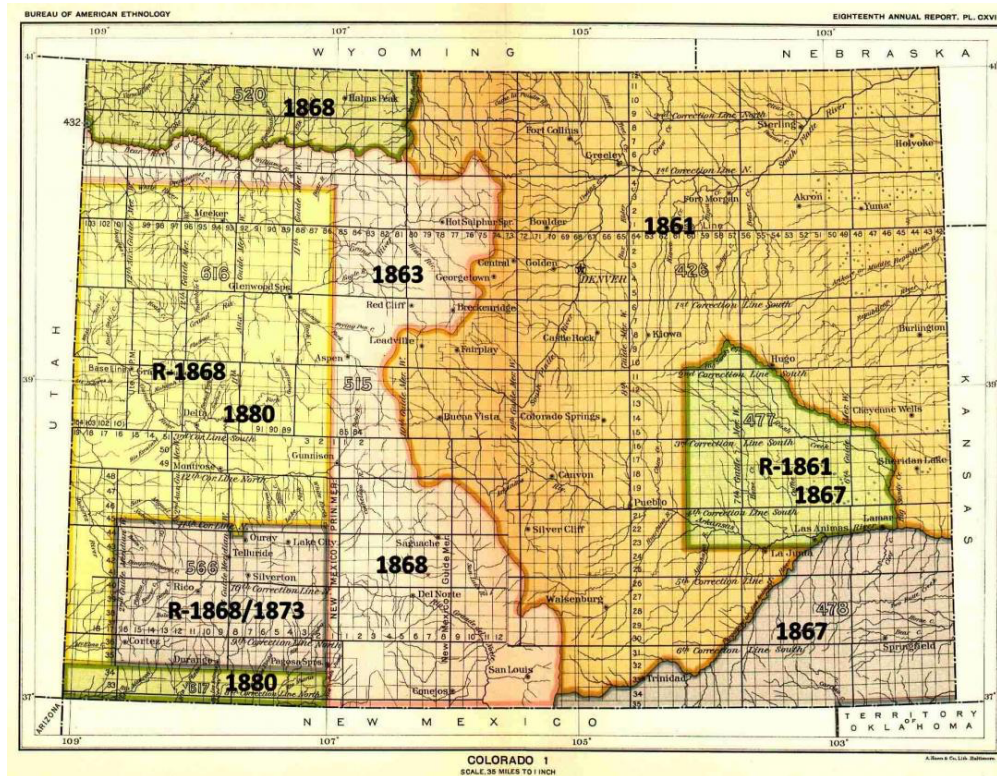


Colorado History¹

When New Mexico Territory was set up in 1850, most of Colorado was home to three groups: the **Ute** in the mountains, and the **Arapaho** and **Cheyenne** on the plains. These groups often used the same areas for hunting and living, especially in the Rocky Mountains.



This map shows the areas of land taken from Indigenous nations between 1861 and 1880. A black "R" marks the years when land was set aside as reservations for Indigenous people.

At the same time, many white settlers were traveling through northern Colorado in wagon trains headed for Oregon and California. The Cheyenne and Arapaho were mostly okay with this and would let the wagons pass if they received food or gifts. But as more settlers arrived, they started taking the resources that Indigenous people needed, like bison and wood. Many Indigenous people got sick from new diseases brought by the settlers.

¹ Adapted from, "Indigenous Treaties in Colorado," *Colorado Encyclopedia* (<https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/indigenous-treaties-colorado>)



The Colorado Gold Rush in 1858–59 brought even more settlers, which made it harder for local Indigenous people to find enough resources. In the 1860s and 1870s, as Colorado Territory grew, there were many conflicts between white settlers and Indigenous people. New treaties and agreements were made, but each one took more land from the Native people who originally lived there.

Cheyenne History²



Tsistsistas means “Human Beings” or “The People” in the Cheyenne language. They used to live near the Great Lakes, along the Mississippi River in what is now Minnesota.

At first, the Cheyenne were farmers who grew crops like corn, beans, and squash. Later, they became hunters and gatherers. In 1804, Lewis and Clark found the Cheyenne living near the upper Missouri River.

