

Early Northwest Coastal Tribes People of Salmon and Cedar



By Lynnwood Elementary 4th grade
students in Mrs Bonney's Class

Map showing location of Northwest Coast Cultural Group



- The area in Blue on the left shows the Northwest Coast which include Native Americans of what is today Alaska down the coast of British Columbia, Washington and Oregon.
- Their way of life was based on what natural resources they could find around them.

Resources by Eliane

- The most important thing about the Northwest Coast Indians is that they have everything they need to survive.
- Their greatest resources were the Cedar trees and food from the sea, river and land around them.



Shelter/ Houses by Alexandra

Native Americans of the Northwest Coast lived in big plankhouses made of cedar along the water. They lived with their whole family, mom, dad, sister, brother, grandma, grandpa, aunt and uncle.



Picture of a Chinook Plankhouse

Shelter by Yafett

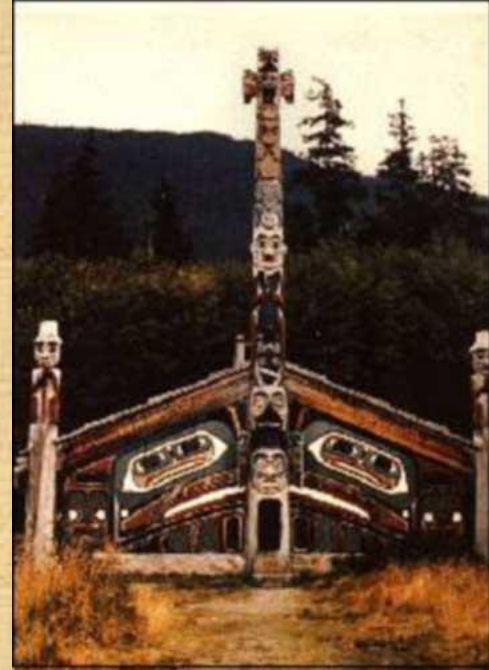
- Northwest coast people were living with their extended families in a longhouse. They get their name because it looked like a long rectangle.
- Usually longhouses were 80 feet long and 18 feet wide.

Totem Poles

- They made totem pole to represent the stories of their clan. They put them in front of their longhouse facing the water.



Village of Ksan, British Columbia



Totem in front of Kvakiul longhouse

Clothing by Nerissa

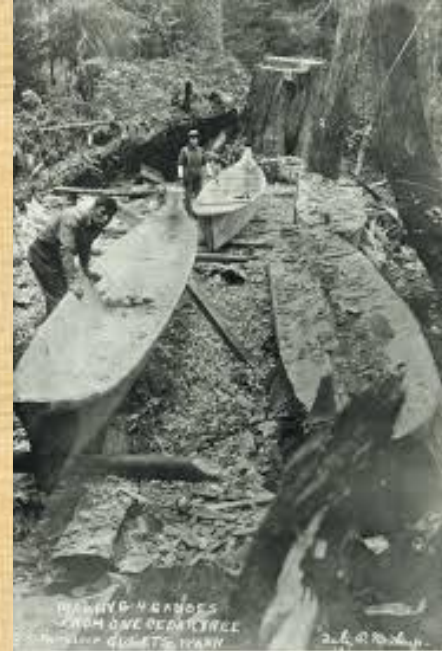
- The Northwest Coastal Indians made clothing out of the inner bark of the cedar tree and some animals skins for the winter.
- They also made beautiful button blankets for ceremonies.



Cedar Clothing drawing

Jobs by Aafiah

- Men made tools to catch fish, and tools for woodworking. They carved totem poles in front of their longhouse. Also they made canoes to go fishing for salmon.



Food by Jaden

- The Pacific Ocean was the main source of food for the people of the coast.
- The men spent a lot of time fishing along the coast. They fished salmon, smelt, crab, whale, oysters, sea -otter, and turtle.
- They also did some hunting
- Women gathered plants and berries to eat.



