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**Teacher Guide for 4th–5th Grades**  
for use with the educational DVD

# **HOW TRIBES GOT THEIR NAMES: A MONTANA EXAMPLE**

**By Sally Thompson**

**First Edition**

The Regional Learning Project collaborates with tribal educators to produce top quality, primary resource materials about Native Americans, Montana, and regional history.

**Produced by**

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 **Regional Learning Project**

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# Acknowledgments

Regional Learning Project extends grateful acknowledgment to the tribal representatives contributing to this project.

The following is a list of those appearing in the DVD *How Tribes Got Their Names: A Montana Example* from interviews conducted by Sally Thompson, Ph.D.

Clover Smith (Assiniboine)  
Stan Pretty Paint (Crow)  
Darrell Martin (Gros Ventre)  
Andy Blackwater (Kainai)  
Fancis Culloyah (Kalispel)  
Vernon Finley (Kootenai)  
Russell Boham (Little Shell Tribe)  
Jesse Taken Alive (Lakota)  
Donovin Sprague (Minnicoujou Lakota)  
Ward Redbird (Northern Cheyenne)  
Horace Axtell (Nez Perce)  
Rob Collier (Nez Perce)  
Darcy Anaquad (Ojibway)  
Darrell Kipp (Pikuni)  
Iris Pretty Paint (Pikuni)  
Louis Adams (Salish)  
Frances Vanderburg (Salish)  
Ronald Snake Edmo (Shoshone)



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# HOW TRIBES GOT THEIR NAMES: A MONTANA EXAMPLE

## Teacher Guide

for 4th and 5th Grades

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# HOW TRIBES GOT THEIR NAMES: A MONTANA EXAMPLE

Suggested for 4th and 5th grades

## ► Getting Started

How Tribes Got Their Names: A Montana Example is designed for use at the elementary school level. The 35-minute DVD explores the history behind the contemporary names of 12 tribal groups located on seven Indian reservations in Montana. This guide contains suggested activities that are designed to help expand the topics introduced in the DVD. These activities will help students hone their skills in geography, history and reading by building their knowledge of Montana tribes, their names, and their locations, both past and present.

In the DVD, tribal educators and elders share the history of their individual tribal names as they were known in Plains Indian Sign Language, followed by a discussion of how tribal names were conveyed by neighboring tribes. The film also examines how tribal names were translated or misinterpreted by French traders and trappers. Students are then introduced to the various misnomers for tribal groups we know today and learn the name each tribal group uses to refer to themselves.

You can learn more about the origins and land base of tribes represented in this film by visiting [www.montanatribes.org](http://www.montanatribes.org) and referring to the "Montana Tribes Land Basics," which is a series of tribal abstracts. These abstracts will be necessary for one of the Post-Viewing Activities.

## ► Using the DVD and Guide

The DVD is intended to be viewed in a single class period, though how you choose to view it is a matter of personal preference and time allocation. We suggest that you preview the entire DVD with the guide to familiarize yourself with its overall layout and to determine how the material can best be integrated into your coursework.

This guide is organized following the five chapter headings that appear on the main menu of the DVD. Please note that the DVD will play straight through without title screens to prompt you between chapters. For this reason, we suggest using the total running time given for each chapter to cue you between chapters. Time codes for each chapter are listed at the beginning of the chapter transcript and in the following table of contents:

Chapter 1 (1:50 min):	Tribes of Montana
Chapter 2 (5:30 min):	Sign Language / Misnomers
Chapter 3 (8:00 min):	West of the Divide Tribes: Flathead Reservation
Chapter 4 (15:48 min):	East of the Divide Tribes: Blackfeet, Rocky Boy, Fort Belknap, Fort Peck, Crow, and Northern Cheyenne Reservations
Chapter 5 (3:37 min):	Class Exercise - Making the Signs

In each chapter of this guide, we have provided the corresponding transcript of the DVD content for a convenient reference while viewing. Please note that these transcripts are exact renditions of the speakers featured in the film. As such, they reflect the nuances of each speaker, regardless of language usage.

**Chapter 1** orients students to the names and locations of 11 tribes in Montana (all but Little Shell).

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**Chapter 2** provides historical background on how the tribal names we know today are often a misinterpretation of sign language used in earlier times to refer to a particular tribe. Given the content of this chapter, we have also provided lists of Key Concepts, Vocabulary, People & Places, and an Essential Question for you and your students to consider as you watch this portion of the film. These lists will be helpful to keep in mind as you view the subsequent chapters as well.

In **Chapters 3 and 4**, students participate in learning the names of 11 tribal groups through sign language. After each sign is presented, tribal elders and educators discuss the translation of the sign and the name each tribe uses to refer to themselves. In these chapters, we have divided the tribes according to their locations - either west or east of the Continental Divide.

Since there are significantly more eastern tribes than western, we have further divided the eastern tribes into subgroups to provide logical cues for pausing the film and reviewing the information. At the end of each of these sections, you will find a Quick Reference and Review of the signs and tribal names just covered.

**Chapter 5** is interactive and provides an opportunity for students to practice the signs that they have seen throughout the DVD.

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# PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

When we hear about the various tribes of Montana – the Crow, the Blackfeet, the Assiniboine, etc. – we often overlook the stories and meanings behind these tribal names. Even more often, we are unaware of the names these tribal groups use to refer to themselves, and how each tribe communicated their identity to other tribes who spoke a different language.

The following pre-viewing activities intend to orient students to the geographical distribution of Montana's tribal groups and the various names that tribes have been referred to in historic times or the names they use to refer to themselves. Throughout the DVD, students will become participants in learning the signs used for each of the tribes represented in Montana.

In order to assist you in the pre-viewing and post-viewing activities, we have provided the following appendices:

Inside the back cover, you will find three map resources:

Map of Tribal Territory in Montana

Base Map of Montana

1857 Isaac Stevens Map

In the tabbed section labeled Appendix, you will find:

Name Game (exercise, and Answer Key)

Names Tribes Call Themselves (exercise, and Answer Key)

## Mapping Exercises

Use the Tribal Territories in Montana Map (inside back cover) to familiarize students with the historic and contemporary locations of Montana's tribes.

