

Kaya

Learning Guide

Learn about
Native American life
and the Nez Perce tribe
through the stories of
Kaya, a Nez Perce girl
growing up in 1764.





Kaya

About the Kaya Books

Kaya is a Nez Perce Indian growing up in 1764 in the Northwest. In 1764, the Nez Perce way of life depended on horses, which had been brought to the Americas by Spanish explorers in the 1500s. Horses were highly valued by many Native American tribes because they enabled faster travel and better hunting. The Nez Perce became expert riders and breeders, developing the spotted Appaloosa horses they are known for today.

Kaya's stories are set at the height of Nez Perce horse culture, before direct contact with whites began changing their way of life. Her stories show what it was like to grow up as a Nez Perce: how the Indians lived close to the land, getting everything they needed from it; how they made food, clothing, shelter, and other goods; how each member of the tribe depended on the others; and how knowledge was passed down from elders to children, so that they could carry their traditions and knowledge into the future.

Note: The terms "Indian" and "Native American" are both acceptable terms, and both terms are used interchangeably today by Native people and cultural experts.

The six books of the core series are:

Book 1: *Meet Kaya*

Book 2: *Kaya's Escape!*

Book 3: *Kaya's Hero*

Book 4: *Kaya and Lone Dog*

Book 5: *Kaya Shows the Way*

Book 6: *Changes for Kaya*

Instructions for Teachers

Assign or read aloud to your students some or all of the books in numerical order. As needed, print copies of each work sheet you would like to use in class. Before assigning the work sheets to your students, consider the talking points and discussion questions for each work sheet, provided below. Note: It's not essential to read all six books in order to complete the work sheets.

Talking Points and Discussion

The Nez Perce Indians

Before European contact, most Native Americans lived in small villages or groups in which everybody knew one another. Like the Nez Perce, many tribes traveled with the seasons, going where the food was best, and returning to more permanent villages for the winter. *Discussion:* Imagine living in a small town where you know *everyone*—and everyone knows a lot about you. When you travel somewhere, your whole village comes too. Do you think you would like that? Why or why not?

Living Close to the Land

In 1774, the Nez Perce did many things differently than we do today—yet they had everything they needed and plenty of time for fun. *Discussion:* How would our lives be different if we made all the things we needed instead of buying them? Do you think life would be better or worse?



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Learning from the Elders

Nez Perce children were expected to help the adults in their daily tasks of gathering, preserving, and preparing food; making clothing and shelter; and caring for younger children and the tribe's herd of horses. Adults also shared their wisdom about how to get along with others and how to survive in difficult circumstances. In this sense, all the adults in the village were teachers, and all the children were students learning the Nez Perce way of life. *Discussion:* Outside of school, what important things do you learn from the adults in your family or community?

Answer Key

The Nez Perce Indians

1. Washington, Oregon, Idaho
2. Appaloosas; they are spotted.
3. Horses could carry riders and belongings; they allowed Indians to hunt more successfully, travel farther and faster, and escape enemies more easily. Horses were also valuable for trade.
4. Kaya learns that what one person does affects all the rest. This lesson is important because in an Indian tribe, everyone's survival depends on the others in the group. A mistake by one person can affect everyone.

Living Close to the Land

1.

| Me | Need | Kaya |
|--|--------------------|---|
| House, apartment (answers may vary) | Home, housing | Tepee, longhouse |
| Grocery store, gardening, farming | Getting food | Hunting, fishing, gathering |
| Freezing, canning, drying, smoking | Preserving food | Smoking meat & fish; drying fish, berries & roots |
| Shower, bath, or washing at sink | Keeping clean | Bathing in streams or lakes, sweat lodge |
| Cloth of various fibers, natural and synthetic; leather; fur; metal; plastic | Clothing materials | Hide, fur, grasses, decorations of shell, quills, beads & teeth |
| Car, bus, train, boat, airplane, bicycle, by foot | Going places | Horse, canoe, by foot |



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2. Answers will vary.

3. reservations

Learning from the Elders

1. Answers will vary but may include learning: how to ride and train her horse; not to boast; to think of others before herself; how to weave baskets and mats; how to clean hides; how to dig roots; how to survive in the wilderness; to be responsible.

