

Wisconsin's First People

Activity 3.1: Paleo-Indian Spear Points

Teacher Materials

Preparation/Organization Students will work with Student Pages 1–3 for this activity. You will also want to have handy both a map of the United States and several centimeter rulers. (Alternatively, you can supervise students in making their own centimeter rulers made from strips of paper.) Students can work in pairs or as either supervised or unsupervised individuals.

Procedure

1. Provide each student or student pair with a set of the activity sheets.
2. Using transparencies of the worksheets, model completing the information needed for Spear Point A. Begin by showing students how to use a centimeter ruler to measure Spear Point A on Student Page 1. When you have determined the length of the spear point, direct students as you and they fill in its length (9.7 cm) on the Spear Point Description Worksheet (Student Page 2).
3. Next help students identify the composition of Spear Point A, calling attention to the key at the bottom of Student Page 1 as well as the names of the various materials (found at the bottom of Student Page 3). When students have finished, direct them as you and they fill in the name of the material (Indiana Hornstone) on Student Page 2.
4. Finally direct students to the paragraphs at the top of Student Page 1, having volunteers take turns reading the information aloud. When they have finished, guide students to recognize that this particular spear point is fluted.
5. Help students use this information to decide whether Spear Point A is Early or Late Paleo-Indian. Make sure they understand that fluted points are from the early, rather than late, period.
6. Next direct students to the map on Student Page 3 and help them determine that Spear Point A is most likely from a quarry in what is now southern Indiana and Illinois. Direct students as they fill in this information on Student Page 2.
7. When students have finished working through this example with you, have them complete the work with the remaining spear points on their own. (**Note:** Depending upon how quickly students grasp the concepts involved, you might want to break this activity into three parts: spear length, stone type, and location.)
8. After students have finished their work, have them submit their finished pages for assessment. You may choose to assess student work yourself, or you might wish to have students exchange papers and do the assessment as a group.

9. After assessing student work and returning it to the students, discuss student findings. Focus the discussion on what students can infer from these findings about the lifeways of the particular Paleo-Indians. For example, students might infer:
- Because these Paleo-Indians needed spear points, they were probably hunters.
 - The spear points the Paleo-Indians made were not all alike.
 - Because their spear points came from quarries that were quite distant from the areas in which they lived, these Paleo-Indians either traveled widely or were able to trade with other Paleo-Indians who lived far away.

Answers

Point A: Early Paleo-Indian; 9.7 cm; Indiana Hornstone; Indiana, Illinois.

Point B: Late Paleo-Indian; 7.9 cm; Taconite; Minnesota.

Point C: Early Paleo-Indian; 2.3 cm; Hixton Quartzite; Wisconsin.

Point D: Early Paleo-Indian; 4.2 cm; Knife River Chalcedony; North Dakota.

Point E: Late Paleo-Indian; 5.6 cm; Burlington Chert; Iowa, Illinois, Missouri.