If you would like to reinforce the basic geography of Montana and the tribal homelands, you can build on the activity above by using the Base Map of Montana (inside back cover) and the 1857 Isaac Stevens Map (inside back cover).

First, lead students in becoming familiar with the major rivers in Montana. Beginning with the Base Map of Montana, use a colored marker to highlight the course of the Missouri River and its three forks. Second, highlight the Musselshell River, the Milk River, and the Marias River. Now trace the Yellowstone and the Clark Fork Rivers. Notice the pattern of the river systems in Montana. Next, observe the major mountain ranges in Montana, the Continental Divide and the outlier or island ranges.

Now that your students are more familiar with the basic geography of Montana, take out the 1857 Isaac Stevens Map. Noticing the pattern of the river systems you traced on the Base Map of Montana, help students recognize the pattern to orient them when observing a historic map.

Examine the 1857 Isaac Stevens Map showing the "Indian Nations and Tribes" in the area that would become known as Montana (which happened with the establishment of the Montana Territory in 1864). Locate the rivers you identified on the Base Map. Note the location of the "Treaty of Oct. 17, 1855," "Common Hunting Grounds," forts and passes. Also locate the boundaries drawn to show reservation lands on the west side. What else can you learn from this map?

## **Name Game Preview**

Pass out the Name Game (Appendix ) and review the list of Montana tribes. Ask if anyone knows what the names mean or if they know other names for those tribes. It is likely that little will be known.

Assure your students that they will know the answers if they pay close attention to the information shared in the DVD.

# TRIBES OF MONTANA

This chapter provides a brief introduction to the Tribes of Montana and the general themes you will be learning about throughout the DVD.

## Transcript

### Tribes of Montana – (1:50 minutes)

**Note:** Transcript text is an exact rendition of each interview, without corrections for grammar, etc.

### Sally Thompson

Today we'll learn about the tribes of Montana and how they got their names. This subject takes us back to the early 1800s when sign language was commonly used

to communicate with people who didn't know each other's languages. Of the names we use today for Montana tribes, some come from names other tribes gave them and others came from European misunderstandings of sign language. We'll learn the signs used to refer to the different tribes, some of which were misinterpreted and led to the names we use today. We will also learn the names the tribes use to refer to themselves. To begin, listen to the names we use today for the tribes of Montana and get a sense of where they now live.\*

#### TRIBES' NAMES AND PRONUNCIATION

Assiniboine	(ə-'si-nə-böin)
Blackfeet	(blak-fēt)
Chippewa	(chi-pə-wo, -wä, -wā, or -wə)
Cree	(krē)
Crow	(krō)
Gros Ventre	(grō-vänt)
Kootenai	(koo-t'nē)
Northern Cheyenne	(nor-thə(r)n shī-'an, or -'en)
Pend d'Oreille	(pen-d'ray or pon-d'ray)
Salish	(sā-lish)
Sioux	(sü)



# SIGN LANGUAGE & MISNOMERS

Chapter 2 explains the origins of Plains Indian Sign Language and the later misinterpretation of these signs by European explorers. Tribes identified each other based on unique characteristics or practices, which were represented through signs.

The European explorers who observed these signs often misinterpreted them and their meanings. These misinterpretations and misunderstandings were recorded and became the tribal names we know today.

## KEY CONCEPTS

- How tribes have received their names
- Origins of sign language
- Interpretation as perspective or point of view

## VOCABULARY

- Intrigued
- Misnomer
- Misinterpret
- Misconstrue
- Vary

## PEOPLE & PLACES

- Warren Ferris (fur trader)
- Northern Shoshone & Bannock Tribes (Idaho)
- W.P. Clark (William Philo)
- Meriwether Lewis
- Great Plains (region)

## Essential Question

What does Louis Adams mean when he calls sign language “a universal language”?

## Transcript

### Chapter 2 – Sign Language & Misnomers (5:30 minutes)

**Note:** Transcript text is an exact rendition of each interview, without corrections for grammar, etc.

### Sally Thompson

In the 1830s a fur trader named Warren Ferris was intrigued by some of the strange and inappropriate names he heard for tribes in the region. According to Ferris, many tribes had names that described some physical characteristic: Flat-heads; Pierced-noses; Big-bellies; but that none of the tribes displayed the noted physical traits. He wrote about this in his journal.

For the first group, the Flatheads, he noticed that not one showed any signs of a deformed head. For the next group, the Nez Perce - Pierced Nose, in French - he didn't see anyone with a pierced nose. And finally he reported that the Gros Ventre - Big Belly, in French - are as slim as any other Indians.

What are the sources of these unusual names? We believe that many of these misnomers came about because European travelers long ago misinterpreted sign language.

### Louis Adams – *Salish*

See the universal language was sign language.

### Sally Thompson

For those who didn't speak other languages, the tribes of the Great Plains developed a way to communicate through signs. No one knows how old this language might be. How do we learn about sign language? The most important source is the people themselves. Some people still speak sign language and many of their grandchildren understand it.

### Rob Collier – *Nez Perce*

I remember my grandfather, and when he would talk to us he would sign. It's that 'old Indian can't hold his hands still.' And so we learned a lot of the different signs for different things like, me, you know, the simple signs. And some of the tribal signs, what they called each other, and clan signs, you know. Each tribe had their own sign for themselves, and then another tribe would have a sign for them as they saw them.

### Sally Thompson

Another source of information comes from research done over a century ago when sign talking was a common practice. We integrate sign language information from a book by W.P. Clark, who spent time with many Indian tribes in the 1870s and '80s, learning all he could about sign language.

Another source of information comes from tapes made at the 1930 Sign Language Preservation Conference held in Browning, Montana. This sign talker gathering brought together the best of the sign talkers who still lived in the area in 1930. It was easy to get confused if you were a traveler from afar because of variations in signs from one tribe to another and from one person to another. Names reflect different points of view, and they are not necessarily the same

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from place to place. People have names they call themselves, but other people don't usually use these names. Instead, tribes carry names given by others. These names vary depending on the relationships with neighbors.

You might understand this better when you think of your own neighborhood. Maybe you have neighbors you refer to by the color of their house, the kind of car they drive, or something they do that you think is funny.

