

TCAP/WA

Directions

In a few moments, you will see a passage and a prompt. You are to plan and write an essay about the passage according to the instructions provided in the prompt. This activity will show how well you write. Express your thoughts clearly and make your writing interesting to the reader. Your essay will be scored as a rough draft, but you should watch for careless errors.

Before writing, spend some time reading the passage, thinking about the prompt, and planning your thoughts.

**WRITE ONLY ON THE PROMPT AND PASSAGE YOU ARE GIVEN.**

The time you have for writing is 60 minutes.

# Let's Talk about the Cherokee

by Bill Carey

## **Who Are the Cherokee?**

Before white settlers came to America, there were about 20,000 Cherokee living in parts of what are now eight states (including Tennessee).

The Cherokee lived in villages next to rivers. Within the village, each family lived in a small house made of mud and logs. Each family also had a different structure that they stayed in during the winter. It was covered with earth, to keep out the cold. Once you moved into the winter house, there was always a fire burning inside.

Cherokee villages didn't have stores, school buildings, or churches. Usually, the only structure other than houses that you found in Cherokee villages was the council house. Meetings were held in the council house.

## **What Was Life Like for Cherokee Children?**

Cherokee boys were taught how to find their way in the forest without getting lost. They were taught to make weapons with their bare hands. They were taught to make fire from sticks. They were taught how to fish. They were taught how to use a blowgun to hunt wild animals such as squirrels, rabbits, and birds.

Boys were also taught to make weapons and tools and carve things from wood. Whenever someone else in the village built a cabin or carved a canoe out of a hollowed-out log, the boys were expected to help. Whenever the men in the village were going on a hunting trip, boys were expected to come. These hunting trips might last for weeks.

If you were a girl in a Cherokee village, you learned how to make clothes out of animal skin and weave baskets from river cane. You learned to make containers for water. You learned to make jewelry out of things like shells, nuts, and stones.

Cherokee girls also had to help look after your younger brothers and sisters. In Cherokee society, women ran the household, so girls had a lot to learn, and a lot to do. They had to keep the fire burning all day. They had to know which plants you could eat, and which plants you could not eat. They gathered berries, nuts, and wild plants.

## **What Did the Cherokee Kids Do for Fun?**

Cherokee children played a game called stickball. Stickball was a rough game played between two teams that was sort of like lacrosse, only a lot tougher. A game of stickball might last for days. And in stickball, you could tackle any other player at any time. Stickball was such a tough sport that it also had a nickname – the little brother of war.

READ THIS WRITING PROMPT CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU BEGIN YOUR WRITING.

**After reading the passage “Let’s Talk about the Cherokee”, imagine you are a Cherokee boy or girl. Write a narrative story in which you tell about your life. What would your day be like? Use details from the passage to help you write your story. Make certain to use narrative techniques such as dialogue, description, and pacing to develop characters and events. Also, remember to use correct grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing your essay.**

You may use the space below for prewriting. You will have a time limit of 60 minutes.