

Oklahoma Indian Education Tribal Guide: The Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma

Tribal Seal/Flag/Website

Tribal Seal:



Tribal Flag:



Tribal Website: www.chickasaw.net, www.chickasaw.tv

Tribal curricula/resources: www.chickasaw.net/curriculum



Migration/Movement/Forced Removal

- Historic Homeland – Southeastern United States, including parts of present-day northwest Alabama, southwest Kentucky, northeast Mississippi and west Tennessee.
- Location in Oklahoma – The Chickasaw Nation Reservation includes more than 7,648 square miles of south-central Oklahoma. It encompasses all or parts of 13 Oklahoma counties.

In 1837, the Chickasaw people were forcibly removed from their historic Homeland to Indian Territory in what is known as the “Chickasaw Removal.” Other Southeastern Indian tribes removed include the Cherokee, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek) and Seminole. Collectively, these tribes are referred to as the “Five Civilized Tribes.” The Chickasaw people were one of the last to remove.

On January 17, 1837, the Chickasaw Nation purchased an interest in land and resources from the Choctaw Nation in Indian Territory for \$530,000, which was negotiated through the Treaty with U.S., Choctaw and Chickasaw (Treaty of Doaksville)¹. On July 4, 1837, the Chickasaw people began the forced removal to Indian Territory, leaving behind their homes, communities, businesses and schools [see attachment 2]. Through this treaty, a Chickasaw District was established within the Choctaw Nation [see attachment 3]. On June 22, 1855, in Washington, D.C., the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations signed a treaty with the United States. The treaty formally reestablished federal recognition of the two separate sovereign Tribal nations—the Chickasaw Nation and the Choctaw Nation. No longer would the Chickasaw occupy a “District” within the Choctaw Nation system but would instead occupy their own treaty homeland. The new treaty delineated the boundaries of the two nations and recognized that the Chickasaw Nation would set up a government separate from the Choctaw Nation and its own laws under its own constitution.

In 1856, the Chickasaw people met at Good Spring (present-day Tishomingo, Oklahoma) on Pennington Creek, to draft an updated constitution for the purpose of governing themselves and their territory. The 1856 Chickasaw Constitution restored direct authority over Chickasaw governmental affairs, and it organized executive, legislative and judicial departments of government with the offices filled by popular election. After careful deliberation, the Chickasaw people decided that a governor would serve as the “supreme executive power” for the Chickasaw Nation. From 1856 to 1904, several leaders were elected and served as governor. Throughout the days of Indian

¹ Kappler, Charles J. “Treaty with the Choctaw and Chickasaw, 1837.” *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*. 1837:1-2. Web. 21 Mar. 2017. Retrieved from <<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/Chi0486.htm>>.



Territory, Chickasaws had strong leadership from elected tribal senators, tribal legislators and tribal judges.

Chickasaws worked diligently to reestablish themselves in the Indian Territory, attempting to recover all that they had been forced to leave behind in the Homeland. Chickasaws built farms, ranches, homes, churches and even commissioned schools. They even built some of the first banks and businesses in Indian Territory. At the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861, the Chickasaw Nation signed an alliance with the Confederacy. The respected Choctaw/Chickasaw Mounted Regiment, headquartered at Fort Washita, fought some of the last battles of the war. Although suffering hardships after the defeat of the Confederacy, the tribe slowly recovered.

Leading up to Oklahoma's entry as the Union's 46th state in 1907, Congress took a series of actions to force the allotment of tribal lands and take control of, and then restrict, tribal governments. During this period, tribal citizens who received individual allotments of tribal land became citizens of the United States and the new state of Oklahoma. Those who did not accept allotment were not granted United States citizenship until the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924. Beginning in 1906, the president of the United States appointed Chickasaw Nation governors. As civil rights issues gripped the country during the 1940s and 1950s, a group of Chickasaw people met at Seeley Chapel, near Connerville, Oklahoma, to again exercise their inherent sovereignty through working to remove the restrictions placed on their tribal government and to regain the right to elect their own leader, among other important matters. Dreams were finally realized when Congress acted in 1970, in response to tribal advocacy, to begin the process of restoring self-governance and self-determination to tribal institutions. The following year, the first tribal election since 1904 took place, and Overton James was elected Governor of the Chickasaw Nation. In 1983, an updated Chickasaw constitution was passed by the Chickasaw people.

