

# Early Northwest Coast People

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# ABOUT STORYPATH

## THE STORYPATH STRATEGY

Storypath offers both a structure for organizing the social studies curriculum and an instructional strategy for teaching. The structure is a familiar one: the story. The strategy is grounded in a belief that children learn best when they are active participants in their own learning, and places students' own efforts to understand at the center of the educational enterprise. Together, the structure and the teaching strategy ensure that students feel strongly motivated and have meaningful and memorable learning experiences.

Originally developed in Scotland during the 1960s, Storypath draws support from decades of experience with teachers and students. The approach has its roots in these beliefs about children and learning:

- The world is complex and presents many layers of information. Children know a good deal about how the world works and have a reservoir of knowledge that is often untapped in the classroom.
- When children build on that knowledge through activities such as questioning and researching, new understandings are acquired. Because children construct their own knowledge and understanding of their world, their learning is more meaningful and memorable.
- Problem solving is a natural and powerful human endeavor. When children are engaged in problem-solving, they take ownership for their learning.
- The story form integrates content and skills from many disciplines and provides a context for children to gain a deeper, more complex understanding of major concepts.

## AN INQUIRY APPROACH

Questioning, by both teacher and students, is a key component of Storypath. Through the story structure and the discourse it creates, the teacher guides students in their search for meaning and understanding as they acquire new knowledge and skills. Your questions, and the discussions they engender, cause students to:

- ask their own questions and think critically about what they know;
- use their prior knowledge to make sense of new information;
- connect personally to important social studies concepts.

The story structure and inquiry guided by unit goals provide the framework for students to integrate skills and complex content through problems they encounter. As they do so, their understanding of important concepts is extended and key connections are made.

## THE STORY STRUCTURE

For thousands of years, stories have helped us create order and make connections between events. Storypath's narrative structure helps students understand concepts that they often find difficult to comprehend in the traditional social studies curriculum.

Each Storypath unit centers on a unique and engaging story that provides a concrete context for understanding the social science content. This story may be based on actual historical events, as developed in *Struggle for Independence*. Or the story might instead be based on typical community or business structures, as developed in *Families in Their Neighborhoods* or in *The Toy Company*. From all of these structures, students develop a meaningful context for developing understanding of the topic.

### Typical structure of a Storypath unit

#### CREATING THE SETTING

Students create the setting by completing a frieze or mural of the place.

#### CREATING THE CHARACTERS

Students create characters for the story whose roles they will play during subsequent episodes.

#### BUILDING CONTEXT

Students are involved in activities such as reading, writing, and research to stimulate them to think more deeply about the people and the place they have created.

#### CRITICAL INCIDENTS

Characters confront problems typical of those faced by people of that time and place.

#### CONCLUDING EVENT

Students plan and participate in an activity that brings closure to the story.

# PLANNING THE UNIT

## EARLY NORTHWEST COAST PEOPLE

### MAKE KEY DECISIONS

**Make Space for the Storypath.** You will need enough wall space for students to make the Northwest Coast frieze and to display their characters and various other materials they complete during the unit. Since students will also be making three-dimensional longhouses and other artifacts representative of the culture, a table or counter set in front of the frieze is necessary, thereby connecting the natural setting to the elements that depict the people's way of life.

**Organize Students.** Beginning in Episode 3, students are organized into groups representative of extended families—each student will create one character. You may want to consider how large you want your groups to be and how you will facilitate the work of the groups. If students seem resistant to playing husband and wife, allow them to create their own role (a husband, for example) and acknowledge that their character has a spouse even though this spouse is not developed by another student. In extended families there are lots of roles, so it generally isn't a problem. These family groups will work together at various points throughout the Storypath.

**Prepare for Role-Plays.** Students will role-play the early Northwest Coast people throughout this unit. Adults can be invited to role-play other characters in this unit. In Episodes 6, 7, and 8, it is suggested that adults play the roles of a trader, new settler, and Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens, respectively. Props for the roles add drama and adults can quickly learn their roles to participate effectively in the critical incidents. The teacher can play these roles as well.

**Weave in Historical Information.** As you introduce students to this unit, it will be important to allow students to “figure out” how these early people lived in their environment. This approach is guided by key questions that you will ask as the Storypath develops. At times—when students have a need to know—you will provide historical information to move the story forward. It may be tempting at times to simply tell students what they need to know before they begin an episode. However, if you follow this path, problem solving and critical thinking are greatly reduced and the power of this approach is jeopardized.

