

## It's Tool Time

ARCHAEOLOGISTS USE the discovery of tools to identify and learn more about specific cultures. Tools serve many purposes in all cultures. Today you might use a hammer, but long ago people hammered with rocks. Today you use a needle and thread to sew, but people once created sewing needles out of bone and thread from the sinew of animals. From the earliest days, tools have been used for hunting, skinning, cutting, and cooking. People look at a need and create a tool to help them with that need.

Now it's time to build your own tool. Have you ever tried to reach for something that is too high? Sure, you can climb on top of a chair, but that means having to move it or worry about falling off the chair. What if you could make a tool to grab what you need?

### Materials

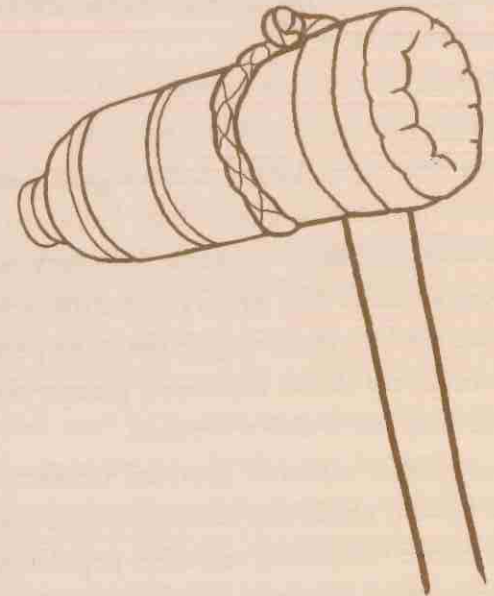
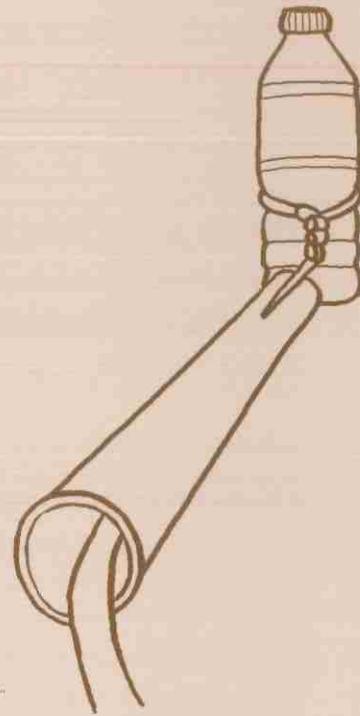
- ◆ Rope, half the width of your tube but three times as long
- ◆ Pencil or knitting needle
- ◆ Long plastic tube, at least as long as your arm

Make a slipknot in the middle of the rope. First, create a loop in the middle of the rope. Wrap one end of the rope around the loop, and then create another loop that you pull through the first loop.

If tied correctly, one end of your rope will tighten the knot, and other will undo it. You might want to mark the end that will tighten it with a piece of tape or by tying another knot in the end of it.

Put a pencil or knitting needle through the loop and tighten the knot around it. This will help you pull the slipknot through the plastic tube without it coming undone.

After you've pulled your knot through the tube, make the knot bigger again and remove the pencil or knitting needle. When you need to retrieve something (nonbreakable only), use the tube of your tool to place the loop of rope around the object. Then pull the knot tight with the correct end of your rope. This should secure your object while you bring it down.



## The Three Sisters Garden

NOT ALL Native American tribes were hunters and gatherers. Many were farmers who liked to grow starchy vegetables such as corn, beans, and squash. These were called the “three sisters.” Corn is the oldest sister who stands in the center. Squash is the sister who protects the soil with her leaves. The third sister is beans, which grow through the leaves of squash, wrapping themselves around the oldest sister of corn.

### Materials

- ◆ Soil
- ◆ Mulch
- ◆ Water
- ◆ Corn seeds
- ◆ Hoe
- ◆ Pole bean seeds
- ◆ Squash seeds

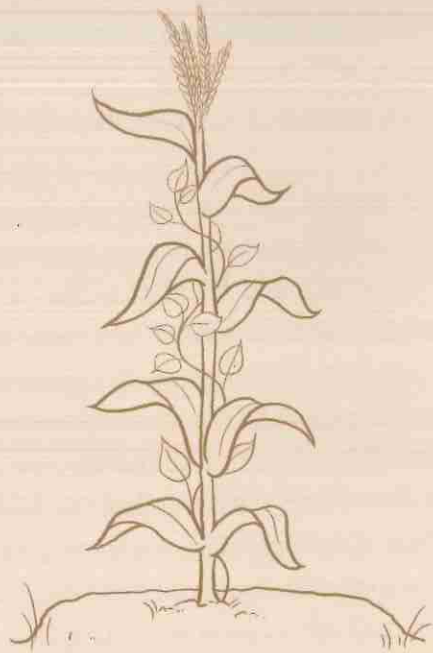
A traditional way of growing these vegetables was to plant them together on a small hill of soil. In the spring, prepare a round, flat-topped mound about 3 feet across and 10 to 12 inches high. Remove any weeds, and cover with mulch to keep the hill moist.

