



The Timucua Indians -- A Native American Detective Story (UPF Young Readers Library)

Kelley G. Weitzel

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Florida's Native American Heritage for Young Readers:

--Interactive Format

--Language and Reasoning Exercises

--72 Illustrations

"*The Timucua Indians* provides young readers with a hands-on introduction to the first Floridians and the methods that archaeologists and historians use to study them. . . . The author, a naturalist and educator who works with kids, has done her homework."--Jerald T. Milanich, curator of archaeology, Florida Museum of Natural History


Long before Mickey Mouse moved to Florida, the state was populated by the Timucua, a tribe of Native Americans who lived in the southeastern United States for more than 1,000 years. Written for kids--and their teachers and parents--who want to explore the Timucuan culture, this illustrated and interactive book leads readers on a detective's quest through 16th-century Florida.

Though Timucua speakers flourished in northeast Florida and southeast Georgia, no other historically accurate book about them exists for elementary and middle-school readers.

At the heart of the book, 47 "Detective Directives" invite kids to follow clues and conduct their own investigative activities: explore a trash midden, speak some of the Timucua language, plan a feast, even figure out how the Timucua hunted 25-foot-long alligators. When the mysteries are solved, the reader becomes a certified Historical Detective.

Each chapter has short informative paragraphs that allow readers to understand archaeology and historical research and to practice language and reasoning skills. Starting 15,000 years ago with the Paleoindians, readers will march across the Bering Land Bridge, past glaciers, down to Florida, learning along the way how Columbus accidentally bumped into the Americas and what happened when the Europeans arrived. Most of all, they will discover the Timucua--and maybe even save an entire native culture from being lost forever.

Kelley G. Weitzel is the senior preserve naturalist at the E. Dale Joyner Nature Preserve at Pelotes Island in Jacksonville, Florida. She has taught workshops and seminars about Florida's environment and its Native Americans for seven years and is currently working on a children's novel about the Timucua culture.

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