

WALK EASY

Chief Harold “Buster” Hatcher, in His Own Words

He founded the modern Waccamaw Indian People of Conway, South Carolina, and led them for more than thirty years. This short book is his own writing, uncorrected and exactly as he typed it.



READERS

Ages 10 and up

GRADES

5–12

LENGTH

88 pages

SOURCE TYPE

Primary — his own writing

WHAT YOUR STUDENTS READ

Schoolchildren wrote to Chief Hatcher with questions and he answered them in writing — how his people hunted and farmed, what they believe, where they lived, and who they are now. Those answers are in this book, in his own words and his own spelling.

South Carolina’s standards have a gap in them. The eighth-grade social studies standards require the culture of the Eastern Woodlands tribal group, and name the Catawba, the Cherokee and the Yemassee. **The Waccamaw are not on that list** — a state-recognised South Carolina tribe, with a founding chief who wrote his own account and is still alive to be asked about it. This book is one way to close that gap with a first-person source rather than a summary.

IN HIS OWN WORDS

There is no word in Waccamaw for “hunt”. Our word means the same thing as “making meat”.

We have no name for our religion because it is a part of life and we practice it in every endeavor... We revere the earth and all of its inhabitants including those with two legs, four legs, and those who fly above the face of the earth.

Three items were often planted together; Corn, squash and beans complemented each other and were often called the three sisters.

Spelling and typing as he left them — that is the rule of the book.

WHAT THE BOOK COVERS

SUBSISTENCE

“Making meat” rather than hunting — what was harvested, and the rule that all of the animal be used.

AGRICULTURE

The three sisters — corn, beans and squash planted together, each helping the others — and the difference between the communal garden and the family ones.

BELIEF

Why he says the Waccamaw have no name for their religion, in his own careful correction of what people tend to assume.

GEOGRAPHY

The Waccamaw River from Lake Waccamaw down to Winyah Bay, which he calls “the man highways for our ancestors.”

CONTINUITY

The tribe as it is now — the pauwau, the grounds, and the letters he wrote his people.

CIVIL RIGHTS

A segregated school, a state that said there were no Indians in it, and what it took to be counted.

SIX QUESTIONS FOR A CLASS

1

He writes that there is no Waccamaw word for “hunt” — their word means “making meat.” What can a language tell you about the people who speak it?

2

Corn, beans and squash were planted together because each one helped the others. What does that suggest about how the Waccamaw understood farming?

3

The village kept a communal garden for “the women who were without sons and/or a husband, the disabled, and the sickly,” as well as family gardens. How does a community decide what it owes its members?

4

He was told by his own state that there were no Indians in South Carolina. What does it take for a people to be recognised — and who gets to decide?

5

He spent thirty years answering “who are you, and how do you know.” Why do you think he was asked that question so many times?

6

His spelling and typing were left exactly as he wrote them, uncorrected. Why might that matter to the people who made this book?

CLASS SETS AND SCHOOL VISITS

The Waccamaw Indian People already run School Day at the pauwau — heritage taught hands-on, built for classrooms, with its own guidance for teachers and schools. Registration and details:

waccamaw.org/pauwau/school-day

For a class set of the book, ask there and it will reach the right people.

A fuller biography, Chief, is in preparation. It is written for adult readers. Walk Easy is the one for a classroom.

chief.hatcher.ltd/walkeasy

This guide may be freely copied for classroom use. Walk Easy publishes November 2026 and will be at the Waccamaw pauwau.