

## The Kwakiutl

We will now travel south of the area inhabited by the Inuit and go to the area of the northwest coast of North America to meet another group of American Indians. This group is called the **Kwakiutl**. They lived along the Pacific coast in California and in the northwestern part of what is now the United States, including the Alaskan coast, and the western Canadian coastline. The climate was rainy and mild. The land was covered with forests and lakes so wildlife and food were abundant. Like the Inuit the Kwakiutl did no farming, but unlike the Inuit they had lots of food available. The area they inhabited was very rich in natural resources the Indians could use to survive.

Their main source of meat was caribou. They also hunted moose, deer, rabbits, and beaver. The women of the Kwakiutl tribe gathered berries, roots, and nuts. To get salt for their food, the women gathered seaweed.

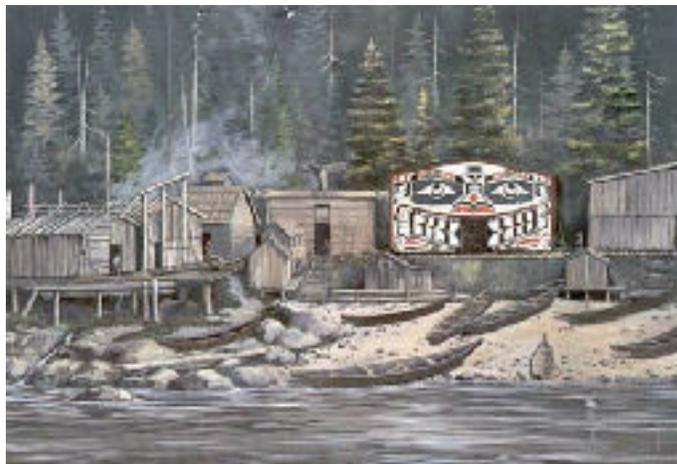
Fish were abundant especially salmon. Other foods included seal, clams, and sea otter. Food was always available for these hunters and fishermen. They fished in canoes made of cedar and redwood trees from the dense forests.

Occasionally they could even catch a whale with wooden harpoons.

The Kwakiutl made clothing from the bark of trees. They also made rain capes and coats from animal skins.

From the abundant forests of cedar and redwood trees, the Kwakiutl built houses called plank houses, or clan houses. Each building of planks could house 30-40 members of the same clan. Each family had an area of the one room dwelling and each cooked its own food on its own cook fire. Clans would construct **totem poles**, which showed family legends, events, or symbols. Made of wood and carved with figures of animals or people, totem poles became family identification symbols.

A kind of unique celebration called a **potlatch** was also found in the Kwakiutl culture. This was a feast held by a wealthy member of the tribe where members of a family or clan would be invited to a huge party and be given possessions of the host such as a canoe or blanket. Giving away ones possessions showed wealth and power. The Kwakiutl lived a much different life from the Inuit because of their location. How will the next tribe differ?



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**Directions:** Using the Kwakiutl story as a guide, answer the following questions putting answers in the space provided.

1. Where did the Kwakiutl live? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Describe the climate of the region where the Kwakiutl lived. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Name two ways the Kwakiutl got their food.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_ was the main source of meat for the Kwakiutl.

5. Name three other foods they ate.

A. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_ C. \_\_\_\_\_

6. The Kwakiutl fished from \_\_\_\_\_ made of

\_\_\_\_\_

7. The Kwakiutl houses were called \_\_\_\_\_ and

were made of \_\_\_\_\_.

8. Their clothing was made from \_\_\_\_\_ or

\_\_\_\_\_.

9. \_\_\_\_\_ were carved from \_\_\_\_\_

to show family legends, history, or identification.

10. A potlatch was \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_