



Athabascan Culture Try-It

Level: Brownie

Requirements: Complete 4 of the following activities.

- 1. Map it!** Find the Athabascan region on a map of Alaska, and identify the major rivers in the area. How is the climate in this area different from other parts of Alaska? Choose a village in this region that you are not already familiar with, and find out four facts about it. Or, sketch the eleven Athabascan language areas on your map.
- 2. Native Legends / Story Time!** Ask an elder or a tradition bearer to tell you an Athabascan legend (or listen to an Athabascan legend from *Athabascan Stories* by Alice Brean or *In the Shadows of Mountains* by John E. Smelcer). Or, listen to an Athabascan story (some examples are *The Girl Who Swam with the Fish* retold by Michelle Renner; *Anna's Athabascan Summer* by Arnold Griese; or *Walk About: Life in an Ahtna Athabascan Village* by John Smelcer and Tricia Wilson).
- 3. Who's Who?** Georgianna Lincoln was born in Fairbanks in 1943. Use the Internet or the library to discover how she has been a leader in the Native community. What was she the first Alaska Native woman in the state to do?
- 4. Handiwork** Women from some Athabascan communities make baskets from birch bark and necklaces using prized dentalium shells. Make your own basket or beaded necklace (*Hands on Alaska: Art Activities for all Ages*, pg. 65-69). Base your necklace pattern on images and designs of actual Athabascan jewelry.
- 5. Making Connections** Invite an Athabascan elder to visit your troop or group, and ask her/him to share stories of what life was like when she/he was young. Learn a few new phrases in her/his language.
- 6. Animal Habitats** Subsistence hunting and fishing remain a central part of Athabascan culture. What kinds of animals are an important source of food for the people? Draw a sketch of one of those animals in its natural habitat.
- 7. Yum!** Athabascans rely heavily on moose as a staple in their diet. Try moose stew or roast (or another Athabascan dish). What ingredients were used?

“Chin’anguninyu” (Thank you, that you came here) – Dena’ina

See Athabascan Culture Badge for additional resources.