In late spring, plant six to eight corn seeds about an inch deep in the middle of the hill, placing them about six inches apart. Water well, and look for corn to sprout in two weeks.

After the corn has sprouted, loosen the soil around the base of the corn stalks using a hoe.

Sow approximately a dozen pole bean seeds in a circle around the corn. Look for beans to sprout in another two weeks. Wrap the vines from the beans around the corn stalks when they become long enough.

A week after the beans sprout, plant six to eight squash seeds an inch deep in a circle about a foot outside the circle of beans. Water well, and watch for the squash to sprout in a week. As the squash vines grow larger, turn them to the center of the mound.



kawa band also ceased to exist, mostly likely due to smallpox and other diseases. Native Americans living in missions were particularly at risk of European diseases.

Some Native American nations, such as the Wichita and their allies, the Waco, were able to avoid the dangers of Spanish mission life altogether. Long a fixture on the southern plains, Wichita villages could be found from southern Kansas to northern Texas more than 500 years before the Spanish stepped on North American soil. Accomplished farmers of the “Three Sisters” crops of beans, corn, and squash, the Wichita also left their villages of grass lodges to hunt for bison.

## California Indians

SPAIN SETTLED in California much later than in Texas, due to its location farther north and west than the other territories. Hundreds of thousands of Native Americans speaking well over 100 different languages called the region home, some for as long as 10,000 years. Limited from contact with the native people of the Southwest and the Plains due to mountains, desert, and distance, California’s native population lived a different kind of life. California was a paradise with temperate weather and plentiful food—fish could be found in the



## Weaving

STYLES OF weaving and basketry varied among Native American nations. California bands such as the Pomo and Washoe valued a tightly woven basket that could carry food and even water. Baskets were typically made from nearby plant material, which might be grass, wheat, reeds, or other products. You can also make a basket out of available materials. Newspaper is a good choice because it's readily available, plus it is a good way to recycle.

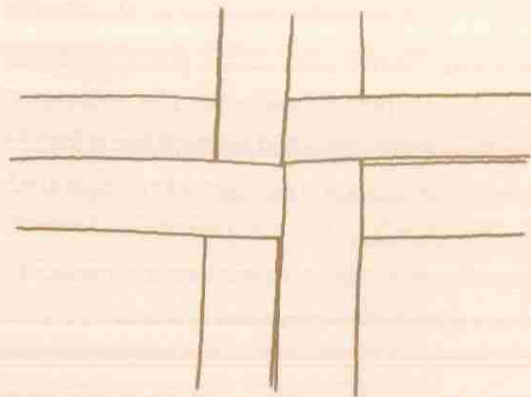
### Materials

- ◆ Newspaper
- ◆ Craft glue

Fold each sheet of newspaper in half. Unfold, and from each side begin folding toward the center so that each fold is the same width (1 inch to 1½ inch is a good width).

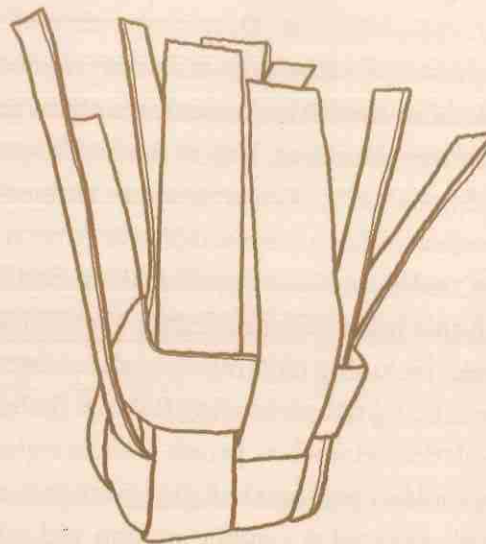
Continue folding from each side until the sides meet in the center. You might want to glue the final fold together.

Lay out four of the newspaper strips, two across each way so that they intersect. Weave each strip in and out of the strips in the opposite direction. Do this several times until you have the bottom of your basket. The weaving should be centered on the newspaper strips, making a square. Leave the



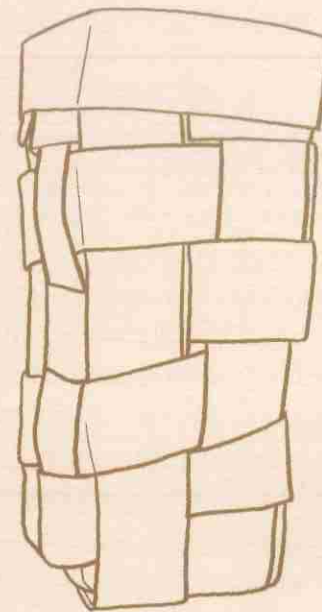
ends of the strips sticking out—two strips in each of the four directions.

Bend the ends of the strips to point up. Take a new strip of newspaper and weave it in and out of



the strips coming from the base. When you near the end of a horizontal strip, either tuck it in securely to one of the vertical strips or use glue to attach it.

