

Name \_\_\_\_\_

***The Osage*** - by Becky Riehecky**GUIDED READING - QUESTIONS & VOCABULARY:**

Look for these words as you read. Determine their meaning from how they are used:



series

Oklahoma

constitution

native

allottee

tradition

native peoples

headrights

boarding school

sapling

inherit

sacred

Siouan

Reign of Terror

arbor

extinct

mural

I'n-Lon-Schka

reservation

lineage

missionaries

**PREREADING:****Using Book and Text Clues**

On the title page of this book (the first page with printing on it), above the title in a colored box it says, "Native Peoples."

Look at the outside of the book's back cover. These titles show that this book is a part of a \_\_\_\_\_ (a group of books on related topics). **series**

What does the word "**native**" mean in the term "**native peoples**"? (**varies**) **people who were here first; a group of people historically from the place they live i.e. American Indians, Native Americans**

Have you heard of any of the other tribes in this series - listed on the back page? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, write its name: \_\_\_\_\_ (varies)

**Skim through this book:**

How do you know what each section is about? **There is a title in a blue box at the top of each section**

What page would help you understand words you don't know? Page 23

**p. 4 Map & caption**

What four states did the Osage control in the past? **Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas, and Oklahoma**

What state is their reservation in today? **Oklahoma**

### **p. 5 Fast Facts**

(True or False) **Today** Osage live in modern houses, shop at grocery stores, wear modern clothes, and speak mainly English. **True**

**Answer the following questions about Osage in the early days:**

**Homes:** Did the Osage live in tepees? **No**

A small thin (bendable) tree is called a **sapling**.

Describe the traditional Osage home. **Dome-shaped, made from bent saplings covered with skins or canvas.**

**Food:** What are 7 foods they ate? **Buffalo, deer, bear, corn, beans, squash, pumpkins.**

Which of these foods do you eat? (varies)

**Clothing:** In very early days, what was their clothing made from? **Deerskin**

**Language:** The Osage language belongs to what language group? **Siouan**

The book says the Osage language had nearly gone **extinct**. What does this mean? **It almost died out because one was speaking it any more**

What are the Osage trying to do today to their traditional language? **Bring it back**

How do you think people could bring back a language? (varies) **Teach it to people again in classes, teach it to young children, start using it little by little in conversation and writing, encourage its regular use at home**

### **p. 6 Osage Tribal Name**

The word Wazhazhe means People of the **Water**.

### **p 7 Osage History**

The traditional Osage village had a road down the middle with two different groups on each side. Who were these two groups: **Sky People, Earth People**

Today the U.S. has a Secretary of State who works to keep peace, and a Secretary of Defense who makes sure we are prepared for war if necessary. Who were the two chiefs in the Osage tribe? **Peace chief and war chief**

What country were their traders from? **France**

The Osage began to be crowded by what two groups of people? **Indians from the east coast and white settlers moving in**

## p. 8 Osage Oil

The first paragraph tells about how the Osage's land was taken from them. They were forced onto a piece of land called a Reservation in the state of Oklahoma.

### DO YOU KNOW?

Where do we get oil from? **Drilling deep into the ground**

How did the oil get there? **As layers of plants and sediment are buried deeper over millions of years, pressure and temperature increase, converting them to oil or natural gas**

When oil was discovered on their reservation, who did the Osage decide should receive the money from it? **The whole Osage nation**

Each person on the list of owners in the nation at that time (1906) was called a(n) allottee. This means they were "allotted" a share of the ownership.

Their ownership shares in the oil were called headrights.

When family members die and pass their property (money or things) to their children, we say the child will inherit that property.

If a family owning one headright had two children, what fraction of the headright would each child inherit? **One-half**

How did some people treat the Osage in order to get their wealth from the oil? **Cheated them in business deals, married and then killed them!**

This bad time for the Osages is called the "Reign of Terror."

## P. 10 Photos

What do we call a large painting that is painted directly on a wall? mural

Osages have created many beautiful murals displaying their culture.

## P. 11 Osage Government

UPDATE: Some things have changed in Osage population and government since this book was written.

This book says the population of Osage people in all the U.S. is about 15,000.

**Today** the Osage population is around 20,000.

Also, the book says that Osages' headrights decide how much their vote counts. **This has changed**. Over years, many Osage - esp. younger people - no longer had headrights (or only small fractions), so they felt left out of their government. To include these people, the Osage changed their **constitution**. **Today all people with Osage lineage can vote, and everyone's vote counts equally.**

Your **lineage** means the line of people in your family tree who were your ancestors.

How do you think allowing more people to vote has affected the Osage Nation? **(varies) Many more people feel like they are real citizens of the Osage Nation. More people care about what is going on because they have a say in it. It is a stronger nation.**

A **constitution** is a set of basic ideas that decide how a government is set up.

Name some of the leadership positions in Osage government: **principal chief, assistant chief, 8-member council.** However, in the new constitution, the 8-member tribal council is now the 12-member “Osage Nation Congress.”