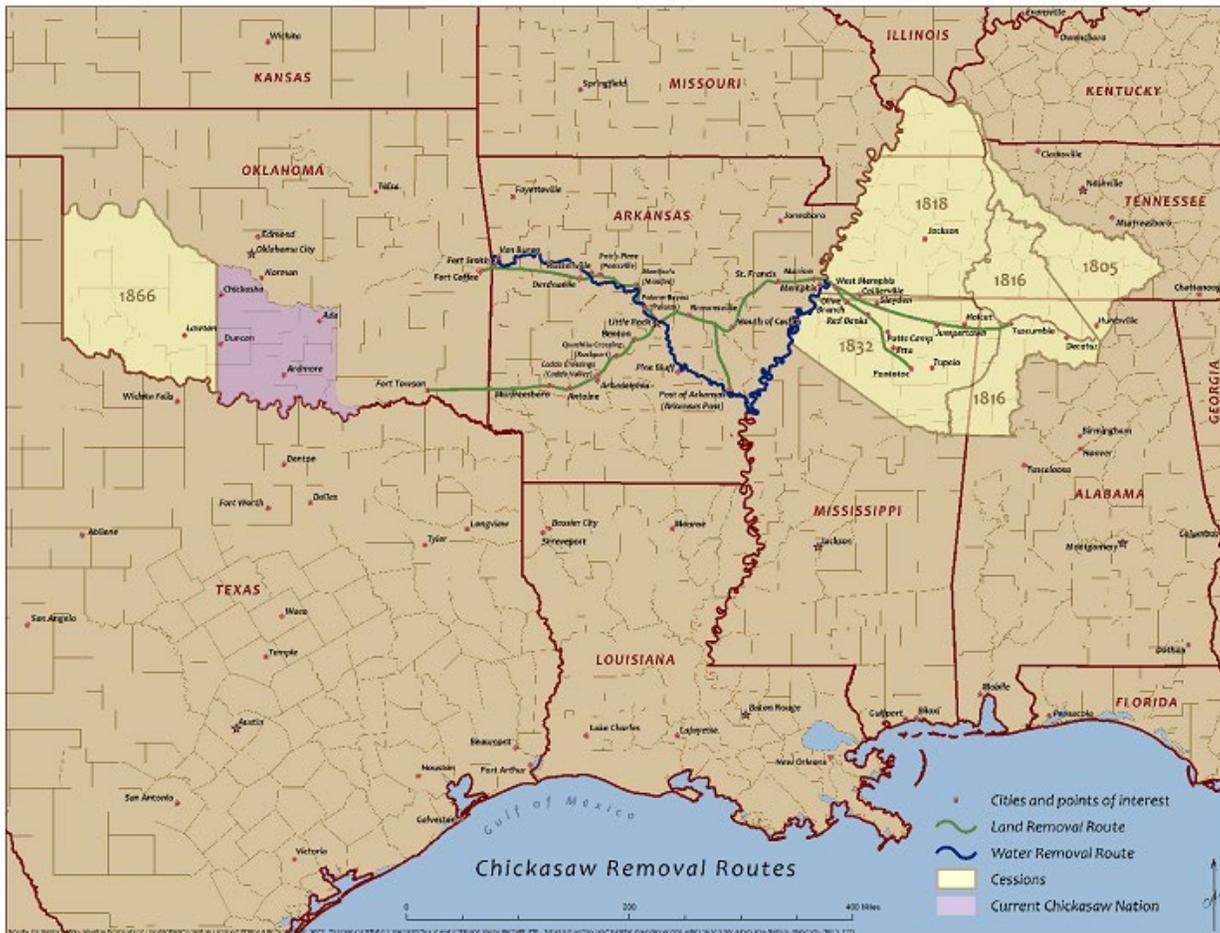
Maps



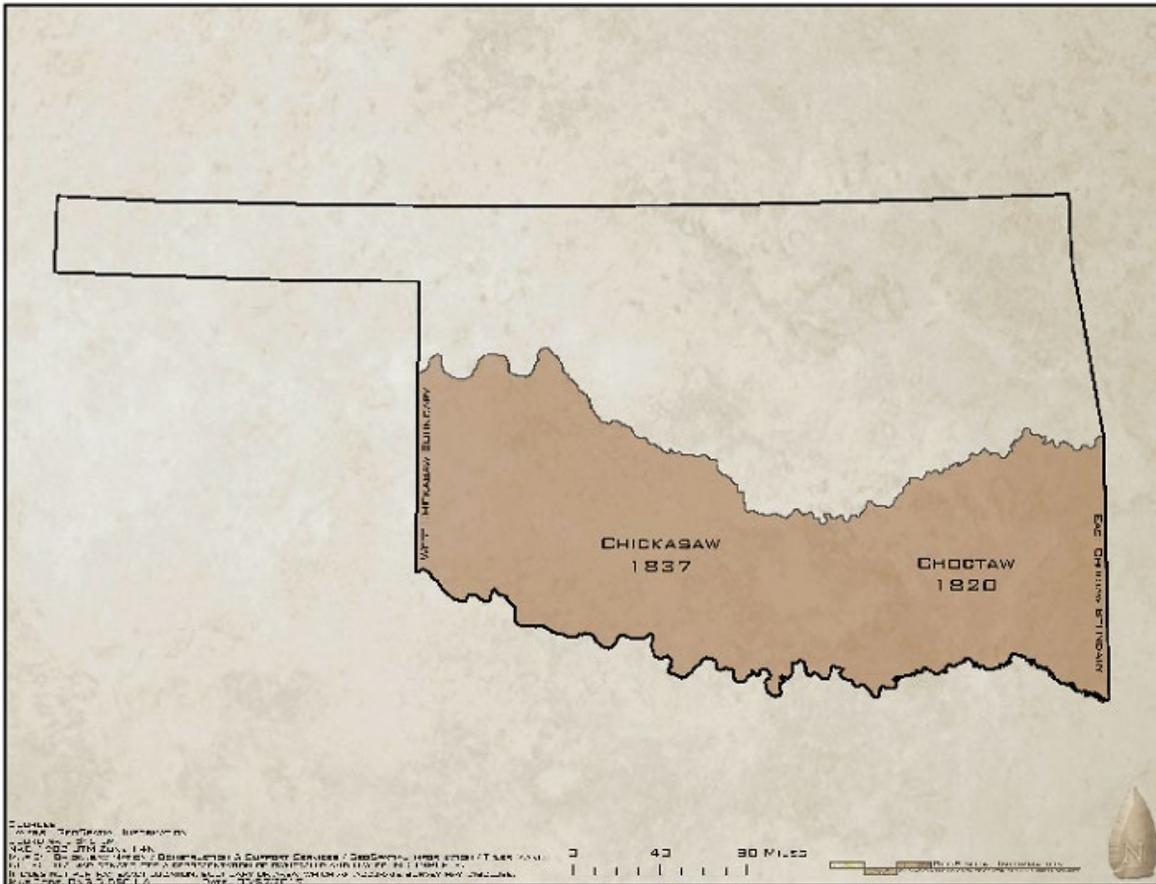
Chickasaw historic Homeland Courtesy of *Chickasaw Nation Collection*.



Chickasaw Removal Routes. Courtesy of Chickasaw Nation Collection.



