

1- GOALS

- Beginning with a discussion of culture and my cultural identity.
- Talk a little about Cherokee Nation history and traditions.
- Allow you to reflect on how the Cherokee view the natural world.
- Review some of my Google Mapping and maybe help give you some mapping ideas in your life.

2 - WHO AM I?

I research myself on the internet to find out who I was. But it just lead my back to my web site where I say who I am. Perhaps the answer is that I define myself.

If you are of mixed descent, don't you have the right to choose your culture. Perhaps mixed descent is where you derive your culture from?

I am a Cherokee Tribal Citizen. My great, great, great, great grandfather was marched on the Trail of Tears.

I am very active in the Kansas City Cherokee Community and with the Kansas City Indian Center. I serve on multiple boards and work closely with a variety of people in the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma.

3 - WHO WERE YOU EXPECTING?

Here is where cultural identify plays a role. If you were told to expect a Cherokee Indian today, would you have expected this over me? But I am a tribal citizen. And it influences my beliefs.

4 - IF I NEED TO BE CLASSIFIED, I WOULD BE.....

I have approached full bloods and asked? They respectfully call me a "city" Indian. A more politically correct term would be Urban Indian. Urban Indians are Native Americans and people of Native American descent in the United States who live in urban areas. Urban Indians represent a growing proportion of the Native population in the United States.

5- WHAT IS A CHEROKEE -

The Cherokee are a Native American tribe indigenous to the Southeastern United States. Now with federally recognized tribes in their original homeland and where the removal placed them in Oklahoma.

6 - FORMAT

Now I will talk a little about Cherokee Nation history and traditions. And to help reflect on some of the cultural beliefs, I will mix in comments about Cherokee Community Values and parts of a Cherokee Prayer.

7 - CAUTION

Reminder, I am no expert. The way of the Cherokee is a way of life. I am just trying to share some insights into the perspectives I have learned. I am attempting to draw on my cultural heritage to help demonstrate my ties to the natural world.

8 - JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME

I have had invitations from friends to go on the journey to learn more. There is a spiritual leader in our community that has invited me to attend his ceremonies. My time constraints have limited me. It would be a long journey of learning, not just one afternoon lesson. There is also a medicine man that has offered to teach me the ways, but it is also a long journey and involves going out in nature and learning just a little each time. These are lifelong pursuits.

9 - VALUE #1

10 - PRAYER EAST

11 - SEVEN GENERATIONS

Native American tribes hold dear the concept of seven generations planning, that the impact of decisions should be considered out seven generations into the future, about 150 years. The idea is that our decisions today should consider the potential benefits or harm that would be felt by seven future generations. While such future-thinking has obvious ethical and moral value, it seems that it may also have scientific validity.

Jennifer Sass

http://switchboard.nrdc.org/blogs/jsass/scientific_evidence_to_support.html

12 - SEVEN AND FOUR ARE IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Certain numbers play an important role in the ceremonies of the Cherokee. The numbers four and seven repeatedly occur in myths, stories and ceremonies. The number four represents all the familiar forces, also represented in the four cardinal directions. These directions are east, west, north and south. Certain colors are also associated with these directions. The number seven represents the seven clans of the Cherokee, and are also associated with directions. In addition to the four cardinal directions, three others exist. Up (the Upper World), down (the Lower World) and center (where we live and where you always are).

<http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/Culture/General/TheTraditionalBeliefSystem.aspx>

(I have already spoken in 7's twice tonight. The prayer I am reference will have 7 points. And we just referenced the importance of our effects on the next 7 generations).

These are very important today - for example - the Seven Clans.....

13 - PRAYER SOUTH

14 - VALUE # 2

15 - CIRCLES AND FIRE

The circle is another symbol familiar to traditional Cherokee. The Stomp Dance and other ceremonies involve movements in a circular pattern. In ancient times, the fire in the council house was built by arranging the wood in a continuous "X" so that the fire would burn in a circular path.

<http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/Culture/General/TheTraditionalBeliefSystem.aspx>

Europeans thought they were fire worshipers - but they were using fire and smoke to carry prayers to the creators in heaven.

16 - STORYTELLING

Storytelling is an important tradition. Nature and animals show up a lot in storytelling. The first time you hear a story of origin, as an outsider, you might go "wow, do you all believe that the turtle and the bird had a conversation with the creation and brought the land from the bottom of the ocean up so mankind be created." But what you start to find out, these stories are the stories of mankind trying to figure out where they came from and what role they play in the universe. To discover what their relationship is with the creator and how they should behave morally.

Last June I was with a Storyteller who told a creation story. And while I listened, I wondered how long this great story had been written. And in the end, he mentioned "I wrote that one a couple weeks ago."

17 - PRAYER - NORTH

18 - VALUE # 3

19 - FIVE CIVILIZED TRIBES

When you speak of American Indian Tribes, you might hear the Cherokee referred to as one of the Five Civilized Tribes.

The term "Five Civilized Tribes" derives from the colonial and early federal period. It refers to five Native American nations—the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek (Muscogee), and Seminole.

A wikipedia reference explanation had a good explanation why: they are the first five tribes that Anglo-European settlers generally considered to be "civilized" according to their own world view, because these five tribes adopted attributes of the colonists' culture, for example, Christianity, centralized governments, literacy, market participation, written constitutions, intermarriage with white Americans, and plantation slavery practices. The Five Civilized Tribes tended to maintain stable political relations with the Europeans.