**Create a Learning Community.** An open and supportive atmosphere is essential for students to engage in the discourse that is basic to the learning process of the Storypath approach. Students should understand the value of reflective discussions and the importance of collaborative work to deepen their understanding of complex ideas. Consequently, students should be expected to listen carefully and respond thoughtfully and respectfully to one another's ideas.

### DEVELOP UNDERSTANDING

**Commonalities Across Cultures.** The early people of the Northwest Coast had a very different way of life from that of people living in modern North American society. Your students will probably be unable to fully understand early Northwest

Coast culture. Nevertheless, they will be able to identify some common human needs—the need for food and shelter—emotions such as love, joy, fear, and sadness; and concern and caring for others. This Storypath creates a context to help children understand our common human needs while opening a door to give students a glimpse of Northwest Coast culture in times past.

## CUSTOMIZE THE UNIT

**Adapt the Unit.** There will be times in this unit when you will want to modify the curriculum to suit the needs of your class and follow the logical progression of the story. Alternative activities or special arrangements are suggested at various points to assist in adapting the unit to meet your unique needs.

Frequently, students will provide an unanticipated twist to the Storypath, or important learning opportunities will arise. The Storypath allows for the accommodation of those special circumstances.

**Accommodate Your Needs.** As you review this Storypath, you will see that it's easy to adapt this unit to another group of native people. If your curriculum requires that you focus on another group of people, use this format and substitute the particulars for that group of people.

**Connect to *The Oregon Trail Storypath*.** *The Oregon Trail* Storypath can be taught before or after teaching this Storypath and will provide students with a different perspective relating to the same time period. Students can then compare and contrast the two groups of people studied, their ways of life, and the historical events of the time.

**Research the Early Northwest Coast People.** Providing students with the opportunity to research the people of the Northwest Coast as they move through the Storypath is essential to deepen their understanding and provide a meaningful context for learning more about the people and their culture. Additionally, students can focus on specific tribal groups for research at the conclusion of the unit.

## INVOLVE OTHERS

**Involve Families and Community Members.** Family and community members can serve as excellent resources for you and your students. Some families may be from this cultural group or have special knowledge about the early Northwest Coast people. Invite them to share what they know. Guest speakers and field trips to museums can enrich students' understanding of this culture. Museums often have artifact boxes that they will ship to schools. Be sure that you are getting artifacts that are representative of early Northwest Coast people, however, as they are distinctly different from other tribal groups. Guest speakers from a local college, university, or tribal association are helpful, provided they clearly understand who their audience is and what kind of experiences students have had prior to their visit. Guest speakers and field trips should occur at the end of the unit when students can knowledgeably compare and contrast their own experience to the new information they are receiving. This makes for a more powerful and memorable learning experience.

# EPISODE

## CREATING THE SETTING THE NORTHWEST COAST

### INTRODUCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

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Students listen to and discuss a description of the Northwest Coast environment.

**Materials** Teaching Master 1, *The Land Along the Coast*, TH\* p. 53  
Portfolio 1, *Map of the Northwest Coast*, p. 4  
Content Slide Set 1

**Grouping** Whole class

**Schedule** Approximately 20 minutes

### CREATING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

page 16

Students create a frieze of the Northwest Coast's natural environment.

**Materials** Portfolio 2, *Frieze Guide*, p. 5

For the frieze:

- one bulletin board or wall space, approximately 6 feet long and 4 feet high, covered with white butcher paper (Make sure a table can be placed against this space. In Episode 4 students will make a three-dimensional village that sits in front of the frieze.)
- construction and tissue paper—many shades of green and brown
- glue, colored markers, crayons, chalk, fabric, foil, cotton balls, yarn
- optional: tempera paint, brushes, water cans

**Grouping** Divide the class into three groups. Each group will make a different part of the frieze.

**Schedule** 1–2 hours.

### CONCLUDING EPISODE 1

page 17

Students reflect on the experience, make a word bank, and write a poem.

