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# Oklahoma: Land of Opportunity

## Chapter 18: Celebrate Oklahoma! QuickNotes

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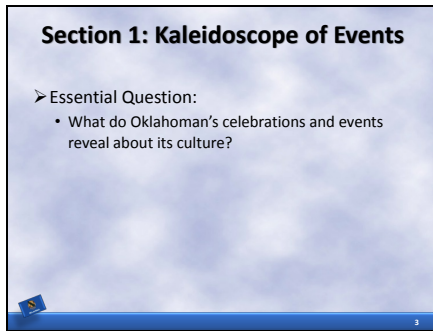
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Slide 3



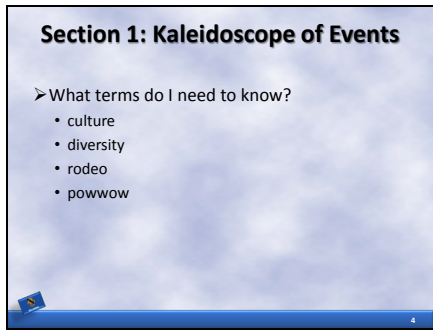
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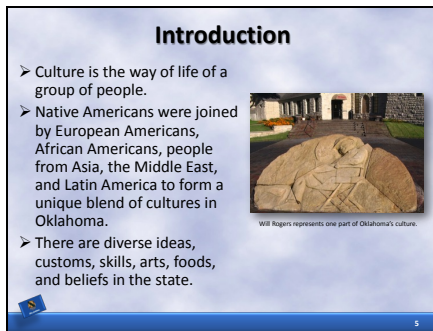
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**Rodeos & Music**

- Rodeos are held in virtually every part of the state.
- They evolved from informal contests held by American cowboys and include roping, horse braking, riding, herding, and branding.
- Music is common to cultures worldwide. In Oklahoma's festivals, one will find bluegrass, western swing, jazz, folk, country, pop, and others plus fiddlers and square dancers.
- Various festivals are held each year.

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**Native American Heritage**

- Celebrations are held by Native Americans throughout the year and are known as powwows. Famous powwows include:
  - Gourd Clan Powwow
  - Tinker Inter-Tribal Powwow
- Other events include:
  - The Choctaw Storytelling Festival
  - American Indian Exposition
  - Red Earth Native American Cultural Festival
  - Celebration of the Muscogee Creek Nation
- The "Trail of Tears Drama"

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**Battle Sites**

- Oklahoma was the site of several Civil War battles.
- Reenactments of life in those times can be seen at the Battle of Honey Springs every three years marking the Union Army victory July 17, 1863.




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**The Frontier Era**

- There are many places to enjoy and learn about the pre-1840s life of mountain men, trappers, and craftsmen in Oklahoma.
- Tombstone Tales is an historical portrayal of those buried at Fort Reno Post Cemetery.
- Blacksmithing demos can be found at Pawnee Bill Ranch.

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**Harvest Celebrations**

- When a ripened crop is gathered from the field, farmers like to celebrate!
- Oklahoma's agriculture heritage is celebrated around the state. Some festivals include AgriFest, the Oldies Club Tractor & Vehicle Show, the Great Plains Antique Tractor Show, the National John Deer Two-Cylinder Show, and the Billings Wheat Country Festival.
- Community fairs are popular, too.

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**Trails and Rails**

- You can learn about the history of travel by rail and trail in Oklahoma in several places.
- The Chisholm, Great Western, and Santa Fe Trails are celebrated with museums and festivals.
- Railroads are celebrated at the Santa Fe Depot and with Railroad Day in Muskogee.
- Many towns celebrate Route 66 which stretched across the U.S.
- Aircraft are featured at the Will Rogers Fly-In and Oklahoma Museum of Flying.

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**Flora and Fauna**

- There are special yearly events to observe the abundance of state wildlife. Among them are the following:
  - Bat watches: Boiling Springs State Park, Freedom, & Jet
  - Annual "Fangtastic" Rattlesnake Hunt
  - Rose Rock Festival at Noble
  - Azalea Festival
  - Iris Festival
  - Dogwood Days Festival
  - Tulips A Bloom Festival
  - The Magnolia Festival
  - The Canna Festival
  - The Birding and Crystal Festival
  - Sand Fest
  - Sand Drag Racing at Little Sahara State Park



Magnolias are celebrated at Durant's Magnolia Festival.

