads and other projects on it. In the 1790s, after the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, Haudenosaunee reservations were established in the United States and reserves were created in Canada. It was at this time that Haudenosaunee people moved from longhouses to single family dwellings. Most commonly, the new homes were log houses. As new types of materials to build homes became available, the Haudenosaunee began to live in those types of homes also.

Today, Haudenosaunee people live like anyone else, in houses and apartment buildings. Most communities have longhouses that are used for civic, ceremonial, political, social, and cultural events.



HAUDENOSAUNEE GAMES

Games have always been, and still are, an important part of Haudenosaunee social life. Not only are they fun to play but many of them teach the importance of physical strength, well-being, and team building. Team sports also offer opportunities for communities to socialize.

LACROSSE

Today, lacrosse is an international team sport played competitively all over the world. This modern game originated with the Haudenosaunee. Four hundred years ago, explorers to Haudenosaunee territory saw the game of lacrosse being played. The French Jesuits called the game “la crosse” because it was played with a long stick, which they called a *crosse*. Among the Haudenosaunee the game is called Tewaathon, which means “they bump hips.” In lacrosse, a player must catch, carry and pass a ball using a lacrosse stick, a long stick with a net at one end. Historically, Haudenosaunee people played lacrosse on a field that could be as short as one hundred yards or as long as two miles. Teams could have from a handful to hundreds of players.

Although the game is won by the team who scores the most goals, there are many other purposes for playing lacrosse. Considered to be a gift from the Creator, it is seen as a medicine game, or a game played in order to heal and strengthen the people. Lacrosse was sometimes played to resolve disputes and get rid of bad feelings between clans and nations within the Haudenosaunee. It was and still is played to bring families, communities, and nations together. Often before players engage in a game of lacrosse there is a community blessing where ceremonial tobacco is placed into a fire. As the smoke rises, it is believed to carry prayers to the Creator. However, some players will also ask for guidance as individuals, praying for strength or speed. These requests to the Creator for personal and community strength are played out within the game.

SNOWSNAKE

Snowsnake is a winter sport played by teams of men and boys in Haudenosaunee communities. Teams compete against each other by throwing a long, wooden, spear-like stick, called a snowsnake, down the length of a snow track, which is built up from the ground. The team that throws its sticks the farthest wins the game. The name snowsnake comes from the way the stick looks as it travels down the track — it slithers like a snake. There are two types of snowsnakes: the longsnake, which is seven feet long, and the mudcat, which is three feet long. Strength and concentration are important qualities to win the game. Each team, called a corner, is allowed a limited number of throws. Each player coats his stick with a special wax that makes the stick travel farther. The best players can throw a stick more than a mile down the track.

Long ago, snowsnakes were used for communication. They were thrown along frozen rivers and lakes to deliver messages between winter camps.



Snowsnakes
NMAI photo by Stephanie Betancourt

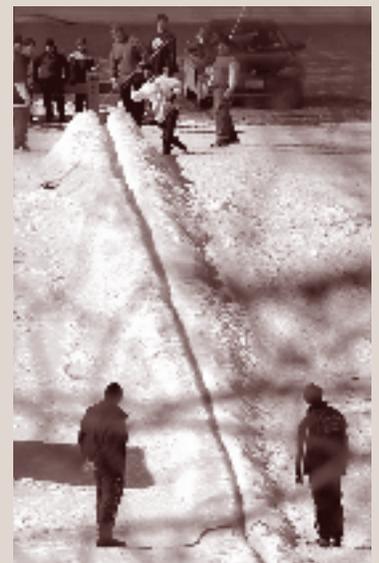


IROQUOIS NATIONALS

In the 1700s lacrosse became a popular sport and Haudenosaunee people, as well as Europeans, Americans, and Canadians, started to play competitively. Today, the Iroquois Nationals, a team of Haudenosaunee lacrosse players, competes nationally and internationally. The Iroquois Nationals is the only Native American team that competes in any sport internationally.

Under-19 World Lacrosse Championships, Nagano, Japan 1996

Photo courtesy of Justin Giles



Snowsnake track

Photo courtesy of John Berry/The Post-Standard

RELATIONSHIP TO THE NATURAL WORLD

We gather our minds together to send greetings and thanks to all the Animal life in the world. They have many things to teach us as people. We see them near our homes and in the deep forests. We are glad they are still here and we hope that it will always be so. Now our minds are one.

With one mind, we turn to honor and thank all the Plant Foods we harvest from the garden. Since the beginning of time, the grains, vegetables, beans, and berries have helped the people survive. Many other living things draw strength from them, too. We gather all the Plant Foods together as one and send them a greeting of thanks. Now our minds are one.

