



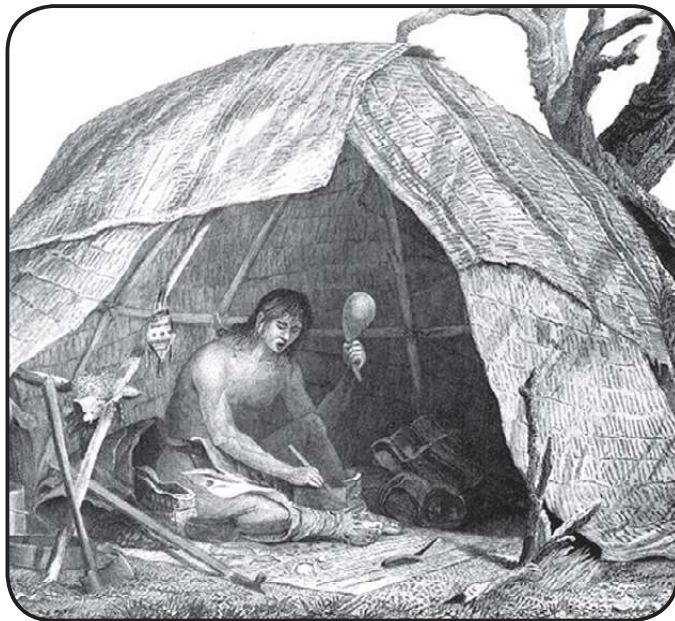
# The Algonquians

## Territory

The Algonquian People travelled and lived throughout northeastern Canada in the areas now known as Québec and Ontario. They sought out forests with birch trees. Birch trees were very important because their bark was better than any other kind of tree for building canoes. Birch bark was also used for making containers and for covering wigwams.

## Food & Shelter

The Algonquian tribes primarily relied on hunting but some practised simple farming. They cleared small pieces of land and grew corn, beans, and squash. They ate wild plants, berries, and wild rice. Fish was a big part of their diet. They also ate deer, moose and the meat of the other animals they hunted.



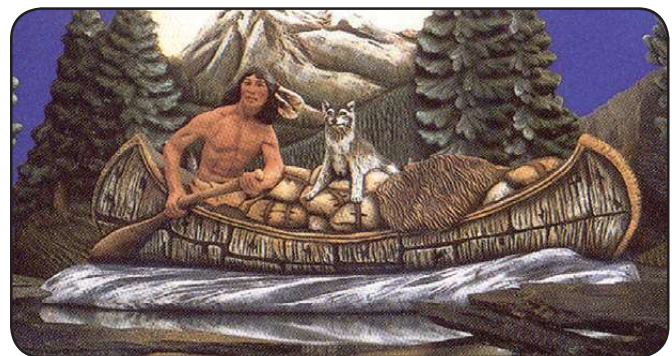
Some Algonquians lived in longhouses for part of the year. When they went on hunting and fishing trips, they built wigwams to temporarily live in. Wigwams were made in the shape of a rounded dome. They were made of bent wooden poles covered with animal skins or brush, grass, mats, and bark. In the centre of the structure was

a fire pit. Above it was a hole to allow the smoke to escape. The floor was covered in boughs. Furs were placed on the boughs for sleeping.

Each wigwam housed a single family, although some tribes lived together in larger dwellings.

## Role of Men

Algonquian men were skilled hunters and fishermen. They fished, hunted, and skinned the game. They made canoes for travelling and fishing on the water. They made tools and wooden frames for the wigwams. Trading skins and furs to Europeans was an important part of their livelihood.