Let's look at an example from a tribe that used to be part of Montana, the Northern Shoshone and Bannock people who now live at Fort Hall, Idaho. The sign commonly used for Shoshone by Plains tribes is shown by Rob Collier, from the Nez Perce tribe.

### **Rob Collier** – *Nez Perce*

(sign for Shoshone) Shoshone

The term "Snake" for the Shoshone is a misnomer. Ronald 'Snake' Edmo explains this to us.

### **Ronald 'Snake' Edmo** – *Shoshone*

In our culture, we refer to ourselves either as the location that we come from or the type of food that we eat. What is known today as a Lemhi Shoshone, they call themselves a <Native language>, which means 'salmon eaters.' And of course, the sign language that was used on the Plains was a waving motion. Well, the white people thought that meant a snake, so they called us the Snake Indians. We call ourselves Nuwe, or 'the people.'

### **Sally Thompson**

Another misnomer is the name Nez Perce, people who live just west of

Montana. Lewis and Clark had been told about these people, and may have been the first to confuse the name. From the Shoshones on August 14, 1805, Meriwether Lewis learns of some people whom he refers to as 'persed nose' Indians. Lewis apparently misconstrues the gesture, [sign for Nez Perce] the original meaning of which is unknown.

W.P. Clark reports that the gesture of passing the index finger under and close to nose is the common sign for the Nez Perce. But he also mentions that the Blackfeet sometimes make the sign for 'powder,' because the people we know as Nez Perce used a bluish-black paint to paint themselves. Blackfeet speakers still refer to the Nez Perce as the Blue Mud People.

### **Rob Collier** – *Nez Perce*

The Blackfeet people, they called us the Blue Powder or Blue Mud people because that was what we painted our faces with, was a blue paint made from a blue powder or a blue mud.

### **Sally Thompson**

Nez Perce people say they never pierced their noses. They call themselves...

### **Horace Axtell** – *Nez Perce*

Niimi'ipuu. Niimi'ipuu, that's what we call ourselves, Nez Perce. It means 'we the people.' \*



## WEST OF THE DIVIDE TRIBES

This chapter focuses on the names of tribes living west of the Continental Divide: the Kootenai, Pend d'Oreille, and Salish tribes of the Flathead Reservation in northwestern Montana.

Before you begin viewing this chapter of the DVD, make sure everyone is ready with a piece of paper and something to write with. The students will be prompted to guess the meaning of 13 signs for tribal names. These signs will be shown in groupings by region, and then discussed. You will find a "quick reference and review guide" at the end of each section.

## Transcript

### Chapter 3 – West of the Divide (8:00 minutes)

**Note:** Transcript text is an exact rendition of each interview, without corrections for grammar, etc.

### Sally Thompson

So you can better understand how sign language can be misinterpreted, you will be watching the signs for tribes of Montana and writing down what you think they mean. We're not going to tell you which tribe is which the first time through.

You're going to want to take out a pencil and paper and number your page from 1 to 13, since you will be guessing the meaning of 13 signs. There are no wrong answers. Just use your imagination and have fun. You will have 10 seconds to complete your guess before the next sign appears. We will show you the signs again afterward when we discover how the tribes of Montana got their names, many of which were misunderstandings of the signs.

Using your pencil and paper, watch the signs and write down what you think they mean. You might not have heard the name before, so just write down what you think the sign shows following the gesture made by Rob Collier.

Sign number 1. What do you think this sign means?

(sign # 1 – Kootenai)

Number 2...

(sign # 2 – Pend d'Oreille)

Number 3...

(sign # 3 – Salish)

Just imagine if you were traveling long ago and had to watch those signs along with all sorts of other information. I bet there were lots of misunderstandings.

Now let us go back through history and see how the tribes of western Montana got their names. This is where you can compare your guess with the interpretation others made long ago. The sign number will appear before each sign we review so you can compare it to your guess.

In western Montana three tribes live on the Flathead Reservation - the Kootenai, the Pend d'Oreille and the Salish. Rob Collier shows us one sign for the Kootenai; Sign number 1...

Kootenai - sign for white tail deer.

### Rob Collier – *Nez Perce*

(sign # 1) People of the white tailed deer.

### Vernon Finley – *Kootenai*

We say Kootenais today, but the word Kootenai doesn't really mean anything in the language. It was a name that was given, I assume, from some other tribe - what they called us. And, then it was a mispronunciation of whatever that word is because none of the other neighboring tribes, it doesn't mean anything in their language either. But how the Kootenai always referred to themselves was through their tribal affiliation, through their specific band.

In past history, the people were called Ktunaxa, and the way that you pronounce it, it can mean slightly different things. One

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of the ways is that it means, 'eating food plain' – you know, with no seasoning. The other translation of it, let's say we went into battle with our enemies and one of us shot an arrow into one of our enemies and killed them. Somebody would go over there and pull the arrow back out and lick the blood off of the arrow. That's Ktunaxa.

There are seven bands of Kootenais. The band that lived in the area that's referred to today as Montana is the Ksanka band. The band Ksanka is 'standing arrow.'

### **Sally Thompson**

The Pend d'Oreille are also based on the Flathead Reservation in their original homeland. This is the upper Pend d'Oreille. The lower Pend d'Oreille, or the Kalispel tribe, live in eastern Washington on the Pend d'Oreille River. This name is a French term for 'earrings,' probably derived from sign language.

Number 2: Pend d'Oreille. The sign indicates ear pendant.

### **Rob Collier – Nez Perce**

(sign # 2) Pend d'Oreille

### **Francis Culloyah – Kalispel**

When the first white man came to this area, there was a lot of the Indian men that wore an earring, or earrings, and they used the shells, the abalone shells and the different kinds of shells for decoration. And I would only imagine that the first Frenchmen that came through the area seen that protrusion coming from an ear, so they called us Pend d'Oreille.

### **Sally Thompson**

The proper name for Pend d'Oreille, the name by which they call themselves is...

### **Vernon Finley – Kootenai**

Qaeisp`e. The Pend d'Oreilles called themselves Qaeisp`e, and that became mispronounced into Kalispel.

### **Sally Thompson**

The Salish are the third group that makes up the people of the Flathead Reservation.