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**Other Celebrations**

- Many colorful cultures are spotlighted in festivals throughout the state.
- Germanfests feature schnitzel sandwiches, bratwurst, sauerkraut, and apple strudel.
- There is the Scottish Games and Gathering in Tulsa, with Celtic crafts, pipe and drum competitions.
- Also there is the Irish Arts Oklahoma Feis, Italian Festival, Cimarron Territory Celebration, and Cherokee Strip Celebration.

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**Section 2: Museums and Historic Sites**

➤ Essential Question:

- How do Oklahomans commemorate their famous people and the frontier era?



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**Prehistory**

➤ The [Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History](#) depicts Oklahoma some 300 million years ago.

➤ There are also Caddo and Choctaw artifacts.

➤ The Spiro Mounds Archaeological State Park (LeFlore County) and Kenton Mercantile or Cimarron Heritage Center (Boise City) have much on the prehistory of the region.

➤ The [Mabee-Gerrers Museum of Art](#) is one of the oldest museums in the state.



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**Native American**

➤ Native American sites include:

- Cherokee Heritage Center
- Tsa-La-Gi Ancient Village
- Indian City U.S.A.
- Five Civilized Tribes Museum
- Ataloo Lodge Museum
- Seminole Nation Museum
- Bigheart Museum
- American Indian Cultural Center



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**Frontier Era**

➤ The frontier era was a time of multi-ethnic history and heritage and an important era of commercial history.

➤ Learn about life in a frontier fort during the mid-1800s at the [Fort Towson Historic Site](#).

➤ The [Doakville Site](#) is the former Choctaw Nation capital.

➤ Also of interest is Fort Gibson and the Fort Sill Museum.



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**Traveling**

- It can be fun to follow an historic trail or road. Several Chisholm Trail museums exhibit this important route.
- The Oklahoma Territorial Museum documents the land rush of the late 1800s.
- Railroad museums are at Hominy, Checotah, and other former station sites.

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**African Americans**

- African Americans searched for new beginnings in Oklahoma.
- More all-black communities were in OK than anywhere in the country.
- Boley was one of 27 all black towns. Its historic district was founded as a camp for black railroad workers.
- The Farmers & Merchants Bank (now closed) was the site of an attempted robbery by gangster Pretty Boy Floyd.

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**Famous Oklahomans**

- Several Oklahomans have gained national fame and are honored in the state. Following are a few of those special locations.
  - Will Rogers Memorial
  - Gene Autry Oklahoma Museum
  - Tom Mix Museum
  - Henry & Shirley Bellmon Library
  - Governor Seay Mansion
  - T.B. Ferguson House of Watonga
  - The Peter Conser House
  - Sequoyah's Cabin
  - Jim Thorpe House at Yale
  - The White Hair Memorial
  - Augusta Metcalfe Museum

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**Urban Regions**

- Oklahoma's large cities have monuments to our state's culture.
- Tulsa:
  - Philbrook Museum of Art
  - The Gilcrease Museum
  - Collection of American Indian and western art
  - The Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Fame
  - The Geoscience Center Oklahoma City Museums
- Oklahoma City:
  - National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum
  - The Horn Homestead
  - The Omniplex Arts and Science Museum
  - The Red Earth Indian Center
  - International Photography Hall of Fame and Museum
  - The State Capitol
  - The Oklahoma City Museum of Art
  - The Firefighters Museum
  - The Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum

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**Other Museums**

- Other museums in the state include:
  - "The Little Smithsonian": the Woolaroc Museum and Wildlife Preserve
  - Nellie Johnstone #1 (replica of state's 1<sup>st</sup> commercial oil well)
  - Main Street Oil Well
  - Pitcher's Mining Field Museum
  - Coal County Historical and Mining Museum
  - Hajek Motorsports Museum: vintage dragsters
  - High Car Museum of Ponca City
  - Darryl Starbird's National Rod & Custom Car Hall of Fame
  - Mickey Mantle Exhibit in Grove
  - Oklahoma Sports Museum
  - The National Softball Hall of Fame Museum

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**Section 3: Ethnic Groups**

- Essential Question:
  - How have various ethnic groups affected the development and lifestyle of Oklahoma?