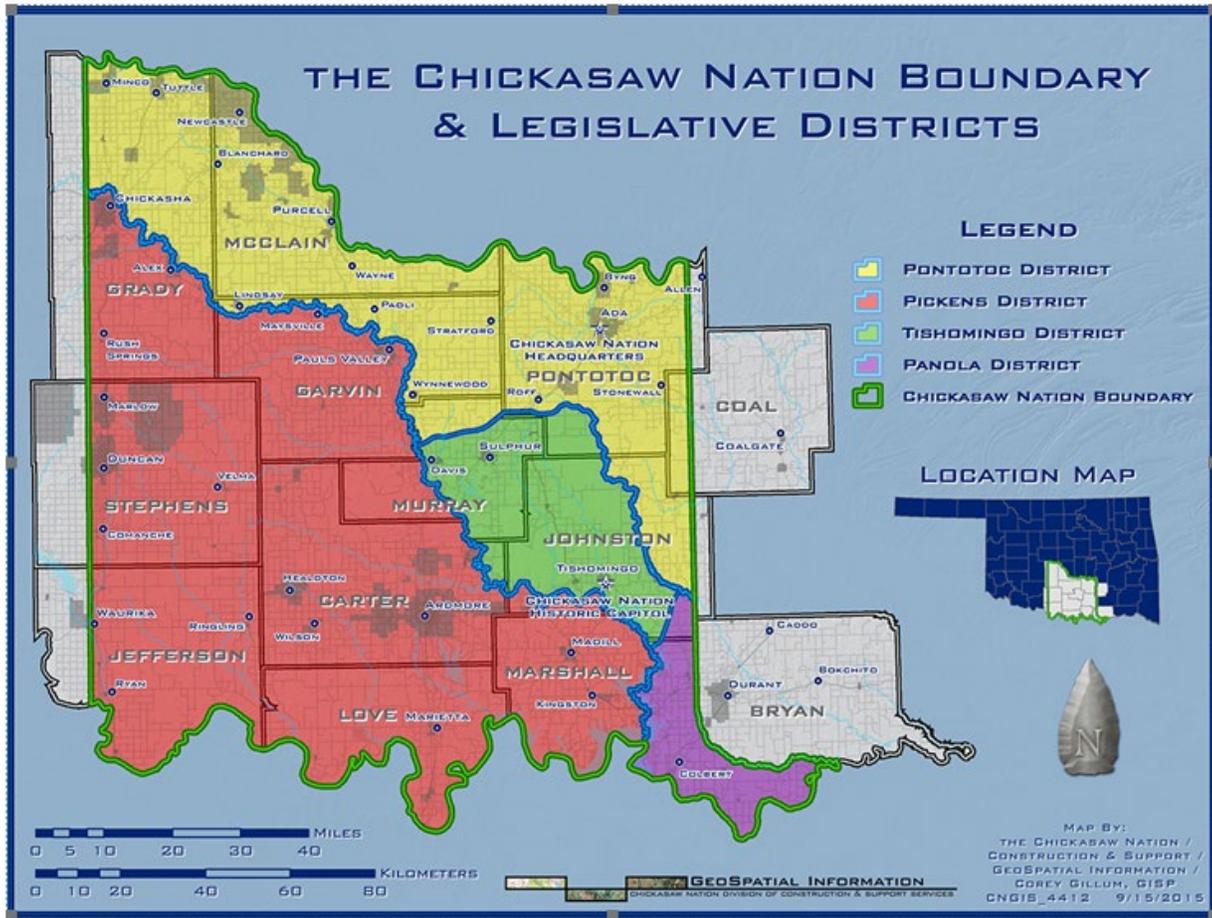
**Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations following Removal into Indian Territory.
Courtesy of Chickasaw Nation Collection.**



Chickasaw Nation Jurisdictional Boundaries, 13 counties. Courtesy of *Chickasaw Nation Collection*.



The Chickasaw Nation Boundary and Legislative Districts. Courtesy of *Chickasaw Nation Collection*.



Population Past/Present

- Total tribal enrollment – more than 80,000

Government: Chiefs vs Chairman, Elected or Paternal

Tribal Government Leadership

Registered Chickasaw voters elect a Governor and Lieutenant Governor to four-year terms. Like the president and vice president of the United States, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor run as a team.

Executive Department

Article X of the Chickasaw Constitution states, “The Supreme Executive power of the Chickasaw Nation is vested in a Chief Magistrate, who shall be styled ‘The Governor of the Chickasaw Nation².’” The governor is the official spokesperson for the tribe and shares in the law-making process through recommendations made to the Chickasaw Nation Legislative Department. The governor’s duties include the day-to-day operations of the tribe, as well as the signing of official papers and official appointments.

Just as U.S. presidents have a staff and cabinet, the Governor of the Chickasaw Nation has cabinet secretaries, deputy secretaries, under secretaries, executive officers and directors to help guide the numerous departments and divisions within the tribe. While most departments and divisions serve the tribal citizens directly through programs and services, many tribal employees work behind the scenes, fulfilling internal tribal needs.

The first constitution of the Chickasaw Nation was ratified in 1856. An updated constitution was passed in 1983. The headquarters of the tribal government is located in Ada, Oklahoma with offices throughout the Chickasaw Nation jurisdictional boundaries, including Ardmore, Ada, Tishomingo, Purcell and more.

Legislative Department

The Chickasaw Nation Legislature is composed of 13 members, elected from the Chickasaw Nation’s four legislative districts: Panola, Pickens, Pontotoc and Tishomingo. Members of the Tribal Legislature are citizens and registered voters of the Chickasaw Nation at least 25 years of age who have lived within the Chickasaw Nation for at least one year and their respective district for at least six months prior to being elected to office.

² “Constitution of the Chickasaw Nation.” Ratified 27 Aug. 1983, amended 21 June 2002. The Chickasaw Nation. Pg. C-7.





Once elected, they must remain residents of their elected district during the tenure of their office, which is set up for reelection every three years. The Chickasaw Legislature is structured much like the U.S. Legislature with scheduled sessions, committees, the formation of procedures and regulations, the approval of budgets and the establishment of law.

Judicial Department

The judicial powers of the Chickasaw Nation shall be vested in the Supreme Court and a lower District Court. The Supreme Court shall consist of three Supreme Court justices elected by popular vote by qualified voters of the Chickasaw Nation. The three supreme court justices perform constitutional interpretative duties much like the U.S. Supreme Court.

The District Court is comprised of a District Judge, Special Judge and Court Advocates who are appointed by the Supreme Court.