### **Frances Vanderburg – Salish**

Salish, a term used to designate Salish-speaking tribes. **Sally Thompson**

Rob Collier shows us the sign used for the Salish. Number 3...

### **Frances Vanderburg – Salish**

Salish

### **Sally Thompson**

Sign indicates 'head flat on sides.'

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### **Rob Collier – Nez Perce**

(Sign # 3)

### **Sally Thompson**

Apparently some early French traders misinterpreted this sign to mean Flathead, as evidenced by the use of the term Tete Plat, which means 'flat head' in French.

In September of 1805, Lewis and Clark arrived at camp of these people on the Bitterroot River. William Clark adds to the confusion about names by recording another name in his journal. 'They call themselves...

### **Louis Adams – Salish**

Oat la shoot.

## **Sally Thompson**

According to Louis Adams, this term was a misunderstanding.

### **Louis Adams** – *Salish*

Not only was Flathead a misnomer, so was Oat la shoot. And when the Indians, our people, met Lewis and Clark's band and due to the communication they had to use sign language. Well one of their people must have told Three Eagles, just like that, you know, "Where are you people from? Where do you live?" And he probably, because they met him way up in the high country, so he probably just turned around and said <Salish>, "down below." And that's what that means, so they wrote it down, Oat la shoot, and that wasn't right, you know. <Salish> is down below.

### **Frances Vanderburg** – *Salish*

Salish, a term used to designate Salish

## **Sally Thompson**

The Salish call themselves...

### **Frances Vanderburg** – *Salish*

Sqelio, meaning 'the people'

## **Sally Thompson**

Let's review. In western Montana three tribes live on the Flathead Reservation: the Kootenai, the Pend d'Oreille and the Salish. The Salish are also known as Flatheads, although that's a misnomer as we've discussed. The Kootenai call themselves...

### **Vernon Finley** – *Kootenai*

Ktunaxa. The band that lived in the area that's referred to today as Montana is the Ksanka band

## **Sally Thompson**

And the Pend d'Oreille call themselves...

### **Vernon Finley** – *Kootenai*

Qaeisp`e.

## **Sally Thompson**

The Salish call themselves...

### **Frances Vanderburg** – *Salish*

Sqelio, meaning 'the people'\*

## EAST OF THE DIVIDE TRIBES

In this chapter we learn the names of 10 tribes in Montana and southern Alberta, Canada, east of the Continental Divide, residing primarily on six Indian Reservations. We have divided this chapter into three sections. At the end of each section is a quick reference guide to the signs and names of each tribe. Students will again need their paper and something to write with, and be prepared to guess the meaning of more signs. The sections appear as follows:

### **SECTION 1: THE BLACKFOOT CONFEDERACY – SIGNS #4-6:**

Siksika, Kainai, and the Piegan or Pikuni:

The “Blackfoot Confederacy” includes the Piegan or Pikuni of the Blackfeet Reservation in northwestern Montana, and the Siksika and Kainai of the Blackfoot of southern Alberta.

### **SECTION 2: FORT BELKNAP – SIGNS #7-8:**

Gros Ventre and Assiniboine

Fort Peck – Sign #9: Sioux (and Assiniboine)

The Gros Ventre and Assiniboine are the predominant tribes of the Fort Belknap Reservation in north central Montana. The Sioux live on the Fort Peck Reservation in northeastern Montana, as do the Assiniboine.

### **SECTION 3: CROW – SIGN #10:**

Crow (there are three bands: River Crow, Mountain Crow, and Kicked in the Bellies)

Northern Cheyenne – Sign #11: Northern Cheyenne

Rocky Boy’s – Sign #12: Chippewa and Cree; the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa

Both the Chippewa and Cree live on the Rocky Boy’s Reservation in north central Montana. The Little Shell mentioned in this section are people of Chippewa, Cree and Metis (French-Cree/Chippewa) descent.

The Little Shell Tribe is currently seeking federal recognition, and do not have federally reserved lands. The Little Shell Tribal Capital is located in present-day Great Falls, Montana and members of this group live throughout Montana.

## Transcript

### Chapter 4 – East of the Divide

#### Section 1: The Blackfeet Confederacy (15:48 minutes)

**Note:** Transcript text is an exact rendition of each interview, without corrections for grammar, etc.

### Sally Thompson

Now let's head east of the Continental Divide. In Montana, there are six reservations on the east side of the Divide: the Blackfeet Reservation, Rocky Boy, Fort Belknap, Fort Peck, Crow and Northern Cheyenne.

Number 4.

What do you think this sign means?

(sign # 4 – Blackfeet)

Number 5

(sign # 5 - Blood)

Number 6

(sign # 6 – Piegan)

### Iris Pretty Paint – *Pikuni*

There are three groups of Blackfeet: two in Canada - the Blackfoot or Siksika, and the Blood or Kainai. And another group of two bands, one in Canada and another on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana, known as the Pikuni, or some people say Piegan. The three bands are referred to as the Blackfoot Confederacy.

### Sally Thompson

Number 4...

### Iris Pretty Paint – *Pikuni*

Blackfoot

### Sally Thompson

The sign indicates black moccasins.

### Rob Collier – *Nez Perce*

(Sign # 4) Blackfoot

### Sally Thompson

Number 5.

### Iris Pretty Paint – *Pikuni*

Blood

### Sally Thompson

The act of wiping off a bloody nose. This is a misnomer. The sign actually referred to the way they painted their faces.

### Rob Collier – *Nez Perce*

(Sign # 5) Blood

### Sally Thompson

Number 6

### Iris Pretty Paint – *Pikuni*

Piegan, or Pikuni in our language

### Sally Thompson

The sign represents rubbing cheek with rawhide spot in a robe.

### Rob Collier – *Nez Perce*

(Sign # 6)

### Darrell Kipp – *Pikuni*

The Blackfeet people, or the Pikuni as they're known in their language, are the spotted robes.

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## **Sally Thompson**

No one knows for sure why this large tribe got the name Blackfeet. Some say that another group observed them walking across some scorched earth that had turned their moccasins black and that's how they got their name.

### **Iris Pretty Paint** – *Pikuni*

The name Blackfeet is a name that was given to us by the Federal Government. It's a federal distinction that we use, but we call ourselves Niitsitapi, 'the real people.'