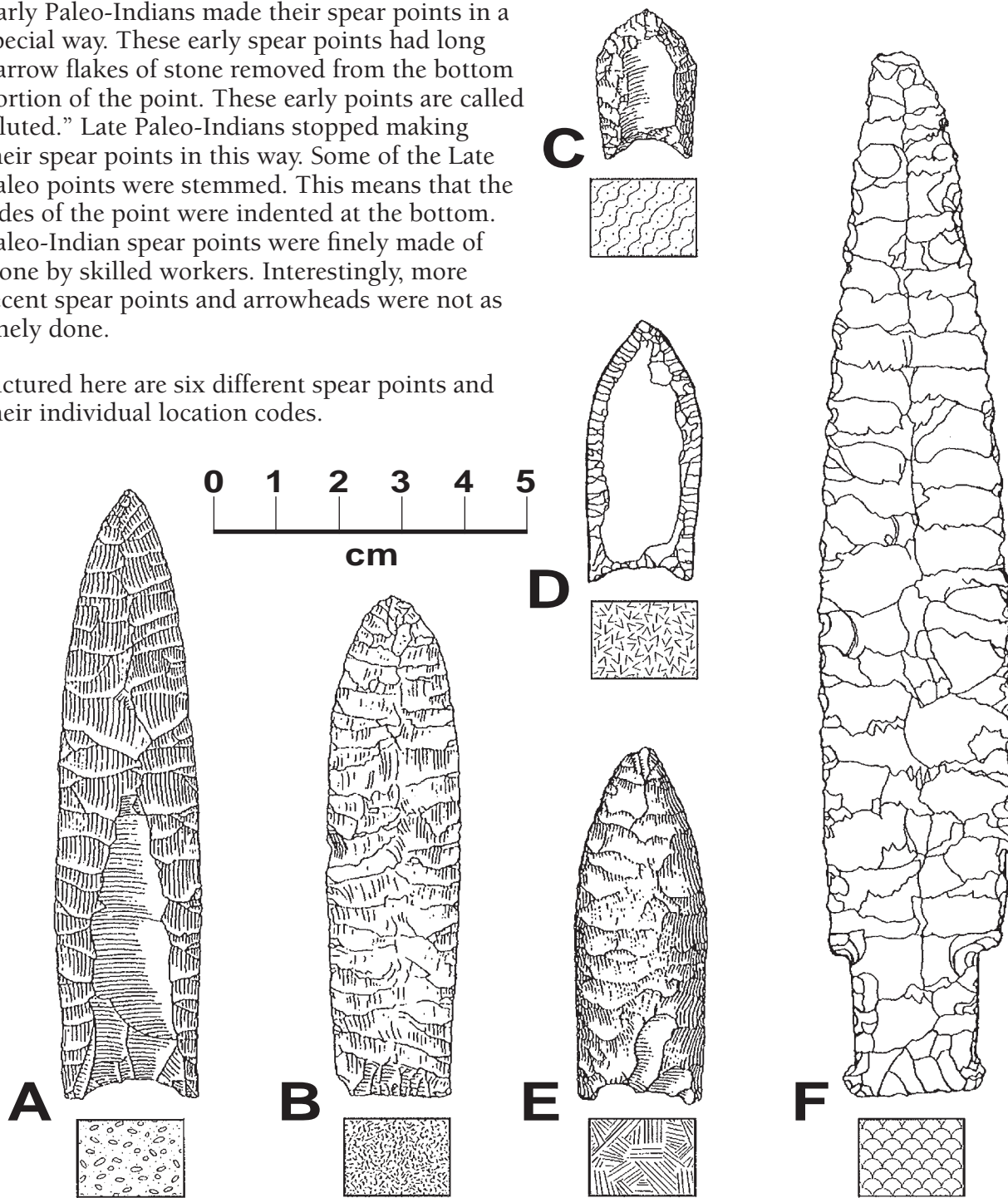
Point F: Late Paleo-Indian; 16.6 cm; Moline Chert; Illinois.

Name _____ Date _____

Activity 3.1 Paleo-Indian Spear Points

Early Paleo-Indians made their spear points in a special way. These early spear points had long narrow flakes of stone removed from the bottom portion of the point. These early points are called "fluted." Late Paleo-Indians stopped making their spear points in this way. Some of the Late Paleo points were stemmed. This means that the sides of the point were indented at the bottom. Paleo-Indian spear points were finely made of stone by skilled workers. Interestingly, more recent spear points and arrowheads were not as finely done.

Pictured here are six different spear points and their individual location codes.



Name _____ Date _____

Spear Point Description

Point A



Early Paleo-Indian or Late Paleo-Indian (*circle one*)

Length _____ centimeters Type of stone _____

In what state or states can you find this type of stone? _____

Point B



Early Paleo-Indian or Late Paleo-Indian (*circle one*)

Length _____ centimeters Type of stone _____

In what state or states can you find this type of stone? _____

Point C



Early Paleo-Indian or Late Paleo-Indian (*circle one*)

Length _____ centimeters Type of stone _____

In what state or states can you find this type of stone? _____

Point D



Early Paleo-Indian or Late Paleo-Indian (*circle one*)

Length _____ centimeters Type of stone _____

In what state or states can you find this type of stone? _____

Point E



Early Paleo-Indian or Late Paleo-Indian (*circle one*)

