

Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma

(Oklahoma Social Studies Standards, OSDE)

Tribe: Peoria Tribe of Indians (pee-awr-ee-uh)

Tribal website(s): <http://www.peoriatrIBE.com>

1. Migration/movement/forced removal

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.3 “Integrate visual and textual evidence to explain the reasons for and trace the migrations of Native American peoples including the Five Tribes into present-day Oklahoma, the Indian Removal Act of 1830, and tribal resistance to the forced relocations.”

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.7 “Compare and contrast multiple points of view to evaluate the impact of the Dawes Act which resulted in the loss of tribal communal lands and the redistribution of lands by various means including land runs as typified by the Unassigned Lands and the Cherokee Outlet, lotteries, and tribal allotments.”

Original Homeland - The Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma is a confederation of Kaskaskia, Peoria, Piankeshaw and Wea Indians united into a single tribe in 1854. The tribes which constitute The Confederated Peorias, as they then were called, originated in the lands bordering the Great Lakes and drained by the mighty Mississippi. They are Illinois or Illini Indians, descendants of those who created the great mound civilizations in the central United States two thousand to three thousand years ago.

The increased pressure from white settlers in the 1840’s and 1850’s in Kansas brought cooperation among the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw and Wea Tribes to protect these holdings. By the Treaty of May 30, 1854, 10 Stat. 1082, the United States recognized the cooperation and consented to their formal union as the Confederated Peoria. In addition to this recognition, the treaty also provided for the disposition of the lands of the constituent tribes set aside by the treaties of the 1830’s; ten sections were to be held in common by the new Confederation, each tribal member received an allotment of 160 acres; the remaining or “surplus” land was to be sold to settlers and the proceeds to be used by the tribes.

Location In Oklahoma - Forced from their ancestral lands in Illinois, Indiana, northern Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Missouri, the Peoria’s were relocated first in Missouri, then in Kansas and, finally, in northeastern Oklahoma. The Peoria and Miami lands in Oklahoma were allotted in 1893, and the excess given to Ottawa County in 1907. By the 1930s both the Oklahoma and Indiana Miami were completely landless, although the Oklahoma tribe has since acquired 160 acres which are held in trust. The United Peoria



3. Population Past/Present

Total tribal enrollment - The Peoria Tribe of Oklahoma is headquartered in Miami, Oklahoma, and their tribal jurisdictional area is in Ottawa County. Of the 3,077 enrolled tribal members, only 777 live within the state of Oklahoma.

Membership criteria - Any quantum is accepted. Members may only claim one tribal membership.

4. Government; Chiefs vs Chairman; Elected or Paternal

US Government C3 Standard 3.4 *“Summarize and explain the relationships and the responsibilities between national and state governments including tribal and local governments.*

Oklahoma History C3 Standard *“The student will analyze the formation and development of constitutional government in Oklahoma. 1) Compare and contrast the development of governments among the Native American tribes, the movement for the state of Sequoyah. 2) Describe and summarize attempts to create a state constitution joining Indian and Oklahoma Territories including the impact of the Progressive and Labor Movements resulting in statehood on November 16, 1907.”*

Tribal Government leadership - John P. Froman, chief; Jason Dollarhide, 2nd chief; Carolyn Ritchie, 1st councilman; Craig Harper, 2nd councilman; Alan Goforth, 3rd Councilman.

5. Language Group

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 4.1 *“Compare and contrast the successes and failures of the United States policy of assimilation of the Native Americans in Oklahoma including the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 and the effects of the Indian Boarding Schools (1880s-1940s) upon Native Americans’ identity, culture, traditions, and tribal government and sovereignty.”*

Illinois Indian people speak English today. In the past, the Illini spoke their native Miami-Illinois language. It has this long name because two tribes, the Miami and Illini tribes, spoke the same language with different accents--just like Americans and Canadians both speak English. The Illinois Indian language is not spoken anymore. However, the Miami and Peoria tribes are working together to teach their children the language again. The name "Peoria" derives from their autonym or name for themselves in the Illinois language, peewaareewa (modern pronunciation peewaalia). Originally it meant, "Comes carrying a pack on his back." No speakers of the Peoria language survive.

6. Cultural Identifiers - ie. Mound Builders; Plains

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The Illini were original inhabitants of modern-day Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and Iowa. The Illini tribe was nearly wiped out by war in the 1700's, and the survivors had to move to Kansas and Oklahoma. The Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma is made up of original Illinois Indians. Five principal tribes survived into the 1700s: the Cahokia, Kaskaskia, Michigamea, Peoria, and Tamaroa. Only the Kaskaskia and Peoria continued to exist in the early 1800s.

Infectious disease to which they had no natural immunity, and intertribal wars drastically reduced the tribe's numbers. Members of the Kaskaskia, Peoria, Piankeshaw, and Wea tribes formed a confederacy under the Peoria name. After the Civil War, most of the confederated tribe signed the 1867 Omnibus Treaty. By this means, the US government purchased land from the Quapaw tribe and relocated the majority of the Peoria tribe to Indian Territory, now part of Oklahoma.

Oklahoma Historical Society source to consider for Boarding Schools:
<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/a/am012.html>

7. Fine arts

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- Music

Music was part of the social, political, and religious lives of the Illinois people. It played an important role in the calumet dance, a ceremony for which the Illinois were justly famous. At the beginning of the dance, male and female singers would stand in a place of honor and sing songs to accompany a series of dancers as each took his turn dancing with the calumet pipe. During the second part of the dance, accompanied by the sound of a drum, the singers continued to sing songs as the head dancer and a warrior performed a mock battle between the calumet and weapons of war.

