

## LENAPE INDIANS AND THE FUR TRADE

### Recommended for Grades 3-4

These activities will help your students understand the fur trade between the Lenape (Delaware) Indians and European-American traders around the year 1800. Below you will find classroom activities that will familiarize your students with vocabulary words associated with the fur trade, historical information about the Lenape Indians, and the process of bartering.

#### OBJECTIVES:

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Describe the process of bartering that was essential to the fur trade between Lenape Indians and European-American settlers in Indiana.
- Understand and use vocabulary words associated with the fur trade.
- Name animals that were hunted in Indiana for their valuable pelts.
- Name trade good that were sought after by the Lenape.

#### WHAT TO DO:

- Read through the Historical Content Information below to familiarize yourself with the concepts covered in this activity.
- Students should begin by completing the “Words to Know” worksheet.
- Discuss with your students the importance of bartering to get the best price, as well as the principles of supply and demand.
- Next, each student should receive one set of fur trade items (found in this packet) to cut out. The students may color the pictures if they wish. Half of the students should receive only sheets labeled “Trader’s Goods” (play the role of the trader) and the other half should receive sheets labeled “Lenape Hunter’s Pelts” (play the role of the Lenape hunter).
- Students should begin trading with each other, making sure to barter to get the best price and to collect the items that are most valuable to them.

#### TEACHING OPTIONS

- Before a field trip to Conner Prairie, review the process of bartering with your students. If they were Lenape Indians bringing furs to the trader, what sorts of goods would they want in exchange? Why?

#### IN ACADEMIC STANDARDS:

Social Studies 3.1.1, 3.1.8, 3.4.3, 3.4.4, 3.4.7, 4.1.2, 4.4.1, 4.4.3, 4.4.4

## LENAPE INDIANS AND THE FUR TRADE

### Historical Content Information

**\*Main ideas are in bold.**

**The Lenape (leh-NAH-pay) Indians originally lived in the eastern part of the U.S. in the areas that became western New York, eastern Pennsylvania, northern Maryland and the Delaware River valley.** In their own language, Lenni Lenape means “the original people.” The Lenape are also known as the “Delaware” Indians. This is the name they were given by the English in the early 1600s.

Between the 1770s and 1795, the expansion of European settlement forced the Lenape to move westward through Pennsylvania and Ohio. **In 1795, the Treaty of Greenville (Ohio) forced the Lenape out of Ohio and into Indiana.** The Miami Indians, who lived in what is now Indiana, invited the Lenape to move west and share their lands along the White River. Tribal members lived in several villages along the river between spots where Muncie and the north side of Indianapolis now stand.

**The Treaty of St. Mary’s (1818) required the Lenape to leave Indiana.**

The Lenape moved to Missouri after they left Indiana. Eventually, they were relocated to Kansas and Oklahoma, where the tribal headquarters is today. (Please note: This is the main body of the Lenape Tribe. Smaller groups now live in Western Oklahoma, Canada, and Wisconsin).

The Lenape traded furs with the French, British, and Americans to obtain goods that they could not produce on their own. The European fur traders were interested in the pelts of the animals in the North American forests. **Beaver and otter were the most valuable as individual skins because hats made from these pelts were fashionable in Europe.** The bulk of the furs traded in Indiana, however, were deer and raccoon. In exchange for pelts, the Indians received goods such as metal knives, cooking pots, and tools, hatchets, guns, gun powder, sugar, coffee, stroud cloth, and cotton fabric. **It is important to remember that in the trading relationship, the Lenape supplied the furs, and the traders supplied the finished goods.** The traders and Indians developed a symbiotic relationship and heavily depended upon the goods received from the other.

Trade was conducted through the process of bartering. **Money was not exchanged; rather, furs and trade goods served as the currency. Prices were determined by what each party was willing to trade for an item rather than by a set pricing system.** The principles of supply and demand proved important as well, particularly with Europeans’ demand for the fashionable beaver pelts.

The Lenape are matrilineal, meaning that they trace their bloodlines through the women rather than the men. Historically, positions of power in the tribe would be inherited from the mother's side of the family. By the mid-1800s tribal members were divided into three traditional clans: turtle, wolf, and turkey. When the time came to marry, the spouse was chosen from a different clan. Children were members of the mother's clan.

The style of traditional clothing, also called Regalia, has not changed much over the years. The materials used have changed, however. Men wore leggings and a breechcloth. Women wore wrap-around skirts. Both sexes wore moccasins. Deerskins were worn like a poncho. Shirts as we know them were not worn until the arrival of Europeans in the late 1500s to early 1600s. Cloth shirts available from traders quickly became popular with men and women.

The Lenape got their food from hunting and farming. The men hunted and fished while the women farmed. Most of the diet consisted of corn, beans, squash, melons, nuts, and wild fruits. Meats included deer, elk, bear, squirrel and rabbit, as well as assorted fish and shellfish.

