

A Visit to Taholah



To become aware of how cultures change through time and recall story details.

Precontact Culture (before 1860)

Long ago Indian people were in complete control of their education, economy, political system and religion. This was a time when Indians lived in harmony with nature and were able to meet their needs without disturbing the balance of the environment.

During this time Indian people from the Coast, the Plateau, and the Plains developed similar ideas or beliefs that helped them achieve this harmony. When a person or a group of people base their activities on certain ideas or beliefs and continue to repeat activities over and over again, then the beliefs are considered to be their values. Some of the main values that were developed by the tribes long ago are still practiced today. These values are in Indian stories.

Reservation Culture (1860-1930)

The reservation period was a period of drastic change for Indian people. During this time, there was a rapid increase in non-Indian control over all areas of Indian life including family life, religion, economics and political activities. Areas of land called reservations were established on which Indians were supposed to live. They could not leave these areas even to hunt.

Because Indians could no longer live like they had before, the government had to feed, clothe and care for them. The government sent Indians to schools and missionaries tried to change their religion.

Many of the Indian values, however, did not change, while at the same time new values were becoming part of this new way of life. Indians began separating their values. They showed the old (traditional) values mostly when they were with other Indians. They showed their newer ways when they were around non-Indians.

Indian people became bicultural (having two cultures or sets of values) during the reservation period. Much of what are still old Indian ways today survived the great changes of the reservation period and beyond.

A Visit to Taholah is a story from the reservation period. Think about how life was changing for Annie and her family. Which parts of the story were from the old way and which were from the new?

Write or Firetalk a story of how you might feel if you were:

- Entering school for the first time and could not speak English. Describe your day. What would you see, hear, smell, think about and feel?
- A person who had never seen modern inventions like cars or airplanes or lights. What would you think about? How would you feel?

Try this game:

- Sit in a large circle.
- Think about the story A Visit to Taholah and try to remember all the unusual things mentioned.
- Each student will repeat the statement, I took a trip to Taholah and in my bag I carried . . . (sea cookies, wampum, sweet grass, etc.)
- Each person must repeat what others have carried in their bag and then add another item. You may want to reread parts of the story to help remember items to carry in your bag.
- Continue this activity around the circle until everyone has tried to recall what is in the bag and added to it.
- If someone cannot recall what is in the bag he/she must drop out of the game. The last student to be able to recall correctly the entire contents of the bag is the winner of the game.
- You may repeat the game, changing locations or a time era to a place you might like to visit.

