



## THE LENAPE

Recommended for Grade 4 and 5

This article provides an overview of the Lenape Indians and their interactions with European settlers. The questions that follow encourage students to think critically about the text.

### OBJECTIVES:

After reading the article and completing these activities, students will be able to:

- Describe how the Lenape way of life changed after European contact.
- Understand what a treaty is and why they are important in the history of the Lenape people.
- Trace the Lenape's migration from the eastern United States to Oklahoma.

### WHAT TO DO:

- Read the article on the Lenape Indians.
- Students may complete the following worksheet and do the classroom activities described below.

### CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

- Using a map of Indiana, have the students look for Native American place names for cities, towns, rivers, and counties. Have them look up on the internet or in an encyclopedia some of the places they found on the map and give a little of the history about the name. For example, Kokomo was supposed to have been named after a Miami chief named Ma-ko-ko-mo. It is not known if this chief really existed. The name means black walnut
- Using a map the students can develop a timeline showing the Lenape's westward migration. This time line should show important events and treaties such as the French and Indian War, the American Revolution and the Treaty of St. Mary's. An extension could also show the Lenape going farther west until they find a permanent home in Oklahoma.

## **INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

### **Social Studies**

4.1.2 Identify and describe historic Native American Indian groups that lived in Indiana at the time of early European exploration, including ways these groups adapted to and interacted with the physical environment.

Example: Miami, Shawnee, Potawatomi and Lenape (Delaware)

4.1.5 Identify the causes of removal of Native American Indian groups in the state and their resettlement during the 1830s.

5.1.1 Identify and describe early cultures and settlements that existed in North America prior to contact with Europeans.

5.1.3 Identify and compare historic Indian groups of the West, Southwest, Northwest, Arctic and sub-Arctic, Great Plains, and Eastern Woodlands regions at the beginning of European exploration in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Example: Compare styles of housing, settlement patterns, sources of food and clothing, customs and oral traditions, political and economic organization, and types and uses of technology.

5.1.6 Identify and discuss instances of both cooperation and conflict between Native American Indians and European settlers, such as agriculture, trade, cultural exchanges and military alliances, as well as later broken treaties, massacres and conflicts over control of the land.

### **Common Core- English/Language Arts**

4.RI.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

4.RI.3 Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

5.RI.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

# The Lenape

## Before the Europeans Came

Long ago, long before the “New World” was discovered by explorers, there were people living in the woods, on the prairies, along the rivers, and by the oceans, in the land we now call America. These are the people that are called Native Americans or Indians. The native peoples had their own traditions, customs, and tribal societies. They respected the land because they had to rely on it to survive. They lived in large groups called tribes and each tribe had its own culture and customs.

One of these tribes was known as the Lenape. These native people lived in the Northeastern Woodlands along the Hudson River valley and in what is now New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware. The name Lenape means the “original people” or the “true people.” This tribe is also known as the Delaware Indians. Their settlements were often along the Delaware River. A British explorer named Samuel Argall named the river after Lord de la Warr, the British governor of the Virginia Colony. Once the European settlers came, the tribe became known as the Delaware because the Europeans often named the native people after the area where they lived.

The Lenape had an organized society. They lived in small villages filled with round houses called wigwams. The houses were made of saplings, vines and bark with a center hole in the roof to let the smoke from the fire escape. Each village usually included a rectangular council house where meetings were held.

Their society was a matriarchal society, which means that the mother’s side of the family owned everything. When a man married he went to live with his wife’s

family rather than his family. Each village had a leader called a sachem or spokesperson. Each member of the village had specific jobs to do. For example the women did the farming. They grew corn, beans and squash. These were called the “three sisters.” The beans climbed up the corn stalks and the wide squash leaves helped to shade the soil and retain moisture. The women did the cooking and preserved food for the winter by drying or salting it. They made clay pots used for cooking, and sewed the family’s clothes made from animal skins, fur, and feathers. The men hunted and fished, provided for their family and protected the village from harm. The children all had chores, and everyone worked for the well-being of the village. Everything the native people used in their daily lives came from nature and their surroundings.

