

Buffalo and the Plains Indians
South Dakota State Historical Society Education Kit

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Goals and Materials

Goals

Kit users will:

- gain an appreciation of the creativity of how the Plains Indians used the buffalo for necessities and “luxuries”.
- see the importance of the buffalo to the Plains Indians.
- gain an understanding of people and animals living in a natural setting.
- develop skills in getting information from objects.

Materials

This kit contains:

1 arrow	1 horn
1 parfleche	1 horn spoon
1 bone flesher	1 bone awl
1 leg bone	1 sinew sample
1 rawhide piece	3 foot bone toy horses
1 buckskin bag	2 teeth
1 robe sample	1 tail
1 pair of moccasins	1 bladder*
1 shoulder blade	1 hair rope
1 set (4) of paint brushes	hair sample
1 rib bone	2 photographs, 8 x 10
1 placemat photograph	1 diagram poster
1 winter count poster	1 teachers manual

Due to the type of disinfecting agents used on the bladder, please do not handle it with bare hands. Keep it in the bag while handling as a safety precaution.

Teacher Resource

The animal we commonly refer to as a buffalo is not really a buffalo at all, but rather the American Bison. The real buffalo – an Indian Buffalo, water buffalo, or carabao – roams wild in southeastern Asia and is the principal draft animal in that region’s rice-growing countries. A massively built, oxlike animal, a water buffalo is dull black with a sparse coat and large horns. These animals are much different than the buffalo that we think of here in South Dakota. In this kit the American Bison will be referred to as the buffalo, because people commonly refer to bison as buffalo.

Related to the cow, but much larger, the buffalo can weigh up to 2000 pounds. A male bull may reach six feet in height and be ten feet long from snout to tail. The animal lives from twenty to forty years. Buffalo are the largest land animal in North America. Being big does not make the buffalo slow. With its short, strong legs and large lung capacity, a buffalo can outrun a horse and change direction on the move very quickly. The buffalo’s sharp horns can do much damage to a rider or horse.

Buffalo originally came to North America from Asia, coming across the Bering Strait during the Ice Age. These early buffalo were much larger than the buffalo of today. Other animals also crossed the ice to North America – camels, woolly mammoths, and a species of the horse. Ancient hunters and harsh weather eventually killed off most of them, but the buffalo survived, and its numbers grew. A single herd or group of buffalo could be several miles wide and fifty miles long. When a massive buffalo herd moved, the ground nearby rumbled.

Just as animals crossed the Bering Strait, so did people. The earliest Plains inhabitants were descendents of those who crossed from the Old World into the New from 40,000 to 15,000 years ago. For the early Plains dwellers, hunting buffalo involved using the natural elements and landscape as well as man-made tools. One hunting method involved starting large grass fires close to ravines. With the wind in the hunter’s favor, the fire caused the buffalo to stampede and run off the cliff into the ravine. Many fires were set each year. These fires helped to keep the Plains treeless.¹ Early Plains dwellers also took advantages of natural occurrences and used buffalo that had drowned by falling through winter ice or in spring floods.

Some early hunting methods continued into more recent times. The jump-kill technique involved stampeding the animals off a cliff or ravine, and then collecting the animals at the bottom. Over forty jump-kill sites have been identified in the Great Plains. Some of the names for these places are: Head-Smashed-In, Boneyard Coulee, and Bison Trap.²

¹ Francis Haines, *The Buffalo: The Story of American Bison and their Hunters from Prehistoric Times to The Present*, University of Oklahoma Press ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, c1995), 10.

² Time Life Books, *The Buffalo Hunter*, (Alexzndria, VA: Time-Life Books, c1993), 103.

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In the winter, buffalo could be hunted by spooking the animals near a frozen river and driving them onto the ice. The buffalos' weight would break up the ice and they would fall into the water. People of the tribe, including women and children, waited at an opening in the river downstream, where they would retrieve the carcasses. This tactic was still used in the 1800's.³ Hunters also disguised themselves with buffalo or wolf skins, and tried to sneak into the herd with spears or bow and arrows, or they waited by a stream or river for the buffalo to come and drink.

Another hunting method used was called "*piskin*" – a corral or pound. The Indians forced the buffalo into pre-built pens, or into a cul-de-sac or box canyon where they could shoot the trapped animals. These hunting methods sound cruel, but remember the Indians depended on the buffalo for survival. They needed the meat and other parts of the animal to live.

Weapons for hunting buffalo evolved over time. The first hunters used spears, no more than sticks with sharpened rocks attached. Later migrants brought a new weapon called the atlatl – a spear-throwing tool that increased distance and accuracy for hunters. This tool consisted of a stick or paddle about two feet long with a handle on one end and a hook or spur to hold a dart on the other end. Atlatl darts looked like large arrows with stone points on one end and feathers on the other. With the atlatl and dart connected, an overhand throw and a sharp snap of the wrist shot the dart forward. It was accurate up to fifty yards, but a skilled hunter could throw an atlatl up to one hundred fifty yards. The atlatl darts penetrated much better than a spear did.⁴ The bow and arrow eventually replaced the atlatl and dart.

European explorers brought horses with them when they came to North America in the 1500s. There had been no horses in North America for over 15,000 years, since the earlier Ice Age animals had died out. Horses profoundly changed the way buffalo could be hunted by making it possible for a rider to keep up with the fast-paced buffalo. Using a bow and arrow, the Indians rode up to buffalo on horseback, and shot the animals in a vital spot. Later on, guns brought by traders revolutionized buffalo hunting again. Firearms could knock down a buffalo from a great distance, be reloaded quickly and then shot again.

Although some hunting techniques killed more buffalo than could be immediately used, at the time the buffalo population was huge. Even when the buffalo were stampeded off cliffs, the number of animals that died was insignificant compared to the supply. There is no way to know exactly how many buffalo roamed the plains from the 16th to the 19th century, but estimates put the number between sixty and seventy million.⁵ Some

³ Time Life, 101.

