

NATIVE AMERICANS PEOPLE OF THE DESERT

Educational Video
29 Minutes

DISCOVERY EDUCATION
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BEHIND THE SCENES

Video crews traveled throughout the Southwestern states of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Colorado to bring back dramatic images of the Southwestern landscape and the ruins of the Anasazi.

Numerous Anasazi ruins were filmed and include the following:

Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado:

Cliff Palace
Square Tower House
Balcony House
Spruce Tree House

Chaco Canyon, New Mexico:

Pueblo Alto
Pueblo Bonito
Pueblo del Arroyo
Pueblo Pintado
kin Kletso

Navajo National Monument, Arizona:

Betatakin
Keet Seel (principal ruin featured in the video)

Dramatic rock formations and landforms were filmed throughout the Southwest and include the following locations:

Arches National Park, UT
Canyon Lands National Park, UT
Chaco Culture National Historical Park, NM
Navajo National Monument, AZ
Valley of the Gods, UT

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Mesa Verde National Park
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Chaco Culture National Historical Park
Arches National Park
Canyon Lands National Park
Red Rock Canyon Recreation Area
Valley of the Gods Recreation Area
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INTRODUCTION

This video is designed to introduce students to Native Americans of the Southwest and to help establish an affinity for their culture.

Students will see that the Southwest is a unique region consisting of arid mountains, cliffs and deserts. Seemingly barren and inhospitable, the Southwest was home to many prominent tribes, including the Navajo, Hopi, Apache, Pima, Zuni and many others.

The focus of this video is on prehistoric times when the Anasazi, or "ancient ones," as they were called by the Navajo, built impressive stone cities and cliff dwelling villages.

The video depicts the day-to-day life of a typical Anasazi family as told through the narrative voice of Akena, a 12 year-old boy. Students will learn how the Anasazi hunted, cooked, made tools and weapons, clothing and pottery. Also discussed are the Anasazi concepts of religion, spirits and the afterlife.

The climax of the video depicts a narrow escape from an enemy raiding party.

Painstakingly researched and authentically recreated, this video provides a rare glimpse of prehistoric culture in an engaging and entertaining format.

OBJECTIVES

After viewing the video, students should know:

- where Native Americans originated
- the unique natural environment of the Southwest
- prominent tribes of the Southwest
- who the Anasazi were
- how the Anasazi built their homes
- how the Anasazi made their tools, weapons and pottery
- how the Anasazi hunted
- how the Anasazi cooked
- how the Anasazi grew their crops
- the importance of trade to a prehistoric economy
- the Anasazi view of religion, spirits and the afterlife
- that while Northwest Coast children may have led different lives, they had many things in common with children of today

Summary

The video opens by portraying the natural environment of the Southwest: dramatic images of towering buttes, sandstone escarpments and red rock canyons.

Historic photographs depict some of the tribes who lived in the Southwest, including the Ute, Pima, Navajo and Hopi.

Ancient petroglyphs (rock art) introduce students to a people who were known as the Anasazi, or ancient ones. The Anasazi were living the desert more than 2,000 years ago. They built simple stone dwellings, later culminating in impressive stone "cities" four and even five stories high. The Anasazi also built cliff dwellings high into canyon walls and the video shows numerous cliff dwelling ruins throughout the Southwest.

Students learn that the Anasazi grew beans, corn and other crops on the mesas that were located directly above their cliff dwellings, and that their culture reached a high level of development evidenced by the sophistication of their baskets, tools and other artifacts.

Posing the questions, "Who were the Anasazi?", and "Where did they come from?", the video segue to an animation sequence that shows the probable migratory route of all Native Americans, from Asia across the Bering Land Bridge that existed some 30,000 years ago. Animation also shows how Native Americans settled into various regional groups, distinguished by common adaptations to unique natural environments. Students learn that one of the groups, Native Americans of the Southwest, inhabited a region that is both dry and rugged.