From the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address



THE GANO:NYOK

The Haudenosaunee give thanks daily, not just once a year. They give thanks for all things, from the water and sun to the insects and animals. Their thanksgiving address, called the Gano:nyok (ga-NYO-nyok), is a very important part of ceremonial and social gatherings. All social and ceremonial gatherings start and end with the Gano:nyok, which is sometimes called “the words that come before all else.” The Gano:nyok serves as a reminder to appreciate and acknowledge all things. The words express thanks for fellow human beings, Mother Earth, the moon, stars, sun, water, air, winds, animals, and more.

THE CALENDAR CYCLE

The Haudenosaunee calendar is measured on a lunar cycle of thirteen months. The Haudenosaunee celebrate several festivals during the year when people come together to honor, acknowledge and give thanks to the environment for nature’s gifts. These are also times to visit and catch up with friends and loved ones. These festivals help the Haudenosaunee maintain a reciprocal relationship with the land. The Haudenosaunee year begins with the Mid-Winter Festival, which is held in late January or early February. This Festival involves giving thanks for the gifts of the past year and preparing for the New Year. The Maple Festival follows the Mid-Winter Festival, which is celebrated to honor the sap that flows each year from maple trees. In April, when the thunders that bring the rain are first heard, the Thunder Festival is celebrated. Each spring, when the strawberries ripen, the Strawberry Festival is observed. At this time, thanks are given for the delicious berry and strawberry juice is prepared. The Green Corn Festival is celebrated in August or early September when corn ripens. This festival is celebrated with corn soup and other dishes prepared from corn. The Harvest Festival follows the Green Corn celebration and is held in October.

THE ANNUAL CYCLE

Prior to European contact, the Haudenosaunee depended entirely on the resources that nature provided. Haudenosaunee used the natural resources for everything they needed, from food to housing and clothing. Clothing, including moccasins, was made from animal hides, furs, and natural fibers. The most commonly used animal skins were deer and elk for their hides and rabbit, beaver, and bear for their furs. Cornhusks could also be woven into moccasins.

Each season brought a flurry of activities. Haudenosaunee shared responsibilities communally and tasks changed seasonally as different natural resources became available. Men hunted and fished throughout the year, as game and fish were available. The lakes and waterways that surrounded Haudenosaunee territory provided an abundance of fish, including salmon, trout, bass, perch, eel, and whitefish. Deer was the most commonly eaten meat but bear, rabbit, and other game were also trapped

and hunted. Birds such as ducks, geese, wild turkeys, and quail were hunted for food. Women gathered wild foods including berries, nuts, tubers, mushrooms and other edible plants. In the spring, fields were prepared for planting. Women were responsible for the gardens and planted, among other things, three main crops — corn, beans, and squash. These crops were so important to the Haudenosaunee diet that they called them the **THREE SISTERS**. Eaten together, these three foods provide many of the essential vitamins and minerals for a healthy body and a well-balanced diet. In the early spring families tapped maple trees for syrup. This was also the time when bark was peeled from trees for longhouses, canoes, and bark containers. In the summer, community members spent much time outdoors. Women tended the crops, prepared animal hides for clothing, and cured meat for the winter. Men hunted, fished, and built and repaired longhouses. The fall was the time of year to harvest and store crops for the winter. In the winter, a time when people spent most of their days indoors, women made and repaired clothing while men made and repaired their hunting gear and tools. The long, cold months offered an opportunity to visit with one another and listen to stories.

Food was gathered and stored in splint baskets, as well as clay, wooden, and bark containers. Clay vessels were used for cooking. Though basket making is still practiced by Haudenosaunee people, metal vessels obtained from European traders replaced clay and wooden containers.

THE THREE SISTERS

The Three Sisters are considered to be divine gifts. They also show how well the Haudenosaunee understood horticulture and ecology hundreds of years before the development of modern farming techniques. Different kinds of beans, corn, and squash grew together in mounds, placed about three feet apart. Cornstalks provided supports for climbing bean vines. Squash leaves provided shade, keeping the soil moist



NMAI photo by Stephen Lang

and preventing weeds from choking the crops. In this way, the soil remained fertile for years. When the soil became fallow, the entire village would move to a new location.

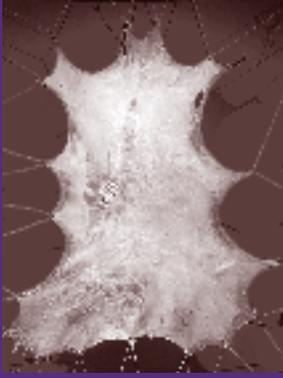
A new corn harvest is celebrated each year during the Green Corn Ceremony in August or early September. The importance of corn goes beyond food. Every part of the corn plant is used to make different things. Corn was pounded into meal using a mortar and pestle. Corn meal was made into bread, hominy, and pudding. Succotash, a stew of corn, beans, and squash, was commonly prepared as was corn soup, which continues to be a favorite among Haudenosaunee people. Corn husks were woven into mats, baskets, and moccasins and made into cornhusk dolls (see instructions on page 19). The cobs were used as scrubbers and container stoppers.