⁴ Haines, 24.

⁵ Albert J. Rorabacher, *The American Buffalo in Transition: A Historical and Economic Survey of the Bison in America*. (St. Cloud MN: North Star Press, [1970, c.1971]), 21.

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scholars are raising questions about what the buffalo's future would have held even without the massive hunting of the 19th century. They point out that the herds were overgrazing the grassland, and food was getting sparse. When fully grown, buffalo have no real predators other than humans. Weather did not effect the animals except for the occasional tornado. Buffalo were essentially immune to blizzards or cold weather and bugs and flies have little effect on them.⁶ Whether the buffalo herds would have naturally thinned out or not, the demand for buffalo hides and the guns that made hunting so effective hastened the demise of the herds and brought about enormous changes for the tribes who depended on the buffalo.

The buffalo plays a central role in Lakota culture and religious beliefs. One of the most important stories in their culture is that of the Buffalo Calf Woman. Buffalo Calf Woman appeared to the Lakota and presented them with the sacred pipe. She showed them many important spiritual things, including how to pray. As she walked into the sunset, she rolled over four times and turned into a black buffalo, brown buffalo, red buffalo, and the finally a white buffalo. The Lakota believed that the mighty buffalo herd came about and allowed itself to be killed so that they might survive. The white buffalo is a sacred Lakota symbol.

Indians used every part of the buffalo for one purpose or another. Hides made clothing and tipis, horns made cups and spoons, muscles and tendons provided glue and bowstrings. Nothing on a buffalo went to waste. After the kill, buffalo meat had to be prepared right away, especially during the summer since there was no refrigeration. Some meat was eaten while it was fresh. Cutting the meat into strips and drying it out in the sun made jerky, which would last a long time without spoiling. Some of the jerky was processed into pemmican - a mixture of mashed jerky and fruit. The pemmican kept even longer than the jerky. Pemmican was often stored in a parfleche; a container made from buffalo rawhide.

Before it could be used, buffalo hide had to be prepared. First, any flesh or fat still on the hide had to be scraped off with a flesher, a tool made from the buffalo's leg bone. Stretching the hide out on the ground made scraping the hide to a consistent thickness easier. Untanned fleshed and dried hide made hard leather called rawhide. Rawhide was used to make parfleches, drums, pouches, and rope. Tanning the hide made soft leather, good for buckskin bags, robes, moccasins, and tipis. To tan the hide, it was spread with a paste of fat, cooked brains, and liver and then put into the sun to dry.

European explorers in North America saw a land full of riches, and one of those riches was fur. Fur trading became a big industry and the Great Plains had a fair number of

⁶ Dana Close Jennings, *Buffalo History and Husbandry: The Buffalo Ranchers Handbook*. (Freeman SD: Pine Hill Press, 1978), 196.

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trading posts. Buffalo hides were one of the major trade items from the plains. Large hides brought between \$1 and \$3.50.⁷

In the 1860's the railroads came through, bringing around 1,200 workers who required fresh meat every day. The vast buffalo herds supplied the meat. Railroads also brought in hunters who had heard about the amazing buffalo herds and wanted to hunt the animals for themselves. Some hunters would shoot from the train as it passed the herds. This shooting did not supply any meat – it was just for sport. Eventually, it became hard to find a herd close to the rail lines. The railroad split the herd into the southern herd and the northern herd. In 40 years, from 1830 to 1874, the southern herd was wiped out.⁸ The meat was rarely taken – possibly the tongue and a few strips off the back. The rest was left for the wolves. In addition to hunters, farmers and ranchers also moved onto the plains. They did not want buffalo grazing on land their livestock needed, so they shot the buffalo to get rid of them.

As hunters destroyed the buffalo, they also destroyed the Indian way of life that depended on the buffalo. The Indians had to move much more often to find the remnants of the buffalo herds that had once roamed the plains. The herd that was once sixty million was reduced to 550 by 1889.⁹ The buffalo were almost extinct. Nothing could restore the old herds. The hunters and fur traders moved on to hunt other animals or find a new line of work. The Indians saw their traditional way of life end. As they were forced onto reservations, they could no longer roam the land to hunt.

After the almost total destruction of the buffalo, some people realized they needed to help conserve the buffalo before it was too late. Some states passed laws requiring hunters to keep what they killed instead of leaving it on the ground. The United States government was not all that interested in the fate of the buffalo in the late 19th century. Yellowstone National Park held the highest concentration of buffalo, but poaching was a problem. In 1894, there were less than 20 buffalo in the park.¹⁰ The efforts of a few men saved the buffalo from total extinction. These men rounded up some of the few remaining buffalo and raised and bred them even while others were out hunting them. Some also tried persuading Congress to pass tougher laws against buffalo hunting. In the early 1900's, parks started opening to protect the buffalo. The last of these large parks was Custer State Park. Twenty-five buffalo purchased from South Dakota buffalo conservationist Scotty Philip started the Custer Park herd. Private investors also started to raise buffalo herds.

Today the buffalo population is around 150,000. While not close to the sixty million that once roamed the plains, the buffalo is no longer in danger of being completely wiped

⁷ Jennings, 239.

⁸ Jennings, 241.

⁹ “Buffalo and the Plains Indian”, www.corpcomm.net/~redeye/buffalo.html, (June 12, 2000).

¹⁰ Rorabacher, 55.

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out. With the push today for healthier foods, providing lean buffalo meat is a growing industry. Mighty herds of buffalo once roamed freely, supporting the Indians who used the animal as a way of life. Greed, sport hunting, and changing uses for the land almost wiped out the animals. Thanks to the efforts of a few far-sighted conservationists, buffalo live strong and plentiful once again.

