

Virginia's American Indians

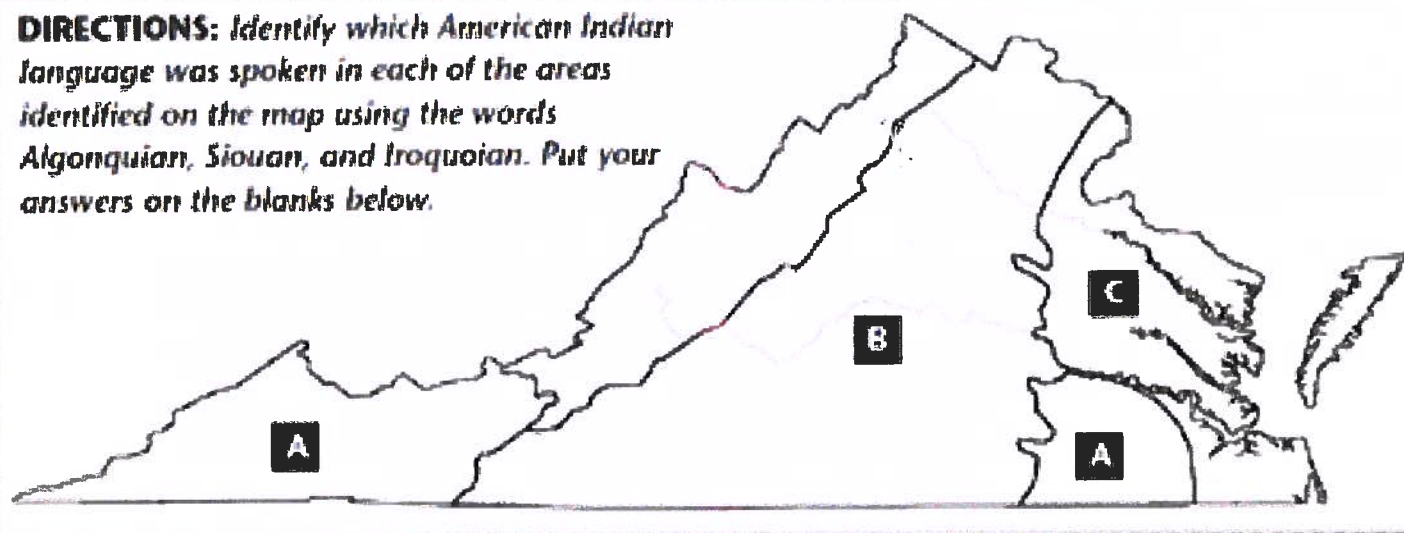
American Indians have been in Virginia for thousands of years. When Christopher Columbus explored North America, he called the people he met there Indians, because he thought he had reached the West Indies. He didn't realize he had reached a whole new continent! Today, we call these people American Indians. They were here first, before any European settlers. All of Virginia's Indians are classified as a group under the name Eastern Woodland Indians, which they received because they lived in an area covered with forests and woodlands.

The American Indians that lived in Virginia did not all speak the same language. In the Coastal Region, the Powhatan tribe spoke the Algonquian language. In the Piedmont region, tribes like the **Monacans** spoke the Siouan language. In southwestern Virginia (Appalachian Plateau) and southern Virginia (near North Carolina), the Cherokee tribe spoke the **Iroquoian** language.

Currently living in Virginia are several state-recognized tribes. They trace their family history back to before 1607. The tribes maintain tribal museums and lands on which they hold public festivals called powwows. The powwow is a way of teaching American Indians and visitors about American Indian culture, past and present. Today, Virginia Indians maintain their vibrant cultural heritage through drumming, singing, dance, art, jewelry, clothing, crafts, pottery, and storytelling. Virginia Indians contribute to American society as active citizens who vote, hold office, and work in communities.

Past	Tribe	Language Group
	Powhatan	Algonquian
	Monacan	Siouan
	Cherokee	Iroquoian

DIRECTIONS: Identify which American Indian language was spoken in each of the areas identified on the map using the words Algonquian, Siouan, and Iroquoian. Put your answers on the blanks below.



A Iroquoian

B Siouan

C Algon