

Mini Page Heroes: Tecumseh



Image courtesy Library of Congress

Mini Fact:

Historians aren't sure who exactly killed Tecumseh at the Battle of the Thames in 1813.

Before the U.S. Constitution was adopted in 1787, we were governed by a document called the Articles of Confederation.

Confederation means a joining together for a common purpose. The newly independent American Colonies joined together as states in a confederation. Their unity gave them strength.

A shared idea

That's exactly what a Shawnee Indian named Tecumseh tried to do in the early 1800s with numerous American Indian tribes. White people were sweeping across the country, taking land from American Indians and offering little or nothing in return. Tecumseh worked hard to unite the Indians into a strong Shawnee Confederation that could resist this invasion.



This painting is from a sketch made of Tecumseh around 1808-1812.

But it wasn't easy. The members of each tribe were fiercely proud of their individual tribal identities and leaderships.

Tecumseh was a gifted speaker. His words convinced American Indians that unity would help them hold on to their land. Traveling thousands of miles through the territory east of the Mississippi River, Tecumseh forged the largest united group of American Indian nations ever.

In 1808, he and his brother, Tenskwatawa, called the Shawnee Prophet, established

a village called Prophetstown. There, confederation members could follow traditional American Indian ways and train to defend their land. Tecumseh told the governor of Indiana that Native Americans wanted to be peaceful, but they could not accept the treaties that were taking away the land they had lived on. But the confederation couldn't stop the westward movement of white settlers.

In 1811, Tenskwatawa sent the unified warriors into battle against white soldiers, although Tecumseh warned that the confederation was not strong enough. The warriors were defeated. Prophetstown was destroyed, and the American Indians were scattered.

A life of war

Tecumseh was born in what is now Ohio in 1768. His name means "shooting star." His father, a warrior, was killed by frontiersmen in 1774, and Tecumseh decided he wanted to be a warrior.

He fought in many battles as a young man. Later he represented the confederacy, telling settlers they wanted to be at peace.

Tecumseh was killed during a battle in October 1813, and most of the tribes in the confederation surrendered to the Americans.

Today, respect for Tecumseh extends far beyond the American Indian community. Throughout our country, you will find towns, schools, even a U.S. Navy submarine named in his honor.

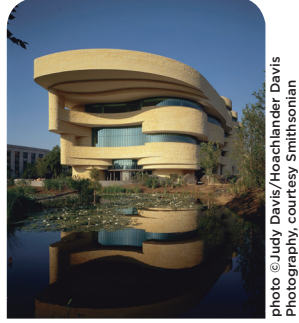
Native American history

Tecumseh's story of loyalty to his people and devotion to his land is only one of countless American Indian efforts to hold on to their heritage.

Opened in 2004, the National Museum of the American Indian is located on the Mall in Washington, D.C. There, great American Indian leaders such as Tecumseh, Chief Joseph, Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull and many others have their stories told.

Cultural artifacts from the Cherokee, Shawnee, Sioux, Hopi and other tribes and nations are displayed. Visitors can see and participate in ceremonies, performances and educational activities celebrating American Indian heritage.

Check out nmai.si.edu for more information about the museum.



The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian opened in 2004.

Photo © Judy Davis/Heather Davis Photography, courtesy Smithsonian

Resources



This issue of *Mini Page Heroes* is based on a chapter from "50 American Heroes Every Kid Should Meet" by Dennis Denenberg and Lorraine Roscoe. To order the book, go to heroes4us.com and click on "50 American Heroes Book" and "Order a Book."

At the library:

- "Tecumseh: Shooting Star of the Shawnee" by Dwight Jon Zimmerman

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Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of Tecumseh are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:



AMERICAN, BATTLE, CONFEDERATION, DEFEND, GOVERNOR, INDIAN, LAND, NATIVE, OHIO, PEACE, SETTLERS, SHAWNEE, SPEAKER, STAR, STRENGTH, TRIBAL, UNITY, WARRIOR, WHITE.

D S E T T L E R S S N R R H Z
 U X B I S T A R T X O E P N N
 D Y T I N U X R I N K V A E E
 N S H A W N E E R A E C L T W
 E N I F B N O E E C I T I L A
 F A O L G I V P A R T H F E R
 E B A T H O S E E A W U O T R
 D N H O G U P M B N A I D N I
 D Y E V I T A N L A B I R T O
 Q N O I T A R E D E F N O C R

Cook's Corner

Surprise Rice Casserole

You'll need:

- 1 cup uncooked brown rice (regular or instant)
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 1 (8-ounce) can crushed pineapple, undrained
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar

- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup reduced-fat shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds



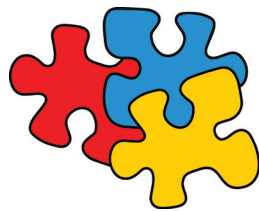
* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

What to do:

1. Cook rice according to directions. Stir in butter until melted. Add pineapple, brown sugar and salt.
2. Spray a shallow medium-sized baking pan with cooking spray.
3. Spoon rice mixture into pan. Sprinkle with cheese; top with sliced almonds.
4. Bake for 15 minutes or until cheese is melted. Serves 6.

Puzzling

Unscramble the words below that remind us of Native Americans.



- brite _____
- odnacmi _____
- erfamsr _____
- theunrs _____

Answers: tribe, nomadic, farmers, hunters.

Mini Jokes



Teddy: What do you call an alligator in a vest?

Tyra: An investigator!

Eco Note



Sicily's Mount Etna erupted twice in March, the second time ejecting lava and incandescent rocks 650 feet into the air. A sudden burst of flying lava and steam injured 10 people, including members of a BBC film crew.

adapted with permission from Earthweek.com

Thank You



The Mini Page thanks Dennis Denenberg, former teacher, principal, superintendent and university professor, and Lorraine Roscoe, a champion of heroes of every kind, for help with this issue.

Teachers:

For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: bbs.amuniversal.com/Everyone_content/Teaching_Guides/The_Mini_Page/

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