

## Lesson

# 2

# The Eastern Woodlands



### WHAT TO KNOW

How did the geography and climate of the Eastern Woodlands affect the Native Americans there?

### VOCABULARY

**division of labor** p. 63

**palisade** p. 64

**longhouse** p. 64

**wampum** p. 65

**confederation** p. 65

**wigwam** p. 66

### PEOPLE

Hiawatha

Deganawida

### PLACES

Great Lakes

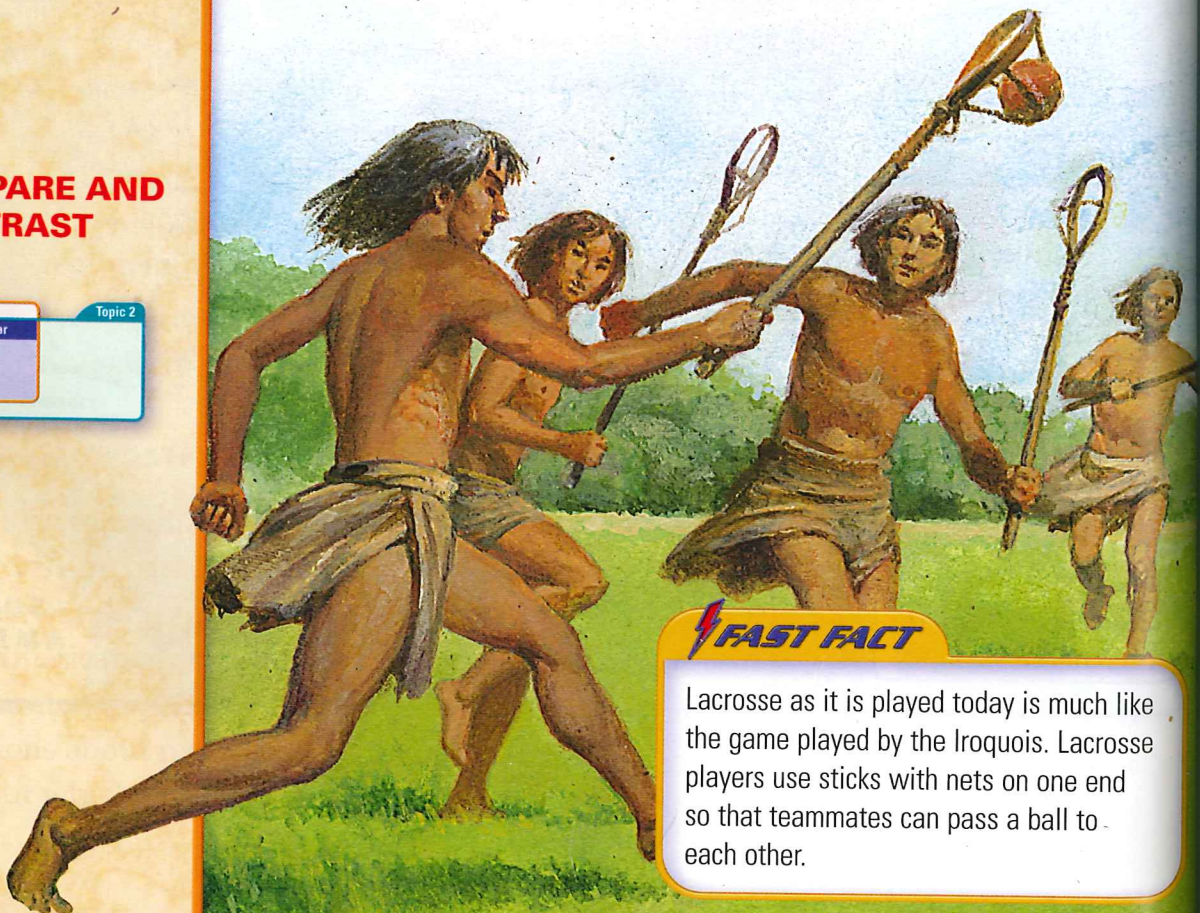


### COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Topic 1	Similar	Topic 2



Imagine playing a ball game with other Iroquois children. You scoop up the ball in the small leather basket at the end of your stick and run toward the other team's goal. Darting past the other children, you make your way down the long playing field. As you fling the ball toward the goal, your heart races with excitement. Your skillful play will bring honor to you and your family. Score!



### FAST FACT

Lacrosse as it is played today is much like the game played by the Iroquois. Lacrosse players use sticks with nets on one end so that teammates can pass a ball to each other.



► **THE EASTERN WOODLANDS** The many forests of this region provided people with wood that was used to make homes and tools.

## Life in the Eastern Woodlands

The Eastern Woodlands cultural region stretched east of the Mississippi River. The region's name came from the thick forests that once covered this land. The Eastern Woodlands people built their villages along the banks of the many rivers and streams flowing through the forests.