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Online at <http://anthropology.si.edu/outreach/Indbibl/sterotyp.html>

Anthropology Outreach Office Smithsonian Institution
ERASING NATIVE AMERICAN STEREOTYPES

How can we avoid stereotypes about Native Americans when we are teaching, selecting textbooks, or designing exhibits and public programs?

Cultural institutions reflect current issues of society. Both museums and schools are wrestling with new sensitivities and concerns with cultural diversity. For instance, at a recent Smithsonian symposium on Contemporary American Indian Art, several Native American artists asked why their paintings and sculpture are rarely shown at fine arts museums, but are more likely to be exhibited at anthropology and natural history museums. Native American artists also question why their work is not combined with other American artists' work in shows on American art (Kaupp, 1990).

In directing an alternative school for Native American children in Chicago, June Sark Heinrich found many misnomers and false ideas presented by teachers as they instructed students about the history and the heritage of Native peoples. She devised ten classroom "don'ts" to help teachers correct these common errors. The D'Arcy McNickle Center for the History of the American Indian at the Newberry Library in Chicago recently began designing a sample checklist for evaluating books about American Indian history.

This *Anthro.Notes* Teacher's Corner combines the two approaches. The questions that follow provide teachers and museum educators with ways to evaluate their own teaching and criteria to evaluate the materials they use.

1. Are Native Americans portrayed as real human beings with strengths and weaknesses, joys and sadnesses? Do they appear to have coherent motivations of their own comparable to those attributed to non-Indians?
2. In books, films, comic strips and curriculum materials, do Native Americans initiate actions based on their own values and judgments, rather than simply react to outside forces such as government pressure or cattle ranchers?
3. Are stereotypes and clichés avoided? References should not be made to "obstacles to progress" or "noble savages" who are "blood thirsty" or "child-like" or "spiritual" or "stoic". Native Americans should not look like Hollywood movie "Indians," whether Tonto from the Lone Ranger days or Walt Disney's recent portrayals. Native Americans are of many physical types and also have European, African or other ancestry. Just as all Europeans or African-Americans do not look alike, neither do Native Americans. Heinrich urges that television stereotypes should not go unchallenged. For example, "when Native Americans fought, they were thought more 'savage' than the Europeans and were often less so. Help children understand that atrocities

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are a part of any war. In fact, war itself is atrocious. At least, the Native Americans were defending land they had lived on for thousands of years. If Native Americans were not 'savage warriors,' neither were they 'noble savages.' They were no more nor less noble than the rest of humanity."

Television, especially old movies, often portrays the "Indian" speaking only a few words of English, often only "ugh." Yet anthropologists have carefully documented the complexity of Native American languages. At least 350 different languages were spoken in North America when William Bradford and the rest of the Puritans first stepped ashore in Massachusetts.

Stereotypes can be defused if teachers check their own expressions and eliminate those such as "You act like a bunch of wild Indians" or "You are an Indian giver." In a similar way, do not use alphabet cards that say A is for apple, B is for ball, and I is for Indians. It may seem trivial, but Heinrich argues that such a practice equates a group of people with things.

4. If the material is fiction, are the characters appropriate to the situations and are interactions rooted in a particular time and place? If they are, a particular group such as the Navajo or Chippewa living at a specific moment in history will be more likely to be brought accurately to life.
5. Do the materials and the teacher's presentation avoid loaded words (savage, buck, chief, squaw) and an insensitive or offensive tone?
6. Are regional, cultural, and tribal differences recognized when appropriate? As everyone knows but does not always put into practice, before the Europeans came there were no people here that called themselves "Indians." Instead, there were and still are Navajo or Menominee or Hopi, or Dakota, or Nisqually, or Tlingit, or Apache. Instead of teaching about generalized Indians or "Native Americans," study the Haida, or Cree, or Seminole.
7. Are communities presented as dynamic, evolving entities that can adapt to new conditions, migrate to new areas, and keep control of their own destinies? Too many classroom materials still present Native American traditions as rigid, fixed, and fragile. For example, some filmstrips and books may have titles like "How the Indians Lived," as though there are not any Indian people living today. In fact, over two million Native Americans live in what is now the United States, about half of them live in cities and towns and the other half on reservations or in rural areas.
8. Are historical anachronisms present? The groups living here prior to the 1540's did not have horses, glass beads, wheat, or wagons. Can your students determine why that is the case and do they understand that these items were all introduced by Europeans?

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9. Are captions and illustrations specific and appropriate for a specific time and place? (Wrapped skirts in the Arctic, feather bonnets in the North Pacific Coast, or totem poles in the Plains never existed.) Are individuals identified by name when possible?
10. Are the different Native Americans viewed as heirs of a dynamic historical tradition extending back before contact with Europeans? Similarly, Native American groups should not be equated with other ethnic minorities. The fact is that Native American tribes--by treaty rights--own their own lands and have other rights that are unique to the descendants of the real Natives of America, because they are that. No other minority within the United States is in a similar legal position. Native peoples view themselves as separate nations within a nation. U.S. laws and treaties, officially endorsed by U.S. presidents and the Congress, confirm that status.
11. If you have Native American children in your class, do not assume that they know all about their own ancestry and the ancestry of all Native Americans. All children including Native American children need to be taught about the Native American heritage, which, in a very real sense, is the heritage of everybody living in the U.S. today. Culture and ideas, after all, are learned and not inherent from birth.

References:

"Checklist," Meeting Ground, Biannual Newsletter of the D'Arcy McNickle Center, Issue 23, Summer 1990. The Newberry Library, 60 West Walton Street, Chicago, Illinois 60610-3380. ("Checklist" was based on criteria provided by Center advisor, Cheryl Metoyer-Duran, UCLA School of Library and Information Sciences.)

Heinrich, June Sark. "Native Americans: What Not to Teach," Unlearning "Indian" Stereotypes, A Teaching Unit for Elementary Teachers and Children's Librarians. New York, NY: The Racism and Sexism Resource Center For Educators, a Division of The Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1977.

