

# Native American literature: Writing Styles and Genres

America's First Literature - Before Colonization Widely agreed that the first American literature was "written" by Native Americans We will read North American literature from both before and after colonization Recap: What does "colonization" mean?

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Before Colonization "Columbus did not discover a new world; he established contact between two worlds, both already old." - J.H. Parry Somewhere between 2.1 million and 18 million Native Americans thrived in North America before Columbus arrived in 1492.

NA Languages American Indians are not one cultural group. There are hundreds of cultural identities which make up the "native" population There are an estimated 500 distinct Native American nations, speaking about 300 different languages.

## Story Similarities

Despite their differences, their cultures and literary traditions had the following

- \_\_\_\_\_:
- \_\_\_\_\_, they believed in the power of words and relied on memory, rather than writing to preserve their texts.
- \_\_\_\_\_; there are no ending pages and they are not contained within a limited, concrete, physical source.
- \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ and is offered to the audience as dramatic events in time.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ is not passive.
- The storyteller is very important to Native cultures and is \_\_\_\_\_ and respected member of the tribe/society.
- There is usually \_\_\_\_\_ known original author

## Types & Functions of Stories

- \_\_\_\_\_ - moral lessons to warn the younger generation to behave or instructions from spirit mentors to explain how to conduct ceremonies.
- \_\_\_\_\_ - water cycles, inter-species relationships, life cycles of plants, earth movements and soil types (among others)
- \_\_\_\_\_ - hunting, gathering and farming stories

- \_\_\_\_\_ - describe historic and on-going migrations of tribe for subsistence and holy journeys.
- \_\_\_\_\_ - articulate the mystery and complexity of being human.
- \_\_\_\_\_ - Adventures in love, romance, and marriage

### Creation Myths

The purpose of a \_\_\_\_\_ is to explain how the universe, earth, or other natural elements began.

Served four functions:

1. To give the audience a sense of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
2. To explain the natural world
3. To support \_\_\_\_\_
4. To guide people through the trials of living

**Throughout history, societies have explained how the world came to be...**

Asian Mythology – From the void, a cosmic egg formed.

Norse Mythology – Man was created from the branch of an Ash tree

Greek Mythology – In the beginning, there was Chaos, there appeared Night and Depth.