## **Sally Thompson**

Let's review. The Piegan Blackfeet, or Pikuni, live on the Blackfeet Reservation. They call themselves...

### **Iris Pretty Paint** – *Pikuni*

Niitsitapi, 'the real people. \*'

Notes

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## Quick Reference and Review – The Blackfoot Confederacy

### **SIGN #4: BLACKFOOT - SIGN INDICATES "BLACK MOCCASINS."**

Siksika = what they call themselves, which means Blackfoot.

### **SIGN #5: BLOOD - SIGN INDICATES THE ACT OF WIPING A BLOODY NOSE, AND INFERS THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY PAINTED THEIR FACES.**

Kainai = the name the Blood use to refer to themselves.

### **SIGN #6: PIEGAN - SIGN REPRESENTS "RUBBING CHEEK WITH RAWHIDE SPOT IN A ROBE."**

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Piegan = Blackfeet; the name "Blackfeet" was perhaps derived from an early observation of this tribe, who had blackened moccasins from walking through a burned area. The "Blackfeet" distinction was ascribed to this tribe by the federal government

Pikuni = name for the Montana Blackfeet in their language.

Niisitapi = the name they call themselves, meaning "the real people."

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## Transcript

### Chapter 4 – East of the Divide

#### Section 2: Fort Belknap and Fort Peck Reservations

(15:48 minutes)

**Note:** Transcript text is an exact rendition of each interview, without corrections for grammar, etc.

#### Sally Thompson

What do you think this sign means?  
Number 7. (sign # 7 – Gros Ventre) The name Gros Ventre means 'big belly' in French. The Gros Ventre tribe is based on the Fort Belknap Reservation. Number 7... Gros Ventre, sign for 'the falls.'

#### Rob Collier – *Nez Perce*

(Sign # 7) People of the falls.

#### Sally Thompson

To explain the origins of the name Gros Ventre, tribal representative Darrell Martin suggests it is a misnomer.

#### Darrell Martin – *Gros Ventre*

Just misinterpretation of the Falls People. We're actually from the south fork of the Saskatchewan River and it's pretty high up north. And the sign language, of course, is for falls, and then we're also known as the White Clay People because we used to dig white clay and that would clean your robes.

One of the misinterpretations by the French was the sign language. Of course, the falls, as your hands fall down, and they misinterpret that as big belly, so Gros Ventre in French means "big belly," so that's just a misinterpretation of the name. Our official name in my language is A-a-ninin,

which means upright man, or upright person, or otherwise White Clay or Falls people.

#### Sally Thompson

This misnomer of Gros Ventre came about from a misunderstanding of the sign language for the Falls Indians, who were also known as White Clay or Upright people.

Let's review. The Gros Ventre are based at Fort Belknap. The name Gros Ventre is a misnomer, based on a misunderstanding of sign language. They were called the Falls People or White Clay people by their neighbors and called themselves...

#### Darrell Martin – *Gros Ventre*

A-a-ninin, which means upright man, or upright person.

#### Sally Thompson

What do you think this sign means?  
Number 8.

(sign # 8 – Assiniboine)

The Assiniboine people of Montana are split between two reservations: Fort Belknap and Fort Peck.

#### Clover Smith – *Assiniboine/Sioux*

I'm a part of the <Wadopana> band and the <Hudasanak> band. They are the red bottom clan and the canoe paddlers. That's what <Wadopana> means, 'canoe paddlers.'

#### Sally Thompson

Number 8. For Assiniboine, the sign, the act of paddling - canoe men

#### Rob Collier – *Nez Perce*

(Sign # 8) Canoe paddlers.

**Clover Smith** – *Assiniboine /Sioux*

The French gave the name Assiniboine to Assiniboines, but the Ojibway called us 'cooks with stone,' people who cook with stone. And the French interpreted it as Assiniboine, and so that's how we got the name Assiniboine. Otherwise, we know ourselves as Nakoda - Nakoda people. So we're Assiniboine to the French, but to us we're Nakoda people.

**Sally Thompson**

Let's review. The Gros Ventre and one band of Assiniboine are based at Fort Belknap. Another band of Assiniboine, or Nakoda, is based at the Fort Peck Reservation along with the Dakota and Lakota Sioux. The word Assiniboine is a misinterpretation by some early French visitors of a name given to those people by the Ojibway. The term meant 'stone boilers.' The Assiniboine call themselves...

**Clover Smith** – *Assiniboine /Sioux*

We know ourselves as Nakoda, Nakoda people.

**Sally Thompson**

Number 9. What do you think this sign means?

(sign # 9 – Sioux)

The Great Sioux Nation includes the various groups of the Lakota, Nakota and Dakota. Most people from these tribes live in South Dakota and some in North Dakota as well as Montana. Lands were reserved for Sioux people in Montana on the Fort Peck Reservation. The name Sioux, meaning 'snake,' was created by early French Canadian traders who abbreviated the

name by which another tribe referred to the Dakota...

**Donovin Sprague** – *Minnicoujou Lakota*

The word 'Sioux' is actually a form...part of the Anishanaabe word from the Ojibway or Chippewa Nations of something like Nadouéssioux.

**Sally Thompson**

...'Iroquois snake'

**Donovin Sprague** – *Minnicoujou Lakota*

And then the French just picked up on the end, the Sioux part. So, correctly they would be Lakota, Dakota and Nakota by language groups.

**Sally Thompson**

There is disagreement about the word Sioux and where it came from. Listen to Jesse Taken Alive tell about the name Lakota.

**Jesse Taken Alive** – *Lakota*

We refer to ourselves as Lakota, and the books call that particular group, Sioux. What has to be corrected is that as Lakota people we literally translate that word as friends and allies. Because we are friends and allies means that we are friends and allies to ourselves first and we must be truthful to ourselves first. And we go on with that way of life and living as we have been for centuries.

**Sally Thompson**

Number 9: Dakota or Sioux. Sign is necklace people, not "cut throat" as

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sometimes interpreted. A cutting edge is always represented by the little finger.

**Rob Collier** – *Nez Perce*

(Sign # 9) Necklace people.

**Sally Thompson**

The Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota have names for their own groups. The different bands of Lakota are listed by Donovan Sprague...

