



NATIVE AMERICANS

THE NATIVE PEOPLES OF NORTH AMERICA may have numbered two million or more at the time Columbus arrived.

Hunting was practiced by all, and it was the principal means of livelihood in at least half of North America. Hunters and gatherers were seminomadic, following seasonal migration patterns. Indians in farming and fishing areas developed permanent villages.

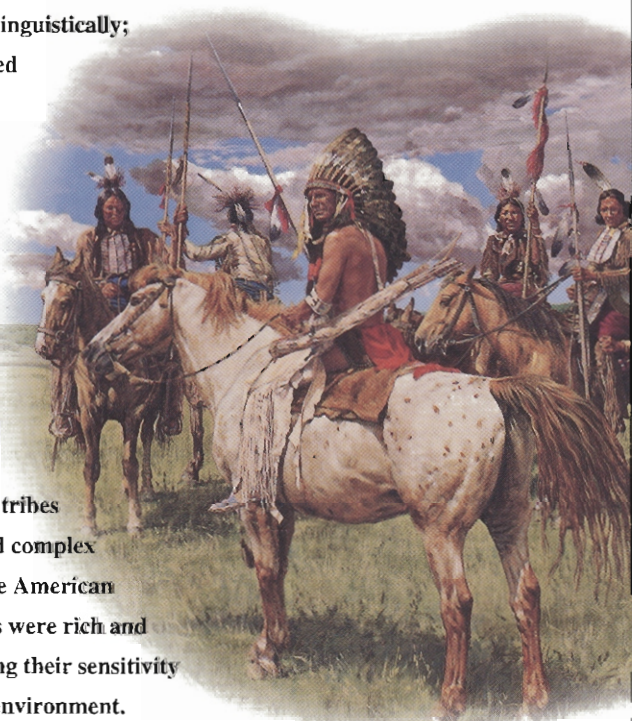
Native Americans were scattered across the continent in hundreds of culturally distinct groups. They spoke some 200 languages. Some tribal groups were bound together politically and linguistically; others interacted

only when bartering. Everything from obsidian and buffalo hides to copper and seashells was traded.

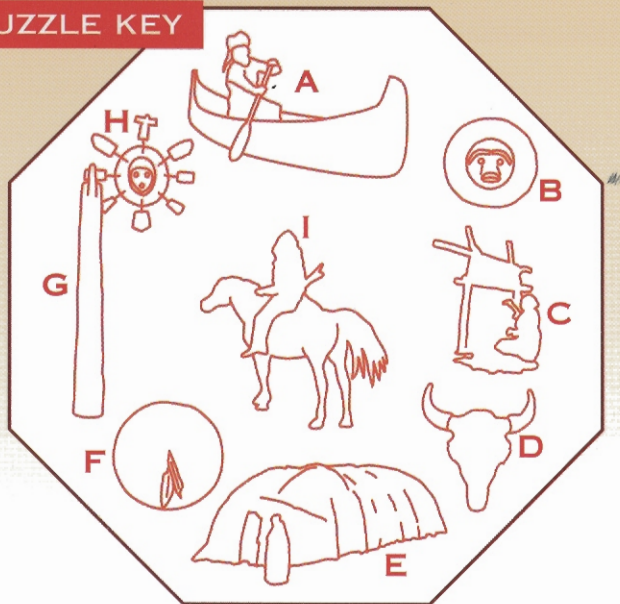
Where an abundant food supply existed, tribes often developed complex societies. Native American spiritual beliefs were rich and varied, reflecting their sensitivity to the natural environment.

Ceremonial art was skillfully crafted and knowledge of herbal medicine well-developed. Horses were introduced in the Southwest by Spaniards in the 1500s. The animals' arrival eventually transformed a number of tribes from riverside farmers into mounted buffalo hunters.

As European settlers and descendants continued to push back the frontier, Native Americans began to resist. War, disease, and the displacement of tribes threatened traditional ways of life as the two cultures continued to clash.



PUZZLE KEY



A. Northeastern Woodland Indian, circa 1700s. He is paddling a birch bark canoe of Algonquin design. Algonquian-speaking tribes continued the prehistoric tradition of small, seminomadic settlements sustained by hunting and fishing, but also raised crops including maize and wild rice.

B. Bella Coola sun mask. The Bella Coola Indians lived on the Pacific coast of British Columbia. The spirit sun mask was used during winter ceremonial rites.

C. A Navajo woman weaving at her loom. She is sitting beneath a canopy of limbs and boughs (called a ramada). The ramada provided shelter from the sweltering sun of the Southwest.

D. Painted bison skull. Decorated skulls similar to this one were used by various Plains Indians in rituals such as the Sun Dance. This rite was performed in anticipation of visions from the gods.

E. Dome-shaped winter lodge of an Ojibwa family. The Ojibwa – also known as the Chippewa – were from the Northern Great Lakes Region. They fashioned their dwellings from saplings, bark and reeds.

F. Crow warrior's buffalo hide shield. The Crow Indians were a Plains tribe dependent on buffalo for survival. The shield pictures a bull bison defying its enemies. This was thought to evoke the animal's spiritual power.

G. Haida totem pole. Haida Indians occupied the Queen Charlotte Islands off the coast of British Columbia. Their carved totem poles were adorned with thunderbirds, sea grizzlies, bears, ravens and other figures. These ornate poles stood in front of their lodges.

H. Eskimo mask. The carved wings, feet and head of a guillemot bird are represented on this ceremonial mask. It is still used by some Alaskan tribes to honor the souls of animals hunted during the year.

I. Kiowa horsemen. The Kiowa tribe, along with the legendary Comanches, became warriors of the Southern Plains. These tribes mastered the use of horses to hunt buffalo and wage war.