

# Native American Cultures: The Northeast

By Encyclopedia Britannica, adapted by Newsela staff on 06.22.17

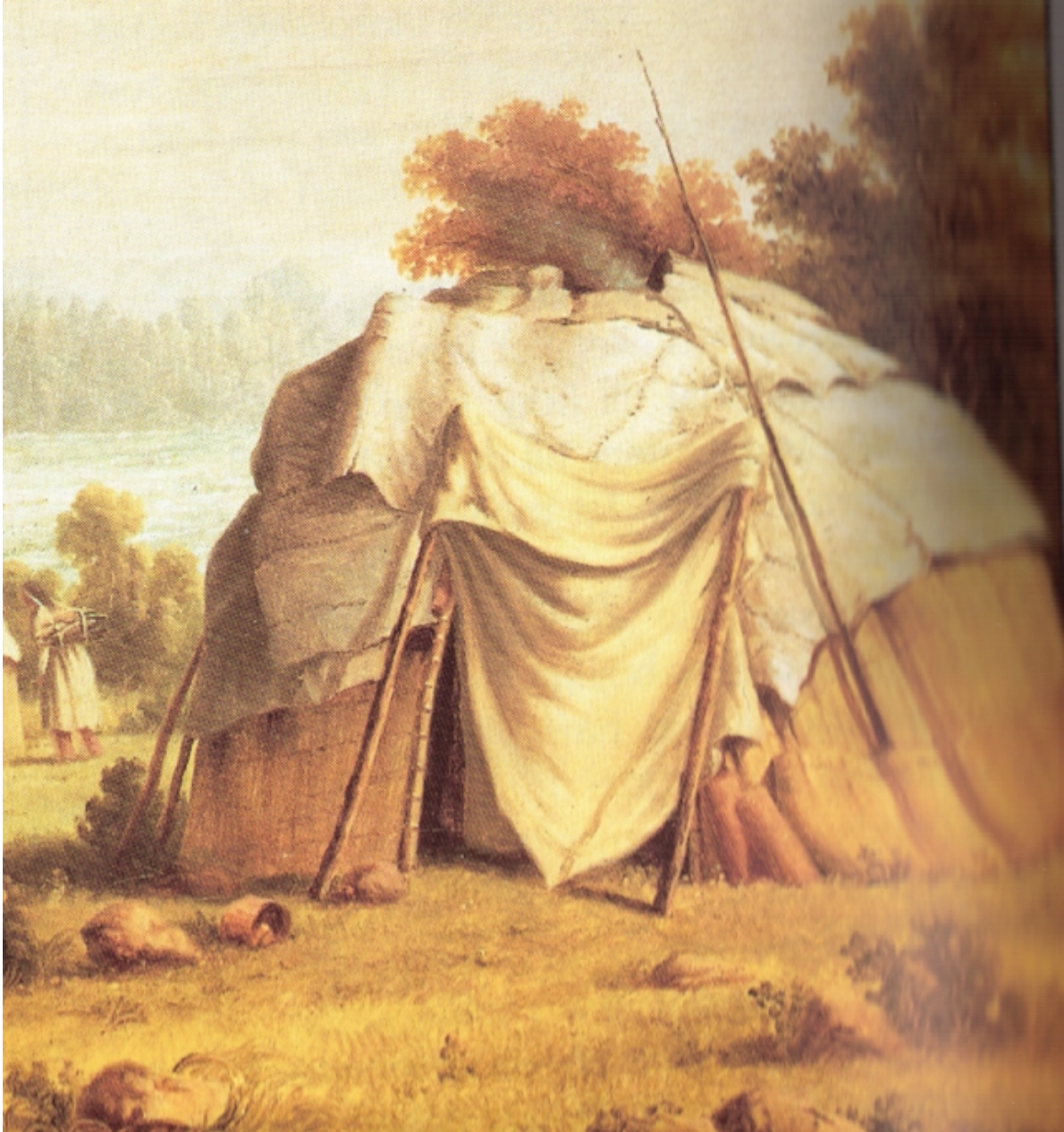
Word Count **483**

Level **600L**



Sauk, or Sac, Native American family photographed in 1899. Photo by: Frank Rinehart.





Iroquoians lived in big wood-frame longhouses. Algonquians and Siouans lived in wickiups, or wigwams.

Wickiups were large, round tent-like houses. They each had a single fire in the center. Usually, a wickiup housed a single family.

Not all Northeast peoples lived in villages. Some formed into wandering bands. These smaller groups moved often in search of food.

### **Forming Confederacies**

Tribes were led by chiefs. Sometimes, different tribes joined together to form larger groups.

The Iroquois Confederacy was the largest and strongest. It was formed to bring peace among warring tribes. Its members were the the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora tribes.

## **Tribal Clans**

The people of the Northeast were not only divided into tribes. Each tribe also had groups called clans. Those who belonged to a clan were descended from the same person.

Clans were often named after animals. For example, there was a Turtle clan, a Bear clan and a Wolf clan.

In some tribes, children joined their mother's clan. In other tribes, they joined their father's clan.

## **Work Duties**

Men and women had separate jobs.

Women cared for babies, cooked and made clothing. They also grew most of the food. The men went to war, built houses, hunted, fished and made tools.

## **Europeans Arrive**

Europeans began arriving in the Northeast in the 1600s. They brought new diseases that killed many Native Americans.

The Europeans also brought guns, metal pots, glass beads and cloth. The native peoples found these items useful. They helped the Europeans get furs in return. The Northeast peoples soon began trading with one another.

## **Lost Lands**

European settlers kept pouring into the Northeast. By the end of the 1800s, the Northeast peoples had lost their land. Some were moved to faraway reservations.

Still, many Northeast tribes held on. Many also kept their old ways of life.



## Quiz

1 Based on the article, which of the following events happened FIRST?

- (A) Europeans began trading with the Northeast Indians.
- (B) Native Americans were killed by European diseases.
- (C) The Iroquois Confederacy was formed.
- (D) The Northeast Indians lost their land.

2 Read these paragraphs from the section "Living Quarters."

*Iroquoians lived in big wood-frame longhouses. Algonquians and Siouans lived in wickiups, or wigwams.*

*Wickiups were large, round tent-like houses. They each had a single fire in the center. Usually, a wickiup housed a single family.*

How are these paragraphs organized?

- (A) as descriptions
- (B) as events in order
- (C) as problems and solutions
- (D) as cause-and-effect relationships

3 Look at the map in the introduction [paragraphs 1-2].

What is the focus of the map?

- (A) the names and homelands of Northeast Native-American tribes
- (B) the names of different states where Northeast Native Americans lived
- (C) the land that Northeast Native Americans used for farming
- (D) the area where Northeast Native Americans fished and hunted

4 Look at the image in the section "Living Quarters."

Use the image and information from the section to select the TRUE statement.

- (A) All Northeast peoples lived in large villages.
- (B) All Northeast people built wigwams.
- (C) Northeast peoples lived in many different structures.
- (D) Northeast peoples who wandered built the largest villages.