20 - A Proud Heritage

Since the earliest contact with European explorers in the 16th century, the Cherokee people have been consistently identified as one of the most socially and culturally advanced of the Native American tribes. Cherokee culture thrived many hundreds of years before initial European contact in the southeastern area of what is now the United States. Cherokee society and culture continued to develop, progressing and embracing cultural elements from European settlers. The Cherokee shaped a government and a society matching the most civilized cultures of the day.

<http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/History/Facts/OurHistory.aspx>

When European Colonists arrived, the Cherokee were one of the most advanced tribes and had made some technological advances that educated some of the European colonists. They never lived in Tee Pee's. Amazing how many people have joked with me about living in a Tee Pee or owning a bow and arrow when I speak of my ancestry.

21 - PRAYER WEST

22 - VALUE # 4

23 - TRAIL OF TEARS -

White resentment of the Cherokee had been building and reached a pinnacle following the discovery of gold in northern Georgia. This discovery was made just after the the creation and passage of the original Cherokee Nation constitution and establishment of a Cherokee Supreme Court. Possessed by "gold fever" and a thirst for expansion, many white communities turned on their Cherokee neighbors. The U.S. government ultimately decided it was time for the Cherokees to be "removed"; leaving behind their farms, their land and their homes.

<http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/History/TrailofTears/ABriefHistoryoftheTrailofTears.aspx>

24 - LANGUAGE

The Cherokee Language is very unique. If you learn to speak the language, it actually changes your perspective of the world and the way you look at things. Very descriptive and based in reality. The language is so descriptive that I have been told speakers sometimes hear words come out of other speakers that they have never heard in a particular combination before. And so based in reality that lying and spinning a conversation is near impossible. No profanity in the language. The language is very much tied to the culture.

25 - PRAYER DOWN

26 - VALUE # 5

27 - BALANCE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Everything in the Cherokee environment — from corn and tobacco to eagles, deer, and snakes to fire and smoke to creeks and mountains — had an intelligent spirit and played a central role in Cherokee myths as well as daily practices. Native peoples did not view themselves as separate from their environment — they were a part of it.

Like other native peoples, the Cherokees did not try to rule over nature but instead tried to keep their proper place within it. A healer might listen to the spirit of a plant to find out what disease that plant could cure. A hunter might pray to the spirits of animals for guidance and forgiveness.

In order to respect and cooperate with all of nature, the natives found ways to conserve its parts. When Cherokees gathered medicinal plants in the forest, they harvested only every fourth one they found, leaving the other three to grow undisturbed for a future use.

All of these practices contributed to the balance of their world. The Cherokees believed that if the balance of nature was upset, everyone would have trouble. They feared a loss of balance could cause sickness, bad weather, failed crops, poor hunting, and many other problems. Humans were responsible for keeping the balance within themselves and between the animals, the plants, and other people.

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-twoworlds/1839> KAREN RALEY

28 - What is the Cherokee Nation Today?

The Cherokee Nation today is an active leader in education, housing, vocational training, business and economic development. We are the largest Indian tribe in the United States with well over 315,000 tribal citizens. More than 110,000 Cherokees reside within a 7,000 square mile geographical area, which is not a reservation but rather a federally-recognized, truly sovereign nation covering most of northeast Oklahoma. Its jurisdictional service area encompasses eight entire counties along with portions of six others. As one of only three such federally-recognized Cherokee tribes, the Cherokee Nation has both the sovereign right and the responsibility to exercise control and development over our tribal assets, including more than 66,000 acres of land and 96 miles of the Arkansas Riverbed.

<http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/History/Facts/OurHistory.aspx>

29 - PRAYER IN

30 - VALUE # 6

31 - CONNECTING WITH THE HOMELAND

Not all of the Cherokee were removed from the East. Some hid in the mountains or were protected by colonists. But the Trail of Tears has had a lasting effect on the culture. I have had people in the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma tell me they have a partial history of something that someone in the Eastern Band is able to tell the other half of the history. A stomp dance that has more elements. Or something as simple as knowing a song that the Oklahoma Cherokee Nation knew was song at someone's birth and then they discovered the Eastern Band in North Carolina shared a song that is song when someone dies.

32 - BIKING THE TRAIL OF TEARS

For the last 30 years, a Remember the Removal Bike Ride has been taking place. Where riders from both the Oklahoma tribe and Eastern Band go on a 3 week journey following the Northern Trail of Tears route.

In the summer of 1838, Cherokees were rounded up and forced from their homes in Georgia, Tennessee and other southeastern states to the tribe's current capital in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Of the estimated 16,000 Cherokees forced to make the journey to Indian Territory, an estimated 4,000 died due to exposure, starvation and disease.

http://www.cherokee.org/News/Stories/20150603_2015RemembertheRemovalBikeRidetoretraceTrailofTears.aspx

33 - PRAYER UP

34 - VALUE # 7

35 - EVALUATION -

On the topic of cultural heritage and my ties to the natural world, I would say it does play a huge part of the decisions I make in my life and the actions I take I respect resources

and all forms of life. I practice conservation of resources and strive to strike a balance. I feel that my actions will have an effect on the next seven generations.

36 - MAPPING WITH GEOTOOLS -

I think of mapping as a tool for communication of information. I also look at it as a tool for Storytelling. And I look at it as a way to visualize and convey data.

1 - Mapping tools to inspire you with ideas

2 - 12 generations (share generation map).

3 - Pittsburg Family Heritage

4 - Share my tour builder.

5 - Satellite Nations Map

6 - Trail of Tears Joseph map

7 - Future map working on the Cherokee Nation. It stopped in Oklahoma.