

everyone into the circle and avoid distractions

- involve the listeners (the Bruchacs and other storytellers use response words like Ho? and Hey!)
- choose your style---both quiet and theatrical styles will work

Story: Use the story “Earth on Turtle’s Back” (attached) from *Keepers of the Earth* by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac. Read or tell the story to the students and discuss the story as one example of a Native American story of creation or how the earth was made. Also discuss what the chief’s wife will now need to survive on the earth. Where did these things come from? What do we need today to survive and where do these things come from?

Activity: Make a Shelter

Students should draw or make a model of their house using cardboard, card stock, and paper. Students should think about all the materials that are necessary to make a house, such as wood, brick, stone, glass, plastic, and cement. Discuss with the students what natural resources are used to make these materials. Student should label the house part with the appropriate materials and/or color the house parts to represent the materials. Gather samples of the materials, label, and display them with the house models.

IV. Shelter and Food

Shelter was an important consideration for Native tribes. The Iroquois or Haudenosaunee (People of the Longhouse) lived in bark longhouses each of which contained an extended family. The Abenaki lived in bark shelters called wigwams. On the grounds of Brookside is an authentic reproduction of an Eastern Woodland Indian wigwam built under the direction of Jim Bruchac and the Ndakinna Education Center. This wigwam is used during the Native New York Program. Attached to this packet are drawings illustrating the steps in wigwam construction.

For food, the Native Americans depended heavily on their annual hunting and fishing expeditions. The men hunted elk, deer, moose, bear, beaver, partridge and wild turkey. They fished for eel, sturgeon, and other lake fish. It was the responsibility of the women to gather fruits, nuts, berries, and wild potatoes along with collecting the sap from the maple trees. In addition, the women farmed the land around the villages, planting “The Three Sisters,” corn, beans and squash which were considered sacred, life-giving foods.

One of the earliest accounts of the Iroquois culture comes from a journal that was kept by an employee of the Dutch West India Company who was sent into Iroquois country (what is now upstate New York) in 1634. Below are several excerpts, dealing with the subject of shelter and food, from *A Journey into Mohawk and Oneida Country, 1635-1635*, “the Journal of Harmen Meyndertsz van den Bogaert” translated and edited by Charles T. Gehring and William A. Starna.

Excerpt #1

11 December. Report of the most important things that happened to me while traveling to the Maquasen and Sinnekens.[1]

Excerpt #2

13 December. In the morning we went together to the castle over the ice that had frozen in the waterway during the night. When we had gone one half mile, we came into their first castle that stood on a high hill. There were only 36 houses, row on row in the manner of streets, so that we easily could pass through. These houses are constructed and covered with the bark of trees, and are mostly flat above. Some are 100, 90, or 80 steps long; 22 or 23 feet high.[19] There were also some interior doors made of split planks furnished with iron hinges.

Excerpt #3

13 ditto. Most of the people were out hunting for bear or deer. These houses were full of grain that they call ONESTI and we corn,[22] indeed some held 300 or 400 skipples.[24] They make boats and barrels of tree-bark and sew with it. We ate here many baked and boiled pumpkins which they called ANONSIRA.[25] ... we were called by another chief when we were already on the path, and turned back toward the castle. He had a large fire started at once, and a fat haunch of venison cooled, from which we ate; and he also gave us two bearskins to sleep on, and presented me with three beaver pelts.... We slept here in this house, and ate large quantities of pumpkin, bean,[26] and venison so that we suffered no hunger here but fared as well as it is possible in their country. I hope that everything shall succeed

[1] The term *Maquasen*, commonly *Maquas* is a reference to the Mohawk, the eastern most tribe of the Five Nation of the Iroquois.

The word *Sinnekens* functioned for the Dutch and others as a generic applied to all of those Indians west of the Mohawk.