**Donovin Sprague** – *Minnicoujou Lakota*

There are seven bands and they are the Oglala, Sicangu, Hunkpapa, Minnicoujou, Itazipco, Siha Sapa, and Oohenumpa.

**Sally Thompson**

Let's review. Lands were reserved for Sioux people in Montana on the Fort Peck Reservation. The name Sioux comes from an abbreviation of an Ojibway word meaning 'Iroquois snake.' The Great Sioux Nation includes the Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota. Each one of these has many bands with their own names. \*

Notes

# Q

## Quick Reference and Review – Fort Belknap and Fort Peck Reservations

### **SIGN #7: GROS VENTRE - SIGN REPRESENTS "THE FALLS" OR "PEOPLE OF THE FALLS."**

Gros Ventre = French word meaning "Big Belly" is a misnomer derived from a misinterpretation of the sign.

People of the Falls & White Clay People = descriptive terms that neighboring tribes used to refer to the Gros Ventre. People of the Falls refers to their geographic location along the South Saskatchewan River in Canada; and White Clay People refers to a white clay they used to clean their hides and robes.

A-a-ninin = the term they use to refer to themselves, which means "upright man" or "upright person."

### **SIGN #8: ASSINIBOINE - SIGN INDICATES THE ACT OF PADDLING AND REFERS TO "CANOE MEN."**

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Assiniboine = French interpretation of the Ojibway (Chippewa) term that means "stone boilers" or "one who cooks with stone."

Nakoda (also spelled Nakota) = the term they use to refer to themselves, which means "the generous ones."

### **SIGN #9: SIOUX - SIGN MEANS "NECKLACE PEOPLE."**

Sioux = this term is derived from French-Canadian traders who abbreviated the word that Ojibwe/Chippewa used to refer to the Sioux. The name Sioux meant 'snake' among French-Canadian people. Among the Lakota, the term 'Sioux' means "friends and allies."

Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota = the three language groups of the Sioux.

There are seven bands of Lakota Sioux: Oglala, Sicangu, Hunkpapa, Minnicoujou, Itazipco, Siha Sapa, and Oohenumpa.

Nadouessioux (also spelled Nadoweisiw-eg) = the name given by the Ojibwe, meaning "Iroquois snake."

Niisitapi = the name they call themselves, meaning "the real people."

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## Transcript

### Chapter 4 – East of the Divide Section 3: Crow, Northern Cheyenne and Rocky Boy Reservations

(15:48 minutes)

**Note:** Transcript text is an exact rendition of each interview, without corrections for grammar, etc.

#### Sally Thompson

What do you think this sign means? Number 10...

(sign # 10 – Crow)

The Crow reservation is home to the Crow. Crow is thought to be a faulty translation of their name for themselves.

#### Stan Pretty Paint – Crow

Apsaalooke. In the language of our sister tribe, the Hidatsa, Apsaalooke means 'children of the large-beaked bird.'

#### Sally Thompson

Other tribes would imitate a bird in flight when referring to the...

#### Stan Pretty Paint – Crow

Apsaalooke.

#### Sally Thompson

...in sign language.

Number 10...

#### Stan Pretty Paint – Crow

Crow. Apsaalooke.

#### Sally Thompson

Sign represents beating of wings.

#### Rob Collier – Nez Perce

(Sign # 10) Children of the large-beaked bird.

#### Sally Thompson

The whites interpreted this as the Crow, and thus called them Crow Indians. The Crow are divided into two bands. [Note: Kick in the Belly is a third band of Crow not mentioned in the film.]

#### Stan Pretty Paint – Crow

River Crow <Crow> Mountain Crow <Crow>.

#### Sally Thompson

Let's review. The Crow Reservation is home to the...

#### Stan Pretty Paint – Crow

Apsaalooke.

#### Sally Thompson

...also known as Crow. The name Crow is a misinterpretation of sign language for a Hidatsa word that means, 'Children of the large-beaked bird.' The Crow call themselves...

#### Stan Pretty Paint – Crow

Apsaalooke [Note: The Crow also refer to themselves as Biiluuke.]

#### Sally Thompson

What do you think this sign means? Number 11...

(sign # 11 – Cheyenne)

The Cheyenne of Montana are based on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation, just east of the Crow. The name Cheyenne

came from the French understanding of a Sioux term.

### **Ward Redbird**, – *Northern Cheyenne*

The Sioux called us <Sioux>, which meant 'the people of the alien speech.'

### **Sally Thompson**

Number 11. Cheyenne, the sign means 'striped arrow feather.'

### **Rob Collier** – *Nez Perce*

(Sign # 11) Striped arrow feather.

### **Ward Redbird** – *Northern Cheyenne*

We call ourselves Tsetsehesestahase, which means 'the people.'

### **Sally Thompson**

Let's review. The Northern Cheyenne are based on a reservation just east of the Crow. Cheyenne is a misunderstanding by the French of a Sioux word. The Northern Cheyenne call themselves...

### **Ward Redbird** – *Northern Cheyenne*

We call ourselves Tsetsehesestahase, which means 'the people.'

### **Sally Thompson**

Number 12. What do you think this sign means?

(sign # 12 – Chippewa)

Number 13. What do you think this sign means?

(sign # 13 – Cree)

The Chippewa and Cree of Montana have lived together so long they are like one group of people, although they are originally from separate tribes. One band has reserved lands on the Rocky Boy's Reserva-

tion. The Little Shell Band of the Chippewa-Cree has no reserved lands. They are based in Great Falls.

Rob Collier shows us a sign for the Chippewa. Chippewa are known as Ojibwe in Canada.

Number 12. The sign means 'timber people,' the same sign used for all Eastern Indians.

### **Rob Collier** – *Nez Perce*

(Sign # 12) Timber people.

### **Sally Thompson**

Chippewa comes from the Algonquian word for 'puckering,' but the Chippewa refer to themselves as...

