

Houses at Pe-quod-e-nonge

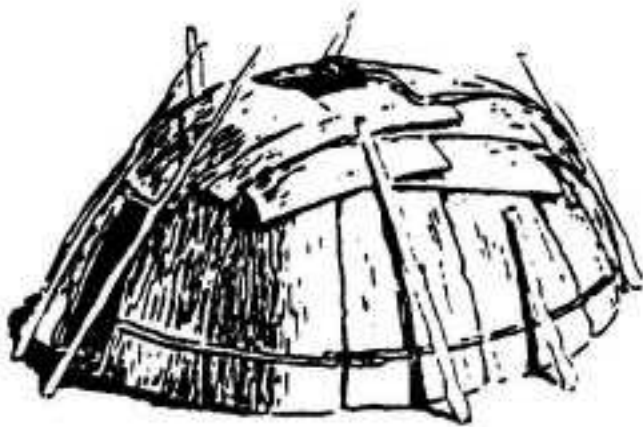


Everyone needs some kind of shelter or house to live in. Houses protect people from the sun, rain and cold. Some people have large houses, others have small ones and some have houses that are inbetween. Some people even have two or more houses.

The American Indians that lived near Michilimackinac had more than one house. They had one kind of house to live in during the summer and a different kind of house to live in during the winter.

One tribe, the Ojibwa, had more than one kind of house because they moved often to get different foods. They tapped maple trees in the forests for sap in early spring. From sap they made maple sugar. During the summer the Ojibwa moved near lakes and rivers to catch fish. They also planted corn nearby and in the fall harvested it. In the winter they moved closer to the forests again to hunt animals for meat—beaver, deer and bears. All of this moving from place to place was hard work.

One way the Ojibwa families made moving easier was to bring their houses with them part of the time.



Waginogan

(wah-GIH-no-gan)

A waginogan is very sturdy. It means “round lodge”. A waginogan is a type of wigwam made by burying tree branches in the ground. The ends of the branches are bent over until they meet, then tied together where they meet. The outside is covered with bark or mats made from Cattail reeds. It is shaped like an upside-down bowl. There is a hole in the top for smoke to go through from the fire. The fire keeps the house very warm in the winter months and also used to cook food.



Nasaogan

(nas-A-o-gan)

A nasaogan is lighter than a waginogan. It means “pointed lodge”. It is made by propping poles made from branches against each other in a circle and tying them together at the top. Because the poles are propped and not buried in the ground, the nasaogan could easily be taken apart and moved. The outside is covered with birchbark, from birch trees in the area, or maybe cloth or mats. It is shaped like an upside-down ice cream cone.

Here are two different kinds of houses the Ojibwa built:

The waginogan was the winter home for Ojibwa people. The branches buried in the ground kept the house sturdy in the cold winter wind. The Ojibwa put moss between the pieces of bark to keep out the wind and had a fire on the inside to keep warm. In the spring they took the bark off the frame, but left the branches buried in the ground for the next winter.

The nasaogan was the Ojibwa's spring and summer home. The branches were easy to put together and take apart. The birchbark could be rolled up, put in a canoe and carried to the next place to use on another house.

The inside of a waginogan had everything the Ojibwa people needed to live, just like your house.

FYI...

Some people have more than one place they live. Many have cottages they move to each summer. Usually they are smaller and not as warm as winter homes.

Many people also camp in tents or campers in the summer. They are easy to move around, like a nasaogan. They are not as sturdy as winter houses either. They can drive around in their camper homes each summer, too.

The Ojibwa aren't the only people to have different kinds of houses!

Platforms were attached to the walls. The platforms were beds at night and benches during the day. The fire was in the center. A hole at the top acted like a chimney to let the smoke out. The fire kept the waginogan warm and was also the kitchen. The Ojibwa women cooked on it for their families.

The nasaogan was used mostly for sleeping in the summer. Outside there would be a fire and a drying rack. The fire was used for cooking. The drying rack was used to dry food to store in the winter. During the summer it was nice outside and people had many things to do to prepare for the winter. People stayed outside for longer periods of time and did not need to be indoors because of the weather.