The Lenape wore clothes made of skins, plant fibers and feathers. Both men and women wore deerskin leggings. In the winter they also wore fur robes for warmth. They decorated their clothes with porcupine quills, feathers and shells. Both men and women liked to paint their faces. They favored the color red and often painted it around their eyes, on their cheeks, and around their ears.

The Lenape had no written language. The stories of their culture and history were passed down from generation to generation through storytelling. It was important that this information live on. The tribal elders were responsible for telling the myths and legends, especially to the children of the community. These stories and legends were often told around the fire on the long winter nights.

## Contact with the Europeans

Once the first explorers made contact with the native people their lives changed. The Lenape did not know about woven cloth,

metal tools, guns and many other items that were part of life in Europe. Once they were introduced to these things they worked hard to try to get them. Instead of taking only what they needed from nature, they began to hunt and trap animals for their furs. The people in Europe wanted the furs. The Europeans would trade them these items for all the furs the Indians could bring. They began to adopt the "white man's ways."

The native people did not understand the concept of land ownership. When the settlers offered them the metal tools, blankets and other goods, the native people thought they were gifts. Actually these items were meant to be payments for their land. The Indians were confused when the settlers would no longer let them use the land. The settlers cut the trees down, and the land was used for farming. The Lenape were slowly pushed farther away from the land they knew by the arrival of more and more settlers. Many times the Indians signed treaties that the settlers had no intention of honoring. The settlers viewed the Indians as savages with little intelligence.

The Lenape did not have any immunity from the diseases that the white men carried. They could not survive smallpox, measles or even the common cold. Because of this many of them died. Before contact with the Europeans there were about twenty thousand Lenape living in eastern Pennsylvania. By 1700 the Lenape's population had shrunk to about four thousand.

Eventually many of the Lenape went and settled along the Susquehanna River. The land there was much like the land along the Delaware River. The Susquehannock Indians also lived in this area. The two tribes lived peacefully together. All was well until the start of the French and Indian War in 1754. This war was fought by Great

Britain and France over who would control the new territories. Both the British and the French wanted the tribes' support. Some of the Lenape stayed along the Susquehanna River and tried to remain neutral. Others had migrated to the Ohio River Valley and sided with the French. The French eventually lost the war and more and more European settlers moved westward into the Indian lands. The Lenape who had stayed in their villages along the Susquehanna decided to move to the west and join the others of their tribe living along the Ohio River. There they thought they would be safe from the settlers.

The American Revolution caused more problems for the Lenape. At first they tried to remain neutral. They had lost much of their lands because of their alliance with the French during the French and Indian War. Many other tribes joined the British side of the conflict and the Lenape were pressured to do the same. However, the Lenape eventually supported the American side. After the Americans won the Revolutionary War the government could not stop the flood of settlers that poured into the lands promised to the native people. Many tribes, including the Lenape, fought against the settlers by killing and burning settlements. The matter was finally finished when the native people were defeated at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in August, 1794. The Lenape were forced to move farther to the west and eventually settled along the White River in present-day Indiana.

Indiana became a state in 1816. Almost two-thirds of the land in the new state was land that had been given to the native people through a series of treaties. The pressure from white settlers to open up land was fierce. The government of the United States negotiated a number of treaties with different tribes to move the native people across the Mississippi River. An important treaty for the Lenape was

signed at St. Mary's, Ohio, on October 3, 1818. In this treaty the Lenape gave up all their claims to the land in Indiana and agreed to move to Missouri. The terms stated that the tribe would have three years to leave the land. The government would give the tribe 120 horses and also money and provisions.

Eventually the Lenape were pushed all the way to Oklahoma where they reside today.

There are two other major settlements of Lenape. One is in Wisconsin. The other is in Canada, where a number of Lenape settled after the Revolution because they supported the British. Today in Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey there is no land that is reserved for the tribe that started out on this journey so long ago.



3. The Lenape culture is “matriarchal.” What does that mean?

4. Why are the Lenape also known as the Delaware?

5. You have read about the many broken treaties that the natives signed in good faith. Why was the treaty that the Lenape signed at St. Mary’s, Ohio an important one?