**Materials** Portfolio 22, *Word Bank*, p. 26

Portfolio 3, *Writing: Sense Poem*, p. 6

For the word banks: thick black markers and index cards or strips of paper  
Pocket folders or sturdy paper to make folders (one per student) for the Portfolio

**Grouping** Three groups for the word banks; individuals for the poetry activity

**Schedule** Approximately 1 1/2 hours, including time for writing the poems

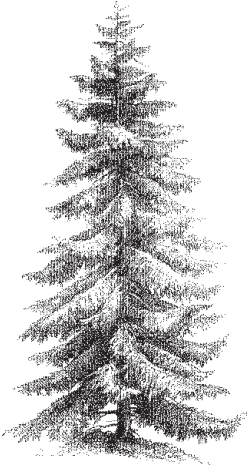
#### EPISODE OBJECTIVES



- **Social Skills** *Organize, plan, and make decisions while creating a frieze with group members.*
- **Social Skills** *Determine an appropriate course of action to complete the frieze within a group.*
- **Critical Thinking** *Organize ideas from class discussion in new ways and apply those ideas to the frieze.*
- **Literacy: Speaking and Listening** *Prepare for and participate effectively in conversations and collaborations to create the setting.*
- **Literacy: Vocabulary** *Clarify the meaning of words and phrases in context; use figurative language to describe the environment; and use academic language to describe the environment.*
- **Literacy: Writing** *Write a poem to convey ideas and information about the setting.*

\*TH = Teacher's Handbook

## THE LAND ALONG THE COAST



This is a long, long time ago ...

[This] is a region of mystery and magic. Dense mists and high rainfall disguise the shapes of the giant cedars, turning them into vague forms with a ghostly presence. It is an area of rocky inlets and fjords in which water, land, and sky blend as one continuous form; where the distinction between solids and liquids can never be fully comprehended. High humidity rots fallen trees and then carpets them densely with moss to create the illusion of solid ground, but it is ground that is treacherous and bears no weight. This narrow, rugged strip of temperate rain forest, often little more than 50 miles wide, extends ... along the shores.... It is [a land] permanently isolated from the rest of the continent by the great peaks of the [coastal mountain range].\*

\* Adapted from Norman Bancroft-Hunt, *North American Indians*. Philadelphia: Courage Books, 1994, p.61.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## CHARACTER BIOGRAPHY

1. Clan name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Character's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Family position: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Family members: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Personality characteristics: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Job: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Special skills needed for job: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Leisure activities: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Interesting past experience: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Assessment:** The biography is realistic to the age, gender, and role in the family. The interesting past experience makes sense and reflects an understanding of early life in the Pacific Northwest.





The climate is often misty,  
especially in winter. ▼

## What is the Northwest Coast like?

The Northwest Coast region of North America is a temperate climate. A temperate climate is warm in summer and cool in winter. This region can be a hard place to live. The climate is very wet with lots of rain. It is often foggy and the winters are long and gray.

