

# *American Cosmologies: The Cherokee*

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**Topic:** American Cosmologies: The Cherokee

**Purpose:** To familiarize visitors with a sampling of history, culture, and storytelling through interaction with the creation story of the Cherokee and a timeline of their history in North America.

**Medium:** Kiosk – Museum of the American Indian (Smithsonian)

### **Sections:**

#### 1. Index Page

The background will be lightly textured with a tan overlay. Between the background and the foreground will be the head of a cougar who will act as the narrator of the interface. In the foreground will be boughs of cedar extending from the left. Both the cougar and the cedar tree are sacred to the old belief system of the Cherokee. The three main links for Culture, History, and the Origin Story will appear as a vulture flies across the bottom mountains.

#### Text:

Hi. I am a cougar. I have an honored status among the Cherokee people, because I stayed awake during Creation. Read more about that in Origin Story. The Cherokee are a tribe of American Indians who live on land next to the Great Smoky Mountains in North Carolina and in regions of the Southeastern United States. Would you like to know more? Just follow me!

#### 2. The Creation Story (Above the Rainbow)

The cougar introduces the topic of the origin story and then when the dialog window is closed, the first section of the story drops in (the earth hanging from the sky ceiling.) The user will be able to click ‘Read More’ to move through subsequent sections of the story (getting the mud, creation of mountains, testing of the earth, bringing down the sun).



Text:

The Cherokee's origin story tells how the world first existed before we animals, plants, and people got there and how we sent messengers down to test the Earth before we left the heavens for our new home.

### 3. The Creation Story (Awake for 7 Days)

This interface contains two matching games that help users learn which animals and which plants have special meaning within the Cherokee origin story.

Game/Text:

Once the earth was created, Someone Powerful told all the animals and plants to stay awake for seven days and seven nights. But only two animals stayed awake all week, so as a reward they were given night vision. Can you guess which two animals stayed awake?

Wolf – Owl – Vole – Bear – Cougar [Images of each animal]

Correct answer is owl-cougar. If user gets this match, the next game is loaded.

Game/Text:

Someone Powerful also told all the plants to stay awake for seven days and seven nights, but only four managed to do so. Someone Powerful let these trees and plants keep their “fur” and stay green all year. Can you guess which plants or trees were chosen?

Oak – Cedar – Poison Ivy – Laurel – Pine – Tulip Poplar – Holly [Images of each plant]

Correct answer is Cedar – Laurel – Pine – Holly. If user clicks correct image, ‘right’ appears beneath. ‘Wrong’ appears beneath those wrongly selected.

Once all the correct answers are selected, user gets the conclusion of the story.



### 4. History (Timeline)

A timeline of key events will run down the right side of interface and when a user hovers over a date, an image associated with the date will fade in and the text will appear in a brown bar at the top of the screen. Larger events such as the Trail of Tears and New Echota have tabs on the side of the interface that cause the brown bar to extend over the interface and present the user with more information.

#### Text:

Pre 8000 BC: The Cherokee people lived in the Southern Appalachians.

2000 BC: Cherokee language is distinguished from other Iroquoian (North and Central American) languages

1000 BC: People start living in permanent villages in close proximity to rivers and creeks; form pottery.

800 AD: Cherokee women develop corn and raise it in fields.

1200 AD: Women then tame beans for growing with corn and squash.

1700 AD: Cherokee start trading with British and French.

1756-1759 AD: Cherokee fight as allies of British against French.

1760-1761 AD: Cherokee War – Cherokee vs. British

1766-1785 AD: Cherokee fight with British against Americans.

1789-1839 AD: Cherokee establish a capital, schools, court, police force and written language.

1814 AD: Join with Andrew Jackson to fight against Creeks in War of 1812.

1832 AD: Worcester vs. Georgia. U.S. Supreme Court rules that Cherokees are sovereign nation.

1838 AD: Trail of Tears, Cherokee forced to march west.

1868 AD: Eastern Cherokee recognized as tribe by US Government.

1898-1948 AD: Boarding schools remove Cherokee children from their parents in order to eliminate their cultural heritage.

1930 AD: Eastern Cherokee get US citizenship.

1946AD: Eastern Cherokee are allowed to register to vote.



### 5. History (Trail of Tears)

This interface will include a black and white image of the Trail of Tears, in addition to a short summary about the event, and a matching game for learning about key historical figures.

