

Lesson 2: Southwest Native Americans

Getting Started

? Questions to Explore

- How were people in the past dependent on plants and animals in the environment?
- How do resources from the environment help meet people's needs?



Facts and Definitions

- Corn was the most important crop of the Native Americans in the Southwest.
- The Native Americans of Southwest lived in a desert environment.

• Skills

- Use geographic terminology to describe variations in the physical environment. (SS)
- Compare how people in different communities adapt to or modify the physical environment to meet their needs. (SS)
- Explain the need for leaders in communities and describe their roles and responsibilities. (SS)

✂ Materials

- | | |
|--|--|
| • <i>The Very First Americans</i> by Cara Ashrose | • 2/3 cup light molasses or maple syrup* (Activity 4 - Option 2) |
| • 1 cup yellow cornmeal* (Activity 4 - Option 2) | • 3/4 tsp salt* (Activity 4 - Option 2) |
| • 1/2 cup brown sugar* (Activity 4 - Option 2) | • 4 cups milk* (Activity 4 - Option 2) |
| • 1/2 cup finely chopped dried apples* (Activity 4 - Option 2) | • brown construction paper |
| • 1/2 tsp cinnamon* (Activity 4 - Option 2) | • bucket |
| • 1/3 cup butter* (Activity 4 - Option 2) | • cornhusks* (Activity 4 - Option 1) |
| • 1/4 cup grits soaked in 1/2 cup water* (Activity 4 - Option 2) | • glue or tape |
| • 1/4 tsp cloves* (Activity 4 - Option 2) | • large mixing bowl* (Activity 4 - Option 2) |
| • 1/4 tsp ginger* (Activity 4 - Option 2) | • rubber bands |
| • 1/8 tsp allspice* (Activity 4 - Option 2) | • scissors |
| • 1/8 tsp nutmeg* (Activity 4 - Option 2) | • scissors* (Activity 4 - Option 1) |
| • 2 eggs* (Activity 4 - Option 2) | • small shovel or trowel |
| • 2 wooden sticks (popsicle, chopsticks, etc.) | • string* (Activity 4 - Option 1) |

Introduction

Tell your child that for the next two days she will be exploring the life of the Native Americans of the Southwest. Reread the pages about the native people of the Southwest in *The Very First Americans*.

Activities

Activity 1: Homes of the Southwest Tribes

Go online and take a virtual field trip to discover the homes of the Southwest tribes. Here are some websites to explore.



Lowry Pueblo National Historic Landmark

www.beyondthepage.com/link/12332/



Mesa Verde National Park

www.beyondthepage.com/link/12333/

This site provides information to people that are traveling to Colorado. It contains some photos of Mesa Verde and the surrounding area.



The People of Mesa Verde

www.beyondthepage.com/link/12334/

The links on this page provide some insight into the life of the native Americans that lived at Mesa Verde.



Pictures of Mesa Verde

www.beyondthepage.com/link/12335/

Click the picture to view more images of the Mesa Verde area.

Let your child gather a bucket full of dirt from the yard. Encourage her to dig deeply to find dirt that has a lot of clay. Tell your child to take out the organic matter and any rocks from the soil. Ask your child to add water to the remaining soil, making a mud pie consistency. If your child needs to add extra clay to the mixture, this may help the consistency. Once the mixture's consistency is right, your child will be able to form small bricks. After she makes the bricks, let her leave them in the sun to dry for a day or two. Then, she will see firsthand how many of the earliest buildings were made by the Southwest tribes.

Activity 2: Tools for Food

Today, your child is going to make cactus fruit tongs. Explain to your child that the Hopi women gathered the fruit from the cactus plant. To avoid being stuck by the quills, they made tongs from stiff fibers of dead cactus.

Your child will also watch a video to learn about throwing sticks that hunters used to use. Throwing sticks carved from wood were used to hunt small game such as rabbits.

Give her the instructions for the tools found on the "Tools for Food" page, and let her follow the directions. When she has finished the tools, tell her to pretend she is a Native American who is hunting and gathering food for her family.



Throwing Stick

www.beyondthepage.com/link/12336/

Activity 3: Growing Corn

Ask your child to think about ways that corn can be eaten (corn on the cob, canned, popcorn, popcorn balls, and cornbread). Explain to your child that corn was the most important crop for Native American tribes. They had many, many uses for corn. On the page "Growing Corn," your child will find the steps for growing corn. Encourage her to put the steps in order.