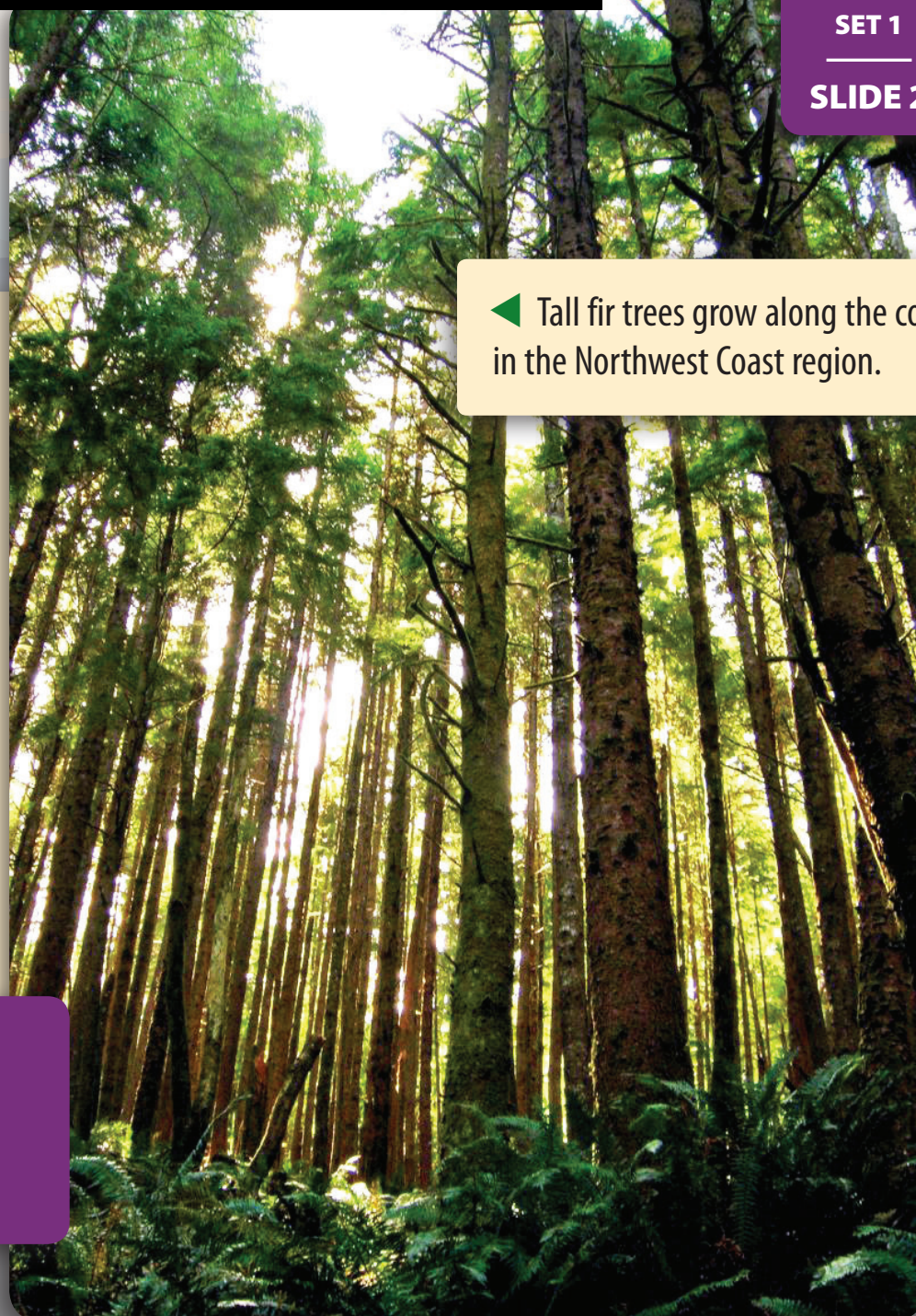
**How is the Northwest Coast climate like your climate?  
How is it different?** *(comparing and contrasting)*

