

Aboriginal Culture

Languages

Since different Aboriginal groups spoke different languages, it is not surprising to find over 50 Aboriginal languages in Canada. In fact, many place names in the country come from Aboriginal languages. The main Aboriginal languages include Anishnabe, Inuktitut, Kwakwaka, Maliseet, Mi'kmaq, Michif, Mohawk, Siksika, and Slavey.



Celebrations

Different Aboriginal groups had different celebrations, which often included music, dancing, and feasting.

Potlatch was an important part of the Aboriginal peoples on the Northwest Coast. It was for celebrating births, rites of passage, weddings, and totem raisings. It could involve a feast with music, dance, and spiritual ceremonies. Giving a potlatch enhanced your social status, since the hosts would give away presents to demonstrate their wealth.

Powwow means celebration. Traditionally, families scattered far and wide to hunt in the long winter. The powwow took place each winter when families and friends reunited to dance, drum, feast, and give thanks to the Creator.

Sun dance, usually performed in midsummer, was a time to renew friendships as well as a time for community announcements and business. Each tribe had its own rituals and ways of performing the dance, but some features were the same, like dancing, singing, praying, drumming, fasting (instead of feasting), and the experiencing of "visions".

Aboriginal Culture

Unscramble the letters to find these Canadian capital cities with Aboriginal meanings. Then finish what Polly says.

Aboriginal Meanings

Canadian Capital Cities

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------|
| 1. murky water | NGEPIWIN | _____ |
| 2. many fish | LUTIAQI | _____ |
| 3. narrowing of river | BEQUÉC TIYC | _____ |
| 4. meeting place | NOTTROO | _____ |
| 5. name of a berry that grows there | NSÁKAOTOS | _____ |

6.

The name of my country, _____, comes from the Aboriginal word "Kanata", meaning "village".



Name: _____

Date: _____

Aboriginal Culture

Complete the following chart on Aboriginal celebrations.



	Purpose	Ways to Celebrate
Powwow		
Sun Dance		
Potlatch		

Name: _____

Ab

Fill
abo

P

Ab
eve
cel
anc
to e
anc
inv

4.
suc

S

The
cel
6.

me
that
day
gav
dar
con

Copyri

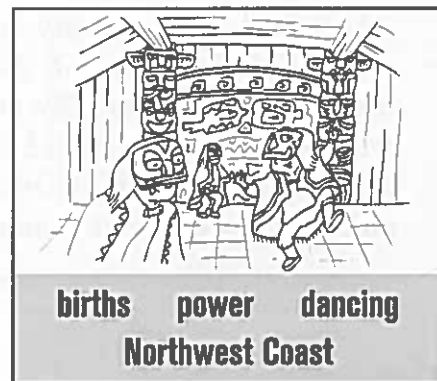
Aboriginal Culture

Fill in the blanks with the given words to tell about two different Aboriginal celebrations.

Potlatch

Aboriginals of the 1. _____ held events known as potlatches to both inform and celebrate. Weddings, 2. _____ ,

and totem raisings were all occasions for a potlatch, but it was also used to establish territorial rights, make announcements to surrounding tribes and proclaim the wealth and 3. _____ of the host. The invited tribes would be entertained for days with music, 4. _____ , and storytelling. They were also given presents such as food and beaver pelts.



Sun Dance

The sun dance was a 5. _____ celebration for the Aboriginals of the 6. _____ . After fasting, a

medicine man or woman would choose a tree that would be the centre pole for the dance, which would last several days. The ceremony, with 7. _____ and singing throughout, gave the people a feeling of uplifting 8. _____ . The sun dance was a time to renew 9. _____ . It was a time for community announcements and business as well.