² Adapted from “Cheyenne History,” *Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes* (<https://www.cheyenneandrapahonnsn.gov/language-culture>)

Arapaho History³



Hinono'ei is the name for the Arapaho people. They lived in the Great Lakes region by the Mississippi River. Around 1680, they started to move away from the Great Lakes because other tribes and white settlers pushed them out. To survive in their new home on the Great Plains, the Arapaho learned to make weapons like bows, arrows, and spears. They learned to depend on the horse and buffalo.

³ Adapted from "Arapaho History," *Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes* (<https://www.cheyenneandrapahonnsn.gov/language-culture>)

Cheyenne & Arapaho⁴

The Arapaho people began in the Upper Midwest, but they moved west because of problems from the fur trade. By around 1790, they settled on the plains and hills of what is now Wyoming and Colorado. The Cheyenne also moved around this time, coming from near the Black Hills to the same areas by the early 1800s. Both the Arapaho and Cheyenne had conflicts with the Lakota, who were expanding across the northern plains in the 1600s and 1700s.

Around 1796, while hunting buffalo on the Great Plains, the Arapaho set up camps by the Cheyenne River near the Black Hills in what is now South Dakota. This is where they became friends with the Cheyenne. In the early 1800s, the two tribes joined together as one Nation. They followed the buffalo herds across the plains in the summer, hunted in the mountains during the fall, and spent the winter along the foothills



Artist: George Curtis Levi⁵
Southern Cheyenne/Arapaho, Lakota Born
1970; active 1978-present

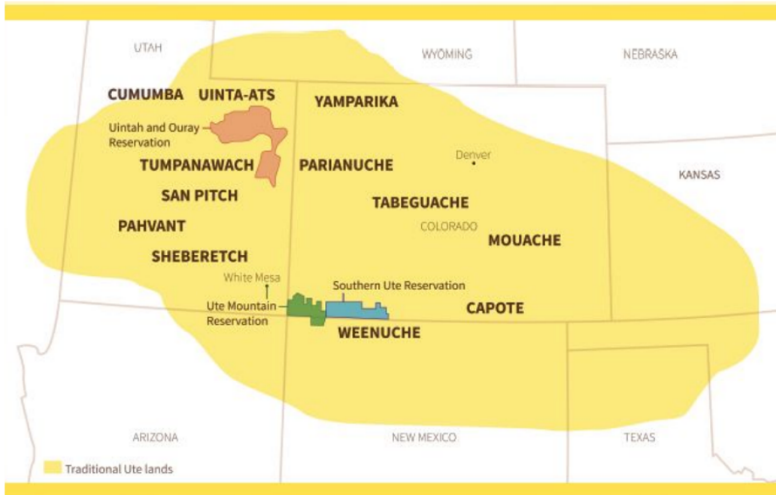
Ledger Art Shoes 2024
Fabric markers and acrylic paint on shoes

⁴ Adapted from, "Cheyenne and Arapahoe Migrations," *Colorado Encyclopedia* (<https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/timeline-date/cheyenne-and-arapaho-migrations>)

⁵ Exhibit Label Texts from "3óóxonee'noho'óóyóó' /Ho'honáá'e Tsé'amoo'ése: Art of the Rocky Mountain Homelands of the Hinono'eino' and Tsétséhéstáhesé Nations," *Gregory Allcar Museum of Art, University Center for the Arts*, August 29, 2024 - December 15, 2024.

Ute History⁶

The Ute Indians are one group made up of seven smaller groups (or bands), and now there are three main tribes.



The Ute people originally lived in Colorado and Utah, and also in parts of New Mexico, Arizona, and Wyoming. They thrived in the Rocky Mountains and high plateaus. To the east and north of the Ute were other groups like the Arapahos,

Cheyennes, Kiowas, Apaches, Comanches, Sioux (Lakotas), and Pawnees. To the south, there were the Pueblos, Navajos, and Apaches. To the north and northwest lived the Shoshones, Bannocks, Paiutes, and Goshutes.

The Ute people call themselves Nuuchu, which means "the human" or "the Ute." Their American Indian neighbors called them "Yoo'tawtch" and "Guaputa." "Guaputa" means "people who live in stick houses" in the Jemez Pueblo language.

Today, there are three Ute tribes:

- Southern Ute Indian Tribe, based in Ignacio, Colorado.
- Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, based in Towaoc, Colorado, and White Mesa, Utah.
- Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, based in Fort Duchesne, Utah.

