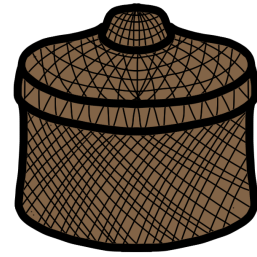
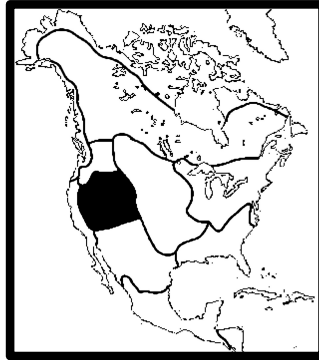


Great Basin



Woven basket

The Great Basin is an area in North America that covers parts of the Southwest and stretches from the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the Rocky Mountains. It touches parts of the states we now call Nevada, Utah, Oregon, California, and Idaho. This region has little rainfall. There are several major tribes living in the Great Basin area. Some include the Shoshone, Ute, Paiute, Bannock, and Washoe. The early peoples of the Great Basin were **nomadic**. This meant they moved about, typically because they needed to find food. Depending on the tribe, the early peoples traveled by foot or rode horses. They often traveled in large family groups and sometimes hunted together in bands. The early Paiute people made major decisions in council meetings. Most bands had its own separate functioning tribal government.

The Great Basin territory has areas of desert and areas of mountain. There are extreme temperatures with each season. Because of this, the early peoples had to find ways to get the clothing they needed, such as animal fur and hides for the winter. Since there are seasonal changes, the game animals like deer, elk, and antelope move from place to place in search of fresh vegetation to eat. The early peoples would often follow them. Men of the tribes were responsible for hunting and fishing. They used bows and arrows, stone and bone tools, and knives. Big game animals, like sheep, deer, and buffalo could be caught by skilled hunters. There were also tribes who went for smaller game like rabbits, hens, and foxes. In addition to that, all the tribes needed to gather nuts, berries, and seeds. Some tribes, like the Washoe people, lived in areas where there were lots of pines, so they ate pine nuts to give them enough protein in their diet.

In many tribes, women and children had to help gather food. Women would prepare meat that men had hunted. Children began helping as soon as they were old enough to learn. Everyone needed to pitch in because their survival depended on having enough food to last through the seasons when game animals were scarce. In summer months, some tribes would make their camps by lakes and rivers in order to fish. Dried fish and meat was stored to last the winter.

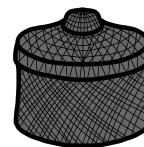
In addition to being skilled at hunting and gathering, the peoples of the Great Basin were artistic. The women are known for their amazing basket weaving and their beadwork. Baskets were a major part of life. They were used for gathering food. They were used for carrying belongings. They were even used as plates and bowls for eating. A member of the Washoe tribe, a woman named **Dat So La Lee**, is one of the most incredible basket weavers of all time. Her baskets are worth a million dollars, but they're on display in museums, not in the stores. Other art came from the Shoshone artists. They would use a sharp knife to carve and shave designs into the fur of the animal hide. They created images of buffalo and other animals that look three dimensional because of the contrast between fur and hide.

Tribes of the Great Basin built shelters and moved them frequently. They also knew that the weather they experienced would be very hot in the summer and cold in the winter. They learned to build different kinds of homes for different locations and different seasons. In the case of the Washoe tribe, the winter homes were lived in for the longest amount of time and were the sturdiest. They arranged wooden poles in a circular fashion and covered them with tree bark or deer skins. The top of the winter dwelling was secured so it wouldn't fall down. The shelter was warm inside as the hide and bark kept out the wind and cold. The summer homes were portable huts made of woven brush and strips of willow. Members of the Northern and Eastern Shoshone tribes lived in **tipis**, which were also portable. These were cone shaped structures covered in animal hides. The Western Shoshone and Paiute lived in **wickiup** houses. These were huts with rounded roofs, and the whole building looked like a little dome. It was covered in dry grass and held together with strong plant fibers, such as fibers from the yucca plant. It was not meant to live in. They kept their belongings in the them and sometimes slept in there especially if it rained. The rest of the time was spent outside hunting, cooking, playing, and attending ceremonies.

Most of the tribes in the Great Basin region have a strong spiritual culture. They perform dances that they believe connect them with nature and animals. They hold ceremonies to honor the different seasons and animals. The traditional **Bear Dance** is still held every spring when the first thunder is heard. An elder tells the legend of two brothers who were out hunting and laid down to rest. One of the brothers saw a bear dancing, making a noise, and clawing a tree. He continued watching the bear as the other brother continued hunting. The bear taught the dance to the boy and told him to teach his people. The dance is meant to help people release their stress after a long winter. It is also meant to show respect for the spirit of the bear. **The Sun Dance** was a dance held in the summer and was a very sacred ritual which focused on life, death, and rebirth. It is the most important spiritual ceremony in the Ute community.



Great Basin



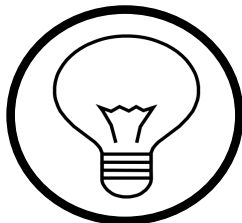
1. What was one of the animals the Great Basin tribes used for clothing?



Schema (prior knowledge)



Text Evidence (clues from the text)

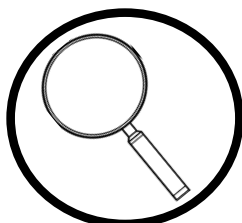


Inference (judgments, opinions, conclusions)

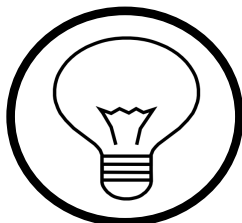
2. Why did everyone have to pitch in?



Schema (prior knowledge)



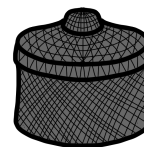
Text Evidence (clues from the text)



Inference (judgments, opinions, conclusions)



Great Basin



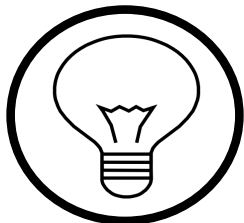
3. Why were the baskets used for so many things?



Schema (prior knowledge)



Text Evidence (clues from the text)

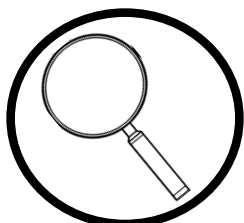


Inference (judgments, opinions, conclusions)

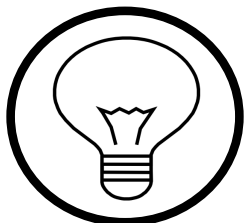
4. Why were some of their homes portable?



Schema (prior knowledge)



Text Evidence (clues from the text)



Inference (judgments, opinions, conclusions)