

Subject Guides

American Indians

Greenwood Public Library



This pathfinder is designed to help you locate all kinds of information on American Indians. It focuses on materials relevant for students grades K-12; these materials include [online searches](#), [print materials](#), [multimedia items](#), [websites](#), and [teacher resources/activities](#).

Because it is impossible for us to travel back in time to observe particular events regarding American Indians, this pathfinder provides resources to help you learn all about their culture and history. The resources are also excellent for studying American Indian culture in our current society. By clicking on the resource links, you can access many materials to help you in your study of American Indians.

The print materials and multimedia materials were located using the Greenwood Public Library Evergreen search website, and they may all be located at Greenwood Public Library. The electronic materials were located through Google searches and other online databases.

Keywords & Searching Tips

When searching for information through an electronic database or Internet search engine, you may find more or stronger resources by using the following tips:

When looking for a particular phrase, such as *American Indians*, surround the phrase with quotation marks (“American Indians”). This ensures that your results will include this entire phrase, rather than just “American” or “Indians.”

If you do not want something in your results, put a minus sign (-) in front of it. For example, if I do not want information regarding the Cherokee tribe in my American Indians search, I could type: “American Indians” -Cherokee.

If you want to search for more than one phrase at the same time, use the word “OR” between the phrases. For example, if I searched “American Indians” OR “Native Americans,” I can locate materials that use either of these phrases.

You can narrow down your search even further by using the word “AND.” If I want to research American Indians in Arizona only, I can search “American Indians” AND “Arizona” to get more appropriate results.

Try using the following search terms to locate various materials regarding American Indians.

- American Indians
- Native Americans
- American Indian tribes (or Native American tribes)
- Amerindians

If looking for information on a particular tribe of American Indians, type the name of that tribe. Here are some examples of well-known tribes:

- Apache
- Cherokee
- Shawnee
- Cheyenne
- Navajo
- Sioux
- Iroquois

Use the website <http://www.native-languages.org/languages.htm#alpha> as a starting point for locating names of specific American Indian tribes.

The following search terms can be used to locate information on a specific topic of American Indians.

- American Indian chiefs
- Famous American Indians (here are some well-known American Indians: Sacajawea, Sequoyah, Sitting Bull, Chief Joseph, Pocahontas, Tecumseh)
- Native American regions
- Native American mythology
- American Indian culture
- American Indian battles
- American Indian reservations

Multimedia

The following multimedia items contain both educational and recreational materials regarding the American government.

[America's Great Indian Leaders](#) (Videocassette) In the late 19th century, four native Americans emerged to protect their people and culture. Crazy Horse, "Sacred Warrior of the Lakota," refused to bring his people into submission. Chief Joseph, "Guardian of the Nez Perce," led his people on a 1700 mile flight from the U.S. Army. Geronimo, "Brilliant Medicine Man of the Apaches," used his powers to vanish and reappear, confounding pursuers. Quanah Parker, "Last Chief of the Comanche" and son of a white woman, guided his people between two worlds, white and Indian.

[Brother Bear](#) (DVD) A young Native American boy's father is killed by a mother bear protecting her cubs. With revenge on his mind, Kenoia sets out into the woods only to find himself magically transformed into the creature he hates most, a bear. Luckily, a bear cub befriends him and Kenoia sets out to become human again. Kenoia begins to see the world through the eyes of what was once his prey and is forced to learn a lesson about nature and life. In the meantime, Kenoia's brother hunts him on his own mission of revenge and honor.

[Powwow](#) (DVD) Describes Native American gatherings, powwows, celebrating their culture and life, including crafts and folklore.

[The Last of the Mohicans](#) (DVD) The love of Hawkeye, rugged frontiersman and adopted son of the Mohicans, and Cora Munro, aristocratic daughter of a British colonel, blazes amidst a brutal conflict between the British, the French and Native American allies in colonial America.

[Touching Spirit Bear](#) (Audiobook) After his anger erupts into violence, Cole, in order to avoid going to prison, agrees to participate in a sentencing alternative based on the Native American Circle Justice, and he is sent to a remote Alaskan Island where an encounter with a huge Spirit Bear changes his life.

