

Basket Weaving

Miwok and Paiute peoples of the Yosemite area had begun to find a new way of life when Yosemite Valley became a National Park. Traditional lifestyles changed because people and money came to the valley. Some Native Americans bought beans, coffee, white bread, and cloth in addition to collecting acorns and catching fish.



Lucy Parker Telles (1870–1956) was a California Indian of Yosemite Miwok and Mono Lake Paiute descent. To support her family, Lucy turned to basket weaving, which she had learned as a child. She changed some basket-making traditions by using two colors and different designs. People visiting the valley loved her baskets. By the 1920s, she was the best weaver in the valley, and other women were copying the style changes she had introduced.

- Use your library and other resources to research basket weaving and record your findings here.

Name at least five tribes that were excellent basket weavers:

What materials are needed for basket weaving? _____

What grasses and plants can be used to make the following different colors in basket weaving?

red _____ black _____

tan _____ green _____

How are baskets weaved? _____

Many baskets have an imperfection. What is this for?

- Draw a design of your own basket. Explain the meaning of the shapes and symbols you used.

