



## Expansion Resources and Teaching Ideas: Powhatan Indians

Culture:	actions and beliefs characteristic of a particular group of people.
Dugout canoe:	a canoe made from a hollowed-out tree.
Fall Line:	the geographic space, marked by waterfalls and rapids, where rivers move from upland to low land.
Gourd:	the hard-shelled fruit whose dried shell is used for bowls and other utensils or instruments.
Palisades:	a fence made of stakes (wooden poles) set firmly in the ground for protection or defense.
Powhatan:	the chief of 31 tribes of Indians who was in power when the colonists began to settle in the Virginia area (c. 1547 – 1618).
Sinew:	made from the tendons of the deer's leg, used as string by the Powhatan Indians.
Costal Plain:	also known as the Tidewater region; an area of low flat land that lies east of the fall line.
Werowance:	Algonquian word meaning tribal leader or king.
Yihaken:	Powhatan longhouse.


Then and Now: Houses

### Materials:

Colored pencils, markers, paper

### Discussion and plan

Read or review *Life in a Longhouse Village* by Bobbie Kalman. Use the following questions to facilitate discussion about the similarities and differences between life in a longhouse village and life in Richmond today: What do you think a longhouse was made out of? What are houses today made out of? How many people could live in a longhouse? How many people do you have living in your own house? How many rooms are in a longhouse? How many rooms are in your own house? What was a room in the yihakan used for? What types of rooms are in houses today? Fold a sheet of paper and have students



draw a picture showing what they think the yihakan might look like. On the other half have students draw a picture of their own house. Label rooms or the materials the houses are made of to show the differences between them. Discuss what makes longhouses similar to the houses we live in today.

### **Bowl Game**

#### **Materials:**

6 plastic milk cap bottles, permanent markers,  
1 large, flat-bottomed bowl, 48 toothpicks or Popsicle sticks

#### **Plan**

Native American Indian tribes played a game tossing tiles in a wooden bowl and keeping score with counting sticks.

Draw a different design such as a star, square, flower, swirl shape, square, and triangle on 1 side of each cap using the permanent markers. Put all of the caps in the bowl. Have each player toss the caps in the air and catch them in the bowl as above. Then count each cap with a design up as 1 point; blank sides count for no points. The players take as many toothpicks or sticks as they win points. When all 48 sticks are gone, count them. The student with the most sticks wins!

### **Cook a Powhatan inspired community meal**

#### **Materials:**

Crock-pot  
Squash (cut up into bite sized pieces)  
Frozen or canned beans  
Frozen or canned corn Salt  
(optional)  
Spoons or bowls

The Legend of the Three sisters- <http://blogs.cornell.edu/garden/get-activities/signature-projects/the-three-sisters-exploring-an-iroquois-garden/a-legend/>

#### **Plan**

Read or tell students about the Legend of the Three sisters as recorded by Lois Thomas (link above). Explain that in the center of the Powhatan village, a large pot would simmer over a fire so that anyone who was hungry could stop by for a bite. Recreate this community food source in your classroom. Place squash, beans and corn in a crock pot and cook on low heat during the day. Once the meal is nice and cooked, let everyone (who wants to try) have a taste of your Powhatan inspired community meal!

To learn more about Virginia Native American's diet and seasonal eating, please visit- [http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Diet\\_in\\_Early\\_Virginia\\_Indian\\_Society#start\\_entry](http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Diet_in_Early_Virginia_Indian_Society#start_entry)



## Resources

### **Books**

Caduto, Michael, and Joseph Bruchac. *Keepers of the Earth: Native American Stories and Environmental Activities for Children*. Golden: Fulcrum, 1997.

Kalman, Bobbie. *Life in a Longhouse Village*. New York: Crabtree Publishing Company, 2001.

Kalman, Bobbie. *Life of the Powhatan*. New York: Crabtree Publishing Company, 2005.

Parin d'Aulaire, Ingri and Edgar. *Pocahontas*, California: Beautiful Feet Books, 1976.

Schaefer, Lola, *Pocahontas: First Biographies*. Mankato: Minnesota State University, 2002.

### **Web Resources**

Grow the three sisters in your class room (or in your schools garden)! A great site that teaches companion planting using the three sisters! <http://www.kidsgardening.org/node/12033>

Learn more about the Native American diet!

[http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Diet\\_in\\_Early\\_Virginia\\_Indian\\_Society#start\\_entry](http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/Diet_in_Early_Virginia_Indian_Society#start_entry)

Discover more about Powhatan and other American Indian tribes by visiting the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian website: <http://nmai.si.edu/home/>

Want to know more about State-Recognized Virginia Indian Tribes? Visit:

<http://home.nps.gov/jame/historyculture/virginia-indian-tribes.htm>

## **VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING SUPPORTED BY THIS PROGRAM**

**English:** Oral Lang. K-5; Reading Skills K.5. 1.5, 2.6, 3.7, 4.7, 5.7

**Visual Arts:** K.3, K.7, K.8, K.10, 1.3, 1.8, 2.4, 2.9, 2.11, 2.15, 2.18, 3.4, 3.11, 3.13, 4.14, 5.18

**Science:** K.4, K.9, K.10, 1.8, 3.2, 3.10, 4.2, 4.8

**Math:** K.10