Throughout the 19th century, Indian tribes across the country continued to lose land and be relocated as European settlement moved west. Today, many Indians still live on the reservations that were created prior to 1900. The Indian tribes in Indiana had been moved west by 1845. It should be noted that not all of the Miami tribe moved west, and their descendants continue to live in Indiana.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

## LENAPE INDIANS AND THE FUR TRADE

### Words to Know

**Lenape**- A name for the Delaware Indians; it means The People

**Pelt**- An animal fur

**Wigwam**- A traditional Lenape home that is round and made from tree bark or cattail mats.

**Fur Trader**- A European-American person who traded goods like metal tools, cloth, and glass beads to Native Americans in exchange for animal pelts.

**Barter**- To trade or exchange

**Treaty**- An agreement

**Beaver**- An animal that lives in water and has thick fur; its pelt was very valuable.

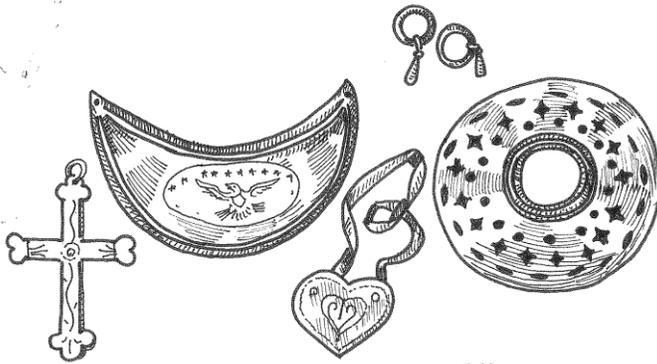
*Fill in the sentences below with the correct word from the list.*

- 1.) The \_\_\_\_\_ Indians lived in Indiana from 1795 to 1818.
- 2.) Lenape Indians did not live in tipis like the Indians on the Great Plains.  
Instead, they lived in \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3.) The Lenape signed a \_\_\_\_\_ with American settlers and moved away from Indiana.
- 4.) The Lenape traded animal \_\_\_\_\_ for goods like cotton cloth and metal tools.
- 5.) \_\_\_\_\_ brought finished goods from Europe to trade with the Lenape.
- 6.) Fur traders and Indians did not buy goods from one another with money.  
Instead, they would \_\_\_\_\_ to get what they needed.
- 7.) Although deer and raccoon were more common, a \_\_\_\_\_ pelt was most valuable.