Store-bought foods started to replace locally grown foods in the nineteenth century. As a result, Haudenosaunee people became more sedentary. Today, many Haudenosaunee still hunt, fish, and farm. However, like most everyone else today, most food is purchased at the supermarket.



Seneca girl, ca. 1910.

*NMAI photo by Alanson B. Skinner.
N1706*

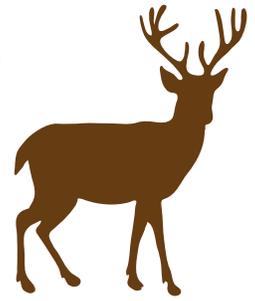


TANNING

Tanning is a process used to turn hides into leather, which can then be made into clothing. Deer brain is used in the tanning process to make the skin soft. Tanned hides are smoked over a fire to make them water resistant.

NMAI photo by Justin Mugits

THE IMPORTANCE OF DEER



Haudenosaunee people have great respect for deer. Deer was particularly important to the Haudenosaunee and they used as much of the animal as possible. The meat was eaten; hides were tanned and stretched and used for clothing, moccasins, and blankets; sinew, made from the animal's tendons, was used for thread; bones and antlers were used to make tools such as awls (a pointed tool used for boring holes) and scrapers; deer hooves were used to make rattles, and deer antlers were attached to the **GUSTOWEHS** of Haudenosaunee leaders.

Prior to European contact, Haudenosaunee men wore hide breech cloths, a long rectangular piece of hide tied at the waist and worn with a belt, leggings, moccasins, and shirts. Women wore dresses or hide skirts and long shirts and moccasins. Children were dressed liked adults. Men's and women's clothing was decorated with dyed porcupine quills, wooden and shell beads, feathers, and paints.



Objects made from parts of the deer: hide moccasins, scapula hoe, hoof rattle, and water drum with hide head.

NMAI photo by Justin Mugits

THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW MATERIALS



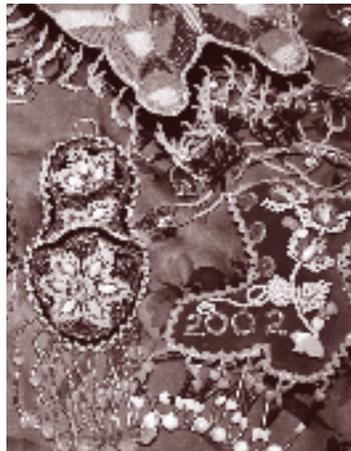
Onondaga woman and child, 1888.
Onondaga Reservation, New York.

NMAI photo by DeCost Smith. N22322.

When Europeans first introduced cotton and wool cloth, glass beads, and silver, the items were quickly adopted, though Haudenosaunee traditional clothing style changed little. By the late 1800s or early 1900s, however, most Haudenosaunee people were wearing European style clothing as their every day wear. The Haudenosaunee have continued to wear traditional style clothing, or **REGALIA**, on ceremonial and social occasions.

Trade introduced silk and other fabrics, as well as European glass beads. Native people quickly became proficient bead-workers and designed intricate geometrical and floral patterns on their clothing.

By the early eighteenth century, Haudenosaunee women had developed a unique style of beadwork called “raised beadwork.” Using velvet fabric, they decorated picture frames, purses, pin cushions and other “whimsies.” After the Civil War, Niagara Falls became a tourist destination for vacationers and honeymooners. This area flourished further after World War I, when people purchased automobiles and were able to take trips for leisure. Haudenosaunee women traveled to Niagara Falls and other tourist locations where they set up tables to sell their work as souvenirs. The sale of this “tourist art” supported many Haudenosaunee families during this time. Today, the works that were produced at the turn of the nineteenth century are considered collector’s items and are extremely valuable. Many Haudenosaunee men and women continue to practice this art form today.



Raised beadwork
NMAI photo

GUSTOWEH

At community and ceremonial gatherings, Haudenosaunee men wear **GUSTOWEHS** (ga-STOH-weh). The gustoweh is a fitted hat that is decorated with hawk, pheasant or turkey feathers. Some gustowehs are decorated with silver, animal hide, and hair. Each nation of the Haudenosaunee has a different number and position of eagle feathers on their gustoweh, although the individual artistry makes each one unique.



SENECA

TUSCARORA

CAYUGA

ONONDAGA

ONEIDA

MOHAWK

NMAI illustration by Mary Ahenakew



SYMBOLISM ON CLOTHING

Today, Haudenosaunee wear their regalia on special occasions. This is Angel (Seneca, Heron Clan). She is wearing her traditional outfit, which is made from cotton and velvet. A woman’s outfit consists of a skirt, overdress, leggings, and moccasins. Angel is also wearing a beaded headband. A distinctive feature of Haudenosaunee regalia is the beadwork. Small white beads create lacelike decorations around the edges of the dress’s collar, skirt, and leggings. Often the designs represent Haudenosaunee environment, cosmology and clan symbols. Haudenosaunee style raised beadwork is used on the collar, purse, and headband.

