

Time and the Valleys **MUSEUM**

Grahamsville, NY

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The First People

• Who were the first people?

The Lenape is pronounced "Leh-NAH-pay" and it means "the people." Sometimes you will see this name spelled Lenápe or Lenapi instead. The tribe is also known as the Lenni Lenape ("true people") or the Delaware Indians. Some of them lived and hunted in the Catskill area, especially what today is known as the Rondout Valley.

• What did they do?

Lenape men were hunters and sometimes went to war to protect their families. Lenape women were farmers and also did most of the child care and cooking. Both genders took part in storytelling, artwork and music, and traditional medicine.

• What were their homes like?

The Lenni Lenapes didn't live in tepees. They lived in villages of round houses called wigwams. Some Lenape Indians preferred longhouses to wigwams, because more family members could live in a longhouse.

• What did the children do?

They do the same things any children do, play with each other. Many Lenape children like to go hunting and fishing with their fathers as well as the chores they had to do. The girls had dolls to play with and the boys had miniature bows and arrows.

• What did they wear?

The women wore knee-length skirts and tops made out of deer skins. Lenape men wore breechcloths and legging also made from deer skins. When it was cold they would wear deerskin mantles or cloaks. Both men and women wore earrings and deer skin moccasins. The men did not wear long headdresses, they usually wore a beaded headband with a feather or two on it.

• What did they use to travel?

They used bark and dugout canoes to travel on the streams and rivers. There were no horses in North America until Europeans brought them here. Lenape Indians used sleds and snowshoes to help them travel in the winter.

• What did they eat?

They were farming people. The women did most of the farming, harvesting corn, squash and beans. Lenape men went hunting for deer, elk, turkeys, and small game, and caught fish in the rivers and inlets. Foods included soup, cornbread, dumplings and salads.

• **What were their tools and weapons like?**

Lenape hunters used bows and arrows. The warriors wielded heavy wooden war clubs, and also carried body-length shields.

• **What crafts did they have?**

The Lenape tribe is known for their beadwork and basketry weaving and Like other eastern Native Americans, they also crafted wampum out of white and purple shell beads. Wampum beads were traded as a kind of currency, but they were more culturally important as an art material.

• **Why was water important to them?**

They traveled on the streams and rivers in their canoes.

They built their villages by a stream or river.

They needed water to drink and cook .

They used water to bath and clean their clothes. (Unlike the Europeans who lived at the same time who did not bath or clean their clothes very often.)

They relied on the fish, eels and shellfish that lived in the water.

They needed the water everyday to survive.

They swam in the water.

Activity

This could be a discussion or written activity.

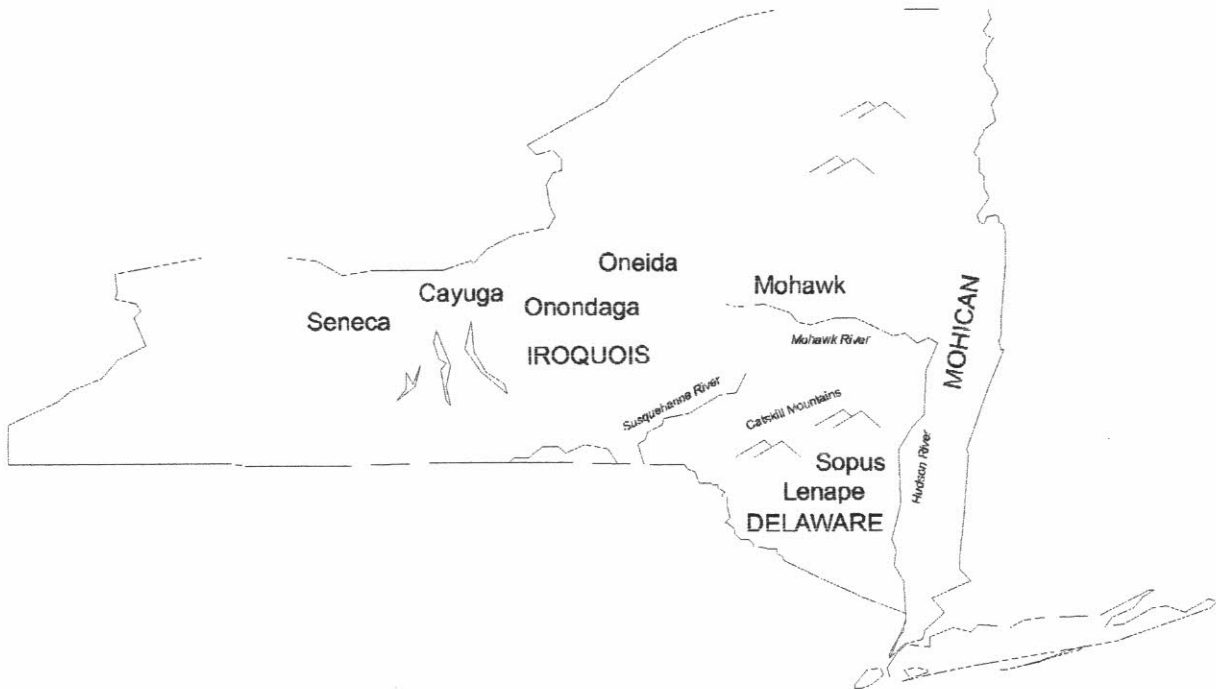
Looking at the attached drawing to how many different activities you can name that involve using water. Write them down.

