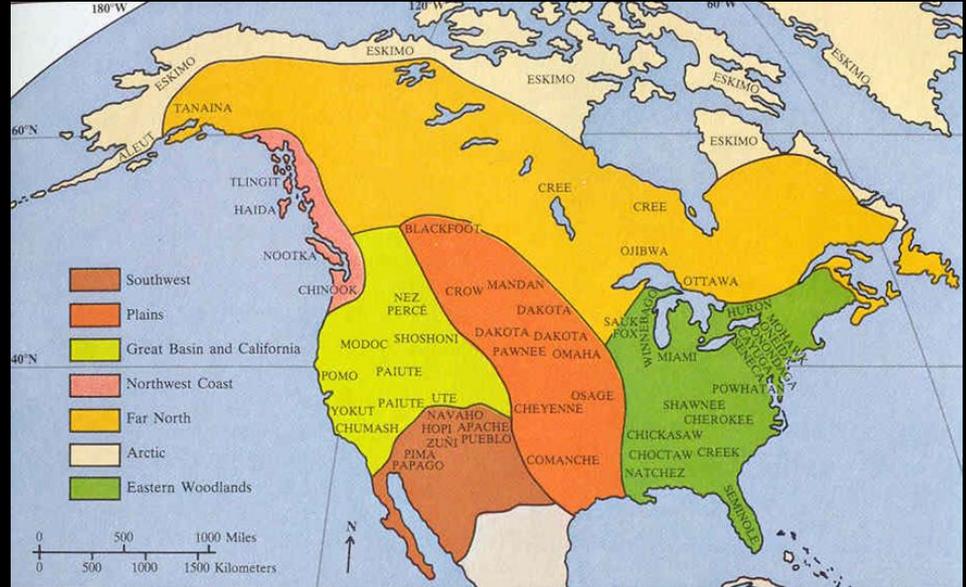




Native American Literature: Pre-Colonization

Recap: Pre-Colonization

Somewhere between **2.1 million** and **18 million** Native Americans thrived in North America before Columbus arrived in 1492.



Pre-Colonial Literature: Genres & Styles

Oral tradition and storytelling (no written language)

Myths to explain mysteries of the universe

Creation Stories - types of myths that explain the origin of the earth and/or humanity

Folktales - stories to pass on moral values/lessons

Trickster Tales - a specific type of folktale with a “trickster” character

Songs & Prayers - for religious purposes

Common Pre-Colonial Topics & Themes

Beliefs about good and evil

-Stories or myths may show that certain actions or beliefs are good or bad

Human connection to nature

-Stories or myths may show how closely intertwined Native Americans were with their environment--particularly with animals

Harmony and balance

-Stories or myths may have a Yin/Yang message to them--opposites cannot exist without each other, every person has good and bad in them, extremes should be avoided, etc.



Native American Literature: Post-Colonization

Post-Colonization

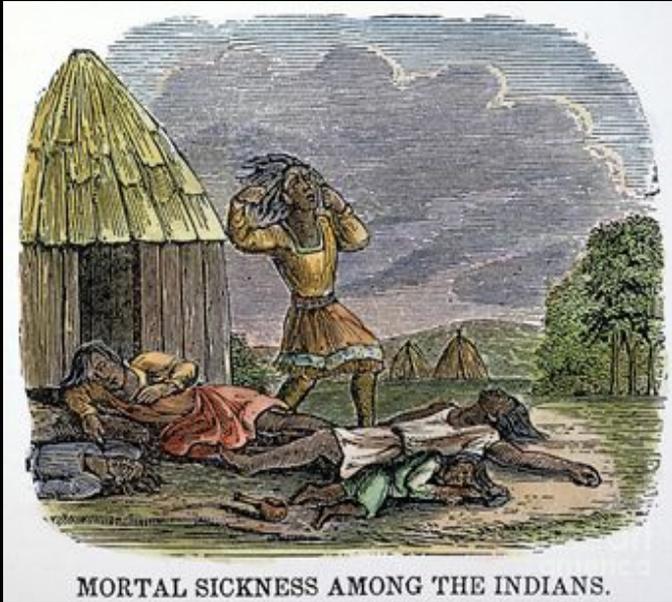
Columbus and European settlers arrived in 1492.

Peaceful, if **tense**--the English depended on the Native Americans to learn how to cook, travel, make clothing, and plant crops.

Relationship founded on trade--in exchange for **goods** (metal tools, guns, jewelry, mirrors, other manufactured goods), tribes provided **services** to colonists (food, clothing, shelter, and knowledge of the area).