Elected Government Officials:

- Governor
- Lieutenant Governor
- Three Tribal Supreme Court Justices
- 13 Members of the Chickasaw Tribal Legislature

Chickasaw Nation Mission

“To enhance the overall quality of life of the Chickasaw people.”

Chickasaw Nation Vision

“To be a Nation of successful and united people with a strong cultural identity.”

Chickasaw Nation Core Values

Core Values are the fundamental, guiding principles of an organization. The Chickasaw Nation-core values are as follows:

- **The Chickasaw People**
Our focus, and commitment, is on the Chickasaw people and improving the quality of life of all Chickasaws. We are empowered and unified in purpose.
- **Cultural Identity**
We will preserve our cultural history and incorporate it into everything we do.

Servant Leadership

We are accountable to the Chickasaw Nation, and we put our people first

- **Selflessness**
We give of ourselves for the betterment of our people.
- **Perseverance**
We will never quit. We have a warrior tradition.





- **Stewardship**
We will responsibly use the Nation’s resources entrusted to us.
- **Trust and Respect**
We trust one another and earn the trust of our citizens. We are caring and compassionate.
- **Loyalty**
We are committed to the Chickasaw Nation, its mission and its goals.
- **Honesty and Integrity**
We will do what we say and are honest and trustworthy. We uphold ethical standards and are accountable for our actions.
- **Teamwork**
We work as a team with a strong work ethic toward solving the problems of the Nation.

Language Group

Chickasaw language

The Chickasaw language is a Muskogean language. Chickasaw and Choctaw together form the Western branch of the Muskogean language family. Chickasaw is also related to Alabama, Koasati, Mvskoke (Creek) – Seminole, Hitchiti and Mikasuki.

Current state of the Chickasaw language

The Chickasaw language has been the primary language of the Chickasaw people since time immemorial. The decline of the language has occurred over time. Boarding schools, which prohibited First American languages, were a significant part of this gradual decline. Learning English was encouraged by some of the Chickasaw people because English was a necessary skill in negotiating with Euro-Americans.

In 1994, the estimated number of fluent *Chikashshanompa'* (Chickasaw language) speakers was less than one thousand. Today, there are less than 35 fluent, Native speakers, all older than 60, with several dozen conversationally proficient *anompa' shaali'* (second language speakers), all under the age of 50.

Today there is a resurgence of interest in *Chikashshanompa'*. The Chickasaw people realize the value of speaking the language. They are participating in adult immersion programs, community language classes, taking part in language camps and clubs, and learning on their own through self-study programs offered by the tribe. In 2016, the Chickasaw Nation released *Rosetta Stone Chickasaw* to help aid in the preservation of the language. The online language program has a total of 160 lessons all customized to allow the more than 80,000 Chickasaw citizens worldwide to become familiar with the language and to access it in the convenience of their homes. Additionally, the Chickasaw Press publishes many language resources including dictionaries by Jesse and Vinnie May (James) Humes, *A Chickasaw Dictionary*, and Pamela Munro and Catherine Willmond, *Chickasaw: An Analytical Dictionary*.



Chickasaw ways of speaking

Speakers of the language often have slightly different ways of speaking Chickasaw. These variations are both regional, associated with the north of the Chickasaw Nation (communities like Kullihoma and Ada) and the south of the Chickasaw Nation (communities like Tishomingo, Fillmore and Ardmore), as well as familial, where a family or groups of families share similar ways of speaking. These variations are neither “right” nor “wrong” but simply reflect the speaking preferences of Chickasaw families within a certain geographic area.

Chickasaw spelling systems

The Chickasaw language is an oral one, meaning it is transmitted through speaking from generation to generation. Chickasaw was not a formally written language until the 20th century, though Chickasaw speakers wrote it as they saw fit before that time. *A Chickasaw Dictionary* was published in 1973, written by Reverend Jesse J. Humes and his wife Vinnie May (James) Humes. *Chickasaw: An Analytical Dictionary* was published in 1994, written by linguist Pamela Munro and Chickasaw speaker Catherine Willmond.

A Chickasaw Dictionary was compiled as a “list of Chickasaw words in a very simple manner. Disregarding all rules of orthography, we made an effort to spell the words as they sound, in the hope that anyone using the list could pronounce them³.” In contrast, *Chickasaw: An Analytical Dictionary* uses a new spelling system that “represents tonal accent and the glottal stop, neither of which is shown in any previous dictionary on either Chickasaw or the closely related Muskogean language, Choctaw. In addition, vowel and consonant length, vowel nasalization, and other important distinctions are given.⁴”

An example of the differences between the two spelling systems is seen in the spelling of the Chickasaw word meaning “to be five in number,” *talhlhá’pi* (Munro-Willmond) and *tulhapi* (Humes). Humes spells the short **a** sound (like in the English word father) with a **u**, whereas Munro-Willmond uses **a**. Both systems use **lh** to represent a Chickasaw consonant sound that sounds something like *Klondike* pronounced without the initial **K**, or like *ilth* in the English word *filth*, but without the *t*. Munro-Willmond indicates pitch accent of the final **a** with an accent mark, (*talhlhá’pi*). Munro-Willmond uses ‘ (apostrophe) to represent the glottal stop, a stoppage of air in the throat, like the middle of the English word *uh-uh*, meaning “no.”

The Chickasaw language revitalization program uses both spelling systems in their language work. There is no “right” or “wrong” way to spell Chickasaw. It is an oral

³ Humes, Jesse and Vinnie May Humes. “A Chickasaw Dictionary.” Ada: Chickasaw Press, 2015. Print.

⁴ Munro, Pamela and Catherine Willmond. “Chickasaw: An Analytical Dictionary.” Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994. Print.



language, so ultimately it is up to each individual Chickasaw person to determine how they want to spell (and speak) their language.

Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program

The Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program was established by Governor Bill Anoatubby in 2007. The Chickasaw people believe their language was given to them by *Aba' Binni'li'* (the Creator), and it is their obligation to care for it: to learn it, speak it and teach it to their children. The Chickasaw language is a gift from the ancestors for all Chickasaw people. The job of the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program, simply put, is to help people access that gift.