The video then follows a typical Anasazi family in their day-to-day activities as told through the voice of Akena, a 12 year-old boy.

Akena is first seen with his father, Tokama, hunting for rabbit. We learn there is a drought and because of it, there are fewer game. About to return home empty-handed, they finally spot a rabbit. The father takes careful aim with his bow and the rabbit is shot. "It is only a small rabbit," says Akena, "but still our people will be pleased."

Back at their cliff dwelling village, Akena's mother and little sister are shown preparing for dinner. First, the mother starts a fire by spinning a dowel on a piece of wood. The spinning causes the wood to heat up, igniting dry grass. The mother then takes a dry yucca leaf to pass the flame to some twigs and sticks, gradually building a large fire.

We next see the mother grinding corn using grinding stones. The kernels are ground to a sticky goo and then formed into patties. After cooking on a hot rock, we see the result: corn bread. The video also shows other food items of the Anasazi: different types of corn, beans, gourds, wild grains, nuts and berries.

The father is next shown making tools from a block of flint. After breaking off a smaller piece, he uses a "hammer" stone to chip away at the piece. Once the piece reaches the

desired form, he uses a deer's antler to press against the edges of the flint to make the edges sharp. The finished tool is a knife which is used for cutting, scraping and chopping. We also see an assortment of other Anasazi tools, some with handles, including axes, cutters, scrapers and arrowheads.

The video next shows Akena and his family having a typical Anasazi dinner, sitting cross legged in front of their dwelling, eating with their fingers from Anasazi black-on-white bowls.

After dinner, the family plays a game of hidden stone (their version of the shell game), the object of the game being to guess under which wooden cone a turquoise stone is hidden. Akena's grandfather misses on all his attempts and the family engages in some good-natured kidding.

The next day, Akena accompanies his father and uncle on a trading journey. We learn that they will travel far to the south to meet with people of another tribe and that this journey might be dangerous. The video features some of the landmarks Akena will see: The Great Stone Bridge, The Woman of Stone and Her Bashful Daughter, and Balancing Rock: each landmark being a naturally-created rock formation of unusual form.

Back at the cliff dwelling, we watch as Akena's mother and sister make pottery by coiling sections of clay one on top of another until the pot reaches the desired size and shape. The mother then places the pot in a fire where it becomes hard and waterproof. The video then displays an assortment of Anasazi pottery, decorated in the usual black-on-white style.

Next, the mother is shown sewing rabbit furs into a blanket, using a needle made from a deer's bone. We learn that the Anasazi use rabbit fur and deerskin for their clothing.

Akena and his father are next seen meeting with the traders. Akena is impressed by things he has never seen, including a green parrot, sea shells and coral. We learn that the sea shells and coral come from a great body of water far to the west.

The father is shown dickering with Loho, one of the traders. The father wants to trade his deer antlers for a block of "black glass" (obsidian), and Loho reluctantly agrees.

Later in the day, Loho conducts a sage blessing, passing burning sage among the traders to protect them on their return trip. Through his narrative voice, Akena tells us that he is happy to take part in the blessing as there are many evil spirits in the world and it is they who bring evil to the Anasazi -- sickness, drought, death. Akena explains how the Anasazi must lead good lives, respecting nature and all its creatures.

In the climax, Akena, his father and uncle are traveling through the land of the "Hostiles," a fierce war-loving people, when they are attacked by a raiding party in war paint. Akena and his companions narrowly escape by hiding in a cave.

In a revised epilog,, the video discusses that the Anasazi abandoned their villages around the year 1300 -- no one is certain why -- and settled in other parts of the Southwest where they became known as Pueblo Indians. They lived in relative peace until the arrival of new peoples into the Southwest.

The video concludes with a number of sequences showing what life is like on modern-day reservations. Students will learn that while alcoholism and unemployment rates are high, life on most reservations is improving.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. When and how did Native Americans arrive in North America?