#### Text:

Following the war of 1812, well-known Southerners, like General Andrew Jackson, lobbied the US Government to end what he referred to as “absurdity” in recognizing Indian tribes as sovereign nations. Georgian politicians cited the Compact of 1802, in which the federal government had agreed to remove the Cherokee people from the state. The Cherokee, lead by Chief John Ross, resisted by pointing to the Treaty of Hopewell (1785) that established borders between the US and the Cherokee Nation.

However, the Cherokee nation divided into two groups: those that wanted to stay put and those who wanted to move west. It was members of the latter group, who signed the removal treaty – albeit without the sanction of the Cherokee National Government – at the capital of New Echota. The US Senate ratified the treaty by a margin of one vote and then sent the US Army down to round up as many Cherokee as possible and forced them to march west.

#### Matching Game:

[Image of John Ross] appears when user correctly matches the name John Ross with the bio: “John Ross was the Chief of the Cherokee National Government and fought to allow his people to stay on the East Coast.”

[Image of John Ridge] appears when user correctly matches the name John Ridge with the bio: “John Ridge was one of the Cherokee who signed the removal treaty at New Echota. He was later killed by those who hadn’t wanted to move.”

[Image of Elias Boudinot] appears when user correctly matches the name Elias Boudinot with the bio: “Elias Boudinot was one of the Cherokee who signed the removal treaty at New Echota. He was later killed by a group of men who hadn’t wanted to move west.”



### 6. History (New Echota)

This will be a purely informational interface with a photo of the capital and perhaps another of a document to indicate the newspaper office role.

Text:

New Echota was a capital established by Cherokee national legislature in 1825. Notably, it was the site of the first Indian language newspaper, held a court case that made it all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, and was one of the foremost experiments in national self government by the Cherokee people.

It was also the place that a treaty was signed, which gave up Cherokee lands East of the Mississippi. As it was signed without the permission of the Chief, many reluctant Cherokee were forcibly removed by the U.S. Government and marched along what would later be know as the Trail of Tears.

### 7a. Beliefs

When a user hovers on the icons at the top of the screen, which represent culturally important symbols or elements to the Cherokee, the description of the element appears in a speech bubble above the cougar.

Compass Icon Text: In addition to the 4 cardinal directions: North, South, East, & West, the Cherokee also include the directions Up, Down, and Center in their lifestyle. To this end, the numbers 4 and 7 have special meaning in how they relate to the directions as well as to the tribes.

Tribe Icon Text: The number 7 is considered special because it stands for the 7 clans of Cherokee people. Members within the same clan are considered to be of the same family and ancient custom considered it poor taste for a man and woman of the same clan to wed.

Leaf Icon Icon: In past times, it was believed that only the pine, cedar, spruce, laurel, and holly-bush had achieved the highest level of sacredness. Check out the Origin Story to see why.



Cougar/Owl Icon Text: Among the animals, only the cougar and owl were considered to be at the highest level of sacredness and because of this they received a gift. Do you know what that was? If not, visit the Origin Story to find out.

River Icon Text: Two other elements, considered sacred by the Cherokee are the circle shape, which is used in some ceremonies and dances, and rivers, which are seen as purifying.

### 7b. Womens' Roles

This interface (accessible from a tab on the side of the 'Beliefs' interface) will have a photograph a young Cherokee woman and older woman and when the user hovers over an image they are presented with a fact about women's roles within the Cherokee culture.

Young Woman Text: Contrary to popular myth, there was no such thing as Cherokee princesses. This was a dramatization given to them by European settlers.

Middle-Aged Woman Text: Kinship was determined through the matriarch of the household and women held ownership of all the houses and the property.

### 7c. Color Game (accessible from a tab on the side of the 'Beliefs' interface)

The user will click and drag phrases that describe the meaning of the seven colors associated with the directions.

East is red. Red means \_\_\_\_\_.

North is blue. Blue means \_\_\_\_\_.

West is black. Black means \_\_\_\_\_.

South is white. White means \_\_\_\_\_.

Up Above is yellow. Yellow means \_\_\_\_\_.

Down Below is brown. Brown means \_\_\_\_\_.

Here in the Center is green. Green means \_\_\_\_\_.



Options:

Success; triumph

Defeat; trouble

Death

Peace; happiness

Trouble; strife

Unknown, but favorable

Self

**Perception Tone:** Earthy

**Target Audience:** Primarily children between 10 and 15 who are interested in learning or are curious about different cultures and histories within the United States, but also adults who may be present with the children.