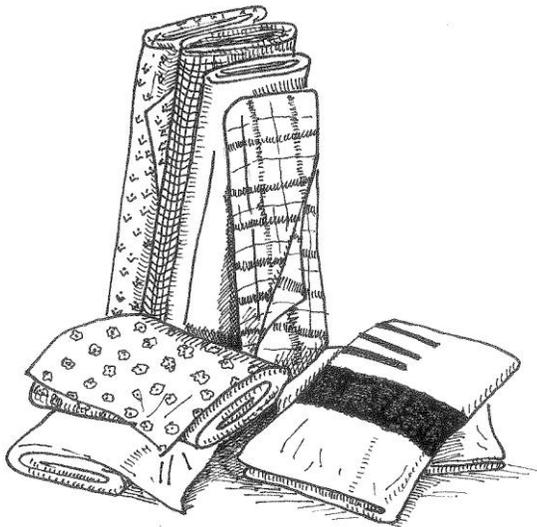
# TRADER'S GOODS



Glass and ceramic beads

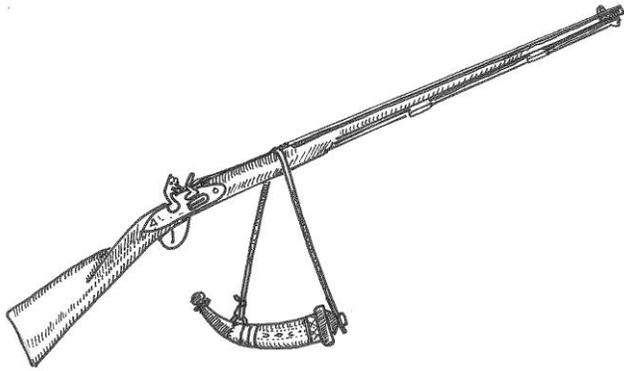


Silver ornaments

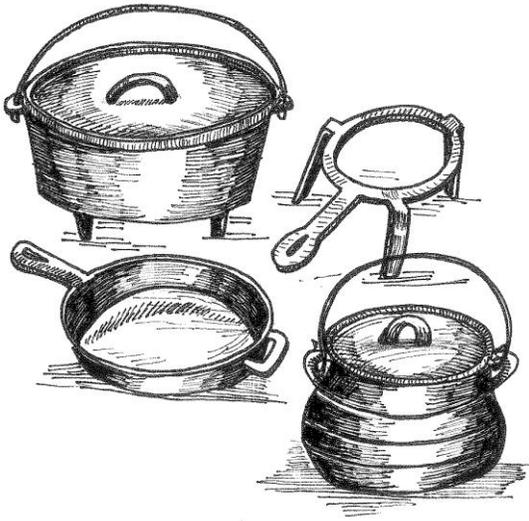


Blankets and other textiles

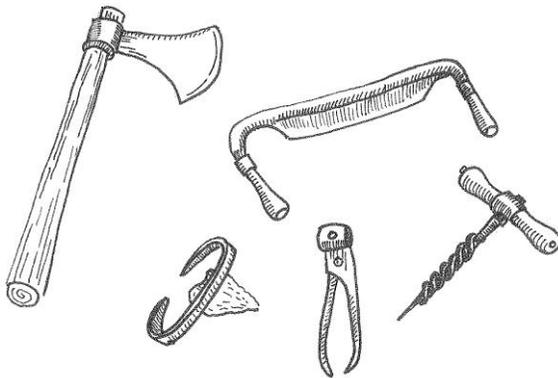
## TRADER'S GOODS



Guns and Gunpowder

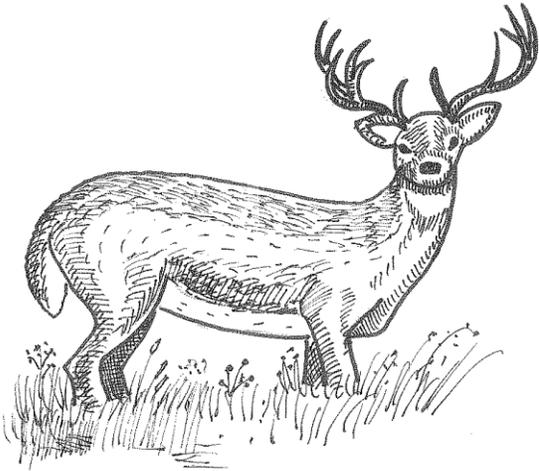


Cast iron cookware



Metal tools

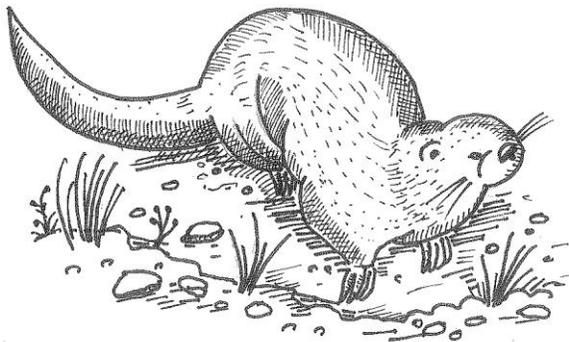
# LENAPE HUNTER'S PELTS



Deer

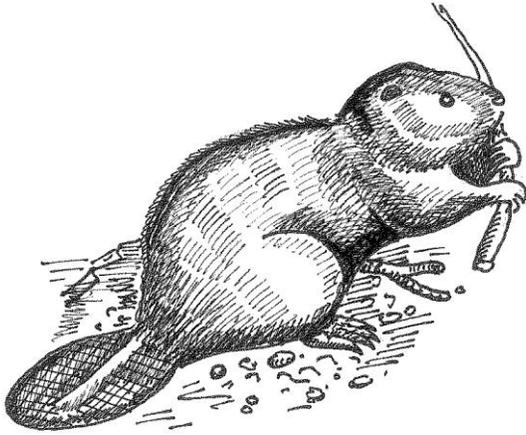


Raccoon

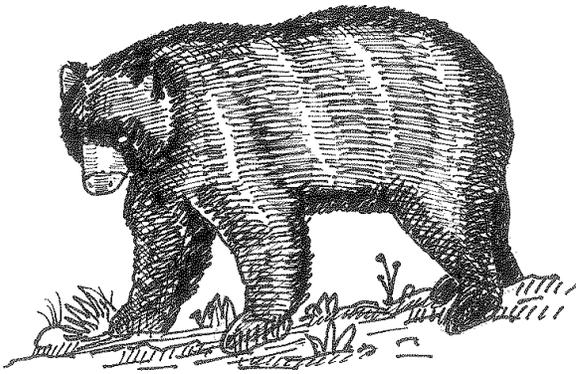


River Otter

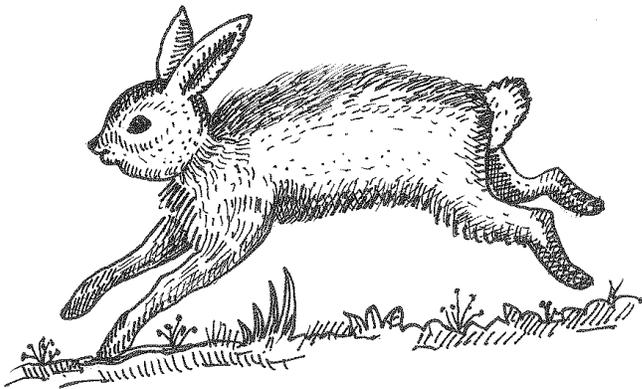
# LENAPE HUNTER'S PELTS



Beaver



Bear



Rabbit