Most anthropologists today accept the theory that all Native Americans are descendants of Asian peoples who migrated to this continent in pursuit of game animals as long ago as 30,000 years, crossing a land bridge that once existed where the Bering Sea is today.

2. How long did the migration take?

There were probably several migrations spread over thousands of years.

3. Where did these Asian people settle?

They settled in all parts of North and South America, adapting to the unique natural environments found in the various regions.

4. How are Native Americans classified?

While Native Americans can be classified in a number of ways, including language and tribal affiliation, the video focuses on classification by group, according to the common habits and customs acquired to adapt to a region's natural environment.

5. How many groups are there?

Seven are featured in this video which covers all U.S. states, excluding Hawaii and portions of Alaska. The seven featured groups are the Eastern Woodlands, the Plains, the Southwest, the Plateau, the Great Basin, California, and the Northwest Coast.

6. What are some of the tribes of the Southwest?

Historic tribes include the Navajo, Hopi, Apache, Pima, Yuma and Zuni.

7. Who were the Anasazi?

A prehistoric people who achieved a high level of development in the American Southwest.

8. What does Anasazi mean?

"Anasazi" is a Navajo word that has been translated both as "ancient ones" and as "enemy ancestors."

9. Why did the Anasazi choose to settle in the desert?

No one is sure, but some speculate the Anasazi were peaceful farmers and that they may have settled in this remote area to avoid nomadic hostile tribes.

10. How did the Anasazi build their homes?

This video features the Anasazi when they first used stones, stacking them one on top of another to build simple dwellings. Their homes culminated in impressive stone and mortar "cities" that stood four and even five stories high and housed as many as a thousand people.

11. When did the Anasazi begin to build their cliff dwellings?

True cliff dwellings were first constructed about 800 years ago.

12. Why did the Anasazi build their cliff dwellings in such inaccessible places?

No one is sure, but since the cliff dwellings were hidden and difficult to attack, one may surmise they were built for defensive purposes.

13. What was the Anasazi diet like?

It was quite varied and included such staples as corn, beans and gourds which they grew themselves, and rabbit and deer they hunted. They also gathered wild grains, nuts and berries.

14. How did the Anasazi make fire?

By spinning a wooden dowel against another piece of wood; the friction caused the wood to heat up, eventually igniting tinder such as dry grass.

15. How did the Anasazi make their bread?

From corn, by grinding the kernels into patties and heating them on hot rocks.

16. How did the Anasazi eat?

With their fingers, taking food from bowls.

17. Did the Anasazi play games?

Yes. One game was called hidden stone and it involved hiding a stone beneath one of four wooden cones, with players attempting to guess the correct cone in as few tries as possible.

18. How did the Anasazi make their tools and weapons?

From flint other rocks found in their area. They chipped and ground stone axes, arrowheads, cutters and scrapers. Some tools had handles.

19. How did the Anasazi obtain shells and coral?

The Anasazi lived near no oceans and obtained shells and coral by trading with tribes from other regions.

20. How did the Anasazi make their pottery?

One method involved laying clay coils one on top of another and then smoothing them with their fingers. Pots were placed in a fire to harden and for waterproofing.

21. How did the Anasazi make their clothes and blankets?

This video features the Anasazi use of rabbit fur and deerskin in the making of blankets and clothing.

22. Did the Anasazi have a religion?

Like virtually all Native Americans, the Anasazi believed that the world was inhabited by good and evil spirits and that if the people led good lives they would go to a special place after they died.

23. Did the Anasazi have enemies?

Yes. Featured in the video is an attack by an enemy raiding party.

24. Why did the Anasazi abandon their cities and cliff dwellings?

No one knows. Not discussed in the video are some popular theories, which include: drought, depletion of resources, disease, social breakdown and attacks by enemies. The real reason might be a combination of factors.

