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Native American languages Before Europeans arrived in North America there were over 300 Native American languages. Some have now died out, and of the 250 or so remaining many are spoken only by a few older people. Other languages, like Cherokee, are more widely spoken. Most Native Americans speak English, some as their first language and others as their second. Native American languages have added many words to English, though the meaning of a word has often been changed. Teepees are a kind of tent, *wampum belts were made of beads and since the belts had great value Europeans used wampum to mean money. Moccasins, a kind of shoe, are today worn by people all over the world. Many Native American words describe the things they name. For example, the Asakiwaki tribes name means people of the yellow earth, and the Cherokees name for themselves, Ani-Yunwiya, means the leading people. Indian names for Whites included people greedily grasping for land. Many American place names have their roots in Native American languages. *Ohio, for instance, is a Native American name, and the names of many of its towns and cities, such as Chillicothe and Sandusky, and the lakes Scioto and Olentangy, are of Native American origin. Native Americans today According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, a part of the US government, there are now about 550 tribes. These include well-known groups like the *Navajo and *Sioux, and less famous tribes like the Cayuse. The

number of Native Americans living in the US is about 1.2 million. Almost a million live on reservations, areas of land that the government has allowed them to keep as their own. Native Americans are US citizens, and have the rights and responsibilities of any US citizen. However, reservations have their own governments and police forces and Native Americans pay different taxes. They also have the right to hunt and fish where and when they like, while other Americans have to get a licence. On or off the reservations Native Americans find it difficult to live the traditional life. Activities of other Americans affect the way they live. Building dams across a river, for example, can affect the numbers of fish living there, so that even though Native Americans have the right to fish they may not be able to catch anything. Away from the reservations, many Native Americans find that their culture is very different from that of white people and have difficulty adapting. Poverty is a serious problem. About 37% of people who live on reservations are unemployed, compared with 6% of the general population. Many tribes try to bring in money from outside. Some sell rights to search for oil on their reservation, others use the fact that the reservation makes its own rules to open casinos where people from outside can come and gamble. Gambling is illegal in most parts of the US and many Americans want it to remain so, but it makes a lot of money for the tribes. This brings Native Americans, once again, into conflict with white Americans. 更多信息请访问：百考试题外语站点 百考试题外语论坛 100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 www.100test.com