Fiction/Nonfiction Books

Nonfiction: Grades K-5

[*The American Indians*](#) by Roland W. Force and Maryanne Tefft Force Discusses the history, culture, and religion of North American Indians and the problems they face as a culture. (J 970.004 FOR)

[*American Peoples: North American Indian*](#) by David Murdoch Describes the culture of North American Indians and provides many pictures and images. (J 970.004 MUR)

[*North American Indian Medicine People*](#) by Karen Liptak Describes the healing techniques used by American Indians. (J 970.004 LIP)

[*The History and Activities of Native Americans*](#) by Lisa Klobuchar Through recipes, crafts, history, activities, and games this book gives you a chance to experience what life was like for Native Americans. (JUV 973.0497 KLO)

[*North American Indian Games*](#) by Madelyn Klein Anderson Describes the origin, nature, and significance of games commonly played in Native American culture (JUV 394.3 AND)

[*Powwow*](#) by June Behrens Describes a traditional powwow in American Indian culture. (JUV 970.3 BEH)

[*Native American Women*](#) by Suzanne Clores Describes the traditional roles of women in Native American tribes. (JUV 970.004 CLO)

Fiction: Grades K-5

[*Trouble at Fort La Pointe*](#) by Kathleen Ernst In the early 1700s, twelve-year-old Suzette, an Ojibwa-French girl, hopes that her father will win the fur-trapping contest so that he can quit being a voyageur and stay with his family year-round, but when he is accused of stealing, Suzette must use her knowledge of both French and Ojibwa ways to find the real thief. (JUV FIC AMER)

[*Kaya's Hero: A Story of Giving*](#) by Janet Beeler Shaw In 1764, Kaya greatly admires a courageous and kind young woman in her Nez Perce village and wants to be worthy of her respect. Includes historical notes on the winter activities of the Nez Perce Indians, including ceremonies and crafts. (JUV FIC AMER)

[*The Sign of the Beaver*](#) by Elizabeth George Speare Left alone to guard the family's wilderness home in eighteenth-century Maine, a boy is hard-pressed to survive until local Indians teach him their skills. (J Fic SPE, YA SPE)

[**Morning Girl**](#) by Michael Dorris Morning Girl, who loves the day, and her younger brother Star Boy, who loves the night, take turns describing their life on an island in pre-Columbian America; in Morning Girl's last narrative, she witnesses the arrival of the first Europeans to her world. (J Fic Dor)

[**Island of the Blue Dolphins**](#) by Scott O'Dell Left alone on a beautiful but isolated island off the coast of California, a young Indian girl spends eighteen years, not only merely surviving through her enormous courage and self-reliance, but also finding a measure of happiness in her solitary life. (J Fic ODE)

[**Standing in the Light: the captive diary of Catherine Carey Logan**](#) by Mary Pope Osborne A Quaker girl's diary reflects her experiences growing up in the Delaware River Valley of Pennsylvania and her capture by Lenape Indians in 1763. (J Fic DEAR)

NonFiction: Grades 6-12

[**Concise Encyclopedia of the American Indian**](#) by Bruce Grant Presents descriptive alphabetical entries on Indian tribes, territories, customs, tools, activities, and famous leaders. (970.004 GRA)

[**North America in Colonial Times: An Encyclopedia for Students**](#) by Jacob Ernest Cooke and Milton M. Klein An encyclopedia of the history of the American colonies and Canada, including Native Americans, Spanish missions, English and Dutch exploration, the slave trade, and the French and Indian War. (ADU REF 970 NOR)

[**Warriors: Warfare and the Native American Indian**](#) by Norman Bancroft-Hunt Describes the history of wars, social life, and customs within Native American society. (970.004 BAN)

[**Do All Indians Live in Tipis? Questions and Answers from the National Museum of the American Indian**](#) Provides questions and answers to many American Indian-related topics, including stereotypes, social life, and customs. (970 WES)

[**Everyday Life among the American Indians**](#) by Candy Moulton Describes the social life and customs identified with American Indians. (973.0497 MOU)

[**American Indian Portraits**](#) Profiles more than 150 native American leaders, such as Black Elk, Crazy Horse, Hiawatha, Little Turtle, Osceola, Quanah Parker, Prophet, Sitting Bull, and also modern leaders such as Jay Silverheels, Graham Greene, Louise Erdrich, and Wilma Mankiller. (ADU REF 920 AME)

[**Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee: an Indian History of the American West**](#) by Dee Brown Documents and personal narratives record the experiences of Native Americans during the nineteenth century. (978 BRO)

Fiction: Grades 6-12

[*The Indian in the Cupboard*](#) by Lynne Reid Banks A nine-year-old boy received a plastic Indian, a cupboard, and a little key for his birthday and finds himself involved in adventure when the Indian comes to life in the cupboard and befriends him. (JUV FIC BAN)