Now look at your list, what ways do you use water in the same way? Write them down. Do you use water for something that they did not use water for?



Native Americans of New York

Circa 1600



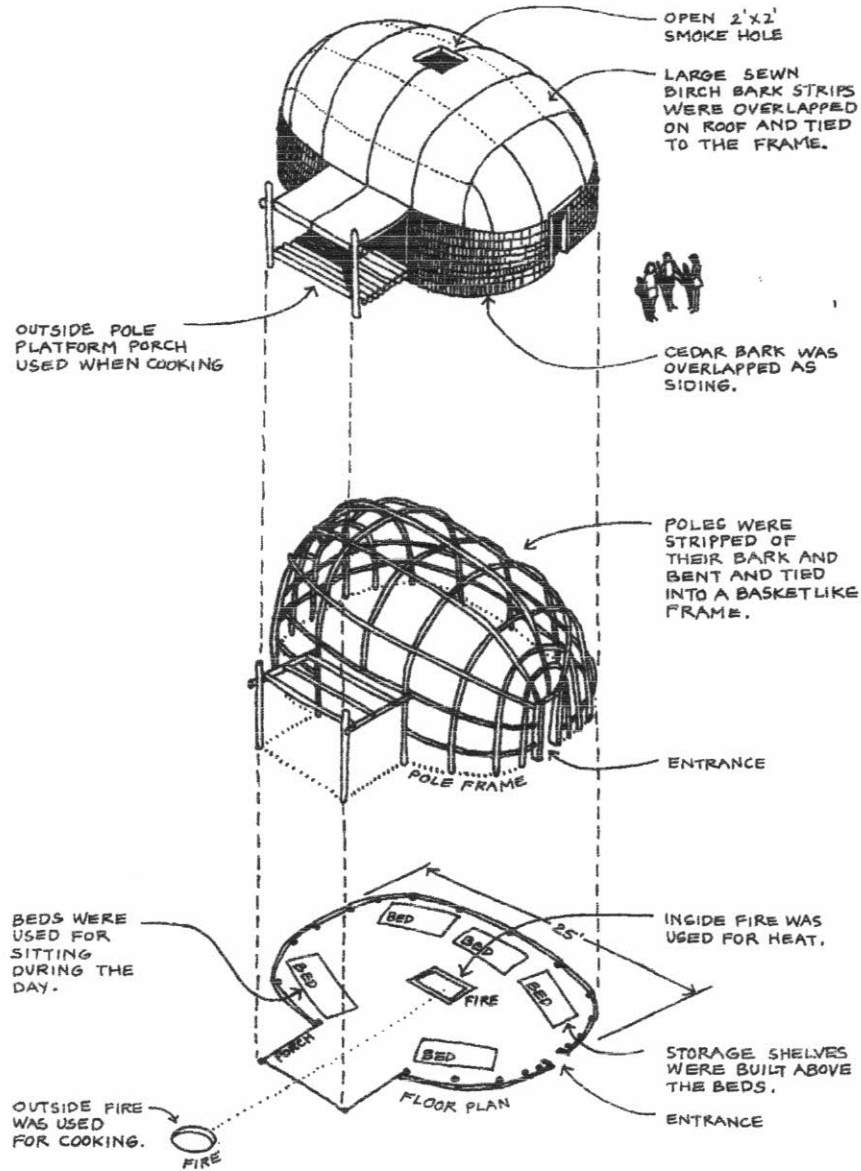
Legend

- IROQUOIS
- DELAWARE
- MOHICAN



Algonkian Wigwam

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1700 ELLIPTICAL WIGWAM,
ALGONKIAN