NMAI photo

Haudenosaunee Friendship Weekend, November 19 and 20, 2005. NMAI, NY.

NMAI photo by Stephen Lang



RESERVATIONS AND RESERVES

A reservation is land that is set aside by the government for Native American use. In Canada this land is called a reserve. Reservations and reserves are made up of lands that were either retained by or secured for Native nations when they gave up enormous portions of their original landholdings by force or in treaties with the federal government. Though many reservations represent only small fractions of Native land, they continue to hold cultural and religious significance for Native people. In 2005, approximately two-thirds of Native people in the United States lived off reservation lands in rural areas, towns, and cities.

LIFE TODAY

The traditional culture of the Haudenosaunee was changed by European contact and the establishment of the United States and Canadian governments. Though their ways of obtaining food and clothing have changed throughout the years, the Haudenosaunee have a rich ceremonial and community life and have been able to live and thrive as a unified people. The Haudenosaunee continue to live on territories and reservations in upstate New York and Wisconsin, in communities in Oklahoma and North Carolina, and in territories and on reserves in Ontario and Quebec, Canada. Haudenosaunee also live and work in many different places across the country and around the world. Today, like Americans and Canadians, the Haudenosaunee live in houses and apartment buildings. They attend school, work, shop for clothing and groceries, and live like other people around them. They have many different professions; they are lawyers, teachers, doctors, nurses, business people, artists, and construction workers.

IRONWORK

Haudenosaunee men began “walking iron” in 1886, when they were hired to work on a bridge being built over the St. Lawrence River. Upon completion of the bridge, Haudenosaunee men began their tradition of “booming out.” “Booming out” is an expression used to describe the urban migration of the ironworkers as they left their Native communities in New York State and Canada in search of work. By 1916, they made their way to New York City, where they helped build the Hell Gate Bridge. More jobs followed, and during the next eighty years, Haudenosaunee men worked on practically all of New York’s major construction projects, including the George Washington Bridge, the Empire State Building, the United Nations, and the World Trade Center. Today, they continue to work on high steel, carrying the Haudenosaunee reputation for skill, bravery, and pride into the twenty-first century.

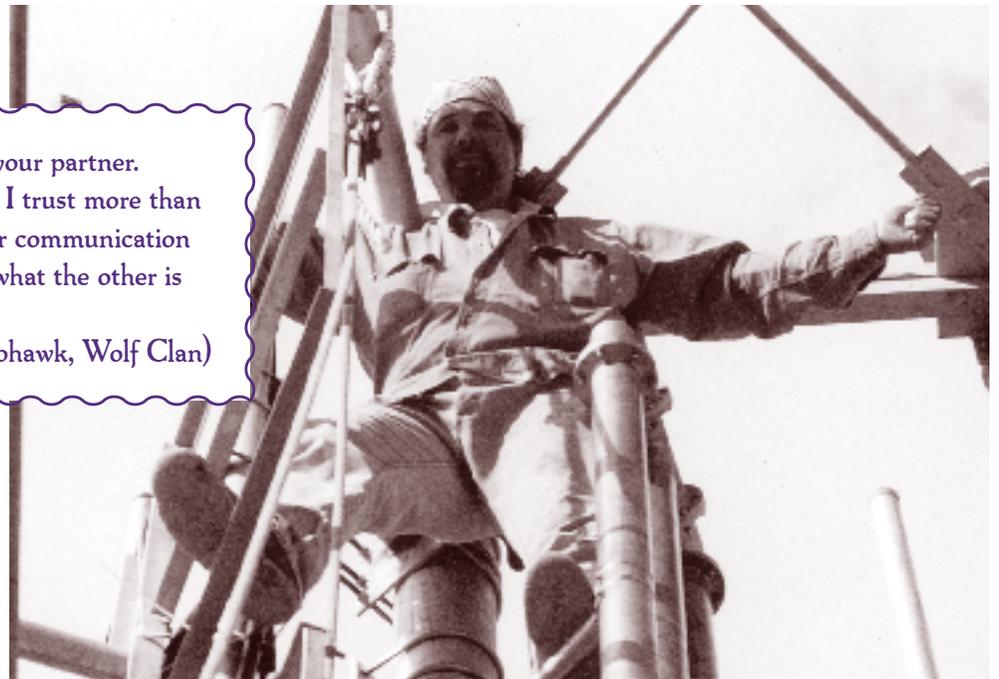
Ironwork is dangerous and ironworkers usually work with a partner. Respect and trust are essential between partners. Haudenosaunee ironworkers often partner with a brother or another relative.

“You place your faith and trust in your partner. This is my life, and there is no one I trust more than working with my brother, Paul. Our communication is good. We think alike and know what the other is thinking without speaking.”

Dave Tripp (Mohawk, Wolf Clan)

Paul Tripp (Mohawk), brother of Dave, shown here on top of the Empire State Building.