### **Russell Boham** – *Little Shell Tribe*

...Annishinabe – and that just means, 'natural man' or 'first man.' Ojibwe is a term that was applied by the French to the Annishinabe. It has to do with the way that their moccasins are made. The word can be interpreted as 'puckered,' so they make the seams around their moccasins and they're puckered in that way, and so they've then been called...it was 'Ojibwe,' and it became 'Ojibway,' which became 'Ochippewa,' which became 'Chippewa.' And Chippewa people, the Little Shell Chippewa Tribe, they're Chippewa, but they're Ojibwe, but they're Annishinabe, which is the term the people call themselves is Annishinabe. And that just means 'natural man' or 'first man.'

The Métis is the term that's applied is Michif, and is basically a French word that means 'mixed.' And the Metis is...historically for 300 years have been...it's a culture that had developed over a period of time between the French and Scottish and Irish fur traders - the voyagers - and the native

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women, mostly Chippewa and largely Cree as well.

### **Sally Thompson**

Rob Collier shows us a sign for the Cree, number 13. Cree, the sign means Rabbit Men.

### **Rob Collier** – *Nez Perce*

(Sign # 13) Rabbit People.

### **Darcy Anaquad** – *Ojibway*

The Plains Cree call themselves Ne-i-yah-wahk, which translates to 'those who speak the same language.'

### **Sally Thompson**

Let's review. The Chippewa and Cree live on the Rocky Boy's Reservation. The Little Shell Band of the Chippewa-Cree has no reserved lands. Neighboring groups on the plains called the Chippewa 'timber people.' The Cree are known by some of their neighbors as 'rabbit men.' The Chippewa call themselves...

### **Russell Boham** – *Little Shell Tribe*

...Annishinabe – and that just means, 'natural man' or 'first man.'

### **Darcy Anaquad** – *Ojibway*

The Plains Cree call themselves Ne-i-yah-wahk, which translates to 'those who speak the same language.' \*

Notes

# Q

## Quick Reference and Review – Crow, Northern Cheyenne and Rocky Boy's Reservations

### **SIGN #10: CROW - SIGN REPRESENTS THE BEATING OF WINGS**

Crow = this word is a misinterpretation of sign language for a Hidatsa word meaning 'children of the large-beaked bird'. There are three bands of Crow: the River Crow, the Mountain Crow, and The Kick in the Belly (the latter is not mentioned in the film).

Apsaalooke = name the Crow use to refer to themselves, which means 'children of the large-beaked bird'. [The Crow also refer to themselves as Biiluke.]

### **SIGN #11: CHEYENNE - SIGN MEANS 'STRIPED ARROW FEATHER'**

Cheyenne = term derived from French misunderstanding of a Sioux term that meant 'people of the alien speech.'

Tsetsehesestahase = name the Cheyenne use to refer to themselves, which means 'the people.'

### **SIGN #12: CHIPPEWA - SIGN MEANS 'TIMBER PEOPLE'**

Chippewa = an Algonquian word for 'puckering'. The Chippewa are often referred to as Ojibwe in Canada. In the US they are commonly referred to as Ojibway or Chippewa.

Annishinabe = term the Chippewa use to refer to themselves, which means 'original people.'

Metis = a unique group of indigenous people who are referred to as Michif, or Michif-speaking people. The Michif language is a mixture of both French and Cree. The word Metis is a French term that means 'mixed', referring to the fact that Metis descended from unions between Cree and/or Chippewa women and French, Scottish, or Irish fur trappers and traders.

### **SIGN #13: CREE - SIGN MEANS 'RABBIT PEOPLE' OR 'RABBIT MEN'**

Ne-hiyawak = name the Cree call themselves, which translates to 'those who speak the same language.'

## CLASS EXERCISE – MAKING THE SIGNS

In conclusion, this chapter provides an opportunity to practice the signs you have learned about throughout the film.

### Transcript

#### Chapter 5 – Class Exercise: Making the Signs (3:37 minutes)

**Note:** Transcript text is an exact rendition of each interview, without corrections for grammar, etc.

#### Sally Thompson

I bet you would like to see those signs again. Stand up. Make sure you have room to spread your arms and see if you can learn these signs by following along.

Kootenai, sign for white tailed deer.

Pend d'Oreille, the sign indicates ear pendant.

#### Frances Vanderburg – Salish

<Salish>

#### Sally Thompson

Sign indicates head flat on sides.

#### Iris Pretty Paint – Pikuni

Blackfoot.

#### Sally Thompson

The sign indicates black moccasins.

#### Iris Pretty Paint – Pikuni

Blood.

#### Sally Thompson

The act of wiping off a bloody nose.

#### Iris Pretty Paint – Pikuni

Piegan, or Pikuni in our language.

#### Sally Thompson

The sign represents rubbing cheek with rawhide spot on a robe.

Gros Ventre, the sign for the falls.

For Assiniboine, the sign, the act of paddling.

Dakota, or Sioux. The sign is necklace people.

#### Stan Pretty Paint – Crow

Crow. Apsaalooke.

#### Sally Thompson

Sign represents beating of wings.

Cheyenne, the sign means striped arrow feather.

Chippewa, the sign means timber people.

Cree, the sign means rabbit-men.

Look at all that you have learned. You know all the tribes of Montana and where they live. You know the names they call themselves and what others call them. You know which ones are misnomers and how they came to be used, and you know the signs for each of these tribes.

#### Rob Collier – Nez Perce

Now go practice with each other!



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# POST-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

## Post-Viewing Activity #1

### The Name Game

Have students revisit the Name Game (Appendix) introduced in the Pre-Viewing Activities and fill in the answers.

## Post-Viewing Activity #2

### Tribal Name Charades

Use the transcripts from Chapter 3 and 4 to assist you in performing the signs in front of the class to quiz students on the signs for each tribe and the names they call themselves.

Try pronouncing what the tribes call themselves to see if students can identify them using the names they are more commonly known by.

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## Post-Viewing Activity #3

### Online Activities

Students can quiz themselves online at [www.montanatribes.org](http://www.montanatribes.org) to assess their knowledge of tribal geography and the names the tribes call themselves. In the game "Namedropping," players click on the name of a tribe and "drop" it into the appropriate location on a Montana map.

In the matching game "Who's Who," students are prompted to push "play" to hear a native speaker pronounce the name after correctly answering a question.

If your classroom does not have internet access, encourage students to play these games at home. For "Who's Who," students can work with the printed handout Names Tribes Use for Themselves in Montana (Appendix) as an alternative or complementary activity.