[*The Journal of Jesse Smoke: a Cherokee Boy*](#) by Joseph Bruchac Jesse Smoke, a sixteen-year-old Cherokee, begins a journal in 1837 to record stories of his people and their difficulties as they face removal along the Trail of Tears. Includes a historical note giving details of the removal. (JUV FIC DEAR)

[*Code Talker: A Novel about the Navajo Marines of World War II*](#) by Joseph Bruchac After being taught in a boarding school run by whites that Navajo is a useless language, Ned Begay and other Navajo men are recruited by the Marines to become Code Talkers, sending messages during World War II in their native tongue. (JUV FIC BRU)

[*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*](#) by Sherman Alexie Budding cartoonist Junior leaves his troubled school on the Spokane Indian Reservation to attend an all-white farm town school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. (YA ALE)

[*Sorceress*](#) by Celia Rees Eighteen-year-old Agnes, a Mohawk Indian who is descended from a line of shamanic healers, uses her own newly-discovered powers to uncover the story of her ancestor. (YA REE)

[*Streams to the River, River to the Sea*](#) by Scott O'Dell A young Indian woman, accompanied by her infant and cruel husband, experiences joy and heartbreak when she joins the Lewis and Clark Expedition seeking a way to the Pacific. (YA ODE)

[*The Second Bend in the River*](#) by Ann Rinaldi In 1798 Rebecca, a young settler in the Ohio territory, meets the Shawnee called Tecumseh and later develops a deep friendship with him. (YA RIN)

[*My Heart is On the Ground*](#) by Ann Rinaldi In the diary account of her life at a government-run Pennsylvania boarding school in 1880, a twelve-year-old Sioux Indian girl reveals a great need to find a way to help her people. (J FIC RIN)

[*The Winter People*](#) by Joseph Bruchac Fourteen-year-old Saxso, a member of the Abenaki tribe in Canada, embarks on a dangerous rescue mission when his mother and two younger sisters are taken hostage during an attack by the British on their unprotected village in 1759. (YA BRU)

[*Weedflower*](#) by Cynthia Kadohata After twelve-year-old Sumiko and her Japanese-American family are relocated from their flower farm in southern California to an internment camp on a

Mojave Indian reservation in Arizona, she helps her family and neighbors, becomes friends with a local Indian boy, and tries to hold on to her dream of owning a flower shop. (YA KAD)

Teacher Resources

All Ages

Create Your Own Native American Board Game

Make a Rainstick

Native American Interdisciplinary Educational Unit: A unit that discusses the differences between the Hollywood perception of American Indians vs. history.

Thanksgiving Lesson Plans and Activities

Code Talkers: Students learn about the Navajo code talkers and use a Navajo code talkers' dictionary to create and decode secret messages.

Native American Word Search

K-5 Activities

Native Americans Today Many people think that Native Americans are a vanished people—that they do not exist in the present day. Using this lesson plan, teachers can use photo essays and other texts to introduce students to Native children and their families, thereby countering the idea that Native people no longer exist.

Totem Poles Explain the place and meaning of totem poles in Native American history and culture.

Squanto's Science Lesson This hands-on science activity proves what a great help Squanto was to the early settlers.

6-12 Activities

Native American History: A study of Chief Joseph

Trails of Understanding, The Earliest Immigrants The traditional and modern theories about the origins of the first inhabitants of North America.

Websites

Databases

A database is a collection of related electronic records in a standardized format, searchable in a variety of ways, such as title, author, subject, and keyword. Common examples of databases are the library catalog and citation indexes. The library subscribes to a variety of websites and also provides access to a state run database known as Inspire. Through each database you can access journal and magazine articles from a variety of sources.

[Inspire](#)

Websites

When searching for information on the Internet, you need to find out where the information is coming from. Anyone can create a website so make sure that the information is referenced or is provided by an educated source. An educated source can be from a university/school, a teacher or usually a site that ends in .edu or .org. Some .com sites have good information just make sure that the person that created the website is qualified. If you are not sure, look for their contact information at the bottom of the website.

Native American Facts for Kids: Resources on American Indians for Children and Teachers <http://www.native-languages.org/kids.htm> This website has many resources for children; the resources give many facts about American Indians and links to additional sites and sources.

Cherokee Culture <http://www.powersource.com//cocinc/default.html> Look here for a number of resources on Cherokee culture, from language and recipes to music and literature. It offers a Cherokee pronunciation key and the Cherokee alphabet.

Social Studies for Kids: Native American Indians <http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/subjects/nativeamericans.htm> This excellent resource provides many links appropriate for students of all ages. The topics related to Native Americans are wide, so students will find charts, graphics, images, and text to aid in their understanding of American Indians.