### Audience Profile #1



Name: Bailey Fellix  
Age: 15  
Occupation: Student  
Location: Alexandria, Virginia

Bailey is a freshman at Fairview High School in Alexandria. Her father is in the military and currently stationed to work in Arlington. She's been in the area for a year and a half now and while her family has been to the Smithsonian museums to visit, this time Bailey has a specific purpose. She is taking a writing-intensive American folklore class and she must write a twelve page research paper on how folk stories governed the lives of a specific people within the United States. Bailey is a bit stuck on ideas and the teacher has required that at least four sources come from outside the web and one of those cannot be a standard textbook. Bailey decides to metro to D.C. and visit the Museum of the American Indian, since American Indian folklore is an option she can choose for her paper. She just wants to find a people whose iconic symbolism appears both in their stories and in present everyday life.

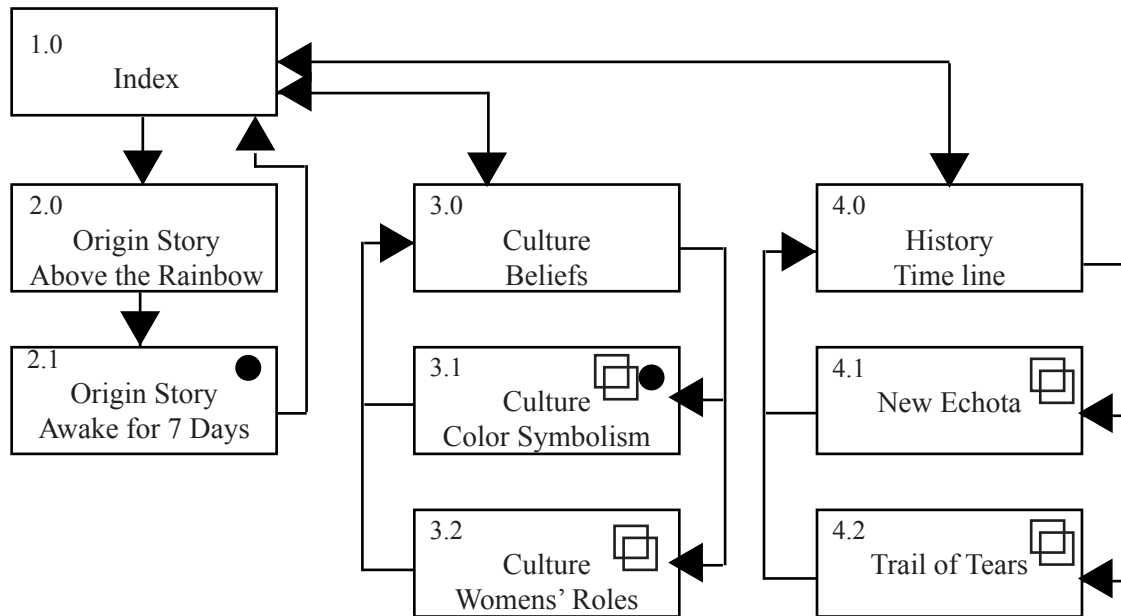
### Audience Profile #2



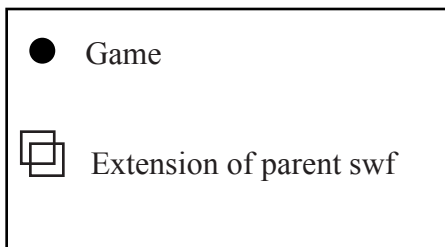
Name: Cynthia Orange  
Age: 43  
Occupation: Mother  
Location: Brackettville, West Virginia