### A Common Resource

Different groups of Native Americans lived in the Eastern Woodlands. However, they all shared an important natural resource—trees. They used trees to make canoes and shelters, and they carved tools and weapons from wood. Trees also gave the people food, such as cherries and plums.

The Eastern Woodlands people were farmers as well as hunters and gatherers.

In the northeastern part of the Woodlands, where the soil was rocky, people did more hunting and gathering than farming.

Jobs were divided between men and women. The men hunted animals for food and used antlers and bones to make tools. Using spears and nets, they fished in the region's many lakes and rivers. The women prepared the food and used animal skins to make clothing and moccasins. This **division of labor** made it possible for people to produce more goods.

In the southern areas of the Eastern Woodlands the soil and climate were better for farming. The people in this area grew corn, beans, squash, and other plants. Usually, the men cleared the land for planting, and the women and children did the planting and harvesting of crops.

### READING CHECK COMPARE AND CONTRAST

How were men's jobs and women's jobs divided?

# The Iroquois

The Native Americans of the Eastern Woodlands cultural region included two main language groups, the Algonquian (al•GAHN•kwee•uhn) and the Iroquoian (ir•uh•KWOY•uhn). Most of the people who spoke Algonquian languages lived on the Coastal Plain. Most Iroquoian-speaking people lived farther inland.

Among the Iroquoian groups were the Mohawk, the Oneida (oh•NY•duh), the Onondaga (ah•nuhn•DAW•guh), the Cayuga (kay•YOO•guh), and the Seneca. Together, they are known as the Iroquois, or the Five Nations. They lived near the Great Lakes, in what is now Pennsylvania and New York and the Lake Ontario region of Canada.

## Iroquois Villages

Like other Eastern Woodlands groups, the Iroquois farmed and lived in villages. They built their villages on top of steep hills. To protect against enemies, many Iroquois built **palisades**, or walls of tall wooden poles, around their villages.

The Iroquois lived in shelters called **longhouses**. These long wooden buildings could hold up to 50 people. Their frames were made by cutting poles from small trees, bending the poles, and then covering them with bark. Each longhouse was divided into sections, and each section was home to one or two families.

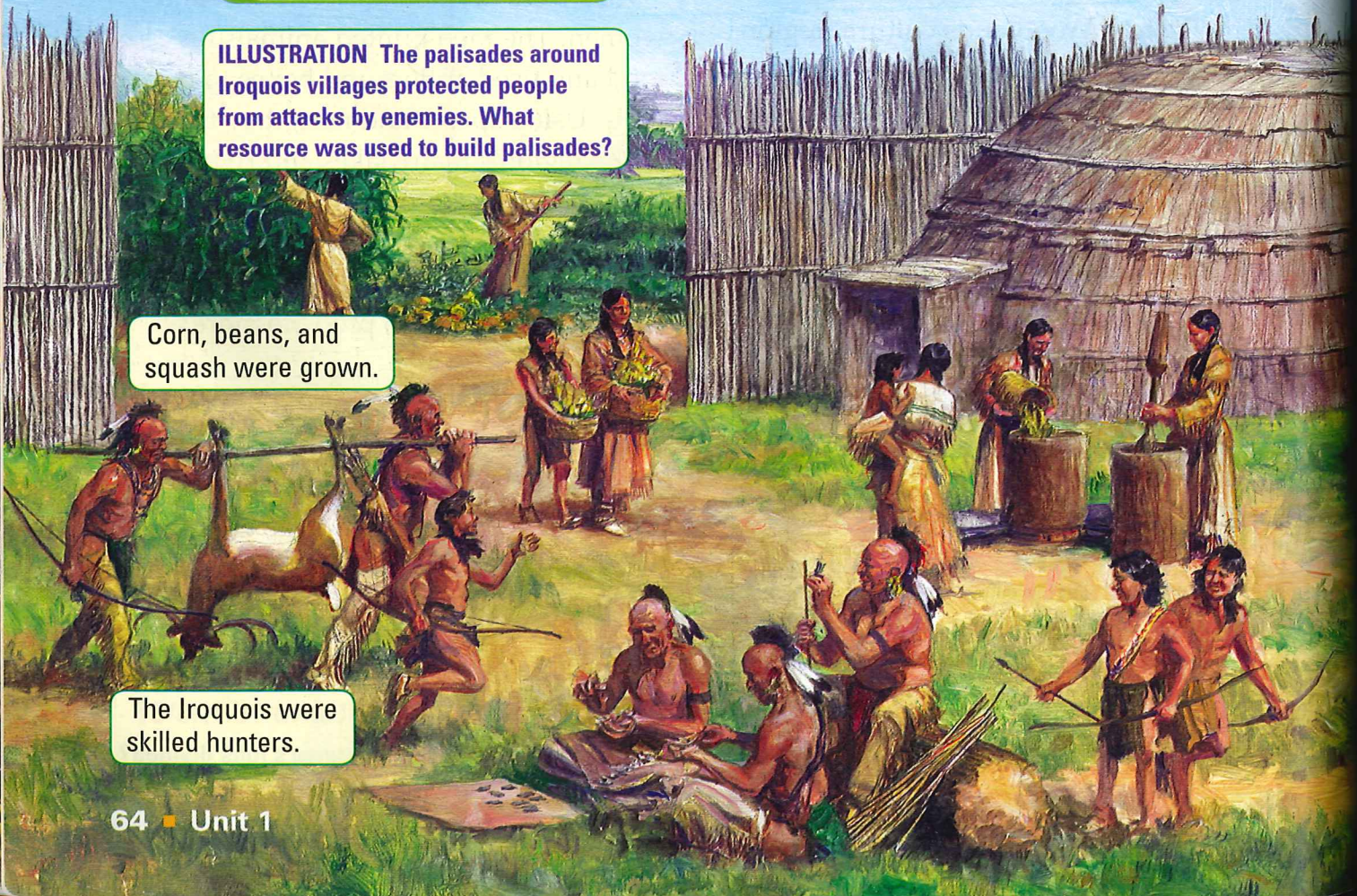
Near their villages, the Iroquois grew three main crops—corn, beans, and squash. The Iroquois called these the Three Sisters because all three were

