

Study Guide For Teachers

Billy B.
in
***The Rock-Knockin'
Native Americans***

presented by

Young Audiences
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BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Woodland Native American tribes lived east of the Plains Indians and extended from New England and Maryland to the Great Lakes Area and into Maine. They lived in the forests near lakes or streams, which is why they're called **Eastern Woodland Indians**. Their food, shelter, clothing, weapons and tools came from the forest. **The Iroquois**, Mound Builders, Algonquian and Shawnee are a few Woodland tribes.

In general, the natives were deer-hunters and farmers. The men made bows and arrows, stone knives and war clubs. The women tended garden plots where beans, corn, pumpkin, squash and tobacco were cultivated. Women also harvested these crops and prepared the food. Black pottery or wood and bark vessels were used for cooking. They dried berries, corn, fish, meat and squash for the winter. The diet of deer meat was also supplemented by other game and shellfish.

The tribes lived near water for transportation purposes. In general, the northern tribes fashioned birchbark canoes while southeastern tribes dug out canoes from tree trunks. On land, the natives traveled on foot and bore their cargo on their backs, having no pack animals. Dogs were their sole domesticated animals.

The Eastern Woodlands' original inhabitants were the first the European colonists met. From the beginning, the settlers adopted many of the natives' proven methods and paraphernalia, including deerskin clothing.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Billy B. begins this performance by taking his audience into Pre-Columbus America – a world with no metal utensils, no wheels and no stores. Billy B. guides the children through song into maintaining a rhythm, imitating animal sounds and moving “heel toe” on the track of an animal. The excitement continues as Billy B. uses songs and activities to demonstrate how Native Americans used their ingenuity to make tools from flint, trap turkeys with a bent sapling, and build wigwams out of cattails, saplings and bark.

LEARNING GOALS

- To demonstrate the daily living skills of the Pre-Columbus woodland Native Americans
- To emphasize the importance of the environment as a source of survival for the Native Americans
- To engage students in original Native American activities via song, dance and overall audience participation.

AFTER THE PROGRAM

1. Have students research different Native American tribes and cultures that have existed for thousands of years in America. Compare and contrast some of these tribes to the Woodland Native Americans that Billy B. discusses in his performance.
2. Have students discuss the natural conditions they think would create hardships for Woodland Native Americans. Why and how would these conditions cause hardship?
3. In order to survive, the Woodland Native Americans relied on hunting especially in the winter when plant foods were not available. Deer which they stalked and shot using a bow and arrow became a main sources of food. Arrows were generally made of wood, while arrowheads were made of horn, shell, copper or slate.
4. In the book Hatchet by Gary Paulsen, a boy who survives a plane crash is alone in the forest and makes a variety of tools and weapons in order to survive. Ask students what tools or weapons they might make to survive alone in the woodlands today. Have students attempt to make a tool or utensil out of bark.
5. Have students write an entry into a daily diary as a pre-Columbus Native American. Explain what was eaten, how it was caught or grown, and how it was prepared.
6. Where are Native Americans today? Discuss the fact that many Native Americans are now living on reservations as well as within the general population of this country.

BEFORE THE PROGRAM

Familiarize students with the history of the Woodland Native Americans – where they lived, their environments and their natural resources.

VOCABULARY WORDS

Native American
Metal
Hide (animal skin)
Squash
Arrowhead
Tribe
Resources
Quartz
Shaft
Flint
Tool
Obsidian
Sapling
Wigwam
Longhouse
Trap/trapping
Sap tracks
Percussion
Slate
Preserve

ARTIST INFORMATION

A veteran performer, Billy B. Brennan has performed for the National Geographic Society and the National Wildlife Federation, as well as at the White House, the Kennedy Center, the Smithsonian and in front of 200,000 people during the 20th National Earth Day. Billy B. has recorded several albums of original songs and has also written scripts and music performed for television, videos and film.

RESOURCES

<http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h922.html>

<http://www.kidzworld.com/article/1330-american-indians-woodland-tribes-and-california-indians>