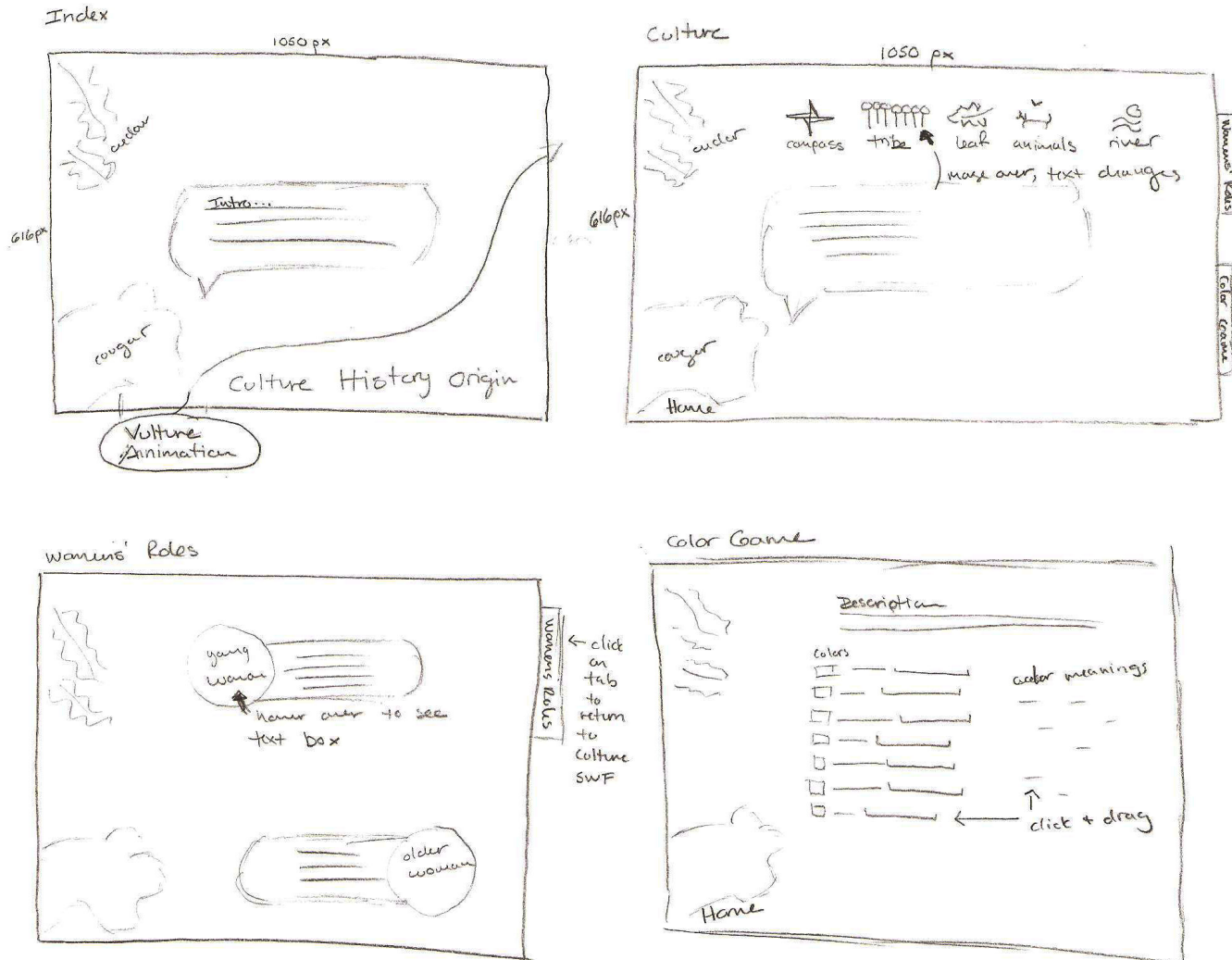
Cynthia Orange is visiting the Museum of the American Indian for the first time with her husband and two children ages, 8 and 10, as part of a two-day vacation to Washington D.C. Cynthia loves history and has been to D.C. to visit the Smithsonian Museums before, but previously without her children. When picking out museums to visit, Cynthia decides to try a museum that wasn't on her map the last time she visited. She thinks her children would benefit knowing more about the American Indians and as the museum is relatively new, she has not been there herself. Cynthia loves the external architecture of the museum and is rewarded by a very photo rich environment full of stories, real artifacts from the various tribes, and interactive displays that allow her to learn about the various cultures through puzzles and games. For her 10-year-old, these kiosks are about all that he slows down to look at.





