

# Peace Pipes and Talking Leaves: Cherokee Leaders & Lore

Program Study Guide  
Barry Stewart Mann

## Program Description

*Peace Pipes and Talking Leaves: Cherokee Leaders and Lore* is a program presenting the customs and lore of the Cherokee through the lives of three fascinating historical figures—Sequoyah, Nancy Ward and Dragging Canoe. Segments include the Seven Clans, the Green Corn Ceremony, Cherokee Stickball, and the stories of Star Girl, the Healing Lake, and the Animal Ballgame. Authentically-styled costumes and props, inventive puppets and staging, and plenty of audience participation make this a stimulating learning experience that honors the tales, traditions, and contributions of this influential Native American nation.



## Artist Bio

**Barry Stewart Mann** is an actor, storyteller, writer and educator who has taught and performed around the country. He holds a B.A. in English from Harvard University and an M.F.A. in Drama from the University of San Diego, and has performed on numerous Atlanta stages, including Theatrical Outfit, Horizon Theatre, and the Atlanta Shakespeare Tavern. He is a member of the Southern Order of Storytellers and the National Storytelling Network. His life partner, Sheri Mann Stewart, is a direct descendant of Nanye-hi (Nancy Ward), and together they have explored her Cherokee heritage.

## Sample Standards

- SS2H1 The student will read about and describe the lives of historical figures in Georgia history.
- SS2H2 The student will describe the Georgia Creek and Cherokee cultures of the past in terms of tools, clothing, homes, ways of making a living, and accomplishments.
- ELACC2RL2: Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral.
- ELACC2RL6: Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.
- TAES2.1 Analyzing and constructing meaning from theatrical experiences, dramatic literature, and electronic media
- TAES2.11 Engaging actively and appropriately as an audience member in theatre or other media experiences

## Key Vocabulary

- Ceremony -- a formal and public way of conducting the life of a community
- Cherokee - Native Americans who lived among the Appalachian Mountains and in what are now the states of the southeastern US
- Clan - a group of extended family members connected by blood or marriage, that form a smaller part of a tribe or community
- Elders – the older and wiser people in a community, clan, or family
- Folklore -- the stories of a people or tribe, usually developed over many generations
- Gourd -- a kind of squash, hollowed and dried for many uses
- Syllabary -- an 'alphabet' of letters representing one- or two-sound syllables.
- Treaty - an official agreement between nations or governments, often to establish peace or exchange land

## Objectives

- To impart essential information about the lifestyles and customs of the Cherokee people that inhabited Georgia, including the Seven Clans, the Green Corn Ceremony, and Cherokee stickball
- To share Cherokee folklore – both creation myths and explanatory tales – to convey an understanding of the Cherokee worldview
- To introduce students to three key Cherokee figures of the period after contact with European settlers but prior to the forced relocation and Trail of Tears
- To model and engage students in a variety of interactive storytelling strategies and activities.

## Assess the Learning

What were some of the customs and practices of the Cherokee?

What are some of the folk tales that the Cherokee tell about the earth, the fire, the people and the animals?

Who were the three historical figures introduced in the program? What made each of them special or noteworthy?

How many clans do the Cherokee have, and what do they represent?

How did Sequoyah develop the Cherokee system of writing?

What problems did the Cherokee have with the settlers who came to live in the Appalachian Mountains?

## Extend the Learning

- Find out where the Cherokee lived hundreds of years ago. Color in those areas on a map. Find out where the Cherokee live now, and color those areas with a different color.
- Make a chart showing the stages in the life cycle of corn or gourds. Show how the Cherokees used these fruits of the earth.
- Imagine dividing your class into seven clans. What animal might represent each clan? What attribute would each animal represent? Draw a mask for each clan.
- Create a story to explain something interesting about an animal, such as why cats purr, or why bears stand up.
- Imagine you are asking a Cherokee War Chief and a US Army general to stop fighting. How would you convince them to be peaceful?
- Sequoyah's name means 'Pig's Leg.' Nanye-hi means 'one who goes about.' TsiyuGansi-ni means "Dragging Canoe." If you had a Cherokee name, what would it mean? Draw a picture to show the idea for your name.
- Look at the Cherokee syllabary. Practice saying the syllables. Then practice writing them. Learn some simple 2-syllable Cherokee words, and then write them and draw pictures to go with them.
- Create a simple dance to represent something you do that is important in your life (may be done individually, in small groups, or as a class.)
- Investigate the Native American origins of state names (e.g, Mississippi, Wyoming, etc.)

## Additional Resources

### Books

Alderman, Pat. *Nancy Ward/Dragging Canoe*. Overmountain Press: Johnson City, TN, 1978.  
Cwiklik, Robert. *Sequoyah and the Cherokee Alphabet*. Silver Burdett: Englewood, NJ, 1989.  
Ellington, Charlotte Jane. *Beloved Mother: The Story of Nancy Ward*. Overmountain Press: Johnson City, TN, 1994  
Mooney, James. *History, Myths and Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees*. Bright Mountain Books: Asheville, NC, 1992.  
Traveler Bird. *The Path to Snowbird Mountain*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux: New York.

### Online

[www.allthingscherokee.com](http://www.allthingscherokee.com) (general information)  
[www.cherokeebyblood.com/cherostories.htm](http://www.cherokeebyblood.com/cherostories.htm) (Cherokee folklore)  
[www.cherokeehistory.com](http://www.cherokeehistory.com) (Cherokee history)  
[www.cherokee-nc.com](http://www.cherokee-nc.com) (about the contemporary Eastern Band of Cherokees)  
[www.native-languages.org/cherokee.html](http://www.native-languages.org/cherokee.html) (focusing on the Cherokee language)

## Contact information

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