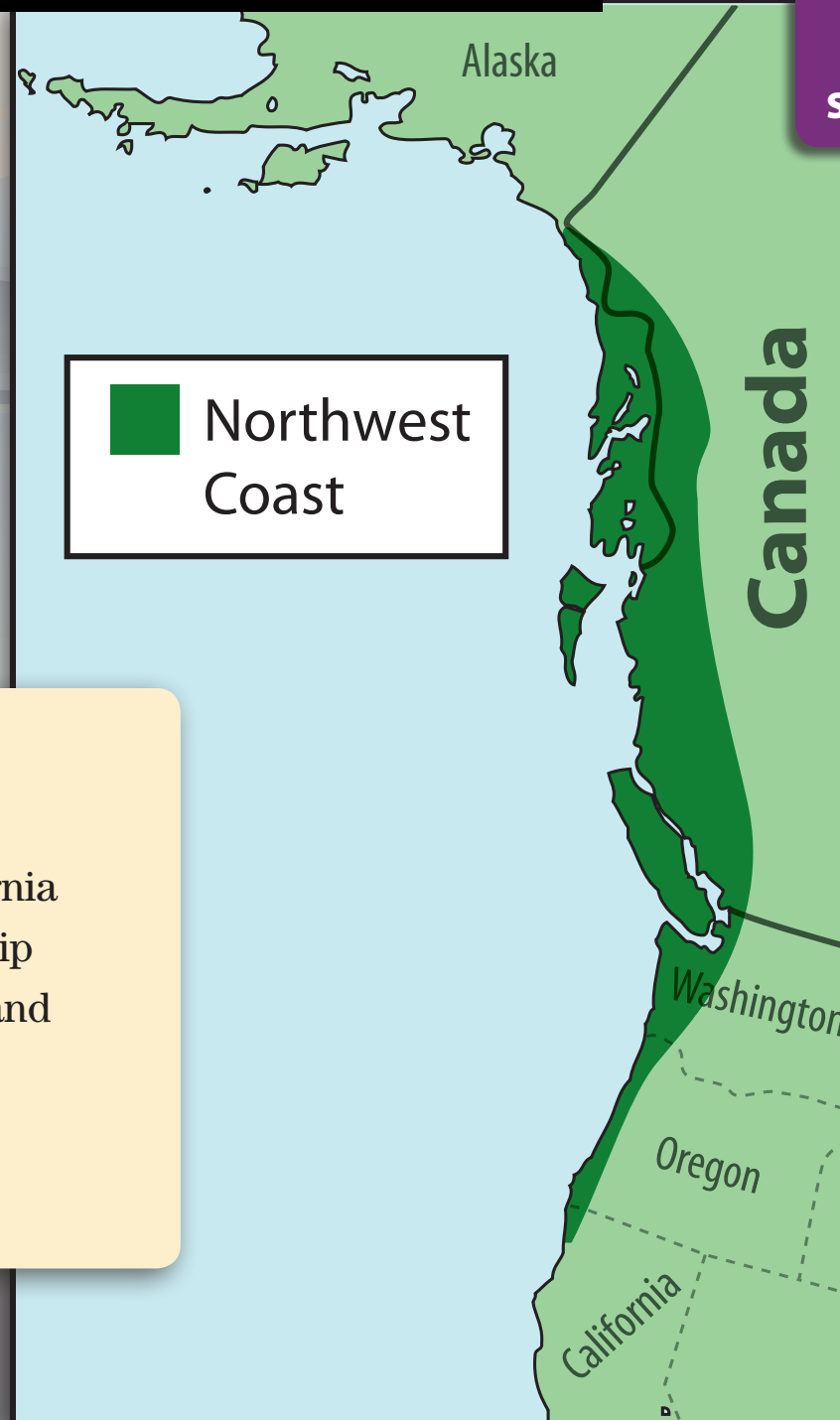


This area is also rich in natural resources. Thick forests of evergreen trees grow between the coast and tall mountains. The temperate, wet climate helps many other plants grow there, too. Bears, deer, and elk live in the forest. Fast rivers run down the mountains to the ocean. Many fish live in the rivers. The sea is full of fish and other animals, as well.

**What natural resources are in this environment?** *(scanning)*

◀ Tall fir trees grow along the coasts in the Northwest Coast region.