Preparing the food by Natalie

- The women prepared and cooked the food
- They preserved the fish by drying or smoking it



Fish Drying



Smokehouse



Cooking Salmon

Canoes and Transportation by Kyler

- The men made tools to catch fish, and tools for woodworking.
- Also they made canoes to go fishing for salmon and hunt sea mammals.
- Canoes were used to go places using the sea or the rivers or they would go on foot.



Hunting sea otter with bow and arrow

Tools by Parsa

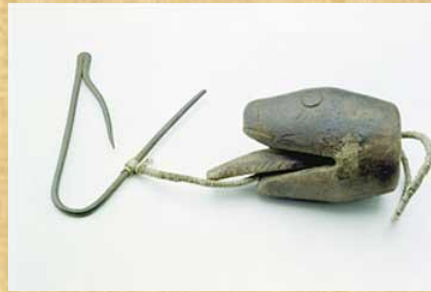
- The Northwest Coastal Indians loved salmon. The fishermen fished for salmon, seal, whale, halibut, and other types of fish. They also used net's traps and baited hooks to catch fish.
- The Coastal Indians used Kwakiutl stone hammer with handle to split the cedar.
- They also used a coast wooden wedge hammer without a handle for woodworking



Stone Hammer

Fishing by Nelson

- The Northwest Coast Indians had many ways of fishing. They used hooks made with bones. They also caught lots of salmon with weirs.



Halibut Hook made of bone

Model of a Weir by Anabelle

- One of the fishing techniques was to build a weir where the fish would be caught. Here is a model of a small weir.



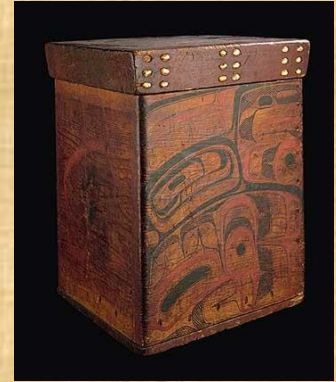
Native American Weir Model
made by Anabelle

Northwest Art

- Coastal Indians made beautiful objects made of Cedar
- They carved beautiful masks.
- They also used the bark and the roots to make beautiful baskets



This kind of Cedar baskets were used to collect clams



Cedar Bentwood Box



Food Dish

Art and Masks

Coastal Indians used the Cedar tree for making useful objects they decorated.

- They also carved masks of the animals representing the spirits that protect them: like raven, frog, or bear and they used them in their ceremonies.



Coast Salish Mask

Traditions by Aafiah

- They had many traditions like the potlatch.
- A Potlatch was a big party where the host made food for you and told stories. Also they ate more and more. And when it's time to leave the host gives you presents.

Celebrations and Ceremonies

- The Northwest Coast People performed dances and told stories and legends of their people during ceremonies. This was the most important way of sharing their history because they did not have any written language.



Haida Raven Dancer

The first Salmon Ceremony

- The salmon was the most important food and when the salmon came back in the spring, there was a big celebration. After cooking the first salmon, its bones were returned in a ceremony to the stream it came from, so that its spirit would return.

Beliefs

- The people of the Northwest believed that everything that was around them had a spirit: the animals, the river, the mountains
- Before they killed an animal, they would thank it for giving up its life so that they could live. They would only take what they needed.
- They believed there were good spirits and bad spirits.
- The only link between the spirit world and the natural world was the 'Shaman' or 'Medicine Man'.

Shaman

- A shaman was a medicine man or woman that would help take the bad spirits away if you were sick, or to help bring good weather or enough food.
- The belief was that they had the power to do all those things through an ability to communicate with the spirit world.
- Shamans wore special clothing like bearskin robes, and had special rattles, skin drums, herbs and charms. Sometimes they used masks to communicate with the spirits asking them to cure a sick person.



Haida Shaman Rattle



Tsimshian Shaman curing boy

What we learned by Tim

- The most important thing about the Northwest Coastal Indians is their creativity with their hands
- Their most important resource is cedar and salmon.
- They fish and they pick food in forests.
- They made clothing with cedar tree bark.
- They had potlatches and shared with other Indians.
They shared their history through stories and dances and did not have a written language
- They only took what they needed and believed that all things in nature had a spirit.

Sources of Information

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