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Social Studies

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THE SAUK AND FOX

by Lillian Forman
illustrated by Dan Bridy



Genre	Comprehension Skills and Strategy	Text Features
Expository nonfiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fact and Opinion• Plot and Theme• Text Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Captions• Glossary

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Vocabulary

boarding schools

dormitory

endurance

manual

reservation

society

Word count: 1,329

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Note: The total word count includes words in the running text and headings only. Numerals and words in chapter titles, captions, labels, diagrams, charts, graphs, sidebars, and extra features are not included.

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Saturday, July 27, 1912, was a great day for all Americans—especially Native Americans. On that day, King Gustav V of Sweden told a young Sauk and Fox Indian, Jim Thorpe, that he was “the greatest athlete in the world.” Thorpe had just won a gold medal in two track and field events in the 1912 Olympics.

The events included track and field contests, such as jumping over hurdles, running races, throwing a javelin (which is similar to a spear), and throwing a shot put (a heavy metal ball). These events tested Jim Thorpe’s skill and **endurance.**

Illustrations by Dan Bridy

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An Olympic gold medal

Americans were happy with Thorpe's athletic skills. He had beaten other athletes in events that called for many different talents. Thorpe's fellow Native Americans felt that he helped them gain the respect of other Americans. Native Americans have had a history of being unfairly treated in the United States.

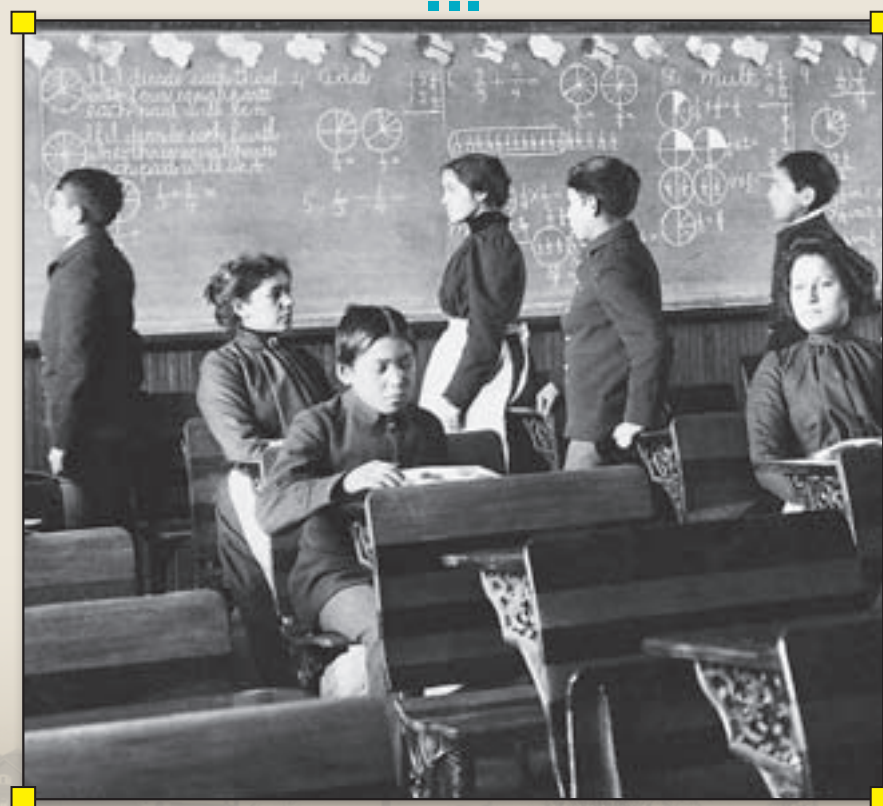
In the 1800s the U.S. government sent people to explore and claim land in the western United States. Native American nations were already living in the West. The U.S. government took their land and in exchange, gave Native Americans pieces of land set aside for them. Such a piece of land is called a **reservation**. Unfortunately, Native Americans had trouble farming or hunting on these reservations.