25. What became of the Anasazi?

No one knows for sure, but the video present the popular belief that they settled in other parts of the Southwest where they became known as pueblo Indians.

26. Where did the U.S. government put Indians after they were forced to give up their land.

On reservations.

27. What did the government do with many Indian children?

Forced them to attend strict boarding schools.

28. How many Indians choose to remain on reservations today in the U.S.?

More than a half million.

29. What are two major problems found on most reservations today?

Unemployment and alcoholism.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to encourage classroom discussion

1. While no one knows with certainty why the Anasazi built cliff dwellings, some authorities speculate they were built for defensive purposes.

Question: Why would cliff dwellings be difficult to attack?

Acceptable answers include: (1) they were hidden (2) they were usually built below over-hanging rocks making an attack from above difficult (3) trails leading to the dwellings were steep and narrow (4) they were made of stone

2. No one knows why, but the Anasazi abandoned their cliff dwellings around the year 1300.

Question: What are some possible explanations?

Acceptable answers include: drought, disease, depletion of resources, social breakdown, enemy encroachment, or a combination of factors.

3. The video shows many examples of Anasazi petroglyphs (rock art), the meanings of which are unknown.

Question: Why did the Anasazi make petroglyphs?

Acceptable answers include:

- to record noteworthy events like an eclipse, supernova, great battle, etc.
- to bring good luck in hunting and battle
- as a means of self-expression
- as their version of graffiti

4. Akena and his family are shown playing a game of hidden stone after dinner.

Question: What modern game is similar to hidden stone?

Answer: the shell game, but instead of a pea and three walnut half-shells, the Anasazi used a stone and four wooden cones.

5. Akena is shown examining sea shells and coral brought by the traders said to have "come from a great body of water far to the west".

Question: From what body of water did the items likely come?

Acceptable answers: the Pacific Ocean (about 600 miles to the west) or the Gulf of California (about 500 miles to the southwest).

6. Loho's parrot was said to come from a faraway land.

Question: Where did the parrot likely originate?

Acceptable answers include: Mexico, Central America and South America.

7. Akena's father is shown trading deer antlers to Loho for a block of "black glass" (obsidian).

Question: Who got the better deal?

There is no definite answer, of course. While many tools can be made from the obsidian, a deer's antler is important for sharpening the edges of tools and weapons

8. Loho is shown conducting a blessing by passing burning sage among the other traders to protect them in their travels.

Question: What superstitious things do some modern people do for good luck and protection?

Answers include: carrying a rabbit's foot or four leaf clover, crossing one's fingers, knocking on wood.

9. Akena discusses some of the spiritual beliefs of the Anasazi.

Question: How are Native American religious beliefs, of which of the Anasazi are typical, similar to our own?

Answers include:

- both believe in good and evil.
- both believe in an afterlife.

Question: How are Native American religious beliefs different from our own?

- they believed in the embodiment of good and evil.
- they attributed natural disasters, disease, virtually all disasters and calamities, to the work of evil spirits, while we believe in the scientific explanation for all events..

10. The utilization of a region's natural resources is an important part of adapting to that region.

Question: How did the Anasazi utilize the natural resources of the Southwest?

Possible answers include:

- made homes from stone.
- clothes were made from rabbit fur and deerskin.
- pottery was made from clay.
- tools were made from flint and chert.
- needles and awls were made from animal bones.
- baskets were made from bark.

11. The video features life on reservations today.

Question: Is it better for Indians to remain on reservations or leave them?

By staying on reservations, Indians maintain familiarity with family, friends and customs, but there are few employment opportunities there. Leaving can bring employment opportunities but can also lead to a loss of identity.

12. The video discusses some problems facing modern-day reservation Indians.

Question: What contributes to the high rate of alcoholism found on many reservations and reserves?

High rates of alcoholism are largely due to the high unemployment and resultant loss of hope found on many reservations. Without employment and something to work toward, many Indians lose their self-esteem and fall into idleness and despair. Many turn to alcohol as a way to escape their problems.