⁶ Adapted from "Unit 1: Ute History," *Nuu-ciu Strong: Ute Resource Guide* (<https://ccia.colorado.gov/fourth-grade-ute-resource-guide>)

Living with the Land¹

The Ute Mountain Ute People have a unique relationship with the land. Their relationship with the land shapes who they are.

The Ute Mountain Ute Reservation is located in southwestern Colorado, northwestern New Mexico, and parts of Utah. The reservation land consists of the Sleeping Ute Mountain, the Mancos River, canyons, high mesas, and semi-desert grassland.

We Are Nuchu Video

What did the People use for food, cooking, clothing, and shelter?

“Living with the Land” Photos

Land/Animal/Plant	How did the Ute use this?
1.	
2.	
3.	

¹ Adapted from *Nuchiu Strong: A Colorado Resource Guide Lessons About the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe*

Tipi¹

The tipi, or tepee, is a special home used by Native American people. It has been around for a very long time in places like Colorado and the western parts of North America. Tipis are strong, safe, and can be moved easily. They are made from animal hides and have been great homes for many people who move from place to place. The word "tipi" comes from some Native American languages and means "house."



A Ute tipi camp near Denver, 1874.

¹ Adapted from Kevin Black, "Tipi," *Colorado Encyclopedia* (<https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/tipi-0#:~:text=The%20tipi%2C%20or%20tepee%2C%20is,millennia%20among%20mobile%20human%20groups.>)

How Tipis are Built

From a distance, tipis look like tall, pointy cones. They are built with a strong frame of poles. The door usually faces east, toward the rising sun. It takes many animal hides to cover a tipi. People would often paint them with bright colors and pictures of animals and people.

Inside a tipi, there is a fireplace for warmth. People sleep and store things around the edges. Men and women might sit in different spots, and some spaces are used for special activities.

Tipi Camps

Tipi camps could be small with just one tipi or very large with hundreds of them. In some camps, tipis are arranged in a circle with an opening facing east. This way, everyone feels connected.

Tipis weren't just homes; they were used for many things. Some tipis were for special leaders or ceremonies, and children sometimes made small tipis for their toys.

The Tipi Today

In Colorado, the Ute Indians had smaller homes called wickiups. But after they got horses, they started using larger tipis like their neighbors. Today, tipis are still important to many Native American tribes and are used by others for camping or outdoor living. Their round shape symbolizes life, and they can easily be made from natural materials.

Lindenmeier¹

Lindenmeier is a big archaeological site located in northern Larimer County. Native American peoples or Paleo-Indians lived there as long ago as the end of the Ice Age, about 12,300 years ago. Archaeologists found stone tools and animal bones at this site. They believe these were left by a group of early people called the Folsom people, who hunted bison.

Folsom points are special stone tools that have a unique groove along the middle. People made them from beautiful stones like chalcedony and chert. Folsom points were attached to the ends of spears for throwing or poking. People used them to hunt big animals like bison, pronghorn, and deer. They could also be used as knives.

The Lindenmeier site has lots of stone and bone pieces. Archaeologists found Folsom points from hunting trips, pieces of tools that were not finished, bone needles, scrapers for hides, and bits of red ochre, which was used as paint. Some parts were found buried under twelve to fifteen feet of dirt and clay from floods and wind over many years. The clusters show where the Folsom people worked. They made



¹ Adapted from Jason LaBelle, "Lindenmeier Folsom Site," *Colorado Encyclopedia* (<https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/lindenmeier-folsom-site>)

tools, fixed broken ones, cooked food, cleaned animal skins, and made clothes there.

Archaeologists think this site might have been used by several large groups of Folsom people, each with twenty to forty members, who came together. It's also possible that people came back to this campsite year after year over many generations.

Working Together²

Archeologists believe that Lindenmeier was a "kill site." This term describes a place where animals, often in large numbers, were killed and butchered. This is shown by a special place called the "bone pit," which had the bones of several bison that were killed at the same time.

It seems that smaller groups of people came together to hunt together. Hunting a single bison is very hard, especially on foot³, so working as a group makes it easier to hunt more than one. Butchering these big animals also needs many hands to help.