### An Iroquois Village

**ILLUSTRATION** The palisades around Iroquois villages protected people from attacks by enemies. What resource was used to build palisades?

Corn, beans, and squash were grown.

The Iroquois were skilled hunters.



planted in the same field. After a field was farmed for a few years, the soil became less fertile. The Iroquois would then clear a field in another location and begin farming there.

Like many other Native Americans, the Iroquois used **wampum**—beads cut from seashells—to make beaded designs that showed important decisions, events, or stories. Wampum was also traded and exchanged for goods.

### The Iroquois League

The Five Nations often battled each other over control of hunting areas. A story about one argument tells of an Iroquois warrior named **Hiawatha**. Hiawatha, it was said, saw his family killed by members of another group. By tradition, he was expected to kill those

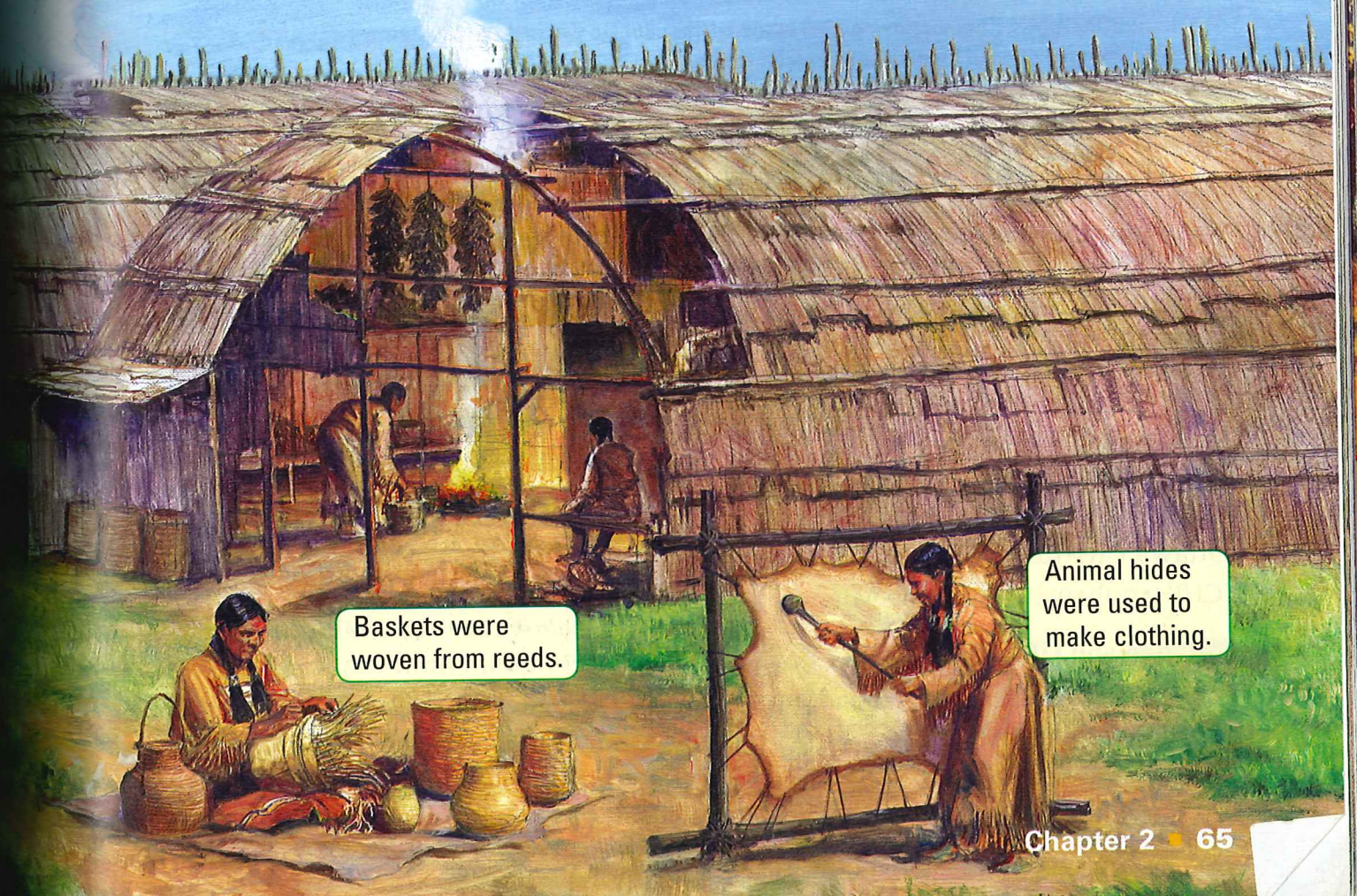
who had killed his family. However, he wanted the fighting to stop.