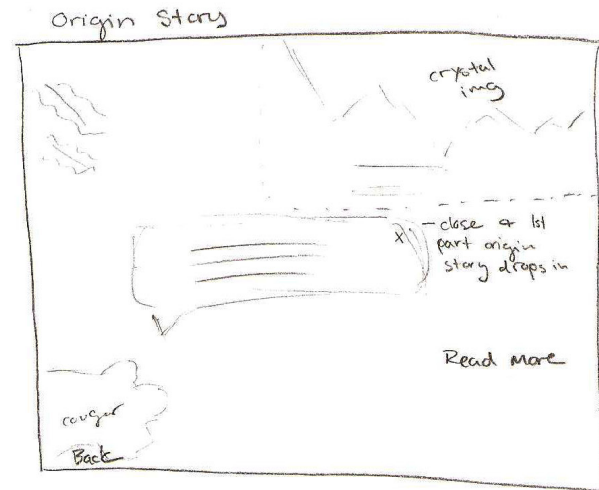
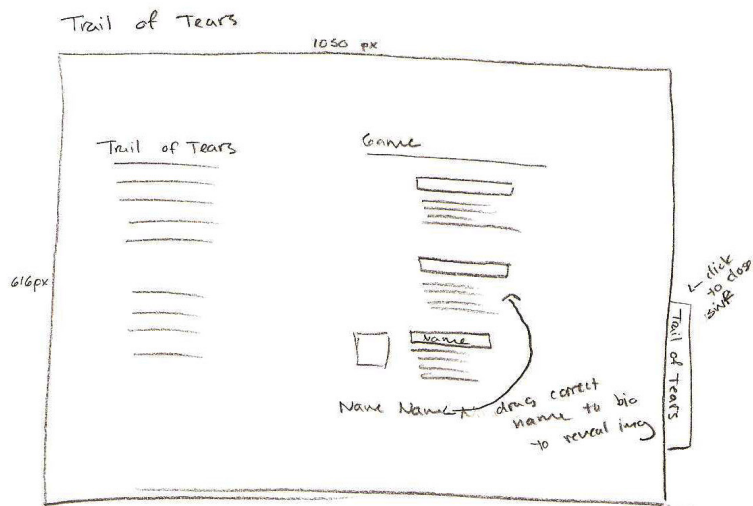
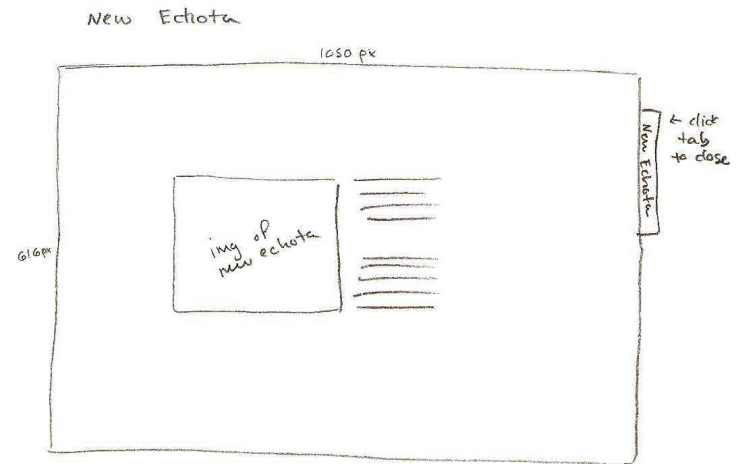
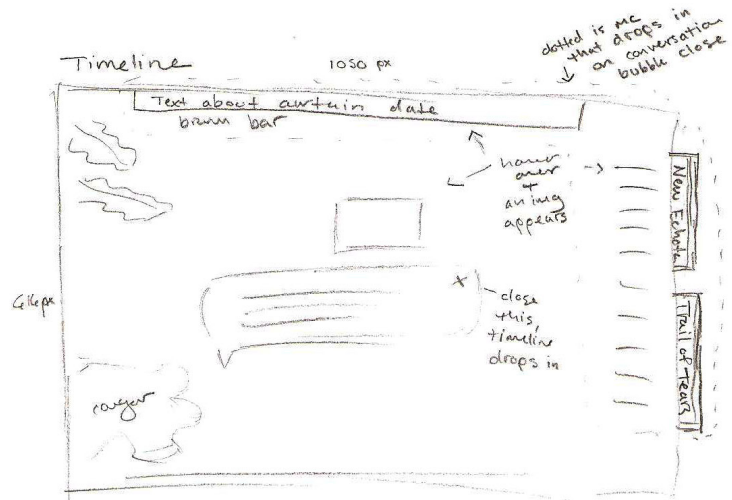
**Key**