Kaupp, Ann. "Toward Gender and Ethnic Equity in Museums." Four Star, Newsletter for the Smithsonian Institution Women's Council 10(2), Summer 1990.

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NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
1996

<http://anthropology.si.edu/outreach/Indbibl/sterotyp.html>

Bibliography

Note: Libraries holding the books are listed by their South Dakota Library Network PALS codes. Book summaries are also from the SDLN PALS database.

Fiction

Clark, Ann Nolan. *There Still are Buffalo / Nahanhci pte yuk*anpi*. New Jersey: Lakota Books, 1996. A buffalo bull baby is born in the land of the Sioux and cared for by his mother, learns from the herd, and grows to become its leader. 87 p.

Libraries: DSU SDS SDD YCL

Goble, Paul. *Buffalo Woman*. New York: Bradbury Press, c1984. A young hunter marries a female buffalo in the form of a beautiful maiden, but when his people reject her he must pass several tests before being allowed to join the buffalo nation. 32 p.

Libraries: BHS DSU NSU RCP SBR SDA SDF SDH SDS STG USD SDD AML MIT SDO SGC LVE FGH RPL SPF PHM WAT MPL YCL DWD

Goble, Paul. *Iktomi and the Buffalo Skull: A Plains Indian Story*. New York: Orchard Books, c1991. Iktomi, the Plains Indian trickster, interrupts a powwow of the Mouse People and gets his head stuck in a buffalo skull. Asides and questions printed in italics may be addressed by the storyteller to listeners, encouraging them to make their own remarks about the action. Unpaged.

Libraries: BHS DSU RCP SBR SDA SDB SDH SDS STG SDD AML SGC LVE FGH RPL SPF WAT MPL YCL DWD

Goble, Paul. *The Return of the Buffaloes: A Plains Indian Story about Famine and Renewal of the Earth*. Washington, D.C.: The Society, 1996. Based on a Lakota myth in which a mysterious woman returns the buffalo and the other animals to the Indian people. 32 p.

Libraries: DSU NSU RCP SBR SDA SDB SDS SDW USD SDD AML LVE HPL RPL WHS WAT MPL YCL

McClung, Robert M. *Shag*. Connecticut: Linnet Books, c1960.

Relates the daily struggle of a buffalo against famine, drought, and death by the hunter's bullet, in the days when the bison moved in mighty herds on America's plains. 96 p.

Libraries: SDS AML SGC

Osborne, Mary Pope. *Buffalo Before Breakfast*. New York: Random House, c1999. The magic tree house takes Jack and his sister Annie to the Great Plains where they learn about the life of the Lakota Indians. 72 p.

Library: Yankton Comm

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Wittmann, Patricia. *Buffalo Thunder*. New York: Marshall Cavendish, c1997. When young Karl Isaac heads west with his family in a prairie schooner, he experiences many things but longs to see buffalo. 32 p.
Library: SIOUXLAND LIBRARIES

Non-Fiction

Berman, Ruth. *American Bison*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, [c1992]
Discusses the life cycle of the bison, its role in the settlement of the American West, and its near extinction. 48 p.
Libraries: RCP SDH SDS STG USD SDD SGC

Bjorklund, Lorence F. *The Bison: The Great American Buffalo*. New York, World Pub. Co. [1970] Describes the prehistoric bison, the discovery of the "Indian cattle" by Coronado's scouts, and the behavior and life patterns of the herd. 63 p.
Libraries: RCP SDS USD AML SGC APM PHM

Campbell, Maria. *People of the Buffalo: How the Plains Indians Lived*. New York: Firefly Books, c1983. Examines the self-sufficient existence of the Indian tribes living on the plains of the United States and Canada. 47 p.
Library: State Library

Crewe, Sabrina. *The Buffalo*. Texas: Raintree Steck-Vaughn, c1998.
Provides an introduction to the life cycle, physical characteristics, behavior, and habitat of a Plains bison. 32 p.
Library: State Library

Fichter, George S. *How the Plains Indians Lived*. New York: D. McKay Co., 1980.
Discusses the way of life of the Plains Indians before the coming of the white man, including hunting, farming, clothing, customs, crafts, and the importance of the buffalo in their life. 121 p.
Libraries: BHS SDA SDS AML MIT SDO SGC RPL EMS PHM WAT YCL

Freedman, Russell. *Buffalo Hunt*. New York: Holiday House, c1988. Examines the importance of the buffalo in the lore and day-to-day life of the Indian tribes of the Great Plains and describes hunting methods and the uses found for each part of the animal that could not be eaten. 52 p.
Libraries: NSU RCP SDA SDH SDS STG USD AML MIT SDO LVE RPL SPF APM EMS PHM WMS WAT MPL YCL MHS

Hoyt-Goldsmith, Diane. *Buffalo Days*. New York: Holiday House, c1997. Describes life on a Crow Indian reservation in Montana, and the importance these tribes place on buffalo, which are once again thriving in areas where the Crow live. 30 p.
Libraries: NSU SBR SDA SDS STG USD SDD AML HPL WAT MPL YCL

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Johnston, Marianne. *Buffaloes*. New York: PowerKids Press, 1997. Describes what buffalo look like, what they eat, where they live and how they have been treated by Native Americans and other people. 24 p.

Libraries: RCP SBR SDS SDD AML MIT WAT MPL YCL DWD

Lepthien, Emilie U. *Buffalo*. Chicago: Childrens Press, c1989. A history of the buffalo/bison in this country, discussing its behavior and population today. 45 p.

Libraries: SDA SDB SDS SDD SDO SPF YCL

Midge, Tiffany. *Buffalo: American Indian Legends*. New York: Scholastic, c1995. Includes both factual information and Indian legends about the buffalo or American bison. 32 p.