ACTIVITIES

These activities are designed to encourage students to learn more about some of the things covered in the video.

1. The video discusses Native Americans as descendants of Asian peoples who migrated to this continent as long ago as 30,000 years, crossing a land bridge that once connected Asia with North America. Many Native Americans living today don't accept this explanation, citing accounts of their own which have been passed down orally from previous generations.

Activity: Ask students to research books on Indian legends at the library and report back to the class how a selected tribe explains its origin.

2. The Anasazi economy was based on the barter system, trading one item for another of like worth.

Activity: Conduct a trading day and ask students to bring in something to trade with other students. Items they might bring in are old toys and games, old books, inexpensive trading cards, and inexpensive school supplies such as pencils, erasers, etc. When the trading is complete, review with the students some of the trades made. Why were they made? Who got the better deal?

3. The Anasazi were known for their outstanding pottery which was frequently decorated in black-on-white.

Activity: Using modeling clay, have students fashion pottery similar to that shown in the video or in books. The pottery need not be fired but, after drying, the students may enjoy painting them using some of their own designs.

4. Cliff dwellings were fascinating places.

Activity: Ask the students to find pictures of cliff dwellings and select one to fashion a model out of papier maché, clay, or other material.

5. While the historical way of life of Native Americans has dramatically changed, Native Americans haven't vanished. More than a million Native Americans live on reservations today.

Activity: Have the students research a selected reservation and report to the class the way of life of reservation Indians today.

6. Dozens of reservations are located throughout the U.S.

Activity:: Have students draw a U.S. map featuring modern-day Indian reservations.

GLOSSARY

abandon: to leave, completely and finally.

alcoholism: a disease caused by repeatedly drinking too much alcohol.

Anasazi: a Navajo word translated both as "Ancient ones" and "enemy ancestors," referring to early inhabitants of the desert Southwest.

awl: a pointed tool for making small holes in leather or wood.

chert: a hard rock composed mostly of quartz that has fracturing qualities similar to flint.

clan: a group of people of common descent.

coral: the hard skeletons of certain sea animals.

descendants: people who are the offspring of a specific ancestor.

environment: that which comprises all the things of a specific place or region.

flint: a hard rock that fractures without shattering.

mesa: a land formation having a flat top and steep walls; typical of arid regions of the Southwest.

migration: the movement of people or animals from one region to another.

petroglyphs: a prehistoric drawing or carving on rock.

reservation: an area of land set aside by the government for the use of Native Americans.

ruin: the remains of a building, village or town that is in a state of decay.

sage: a grayish-green shrub found abundantly in the desert and held sacred by many Native Americans.

sandstone: a rock formed of highly compressed sand.

spirit: a supernatural being without physical form.

turquoise: a semi-precious blue mineral.

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SCRIPT

Narrator

The winds have great patience. They blow today as they have for centuries, carving this land of standing rock and sandstone cliffs. Today, there is no one who hears the wind. No people who walk this canyon, or drink from this stream. But if you listen carefully, you can hear voices: voices in the wind, voices from the past voices of the desert people.

MAIN TITLE: Native Americans: People of the Desert

There were many people who called the desert their home. They had many names: Ute, Pima, Navajo, Hopi. But the people who were here before these were called the Anasazi, the "ancient ones."

These are examples of their rock art.

The Anasazi were living in the desert as long ago as two thousand years. Why they chose to live here, we'll probably never know, for while they left behind their pictures, they did not have a written language.

Perhaps they were a peaceful people and found safety in the desert, away from other, hostile tribes.

Early homes of the Anasazi were simple. Some were made of stone slabs, stacked one on top of another.

Later in their development, the homes became larger.

Family joined family, creating communities.

The style of their stonework changed from generation to generation. And they now used clay to keep the stones together.

