Teacher Resource Information:
Food, Clothing, and Shelter

Food: The Northwestern Band of the Shoshone were a hunter-gatherer group, traveling from one place to another in search of food according to the changing seasons. In early autumn the Northwestern Shoshone traveled to the area that is now Salmon, Idaho to fish and then would travel to western Wyoming to hunt for larger game, such as buffalo, elk, deer, moose, big horn sheep and antelope. This was important in sustaining the tribe through the winter as well as providing shelter and clothing. During the spring and summer the Northwestern Shoshone traveled through southern Idaho and northern Utah gathering berries, seeds, and roots (ground potatoes, camas, sego lilies, wild garlic, cactus, and other bulbs). The Northwestern Shoshone looked upon the earth not only as a place to live, but as the provider of their livelihood. Gathering seeds and digging roots were labor intensive activities, often yielding only enough food for one family after an entire day's work. In the fall they gathered wild honey. In October the band traveled to western Utah and parts of Nevada to gather pine nuts. The band wintered in the areas around the Franklin and Preston, Idaho areas.

Clothing: Tanned animal skins were the primary clothing material for the Northwestern Shoshone, and clothing was often adorned with items such as beads, shells, animal claws and teeth, porcupine quills, or bone. Moccasins were made from deer, elk, and moose hides. Sinew from animal tendons and backstraps was used as thread, until white traders brought cotton and silk thread.

Shelter: The Northwestern Shoshone used tipis, wickiups, and sometimes caves as shelter. The tipi was made by stretching buffalo hides over poles erected in a cone shape with a hole in the center for smoke to escape. Inside, personal belonging such as clothing, bags, and shields were hung from poles or kept in parfleches. The outside of the tipi was decorated with paintings and designs on the hides. Temporary shelters, such as wickiups, were made in the summer with branches and leaves. These shelters could be abandoned and new ones constructed in areas that they traveled to.

Source:
Northwestern Band of Shoshone Nation website:
http://www.nwbshoshone-nsn.gov/culture/history/index.htm