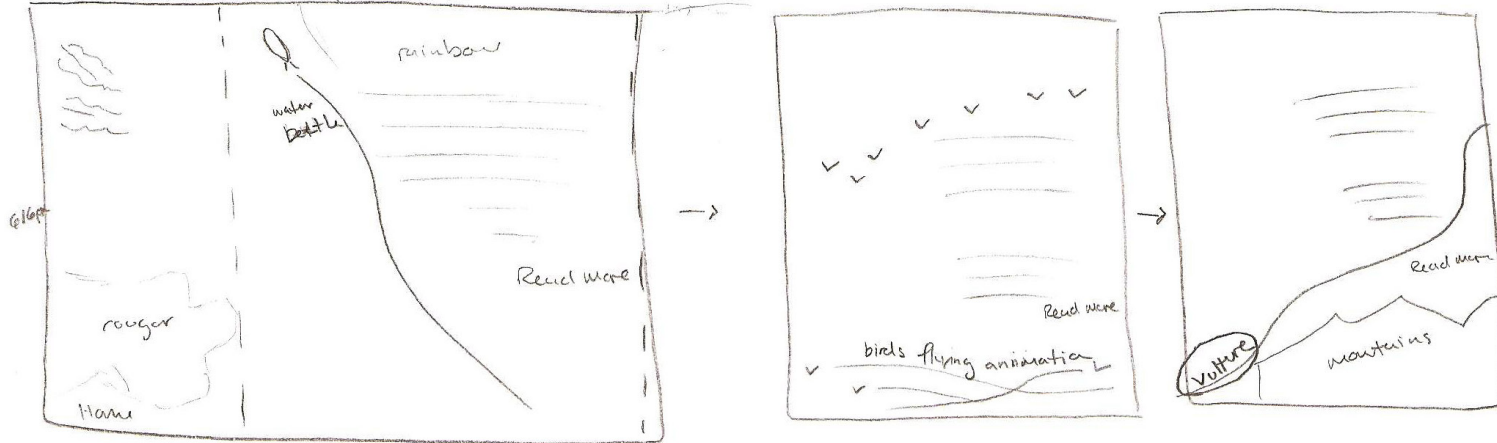
# American Cosmologies at a Glance: The Cherokee

## Wireframes

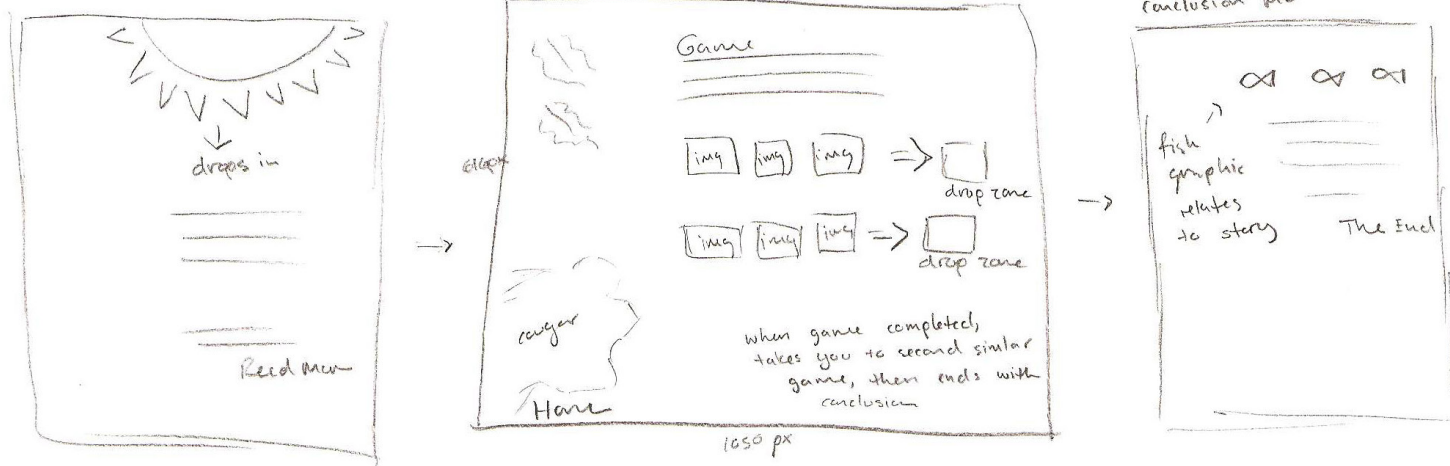


# American Cosmologies at a Glance: The Cherokee

Origin Story (subsequent me when 'Read Here' is clicked)  
1050 px



Origin Story (Awake for 7 Days) Game



*American Cosmologies: The Cherokee*

Hi. I am a cougar. I have an honored status among the Cherokee people, because I stayed awake during Creation. Read more about that in *Origin Story*. The Cherokee are a tribe of American Indians who live on land next to the Great Smoky Mountains in North Carolina and in regions of the Southeastern United States. Would you like to know more? Just follow me!







