

THE IROQUOIS



Vocabulary

unity	disciple
succotash	sachem
wampum	unanimous
negotiator	condolence
prejudice	elder
stereotype	entity

Mark It on the Map

New York—Oneida, Onondaga, Syracuse	
Virginia	
Massachusetts—Plymouth	Adirondack Mountains
Seneca Lake	St. Lawrence River
Tennessee River	Chesapeake Bay
Lake Michigan	Canada—Ontario, Montreal

Introduction

Read aloud "The Iroquois" (see page 2). Emphasize how the League of the Iroquois kept peace among its members by making important decisions through group agreement. Give your class a list of situations that present problems they must solve. Guide them in working cooperatively to come up with solutions on which everyone agrees.

Questions for Discussion

- What were the five original tribes in the League of the Iroquois? Why was the League formed? What tribe joined to make it the League of the Six Nations?
- What do the Iroquois believe is the basis for human success?
- What did Deganawida and Hiawatha do to convince opposing chiefs to be part of their peace-keeping League?
- What role do women play in Iroquois politics?
- What contributions did the Iroquois make in building the American nation?
- Who or what are The Three Sisters? How and why do the Iroquois give them thanks?
- What happens when the Iroquois gather at a longhouse for a ceremony?
- How did the Mohawk get involved in ironworking and bridge building?

Writing Workout

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Use the unity theme "One heart, one mind, one law" in an original poem about the Iroquois.
- Think about the skills required to be Thadodaho, or chief of chiefs. Write a classified ad seeking someone for this position.
- Actor Jay Silverheels was given his name because he was a fast runner. Make up an Indian name for yourself and explain why it is appropriate for you.

Viewpoints

Ask students how Indians have been portrayed in many books, television shows, and movies. Have them find examples in books and other media that portray Indians in stereotypical roles. Also have them look for examples that portray Indians in a more realistic way.

Then and Now

Ask students these questions: In the past, why was winter a time of little activity for the Iroquois? What was the significance of the Midwinter celebration for Iroquois farmers? What do many Iroquois do during the winter now?

Get Into Art

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Design an Iroquois flag with a pine tree (symbol of unity) and an eagle (guardian of peace).
- Make a paper banner about respecting and preserving the earth.
- Create a card for an older person to make him or her feel special. Give it to someone you know or take it to a senior center to brighten a stranger's day.
- Design an honorary plaque to the brave Mohawk bridge builders.

Important Interviews

Ask two students to role-play the narrator and Leon Shenandoah and read aloud the interview beginning on page 9. As a follow-up, have students write a news article summarizing what they heard in the interview.

Speak Up

Have students prepare and deliver speeches of thanksgiving like those the Iroquois may have given to mark the beginning or end of a ceremony. (The article beginning on page 26 will be helpful for this assignment.)

Just for Fun

Let students play the sacred bowl game (see page 30).

Enrichment

Make succotash with your class (see page 25) or introduce the class to the old Iroquois custom of adding maple syrup to corn by fixing that tasty treat. Enjoy these foods while listening to a recital of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem "Song of Hiawatha."

Follow These Footsteps

Deganawida Hiawatha Thadodaho Leon Shenandoah Jay Silverheels