

Compare and Contrast Native Cultures

This activity is designed to show students how the ecology of where a band or tribe lived determined its customs, its life style, from the type of houses a group used, to the food they ate, whether they migrated, and even their legends. This activity should be spread over two class periods.

Ask students to choose a tribe which lived in the Southwest, and fill out the handout provided by researching its life style. Ask them to obtain pictures of the kinds of shelters the tribes use. Compare and contrast the life styles of these tribes with the lifestyle of the Paiutes. How can you account for the similarities, how can you account for the differences? Consider the terrain where the tribes live and compare it to the terrain where Paiutes live. Could this account for the differences?

Ask the students to choose each choose a tribe which did not live in the Southwest. Encourage your students to choose tribes that represent different regions—Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, Far West. Have the students fill out the handout and obtain pictures of the shelters used by their tribe.

Group the students by regions and have them compare and contrast the life styles of the tribes in the region.

Have the students share their findings and place pictures of the shelters on a rough map drawn on the board. If the tribes live in the mountains, denote that on the class map.

Discuss with the students what they found in their research.

We hope that the conclusion of this activity will be that the students learn how each tribe's life style was dictated by their environment.