Photo courtesy of Paul Tripp





Ann Drumheller and family.
Photo courtesy of Ann Drumheller



Akwesasne Mohawk Choir members.
NMAI photo by Katherine Fogden. P26533



Angel
NMAI photo



Charles Lazare
NMAI photo by Katherine Fogden. P26534



Haudenosaunee Friendship Weekend, November 19 and 20, 2005. NMAI, NY.
NMAI photo by Stephen Lang



Cecilia Mitchell with her family on the back porch of her bakery in the village of St. Regis.
NMAI photo by Katherine Fogden. P26531

PROFILE: Perry Ground

Among the Haudenosaunee, the winter was the time to tell stories. This was the season when people spent much of their time indoors. Storytelling was and continues to be a very important part of Haudenosaunee life. It is how many young children learn about the appropriate rules and behavior of their community in a fun way. Perry Ground (Onondaga, Turtle Clan) is a highly regarded Haudenosaunee storyteller. He has been telling stories for many years to both children and adults.

When Perry is not telling stories, he lives in Rochester, New York, where he works at the Native American Resource Center in the Rochester City School District. He speaks to many students and teachers about the Haudenosaunee.



Perry Ground
NMAI photo by Stephen Lang

PROFILE: Reaghan Tarbell

Reaghan Tarbell (Mohawk, Turtle Clan) is from the Kahnawake Nation, just outside Montreal. She is a filmmaker who in 2007 was awarded a Canada Council for the Arts grant and funding from Native American Public Telecommunication's Public Television Program Fund for the production of *Little Caughnawaga: To Brooklyn and Back*. This documentary traces the connections of her family from their Kahnawake community in Quebec to the Brooklyn neighborhood where Mohawk iron workers and their families have lived. Reaghan is a staff Program Assistant in the National Museum of the American Indian's Film and Video Center and lives in Brooklyn, not far from the former neighborhood of Little Caughnawaga.



Reaghan Tarbell
NMAI photo by Stephen Lang



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

THE GREAT LAW OF PEACE

1. Have the class create a “Tree of Peace” in the classroom (use construction paper for the tree). Brainstorm a list of ways that everyone in the class might get along better (no mean words, bullying, etc.). Agree to “bury” actions and words that create a negative environment.
2. Benjamin Franklin and the Founding Fathers were informed by the Iroquois Confederacy of the Great Law of Peace. Look at the symbols on a dollar bill that both the Haudenosaunee and the United States used to indicate unity among their respective peoples (eagle, bundle of arrows).
3. Set up a constitution in your classroom that sets forth the rules by which your class hopes to follow to create a peaceful atmosphere. Design a symbol that represents this unity in your classroom.
4. The Great Law of Peace has specifically defined roles for men and women. Compare how the balance of power is shared between men and women in Haudenosaunee government and in the United States government.



CLAN SYSTEM

1. Clans are very important to the Haudenosaunee. Discuss the following questions about clans in your classroom:
 - From whom does a Haudenosaunee person get his or her clan?
 - Who lived in longhouses?
 - What are some of the roles of a clan mother?
2. The role of clan mothers has changed over time. Have students interview an adult woman in their community to learn how women’s roles have changed in her lifetime.

FOOD

The Three Sisters play an important role in Haudenosaunee society. Discuss why these crops were so significant and why they were grown together.

VOCABULARY

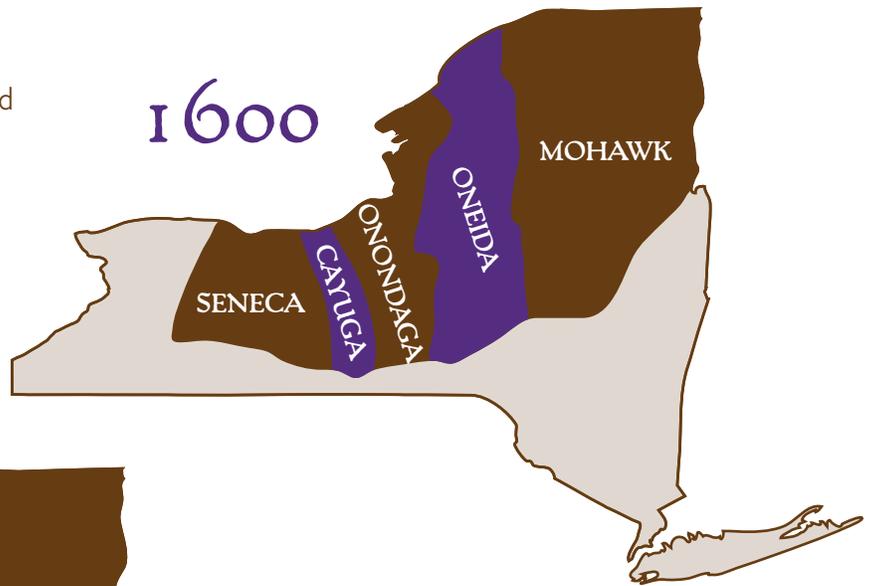
New words were defined throughout this guide. Review this vocabulary with your students.

