# Keeping Culture Strong

How Tribal governments support language and community life

**OKH.C.8.3.F** "Explain the ongoing role of Tribal governments in preserving Native cultures, languages, and community institutions."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline four actions the Cherokee Nation takes to support its language, culture, or community institutions. Number each action, then circle the words that show whom it helps or what it keeps available.

### Preservation in the Present

1. At a Cherokee Nation immersion classroom in Oklahoma, children practice reading, speaking, and writing Cherokee during the school day. The Cherokee Nation, a sovereign Tribal government, operates an immersion school as part of its work to strengthen the language. A language survives when people can use it with others, not only when its words appear in a book. By supporting teachers and classroom materials, the government helps young speakers gain daily practice. Families and fluent speakers also share knowledge that a school cannot create on its own. Government support makes room for that knowledge to reach another generation.

2. Not every learner can attend an immersion school. Cherokee Nation language programs also offer classes and learning materials that people can use beyond that classroom. Such programs give adults and children more ways to practice, including ways to learn from fluent speakers. When a Tribal government pays for staff and materials, these opportunities can continue across years instead of depending on one short project. Speakers, families, and teachers still decide how to use the language in their lives. The government's role is to support their efforts and create more places where learning can happen.

3. Preservation is not limited to language lessons. Cherokee Nation museums share Cherokee history and culture, while Cherokee Nation health facilities provide care as lasting community institutions. Tribal leaders decide how to direct public resources to services and cultural work. Keeping a museum open gives people access to accounts of Cherokee life shared through Cherokee institutions. Maintaining health services helps sustain the community whose members carry traditions forward. Neither a museum nor a clinic can define culture for every Cherokee person. Together, these government-supported institutions show that preservation includes both sharing cultural knowledge and meeting community needs today.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does the Cherokee Nation's immersion school help preserve the Cherokee language?

2. Why does the government offer language classes and materials beyond the immersion school?

3. How does keeping a Cherokee Nation museum open support cultural preservation?

4. Why does the passage include health facilities in its explanation of preservation?

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a Tribal community wants to preserve stories shared by elders while keeping a local gathering place active. Propose a new project the Tribal government could support. In 4 to 5 sentences, explain two specific government actions and how community members would guide the work.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · OKH.C.8.3.F

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline four actions the Cherokee Nation takes to support its language, culture, or community institutions. Number each action, then circle the words that show whom it helps or what it keeps available. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | How does the Cherokee Nation's immersion school help preserve the Cherokee language? | **Government support for teachers and materials gives children daily practice reading, speaking, and writing Cherokee.** |
| 2 | Why does the government offer language classes and materials beyond the immersion school? | **They give adults and children who cannot attend the school more ways to learn and practice Cherokee.** |
| 3 | How does keeping a Cherokee Nation museum open support cultural preservation? | **It gives people access to Cherokee history and culture shared through a Cherokee institution.** |
| 4 | Why does the passage include health facilities in its explanation of preservation? | **They are lasting Tribal community institutions that provide care and help sustain the people who carry traditions forward.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Tribal government could establish a story-recording program at the community center. It could pay for recording equipment and staff training so stories can be saved and heard there. It could also fund regular listening events that bring neighbors together at the center. Elders would choose which stories to share and set rules for access, so the program follows community wishes.

Accept other passage-supported explanations that connect a government action to preserving language, sharing culture, or sustaining a community institution. For Part 3, look for two distinct government actions and a clear role for community members in guiding the project.