The Northeast
The six Iroquoian dialects are similar enough to allow easy conversation. The Mohawk and Oneida are quite similar, as are the Cayuga and Seneca; the Onondaga and Tuscarora are each different from the five others. One common characteristic is the lack of labial sounds formed by bringing the lips together.

Niagra Falls is a term derived from the Seneca Indians called "Ongiara" or neck
“Iroquois”

The people of the Iroquois Confederacy actually call themselves the Hau de no sau nee (pronounced “ho dee noe sho nee”) or People of the Longhouse.

The term "Iroquois" was in fact coined by the French to describe the oral tradition of the Haudenosaunee people.

The term “Iroquois was derived from the Iroquoian “Haudenosaunee” ending their orations with the two words hiro and kone. The first meant "I say" or "I have said" and the second was an exclamation of joy or sorrow according to the circumstances of the speech. The two words, joined and made subject to French pronunciation, became Iroquois. Five Nations, composed of the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca nations. After the Tuscarora nation joined the League in 1722, the Iroquois became known as the Six Nations.
Many families lived together in one longhouse. Each family was assigned their own section in the longhouse. Fireplaces and fire pits ran down the middle of the longhouse for heat and for people to share as a place to cook food.

A longhouse could be over 200 feet long, 25 feet wide, and 25 feet high. But longhouses were not measured by feet. They were measured by camp fires. A house might be 10 fires long, or 12 fires long or even bigger.

Longhouses were so important to the Iroquois way of life that the Iroquois call themselves "the People of the Longhouse."
Extended, matrifocal households: Iroquois society was matrilineal, meaning descent was traced through the mother rather than through the father, as it was in Colonial society. While Iroquois sachems (chiefs-leaders) were men, women nominated them for their leadership positions and made sure they fulfilled their responsibilities.

Besides performing the normal household functions of producing, preserving and preparing food and clothing for the family and taking care of the children, Iroquois women participated in many activities commonly reserved for men. They gambled, they belonged to Medicine Societies (spiritual associations) and they participated in political ceremonies.

The Iroquois were an agricultural people and it was the women who owned the land and tended the crops. After marriage, an Iroquois man moved into the longhouse of his wife's family. Their children then became members of her clan. While Iroquois society was far from being a female dominated matriarchy, Iroquois women enjoyed social equality and respect that was not shared by colonial women. The women in the longhouse all belonged to the same clan. When a woman married, her husband moved to his wife's longhouse. It was forbidden to marry anyone from your own clan, so when any woman married, a new man arrived in the longhouse.
This is also an example of a bifurcate merging system. Maternal and paternal kin are differentiated and same sex siblings of parents are merged. Parallel cousins are merged with Ego's siblings and cross cousins are merged as "cousins".
The Iroquois League of Nations

The League did not try to create rules for each tribe and village. That was the job of local government or regional government - the village council and the tribal councils. Only major issues were debated on the floor of the League of Nations. Council speakers (sachems) were eloquent and persuasive. Some members of the council were selected not because they were great warriors, but because they were great speakers.

There were groups inside the League that acted a great deal like today's political parties. The war-like Mohawk and Oneida often teamed up in the debates. The peaceful Seneca and Cayuga speakers would team up to oppose them. Fortunately, one of the League's constitutional rules was that the Chief of the League would always be selected from the Onondaga Nation. The peace loving Onondaga held 14 seats in the council. That most seats of any tribe. The Onondaga were able to keep peace simply by reminding all representatives that their block of votes could swing either way.

Although each member's vote carried the same weight, there was a pecking order. The Mohawk, Onondaga, and Seneca were addressed as "elder brothers" and the Oneida, Cayuga, and Tuscarora were addressed as "younger brothers".
The Confederacy-- Incipient state *Structure*? A model for the United States Senate?

The League had a written constitution, a set of rights and agreements that all the people had to honor. The constitution was recorded on 114 wampums. The League had a Council. Each Iroquois tribal clan had a set number of seats on the Council. The decisions of the Council were binding on every person in all Iroquois Nations.

The Iroquois originally obtained Wampum of this form and color by trade and tribute from the "Wampum makers" of Long Island the Montauk. The Iroquois did not make the beads themselves, and Wampum did not serve as a form of currency among the indigenous Iroquois. Wampum belts presented or received at councils, recorded significant events in Iroquois history. Woven belts were records of important civil affairs. They were a record of events, ideas, contracts, pledges, treaties or compacts between political entities.
Wampum is a small and short tubular shell bead. The beads were strung into strings or woven into belts. White beads were made from the inner whorl (columella) of the whelk Purple (also called black) beads were manufactured from the dark spot or "eye" on the quahog clam shell.

Wampum belts presented or received at councils, recorded significant events in Iroquois history. Woven belts were records of important civil affairs. They were a record of events, ideas, contracts, pledges, treaties or compacts between political entities. When no longer needed as a record, belts were commonly unraveled and the beads reused.

The early Dutch settlers recognized the value of the beads to the natives. They introduced contemporary technology into its production and manufactured Wampum themselves. The exchange of Wampum became an important part of diplomatic protocol whenever Indians and whites concluded a treaty or assembled for other councils. From the early seventeenth century through the end of the eighteenth century, Wampum beads evolved in form, likewise the technology used to make them also evolved. Early beads are relatively shorter and wider than later beads, and were usually drilled using iron tools from both ends, unlike the later beads.
During the hundred years preceding the American Revolution, wars with French-allied Algonquin and British colonial settlement forced them back within their original boundaries once again.