Traditional Lifeways

Oral tradition indicates the Chickasaw people came from the west to their historic Homeland in the North American southeast, which includes parts of present-day Mississippi, Kentucky, Alabama and Tennessee. Early European historians referred to the Chickasaw people as the “Spartans of the Lower Mississippi Valley,” due to their fierce warrior mentality. They were skilled traders and entrepreneurs, having established extensive trade fairs along the Mississippi River and other major waterways throughout the North American southeast. There, they traded with other Southeastern Indian Tribes, items such as meats, furs, fruits and vegetables, bows and arrows, pottery, native copper, turquoise, obsidian and many other items. The Chickasaws first encountered Europeans in December 1540 when Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto and his company of conquistadors arrived in their Homeland. While the Spaniards were eventually defeated and driven from Chickasaw territory, the encounter represented the beginning of a great change of lifestyle for Chickasaws and other Southeastern Indian Tribes east of the Mississippi River.

With the beginning of the foreign settlement by the Spanish, British and French nations during the mid-to late 1600s, Chickasaw and other Southeastern Indian Tribes began to trade for European goods based on their existing trade system. Throughout the North American southeast, Chickasaws sought trade items including crockery, artillery, bells, tinkler cones and glass trade beads, among others. Early Chickasaw leaders took notice of the trade items from the European nations and eventually agreed to a trade alliance. While some Chickasaw villages and leaders traded with the Spanish and the French, most Chickasaws traded with the British. Trade for Southeastern Indians did not solely mean acquiring non-Indian supplies. Instead, trade with Europeans and other tribal nations was strategically made to identify and negotiate trade alliances throughout the North American southeast.

These European nations found themselves dependent upon the Southeastern Indians for greater military protection against warring nations and to aide in their efforts in developing colonies throughout the southeast. However, the British, French and Spanish armies all witnessed first-hand the ferocity and strength of the Chickasaw and other Southeastern Indian Tribes who could, if necessary, overtake the Europeans



through Southeastern Indian strategies of military warfare.

Chickasaws have always been quick to protect and defend their people when necessary. Warriors repelled the overwhelming combined forces of French and First American allies during the 1730s. This greatly weakened the French Empire’s plan to link its northern boundaries in New France to its southeastern colony of Louisiana, which included the critical port city of New Orleans and control of the Mississippi River. Because of this, many historians credit the Chickasaws for the United States being an English-speaking country. The Chickasaw society, a powerful and dynamic warrior nation, allied over the years with various European nations, most notably with the British during the French and Indian War (also known as the Seven Years’ War).

With the expansion of the United States, European settlers flooded onto First American lands. This led to land cessions that reduced the Chickasaw ancestral domain to only the northern part of Mississippi. Continued disrespect and forced treaty signings for tribal holdings of land eventually led to the U.S. Congress passing the Indian Removal Act in 1830. This act negatively impacted numerous Southeastern Indian Tribes who were forcibly removed from their homelands⁵. Removal is one of the most traumatic experiences in the Chickasaw Nation’s history. Chickasaw people were met with starvation, disease and death, among many other hardships, traveling hundreds of miles in extreme cold and heat. Additionally, families were forced to abandon their homes, businesses, schools, communities and buried ancestors. Other Southeastern Indian Tribes forced to remove to Indian Territory were the Cherokee, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek) and Seminole. The Chickasaw people were one of the last to remove. In 1837, they signed the Treaty with the U.S., Choctaw and Chickasaw (also known as Treaty of Doaksville) and purchased the right for the settlement of their people in their own district within the Choctaw Nation⁶. Government records indicate the Chickasaw people removed to Indian Territory between 1837-1851. However, according to Chickasaw tribal enrollment records in the Dawes Roll, families continued to arrive in Indian Territory up to the 1890s⁷.

In spite of the devastation wrought by the forced removal to Indian Territory, the Chickasaw people determinedly rebuilt their nation. Knowing that education was crucial to their survival, they founded a tribal academy in 1844, the Chickasaw Manual Labor Academy for Boys. The Chickasaw Nation soon opened many other boarding schools for both males and females that included the Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaw

⁵ “European Contact.” March 2017. The Chickasaw Nation. <https://chickasaw.net/Our-Nation/History/Europeans-Contact.aspx>.

⁶ Kappler, Charles J. “Treaty with the Choctaw and Chickasaw, 1837.” *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*. 1837:1-2. Web. 21 Mar. 2017. Retrieved from <<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/Chi0486.htm>>.

⁷ “Removal.” March 2017. The Chickasaw Nation. <https://chickasaw.net/Our-Nation/History/Removal.aspx>.



Females, 1852; the Wapanucka Institute for Girls, 1852; the Collins Institute (later Colbert Institute), 1854; the Burney Institute for Girls, 1859, among others. Chickasaw schools represented a rare instance of tribal control during a time when most First American nations were defending their homelands through physical warfare with the United States.

Fine Arts

- **Music**

The root of First American cultures rests in their native languages. Such is true for the Chickasaw who belong to the Muskogean speaking peoples of the Southeast. Their ancient language was described by early Europeans as “very agreeable to the ear, courteous, gentle and musical.” (The letter R does not exist in the Chickasaw tongue.) Many concepts within the language have no English counterpart and cannot be described in European terms of understanding.

The spoken word is often expressed through song and accompanied by dance. The use of clay pot drums, rattles and cane flutes added to self-expression on many different levels. The stomp dance was a fundamental part of many spiritual and social gatherings. Both men and women participated as men sang songs, and women provided musical accompaniment with deer toe rattles or turtle shell shakers worn on their legs. Today, Stomp Dance remains very important to Chickasaw people and culture.