Libraries: LVE JHE

Ritchie, Rita. *The Wonder of Bison*. Milwaukee: Gareth Stevens Pub., 1996. Text and photographs introduce an animal of the Great Plains that gave the early Indians food, clothes, shelter, and tools. 48 p.

Libraries: RCP SDD

Swanson, Diane. *Buffalo Sunrise: The Story of a North American Giant*. San Francisco: Sierra Club, c1996. History and habits of North America's largest land animal. 58 p.

Libraries: RCP SDS SDD MIT YCL

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Photo List

Photo 1: Dakota woman scraping buffalo hide (3700)

Photo 2: Buffalo skin tipi (1448-D-2)

How the Plains Indians Used the Buffalo

BUFFALO HIDE

Containers
Shields
Buckets
Moccasin
Soles
Drums
Splints
Mortars
Cinches
Ropes
Sheaths
Saddles
Saddle Blankets
Stirrups
Bull Boats
Masks
"Parfleche"
Ornaments
Lariats
Straps
Caps
Quirts
Snowshoes
Shrouds

LIVER

Tanning Agents

BUCKSKIN

Cradles
Moccasin Tops
Winter Robes
Bedding
Shirts
Belts
Leggings
Dresses
Bags
Quivers
Tipi Covers
Tipi Liners
Bridles
Backrests
Tapestries
Sweatlodge Covers

BRAIN

Hide Preparation
Food

BLADDER

Pouches
Medicine bags

BONES

Fleshing Tools
Pipes
Knives
Arrowheads
Shovels
Splints
Sleds
Saddle Trees
War Clubs
Scrapers
Quirts
Awls
Paintbrushes
Game Dice
Tableware

SKULL

Sun Dance
Medicine
Prayers
Other Rituals

BEARD

Ornamentation
Dolls
Mittens

MUSCLES

Glue
Preparation
Bows
Thread
Arrow-Ties
Cinches

HOOFS, FEET

DEWCLAWS

Glue
Rattles
Spoons

HORNS

Arrow Points
Cups
Fire Carrier
Powderhorn
Spoons
Ladles
Headdresses
Signals
Toys
Medication

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TAIL

Medicine
Switch
Fly Brush
Decorations
Whips

CHIPS

Fuel
Diaper Powder
Toys
Jewelry

GALL

Yellow Paints

HAIR

Headdresses
Pad Fillers
Pillows
Ropes
Ornaments
Hair Pieces
Halters
Bracelets
Medicine Balls
Moccasin Lining
Doll Stuffing

**PAUNCH
LINER**

Meat Wrappings
Buckets
Collapsible Cups
Basins
Canteens

FAT

Tallow
Soaps
Hair Grease
Cosmetic Aids

SCROTUM

Rattlers
Containers

**STOMACH
LINER**

Water Container
Cooking Vessels

TENDON

Sinews
Sewing
Bowstrings

**STOMACH
CONTENTS**

Medicines
Paints

BLOOD

Soups
Puddings
Paints

MEAT

Immediate Use
Sausages
Cached Meat
Jerky (Dehydrated)
Pemmican (Processed)

HIND LEG

SKIN

Preshaped Moccasin

TONGUE

Choice Meat
Comb (Rough Side)

TEETH

Ornamentation

Source: <http://www.buffaloexpress.com/uses.html>

Name _____

Main Ideas

If the sentence is true, circle it. If it is not true, draw a line through it.

1. The Plains Indians made clothing out of parts of the buffalo.
2. A parfleche is a kind of a house.
3. The Indians did not eat the buffalo meat.
4. The shoes made from buffalo hide are called moccasins.

Something to Think About

Think about all of the things that can be made from the buffalo. Write a sentence telling which one you like the most and why.

For Fun

The buffalo was a very important animal to the Plains Indians. Hidden below are some animals that might be important to you or people that you know.

To find the animal's name, circle every third letter. Then write the circled letters on the line.

1) Q V C A E O S M W

2) A S C Y G H L E I Q P C D Y K R O E Z S N

Reading An Object

Objectives:

- Participants will recognize the variety of information that can be learned directly from objects.
- Participants will learn how to examine objects and draw conclusions from their observations.

South Dakota Social Studies Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
		2.US.1.2 2.US.2.1 2.E.1.1	3.E.1.1		5.US.1.1	6.W.1.1 6.E.1.1

South Dakota Communication Arts Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
K.LVS.1. 2 K.LVS.1. 6	1.LVS.1. 2 1.LVS.1. 6	2.LVS.1. 2 2.LVS.1. 4 2.LVS.1. 5 2.LVS.1. 6	3.LVS.1. 1 3.LVS.1. 2 3.LVS.1. 3 3.LVS.1. 4	4.LVS.1. 1 4.LVS.1. 3	5.LVS.1. 1 5.LVS.1. 2 5.LVS.1. 3	6.LVS.1. 2 6.LVS.1. 3

South Dakota Science Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
K.P.1.1		2.P.1.1	3.P.1.1 3.E.1.2			

Timeframe: 30-60 minutes

Materials:

Included in kit

All objects

Object Identification Sheet

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Background Information:

Every culture has used objects. These objects reflect the beliefs of the people who constructed, acquired, or used them. They also reflect the unique identity of the culture. If we study and/or teach only what's been written down about a culture, there are many things we miss. The same is true if we only look at cultural objects. When separated, written words and objects are both incomplete. When the two are studied together a more complete cultural picture emerges. One of the main goals of this kit is to increase the participants' visual literacy skills and teach them how to learn from objects.

Activity Steps:

1. Arrange the participants so that it is easy to pass objects from one to another. Pass each object around one at a time, allowing the participants to handle and examine them.
While the participants are examining the objects, use the points below to start discussion about the materials, construction and history of the objects.
2. Encourage the participants to share the visual and tactile information they get from the objects. You may ask each participant to consider a different aspect of the object – history, material, etc. Have the participants respond so the entire group can hear and enter into the discussion.
3. After each object has been examined, share the information about each object on the Object Identification Sheet with the group.