Answer Key:

- The tribe shaped the earth into a grid, like a waffle. They created squares in the ground to plant the corn.
- The Zuni used sticks to poke holes in the ground in each square. Then they placed a corn kernel in each hole.
- Each square was filled with water.
- Once the seeds had sprouted, small plants began to appear above the ground.
- The Zuni harvested the corn as soon as it was ripe and ready to eat.

Activity 4: Uses of Corn

For this activity, your child can either make a cornhusk doll (Option 1) or cook a Native American corn dish (Option 2).

Option 1: Cornhusk Doll

Give your child the directions for making a cornhusk doll. They are found on the page, "Cornhusk Doll (Option 1)".

Option 2: Native American Corn Dish

Give your child the recipe on the page, "Native American Corn Dish (Option 2)", and help her cook the corn dish. Explain that this recipe was one that the Native Americans shared with the settlers who moved out west.

Wrapping Up

Ask your child what she learned about the Native Americans of the Southwest and see if she can describe ways the people were dependent on resources in their environment. Ask her if she thinks she would have enjoyed being a Native Americans of the Southwest. Why or why not?

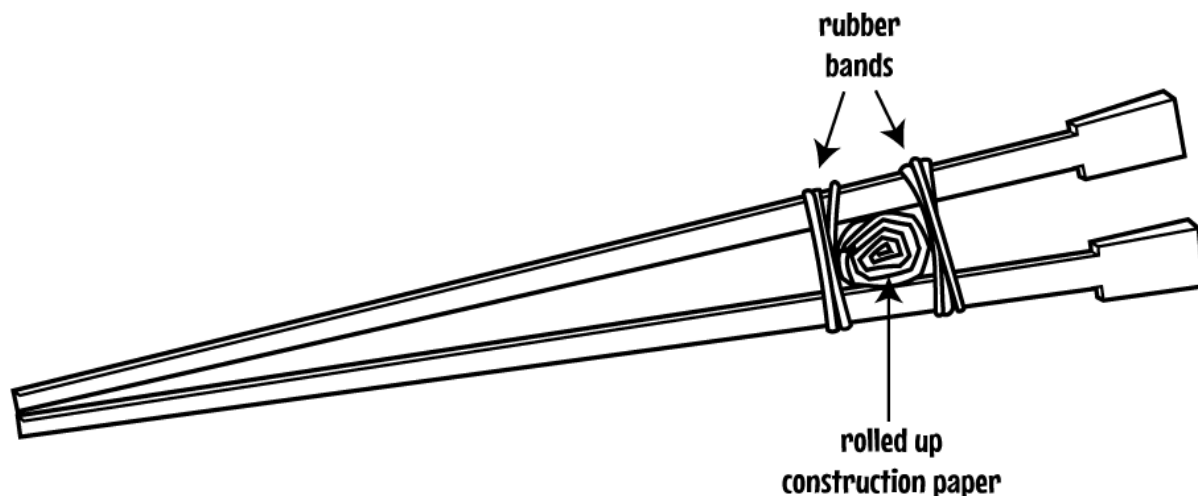
Tools for Food

Materials:

- 2 wooden sticks (popsicle sticks, dowel rods, chopsticks, etc.)
- rubber bands
- brown construction paper
- scissors
- glue or tape

Instructions:

1. Cut out a 1 inch strip along the long edge of your construction paper.
2. Roll the strip of construction paper up so that you have a tight cylinder.
3. Glue/tape the end of the construction paper down so that the cylinder does not unroll.
4. Place the cylinder between your two sticks, about an inch from the the top.
5. Twist your rubber bands around both sticks, and make sure they go both above and below the paper cylinder.



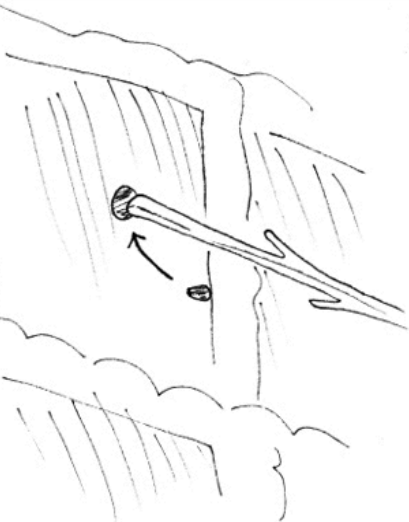
Growing Corn

Directions: Cut the steps apart for growing corn. Put the steps in the correct order for the process and number them in the circles provided.

