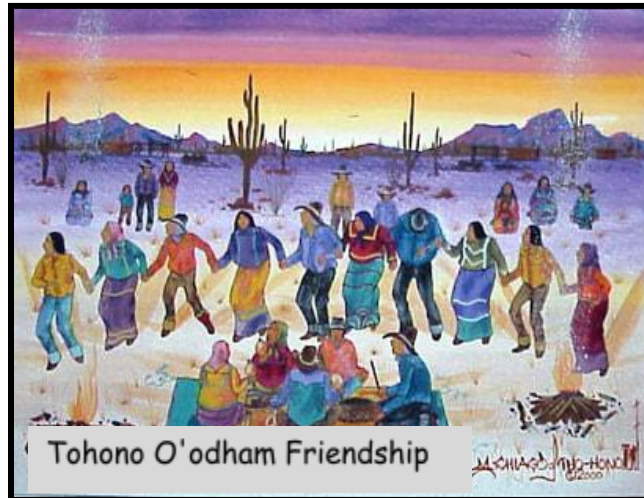


Name _____ Date _____

Tohono O'odham Painter Michael Chiago



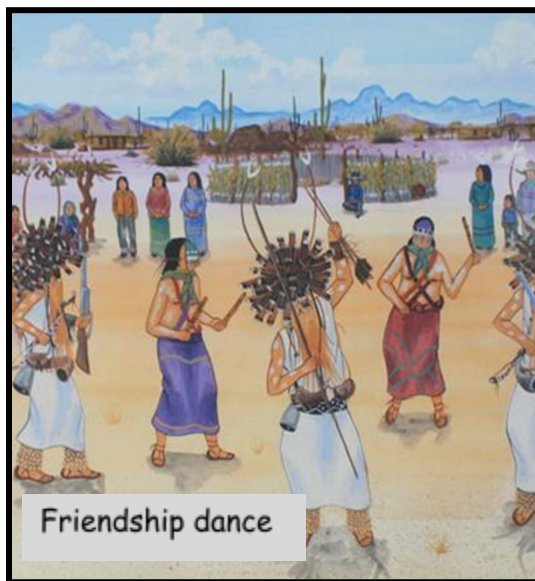
Michael Chiago was born in the Kohatk Village on the Tohono O'odham reservation in 1946. His tribal lineage is Tohono O'odham (mother) and Pima-Maricopa (father). He went to school on the reservation, then to St. John's Indian School in Laveen, Arizona. Afterwards, he went to school to be a barber and got his license. Then he joined the Marines and volunteered to go overseas to Vietnam. Michael states, "Yes, I am American and I am Native and I am a Vietnam Vet. I believe I was compelled to serve to honor the warrior tradition which is inherent to most Native American societies - the pillars of strength, honor, pride, devotion, and wisdom."



Michael began his painting career in the early 70's and is self-taught. He shows the past and present Akimel O'odham and Tohono O'odham culture in a variety of O'odham lifeways. He started painting O'odham baskets and pottery and then traditional O'odham homes. Later he started sketching people. Now, he does paintings of different dances, religious processions, the saguaro fruit harvest, basket dancers, O'odham home life like washing clothes, making cecemait (tortillas), chopping wood, and cooking. His paintings show the lives and traditions of O'odham people from the artist's parents' and grandparents' generations and today.



Michael likes educating others about the O'odham culture and meeting other Native American artists. He also does a lot of public speaking on and off the reservation. His paintings show the colonial Spanish, Mexican, and European



influences on O'odham culture throughout the decades. He is preserving O'dham history by showing how wells and windmills, schools, border walls, and nonnative crops have changed O'odham life. According to Ofelia Zepeda, "Michael Chiago's paintings bring us home to the desert. His vibrant paintings depict traditional and contemporary O'odham life. The landscape is living, and the clouds seem to move."

Check for understanding

1. In what art form does Michael Chiago specialize? _____
2. According to the text, what is Michael's tribal lineage? _____

3. Where was Michael born?
 - a) In the St. John's Village on the Tohono O'odham reservation.
 - b) In the Laveen Village on the Tohono O'odham reservation.
 - c) In the Kohatk Village on the Tohono O'odham reservation.
 - d) In the Komlic Village on the Tohono O'odham reservation.
4. Where did Michael go to school?
 - a) painting school, St. John's Indian School, on the reservation
 - b) Barber school, St. John's Indian School, watercolor school
 - c) painting school, St. John's Indian School, watercolor school
 - d) Barber school, St. John's Indian School, on the reservation
5. According to paragraph 1, how does Michael describe himself? _____

6. When did Michael start his painting career? _____
7. According to paragraph 2, Michael shows the past and present Akimel O'odham and Tohono O'odham culture in a variety of O'odham lifeways. List at least 5 O'odham lifeways. _____

8. According to paragraph 2, because Michael likes to educate others about the O'dham culture, he (cause and effect) _____

9. Michael uses his paintings to
- a) preserve O'dham culture
 - b) preserve O'dham history
 - c) preserve Marine culture
 - d) preserve O'dham history

10. Select a painting from this text and use vivid details to describe what is happening. _____

11. Describe which painting is your favorite and why? _____