Materials & Construction:

- Is it hard or soft?
- Is it light or heavy?
- Is it strong or fragile?
- What material is the object made out of? (wood, hide, stone, fur)
- Is it made of something found in nature?
- If it is natural, has it been changed by people? (cutting, sewing, mixing)

History & Function:

- Who might have made the object?
- What was it used for?
- Is this object still used today?
- Do we use something else today that does the same job?
- How is the object in the kit different from our modern object? How are they similar?
- Would you rather use the modern object or the object in the kit? Why?
- Was the object used for a special task or occasion or was it an everyday item?
- Does the object show signs of wear?
- Was the object worn on the outside or inside? Has it been changed by time or weather?
- Is there dirt on the object? If so, what kind and where is it located?
- Is any part of the object broken or missing?

OBJECT IDENTIFICATION LIST (Kit 1)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| T1996.1.1
Arrow | Used for hunting and in warfare. |
| T1996.1.2
Parfleche | This is a container made from rawhide. Parfleches were used to store food and other items. They could be painted with designs. |
| T1996.1.3
Flesher | Lakota women used fleshers to scrape the muscle and other tissue off a fresh animal skin. This flesher is made from a buffalo leg bone. |
| T1996.1.4
Leg bone | Buffalo leg bones could be made into fleshers, and other tools. |
| T1996.1.5
Rawhide | Rawhide is hard, untanned leather. It was used to make parfleches and other useful items like drums, pouches and ropes. |
| T1996.1.6
Buckskin bag | This bag is made from softened, or tanned, leather. Notice how different it feels from the untanned rawhide. |
| T1996.1.7
Buffalo robe | This is a piece of a whole buffalo robe, the entire robe would be much bigger. Buffalo robes were the principal fur traded by the Lakota, and was their standard of value--like money. The thick buffalo robe obtained in the winter was called a seasonable robe. It was worth more than a summer robe. |
| T1996.1.8
Moccasins | This pair of men's moccasins is made from softened, or tanned, leather. |
| T1996.1.9
Shoulder blade
bone | This large buffalo bone made an excellent hoe. |
| T1996.1.10
Bone
paintbrushes | Small bones or bone pieces could be used to paint designs on tipis, parfleches, and other items. |
| T1996.1.11
Rib bone | Rib bones could be made into tools, and also made good sleds in the winter. |

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- T1996.1.12
Buffalo horn A useful part of tatanka, horns could be made into containers, drinking cups and other things.
- T1996.1.13
Horn spoon Here's an example of a useful thing made from buffalo horn.
- T1996.1.14
Bone awl An awl is a sharp, pointed tool used to punch holes in leather prior to sewing. Awls were frequently made from rib or leg bones.
- T1996.1.15
Sinew Sinew comes from the tendons of the buffalo. It's like very tough thread. Sinew was used to sew together hides for tipis and for clothing. It is still used today by traditional bead workers.
- T1996.1.16
Foot bone toys Indian children used buffalo foot bones like these as toy horses.
- T1996.1.17
Buffalo teeth These made good decorations for jewelry and clothing.
- T1996.1.18
Buffalo tail A buffalo tail made a good fly swatter, bath brush, or decoration.
- T1996.1.19
Buffalo bladder (Keep the bladder in the plastic bag) A buffalo bladder made a very useful container because it was waterproof.
- T1996.1.20
Rope and hair Buffalo hair could be twisted into a strong rope, or used loose to fill a pillow.

Shadow Boxes

Objectives:

- Participants will understand how the Plains Indians used objects from their environment to meet their everyday needs.
- Participants will learn about some of the different objects that Plains Indians used.
- Participants will increase their art skills.

South Dakota Social Studies Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
K.E.1.2		2.E.1.1	3.US.1.1	4.G.2.1	5.US.1.1 5.G.2.1	6.W.1.1 6.E.1.1

South Dakota Communication Arts Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
K.LVS.1.6	1.LVS.1.6	2.LVS.1.6	3.LVS.1.4	4.LVS.1.2	5.LVS.1.2 5.LVS.1.3	6.LVS.1.3

South Dakota Art Standards

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Std. 1: Visual arts as communication, benchmark 2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Std. 3: Relationship of art and history/culture, benchmarks 1 & 2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Timeframe: 30-60 minutes

Materials:

Provided by instructor or participants	
Shoe box Glue Crayons or markers	Clay Cotton balls Construction paper

Background Information:

The Plains Indians did not use resources like we do today to build homes of brick or wood. Bricks were not around on the plains, and wood was scarce. They used the tipi as a home. Tipis were constructed from the natural resources available on the plains, especially the buffalo. Plains tribes hunted the buffalo to feed themselves and get the materials and tools that they needed to live.

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Activity Steps:

1. Tell the participants they will be building a shadow box showing how they think that plains tribes lived. Discuss the environment – what was available to build with? To eat? How did you get food?
2. Have participants get out their shoeboxes, and have the other supplies readily available. They can use the crayons and markers and construction paper to create a background and make a tipi.
3. To make a tipi from construction paper, cut out a cone shape and glue the two straight edges together. Glue tabs on the tipi bottom to attach it to the shadow box floor.
4. Use clay to make figures such as people, buffalo, or horses. Cotton balls can be glued into the “sky” as clouds.
5. When the boxes are completed, participants can show them to the group and describe the different features they included, and why they included them.
6. If there is space, display the boxes so others can enjoy them and learn about the plains environment and how tribes used it.

Natural Artifacts

Objectives:

- Participants will analyze how other cultures used things from nature.
- Participants will understand why museums keep artifacts.
- Participants will collect and share information about natural objects.