An example for musicianship is Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate. Jerod is a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation. Mr. Tate is dedicated to the development of First American classical composition. In 2016, Tate was selected as one of five composer-orchestra pairs, to participate in *Music Alive*, a national three-year residency program of the League of American Orchestras and New Music USA. The 2005 review by The Washington Post states that “Tate’s connection to nature and the human experience was quite apparent in this piece...rarer still is his ability to infuse classical music with American Indian nationalism⁸.” This review was a response to his performance of *Iholba* (The Vision), for Solo Flute, Orchestra and Chorus, which was commissioned by the National Symphony Orchestra and premiered at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Another example of musicianship is by way of the education of both our youth and adults through the teaching of the Chickasaw language by song. The

⁸ “Jerod Tate.” Creating Nations: Past, Present, and Future. 28 June 2017.
<http://sites.northwestern.edu/creatingnations/participant-biographies/jerod-tate/>



Chickasaw Nation’s Choir Program has used hymns and original songs to promote the learning and appreciation of Chickasaw language. Chickasaw numbers, colors and prayer songs contribute to the retention of language in music. Through repetition of language in verse, the true meaning and spirit of the song is best preserved.

- **Art**

The Chickasaw Nation has a rich tradition steeped in the arts. From Te Ata, an inspiring storyteller who shared Chickasaw history, culture and oral stories with the world, to Ataloo, an enchanting Chickasaw singer of the past, Chickasaws have always fostered the arts and their artists.

Today, the Chickasaw Nation is proud to call many wonderful and world-renowned artists their own. From music composition and performance art to painting, sculpting and writing, Chickasaw artists excel in a number of both contemporary and traditional artistic forms of expression.

Many Chickasaw artists choose to articulate their artistic vision through their Chickasaw heritage, and traditional storytellers, potters, painters, jewelers, sculptors, weavers and craftsmen still abound.

Examples of Chickasaw artists and artisans include Steve Adamietz, Jeannie Barbour, Chance Brown, Tracie Tuck Davis, Kristen Dorsey, Sue Fish, Brent Greenwood, Billy Hensley, Lokosh (Joshua D. Hinson), Brenda Kingery, Brian Landreth, Mike Larsen, Paula Loftin, Dustin Mater, Tom Phillips, Drue Ridley, Tyra Shackelford, Vicki Somers, Clayburn Straughn, E. Dee Tabor, Cotie Poe-Underwood, Joanna Underwood, Ashley Wallace, Margaret Roach Wheeler, Ben White, Daniel Worcester, Marcella Yeppa and many others. Each are accomplished artists in their respective fields.

Significant Events

Prior to the forced removal of the Chickasaw people to Indian Territory, Chickasaw and Choctaw leaders foresaw new conflicts on the horizon and began negotiating peace-keeping provisions into treaties. The first U.S. promise was to the Choctaws in the 1830 Treaty with the Choctaws. Article XI provided that the United States would establish



military post roads and posts, as needed⁹. The second U.S. promise to establish peace is mentioned in the 1834 Treaty with the U.S. and Chickasaws in Article II, in which the U.S. government agreed to defend against the inroads of any other tribes or settlers¹⁰. This provision ultimately led to the construction of Fort Washita. During this time, the closest U.S. troops to help maintain peace were 80 miles away at Fort Towson, located on the eastern edge of the Choctaw Nation.

Constructed in 1842, Fort Washita sat on the southwestern-most edge of the American territory. The goal of the fort was to maintain peace. Increased hostilities in the region persisted because of the following: attacks by Texas militia who were seeking justice after raids by Indian Territory plains tribes; interference by unscrupulous intruders¹¹; and the presence of traders and trappers. In addition, Chickasaws had unsettled conflicts with some of the plains tribes due to disputes concerning hunting grounds back in their Homeland.

The fort became a trading center and market for Chickasaw and Choctaw produce, including corn, wheat, oats, rye and cotton¹². Its presence and security ushered in accelerated growth and prosperity. Between 1842 and 1860, it served as a hub for Chickasaws, Choctaws and many others.

When the Civil War broke out between Union (north) and Confederate (south) forces in April 1861¹³, the federal militia withdrew from Indian Territory because it was vulnerable due to its proximity to Confederate Texas. On May 1, 1861, Fort Washita became occupied by Confederate troops and was used as a headquarters and hospital during the remainder of the Civil War. Many Chickasaws joined the Confederacy for a variety of reasons. They were linked historically to the South through culture and economics. Their original Homeland was in the southern states. Additionally, mistrust of the federal government resulted from the slow, or complete lack of, response in fulfilling treaty obligations and the lingering resentment of the forced removal from their historic Homeland.

⁹ Kappler, Charles J. "Treaty with the Choctaw, 1830." *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Vol. II, Treaties. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904.

¹⁰ Kappler, Charles J. "Treaty with the Chickasaw, 1834." *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Vol. II, Treaties. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904.

¹¹ St. Jean, Wendy. *Remaining Chickasaw in Indian Territory, 1830-1907*. Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama P. 2011. Print.

¹² Blaine, Martha , et al.. "Fort Washita: From Past to Present, An Archaeological Report." *Oklahoma Historical Society*. 1975.

¹³ Jenkins, Mark C. "Fort Sumter: How Civil War Began with a Bloodless Battle." *National Geographic News*, 2011: 5. Web. 23 Mar. 2017. Retrieved from <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2011/04/110412-fort-sumter-civil-war-nation-150th-anniversary-first-battle>.



Following the Confederate's loss to the Union, most of the buildings were burned¹⁴. For the Chickasaw people, there was no escaping the devastation of the Civil War. When the Confederate troops left the fort in 1865, it was time to rebuild again; families, communities, businesses and schools were in need of repair. Chickasaws and other Native American people paid a bitter price for their involvement in the war. Their people were scattered, their territory devastated, their livestock stolen or killed, and their homes burned. An estimated twenty-five percent of the First American population at that time became casualties of battle, disease and starvation¹⁵. Still, through determination, tenacity and strong leadership, the Chickasaw people rebuilt their families, communities, businesses, government and schools.

