

## Creeks

WORD OF THE DAY: Matrilineage: When property and descent flow through the maternal line (from mother to daughter to daughter to daughter, etc.).

1. Jimmy Tawny's real name in this story was James Moore. His nickname was Jimmy Tawny. He is in the lineage of the story's author, Jill Florence Lackey, who actually possesses some of the letters from Moore's children on the Trail of Tears. His real name was not used to avoid confusing the kids, as the FPC on Newman's Ridge was also named James Moore (both men were real historical people but not apparently related). The author's family donated the original letters to the University of Alabama, where they've been used by scholars ever since to reconstruct that period of Creek history. Here the students are privileged to get information that they would not get anywhere else on the actual lives of the Creeks of Okfuskee back then.
2. Okfuskee is now buried under the Tallapoosa River.
3. Jimmy Tawny's Creek kids (those few who survived) ended up taking their father's advice and went to TX. But when the Americans took control of TX they no longer had the freedom they'd had under the Mexicans and did end up on their reservation in Oklahoma.
4. Terms you might want to put on the board: Okfuskee, Muscogee Creek, chunkee, matrilineage.
5. You might mention that gambling was a major activity for most North American Indians. This is one reason why so many tribes ended up finding casinos as a good investment for their livelihood.
6. When the WPA in the 1930s collected stories from former slaves, they also got some stories from one of the slaves of Jimmy Tawny's daughter, Peggy. The slave said that slavery for the Creek Moores amounted to standing around betting and playing games, with little work. The only thing they were deprived of was involvement in some of their sacred ceremonies—and of course freedom to leave at will.
7. You might ask the students if they can figure out how the Creek Indians got their name.

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