

# TEACHING PEBBLE HILL



## A Portrait is Worth a Thousand Words

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**AUBURN UNIVERSITY**

Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for Arts & Humanities

# A ~~Picture~~ Portrait is Worth a Thousand Words

AL Course of Study: 4<sup>th</sup> Grade, standard #3. Explain the social, political, and economic impact of the War of 1812, including battles and significant leaders of the Creek War, on Alabama.

Objective: Students will use portraits and information about the Creek men in the portraits to better understand the role of Creek leaders and the use of portraits as a historical source.

## Materials:

- Image of Nahetluc Hopie and all Creek Indian portraits found at <https://cla.auburn.edu/cah/assets/File/McKenney%20and%20Hall%20Book%20let.pdf>, page 11 (projected on interactive board, if available)
- Images and descriptions of Creek Indian leaders – one set for each group of students (found at the end of this lesson plan)

Hook: Show several photos of NFL quarterback Cam Newton's interesting outfit choices by searching "Cam Newton outfits" on Google image search (or use any popular figure known for their fashion). Ask students to discuss what they think of the outfits and why they were chosen.

## Discussion Prompts and Lesson Intro:

When was the last time you had your picture taken? Was it to document a special event or place?

Think about the photos we capture of our world today. Just about every event is documented with pictures and videos from more than one cell phone. What about selfies, family pictures, and even our school picture day? Photographs are definitely one way to capture memories of our lives.



What about the people and the events of the early 1800s? There weren't any cameras back then, but people still thought it was important to capture images of people through the painting of portraits.

### Whole Group Activity Intro:

The pictures you are going to look at today are portraits of Creek Indian leaders. These men traveled to Washington DC in 1825 to meet with US leaders to overturn the Treaty of Indian Springs (a treaty signed by one of their own Creek chiefs that illegally gave the United States Creek land in Georgia and Alabama).

As these men prepared to have their portraits painted, they had important decisions to make about how they wanted to look – what colors would they wear, what jewelry, how would they represent their family and their tribe?

“When they sat for artists, Creek men preened and painted and prepared their bodies to communicate who they were and why they were important. They not only wore, they wove, painted, and assembled their personal histories by their choice of color, design, ornament, and deportment.” (Braund) These men chose costumes that would reflect their traditions as well as fashions that showed their power, status, and wealth. Some of their styles have meaning that historians still don’t completely understand!

### Whole Group Activity:

Display image of Nahetluc Hopie for students to see. (Image available at <https://cla.auburn.edu/cah/assets/File/McKenney%20and%20Hall%20Booklet.pdf>, page 11

Now, let’s look at the choices one of these Creek leaders made. Nahetluc Hopie, also known as the Little Doctor, is the man in this interesting outfit. We don’t have much written information about him, but historians tell us his portrait can tell us a lot about him.

Let’s read the words of historian Kate Braund as she describes what this portrait tells us about Hopie. As we read, find the details she is describing in the portrait. (Teacher can read or print/cut into sentence strips for students to read.)



“His portrait sits before me, the determined brown eyes gazing off into eternity.

It is a hand-some, mustachioed face, embellished with paint, capped by an elaborately wrapped red turban.

Enormous incised silver bobs dangle from his ears.

The coat, cinched at the waist by a red and yellow beaded belt, is deep indigo with lighter blue stripes.

Someone has taken the time to carefully trim the shoulder seams and front opening of the coat with fringe—his wife no doubt. She is the most likely weaver of the sash as well.

An ascot hints at the wealth and stylish adaptation of European fashion by this Native American man.”

Hopie’s “individual history was proudly displayed and communicated by his costume. He revealed to the painter that the red spots on his dress mark the balls that he received when he was surprised in his hut.

The paint on the face is commemorative of the same event, as the blood ran from his nostrils and mouth. The commemoration of bullet wounds recalls his attempted murder, most likely during the Creek War and at the hands of a Red Stick Creek.

Thus, the red paint represents the blood he spilled as an ally of Americans during the Creek War.” (Braund)

### Introduction of Group or Partner Activity:

Just by studying this portrait carefully, you now have a little glimpse into the life of the Little Doctor, Nahetluc Hopie.

At Pebble Hill in Auburn, there are 13 portraits of Creek Indian leaders hanging on the wall. You will notice that each man sits straight and self-confident, refusing to cower before the power of the Americans. Nahetluc Hopie and the other Creek leaders were proud enough to assert that their people—and justice—still mattered. These delegates who traveled to Washington DC to represent their people were very respected, but they were also very different. They represented various towns and regions of the Creek Nation. Their portraits also reveal the different ethnicities and views of a proud people.

Portraits provide faces, names, and even a glimpse into the personalities of individuals that were at the center of the stories we tell and the historical events we seek to understand. By looking closely at the faces and fashions of these Creek men we can be reminded that these were real people with specific reasons as to why they dressed the way they did for their portraits.

Your job today is to get to know these men a little better through their portraits. You will read the description of each man's appearance and match the portrait to the description.

### Group or Partner Activity:

Give partners or groups a set of the portrait and description cards. Students work together to match the written description to the correct portrait.

After matches are made, reveal correct matches – images can be projected from the website:

<https://cla.auburn.edu/cah/assets/File/McKenney%20and%20Hall%20Booklet.pdf>,

Match answers: 1) William McIntosh; 2) Opothle Yoholo 3) Apaully Tustennuggee; 4) Yoholo Mico; 5) Oche Finceco; 6) Yaha Hajo; 7) Ledagie; 8) Menawa; 9) Selocta; 10) Paddy Carr; 11) Mistipee; 12) Major Timpoochee Barnard

### Post Activity Discussion:

Through studying the decorative and elaborate fashions of these men, it should be clear how important the portraits and their visit to Washington was.