Jacques Marquette wrote out the words and musical notation of a song that was part of a calumet dance performed in his honor by the Peoria tribe in 1673. The song has a beautiful melody, a wide dynamic range, and what appears to be a slow, chant-like rhythm.

The Illinois played at least three musical instruments: drum, rattle, and flute. The drum was a large ceramic pot, half filled with water, in which the opening was covered with a drum-head made of buckskin. Drums were played during calumet dances and also to signal the departure of war parties marching off to battle. The rattle, called a *chichicoya*, was made of a hollow gourd that contained glass beads and was attached to a wooden handle. It was played by shamans during healing rituals. The flute was an end-blown instrument, evidently made of wood, which resembled a European recorder or flageolet.

- Art

The Illini tribe was known for their Native American quillwork, beadwork, and embroidery. Peoria Indians in Oklahoma still make beautiful beadwork today.



The Illinois engaged in many different kinds of decorative arts. Among these were hide painting, weaving, fabric dyeing, quillworking, and wood carving. Unfortunately, many of the artistic traditions of the Illinois were lost during the historic era. Today, only a handful of art objects are preserved in museum collections.

Wood-carving was an important means of artistic expression among the Illinois, although only a few wooden objects have survived in museum collections. Two highly respected pieces are wooden effigy bowls carved to look like beavers. The bowls stand on four legs, have flat tails, and, in one case, have eyes inset with brass tacks.



8. Significant events (i.e. Massacres, Battles, Supreme Court cases...)

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.4C “Summarize the impact of the Civil War and Reconstruction Treaties on Native American peoples, territories, and tribal sovereignty including the a) Required enrollment of the Freedmen, b) Second Indian Removal and the role of the Buffalo Soldiers, c) Significance of the Massacre at the Washita, d) Reasons for the reservation system, and e) Establishment of the western military posts of Fort Sill, Fort Supply, and Fort Reno.”

"Chief Illiniwek" mascot of the "Fighting Illini" creates controversy today for the Peoria Tribe. There are three main reasons. First, the Illini mascot wears Sioux clothes and accessories, which are different from actual Illini traditions. So the mascot is misrepresenting Native American culture. Second, many Native Americans think Chief Illiniwek is disrespectful of their religion because he mimics certain Indian religious gestures. Just like anyone else, Native Americans are sensitive about their religious beliefs. And third, many people think it is inappropriate to use a racial costume at all. Some Native Americans feel hurt and embarrassed when a white person dresses up as an Indian chief, just as some African-Americans feel hurt and embarrassed when a white person dresses up in blackface.

Oklahoma Historical Society: <http://www.okhistory.org/research/indianrecs>

9. Current Information on tribe

The Peoria issue their own tribal vehicle tags and operate their own housing authority. The tribe owns a casino and the Peoria Ridge Golf Course. The estimated annual economic impact of the tribe is \$60 million. Tribal businesses, Buffalo Run Casino and Hotel, Joe's Outback, the Trailer Park Bar, the Coleman House Restaurant are all located in Miami, Oklahoma.

“EEIŠI IYYAAYANKWI,” which means “where we are going,” is a quarterly newspaper published by the Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma.

10. Other information (ie. Elder testimonials; Guest speakers; Literature; Famous Tribal members...)

Literature

Rabbit and Possum. This tale recounts a struggle between Rabbit and Possum. It explains the origin of daylight and the shape of a rabbit's upper lip.

The Snake Husband. This is the story of a woman who falls in love with a handsome man who whistled at her in the woods. She marries him but later discovers that appearances can be deceiving.

The Painted Turtle. In this story, a turtle falls in love with a beautiful girl and strives to win her affection. The tale explains the origin of a women's name.

How Wisakatchekwa Got Into Some Trouble. Wisakatchekwa (wis-ah-KATCH-eh-kwah) was a cult hero in the folklore of several Algonquian-speaking tribes, including the Chippewa, Cree, Ottawa, Miami, and Peoria. Different tribes had different names for him. He was commonly identified as "The Great Hare," a mythological creature who was responsible for the origin of land and the creation of people. Wisakatchekwa was also an entertaining character who got into all kinds of trouble. Good sources for kids are *Illinois Native Peoples* and *The Illinois Confederacy*. Older readers may find useful information in the text *Indian Villages of the Illinois Country*.

Suggested book resources

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Illinois State Museum Exhibit Tour

http://www.museum.state.il.us/exhibit_tour/take_tour.html

Famous tribal members

Ruthe Blalock Jones (b. 1939), Delaware-Shawnee-Peoria artist and educator

Moscelyne Larkin (b. 1925), Peoria-Shawnee ballerina

Sources:

Clark, Blue. *Indian Tribes of Oklahoma*. University of Oklahoma Press: Norman. 2009

Museum Link Illinois:

http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/nat_amer/post/htmls/be_folk.html

Oklahoma Historical Society

Oklahoma Indian Country Guide, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department *One State Many Nations*

Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma: <http://www.peoriatribes.com>

Redish, Laura and Lewis, Orrin. "Illini Indian Fact Sheet" Native Languages of the Americas. 2013. Web. 18 Nov. 2013.

The Library of Congress

Oklahoma Historical Society source to consider for Indian Removal information:

<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/i/in015.html>

The Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Indian.html>

Oklahoma Indian Country Guide, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department

[NIE 2011 OK Indian Country Guide\[\[1\].pdf](#)