Logs were used to support upper stories, and the Anasazi built their largest and finest dwellings, like Pueblo Bonito. It once stood five stories high and may have housed as many as a thousand people.

After a thousand years of steady development, the Anasazi built their largest and finest dwellings, like Pueblo Bonito. It once stood five stories high and may have housed as many as a thousand people.

Then, about 800 years ago, the Anasazi began to do something unusual. They began to build their homes high into canyon walls.

The ruins of these cliff dwellings can be found throughout the Southwest.

They were usually built below massive over-hanging rocks. The homes were not only hidden, but were difficult to attack.

The Anasazi grew beans, corn and other crops on the flat mesas that were located directly above their homes. Each day they had to climb steep trails to go to and from their fields.

They made fires next to their homes, for cooking, and warmth during the cold winters.

They sharpened their tools and weapons on the sandstone rocks used to make their walls.

And here, too, they made their rock art.

The Anasazi made beautiful pottery.

They wove baskets from the bark of trees.

From the bones of animals they made needles and awls.

And from flint and other rock they chipped weapons that were not only functional but also beautiful.

Who were the Anasazi? Where did they come from? How did they get here? While many Native Americans explain their origin in a different way, most anthropologists believe the following: about 30,000 years ago, North America looked much like it does today. A narrow stretch of ocean separated Asia from this continent. There were no people live here.

Then, ice began to advance across the Northern Hemisphere. As it did, sea levels dropped, exposing a land bridge connecting Asia with North America.

Large game animals, like bison and mammoth, crossed this land bridge, entering the new continent, soon followed by Asian hunters.

There were probably several migrations, over thousands of years, and eventually, the people spread throughout North and South America, before the ice retreated and the land bridge became covered by water again. There were hundreds of tribes, but each can be classified into one of several groups, according to the natural environment in which they lived. The names of the groups are: the Eastern Woodlands, the Plains, the Southwest, the Great Basin, the Plateau, California, and the Northwest Coast.

Each of these groups lived in an environment that was unlike the others.

None of the others lived in an environment quite like this one, the Southwest, the land of the desert people. This region is dry and rugged. There is little vegetation.

How was it that people could live here? What were their lives like?

For the answers, we need only to listen to the wind, the wind that has blown for centuries.

Akena

I am Akena. This is my father, Tokama.

We have been hunting most of the afternoon and even though my father is the best hunter in our clan, we have not been very lucky.

The rains have not come in many passings of the moon. The creeks are nearly dry and my father says there are fewer rabbits because of it.

It is only a very small rabbit. It won't feed many mouths, but still our people will be pleased.

While we have been hunting, my mother has been back at our village, preparing for our dinner.

First, she starts a fire by spinning a stick on a piece of wood. The spinning causes the wood to heat up.

Sheva, my little sister, watches very carefully. In a few years she will have to know how to start a fire herself.

Soon the wood gets hot enough to make dry grass smolder. My mother then blows on this until flames appear. At just the right moment she takes a dry yucca leaf to pass the flame to some twigs and sticks. She adds to this until there is a real fire.

Corn is eaten at practically every meal. We grow it ourselves.

The kernels first must be ground.

They are then formed into patties.

Even Sheva helps out by making a patty or two.

This is what they look like after they've been cooked on a hot rock: corn bread. With a little bit of honey, they taste very good.

We grow several different types of corn and beans and other crops as well. And we also pick wild grain, nuts and berries.

While my mother cooks, my father will make more tools. Many of our knives, axes and arrowheads are made the same way, from flint, chert and other rocks found in our area.

My father has broken a piece of flint off a larger piece.

He uses a hammer stone to chip away at the flint. He must be careful. If he hits the flint too hard, or in the wrong place, it will shatter.

Gradually the flint is worked into the desired shape.

When the piece is nearly complete, my father will use a deer's antler to press against the edges of the flint. This breaks off even smaller pieces of flint, and the edges of the tool become very sharp.