*Culture History Origin Story*







Each one of the seven directions in the Cherokee cosmology is represented by a color. Learn more about the symbolism of the colors by matching the meaning with the color.

	East is red. Red means _____	<i>Unknown, but favorable</i>
	North is blue. Blue means _____	<i>Peace; happiness</i>
	West is black. Black means _____	<i>Trouble; strife</i>
	South is white. White means _____	<i>Success; triumph</i>
	Up Above is yellow. Yellow means _____	<i>Defeat; trouble</i>
	Down Below is brown. Brown means _____	<i>Self</i>
	Here in the Center is green. Green means _____	<i>Death</i>

Color Game



Womens' Roles

Kinship among the Cherokee was determined through the matriarch of the household and women held ownership of all the houses and the property.

Home



Cherokee women develop corn and raise it in fields.



8000 BC  
2000 BC  
1000 BC  
800 AD  
1200 AD  
1700 AD  
1756-1759 AD  
1760-1761 AD  
1789-1839 AD  
1814 AD  
1832 AD  
1838 AD  
1868 AD  
1898-1948 AD  
1930 AD  
1946 AD

New Echota

Trail of Tears

*Back*





New Echota was a capital established by Cherokee national legislature in 1825. Notably, it was the site of the first Indian language newspaper, held a court case that made it all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, and was one of the foremost experiments in national self government by the Cherokee people.

It was also the place that a treaty was signed, which gave up Cherokee lands East of the Mississippi. As it was signed without the permission of the Chief, many reluctant Cherokee were forceably removed by the U.S. Government and marched along what would later be know as the Trail of Tears.

New Echota

*Back*



### Trail of Tears

Following the war of 1812, well-known Southerners, like General Andrew Jackson, lobbied the US Government to end what he referred to as "absurdity" in recognizing Indian tribes as sovereign nations. Georgian politicians cited the Compact of 1802, in which the federal government had agreed to remove the Cherokee people from the state. The Cherokee, lead by Chief John Ross, resisted by pointing to the Treaty of Hopewell (1785) that established borders between the US and the Cherokee Nation.

However, the Cherokee nation divided into two groups: those that wanted to stay put and those who wanted to move west. It was members of the latter group, who signed the removal treaty – albeit without the sanction of the Cherokee National Government – at the capital of New Echota. The US Senate ratified the treaty by a margin of one vote and then sent the US Army down to round up as many Cherokee as possible and forced them to march west.

### Who was responsible for the Cherokee's fate?

Match the name with the correct bio to see a picture.

This was one of the Cherokee who signed the removal treaty at New Echota without the Chief's authorization. Upon reaching the new territory he killed by a group of men who hadn't wanted to move west.

This man was one of the Cherokee who signed the removal treaty at New Echota. He was later killed by those who hadn't wanted to move

### John Ross



This man was the Chief of the Cherokee National Government and fought to allow his people to stay on the East Coast.