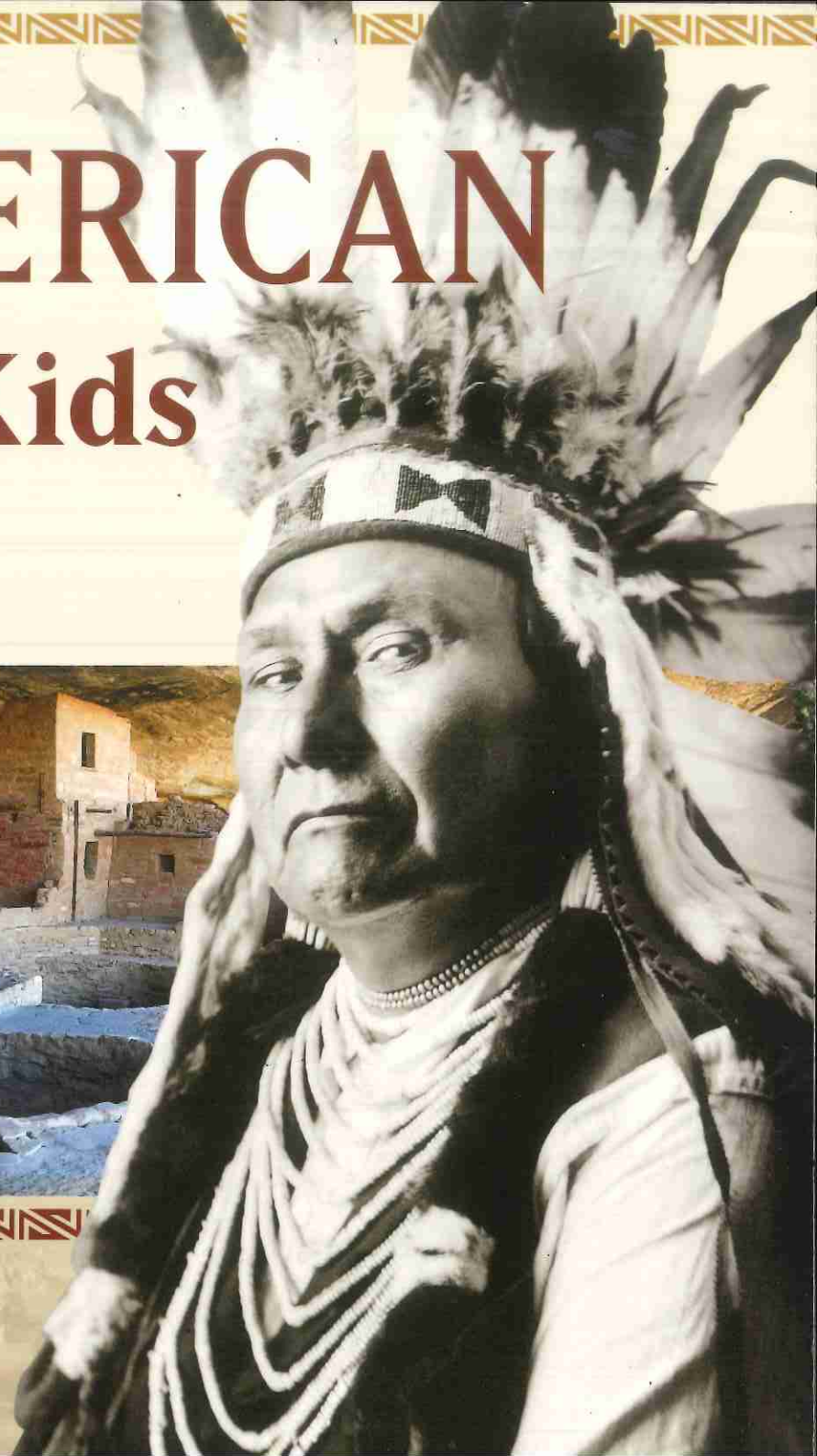
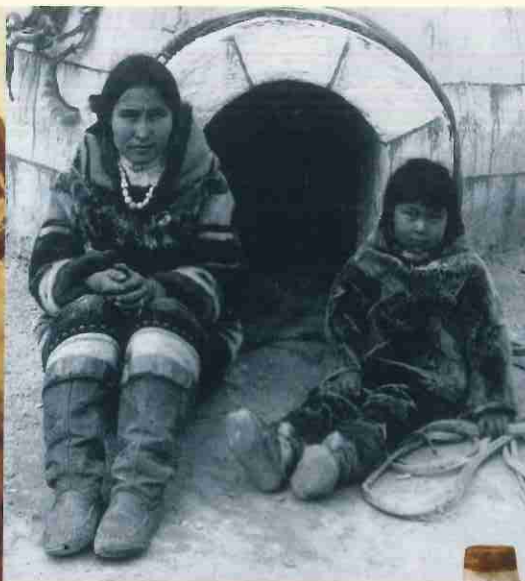
Continue weaving the sides with additional newspaper strips until you reach the desired height. Use one last strip (or two, if needed) to fold over the top of the basket to hold it secure. Glue this last strip in place as the top rim.





# NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY *for* Kids

WITH 21 ACTIVITIES



KAREN BUSH GIBSON

