

**Summary Description**

This is the ninth and final in a series of nine lessons that introduces the student to Native American history.

**Learning Objectives**

To have the student learn a few key facts about Wiyot history and culture.

**Approximate Time for Lesson**

50 minutes

**Suggested Maturity Level for Instruction**

Student should be able to read simple words and perform simple addition and subtraction. Also, student should be able to sit still and engage in one-on-one conversation.

**References:**

Native Languages of the Americans, Laura Redish and Orrin Lewis - <http://www.native-languages.org/new.htm>

Wiyot Tribe - History and Culture - Table Bluff Reservation - Wiyot Tribe - <http://www.wiyot.com/history.htm>

California Cultural and Historical Endowment project: Wiyot Tribe Sacred Ground project, California State Library - <http://www.library.ca.gov/newsletter/2007/2007fall/cche.html>

**Materials Needed**

1. Internet Access - Pull up the following:
  - a. United States Map of Native American Populations by Geographic Region (go to <http://portfolio.educ.kent.edu/mcclellandr/zackthezipper/nativeamericans.htm>)
  - b. Picture of cedar plank house (go to <http://www.native-languages.org/houses.htm#plankhouse>)
  - c. Picture of basket hat (go to <http://www.native-languages.org/headresses.htm#basket>)
2. Glass of drinking water that is half full (must be clear glass so that the Student can see the water)

**Preparation**

Make sure you have materials open, printed, and/or available prior to beginning the lesson.

**Script**

*Introduction (5 minutes)*

1. **Teacher:** Alright, we are now going to learn about one of the last Native American people who met the Europeans - these Native Americans were called the Wiyot and lived in Northern California [[point to Northern California on the map](#)].

2. Teacher: You're going to find that the Wiyot's way of living was similar to the Makah, but the way the Wiyot got treated by the Europeans was one of the worst ways that any Native Americans got treated. This is not a story with a happy ending, but I want to share this with you because I want you to learn that people, wherever they come from, should always try to get along and work as team to make our country great.
3. Teacher: OK - so are you ready to learn about the Wiyot? [Get Student's positive response and begin lesson].

Lesson (50 minutes)

1. Teacher: Wiyot is pronounced "wee-yot" which means Eel River. Eel River was a river that was nearby to the Wiyot village so for them, the Wiyot named meant "people that live near the Eel River". Can you say, "Wiyot"? [Have the Student practice several times].
2. Teacher: Good. Now, like I said before, the Wiyot lived in the northern part of California right near the ocean. There were also plenty of trees and forests here.
3. Teacher: So, just like the Makah, the Wiyot also hunted in the ocean for their food. They hunted sea lions (the Wiyot did not hunt whales like the Makah), fish, and also got food from the forests such as deer, acorn, nuts and roots.
4. Teacher: For homes, the Wiyot made houses out of wood from redwood trees, and looked similar to the cedar plank houses that the Makah lived in. Since these houses were hard to build and take apart and since their food was always nearby, the Wiyot were not nomads.
5. Teacher: As for clothing, the men wore breechcloths and the women wore long grass skirts. When it got hot, no one wore shirts. When it was cold, they wore robes made of deer skin. Also, remember those basket hats that the Makah men and women wore? Well, only the Wiyot women wore basket hats.
6. Teacher: And although the Wiyot didn't fight too often, their weapons were similar to the other Native Americans, bow and arrows, clubs, shields, and spears.
7. Teacher: Like I said before, the Wiyot were not a fighting tribe. In fact, every year they had a celebration that lasted a whole week to ask blessings for the New Year (kind of like our New Year's celebration) - and all peoples (not only Wiyot) were invited.
8. Teacher: This celebration was held on an island. Well, during that time, the Americans that came from Europe were living in California because this state had plenty of gold that could be found and make them rich (this was called the Gold Rush, which you will learn more about later). These Americans and the Wiyot did not get along since the Wiyot's way of living was very different from the American way of living (for example, the Americans thought that they owned the land that the Wiyot lived on and the Americans wanted the Wiyot out so the Americans would be free to dig for gold in those lands).