South Dakota Social Studies Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
K.E.1.2		2.US.1.2 2.E.1.1	3.US.2.1 3.E.1.1		5.W.1.2 5.W.2.1	6.W.1.1 6.C.2.1 6.E.1.1

South Dakota Communication Arts Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
K.LVS.1. 6	1.LVS.1. 6	2.LVS.1. 6	3.LVS.1. 1	4.LVS.1. 1	5.LVS.1. 1 5.LVS.1. 3	6.LVS.1. 3

South Dakota Science Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
K.P.1.1		2.P.1.1 2.L.3.1	3.P.1.1 3.L.3.1 3.E.1.2			

Timeframe: 45-60 minutes

Materials: [Participants will collect and bring natural items from home]

Included in kit

All artifacts

Provided by participants

Found natural objects-stones, twigs, leaves, grass, leather, bones, and etc.

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Background Information:

The Plains Indians used everything from the earth. Most of their garments and shelter came from animals, especially the buffalo. Parts for their tools came from stones. They used wood and grasses to cook and keep warm. Many different artifacts made from natural material have been found, some are now in museums. In the museum, people can look at the artifacts and learn from them. Seeing artifacts in museums can help people better understand different cultures and how they live.

Activity Steps:

1. Have participants look at the different artifacts from the kit, and read them the object descriptions from the object identification list.
2. Participants have to collect and bring five natural objects from home. These items should be things they think the Plains Indians had in their environment.
3. Divide the participants into small groups of three or four.
4. Have each group arrange a small display of the items they brought. Acting as tour guides, have them describe their display to the rest of the group. How do they think the Plains Indians might have used the items?

Quill Decorating

Objectives:

- Participants will learn about the Plains Indians culture.
- Participants will understand how the Plains Indians decorated their clothing.
- Participants will develop their art skills.

South Dakota Social Studies Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
	I.E.1.1	2.US.2.1 2.E.1.1	3.US.2.2 3.E.1.1	4.E.1.1	5.US.1.1 5.E.1.1	6.W.1.1 6.E.1.1

South Dakota Visual Art Standards

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Std. 1: Self expression and interpersonal communication, benchmark 2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Std. 3: Relationship of art and history/culture, benchmark 2	X	X	X			X	X

Timeframe: 45-60 minutes

Materials:

Provided by instructor	Provided by participants
Colored toothpicks *	Glue
Feathers (optional)	
Large brown paper bags or construction paper	

*to color toothpicks: soak flat toothpicks in water for about five minutes in small Dixie cups or other containers. Use one container for each color you make. Drain the picks and add 5 to 10 drops of food coloring to the picks. Stir them around to evenly distribute the color. Spread on paper towels to dry.

Background Information:

The Plains Indians used many different things to decorate their clothing. One of the things that they used was quills. They would dye the quills different colors and sew them onto their clothing and other items in colorful patterns. The colored quills made the clothing and other objects more decorative and more personalized.

Buffalo and the Plains Indians
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Activity Steps:

1. Cut one shirt shape from the brown paper bags or construction paper for each participant.
2. Have the colored toothpicks and feathers in a central location.
3. Have the participants come to the toothpick pile three or four at a time and get a supply of toothpicks and a few feathers.
4. Using the toothpicks, have each participant work out a decorative pattern for their shirt. Toothpicks can be broken into smaller pieces if desired. Encourage them to experiment and try several different designs before gluing the toothpicks and feathers down.
5. Display the decorated shirts and have participants describe what they designed to the rest of the group.

Catching the Prey

Objectives:

- Participants will understand the types of situations that early Plains inhabitants might have faced.
- Participants will use their senses in different ways.

South Dakota Social Studies Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
	I.E.1.1	2.US.2.1 2.E.1.1	3.US.2.2 3.E.1.1	4.E.1.1	5.US.1.1 5.E.1.1	6.E.1.1

South Dakota Communication Arts Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
K.LVS.1. 6	1.LVS.1. 6	2.LVS.1. 6	3.LVS.1. 1	4.LVS.1. 1	5.LVS.1. 1 5.LVS.1. 3	6.LVS.1. 3

South Dakota Science Standards

K	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
	1.L.1.3 1.L.3.1		3.P.3.3 3.L.3.1	4.L.2.1 4.L.3.1	5.L.3.2	

Time Frame: 30-45 minutes

Materials:

Provided by instructor

Blindfold

Background Information:

Catching prey was not easy. Early Plains inhabitants did not have guns to shoot animals, so they had to chase their prey and sneak up as close as they could to make bows and arrows or spears effective. Both the hunter and the prey used all their senses when a hunt was on. Listening carefully or catching a scent on the wind could mean the difference between eating and going hungry for a hunter and his tribe.

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Activity Steps:

1. Have the participants sit in a circle.
2. Choose one person to be the predator, and put them in the middle of the circle on their hands and knees, and blindfold them.
3. Silently point to another person who will be the prey.
4. The prey then enters the circle on their hands and knees and tries to move completely around the predator. The prey must make a complete circle and get back to their place without being tagged by the predator.
5. If the prey is tagged, then that person becomes the predator.
6. If the predator is unable to tag the prey after two rounds, select another predator.
7. The game does not have a definite ending, but if possible let each participant be both the predator and the prey.
8. Discuss these questions or others that may have come to mind at the end of the activity:
 - a. How did you feel as the predator trying to catch the prey? How did you feel when you were the prey trying to avoid getting caught?
 - b. If you caught the prey, how did you do it? Which sense helped you the most?
 - c. How would you feel if catching prey was your only chance of getting food?
 - d. Do you think it would be difficult to survive if you could never buy food, but always had to catch or gather it?

The Journey

Objectives:

- Participants will understand the many unpredictable situations that animals living in the wild might encounter.
- Participants will increase their thinking and listening skills.
- Participants will use math skills.