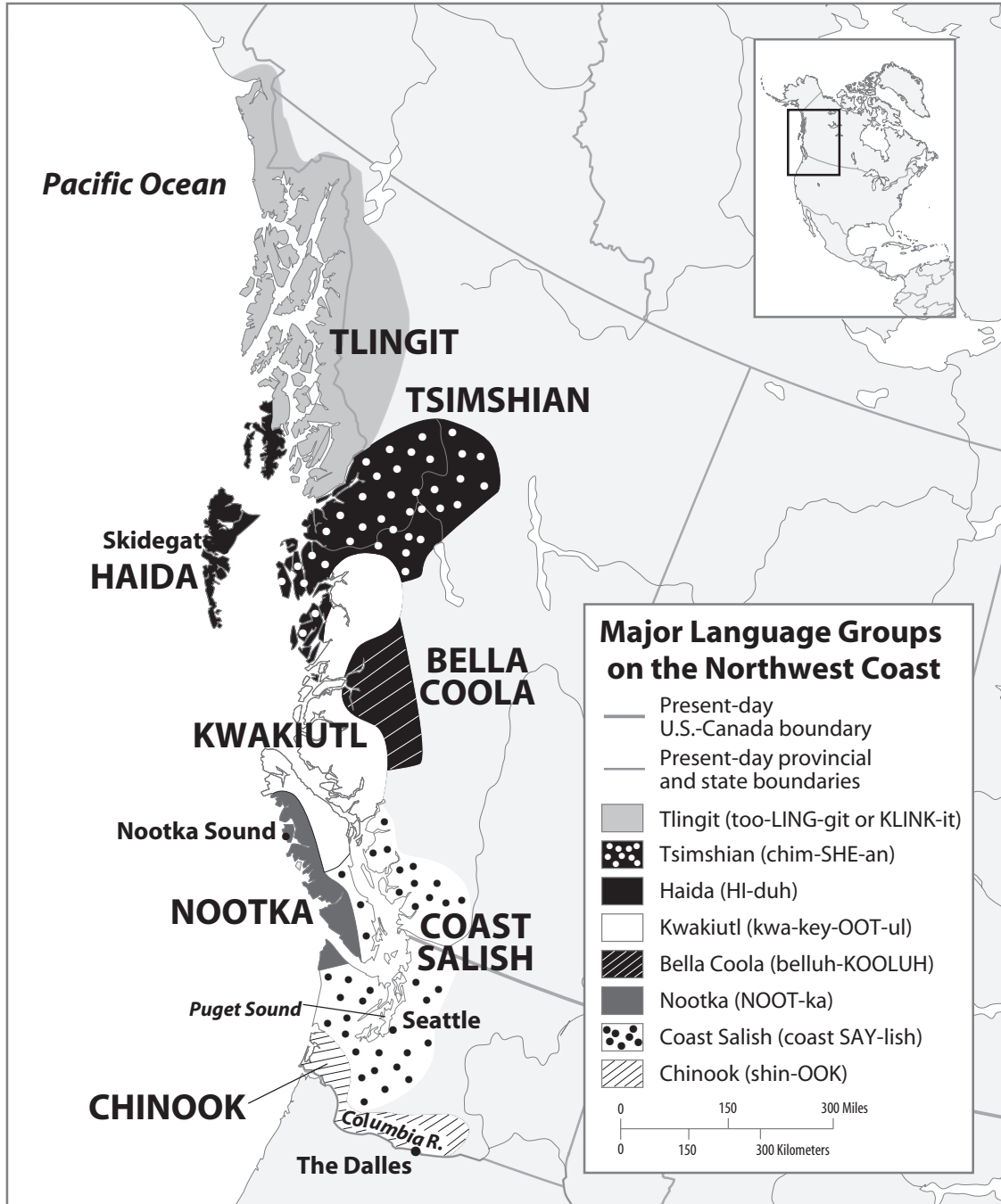




The Northwest Coast includes land that stretches from Northern California to Southern Alaska. This narrow strip of land between the Pacific Ocean and the mountains is warmed by ocean currents and coastal winds.



## MAP OF THE NORTHWEST COAST



There were many villages of people living up and down the Northwest Coast in the 1700s and early 1800s. At least 45 different languages were spoken in this region, but all of the villages used the sea for food and transportation and shared a similar culture.



## FRIEZE GUIDE

Work with your group to plan and make your portion of the Northwest Coast natural environment.

### 1. Brainstorm and list ideas for your setting.

### 2. Prioritize your ideas.

Look over your list as a group. Circle the ideas that you will use.

### 3. Assign jobs and list assignments.

### 4. Assess your work.

Put a check next to the things you did.

- I offered ideas about the frieze.
- I listened to other people's ideas.
- I disagreed in a polite way.
- I made positive comments to my group members.
- I was willing to change my ideas to help the group.

If you were to do the task again, what changes would you make in how you worked with your group?



DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## WRITING: SENSE POEM

Write a sense poem to describe the Northwest Coast environment. Imagine yourself somewhere in the environment shown in the frieze and think about what you would see, hear, touch, smell, and feel. Then complete the lines below with at least one describing word (adjective) and one thing (noun). Use words from the word bank or any other words that will give your readers a vivid picture of the environment.

I see \_\_\_\_\_

I hear \_\_\_\_\_

I touch \_\_\_\_\_

I smell \_\_\_\_\_

I feel \_\_\_\_\_

Rewrite the poem on a separate sheet of paper. Use only the words you wrote on the lines. Use your best handwriting and check for correct spelling. You will take the poem home to show your family.

Your finished poem might look something like this:

Green cedar trees  
Rustling branches  
Craggy, veined bark  
Pungent evergreens  
Sheltered by giant trees

**Assessment:** The poem follows the given format and creates an accurate picture of the place. The poem uses adjectives and nouns to create a logical sequence for each sense; vivid and interesting adjectives describe the nouns. There is evidence of care in choosing words and in construction; correct spelling is used.