In just a short time, my father has made a knife. It is very sharp and is used for cutting, scraping and chopping.

My father can make many tools: axes, cutters, and scrapers of many types, and, of course, arrowheads.

Sometimes we put handles on our tools. This makes them easier to use and more effective.

We eat two meals each day and we always eat outdoors, unless it is raining.

We're very hungry as it has been a long time since we've had our first meal.

There is little talk at our meals. We are too hungry.

After dinner, we might tell stories, or better still, play a game of hidden stone.

The object of the game is to guess under which cone a turquoise stone is hidden.

The sooner you find the turquoise, the more points you score.

The next day is one of great excitement. My father and my uncle have been chosen by our clan to travel to the south to trade with people of another tribe. For the first time, my father has agreed to take me with him, even though our journey might be dangerous.

We will see places I have only heard about: The Great Stone Bridge, The Woman of Stone and Her Bashful Daughter, and Balancing Rock. This will be a great adventure.

While we are gone, my mother and sister will have plenty to do. This will be a good time for them to make some new pottery from clay found in our area.

My mother begins by working clay with her hands, making sure there are no air bubbles inside.

Next, she places a piece in the bottom of a bowl and spreads it out evenly.

When the inside of the bowl is covered, my mother places a coil around the edge, and smoothes this out.

She keeps adding coils and smoothing until the pot reaches the desired shape.

After drying in the sun, the pot changes to a lighter color and is placed in the fire where it is covered with another pot.

Wood is stacked around this.

After several hours in the fire, the pot becomes very hard and waterproof.

After firing, the pot is decorated. Practically all our pottery is painted the same color, black on white.

Another job that always needs being done is sewing. My mother is adding a rabbit fur to a blanket. As always, Sheva is right by her side.

The needle my mother uses is carved from the bone of a deer, another animal we hunt in our area.

We use rabbit furs for our blankets, robes and clothing. We also use deerskin, but rabbit fur is much softer and it is Sheva's favorite.

My father and I have come to the place where we meet the traders from the other tribe. My father has met them before and they have become friends.

One of the raiders, Loho, has brought a strange green bird. It is said to come from a faraway land. The bird is very friendly, and quite smart. With just a little help from Loho, it will lie on its back and roll over.

The trader shows other things I've never seen. A beautiful shell that comes from a great body of water far to the west. And red coral which can be made into beautiful jewelry.

My father examines a large block of black glass. It is found only in special areas. Many excellent tools can be made from a piece this large.

My father wants to trade deer antlers he has brought, for the black glass, but Loho does not seem interested. He says the glass is worth much more than the antlers.

My father doesn't agree and the two dicker back and forth. Until finally, Loho gives in.

Later that day, Loho performs a blessing. Burning sage is passed among the traders to protect them on their return trip.

Sage grows just about everywhere in the desert and it is know to have special powers.

We are all happy to take part in this blessing, for there are many evil spirits in the world who live in the forbidden land. They have great powers and can bring evil to the Anasazi. . .sickness. . .drought.. . .death.

Just as there are evil spirits, there are good spirits, too. It is a spirit who is responsible for the rains that bring needed water to the desert.

It is a spirit who is responsible for the wind which spreads the seeds of the desert plants.

If our people lead good lives, respecting nature and all its creatures, we will be permitted to live with the good spirits after we die.

It has been two days since we left the traders and we were passing through the land of the Hostiles, a fierce war-loving people. We hoped we wouldn't see any.

My uncle dropped his bag hoping this would slow the Hostiles down. It did, but not for long.

We hid in the cave for most of the day.

Finally, when we thought it was safe, we left. During the chase we lost some of the things we had traded for. Our people will not be too disappointed, for they will be happy we have returned with our lives.

Akena, his father and his uncle made it back safely, but the days of the cliff dwellers were coming to an end. No one is sure why, but the Anasazi abandoned their dwellings around the year 1300.