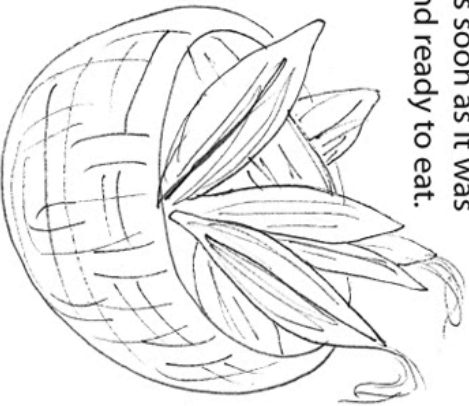
Each square was filled with water.



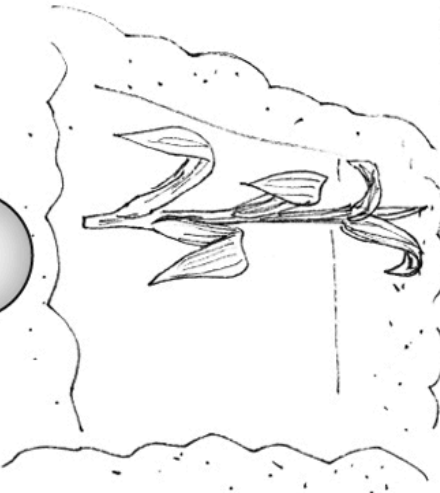
The Zuni used sticks to poke holes in the ground in each square. Then they placed a corn kernel in each hole.



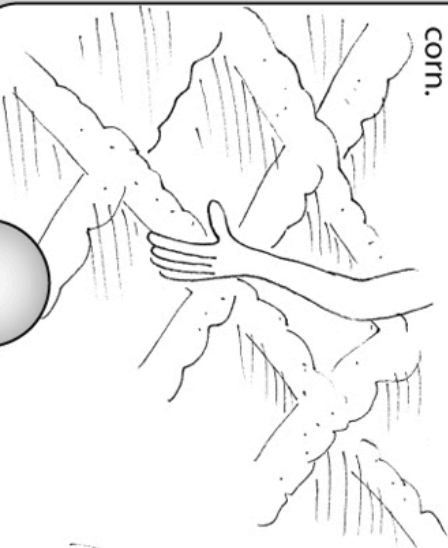
The Zuni harvested the corn as soon as it was ripe and ready to eat.



Once the seeds had sprouted, small plants began to appear above the ground.