Hiawatha left his village and met another Iroquois, named **Deganawida** (deh•gahn•uh•WEE•duh), who became known as the Peacemaker. In time, the two men persuaded the Five Nations to unite and work together as a group.

The group that formed about A.D. 1570 was called the Iroquois League. It acted as a **confederation**, a loose group of governments working together. Members from each of the five tribes were sent to speak for their group. They joined the Grand Council, which the league set up to settle disputes among the people peacefully.

#### READING CHECK MAIN IDEA AND DETAILS

What was the Iroquois League?



Baskets were woven from reeds.

Animal hides were used to make clothing.



► **THE ALGONQUIAN** This engraving was made by Theodor De Bry in A.D. 1590 from a watercolor made by the English settler John White.

## The Algonquian

Among the Algonquian groups were the Delaware, the Wampanoag (wahm•puh•NOH•ag), and the Powhatan (pow•uh•TAN). All three of these tribes lived on the Coastal Plain. Other Algonquian-speaking groups lived farther inland, around the Great Lakes. These people included the Ottawa (AH•tuh•wuh), the Chippewa (CHIH•puh•waw), and the Miami.

### Villages and Lifeways

Most Algonquian groups had anywhere from 1 to 20 villages. Some groups built longhouses similar to those of

the Iroquois. Others built round, bark-covered shelters called **wigwams**. Apart from their shape, wigwams were made in much the same way as longhouses. The trunks of small trees were bent, tied together into a dome shape, and then covered with bark.

### Algonquian Lifeways

The Algonquian who lived near the coast did not rely on their crops for food as much as their Iroquois neighbors. Fish was an important food source. The Algonquian built canoes to fish in the rivers and along the coast. They used animal bones and wood to make hooks and fishing traps.

The Algonquian made clothing mostly from deerskin, which kept them warm during the cold winters. Men wore shirts, leggings, and moccasins. Women usually wore dresses.

### Government and Customs

Many Algonquian groups had leaders who governed more than one village. Some groups had two chiefs, one to rule on matters of peace and the other to rule on matters of war.

Among Algonquian groups, marriage ceremonies were very much alike. If a man wanted to marry a woman, he had to show her he was a good hunter. If the woman wanted to marry him, she would show him that she was a good homemaker. When the couple married, they usually exchanged gifts and invited their families to a feast.

#### READING CHECK **COMPARE AND CONTRAST**

How did the diet of the Algonquian differ from that of the Iroquois?



► **ALGONQUIAN BOWL** Many Algonquian household items were carved from wood.

### Summary

The people of the Eastern Woodlands used trees for food, shelter, and transportation. The two main language groups of the Eastern Woodlands were the Iroquoian and the Algonquian.

## REVIEW

- 1. WHAT TO KNOW** How did the geography and climate of the Eastern Woodlands affect the Native Americans there?
- 2. VOCABULARY** How is the term **confederation** related to the Iroquois League?
- 3. GEOGRAPHY** Why was living near the Atlantic Ocean important for the Algonquian peoples?
- 4. CRITICAL THINKING** Why did the Iroquois groups choose to come together to form the Iroquois League?
- 5. GIVE A SPEECH** Write and deliver a speech to try to persuade Iroquois leaders to join the Iroquois League. Be sure to include good reasons for working together.
- 6. COMPARE AND CONTRAST** On a separate sheet of paper, copy and complete the graphic organizer below.

Topic 1		Topic 2
The Iroquois	Similar	The Algonquian