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**Section 3: Ethnic Groups**

- What terms do I need to know?
  - ethnic groups

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**Native Americans**

- The name Oklahoma is derived from two Choctaw words:
  - okla - red
  - humma - people
  - Combined means "red people"
- Oklahoma is home to the headquarters of thirty-nine different tribes and nations.
- Descendants of the original 67 Native American tribes still reside in Oklahoma.
- Oklahoma has the second largest American Indian population in the US (behind California).
- The earliest tribes were the Wichita, Comanche, Plains Apache, and Quapaw.
- New tribes were added through forced relocation of hundreds of American Indians.
- Most retained their basic values.
- Festivals, museums, and cultural centers retain Indian heritage for younger generations.

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**African Americans**

- African-Americans arrived with early explorers.
- Others came as slaves to Indian plantation owners.
- Some black troops saw action during the United States Civil War and were later known as the "buffalo soldiers."
- An estimated 7,000 blacks came to Indian Territory after the Civil War on a promise of a "black paradise."
- They came as settlers, farmers, workers, cowboys, and gunfighters.
- They built 27 all-black towns in Oklahoma; some towns no longer exist.

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**British and Irish**

- Europeans were in America before white settlement in Oklahoma.
- Intermarriage between Europeans and Indians followed (including English, Scottish, Welsh, & Irish).
- Most came as settlers, traders, and trappers.
- After the Civil War, Scottish cattlemen leased Indian grassland.
- Irish laborers helped build railroads or worked coal mines.
- British and Irish settlers helped establish a coal industry in southeastern Oklahoma.
- By 1900, over 4,000 English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh were in the state.
- The British and Irish settlers settled in rural areas but moved over time to urban areas.

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**Italians**

- Italians first came to work in coal mines in 1875; some farmed in the Fort Cobb area.
- Large group of Italians immigrated to the U.S. in the early 1900s.
- By 1910, over 2,500 lived in Oklahoma (85 % in coal-mining towns in southeastern Oklahoma).
- Others established grocery and dry goods stores, blacksmith shops, and restaurants.
- Pete Prichard established "Pete's Place."

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**Germans and Germans from Russia**

- The largest number of foreign-born immigrants in Oklahoma was German in language and culture. Most were German but some were Swiss or Austrian.
- One in eight Oklahomans claim German ancestry (more than any other ethnicity).
- Cheap land appealed to many Germans already in United States.
- Land runs, lotteries, and allotments attracted thousands of Germans, including Germans from Russia.
- Most were farmers and were largely responsible for bringing wheat to the new land.
- Other Germans were shoe cobblers, cabinetmakers, butchers, bakers, watchmakers, and blacksmiths. They were known for their work ethic.

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**Czechoslovakians**

- Czech families were successful at farming which was a family affair.
- Czechoslovakians immigrated to America to preserve their culture which was being threatened in their home country.
- Polka music and good food continue to be a part of Czech culture.



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**Hispanics**

- Hispanics now rank as one of the fastest-growing groups in Oklahoma. Early Indian raids brought some Mexicans as captives in the 1800s.
- Poor conditions in Mexico caused many Hispanics to emigrate after statehood for better opportunities.
- Early Hispanics worked as laborers in coal mines, railroads, and on farms and ranches.
- Hispanic family ties retain strong generational bonds.
- Spanish is still spoken in some households with English as the main or only language in others.
- Traditional Mexican food is a part of many religious celebrations and colorful fiestas for special days.



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**Asians and Pacific Islanders**

- Chinese immigrants came in the late 1800s and others in Oklahoma by the time of statehood.
- After the Vietnam War departure of Vietnamese from their country (sponsored by groups across the United States) brought many to Oklahoma.
- Oklahoma City has a growing Asian District with businesses and shops.



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