FYI...

Do Ojibwa people still live in waginogans and nasaogans?

Most American Indians today live in modern houses. They live in cities and towns and on reservations and reserves. A reservation is land that belongs to a certain American Indian tribe or group.

Waginogans and nasaogans are still around today. They are used by some Ojibwa people for traditional ceremonies.

Is a nasaogan a tipi?

Some people think that all American Indians lived in tipis, like we see in the movies or on T.V. There are many different tribes of American Indians and they all live differently. Most American Indians did not live in tipis. In the southwest part of North America the Hopi people lived in pueblos. A pueblo is a flat-roofed house. Inuit families in the far north lived in igloos. Some American Indians living in the east lived in long houses.



Some people did live in tipis. The American Indians that lived on the plains had tipis made with poles and animal skins. There were not many trees on the plains, so those tribes could not use bark. Instead they used animal skins, like the bison and buffalo, as a

covering. A real tipi had a smoke flap made from skins where the smoke rose out of the structure. The tribes that lived on the plains moved often. They followed the buffalo and other animals they hunted around the lands. It was easily to move a tipi. The word tipi means “house” in the Dakota language. The Ojibwa people’s word for house is wigwam.



The Ojibwa nasaogan looked similar to a tipi, but it was different. A nasaogan is covered in bark instead of animal skins, has different shaped holes for doors and windows and is built a little differently than a tipi.

Lesson 7

Using “Houses at Pe-quod-e-nonge”

☞ Read the “Houses at Pe-quod-e-nonge”.

☞ Discuss the following questions with students during or after reading.

1. Why did the Ojibwa people have more than one house? What does scarcity have to do with the people’s move?

They had more than one house because they moved often to harvest different foods throughout the year. It was easier to leave parts of their houses and bring parts of their houses with them. Scarcity requires choice. It occurs when what we want is greater than the resources we have. So, the people had to move to find other resources than were available to them in the particular area they were living in.

2. What are the main differences between a waginogan and a nasaogan?

Waginogans were the winter homes. They were dome shaped and sturdier for the winter winds. Nasaogans were spring/summer homes. They were pointed and lighter to transport.

3. Why did the Ojibwa people make their homes of birchbark and tree branches?

These were the natural resources available to them. They used what was there to build with on the land.

4. What are some of the differences between the homes of the American Indians in Michigan with others around the nation?

Many are similar, like wigwams and tipis. The Plains Indians used animal hides to cover their tipis and the Michigan Indian tribes used birchbark. Other tribes, like the Inuit, used resources they had available and built their homes from snow and ice to build igloos. Other people, like the Hopi, used their resources of earth and dirt and built pueblos.

☞ Use Activities 19, 20 to further support the ideas in the “Houses at Pe-quod-e-nonge”.

GLCEs that may be reached in Lesson 7:

3-H3.0.5 Use informational text and visual data to compare how American Indians and settlers in the early history of Michigan adapted to, used, and modified their environment.

3-H3.0.7 Use a variety of primary and secondary sources to construct a historical narrative about daily life in the early settlements of Michigan.

3-G5.0.2 Describe how people adapt to, use, and modify the natural resources of Michigan.

