

HUMBER ARBORETUM ECO CENTRE

HURON PEOPLE

INTERESTING FACTS

- ✦ The Wendat lived in harmony with their environment. Everything they wore or used was made from the natural things that they found in their environment.
- ✦ Wendat children did not go to school but learned everything by watching and listening to their elders. They did not have a written language so they had to *remember* everything they learned! Games were used to teach skills.
- ✦ The plants in their environment were used for many things. Cedar leaves and sumac berries were an excellent source of Vitamin C, to help prevent scurvy especially in winter. The inner bark of the willow is an excellent pain killer (aspirin). Yellow dye was made from goldenrod flowers and sumach branches. Trees were used for construction of shelter and canoes. Of course, the maple tree was used to produce maple sugar.



COOL ACTIVITIES



Talking Circle

Use the idea of a talking circle to debrief activities done during the day or to have a class discussion about an activity or situation that is relevant to the students. Have the students sit in a circle on the floor of the classroom. (You will have to clear away the desks and chairs.) Remember that the teacher is part of the circle, too. All members of the circle are equal.

You will need a talking stick or a talking feather to pass around the circle. The rules of the circle are that the person holding the stick or feather is the only one talking, everyone has the right to pass, no one comments on what someone else has said and no putdowns.

At the end of the circle discussion, the teacher goes around and shakes everyone's hand and then sits down. The students then come around and shake the teacher's hand. This illustrates the concept of giving and receiving.

You may wish to serve cedar tea or some other beverage as a treat. (Hint: use only the green ends not the brown parts or the tea will be bitter. Boil the leaves for only a few minutes. You don't need many leaves. It can be sweetened if you like.)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What does the word "Huron" mean? Why did the French explorers call the people by that name? (ANS: The word "Huron" means "boar's head" or "rough and boorish". It was not a complimentary name given to the people. They may have given them the name because of the bristly hairstyle that many of the men wore which was different than the styles of the French.)
2. What personal characteristics were valued by the Wendat? (ANS: being strong and brave, being honourable and considerate of others, being cooperative and respectful) Do you think these characteristics are important today? (opinion question)
3. Name the roles that that men had in the community. (ANS: hunting, fishing, trapping, clearing land, defending the village, trading and building the longhouses)
4. Name the roles that the women had in the community. (ANS: gathering food, cooking meals, gardening, making pottery, weaving baskets and fishing nets, tanning the hides and making clothing)

