

Name: _____

Date: _____

Native America – Northwest Coast Tribal Region

Directions: Read the passage. Then answer the questions from the reading.



Cedar plank longhouses and totem poles

The Pacific Northwest coast is a narrow strip of land between the Pacific Ocean on the west and mountains in the east. The coast is jagged with many inlets and islands. The mountains trap the wet ocean air so that summers are cool, and winters are mild and wet, so there are many trees and plants.

People who lived in the Pacific Northwest lived in cedar plank longhouses. Boards were cut from cedar trees to build the large houses. Many families of the same clan lived in each house. There were no windows, one door, and a hole in the roof to let the smoke from fires out. Beautiful clan symbols were painted on the outside.

Totem poles tell the story of the history of the clan or the history of a person's life. Animals, birds, fish and landmarks were carved on the poles. The Pacific Northwest people were the only Native Americans who created totem poles. Long ago, totem poles were carved using tools made from whale bones. When European people came to the Northwest, they brought tools made of metal. The carvings were painted using dyes made from vegetables, tree bark and berries.

Salmon and trout were very important foods for the people in this region. They caught fish in several different ways. One way was spearing them; another way was to make nets to catch them.

Just like all other Native people, the California tribes dressed in materials found in the region where they lived. In hot weather, men wore breechcloths made of animal skins or woven grass or reeds. When it got colder, especially in the northern part of the region, they added deerskin shirts, leggings, and moccasins. Women wore dresses of skins, and later of cotton.

1. What do totem poles tell the story of? _____
2. What type of clothes did the people of this region wear? _____
3. What type of home(s) did the people of this region live? _____
4. What is the climate like in this region? _____
5. What type of food(s) did the people of this region eat? _____

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History of a clan, or person

Breechcloths, Shirts, Leggings, Moccasins

Cedar plank longhouses

Cool summers, Mild winters

Salmon and Trout