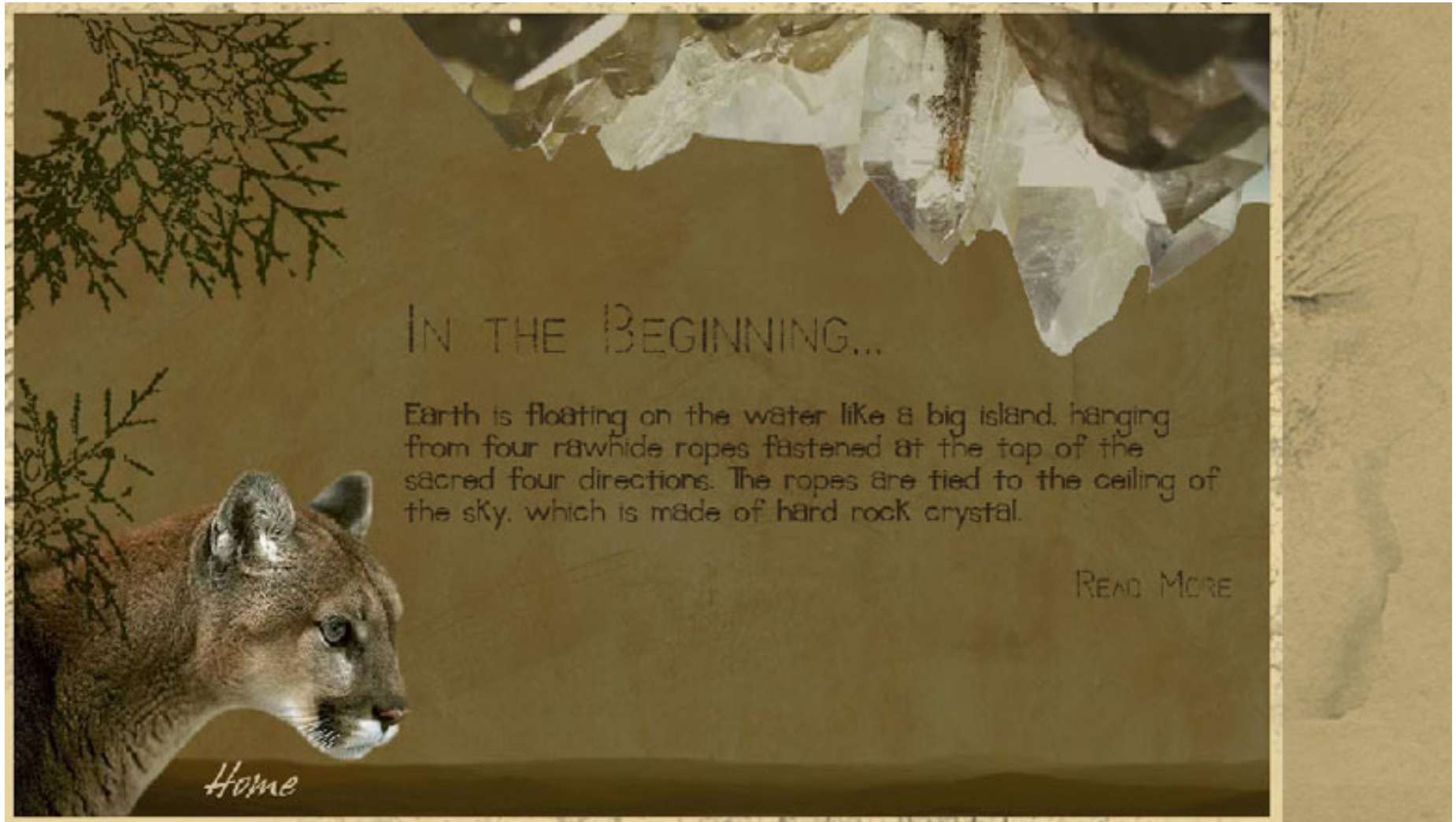
John Ridge

Elias Boudinot

Trail of Tears








Back





**Game**

Once the earth was created, Someone Powerful told all the animals and plants to stay awake for seven days and seven nights. But only two animals stayed awake all week, so as a reward they were given night vision. Can you guess which two animals stayed awake?

*Home*



**Process Book Images**

Austin, Barry. "Young Woman Studying in Classroom." GettyImages. <http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/73532182/Photodisc> 27. Feb. 2011

Woolley, David. "Mother and Children." GettyImages. <http://www.gettyimages.com/detail/200521176-001/Photodisc>. 27 Feb. 2011.

**Interface Images**

Davidb30906. "Mountain Lion." Flickr.com. 24 July 2007. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/davidb30906/887768734/in/faves-37748068@N02>. 27 Feb. 2011.

Pokoert. "Rainbow." SXC. 19 Feb. 2005. <http://www.sxc.hu/photo/260426>. 27 Feb. 2011.

Scott. "Native American." Flickr.com. 6 Nov. 2006. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/jsmoorman/4084176182/in/faves-37748068@N02>. 7 Feb. 2011.

Skip Bradley. "Cherokee Beauty." Flickr.com. 10 Dec. 2009. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/skipbradley/4183072324/in/faves-37748068@N02>. 27 Feb. 2011.

Surely. "Fish Sequence." SXC. 7 Aug. 2007. <http://www.sxc.hu/photo/839945>. 27 Feb. 2011.

Valter Jacinto. "Water Beetle." Flickr.com. 13 Feb. 2010. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/valter/4361439011/in/faves-37748068@N02>. 27 Feb. 2011.

Verzerk. "Quartz 2." SXC. 20 Jan. 2007. <http://www.sxc.hu/photo/702164>. 27 Feb. 2011.

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