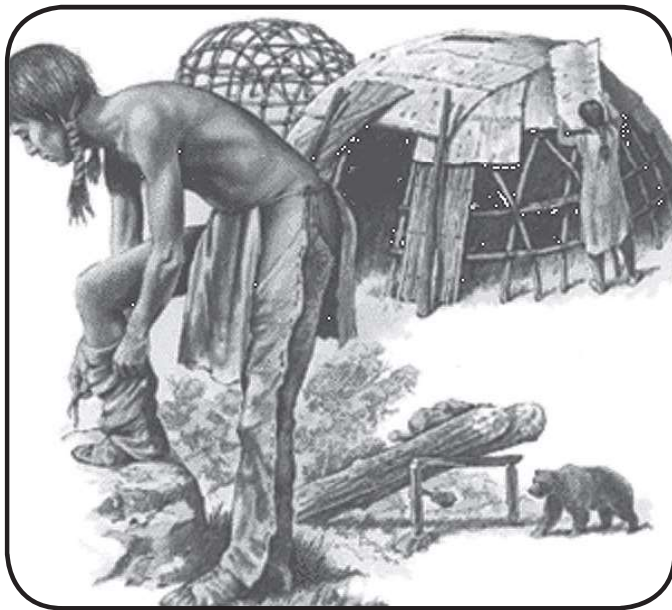




# The Algonquians

## Role of Women

Algonquian women planted and tended the crops on their farms. They gathered wild plants and berries. They prepared the animal skins. The women made all the clothes and the wigwam covers and wove baskets out of bark, reeds, and grasses. They also took care of the children.



## Clothing

Most of the women wore long tunics over leggings. The men wore short tunics over breechcloths and leggings. Everyone wore moccasins and fur robes in the winter. All of the clothes were made from animal skins. Some clothing was decorated with dyed porcupine quills, moose hair, seashells, feathers, and clamshells.

## Tribal Culture

The Algonquians lived in villages for part of the year. Each village had a Chief. The Chief was not elected, but inherited his title from his father. The Chief was more of a spokesperson than someone who dictated the rules. The decision-making process was very democratic. All the villagers, men and women, were allowed to express their opinions, and the final decision on any issue was

based on a **consensus**. Most villages had war chiefs to lead them into battle if necessary.

## WORD POWER

**Consensus** – a general agreement about something; an idea or opinion shared by the whole group

## Spiritual Beliefs

The Algonquian People believed in supernatural powers and beings. They believed all animals had spirits and that they should be treated with respect. If an animal was offended it would not allow itself to be caught for food. The northern tribes of Algonquian People used vision quests as an important part of their religious ceremonies.



*Religious ceremony*

## Friends & Enemies

Originally, the Algonquian were friendly with the French. They happily traded their furs with them. But soon they found the French to be greedy and untrustworthy. So they changed their alignment to the British traders. In the early 1700s, ongoing conflicts with the Iroquois developed. The French and the Iroquois became their enemies.

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## The Algonquians

Answer the following questions with a complete sentence.

1. Who made most of the tribal decisions for the Algonquians?

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2. Where did the Algonquian People live?

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3. Name two ways the Algonquians used birch bark.

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4. Describe what a wigwam looked like.

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5. How did the Algonquians decorate their clothing?

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6. Who were the enemies of the Algonquians?

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## The Algonquians

Choose a word from the word box to fill in the blanks and complete each sentence.

Not all of the words will be used.

tunics	farming	supernatural	spirits	wigwam
powers	yams	dresses	fishing	rice

1. The Algonquian People believed in \_\_\_\_\_ powers and beings.
2. Most of the women wore long \_\_\_\_\_ over leggings.
3. Some of the Algonquian tribes practised simple \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The Algonquian People believed all animals had \_\_\_\_\_ and that they should be treated with respect.
5. The women made all the clothes and the \_\_\_\_\_ covers and wove baskets.
6. The Algonquians ate beans, squash, corn, wild plants, berries, and wild \_\_\_\_\_.







Name \_\_\_\_\_

## The Algonquians (continued)

3. Explain ways in which the Algonquians relied on nature (plants, trees, rivers, lakes, animals) for their survival. Try to describe at least six ways.

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4. a) Complete the following paragraph by filling in the blanks with the correct answer. Each village had its own \_\_\_\_\_. He \_\_\_\_\_ the title from his father instead of being \_\_\_\_\_. The Chief was a \_\_\_\_\_ and did not \_\_\_\_\_ the rules. Decision making was a \_\_\_\_\_ process and both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ had the right to express an opinion. The final decision was based on a \_\_\_\_\_.

- b) Think about our governing process. List ways in which we are the same as the Algonquians and ways in which we are different.

Same: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Different: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Outline the spiritual beliefs of the Algonquians. Include at least three points.

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6. Originally the Algonquian were friendly with the French. Explain what happened to that friendship and what was the final outcome.

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