The advisor to the Creek delegates noted that “this delegation is composed of the choice men of their Nation & as patriots are second to none in the world.”

Are you wondering what happened when these men traveled to Washington to secure peace with the United States and regain title to their land?

Negotiations would drag on for months and, in the end, the Creek delegation was not successful in regaining control of their Georgia lands, but did regain land claimed by Alabama with a new Treaty of Washington, ratified in 1826. Thus, the infamous McIntosh treaty of Indian Springs was rejected and stands as the first and only Indian treaty ratified by the United States Senate that was later set aside and renegotiated. (Braund)



Now, are you also wondering about Cam Newton and his outfits?

According to an interview that Cam's father, Cecil Newton, did on ESPN's SportCenter, Cam's interesting fashion choices started out as a punishment in sixth grade. Mr. Newton wanted to teach Cam to stop being disruptive and drawing attention to himself, so he made Cam wear a suit and tie to school to make him stand out in a way he wouldn't like.

But, Cam actually liked wearing the suit and was soon dressing up and ironing his clothes each morning. Other students even started dressing up, too. Mr. Newton said this about Cam, "He always had a strong will to self-identify who he is and appreciate his person. He never cared whether people enjoyed or appreciated that or not. He was who he was. He is who he is. That always propelled him forward."

Cam himself has described his style as, "...groovy, swaggy, saucy, drippy." He says, "Fashion is like beauty. It's in the eyes of the beholder. Whatever kind of cracks your eye."

From the Creek Indians to modern day celebrities and even fourth graders today, how we dress can say a lot about our personalities!

Additional Learning:

If you want to read more about the Creek Treaty Delegation that traveled to Washington in 1825, read through the information found alongside the portraits in the pdf document linked on the website.

Assessment: Quiz is available at the end of the lesson plan. Answers: 1) Creek; 2) Washington, DC; 3) c; 4) b; 5) d

ELA Extension: Relate how styles and fashions today can be choices to tell your story. (Hairstyles, shirts with messages, jewelry, tattoos, etc) If you were to sit for a portrait and wanted to tell future generations about yourself, what would you wear and why?

# A Portrait is Worth a Thousand Words Quiz



Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. What tribe do the men in the portraits at Pebble Hill belong to? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Where did the men travel to meet with President John Quincy Adams? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What was the delegation trying to accomplish?
  - a) To purchase new land from the United States
  - b) To have their portraits painted
  - c) To regain the land given up in the Treaty of Indian Springs
  - d) To find land to move to
4. Why did Nahetluc Hopie (Little Doctor) have red spots painted on his face and jacket?
  - a) To symbolize his strength as a warrior
  - b) To represent blood from a time he was attacked in his hut
  - c) To represent the red clay from his land
  - d) To symbolize the war paint of his Creek tribe
5. What was the outcome of the Creek delegation meetings with US leaders?
  - a) The Treaty of Indian Springs was replaced by the Treaty of Washington.
  - b) The Creeks did not regain control of their land in Georgia.
  - c) The Creeks did regain land that was claimed by Alabama.
  - d) All of the above were outcomes of the delegation's meetings.



1. His large silver headband (or coronet) is adorned with a large red-tipped feather. His checkered vest opens to reveal a ruffled shirt, topped by a blue hunting shirt adorned with red fringe. His sideburns suggest European ancestry and a nod to the current American style.

2. His hunting coat is a lovely shade of blue, trimmed with gold ribbon and he wears a beaded shot pouch. His silver coronet features a fringe of silver earbobs and is topped with black feathers.

3. He has a gorget (silver neck crescent worn around the neck) matches his silver coronet. His red vest has a very large collar, which contrasts with his striped hunting shirt.

4. He has red & blue face paint and a headdress made of rolled bands of blue, yellow and red fabric. His beaded shoulder bag and coat are typical of Creek design. He's wearing a wide, banded cloth belt.

5. He preferred the traditional colors of red and blue. His coat has an asymmetrical cape with red fabric ruffles at both the neck and the edge. The cape design pairs with the beaded shoulder strap.

6. His blue and red striped coat has fabric trim, and his shoulder strap displays a diamond pattern. A peace medal is shown around his neck (each delegate was given one by the president).

7. In his portrait, he wore a shawl fashioned into a turban and accented it with ostrich feathers. He also displayed silver arm bands and a gorget, as well as face paint.

8. Notice the silver wrapped around this older Creek's deformed earlobes. He achieved the stretched, bow-like shape by slicing the outer rim of the ear and stuffing it with soft material until it healed.

9. He's wearing a large silver gorget, typical of an earlier period. He reflects Creek traditions by the red, blue, black, and white colors he wears.

10. His red hunting shirt is trimmed with blue ruffles. He sports a sash of beads in a diagonal design. His facial tattoo is his only other adornment, as he is young and hasn't acquired silver gorgets.

11. The landscape background and bow & arrows distinguish this portrait. Particularly notable are the finger-woven sash, shoulder strap, and bandolier bag, as well as his red and blue face paint.

12. Facial hair reveals this Creek's bicultural background. His clothing is typically Creek with the brilliant red turban, caped coat, finger-woven sash and strap, which probably supported a shot pouch.







Selocta  
A CHIEF.



Ledagie  
A CHIEF.



Mistipee



Menawa



Major Timpoochee Barnard



Paddy Carr