## Montana Tribal Land Basics

Divide the class into eight tribal groups:

Assiniboine  
Blackfoot Confederacy  
Chippewa Cree  
Crow  
Gros Ventre  
Kootenai  
Northern Cheyenne  
Salish and Pend d'Oreille

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Each group should have its own copy of the **Tribal Territories in Montana** map (inside back cover), the **Base Map of Montana** (inside back cover) and their respective tribal summary.

For tribal summaries, go to: [www.montanatribes.org](http://www.montanatribes.org) – Resources and Links section, and click on the flags. You will find a summary produced by each tribe as part of Montana's tribal history projects. The summaries include information about each tribe's origin, language, homelands and historical relationship with the US government.

Students can transfer information about their tribe onto the base map.

The groups can take turns presenting to the rest of the class what they have learned from their summary review and mapping exercise.



# Name Game: Clues for Names of Tribes in Montana

Match names of tribes with the clues presented.

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
|                       | _____ Name translates as French phrase for “big belly”, but this tribe calls itself “White Clay people”                                |
| 1. Assiniboine        | _____ Historic land base includes Yellowstone River country  |
| 2. Blackfeet          | _____ Ancestors in this tribe conserved animals which became the National Bison herd   |
| 3. Chippewa           | _____ Montana band of this tribe is related to bands in adjacent state and province, and has a very unique language                    |
| 4. Cree               | _____ Montana members of this tribe are part of the largest Algonquin-speaking First Nation in Canada                                  |
| 5. Crow               | _____ Canoe Paddler and Red Bottom bands make up this group in Montana   |
| 6. Gros Ventres       | _____ Name of this tribe is taken from description of traditional puckered style of moccasin; tribe is also known as Ojibwe            |
| 7. Kootenai           | _____ This misnomer is the federally recognized term for Lakota and Dakota people  |
| 8. Little Shell Band  | _____ Tribe commonly mislabeled as Flatheads   |
| 9. Métis              | _____ Distinct group demonstrates a blending of cultural traditions; recognized as a tribe by Canadian government, but not by the U.S. |
| 10. Northern Cheyenne | _____ Recognized by state, but not federal government  |
| 11. Pend d’Oreille    | _____ This tribe has a southern counterpart based in Oklahoma  |
| 12. Salish            | _____ This tribe’s original reserve included part of Glacier National Park   |
| 13. Sioux             |  |



# Name Game: Clues for Names of Tribes in Montana

Match names of tribes with the clues presented.

## ANSWER KEY

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. Assiniboine        | <u>6</u> Name translates as French phrase for “big belly”, but this tribe calls itself “White Clay people”                                |
| 2. Blackfeet          | <u>5</u> Historic land base includes Yellowstone River country  |
| 3. Chippewa           | <u>11</u> Ancestors in this tribe conserved animals which became the National Bison herd  |
| 4. Cree               | <u>7</u> Montana band of this tribe is related to bands in adjacent state and province, and has a very unique language                    |
| 5. Crow               | <u>4</u> Montana members of this tribe are part of the largest Algonquin-speaking First Nation in Canada                                  |
| 6. Gros Ventres       | <u>1</u> Canoe Paddler and Red Bottom bands make up this group in Montana   |
| 7. Kootenai           | <u>3</u> Name of this tribe is taken from description of traditional puckered style of moccasin; tribe is also known as Ojibwe            |
| 8. Little Shell Band  | <u>13</u> This misnomer is the federally recognized term for Lakota and Dakota people   |
| 9. Métis              | <u>12</u> Tribe commonly mislabeled as Flatheads  |
| 10. Northern Cheyenne | <u>9</u> Distinct group demonstrates a blending of cultural traditions; recognized as a tribe by Canadian government, but not by the U.S. |
| 11. Pend d’Oreille    | <u>8</u> Recognized by state, but not federal government  |
| 12. Salish            | <u>10</u> This tribe has a southern counterpart based in Oklahoma   |
| 13. Sioux             | <u>2</u> This tribe’s original reserve included part of Glacier National Park   |



## Names Tribes use for themselves, in Montana

Match the common names of tribes with the names tribes call themselves.

- |                       |                                  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Assiniboine        | _____ A'aninin                   |
| 2. Blackfeet          | _____ Apsaalooke                 |
| 3. Chippewa           | _____ Qíispé                     |
| 4. Cree               | _____ Ktunaxa (Ksanka)           |
| 5. Crow               | _____ Métis                      |
| 6. Gros Ventres       | _____ Nakoda                     |
| 7. Kootenai           | _____ Annishinabe (Ojibwe)       |
| 8. Little Shell Band  | _____ Lakota and Dakota people   |
| 9. Métis              | _____ Sélish                     |
| 10. Northern Cheyenne | _____ Ne-i-yah-wahk              |
| 11. Pend d'Oreille    | _____ Annishinabe and Métis      |
| 12. Salish            | _____ Tsististas and So'taa'eo'o |
| 13. Sioux             | _____ Niitsitapi (Pikuni)        |



# Names Tribes use for themselves, in Montana

Match the common names of tribes with the names tribes call themselves.

## Answer Key

- |                       |                                      |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Assiniboine        | <u>6</u> A'aninin                    |
| 2. Blackfeet          | <u>5</u> Apsaalooke                  |
| 3. Chippewa           | <u>11</u> Qíispé                     |
| 4. Cree               | <u>7</u> Ktunaxa (Ksanka)            |
| 5. Crow               | <u>9</u> Métis                       |
| 6. Gros Ventres       | <u>1</u> Nakoda                      |
| 7. Kootenai           | <u>3</u> Annishinabe (Ojibwe)        |
| 8. Little Shell Band  | <u>13</u> Lakota and Dakota people   |
| 9. Métis              | <u>12</u> Sélish                     |
| 10. Northern Cheyenne | <u>4</u> Ne-i-yah-wahk               |
| 11. Pend d'Oreille    | <u>8</u> Annishinabe and Métis       |
| 12. Salish            | <u>10</u> Tsististas and So'taa'eo'o |
| 13. Sioux             | <u>2</u> Niitsitapi (Pikuni)         |