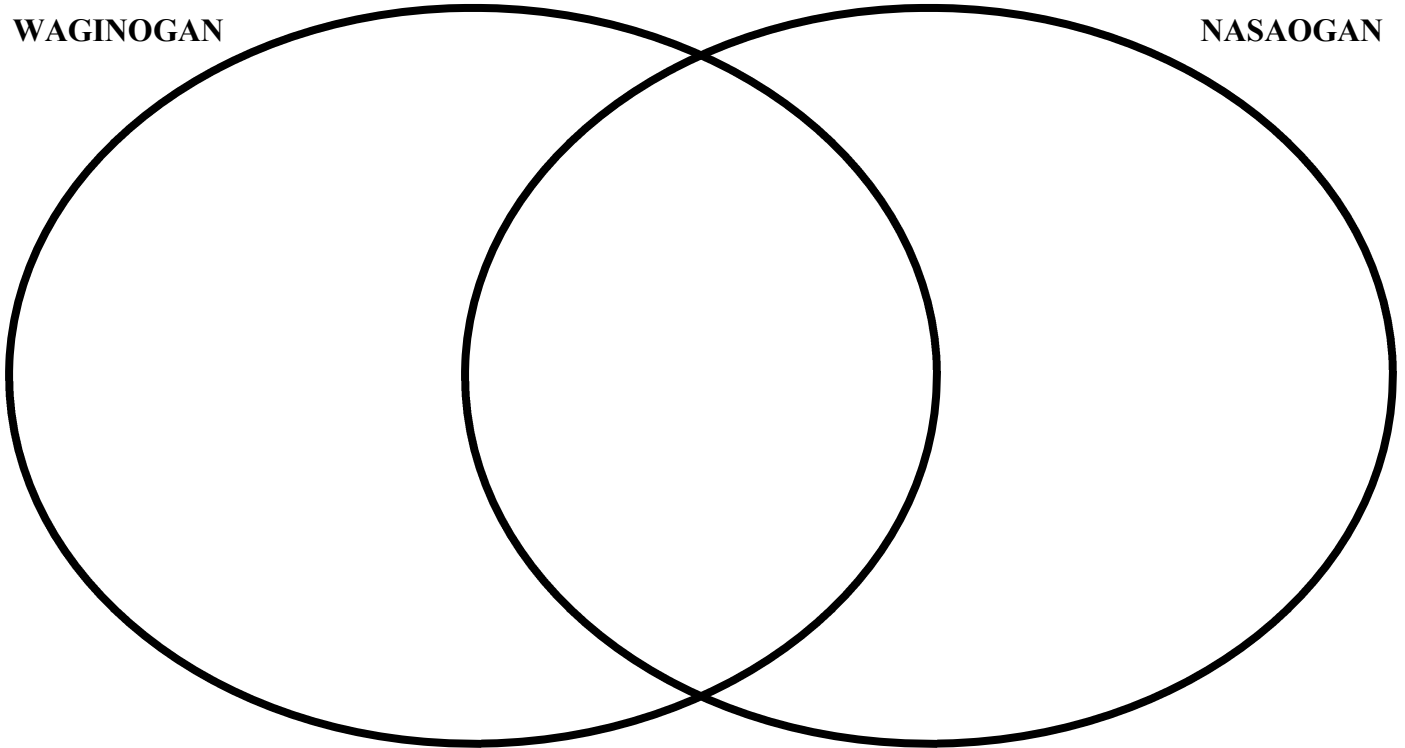
Vocabulary Words: waginogan nasaogan tipi
wigwam



There are different kinds of houses. American Indians lived in the Straits of Mackinac region waginogans and nasaogans. What is different about their houses? What is the same? Fill out the circles. On either side put the differences. In the middle put what is the same about them.

WAGINOCHAN

NASAOCHAN



Both of these homes are called wigwams. There are many other types of homes that American Indian tribes lived in throughout North America. Some are listed in this story. Can you find others? Use the back if you need more room or want to draw examples.

| Type of shelter | Where/Tribe? |
|-----------------|--------------|
| | |
| | |
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| | |

People live in different houses around the world. People lived in different houses throughout time, too. What would it be like to live in a traditional American Indian home?

Tape the perimeter of a waginogan on the floor (there is no “average size,” just like many people live in different sized houses today). The one at Colonial Michilimackinac is 11 ft x 17 ft.

How would you divide it up for a living space?

Decided how you would divide up the space inside the waginogan. Lay on the floor to determine how much room you would need for sleeping platforms. There was a fire in the middle of the room, so do not put anything too close? Where could you store food for the winter? What could you hang from the bent pieces of wood on the ceiling? Remember you (and others in your family) need to eat, sleep and store items in the waginogan.

Draw a model of what the inside would look like. Compare it with other’s models in the class!

Inside my waginogan

