

## What is a Talking Stick?



*Photo Credit: Library of Congress*

For hundreds of years, Native Americans used talking sticks. The person who held the stick was allowed to speak. The others had to listen until it was their turn to hold the stick.

The tribes carved talking sticks from pieces of wood. They added beads, feathers, or fur. The talking stick gave each person time to share a thought. It helped members of a tribe have peaceful meetings.

What do you do in your classroom when you want to talk? You raise your hand, and everyone listens. You can try this new-but-also-old idea in your classroom. Use a talking stick!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** For questions 1-4, circle the correct answer.

1. Who used talking sticks for hundreds of years?

- a) school teachers
- b) Native Americans
- c) parents

2. This passage describes a talking stick and how it was used. What are you allowed to do when you hold the talking stick?

- a) sing
- b) speak
- c) dance

3. The talking stick helped members of a tribe have peaceful meetings. What part of the passage shows us that this is true?

- a) "The person who held the stick was allowed to speak. The others had to listen until it was their turn to hold the stick."
- b) "The tribes carved talking sticks from pieces of wood. They added beads, feathers, or fur."
- c) "What do you do in your classroom when you want to talk? You raise your hand, and everyone listens."

4. What is "What is a Talking Stick?" mainly about?

- a) how you can use a talking stick in your classroom
- b) how to make a talking stick
- c) how the Native Americans used talking sticks

**5. A) Talking sticks were carved from what?**

Talking sticks were carved from

---

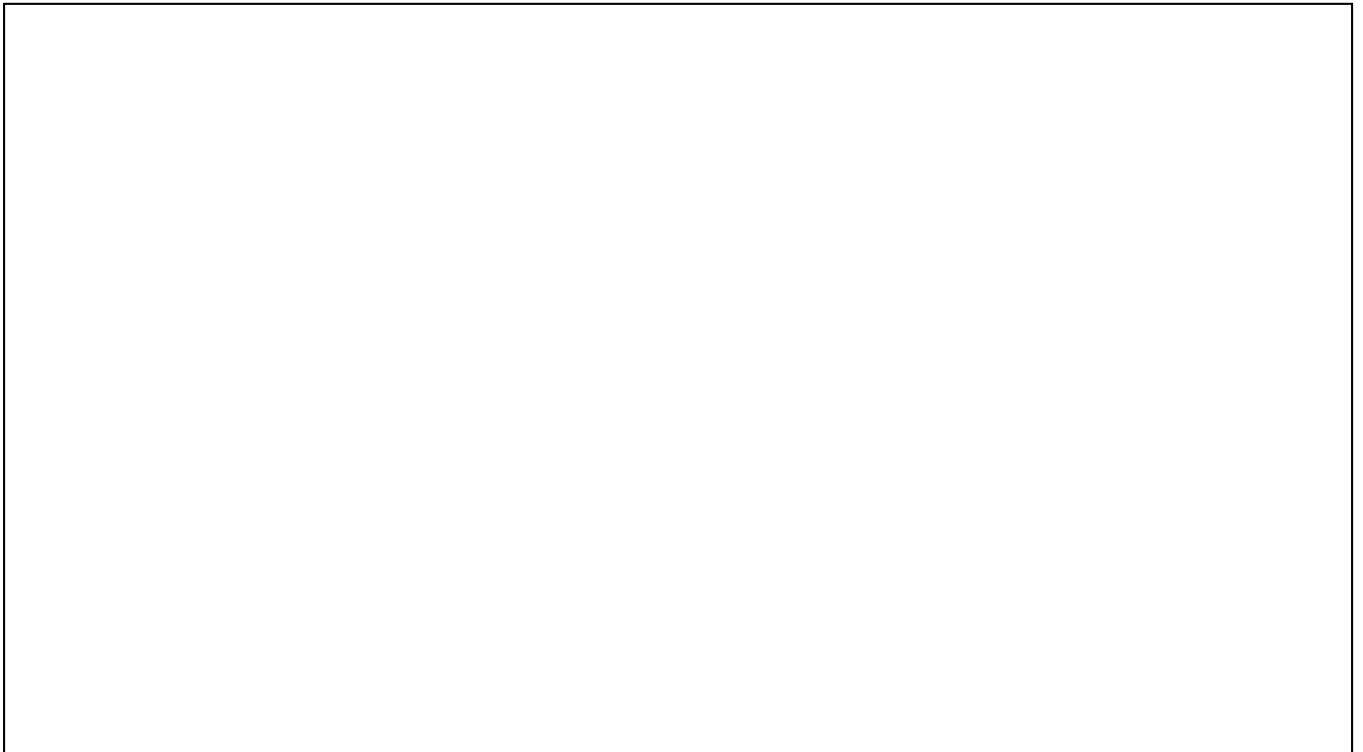
---

---

---

---

---

**B) Draw a picture of a talking stick.**

6. What did you learn from "What is a Talking Stick?"

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**7. Class Discussion Question:** Explain how using a talking stick is similar to raising your hand in your classroom.

**Teacher Guide & Answers**

**Note to Teacher:** Read each question out loud to your students and have each student complete the worksheet independently. For questions 5 A) and 6, you can have students draw their answers, answer orally, or write their answers depending on your students' progress. If you have them write their answers, you may want to write the word(s) on the board for them to copy. Question 7 is a class discussion question.

**Passage Reading Level:** Lexile 550

**Directions:** For questions 1-4, circle the correct answer.

1. Who used talking sticks for hundreds of years?

- a) school teachers
- b) Native Americans**
- c) parents

2. This passage describes a talking stick and how it was used. What are you allowed to do when you hold the talking stick?

- a) sing
- b) speak**
- c) dance

3. The talking stick helped members of a tribe have peaceful meetings. What part of the passage shows us that this is true?

- a) "The person who held the stick was allowed to speak. The others had to listen until it was their turn to hold the stick."**
- b) "The tribes carved talking sticks from pieces of wood. They added beads, feathers, or fur."
- c) "What do you do in your classroom when you want to talk? You raise your hand, and everyone listens."

4. What is "What is a Talking Stick?" mainly about?

- a) how you can use a talking stick in your classroom
- b) how to make a talking stick
- c) how the Native Americans used talking sticks**

5. A) *Note to Teacher: See note at the top of the first page.*

Talking sticks were carved from what?

**Suggested answer:** Talking sticks were carved from *pieces of wood*.

B) Draw a picture of a talking stick.

**Suggested answer:** Students' pictures may vary but should include a stick that is small enough to be held in your hands and passed safely around a group. Advanced pictures may show how the stick was decorated (with beads, feathers, fur, or carvings).

6. *Note to Teacher: See note at the top of the first page.*

What did you learn from "What is a Talking Stick?"

**Suggested answer:** Answers may vary and should be supported by the passage.

7. *Note to Teacher: See note at the top of the first page.*

**Class Discussion Question:** Explain how using a talking stick is similar to raising your hand in your classroom.

**Suggested answer:** Answers may vary but students should explain that both the talking stick and raising your hand show who is allowed to talk and who should be listening quietly. In one case, the person with the talking stick is allowed to talk and everyone else should be quiet. In the other case, the person raising their hand who was called on is allowed to talk and everyone else should listen quietly.