Do the Osage still have very large incomes from vast oil production? **No, the income is much smaller**

### **p. 13 Osage Family**

How important is family to the Osage? **Very important**

Does “family” even include their distant relatives? **Yes**

In what ways, and at what times, can it be helpful to have a large, supportive family in your life? List at least three situations: **(varies) you feel good to know someone is there to help you when you need it: i.e. give you advice, be there if you need someone to talk to, help care for you when you are sick, help you if you have a disaster to your home and need a place to stay, help you if you run out-of-money, help comfort you when someone you love dies, etc. Also, when times are good, they will help you celebrate - new babies, birthdays, weddings, graduations, etc.**

In times past, extended families (aunts, uncles, cousins) would live together in the same large lodge. This meant families were very close to one another. These two examples of Osage words for family members show this effect:

Why do the Osage have the same name for “mother” and “aunt”? **because in the past, a woman cared for her nieces and nephews like her own children**

How do the Osage think of “cousins”? **as their brothers and sisters**

When do Osage families have their reunions? **In June at ceremonial dances**

### **p. 15 Osage Education**

What is the word used in this section that means: a custom, idea or belief that is passed on to younger people by older relatives or tribal members? **tradition**

In the past, what were Osage boys taught to become? **Hunters and be warriors**

Who planted the crops? **The girls**

A **boarding school** is a school where children leave their families, living all the time (day and night) at their school.

Why did the U.S. government force Osage children to leave their homes and go live in boarding schools? So they would forget their traditions and live the way white people did

How young were the children who had to leave their families? As young as 7, up to age 14

The Osage students in boarding schools were forced to learn English and not allowed to speak Osage. What effect would this have on the Osage language? It made the Osage language seem bad, you people would forget how to speak it

From what you know about Osage's feeling of importance of family and learning by watching family members do things, what effect did the boarding schools have? (varies) very hard on the children and parents, hurt their families, children could not learn Osage traditions or language from their parents and grandparents

How do Osage treat their older people? With respect

How do older members serve the tribe? Giving wisdom and advice to younger people

#### **p. 16 Sharing Traditions**

What tribes did the Osage share traditions with? Kaw and Ponca

What did those tribes give to the Osage Nation? their sacred ceremonial drum

From this pg, what do you think the word **sacred** means? (varies) special, holy, spiritual

#### **p. 17 I'n-Lon-Schka**

What is the name for the main Osage ceremonial dances centered on the sacred drum? I'n-Lon-Schka

How many days does the **I'n-Lon-Schka** dance last? Four

It is held in an **Arbor**. Describe this kind of building: metal roof but open on all sides

What is in the center of the arbor and the dances? The drum

Who sits around it in a circle? Male drummers and female singers

Which direction do the dancers go? Counter-clockwise

Dancers stay in step to the beat of the drum.

How do Osage feel when they are dancing? Closer to God

At what times might people of non-Indian cultures feel this way? (varies) at church, when praying, out in nature, etc.

Why do you think the Osage don't allow people to take pictures of the dance? (varies) it is special and sacred, it is private, it belongs just to the Osage

**p. 18-19 Ceremonial Dress**

Tell two of the things the men wear in the l'n-Lon-schka dance. Breechcloth and leggings tied to a belt, colorful shirts or vests, otter pelt, neck scarf, bells below knee, ribbons, silver medallions, beads, a headpiece called a roach

Which of these items do you think goes back to the earliest days of the Osage? (varies) Otter pelt, deerskin leggings

How did the Osage men of the past wear their hair? They shaved it off

Describe the roach and what goes on top: made of deer tail hair, roach makes hair stand straight up in a line, an eagle feather goes on top

What are two things the women wear in the dance? (varies) Leggings, skirt, wide belt, fringed blanket or shawl, silk blouse, ribbons, beads, jewelry

What are two things that *both* the women and the men wear? Leggings, belt, colorful shirt, ribbons, beads

**p. 21 Religion**

Do the Osage have a strong religious tradition? Yes

In their traditional religion in early days, Wa-kon-ta was their Creator.

The sun was considered their Grandfather.

How did the Osage feel about animals? Many are sacred

The Osage prayed to borrow hunting or fighting skills from animals. Name an animal and a skill it has that you would like to have. (varies) Birds - fly, coyote - smell, hunt, fish - swim and breathe underwater, deer - jump high, owls - see at night, etc.

Who were the people that tried to convert (change) the Osage into Christians? Missionaries

How did most of these people treat the Osage regarding their religious beliefs? They did not respect them

Where does the Native American Church get its beliefs? From both Christianity and traditional beliefs

Give two possible reasons why you think most Osage eventually became Christians? (varies) missionaries pressured them to do it, some of the Christian missionaries were good to them and helped them, it was difficult to maintain traditional beliefs with white Christianity all around them in white society, some Christian beliefs were similar to their traditional values (generosity, honesty, respect for others, be thankful to God, etc.)

p. 22 **The Hand Game**

What things do you need to play this game? 10 sticks and 4 buttons

What if you were outside and wanted to play this game without any of the above things. How could you make your own game pieces? (varies) Break up ten little sticks. Instead of buttons, use small stones

Name a game you play that involves guessing: (varies) i.e. rock, paper, scissors, etc.

## OSAGE TRADITIONS

**Write a paragraph describing the customs in an Osage tradition. Consider the following Osage traditions:**

1. Having a very large, supportive family
2. Having close relationships with older people
3. Dancing together in a large group to a sacred drum at l'n-lon-schka
4. Having a beautiful ceremonial outfit
5. Having traditional stories from times when your ancestors lived off the land
6. Playing the Hand Game

**In a topic sentence, tell which of the above Osage traditions you like best. In at least three more sentences, tell the reasons why.**

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