- Alliance
- Clan
- Clan mother
- Confederacy
- Consensus
- Corn husk
- Gustoweh
- Longhouse
- Matrilineal
- Regalia
- Reservation/reserve
- Three Sisters

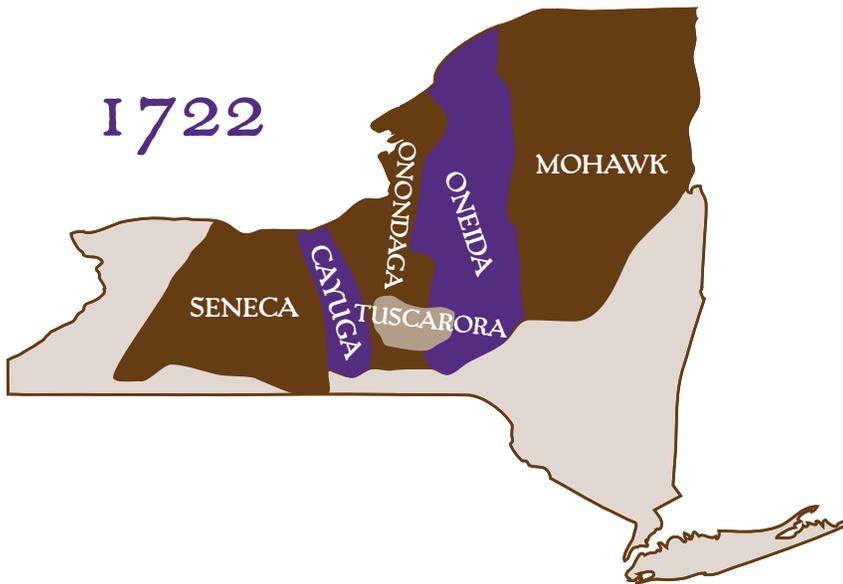
HAUDENOSAUNEE TERRITORY THROUGH TIME

Have a discussion with your students about some of the ways the Haudenosaunee people responded to encounters with Europeans. What impact did the beaver fur trade have on Haudenosaunee communities? What new items did the Haudenosaunee receive through trade with Europeans? Where do Haudenosaunee people live today and what types of activities do they engage in?

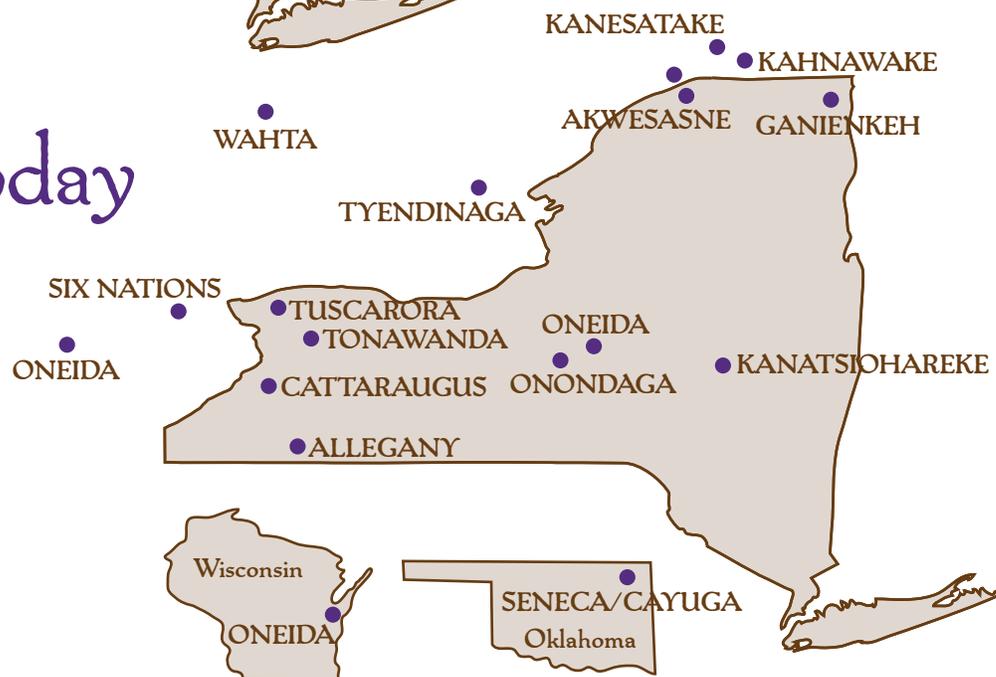
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Today





CORNHUSK DOLLS

Cornhusk dolls are made from husks, which are the green leaves around an ear of corn. After the corn is picked, the husks are dried and stored. Dried husks are soaked in warm water to make them pliable so they can be made into dolls, moccasins, mats, and baskets. Many girls adorn their dolls with intricately made clothing. The following is a story that goes back a long time and might have been told during the winter season.

