





Northwest Coast Food

The Indians of the Northwest Coast got a lot of their food from the

ocean  . They ate fish  and shellfish  . Fish

called salmon  was one of their main foods. In the



spring, the salmon swam upstream to lay their eggs. The Indians



lined up along the riverbank and trapped the salmon. This was

called the “salmon run.”

Northwest Coast Indians also hunted larger sea animals. They

hunted seals  , porpoises  , and

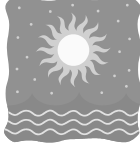
whales  . On land, they hunted deer  , goats

 , and bears  .

Northwest Coast

Shelter

The Northwest Coast Indians lived in villages. Their houses



always faced the water . Houses were made out of planks

of cedar wood  from the forests  . A plank

 is a long, thin piece of wood. These houses were

called plank houses. Plank houses were large. Four or five

families could live in one. Totem poles stood outside each house.





A totem pole is a tall wooden log that has carvings of

things in nature on it. The carvings told about each family's

history.

Northwest Coast Arts/Recreation

These Indians were great wood carvers. They carved wooden

animals . They carved wooden tools . They even

carved wooden poles. A totem pole  is a tall wooden

pole. It has carvings of things from nature on it. Each totem pole




told the story of a family's history. Totem poles were

put outside the plank houses. These Indians liked big parties.

Their parties were called potlatches. People from nearby villages



were asked to come.

The person giving the party gave away  the things he

owned. He did this to show how rich he was.


Northwest Coast Transportation


Indians in this region traveled by foot  . They also used big

trees from the forests  to make dugout canoes  .

They did not have sharp tools to chop down the trees or carve

them. Instead, they used fire  to help them. First, they put

a circle of clay around the bottom of the tree  . Then they


started a fire  . The tree burned around the bottom. The

fire was put out. The Indians then scraped the burnt wood from the

tree. Then they set another fire. The tree burned a little more



around the same circle  . They put out the fire

 . Then the burned wood was scraped off again.



They kept doing this until the tree fell . They did the same thing to hollow out the inside of the canoe. One end of the canoe was always pointed. Sometimes they carved animals or things in nature on the ends or along the sides of the canoes.


Northwest Coast Physical Surroundings, Location, and Climate

This region is on the west coast of North America. It goes from southern Alaska into Washington, Oregon, and California. The

ocean  is on the west. Mountains  are on the

east. The Indians lived on the land in between. There were thick

forests . There were many rivers and streams .

The Indians who lived here had a lot of food. Salmon  was

one of their favorites.