Rivers and Communities

Read how Native communities shaped the land that became Indiana.

IS.1.1 "Identify two or more Native American groups that existed and describe their contributions to what is now the state of Indiana."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the names of at least two Native groups. For each group you circle, underline two details that show its contributions to what is now Indiana.

Life Along Indiana's Rivers

1 At the meeting of three rivers near present-day Fort Wayne, a Miami town called Kekionga became a busy center. Miami families lived in the region long before Indiana became a state. They raised corn, beans, and squash on nearby land, while the rivers supplied fish and routes for travel. At Kekionga, Miami people traded with other Native nations and European newcomers. They also held councils where leaders discussed relationships and decisions affecting the region. Farming, trade, and diplomacy helped make this river junction an important place in the history of what is now Indiana.

2 Farther north, Potawatomi communities lived near lakes and rivers, including the St. Joseph River. Families grew crops, gathered plants, and fished local waters. Their knowledge of these places supported food supplies and travel. Potawatomi traders exchanged goods with other Native peoples and with European newcomers, linking northern settlements to wider trade networks. These activities shaped life in the northern part of what is now Indiana, not just during the years before statehood. Potawatomi people still live in the region, and tribal communities continue to teach their languages and histories.

3 Another community, the Lenape, also called the Delaware, established villages along the White River in the late 1700s. Many Lenape families had moved west after losing land farther east. In their Indiana villages, they planted crops and exchanged goods with neighboring peoples and traders. Their settlements made the White River a place of farming and exchange. In the early 1800s, United States treaties pressured the Lenape to leave Indiana, and many moved farther west. That removal did not erase their contributions or their people. Lenape communities, like Miami and Potawatomi communities, continue to preserve and share their histories today.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which Native group lived at Kekionga? Describe two contributions it made there.

2. Which Native group lived near the St. Joseph River? Describe two ways its food practices supported communities there.

3. Which Native group established villages along the White River? Describe one contribution it made there.

4. How did the Miami and Potawatomi each contribute to trade in different parts of what is now Indiana?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 65 to 85 word label for a museum exhibit called "Communities Along the Rivers." Name at least two Native groups, explain one contribution from each, connect their contributions to a shared theme, and explain why their story is not only about the past.

Rivers and Communities

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle the names of at least two Native groups. For each group you circle, underline two details that show its contributions to what is now Indiana. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which Native group lived at Kekionga? Describe two contributions it made there.	**The Miami farmed nearby land and made Kekionga a center for trade and councils.**
2	Which Native group lived near the St. Joseph River? Describe two ways its food practices supported communities there.	**The Potawatomi grew crops, gathered plants, and fished. Accept any two.**
3	Which Native group established villages along the White River? Describe one contribution it made there.	**The Lenape, also called the Delaware, established farming villages and exchanged goods along the White River.**
4	How did the Miami and Potawatomi each contribute to trade in different parts of what is now Indiana?	**Miami people traded at Kekionga near present-day Fort Wayne. Potawatomi traders connected northern settlements to wider trade networks.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Rivers connected communities across the land that became Indiana. Near Fort Wayne, Miami farmers grew crops, and Miami leaders made Kekionga a place for trade and councils. Along the White River, Lenape families built villages where they farmed and exchanged goods. Both groups used river locations to support their communities, though they lived in different parts of the region. Their descendants are not only part of the past: Native communities still preserve and share these histories today.

Accept other contributions stated in the passage when they match the named group. The exhibit label should connect at least two groups through a shared theme and acknowledge that Native communities continue today.