WHY THE CORNHUSK DOLL HAS NO FACE

A long time ago, there lived a girl who was given the gift of beauty. People in her village would turn their head to see her when she walked by. Everyone would talk about how beautiful she was. The girl realized she was beautiful and spent all her time looking at herself in a pond (in those days there were no mirrors). When it came time to plant the Three Sisters (corn, beans, and squash), she was nowhere to be found. When the garden needed weeding, she was nowhere to be found. When it was time to prepare the animal hides for clothing and other useful things, she was nowhere to be found, and when it was time to grind corn into meal, she was nowhere to be found.

When it was time to serve the meals, she was the first one to eat. When it came time to get new clothing, she got the best hides. When it was time to dance and sing at the ceremonies, she was the first in line to start. The people were very unhappy with the way the young woman was behaving. They complained so much that the Creator decided that something had to be done. The Creator came to the young woman one day and said to her: "I gave you the gift of beauty and you misused it. I will have to punish you." The Creator reached out and took her face and hid it. That is why the cornhusk doll has no face, to remind us that no one is better than anyone else, and that we must always cooperate with one another.



Cornhusk dolls.

NMAI photos by Justin Mugits

HOW TO MAKE A CORNHUSK DOLL

MATERIALS:

- 10 or 12 pieces of dried cornhusk; in your local supermarket look for cornhusks for tamales. A one-pound bag will accommodate approximately 30 students.
- Twine, string, or sinew
- Scissors
- Bucket or bowl of warm water for soaking the cornhusk

NOTE:

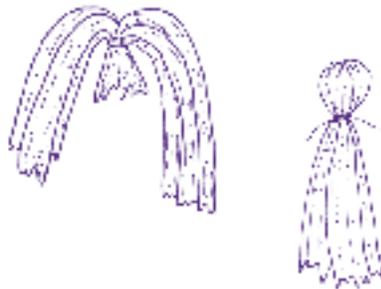
You may want to cover the tables with newspaper when making cornhusk dolls.

1 Separate the pieces of cornhusk and place them in a large container of warm water. Soak for at least ten minutes. Soaking the cornhusk makes them pliable. Remove the cornhusk from the bowl of water and drain on paper towels.

2 To form the head, take six pieces of cornhusk and tie with the sinew about an inch to an inch-and-a-half down from the top.



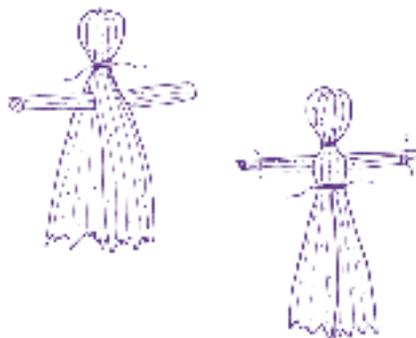
3 Separate the husks, three pieces of cornhusk on one side and three on the other. Flip over so that the portion tied with the sinew is now on the inside. Bring all the pieces together and tie with sinew about one inch to an inch and a half down from the top, creating the neck.



4 To form the arms, take a new piece of cornhusk and roll lengthwise. Tie one end to form a wrist. Do not cut to size yet.



5 Divide the husks in half, three to one side and three to the other side and place the rolled piece between the two halves. Tie securely to form the waist.



6 Size the arms so they are even and proportionate to the body. Tie at the wrist and cut to size.

7 Use two cornhusks to form the shoulders. Lengthwise, fold the edges of each husk to its center. This forms two strips of husk with no raw edges.



8 Drape the strip over one shoulder and across the body and hold in place. Do the same for the other shoulder. Tie the shoulders into place at the waist with sinew.



9 To form the skirt, take two or three husks and lay them down on the table, slightly overlapping each other. Fold the top portion down about an inch to create a straight edge. Wrap the body of the doll in the cornhusk skirt, making sure it goes all the way around. Tie securely at the waist.



10 Let the cornhusk doll dry for a few days and then cut off the bottom edge of the skirt. To make a boy doll: Before drying, cut the skirt in half up the middle, wrap each leg with sinew and tie.

WAMPUM

Wampum belts are recorded documents constructed from shell beads. The white and purple beads form symbolic designs that reflect significant events or a code of ethics. Have students in your class create their own wampum belt designs, using any colors they want to fill in the squares. Have them make symbols to represent an event from their family, school, or community that is important to them.

