

Exemplar Informational Texts – A History of US

Hakim, Joy. *A History of US*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. (2005)

From Book 1: The First Americans, Prehistory to 1600; Chapter 7, “The Show-Offs”

In case you forgot, you’re still in that time-and-space capsule, but you’re not a baby anymore. You’re 10 years old and able to work the controls yourself. So get going; we want to head northwest, to the very edge of the land, to the region that will be the states of Washington and Oregon. The time? We were in the 13th century; let’s try the 14th century for this visit.

Life is easy for the Indians here in the Northwest near the great ocean. They are affluent (AF-flew-ent –it means “wealthy”) Americans. For them the world is bountiful: the rivers hold salmon and sturgeon; the ocean is full of seals, whales, fish, and shellfish; the woods are swarming with game animals. And there are berries and nuts and wild roots to be gathered. They are not farmers. They don’t need to farm.

Those Americans go to sea in giant canoes; some are 60 feet long. (How long is your bedroom? Your schoolroom?) Using stone tools and fire, Indians of the Northwest cut down gigantic fir trees and hollow out the logs to make their boats. The trees tower 200 feet and are 10 feet across at the base. There are so many of them, so close together, with a tangle of undergrowth, that it is sometimes hard for hunters to get through the forest. Tall as these trees are, there are not as big as the redwoods that grow in a vast forest to the south (in the land that will become California).

Media Text

“American Indians of the Pacific Northwest Collection,” a digital archive of images and documents hosted by the University of Washington: <http://content.lib.washington.edu/aipnw/>