Current Tribal Information

- Today, the Chickasaw Nation is economically strong, culturally vibrant, and full of energetic people dedicated to the preservation of family, community and heritage. Since the 1980s, tribal government has focused most of its efforts on building an economically diverse base to generate funds that will support programs and services to both Chickasaw and other First American people.
- Businesses have flourished, programs and services have grown, and the quality of life for all Chickasaws has been greatly enhanced. The Chickasaw Nation's current three-branch system of government was re-established with the ratification of the 1983 Chickasaw Nation Constitution. The elected officials provided for in the constitution believe in a unified commitment, whereby government policy serves the common good of all Chickasaw citizens. This common good extends to future generations, as well as today's citizens.
- The structure of the current government encourages and supports infrastructure for strong business ventures and an advanced tribal economy. The use of new technologies and dynamic business strategies in a global market are also encouraged. As in times past, the Chickasaw work ethic is very much a part of everyday life today. Monies generated in businesses are divided between investments for further diversification of enterprises and support of tribal government operations, programs and services for Chickasaw people. This

¹⁴ "Fort Washita – Protecting the Civilized Tribes." *Oklahoma Legends- Legends of America*. Web. 3 Mar. 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.legendsofamerica.com/ok-fortwashita.html>.

¹⁵ "Civil War in Indian Territory." Oklahoma Department of Transportation, Planning Division. Reviewed by: Oklahoma Historical Society.



unique system is key to the Chickasaw Nation's efforts to pursue self-sufficiency and self-determination, which helps ensure that Chickasaws stay a united and thriving people¹⁶.

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¹⁶ Barbour, Jeannie, et al. *Chickasaw: Unconquered and Unconquerable*. Ada: Chickasaw Press, 2007. Print.





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88 Straight	Nelson, Stanley
A Chickasaw Dictionary	Humes, Vinne May
A Chickasaw Historical Atlas	Nelson, Stanley
A Concise Chickasaw Dictionary	Humes, Vinne May
A Nation in Transition	Lovegrove, Michael W.
Anompilbashsha’ Asilhha’ Holisso: Chickasaw Prayer Book	Chickasaw Language Committee
Anompolichi: The Wordmaster	Morgan, Phillip Carroll
Brave Little Anoli	Cannon, Gabriel
C is for Chickasaw Coloring Book	Barnes, Wiley
C is for Chickasaw	Barnes, Wiley
Capital City: History of Tishomingo	Lambert, Paul F.
Chickasaw Adventures	Lyle, Tom
Chickasaw Basic Language Workbook 1	Cooke, Michelle
Chickasaw Basic Language Workbook 2	Cooke, Michelle
Chickasaw Journey’s Activity Book	White Dog Press
Chickasaw Lives Vol. 1: Exploration in Tribal History	Green, Richard
Chickasaw Lives Vol. 2: Profiles and Oral Histories	Green, Richard
Chickasaw Lives Vol. 3: Sketches of Past and Present	Green, Richard
Chickasaw Lives Vol. 4: A Tribal Mosaic	Green, Richard
Chickasaw Removal	Paige, Amanda L
Chickasaw Renaissance	Morgan, Phillip Carroll
Chickasaw Women Artisans	Fields, Alison
Chickasaw: An Analytical Dictionary	Munro, Pamela
Chickasaw: Unconquered & Unconquerable	Cobb, Amanda





Chikasha Chahta' oklaat wihat tanó_wattook (The Migration Story of the Chickasaw and Choctaw People)	Chickasaw Press
Chikasha Holisso Holba: Humes Coloring Book	Humes, Vinne May
Chikasha Stories Vol. 1 Shared Spirit	Galvan, Glenda
Chikasha Stories Vol. 2 Shared Voices	Galvan, Glenda
Chikasha Stories Vol. 3 Shared Wisdom	Galvan, Glenda
Chikasha: The Chickasaw Collection at the National Museum of the American Indian	Hinson, Lokosh Joshua D.
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Coyote and the Turkey	Thompson, Nashoba Gene
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Edmund Pickens	Tate, Juanita J. Keel
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Footprints Still Whispering in the Wind	Testerman, Margie
Funny Fani'	Barnes, Wiley
Goodnight, Trilobite	Vanlandingham, Steve
Holmes Tuttle: His Life and Legacy	Goalstone, Jodi
Ilimpa'chi' (We're Gonna Eat)	Penner, Vicki
Ilittibaaimpa' (Let's Eat Together)	Penner, Vicki
Koni Board Book	Begay, Sherrie
Let's Speak Chickasaw, Chikashanompa Kilanompoli'	Munro, Pamela
Listening to Our Elders	Larsen, Mike
Little Bird	Barnes, Mary Ruth
Little Loksi	Hays, Trey
Mission to Space	Herrington, John
Never Give Up! Collector's Edition	Lambert, Paul F.
Oka Holisso: Chickasaw and Choctaw Water Resource Planning Guide	Chickasaw Press
Otis W. Leader: The Ideal American Doughboy	Sawyer, Sarah Elisabeth
Picked Apart the Bones	Travis, Rebecca Hatcher
Piominko: Chickasaw Leader	Cowger, Thomas
Protecting Our People	Cooke, Michelle
Proud to be Chickasaw	Larsen, Mike
The Rabbit and the Doctor	Brown, Pauline
Rabbit Wants More Sense	Thompson, Nashoba Gene
Riding Out the Storm	Morgan, Phillip Carroll

Shikonno'pa' Anoli': Stories to Tell
Te Ata the Collector's Edition
The Early Chickasaw Homeland: Origins,
Boundaries, & Society
The Indian Way
The Lost River: Anompolichi II
They Know Who They Are
Toli Chickasaw Stickball
Wenonah's Story: A Memoir of a Chickasaw
Family

Nelson, Stanley
Green, Richard
Dyson, John P.

Milligan, Dorothy
Morgan, Phillip Carroll
Larsen, Mike
Nelson, Stanley
Gunning, Robin

Other Resources

Chickasaw Press *Ikbi Holisso* Camp books:

- Aba' Binni'li' and the Butterfly
- Blue Jay and Cardinal
- Chikasha Heroes
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- How Raccoon Got His Mask
- Ishno: It's in You
- Jack and the Giant
- Space Dogs: Tochina Kilimpi
- Three Little Shikoshi's

Chickasaw Press applications (iTunes app store and amazon.com):

- Chikasha Stories App
- C is for Chickasaw App
- Chikasha Emojis Keyboard App
- Choctaw Hymns App

Chickasaw Adventures comic books (Layne Morgan Media, Inc.):

- Issue 1: *The Journey Begins!*
- Issue 2: *The Battle of Akia!*
- Issue 3: *Tears at Fort Coffee!*
- Issue 4: *The Making of a Storyteller!*

The Chickasaw Creation Story

Interpreted by Juanita Byars. Translated by the Chickasaw Language Committee.