It is believed the people settled in other parts of the southwest where they became known as Pueblo Indians. Here, they built adobe villages along rivers and farmed the land. They lived in peace for hundreds of years until a new people, the Europeans, entered the continent.

Indians everywhere were forced to give up their way of life and to live on small reservations, areas of land set aside for Indians.

No longer able to hunt and fish in the old ways, the Indians were rationed food and clothing by the government. Some government agents who were supposed to help the Indians were dishonest. They stole money and supplies, so the Indians never got all that they were entitled to. As a result, the Indians lived in total poverty and many starved.

Tribes were forced to give up many of their traditions and could no longer perform many of their religious rites and ceremonies.

Many Indian children were separated from their families and were sent to strict boarding schools where they were forced to give up their Indian ways.

In the 1950s, the government encouraged Native Americans to relocate to the nation's cities, where they could find jobs and live in modern ways, but not all Indians chose to do this.

Today, Indians can live anywhere they want, and many choose to live off reservations in cities and towns, employed in the same sorts of jobs as other Americans.

But more than a half million Indians prefer to remain on reservations located throughout the United States.

Life here is much better than it used to be and, in some ways, is similar to life anywhere else.

Indians drive cars and live in modern dwellings like other Americans.

They dress in modern clothing and shop in stores.

They go to movies.

Many attend Christian churches.

Indian children go to schools that look like schools anywhere, and study the same kinds of subjects

They play the same sorts of games and enjoy the same things as other American children.

While reservation life is a lot like life anywhere else, there are some big differences. Unemployment is very high. On some reservations, four out of five people are out of work, and because of it, alcoholism and poverty are widespread.

One of the reasons unemployment is so high is because few businesses will come to the reservation. That's why some Indians are starting up their own.

Zuni Technologies is one of them. This furniture company is owned and operated by Zuni Indians here in New Mexico. There are plenty of furniture companies in the United States, but this one is unique. All of its furniture is accented with beautiful Zuni designs and colors that have long been associated with the Zuni people.

Zuni Technologies has not only brought needed jobs to the reservation, but its furniture is prized by people throughout the country.

But good paying jobs like these are few.

In recent years, many tribes have opened gambling casinos in order to create jobs and bring in additional income. But only a few tribes -- those near major cities -- have actually profited from casinos.

A few Native Americans are able to earn good livings by selling their arts and crafts. The Navajo are famous for their beautiful jewelry. Talented silversmiths can earn hundreds, even thousands, of dollars for a single piece. Their designs often include turquoise, coral and a variety of other materials.

Navajo weavers use simple looms to weave rugs and blankets. This weaver is showing her niece how to weave so that she might be able to do it herself one day. When this rug is finished, it will fetch thousands of dollars from a tourist.

Indians have been doing beadwork for many generations and some still do it today. Beadwork like this is prized by collectors and a single piece might sell for thousands of dollars.

Crafts like these not only bring in needed income, but they enable crafts people to stay in touch with their traditional ways, and that's important to many Indians.

That's why some Pueblo families prefer to live in the very pueblos in which their ancestors lived. Some pueblos are hundred of years old and many have no electricity or running water.

That's why this Navajo family still keep its traditional home, the hogan, and will visit it on special occasions.

That's why some Indians still plant corn in the old ways. . .and use grinding stones to grind it into flour, just like their ancestors did.

That's why they will occasionally cook Indian fry bread over an open fire, in the same way food was cooked centuries ago.

It's why they still gather wild plants. And make Navajo tea.

That's why some families still raise sheep, which has been a Navajo tradition for hundreds of years. Sheep are important not only for their meat, but also for their wool, which is used to weave blankets and rugs.

And that's why Indians everywhere continue to celebrate their ancient ceremonies and festivals. Some of these dances date back hundreds, even thousands of years, and may be similar to those that were performed by the Anasazi.

So, while the Anasazi may be gone, their spirit and many of their traditions live on.