The Iroquois decision to side with the British during the Revolutionary War was a disaster for the Iroquois. The American invasion of their homeland in 1779 drove many of the Iroquois into southern Ontario where they have remained. With large Iroquois communities already located along the upper St. Lawrence in Quebec at the time, roughly half of the Iroquois population has since lived in Canada. This includes most of the Mohawk along with representative groups from the other tribes.

In the United States, much of the Iroquois homeland was surrendered to New York land speculators in a series of treaties following the Revolutionary War. Despite this, most Seneca, Tuscarora, and Onondaga avoided removal during the 1830s and have remained in New York. There are also sizeable groups of Mohawk, Oneida, Cayuga, and Caughnawaga still in the state.

Most of the Oneida, however, relocated in 1838 to a reservation near Green Bay, Wisconsin. The Cayuga sold their New York lands in 1807 and moved west to join the Mingo relatives (Seneca of Sandusky) in Ohio.
Ideology

The False Face Society is probably the best known of the medicinal societies among the Iroquois, especially for its dramatic wooden masks. The masks are used in healing rituals which invoke the spirit of an old hunch-backed man. Those cured by the society become members. Also, echoing the significance of dreams to the Iroquois, anyone who dreams that they should be a member of the society may join.

False Face Society was an Iroquois healing group. The Iroquois False Face Society knew they could not kill a bad spirit. Their job was to scare the bad spirits. They used masks and chants and rattles and dance to scare the evil spirits and to chase them away.

One bad spirit was the flying head. The Iroquois False Face Society was very familiar with the flying head. He lived in the forest and caused all the disease he could. He was a very bad spirit. If someone had a dream, and saw a flying head, they would go to the False Face Society and ask for help.

To chase the flying head away
1. The dreamer would be told to carve a face on a living basswood tree.
2. Once the face was carved, the tree would be cut down.
3. The piece of tree that had the outline of a flying face carved on it would be taken to the wood carver.
Cahokia, Mississippian Culture– population 50,000. A.D. 800 to 1500, varying regionally.
Eastern and Western “Gulf” Muskogean
North Carolina utilized burial mounds well into the 1500’s A.D. while the European population continued to think the mounds were built by Egyptians or other non-Indian early cultures.
Creek / Seminole house “chickee”
Clan membership was determined by a child's mother. Although the father's clan was respected, he had little role in his children's upbringing. Instead, the men of the mother's clan saw to a child's development.

Polygamy was common among the Creeks, although each wife usually lived in a separate home. If plural wives were sisters they might share a home, and sometimes unrelated wives lived in the same house without apparent jealousy. In all cases, the first wife had to approve of all subsequent wives, and if a husband attempted to ignore his wife's advice he might be punished as an adulterer by his wife's clan.

The entire Creek population was divided into clans that cut across towns and families alike. Clan members had unlimited claims on each other's services. Because of the perceived kinship of clan members, marriage within a clan was strictly forbidden. Clans varied in size and stature. The Wind Clan, for example, had members in all of the towns of the confederacy and enjoyed special privileges as an aristocratic caste.
The Creek ("Muscogee") were the first Native Americans to be "civilized" under George Washington's civilization plan. In the 19th century, the Muscogee were known as one of the "Five Civilized Tribes", because they had integrated numerous cultural and technological practices of their more recent European American neighbors.
"The Five Civilized Tribes" was just a name that the white settlers used to refer to the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Seminole, and Creek tribes of the Southeast. These five tribes were never part of an alliance together, and they did not call themselves the Civilized Tribes in their own languages. Originally, the white settlers probably called them this because these five tribes were early converts to Christianity. They were also farmers who lived in settled towns under sophisticated government systems.

These tribes communicated using a simplified trade language called Mobilian Jargon. The Creek frequently fought with the Cherokee and Choctaw tribes. The closest Creek allies included the Yuchi, Miccosukee, Alabama, and Coushatta tribes, who were united into a loose confederacy in the 1700's.

Mobilian is a pidginized form of Choctaw and Chickasaw (both Western Muskogean) that also contains elements of Eastern Muskogean languages such as Alabama and Koasati, colonial languages including Spanish, French, and English, and perhaps Algonquian and/or other languages.
Sequoyah (1770–1843), named in English George Gist, was a Cherokee silversmith who in 1821 completed his independent creation of a Cherokee syllabary, making reading and writing in Cherokee possible.
In 1831, the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee-Creek, and Seminole (collectively referred to as the Five Civilized Tribes) were living as autonomous nations in what would be called the American Deep South.

Andrew Jackson renewed the political and military effort for the removal of the Native Americans from these lands with the passage of the Indian Removal Act of 1830.
Currently, most of the Creek Indians, Muskogees in particular, live southwest of the Cherokees and northwest of the Choctaws in central eastern Oklahoma. At the time of removal in 1832–33, the Creek population was 21,733. Of that population, 17,939 were Muskogees.
Seminole resistance

The Seminole tribe was originally an alliance between certain Creek, Miccosukee, Hitchiti, Oconee, and other Indian people of northern Florida and southern Georgia. Only some Creek people, not all of them, joined the Seminoles.
simano-li, an adaptation of the Spanish cimarrón which means "wild" (in their case, "wild men"), or "runaway" [men]. The Seminole were a heterogeneous tribe made up of mostly Lower Creeks from Georgia, Mikasuki speaking Muscogees, escaped African-American slaves, and to a lesser extent, Indians from other tribes and even white Americans.
clan-based matrilocal residence in scattered thatched-roof “chickee camps”