Native American Canoe Technology

Native Americans developed **technology** to survive in their **varied** environments. A common technology that was developed across North America is the canoe. Native Americans built and used canoes thousands of years ago. Canoes are still in use today by Native Americans and other people around the world.

Canoes are usually between 10 and 20 feet long. They are used in lakes, rivers, and oceans. Usually, two or more people ride in a canoe. They use paddles to steer and **propel** it forward.

Several methods were used by Native Americans to build canoes. One method involved using heavy wood for the frame and covering it with a lighter wood. The Algonquians who lived around the Great Lakes made canoes covered with birch bark. This is because birch trees were **abundant** near their homes. Another method used to build canoes was digging out wood from a felled tree. This is called a dugout canoe. A third method is the plank canoe. The plank canoes were created by sewing planks together with cords made from plants. They were then sealed with a tar-like material. This method was commonly used among the Chumash.

Canoes were important to Native Americans for travel. They used canoes to **transport** goods for trade. Their methods of canoe construction were amazing, and some of those methods are still used today.

Key Terms

- technology
- varied
- propel
- abundant
- transport

Making Connections

Since canoes often had to be carried over the land from one body of water to another, it was important that canoes were lightweight.

Interesting Facts:

- Dugout canoes were often made by burning out the wood in a tree trunk.
- Iroquois tribes built large canoes that could fit 18 people in them.
- Native Americans also used kayaks which are different from canoes in several ways.