Unintended Tragedy



Unknowingly, the English exposed the Native Americans to new **diseases**, like smallpox and influenza.

Native Americans had no natural **immunity** built up against these diseases (like the English had).

The Native American populations suffered a **40-80%** decrease after contact with these diseases.

Puritan “Superiority”

The colonists were also known as Puritans--they left Europe because of **corruption** in the Church with the goal of starting their own, “purer” sect of Christianity in the New World.

Puritans took the Native Americans dying as a sign from God that they (Puritans) were **spared** from sickness because of their religious morals, while the “immoral Indians” were being **punished** for their non-Christian ways.



Westward Expansion

As more and more colonists arrived in North America, Native American tribes were pushed further West due to the growing population. This led to **violence** over territory lines.



Attempts at Peace

English tried to establish peace through **treaties** (agreements between two nations that becomes law).

Native Americans agreed to submit to English control in exchange for peace. In exchange, the English set aside **reservations**, or smaller areas of original Native American territories that they could live on undisturbed by settlers.

Unfortunately, the treaties were **not enforced**, and European settlers moved onto reservation lands and restricted Native American use of non-reservation land.

Land transferred from Indians to Whites Lands held by Indians or returned to Indians



Trail of Tears

Five tribes (the Cherokee, Creeks, Choctaws, Blackfoot and Seminoles) refused to leave their home territories for the government's reservations.

In 1838, the Georgia militia was ordered to force the Native Americans out of Georgia.

17,000 Native Americans were brutally rounded up and marched to Indian territory in Oklahoma.

As many as 4,000 died along the "Trail of Tears".



"I fought through the Civil War and have seen men shot to pieces and slaughtered by the thousands, but the Cherokee removal was the cruelest work I ever knew." - Georgia soldier involved in removal process

Assimilate or Eliminate

Ultimately, Native Americans would be **limited** in every aspect of their lives by the colonization of Europeans.

In additions to being forced to live on reservations, Europeans forced Native Americans to adopt their religion, dress, and **lifestyle**.



Modern Impact

Today the population of Native Americans (including those who also identify with another race) is just over **5 million**.

About **22%** of Native Americans live on U.S. reservations.

Reservation living conditions are considered “comparable to the **Third World**”.

63% of Native Americans living on reservations are below the poverty line.

Native Americans are **82%** more likely to die of suicide compared to other races.

Post-Colonial Styles & Genres of Literature

Oral Tradition - folk tales, myths, histories, maps, etc. - transposed to written tradition.

Adoption of **European literature** writings and styles--including poems, short stories, and novels.

Common Post-Colonial Themes & Topics

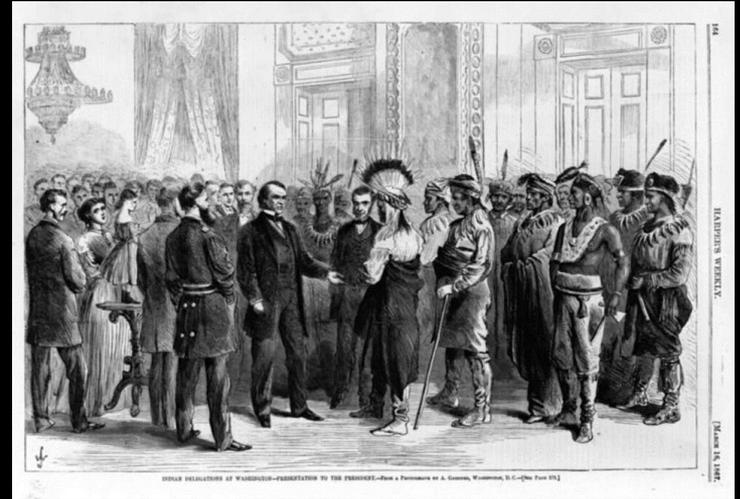
Migration/Displacement (literally or emotionally/spiritually)

Protecting tribal history

Tribal life and hardship (particularly **reservations**)

The struggle to find a voice in a white-dominated society

Finding **balance** between Native American and white culture



“Don’t Drink the Water” by the Dave Matthews Band

1. Read through the lyrics of “Don’t Drink the Water.” Who is the **speaker**? How do you know?
2. Who is the **“you”** the speaker is supposed to be talking to? How do you know?
3. What is the artist’s **purpose**? What is the point/message/theme of this song? Please back up your answer using evidence from the text.
4. If you were directing the **music video** to this song, what types of images/video clips would you include to enhance the song’s meaning?

“Don’t Drink the Water”



5. Watch the real music video! Did you predict anything in the music video in your answer to #4? Did anything surprise you?