Chikashsha alhiha'at Aba' B́inni'li hoojyimmi bíyyi'kattook.	The Chickasaws have always believed in He Who Sits on High.
Chikashsha alhiha'at Aba' B́inni'li hoojyimmi bíyyi'kattook.	The Chickasaws have always believed in He Who Sits on High.
Nanna oshta'at Chikashsha alhiha' ihólf́tto'pattook.	Four things were sacred to the Chickasaws.
Nanna oshta' yammat hashi', hoshonti', shotik bashili', micha Aba' B́inni'li'.	Those four things are the sun, the clouds, the clear sky, and He Who Sits on High.
Hopaakikaash Aba' B́inni'li'at hattak móma' ikbittook.	Long ago Aba' B́inni'li' made all the people.
Aba' B́inni'li'at hattak móma' shinok shobolli' ishtikbittook.	Aba' B́inni'li' made all the people from dust.
Hookya yaakni' ikbittook ki'yo.	But He did not make the land.
Shakchiakoot lokfi' chakissa' ayowattook.	Crayfish (was the one who) gathered up the mud.
Micha Shakchiat lokfi' chakissa' tanahlittook.	And Crayfish piled up the mud.
Aba B́inni'li'at ishki' yaakni' hochifottook.	Aba B́inni'li' named it mother earth.





Shakchiat yaakni' ikbittookookya kanihkā latassattook.	Crayfish made the earth but it was very flat.
Micha Shakchiat ayokpānchittook ki'yo.	And Crayfish did not like it.
Onchaba' bannattook.	They wanted mountains.
Haatoko Fala' Ishto'at Shakchi apilattook.	So then Raven helped Crayfish.

Fala' Ishto'akoot onchaba' micha yaakni' hayaka' ikbittook.	Raven was the one who made the mountains and valleys.
Fala Ishto'at onchaba' fanalhchi' ishtikbittook.	Raven made the mountains with their wings.
Yammak illa.	The end.

The Migration Story

Translated by the Chickasaw Language Committee.



Hopaakikaash p̄sip̄ngni'at hashakottola' p̄lla' aa-áyya'shattookookya wiha makillatook.

Long ago there came a time when the Chickasaw People needed to move from the West.

Aba' B̄nni'li' anompilbashsha imasilhlahma hopayi'at nannakat imoktanitook –

Ittibaapishi' toklo' Chiksa' Chahta' holhchifohoot p̄sip̄ngni' pihli'cha'chitook, hashakochcha' p̄lla wihaka.

After praying to our Creator, Aba' Binni'li', it was revealed to the hopayi', or prophets, in a vision that the two brothers, Chiksa' and Chahta, were to lead our ancestors on a journey to the East.

Aba' B̄nni'li'at ittibaapishi'at itti' fabassa' holitto'pa' áwwali'cha'chika imoktanichitook.

Within the vision of the hopayi', Aba' Binni'li', revealed that the brothers would gain direction from Itti' Fabassa' Holitto'pa', a sacred pole.

The people hurriedly set about constructing rafts, and soon the crossing was underway.

Tannap onat tahama Ofi' Tohbi' Ishto'at ikshokitook Oklhili momaka itti' fabassaash aa-albinachi' ittintakla' p̄la' aahilicha'china nittakima kana'ookya itti' fabassaashoot wáyya'akma yamma p̄lla pitwiha'chitook.

The pole was to be planted in the middle of camp each night and whichever way the pole leaned the following morning, they were to continue their journey in that direction.

Itti' fabassaashoot apissat híkki'yakma p̄sip̄ngni'at iyaakni' himitta' hayoochikat ithána'chi.

When the pole stood straight, our ancestors would know that they found their Homeland.

Ingma yakohmi wihat ishtayyattook.

And so the journey began in this way.

Aba' B̄nni'li'at Ofi' Tohbi' Ishto' impilachitook, apilat atoona'chitookoko.

Aba' Binni'li' sent an animal guide, Ofi Tohbi' Ishto, a large white dog, to assist and protect them.

Ofi'aashoot tingba' áacha nannoppolo ho'yocha bashafakma masacha'chitook.

The dog would travel ahead – scouting for any potential threats and healing the physical wounds of the injured.



Alhchimbahmat okhina' hayoochittook.

After a long time, they encountered the mighty watercourse.

Himmaka' nittaka "Mississippi River" holhchifo.

Today that great river is known as the Mississippi.

Okla'at piini' patha' toshpat ikbicha okpalat ishtayyattook, kanookya anowa' pisa ki'ya'ma'chi ookya nannanoli' ma ilimanolikmat ishtiifatpoli Ofi' Tohbi' Ishto'a.

After the crossing, Ofi Tohbi' Ishto, their animal guide, would not be seen again, but would forever become part of the story of this journey.

Okhina' tannap onat tahahma ittibaapishi'at itti' fabassa' holitto'pa' hili'shcha fohattook.

Nittakihma hoo-okchacha nanniila hoopisattook.

Itti' fabassa' holitto'pa'at aachokkaamalattook.

Chahtaat itti' fabassa' holitto'pa'at apissat hikki'yahootoko iyaakni' himitta' alat tahakat yimmittook.

Chiksa'at itti' fabassa' holitto'pa'at hashakochcha' pilla' pitwayya'a yimmittook.

Okla'at wihat tahlhma okloshi' Chiksa' awwa'lichihoot 'Chikashsha' holhchifottook.

Okloshi' Chahta ibaa-ayya'shahoot 'Chahta' holhchifottook.

When they reached the other side of the river, the brothers planted the pole and rested. In the morning, they woke up to a strange sight. The pole was gyrating around in the ground – moving in all directions. Chahta believed the pole to be standing straight – signaling that they had reached the homeland. Chiksa' believed the pole continued to lean eastward. After this journey, the people who followed Chiksa' were known as Chickasaws. Those who stayed with Chahta were called Choctaws.