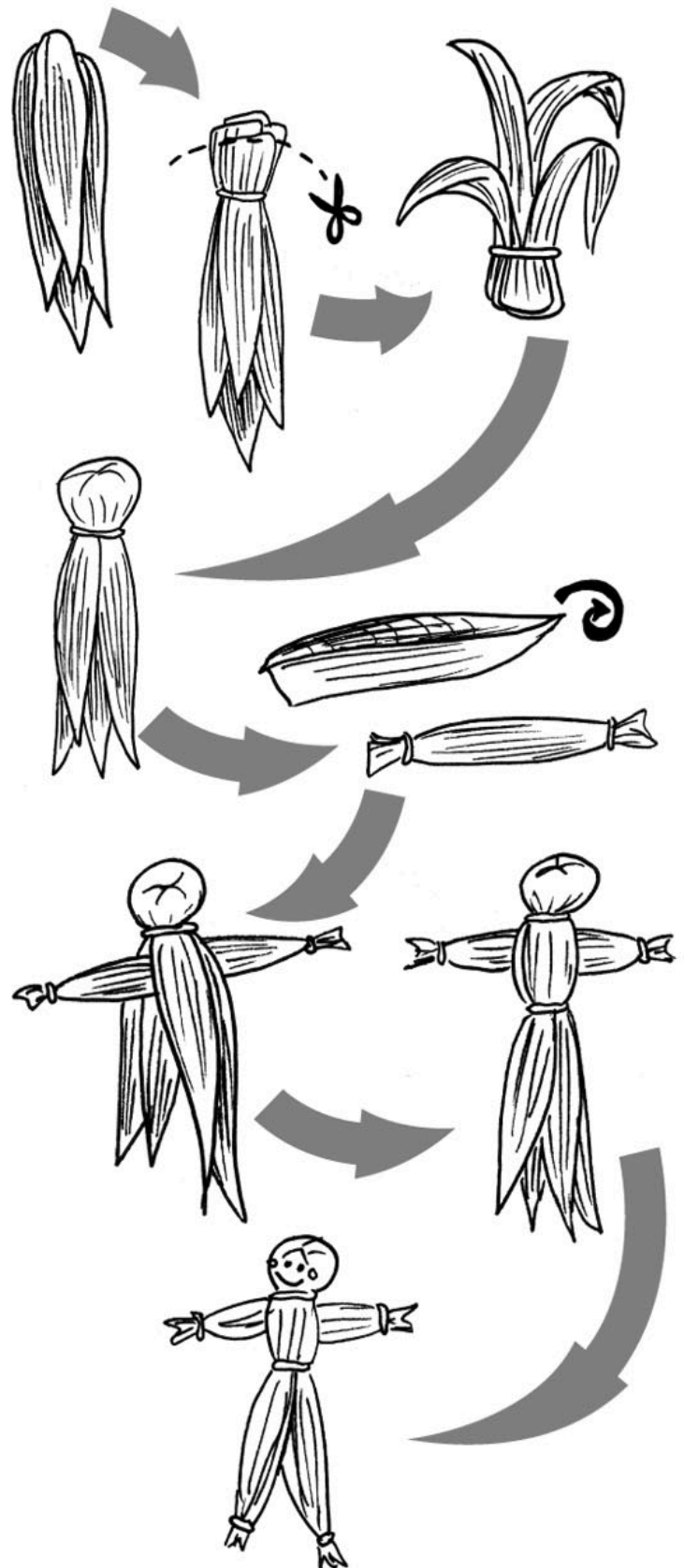


The tribe shaped the earth into a grid, like a waffle. They created squares in the ground to plant the corn.



Cornhusk Doll

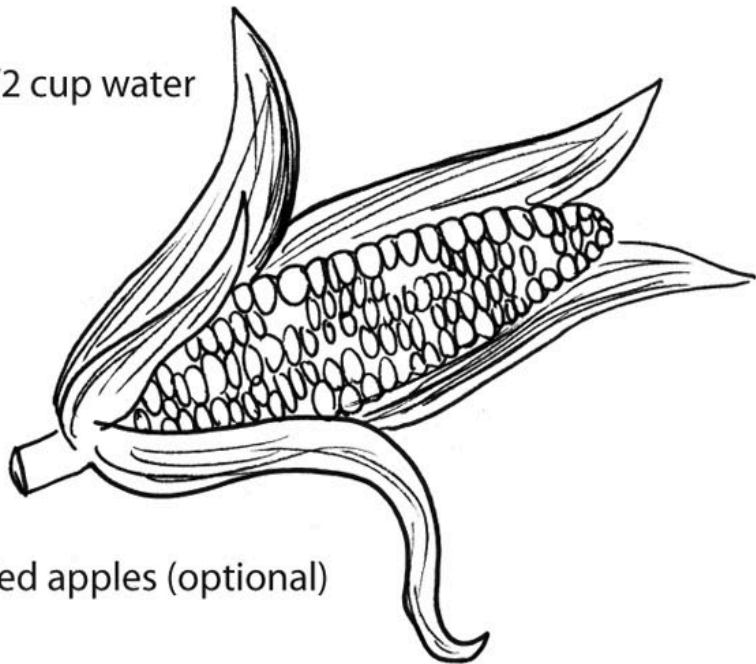
1. Soak the cornhusks in a bucket of water to make them pliable.
2. Take four cornhusks from the water and arrange them to have the points facing downward.
3. Tie the ends together near the top with a small piece of string.
4. Trim the ends of the cornhusks into a rounded shape using scissors.
5. Turn the cornhusks upside down and pull the long ends out and down on top of the trimmed edges.
6. Tie again with string around the top to create the head of your doll.
7. Take one more husk and roll it tightly to create the doll's arms. Tie each end with a piece of string.
8. Place the arms inside the long cornhusks below where you think the doll's neck would be.
9. Tie with string to form the waist of your doll and hold the arms up.
10. If you want to, you can use more string to tie off the cornhusks to make your doll have two legs. You may also decorate your doll's face and body.



Native American Corn Dish

Ingredients:

4 cups milk
1 cup yellow cornmeal
1/4 cup grits soaked in 1/2 cup water
1/3 cup butter
1/2 cup brown sugar
2/3 cup light molasses
3/4 tsp salt
1/2 tsp cinnamon
1/4 tsp cloves
1/4 tsp ginger
1/8 tsp allspice
1/8 tsp nutmeg
1/2 cup fine-chopped dried apples (optional)
2 eggs

**Directions:**

- In a big pan, bring the milk to a boil.
- Add the cornmeal and grits gradually stirring rapidly to keep lumps from forming. Lower heat and beat vigorously until it starts to get thick (about 5 minutes). Remove from heat.
- Add butter, sugar, molasses (can use maple syrup) and spices, let cool somewhat.
- Stir in 2 beaten eggs.
- Pour into buttered baking dish, bake 50-60 minutes at 325°, until pudding is firm. Serve warm with cream, vanilla ice cream, or plain yogurt.