

# Crow by Erin

The Crow tribe is very interesting. They once lived in the Great Lakes but traveled across the Great Plains and continued west. They settled in Montana and Wyoming in mountains and river valleys.

For food, they captured small game, they fished, and they gathered nuts and berries. Their homes were made of wooden poles and buffalo skins. The Crow constructed some of the biggest teepees of all Indian tribes. Inside were mattresses to sleep on along the sides of the teepees, a fireplace in the middle, and a hole on top for smoke to escape.

The men and women dressed and looked very different from each other. The women didn't dress fancy because they mostly stayed around their shelters. They wore dresses made of deer and mountain sheep skins decorated with elk teeth. They also wore leggings and moccasins. Their hair was always short. The men's hair was always long and sometimes even dragged on the ground! Men dressed in a shirt,



a robe, moccasins, and trimmed leggings with a belt. The women cooked, cleaned and built the homes. The men defended and fed their families. They were hunters and warriors. Men and women joined together in storytelling, art, music and traditional medicine. The children played, helped around the house and attended school. Many children loved to hunt and fish with their fathers. They were often busy with chores, but still found time for dolls, toys and games.

In most tribes men were considered superior to the women. But Crow women were treated equal to men. Some women even became chiefs.

The Crow made geometric artwork that they used to decorate clothing, blankets, pots and baskets. They painted, beaded and sculpted. Later, they inlaid gold and silver items with colorful stones.

The Crow were smaller in number than many of the tribes around them, but they defended themselves very well and did not join other tribes for defense.

They sometimes fought against the Sioux, the Arapaho and the Cheyenne to protect their territory. They even helped General George Custer scout those tribes before his soldiers were defeated at Custer's Last Stand.

Their name, "Apsaalooke," means "children of the large-beaked bird." The white man mistranslated the word as "crow."

Today, the Crow have about 12,000 members. Most of them live on the Crow reservation, which is near Billings in southern Montana and stretches into northern Wyoming. It is the fifth-largest Indian reservation in the country, covering 2.3 million acres.

In 2008, Barack Obama became the first presidential candidate to visit the Crow reservation.