Another sign that people worked together is a small "work" area where eleven bone needles were found. You can imagine a group of women sitting together, sharing stories and helping each other, just like in quilting circles or knitting groups today.

² Adapted from Brenda Martin, et. al., *The Excavation of Lindenmeier: A Folsom Site Uncovered 1934-1940* (Fort Collins Museum & Discovery Science Center, 2009).

³ Horses did not

Powwows¹

A powwow is a time of celebration. It is a time for Native Americans from different tribes to come together and remember their traditions. Anyone can come to a powwow, but only Native Americans can join the special activities and wear the colorful costumes. At a powwow, there are parades, rodeos, dances, and games. Gathering in a circle shows the “unity of life.”

Annual Denver March Powwow 2024 (Video)²

What do you see in this video?

What activities take place at the powwow?

What do you hear in this video?

How do people talk about why the powwow is important?

¹ Adapted from *Nuchiu Strong: A Colorado Resource Guide Lessons About the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe*

² Annual Denver March Powwow 2024 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdHxA1jzn2s>



Colorado Indian Boarding Schools¹

Vocabulary

- Boarding Schools
- Assimilation

What do you see in this photograph?



Native American Ute girls pose at wooden desks and a sofa reading books inside their dorm. Ignacio, La Plata County, Colorado.²

¹ Adapted from Rachel Estabrook, “For the first time, Colorado details dark historical chapter of attempted forced assimilation of Indigenous children in extensive report,” *CPR News* (October 3, 2023).

(<https://www.cpr.org/2023/10/03/state-investigation-report-released-indian-boarding-schools/>)

² “Girls in Dorm,” Denver Public Library Digital Collections (1900-1920).



What do you see in this photograph?



Native American Ute students sit at wooden tables in the Southern Ute Agency school dining room. The girls sit at one end, the boys at the other.³

Colorado had nine “Indian **Boarding Schools.**” The two biggest schools were in Grand Junction and at Fort Lewis near Durango. The purpose of these schools was to force Native children to **assimilate** or to erase their Native identity.

Indigenous children across Colorado, as young as kindergarten, were taken away from their families and homes to these **boarding schools.** Even though parents were supposed to agree for their kids to go to school, sometimes they were pressured and did not really understand what was happening.

When the children started school, their hair was cut, and their Native names were changed to American names. Living conditions were dirty and unhealthy.

³ “Ignacio Dining Hall,” *Denver Public Library Digital Collections* (1900-1910).³



Hand Talk or Plains Indian Sign Language

Native American peoples are not one big culture. Before meeting Europeans, there were hundreds of different cultures and tribes, each with its own way of organizing, beliefs, and languages. When people who spoke different languages came together to trade, have meetings, or even fight, they used a special way to communicate called Hand Talk or Plains Indian Sign Language (PISL).¹

PISL is more than just hand signs; it is a strong way for people to express themselves. It lets them share complex ideas and feelings without saying any words. For Native American communities, PISL is an important way to communicate and represents their culture. It helps them connect with their ancestors and keep their traditions alive. The special hand signs and gestures hold the wisdom and stories of many generations.²



William Tomkins, *Indian Sign Language* (1931)³

¹ Adapted from “Plains Indians Sign Language,” *Wyoming Humanities* (<https://thinkwy.org/programs/plains-indian-sign-language/>)

² Adapted from Clarissa Alexander, “The Cultural Relevance of Hand Talk: Native American Sign Language,” *National Institute of Health: Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion* (October 25, 2023).

What do you notice about Dr. Lanny Real Bear

³ Image excerpted from Jon Hammond, “Hand Talk: The forgotten Language” *Tehachapi News* (March 4, 2024).



The Hidden History of “Hand Talk” (Video)⁴

Name three reasons Indigenous People used “Hand Talk”
1.
2.
3.

How the Arapaho Tribe is Trying to Save its Language and Culture (Video)⁵

Name three things you learned in this video
1.
2.
3.

⁴ The Hidden History of “Hand Talk” https://youtu.be/s1-StAlw3aE?si=bOtOjx7OQazWc_dO

⁵ How the Arapaho Tribe is Trying to Save its Language and Culture <https://youtu.be/kzvObSwcUjU?si=fT1n-BE4aJLUQBBv>