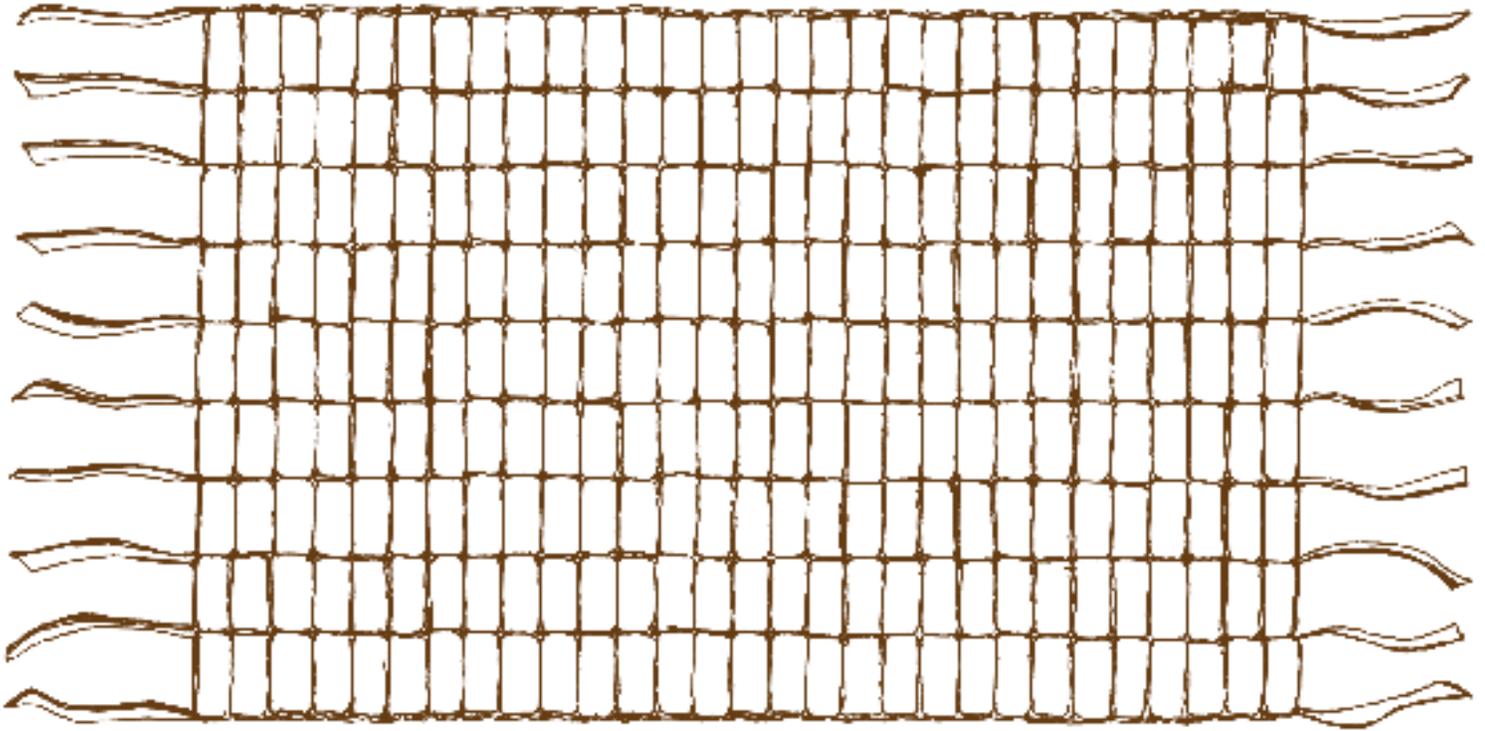


Illustration by Mary Ahenakew

RESOURCE LIST

FOR STUDENTS:

- Bruchac, Joseph. *Children of the Longhouse*. Puffin. 1998
- De Coteau Orié, Sandra. *Did You Hear Wind Sing Your Name? An Oneida Song of Spring*. Walker Books for Young Readers. 1996.
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FOR TEACHERS:

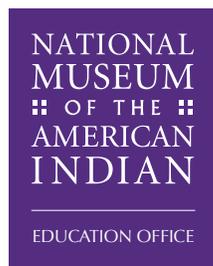
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- Northeast Indian Quarterly. *Knowledge of the Elders: The Iroquois Condolence Cane Tradition*. 1991.
- Wallace, Paul A. W. *White Roots of Peace*. Clear Light Publishers. 1994.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

GANONDAGAN STATE HISTORIC SITE: ganondagan.org

IROQUOIS INDIAN MUSEUM: iroquoismuseum.org

IROQUOIS.NET



www.AmericanIndian.si.edu

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COVER PHOTOS:

Top left: Photo courtesy of Paul Tripp

Top middle: George Pierce and family (Seneca), 1905. NMAI photo. P12477

Top right: Haudenosaunee Friendship Weekend, November 19 and 20, 2005. NMAI, NY. NMAI photo by Stephen Lang

Bottom left: detail, Cecilia Mitchell's family, St. Regis. NMAI photo by Katherine Fogden. P26531

Bottom middle: beadwork, NMAI photo

Bottom right: Seneca girl, ca. 1910. NMAI photo by Alanson B. Skinner. N1706

Back cover: Photo courtesy Karen Kaz

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