

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Iroquois Confederacy (P. 82-92)

BIG IDEA: Democracy is influenced by past societies.

What is a wampum?

This is a special belt, created by women, and made of special shells in the colours of white and purple. Each belt contained a different message that was suggested to be serious and sincere, depending on who made it.

Canada has written a set of rules, the Constitution and the Iroquois confederacy was established based on the Great Law of Peace. One way that the Iroquois were able to remember the Great Law was by using a wampum belt.

One person was responsible for caring for the wampum and reading of the belt, bead by bead. Each wampum keeper was selected at a young age and trained to read, care and taught to remember the information and retell it in a poetic way.

The Hiawatha Wampum

Without having access to writing materials, there was no way to record the Great Law. Using the wampum beads, a belt was created that shows the 5 original nations begin connected with a row of white beads. This row represents the path of peace between all the nations.



SENECA NATION
Keepers of the Western Door

CAYUGA NATION

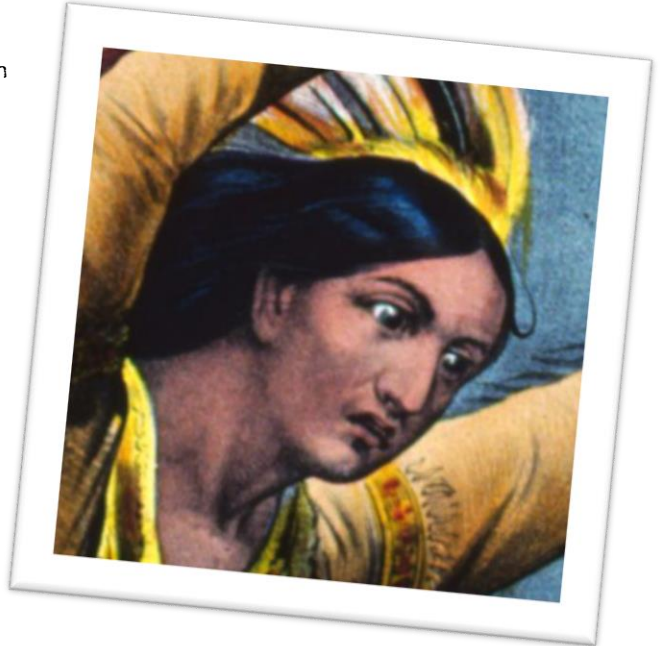
ONONDAGA NATION
Keepers of the Central Fire and the heart of the Five Nations loyal to the Great Law of Peace

ONEIDA NATION

MOHAWK NATION
Keepers of the Eastern Door

Who Was Hiawatha (Hayehwatha)?

- Believed that he lived sometime between 1100-1450
- Helped promote peace among Haudenosaunee
- **Story:** Tadodaho (chief of Onondaga) was not interested in peace. He was an evil man who caused death of Hiawatha's three daughters. In his sadness, Hiawatha went to live alone in forest. He put shells on a string as he thought about his daughters. This was the **FIRST** wampum.
 - Peacemaker found Hiawatha. Hiawatha was so sad that he could not see, hear, or speak, so the Peacemaker comforted him.
 - Peacemaker wiped the tears from Hiawatha's eyes with soft deerskin, he removed obstruction in Hiawatha's ear with a feather and gave him cool water to drink, which cleared obstruction in his throat.
 - Hiawatha spread the good word of peace with the Peacemaker and cleared the evil from the mind of Tadodaho. This allowed the Onondaga Nation to join the Confederacy.
 - *Picture courtesy of*
www.biography.com/people/hiawatha-9338091



How Was the Confederacy Structured?

You can compare the confederacy to the longhouse; the longhouse protected each family member from the enemies and the confederacy stretched over the whole territory, protecting the Six Nations.

The Chiefs

The duty of the chiefs was to teach and spiritually guide their people, as well as remind the people of how the Creator wanted them to live their lives in peace.

Although the chiefs were the same as everyone in the tribe, they were treated with great respect because of their wisdom and other special qualities. Not only did they take care of the Great Law of Peace, they had many other responsibilities:

- care for the welfare and affairs of the clan, nation and the Confederacy.
- uphold the rule of law in their society

Other Chiefs

- **War chiefs** - selected by the nation to sit on the Grand council, during war time.
- **Pine Tree Chiefs** - selected to join the Grand Council, by the chiefs, because they had a special interest in public affairs and showed special abilities.

The Grand Council

This is a group of 50 chiefs who represent the Six Nations.

- Mohawk Nation - 9 chiefs
- Oneida Nation - 9 chiefs (Tuscarora was not part of the Confederacy yet and were represented by the Oneida Chiefs)
- Onondaga Nation - 14 chiefs
- Cayuga Nation - 10 chiefs
- Seneca Nation - 8 chiefs

The Real Boss

The clan mother was the only person who could remove a chief from his position, if she felt he was not doing his job properly. Some reasons might be:

- committing a serious crime
- not attending Grand Council meetings
- not listening to the people or representing their views
- not looking after the welfare of his people

The clan mother would be responsible for selecting the new chief. She also made sure all decisions made by the Grand Council were "in line" with the Great Law of Peace and that all voices were heard and treated respectfully.

The Seventh Generation

generation - the descendants in a line of a family.

The seventh generation was something to consider, when making decision for the group. All changes and choices made for the clan would affect the 7th generation, more than 200 years in the future.

We expect our government to do the same for us. Do you think that our governments are passing laws which are strong enough to protect our environment? Health care? Human rights?

How Were Decisions Made in the Iroquois Confederacy?

