

# Summary: The Yurok

## River and Forest Life

The Yurok live on the northern coast of California. This land has forests of redwoods, the tallest trees in the world. It has rivers and valleys with many plants and animals.

The Yurok lived here long ago. They used plants and animals to live. They hunted animals. They built houses using wood from redwood trees and gathered nuts and berries to eat.

The Yurok respect nature. They were careful when they changed the land. They built dams across the rivers to catch salmon. They did not catch more fish than they needed. When the Yurok cut down trees and bushes, the open space gave other trees more room to grow. The Yurok took good care of the land.

## The Yurok Economy

The Yurok shared with others. They would trade or barter, with other American Indians. They traded or bartered for things that they could not make or find themselves. Sometimes the Yurok used special shells as money. A small boat cost one chain of shells.

Natural resources and trade made the Yurok economy strong. Some Yurok became rich. Today the Yurok are the largest group of American Indians in California. Salmon fishing is still important to the Yurok economy and way of life. They work to make sure there will always be salmon and other fish in their rivers.



### Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

**trade** *verb*, to exchange things with someone else

**barter** *verb*, to trade one item or service for another

**economy** *noun*, the way that people make, buy, sell, and use things



### After You Read

**REVIEW** In what ways did the Yurok change their environment?

Underline the sentences that tell how the Yurok changed rivers and land.

**REVIEW** Why did the Yurok trade with other American Indians?

Highlight the sentence that tells the answer.