

**NATIVE AMERICAN TRY-IT**  
**Girl Scouts of Middle Tennessee**

**Age Level:**

**B**

There are six activities to choose from. To earn a try-it four activities must be completed.

1. Oral traditions are an important part of the Native American culture. Storytelling was used to teach and explain creation, relationships and close ties with nature. Visit a library and find a story to read or have someone read it to you.
2. Native American crafts reflect a rich tradition of artistry. Basket making, bead craft and pottery played both practical and ceremonial roles. Learn a craft: weave a God's Eye or make a woven belt using beads.
3. Mark the movement of the sun by using a pole and marking its shadow with a stone.
4. Take a trip to look for Indian artifacts or visit a museum or a cultural center to see them.
5. Native American picture writing is beautiful. Painted pictures were used to record tribal history and for many other reasons. Attached are some Native American picture writing symbols. See if you can read the message or have someone read it to you.
6. Learn a Native American game. Attached are three games for you to choose from.



# BEADS FOR BARTER

**M**any Indian tribes are famous for the beautiful jewelry they created. The Hopi Indians made necklaces from polished stones and shells. Other tribes used the teeth and bones of different animals. Some even used corn kernels as beads.

The colors the Indians used were chosen because they represented something important to the tribe.

Red = morning or evening; health  
Blue = sky or water; power  
Yellow = sun or moon

White = water or day  
Orange = calm, peace

★ String your own necklace or belt with beads made from macaroni! You can even dye the macaroni different colors.

1. Get a bowl for each color you want to use. Pour a small amount of water into each bowl. Add a few drops of food coloring. (Remember: yellow + red = orange. Do not color the macaroni beads you want to be white.)
2. Put several pieces of macaroni in each bowl. (Ditalini works best.) Stir and allow them to soak for just a moment. (Macaroni takes the dye quickly.)
3. Carefully remove the macaroni. Allow the pieces to dry completely on a piece of wax paper.
4. Thread a needle with heavy thread and string the "beads." Tie the thread around the first bead so it won't slip off.
5. Make the necklace or belt long enough to fit over your head or around your waist. Leave some thread at the end of the strand so that you can tie the two ends together in a tight knot.
6. Make several strands of beads to wear at the same time.



## WAMPUM

Indians on the eastern coast of America made beads from the white and purple parts of clam shells. These beads were woven into belts and necklaces and were called *wampum*.

Wampum was used as money when the Indians wanted to *barter* or trade for something.

The purple beads were worth more than the white ones.

★ You can make your own wampum by dyeing some macaroni pieces purple and leaving others plain. What two colors need to be mixed to make purple? \_\_\_\_\_

# Fun and Games

Many Native American tribes enjoyed playing games. They made their own playing pieces from the things around them. They used sticks, stones, fruit pits, animal bones and other objects to create games and toys.

## ✧ **Stick Around**

To play this game, a Native American would bend a long, thin green branch into a circle and tie the ends together to form a hoop.

The object of the game is to toss three sticks, each a little shorter than the width of the hoop, into the hoop. The trick is that you must stand four feet away and turn your back to the hoop. Then toss the sticks over your shoulder without looking.

If you do not have a hoop, form a piece of rope into a circle. Give yourself one point each time you succeed in getting a stick in the circle. Give yourself an extra point if you get all three sticks on one turn.

## ✧ **Get the Point**

Some tribes enjoyed an especially challenging game. They would tie a ball of grass to a sharp, pointed stick. The object was to toss a ball and get it to land on the stick. (It's not as easy as it sounds!)

A modern version of this game uses a 12-inch stick, a 14-inch piece of string and a paper cup. Make a tiny hole in the bottom of the cup and insert one end of the string. Knot the end inside the cup so that the string can't slip out. Tie the other end to the top of the stick.

Now, try to swing the cup and catch it on the stick.

## ✧ **Can You Guess?**

In this game, you will need two small stones. Mark one stone with a red dot using paint, markers or crayon.

Sit in a circle with two or more friends. Pass one stone to another player, but keep it hidden the whole time. Ask another person to guess which stone you gave away. If the person guesses correctly, give him or her both stones. That person now takes a turn, and so on. If he/she guesses incorrectly, you go again. The person who guesses correctly the most times wins.

# PICTURE THIS!

**A**merican Indians painted pictures to record their tribal history, to tell about their dreams; and to describe their successes in battle and in the hunt. Indians in the northern part of the U.S. painted their pictures on walls and totem poles. The Plains Indians used the hides of animals, and the Woodland Indians drew on strips of birch bark.

Indian picture writing is very beautiful. Paints were made from the earth and from dried plants and grasses which were crushed and mixed with water. A piece of buffalo bone was dipped into the paint and used to draw the pictures.

★ Here are some Indian picture-writing symbols and a message for you to translate. Use the back of this page to write the message in English. You will have to add such words as "to," "and," "in," and "the."

LAKE

EAT

SING

ME, MY

HOUSE

FRIENDS

REST  
|| (Used instead of a period.)

MOUNTAINS

SWIM

BRING

GO TO A FEAST, PARTY

COME

FISH

WE, US

YOU, YOUR

DANCE

GO

PLENTY OF FOOD