How do people participate in the decision making process in Canada?

How did the people of Ancient Athens participate in the decision making process?

Decision Making

Under the Great Law, democratic principles were built into the decision making process:

- equality among all chiefs, in the Grand Council with the same level of authority
- both men and women shared authority
 - men were nominated as chiefs (male authority) by women (female authority)
 - both men and women belonged to the mother's clan (giving women authority)
- the clan system ensured no one nation could over take the confederacy. Loyalties were split between the clan and the nation, which helped maintain democracy and unity in the Confederacy

Decisions by Consensus

The Great Law allows everyone to voice opinions and agree upon decisions through *consensus*

Consensus - all people affected by a decision have an equal voice

In order for consensus to work, people must be open-minded and willing to think deeply about issues and what other peoples' ideas and suggestions are. Although the decision may not be their first choice, for what is best to all in the group, they must be willing to support it.

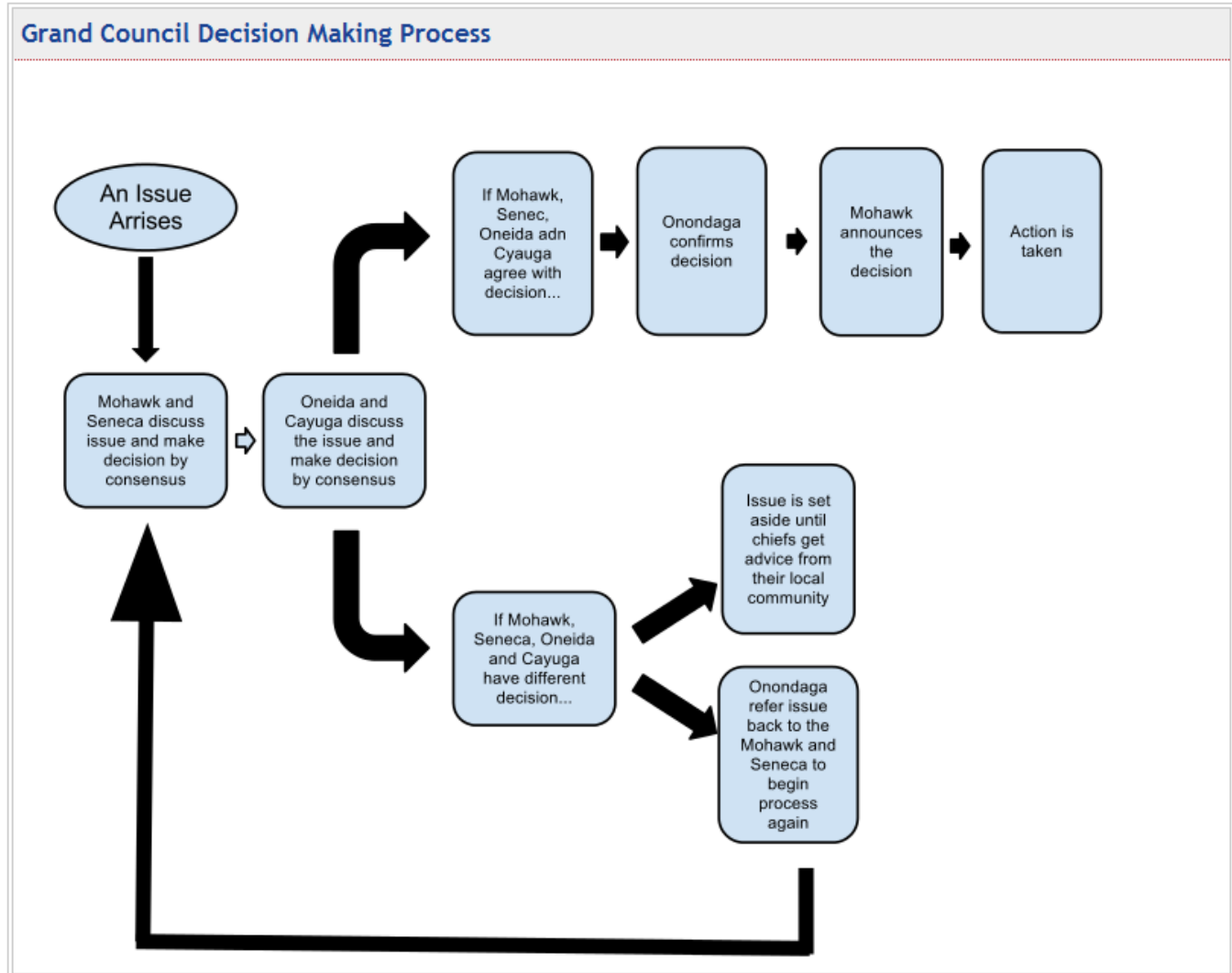
How does the social structure of the Confederacy encourage consensus decision making?

Why do you think people must be open-minded in order for consensus decision making to work?

Many times, people disagree with issues, in Canada. How do these people show they disagree with government decisions?

Decision Making in the Grand Council

The chiefs were divided by nations in order to fulfill rolls for the Grand Council.



Consulting the Clans

There were times when the Grand Council were required to return to each chiefs clan and heard what the clan thought about a certain topic. When this took place, there was certain steps taken to ensure the voice of the people was heard:

Step 1: Clan meeting was held; men, women, children and elders were given a chance to speak

Step 2: Clan mothers informed their chief what decision was made through consensus

Step 3: Clan chief carried the decision to the Council of the Chiefs of the nation

Step 4: The Council of the Chiefs of the nation brought the decision to the Grand Council