Jim Thorpe throwing the shot put



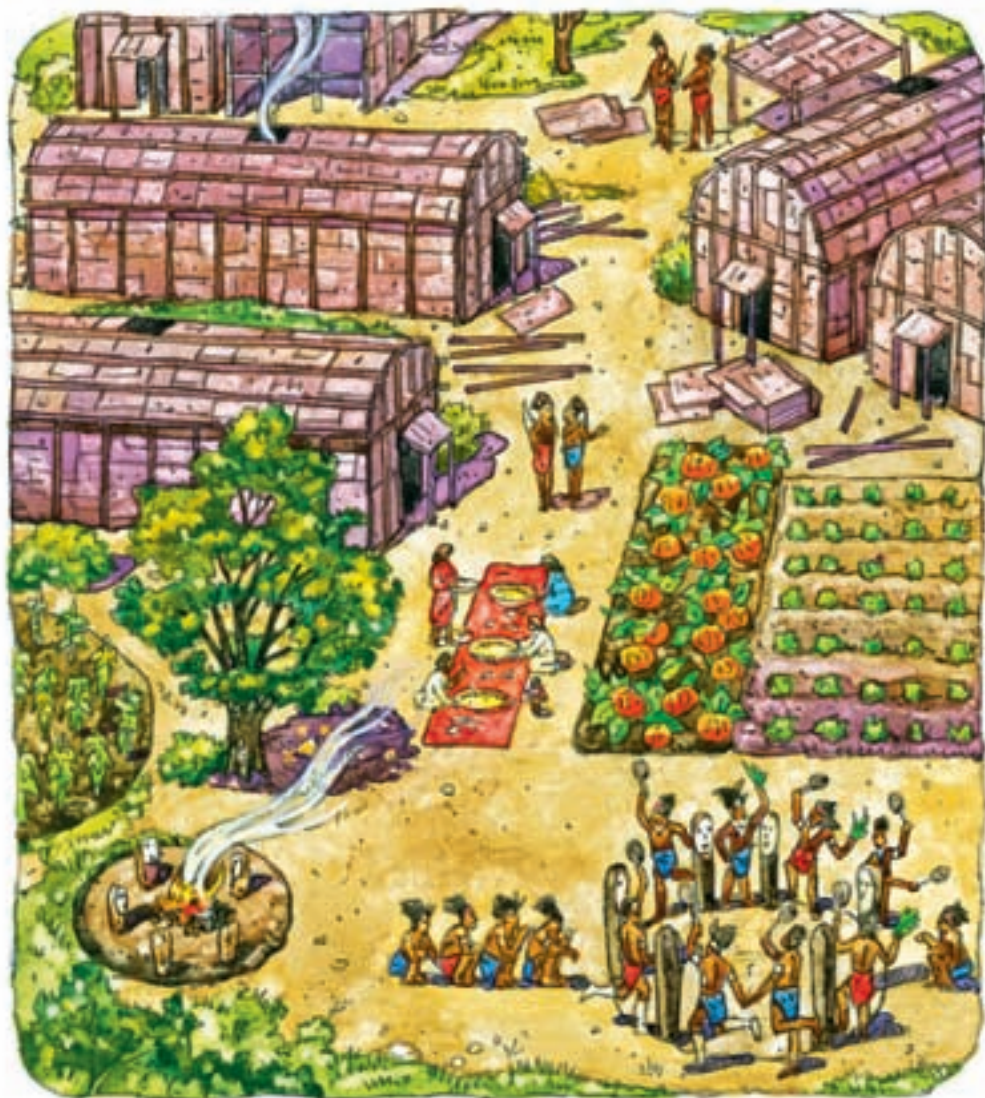
As a result, many Native Americans were poor. Many depended on help from the U.S. government. This gave the government control over the Native Americans. It encouraged them to send their children to **boarding schools**. The students lived there during the school term. They ate in a dining hall and slept in a **dormitory**.

The students learned English and other subjects. They also learned to do different kinds of **manual** work. The teachers did not allow the Native American students to speak their native languages.



Boarding school for Native Americans

The Sauk and Fox—also known as the Mesquaki—were once separate Indian groups, but they had similar cultures. In the 1600s and 1700s, the Sauk and Fox lived in Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri. The two groups lived in villages near one another. They traded, visited, and learned each other's ways.




Sauk and Fox villages looked similar to this.

Their villages were similar. The village shown on page 6 could have belonged to either the Sauk or the Fox. Wide streets separated the houses from the fields where crops were planted. The houses were long, wooden buildings called lodges. Several families that were closely related to each other lived in one lodge. People gathered in the wide streets to chat or to trade goods. The open spaces were used for ceremonies, dances, and sporting contests.


The areas where the two groups lived had rich soil and lots of rain. The Sauk and Fox women were the farmers of their communities. They planted large crops of corn, beans, pumpkins, melons, and squashes. They gathered wild plants that could be used for food or medicine. The men hunted animals and fished. The Native Americans ate the animals they hunted. They also used animal skins and bones for clothes and tools.

Men and women each played different and important roles in the Sauk and Fox communities. One of the women's jobs was caring for their children. Farming was a good job for women because the fields were near the village. Gathering plants was fitting because the children could come with their mothers to nearby woods and prairies. Women also did tasks that could be done in or near the lodges. They cooked meals and made clothes and blankets from the skins of the animals killed by the men.