Length _____ centimeters Type of stone _____

In what state or states can you find this type of stone? _____

Point F



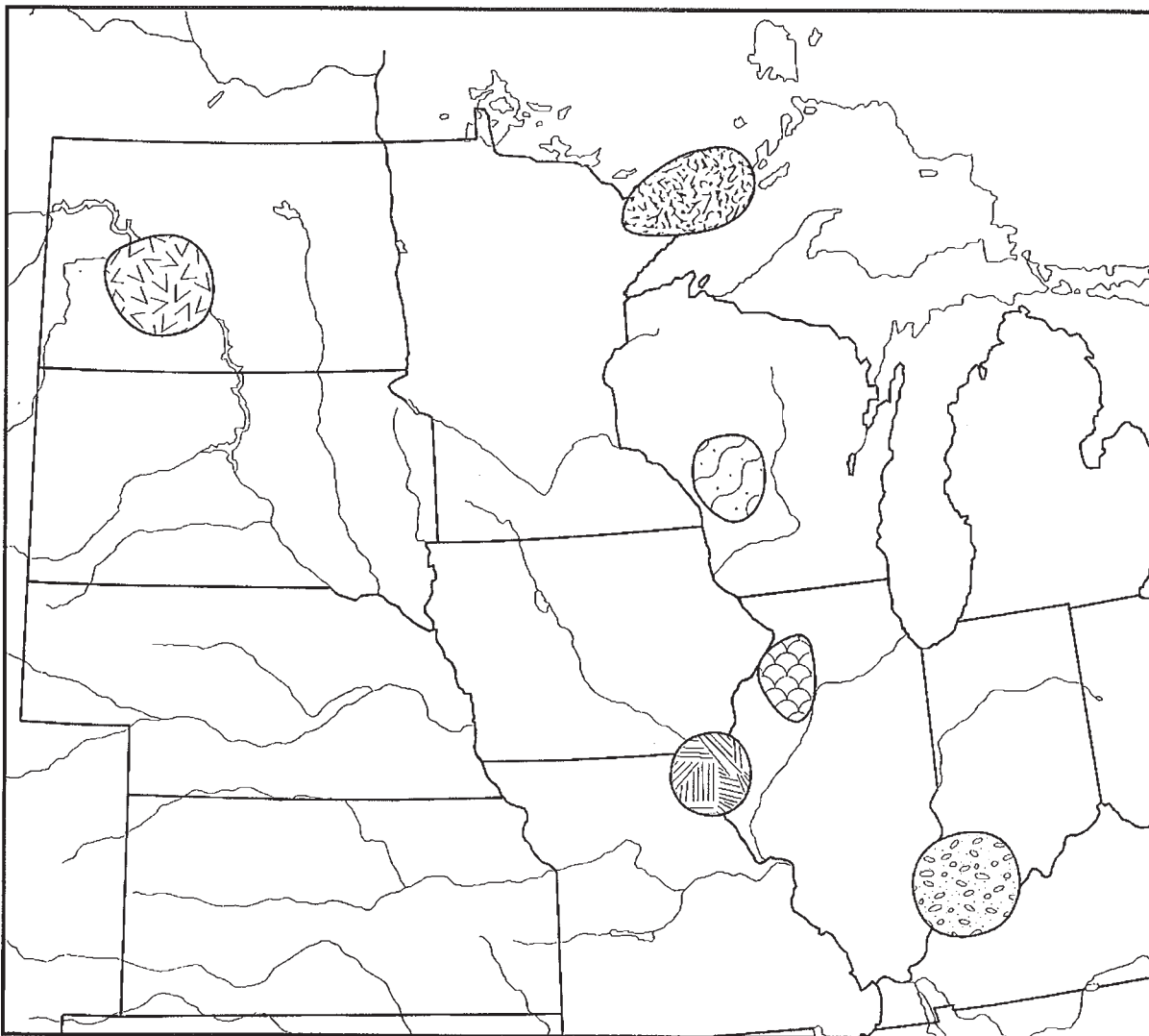
Early Paleo-Indian or Late Paleo-Indian (*circle one*)

Length _____ centimeters Type of stone _____

In what state or states can you find this type of stone? _____

Name _____ Date _____

Some Quarry Sites in the Upper Midwest



Often times Early and Late Paleo-Indian spear points were made from types of rock whose sources were located far away from where the points were eventually found. This map shows six sources of rocks used by Paleo-Indians in Wisconsin. Match the codes on the key below with the codes noted on Points A, B, C, D, E, and F on the “Paleo-Indian Spear Points” worksheet.

Write your answers on the “Spear Point Description” worksheet.



Taconite



Hixton Quartzite



Burlington Chert



Knife River Chalcedony



Moline Chert



Indiana Hornstone