2. Answers will vary.

3. Answers will vary.

Kaya's Word Puzzle

All creatures have wisdom to share with us.

Illustrations by Bill Farnsworth and Susan McAliley



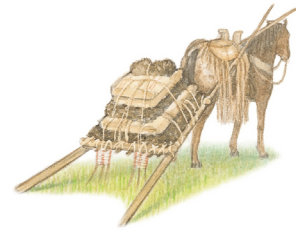
Kaya

The Nez Perce Indians

1. In the 1700s, the Nez Perce Indians lived in the mountains, forests, and prairies on land that now lies in which three states?

2. Like many Native Americans, the Nez Perce were expert horse riders and breeders. What kind of horses are the Nez Perce famous for, and what is distinctive about these horses?

3. Why do you think horses were so important to the Nez Perce and other Indian tribes?



4. Kaya lives in a village with her extended family, including grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. If one child in a village misbehaves or disobeys, all the children are punished. What lesson does Kaya learn from this, and why is this lesson an important one for Nez Perce children to learn?

Did you know?

Nez Perce children regarded not only their siblings but also their cousins as brothers and sisters.



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Living Close to the Land

1. Kaya's life is very different from yours. To compare how you live today with how the Nez Perce lived in 1764, complete the chart below. For each item in the middle column, list what these things are or how they're done in your world and how they are for Kaya, as shown in the examples.

| Me | Need | Kaya |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| | Home, housing | Tepee, longhouse |
| Grocery store, gardening, farming | Getting food | |
| | Preserving food | |
| | Keeping clean | |
| | Clothing materials | |
| | Going places | |

2. The Nez Perce used every part of an animal's body to make food, clothing, toys, jewelry, tools, and other useful things. What can you think of making from these animal parts? Use your imagination!

Deerskin or buffalo hide: _____

Horse-tail hairs: _____

Horns or antlers: _____

Hooves: _____

Bones and teeth: _____

3. Today, many Nez Perce live on land in Idaho that the U.S. government *reserved*, or set aside, for the tribe. Native Americans from many other tribes also live on lands set aside by the government. These Indian lands are known as

Did you know?

The Nez Perce believed that the land was something that could not be owned, any more than you could own the air.



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Learning from the Elders

1. Kaya learns many things by working alongside adults and by listening carefully to their stories and advice. She learns not only practical skills such as preparing food, but also how to get along with others—an important skill among people who live close together and depend on one another for survival. What are some of the skills Kaya learns?
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2. Nez Perce children received many names throughout their life. Receiving the name of a respected elder was a great honor. Receiving an animal's name could suggest the animal's power and strength—or bring to mind the animal's unwanted behavior, such as Kaya's nickname, Magpie! Choose a name for yourself the way the Nez Perce did, using animals, weather, or other things around you. Then choose a name for a good friend—and one for a relative who sometimes annoys you. Explain why you chose each name.

Did you know?

In Kaya's time, the Nez Perce shared information through conversation and storytelling rather than through written language.

My name: _____

Why the name fits: _____

Name for my good friend: _____

Why the name fits: _____

Name for an annoying relative: _____

Why the name fits: _____

3. Kaya's elders tell many legends of animal spirits, including a character named Coyote. These legends were exciting, often funny, and sometimes scary. Imagine that you are growing up in a Nez Perce tribe in 1764, like Kaya. There are no books, TV, movies, or computers. Would you look forward to an evening spent listening to legends and stories told by firelight? Why or why not?
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-
-



Kaya

Kaya Word Puzzle

In *Kaya and Lone Dog*, Kaya cares for a starving dog she names Lone Dog. Kaya sometimes feels almost as if Lone Dog is talking to her with her eyes. Kaya's grandmother agrees that animals talk to people in many ways. What else does she tell Kaya? To find out, cross out all the Ps, Ns, Bs, and Ks in the puzzle. Then write the remaining letters in the spaces below.



P A N B L K N K P L B C R
 B K N E B N P B A K T K B
 P N U B K R N P B K E P K
 B N S H K B A N K B V N B
 K E P W N P K I N B S D P
 K B O N P M K T P B N O S
 K N H B K A N R P P K E B
 W N I K B T K H U N B K S