 Women had an important role in the Sauk and Fox community, including taking care of the children and farming.



 Sauk and Fox men were hunters and warriors.

Men were the hunters, traders, and warriors. Men's jobs took them far from the village for long periods of time. Men met people from different Native American groups on hunting and trading trips. Sometimes they disagreed with other Native Americans about which group had the right to hunt in certain places. They got into fights. That is why men also needed to be trained as warriors.

Some men were chiefs. Each Sauk and Fox community had a peace chief and war chiefs. People came to the peace chief for advice about all kinds of community problems. They asked for help in solving problems with neighbors. A peace chief was kind and fair. He had to know all the traditions of his community and have a good understanding of his people. He could not force anyone to do anything. He gained respect by setting a good example.



Some men were peace chiefs, and some were war chiefs.



War chiefs

The role of the war chiefs was different from that of the peace chief. The Sauk and Fox war chiefs planned raids against rivals. They also planned ways to protect their nations from attack. Only the best warriors could become war chiefs.

Only men who the members of the group thought would make good leaders could become peace chiefs. Sauk and Fox chiefs could try to pass the office on to their sons, but the members had the final say.

Sauk and Fox women could not be chiefs. But they still played important roles in their communities. As farmers, they brought in much of the nation's food. They made clothing and other items for the nation. They took care of other women during childbirth. Sauk and Fox women were highly valued.



Men and women worked together in their communities.

Family was very important to the Sauk and Fox people. Their **society**, or people who lived together, was based on family relationships. People belonged to groups called clans. Each clan had special religious objects. Twice a year, clan members would join together to perform a ceremony that honored these sacred objects.

The Sauk and Fox believed that spirits were important. The chief of these spirits was called the Great Manitou. He was believed to be the creator and controller of the world. Each person and every animal were also thought to have manitous of their own.

The Sauk and Fox people believed that these spirits of nature could protect them. Sometimes they saw and spoke to spirits in dreams. Often they tried to get in touch with them by performing ceremonies. Religious leaders called medicine men helped them perform the ceremonies.

There were many ways in which the Sauk and Fox showed their religious beliefs. Just as the spirits in nature could help humans, humans helped each other. They shared food and other goods with the needy. They worked with each other. They tried to show each other respect.



Medicine man

European people began to settle Sauk and Fox land in the 1800s. The Sauk and Fox decided to move to new areas. Then they began to resist the settlers. They struggled to keep their homeland. The Sauk and Fox became close allies, or partners.

The U.S. government sent in soldiers with modern weapons. The soldiers defeated the Native Americans. The Native Americans knew it was useless to resist.

Troops sent by the U.S. government had forced most of the Sauk and Fox people out from where they lived in Illinois. By 1870 most Sauk and Fox people had moved to Iowa and Oklahoma. A few years later, they were forced to move to Kansas. At this time the Sauk and Fox began to unite into a single nation.



Soldiers build forts near Sauk and Fox villages.



Native American girls in an ironing class



Native American boys in a physical education class

As you learned, the U.S. government controlled what Native American children studied in their boarding schools. The government also tried to change the way the adults lived. It divided the reservation land among individuals and single families. The land no longer belonged to the whole nation. Still, the Sauk and Fox people hung onto their culture. Perhaps Jim Thorpe's success in the Olympic games helped give them courage.

Today the Sauk and Fox have more control over how they live. Farming is no longer their only means of making a living. Some even live outside the reservation.

The Sauk and Fox are learning skills for a variety of jobs. They go to meetings to make decisions about how to govern their reservation. They hold their traditional ceremonies. Their children can once again learn the Sauk and Fox language and listen to their elders tell them stories from the past.



A traditional Sauk and Fox ceremony

Glossary

boarding schools *n.* schools with buildings where the pupils live during the school term.

dormitory *n.* a building with many rooms in which people sleep.

endurance *n.* power to last and to withstand hard wear.

manual *adj.* done with the hands.

reservation *n.* land set aside by the government for a special purpose.

society *n.* the people of any particular time or place.

Reader Response

1. Facts are statements that can be proven. Opinions are what someone thinks or believes. Reread page 10 to find a statement of fact and a statement of opinion. Write them in a chart similar to the one below.

Fact	Opinion

2. On page 7 through page 9, the author compares and contrasts the roles of Sauk and Fox men and women during the 1600s and 1700s. What did you learn from these comparisons?
3. Look at the word *reservation* in the Glossary. Give one other meaning for the word. Use it in a sentence.
4. Use the picture on page 6 to tell about the daily life of the Sauk and Fox.