9. Teacher: Well, because the Americans wanted to kick the Wiyot out of their lands, a group of Americans snuck up on the Wiyot after their celebration and killed the Wiyot while they were sleeping.
10. Teacher: And since most of the men were not on the island when this happened (the men went off the island the night before to get more food and supplies), most of the Wiyot that were killed were women and children. In fact, out of all the Wiyot babies, only one survived the attack by the Americans.
11. Teacher: The Wiyot that survived were afraid for their lives and were moved to reservations. But during the move to the reservations, more died because the move was too hard on the weaker Wiyot people like the old and sick people.
12. Teacher: To try to survive among the Americans, the Wiyot no longer had their celebration to ask for blessings for the New Year. Can you imagine giving up one of the best holidays of the year because someone might hurt you? On top of that, the Wiyot even stopped speaking their own language and instead, only spoke English. In fact, even though there are a few Wiyot people living today, none can speak their old Wiyot language because it was never taught to them. How would you feel if something like this happened to you? [\[Engage the Student in conversation\]](#).
13. Teacher: Now, I'm not telling you this story to make you think that Americans are bad and Wiyot are good. I'm telling you this story because today, this country, called the United States, is made of people who look different than you do and speak different languages and think differently than you do because they came from countries all around the world. But to treat these people in a bad way just because they are different, well that's just not fair or right. You see, we need these people because the only way to keep this country the best is to borrow some of their best ideas that could have only come from them. And why do you think that some of the best ideas can only come from these different people? [\[Engage the Student in conversation but come to the point that unique living experiences of different people are great for generating ideas since they may look at the same problem in a different way\]](#).
14. Teacher: [\[Show Student glass of drinking water that is half full\]](#) For example, let's pretend that we have to hold this glass and water and walk with it backward for five steps as fast as possible without spilling. Well, one group of people who have been taught since they were babies (like us) that water belongs in a glass may just start out by holding the glass, with water in it, in their hands and walk backwards carefully for five steps. Like this. [\[Demonstrate by holding the glass in your hand and walking backwards steadily without spilling the water\]](#).
15. Teacher: Now is that the only way to hold the glass and water and walk backwards? No. Because there may be another group of people that think completely different from you do, who have never been taught that water belongs in the glass at all - these different people may think of a faster way to hold the glass and water while walking

backwards five steps. Like this. [Demonstrate by drinking the water first from the glass, then hold the glass as you would anything in your hand while walking (no need for trying to hold it straight up since there's no water in the glass) and just casually walk five steps backwards].

16. Teacher: So, which group had the best idea for walking backwards the fastest without spilling the water? That's right; it was the second group of people. But if we never learned to accept and respect this second group of people, then even if both groups of people came together as one team, we would still never have been able to use this second groups' idea, which would have been the best idea.
17. Teacher: So, once we can first accept and respect people from different countries that live here as Americans, then, we can borrow all of the best ideas that came from these different people, and work together as one people for one country, the United States.
18. Teacher: In fact, you're going to learn that what made this country so great was because of ideas from Americans that came from different places that may not look the way you do, but were still Americans. Also, we as Americans must always live by remembering the mistakes the earlier Americans made so that we can make sure that we never make those same kinds of mistakes again. Does that make sense? [Engage the Student in conversation].
19. Teacher: OK - time for review. Get in front of the class. [Have the Student stand in front of you (consider inviting other members of the family also to set the stage) and ask her the following:
  - a. Where did the Wiyot Native Americans live? Northern California
  - b. What kind of homes did the Wiyot live in? They lived in plank houses.
  - c. Do you think the Makah were nomads? Why or why not? The Wiyot were not nomads since they did not have to move around to find their food
  - d. What was one of the saddest things that happened to the Wiyot? Most of the women and children were killed by the Americans
  - e. What was one thing that made this country great? Great ideas that came from Americans with different backgrounds

Teacher reviews any questions that the Student missed].

Wrap Up (5 minutes)

Teacher: [Clapping] You did GREAT! Wonderful job! Are there any questions that you have regarding Wiyot? [Engage in conversation with the Student and resolve further questions by researching the Internet].