

Mountain cultures graphic organizer

BY PAULINE S. JOHNSON

As students read the article “Peoples of the Mountains,” this graphic organizer will help them develop an understanding of the cultures that existed in North Carolina’s mountains hundreds of years ago.

Mountain cultures

	Pisgah	Qualla
Time period		
Shelter/Settlement		
Food		
Containers/Tools		
Culture (including burial practices		

Mountain cultures (teacher guide)

	Pisgah	Qualla
Time period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1000-1450 CE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around 1400
Shelter/Settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Villages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some had earthen mounds • Some were small spread out villages • Some were larger villages of clustered houses • Platform mounds • Stockades • Houses were rectangular 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large townhouses on mound summits • Rectangular houses • Villages were like Pisgah villages • houses were clustered around a central plaza • Stockades
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corn agriculture • Probably half their food came from fields of maize, beans, squash, and marsh elder. • The rest came from wild foods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deer and bear provided meat • Nuts and berries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deer and black bear • Farming: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corn, beans, squash, pumpkin, and gourds • Gathering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonal nuts and fruits
Containers/Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deer skins made into containers • Bones made into tools • We can assume they made pottery based on the statement in the Qualla section about Pisgah potters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pottery reflecting a change in style from Pisgah pottery
Culture (including burial practices)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graves were next to or in their homes • Some graves had burial offerings • It appears that the society may have had ranking — some higher than others. • There were shamans or religious leaders. • Chiefs who inherited their power. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community decisions made in large townhouses • Burials were in house floors near hearths • Grave offerings • A few people were buried in front of townhouses — most likely important people

North Carolina Curriculum Alignment

SOCIAL STUDIES (2003)

Grade 8

- **Goal 1:** The learner will analyze important geographic, political, economic, and social aspects of life in the region prior to the Revolutionary Period.
 - **Objective 1.02:** Identify and describe American Indians who inhabited the regions that became Carolina and assess their impact on the colony.

On the web

Peoples of the mountains

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-twoworlds/2.5>

During the Mississippian period, corn agriculture became more important in the mountains of North Carolina. More productive agriculture supported larger populations and provided opportunities for accumulating wealth. This brought about increased social ranking and political centralization. The Mountain region was creating its own identity -- an identity that archaeologists tie to the modern-day Cherokee. Archaeologists have given the names Pisgah and Qualla to these Cherokee ancestors.

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About the author

PAULINE S. JOHNSON

I am currently the Director of a Teaching American History Grant for Buncombe County Schools, Asheville City Schools, and Madison County Schools. I have taught history and English in the seventh and eighth grades for over twenty-six years at Reynolds Middle School in Asheville, North Carolina. I am currently doing adjunct work for Mars Hill College and Western Carolina University. I have a Masters Degree from Western Carolina University and am Nationally Board Certified in Early Adolescence/Social Studies-History. I am certified to teach K-12 and I also have Academically-Intellectually Gifted certification.