



## **“People of the Inside” Reading Comprehension Questions**

“People of the Inside” explores the history of the Duwamish people in Renton, a key aspect of Renton’s history, with a special focus on the Moses family, the most prominent Duwamish family in Renton at the time that White began to move here in greater numbers.

This activity is designed for readers in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and above. Questions can be used for discussion or as writing prompts. You can find the original article from March 2017 on [Renton History Museum’s Newsletters Page](#).

1. Why is cedar an important resource to the Duwamish?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. After the Treaty of Point Elliot was signed, some tribes received reservations, but the Duwamish did not. When White settlers encroached on their land, where did the Duwamish go?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Keokuk was named sub-chief of the Black River Duwamish by Governor Isaac Stevens in 1854, but in 1856 the title was given to his brother William. Why did this happen?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. How did Chief William react to pressure from the government to leave the land on the Black River?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Why was Dr. Jack’s sing-gamble in 1894 a significant cultural event?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. The Moses family was the most well-known Duwamish family in Renton. What sources have Renton historians studied to learn more about them?



7. What are some of the activities that Joseph, Charlie, and Henry Moses enjoyed when they were young?

8. What building was opened on the banks of the Duwamish River in 2009 to help the Duwamish continue their traditions?

**SHORT ESSAY QUESTION:** What changes did the Moses family experience in Renton from the 1880s through the 1960s? How did they cope with this change?

**CREATIVE ESSAY QUESTION:** If you were Jennie or Jimmie Moses, how would you raise your children? What would be important for them to know about their Duwamish heritage, and what would be important to know about their changed world?



## Answer Guide for Parents and Teachers

1. Why is cedar an important resource to the Duwamish?

*Cedar is central to Duwamish culture. It is used in making canoes, paddles, boxes, hats, clothing, mats, and baskets.*

2. After the Treaty of Point Elliot was signed, some tribes received reservations, but the Duwamish did not. When White settlers encroached on their land, where did the Duwamish go?

*Some Duwamish people moved onto the Port Madison/Suquamish Reservation, the Muckleshoot Reservation, and or other reservations far from their ancestral homelands, rather than risk constant conflict with Whites. Others refused to leave; the Moses family was among them.*

3. Keokuk was named sub-chief of the Black River Duwamish by Governor Isaac Stevens in 1854, but in 1856 the title was given to his brother William. Why did this happen?

*A group of around 200 Duwamish returned to the Black River without government permission, and the government retaliated by transferring leadership to William and pressuring the group to leave. The positions of "chief" and "sub-chief" were often created by Whites as a way to understand tribal life. Designating one chief as spokesman for a whole Native American group streamlined negotiations.*

4. How did Chief William react to pressure from the government to leave the land on the Black River?

*He refused, stating that the land belonged to the Duwamish and they would live and die on the same land where their fathers were buried. He successfully kept the Duwamish on their land until his death in 1896.*

5. Why was Dr. Jack's sing-gamble in 1894 a significant cultural event?

*It was a way to keep Duwamish culture and traditions alive at a time when the community was splintered. It was the first sing-gamble in 30 years, and it brought together over 300 people from the Puyallup tribe and Black and Cedar River Duwamish.*

6. The Moses family was the most well-known Duwamish family in Renton. What sources have Renton historians studied to learn more about them?

*Historians have used newspaper articles, written remembrances from friends, and state and federal records such as census records and reservation allotment records. Firsthand accounts by White observers have also been used as sources, but more cautiously.*

7. What are some of the activities that Joseph, Charlie, and Henry Moses enjoyed when they were young?

*The Moses brothers enjoyed canoeing, catching and smoking salmon, horseback riding, and team sports. Joe and Charlie played baseball, and Henry participated in track, baseball, and basketball at school. Henry taught horseback riding as well as fishing and canoeing to his friend Leonard.*



8. What building was opened on the banks of the Duwamish River in 2009 to help the Duwamish continue their traditions?

*The Duwamish Longhouse and Cultural Center opened in 2009. It is located at 4705 West Marginal Way in Seattle, and is open to the public interested in learning about the Duwamish's living traditions.*

**SHORT ESSAY QUESTION:** What changes did the Moses family experience in Renton from the 1880s through the 1960s? How did they cope with this change?

**SAMPLE ANSWER:** Land that the Moses family had used for fishing, hunting, food gathering was mapped and platted and sold to White settlers for farming. While some Duwamish people joined reservations, the Moses family remained on their ancestral land. Jimmie Moses often worked as a farm laborer on the farms of these new settlers, and his and his family's clothes, food, and language changed as it became increasingly difficult to continue their way of life. Jennie Moses had eight or nine children, but only three lived to adulthood. Henry was especially successful in school sports at Renton High, and made friends with White children by sharing skills like fishing, canoeing, hunting, and horseback-riding. Henry married and moved away, but remained close to his brothers and returned often for reunions. When his last brother, Joseph, died, the Moses' land was sold to the Renton School District. On Joseph's death, White Rentonites thought of Henry as a Chief, and that honor helped Renton High School retain its sports team's name, the "Indians." In the 1970s when Native Americans objected to mascot stereotypes, Henry's wife Christina wrote the school a letter, asking them to retain the team name because Henry had always taken pride that the team was named for him.

**CREATIVE ESSAY QUESTION:** If you were Jennie or Jimmie Moses, how would you raise your children? What would be important for them to know about their Duwamish heritage, and what would be important to know about their changed world?



## Supplemental Resources

**Duwamish Longhouse & Cultural Center:** The Duwamish Longhouse has its own webpage on the Duwamish Tribe's site (<https://www.duwamishtribe.org/longhouse>). You can read about the Duwamish Longhouse's design and historical significance. The Duwamish Longhouse is open to the public.

*Critical Thinking Questions:* Name some features of the Duwamish Longhouse that are traditional, and some that are modern. Why do you think the location of the Duwamish Longhouse is significant to contemporary Duwamish people?

**The Treaty of Point Elliott:** To help put the effects of the treaty in context, the Duwamish Tribe's website has an explanation of the treaty, as well as some background about the U.S. Government's failure to deliver on its promises to the Duwamish (<https://www.duwamishtribe.org/treaty-of-point-elliott>). A transcription of the original treaty can be found at HistoryLink.org (<https://www.historylink.org/File/2629>).

*Critical Thinking Questions:* Why do you think the Duwamish who signed the Treaty of Point Elliot agreed to do so? How are tribes in the Puget Sound region still affected by the treaty and its aftermath today?

## Coast Salish Culture:

For a broader study of the Coast Salish People, here are a few recommended resources.

Chief Seattle and the Town That Took His Name is available for free as an eBook and audiobook from the King County Public Library website. Chief Seattle was half Duwamish, and the book contains detailed descriptions of everyday life as well as celebrations, such as potlaches (<https://kcls.bibliocommons.com/item/show/1741841082>).

The Burke Museum has an interactive page about Coast Salish Art (<https://www.burkemuseum.org/collections-and-research/culture/contemporary-culture/coast-salish-art>).

Preserving the Lushootseed Language for the Next Generation is a *Crosscut* article about the history of the Lushootseed language, and efforts to preserve it today (<https://crosscut.com/2010/05/preserving-lushootseed-language-for-next-generatio>).

*Critical Thinking Questions:* Why are artistic traditions important to preserve? Do you see elements of Duwamish and/or Native American cultural traditions around you?