South Dakota Communication Arts Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
K.LVS.1.6	1.LVS.1.6	2.LVS.1.6		4.LVS.1.1	5.LVS.1.1 5.LVS.1.3	6.LVS.1.3

South Dakota Mathematics Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
K.N.3.1	1.N.2.1 1.N.3.1	2.A.2.3 2.N.3.1	3.A.2.2			

Timeframe: 20-30 minutes

Materials:

Included in the kit
 The Journey Activity Scoresheet

Provided by participants
 Pencil

Background Information:

This activity illustrates the many unpredictable situations that an animal might encounter in the environment. Hunters and trappers, bad weather, cold, and poisonous food or lack of food had to be dealt with if an animal was to survive. Animals used all of their senses to stay alive.

Activity Steps:

1. Give each participant a scoresheet.
2. Introduce the activity: "Imagine you are an animal in the wild. You need to take care of yourself by finding food, water, and shelter when necessary, and by avoiding hunters. Are you up for the challenge?"
3. Encourage the participants to be silent during the adventure so that they do not draw attention by hunters or other enemies. (Do the activity outside to really get in "nature" mode.)
4. During the journey, the participants will be asked to make five choices (a or b). Have them mark their choices on the scoresheet. Scores are tallied at the end of the journey.

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Begin reading the adventure:

Choice #1: You open your eyes from a nap that you took near a bush. You hear a rustling in the bush. At first you are afraid and want to run, but you are also curious and want to investigate. You are very hungry and whatever is rustling in the bush might be something to catch and eat. You decide to:

- a) run away.
- b) find out what it is.

Choice #2: After leaving the bush, you begin to walk along a river. Soon, the sunshine disappears and thick clouds roll in. It becomes very windy. There is a flicker of lightning in the sky and raindrops begin to splash onto your face. You see a cave up ahead. When you get there, you find a scent that is very new to you. You're not sure if you should go into the cave, but the storm is getting very bad and you need shelter.

Finally, you decide to:

- a) go in the cave.
- b) look for shelter somewhere else.

Choice #3: After the storm passes, you try to relax. The sun comes out again and you:

- a) take a nap in an open field where there is sunshine.
- b) nestle up in the shady shelter of a tree to take a nap.

Choice #4: After a long nap, you wake up feeling weak and thirsty. It has been a long time since you have had anything to drink. Slowly you get to your feet and begin walking toward the river. As you walk, you come upon a large pile of something unknown to you. It smells like something to eat, but you take one bite and find out that it is not! Suddenly, you feel very scared. Maybe you should just get out of there! If you run, you must take a different path to the river. On the different path you will have to walk farther and might not have enough strength to make it. You know that getting some water to drink will make you feel stronger. After thinking for a moment, you decide to:

- a) take the different path.
- b) move on ahead to get the water that you need.

Choice #5: You reach the river and have a long drink. The water tastes good and you start to feel strong and refreshed. You decide to look for your family. You head off in the direction where you usually find them. Soon you come across a scent that seems familiar, almost like your family . . . but just a little bit different. You:

- a) follow the scent.
- b) are suspicious of the scent and go in another direction.

The journey ends.

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Scoring

Each participant starts the journey with 13 points. Their decisions affect how many points they have at the end of the journey. Read the answers and have the participants keep track of their points by adding and subtracting on their scoresheets.

Choice #1: If you chose “a” and ran away, you missed out on some food. Subtract 2 points. If you chose “b” you found the food. Add 3 points.

- a) Subtract 2 points
- b) Add 3 points

Choice #2: If you chose “a” – to go into the cave – you got shot by a hunter that was already in the cave. You don’t die, but your injuries will not heal for days. Subtract 3 points. If you chose “b”, you found safe shelter. Add 2 points.

- a) Subtract 3 points
- b) Add 2 points

Choice #3: If you chose “a” and took a nap in the sunshine, subtract 3 points because a trapper captured you in a cage. He was going to sell you, but you escaped without serious injury. If you picked “b” you had a safe nap under the tree. Add 4 points.

- a) Subtract 3 points
- b) Add 4 points

Choice #4: For this choice, do not add or subtract any points. Both choices bring you to the river. The pile that you found was a blanket left behind by some hunters, but they had already left and were no threat. If you took the different path, you had to walk slowly, but you made it to the river for water.

- a) no point change
- b) no point change

Choice #5: Choosing “a” means trouble because you were tricked by a hunter and have been trapped. Subtract 5 points. If you chose “b”, you find your family. Add 4 points.

- a) Subtract 5 points
- b) Add 4 points

After the participants have tallied their scores, you may compare score results.

- Discuss the following or similar questions:
- Why did you make the decisions that you made?
- What information influenced your decisions?
- Was it hard to decide what to do?
- Would it be difficult to live in the wild like an animal?
- How would your senses help you survive?

The Journey Activity Sheet

			+ 13
1)	a.		
	b.	+	-
		<hr/>	
		TOTAL	
2)	a.		
	b.	+	-
		<hr/>	
		TOTAL	
3)	a.		
	b.	+	-
		<hr/>	
		TOTAL	
4)	a.		
	b.	+	-
		<hr/>	
		TOTAL	
5)	a.		
	b.	+	-
		<hr/>	
		FINAL SCORE	

Pebble Patterns

Objectives:

- Participants will become aware of how important good observations skills were for people who depended on hunting for food.
- Participants will practice observation and memory skills.
- Participants will apply observation skills to the wider world around them.

South Dakota Mathematics Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
K.A.2.1 K.A.4.2	1.A.2.1 1.A.4.1	2.A.4.1 2.A.4.2	3.G.2.1			

Timeframe: 45 minutes

Materials:

Provided by instructor

30 pebbles, in various sizes, colors and shapes

Two towels

3 to 5 pattern charts prepared ahead of time

Provided by participants

Paper

Pencil

Background Information:

Hunting buffalo and other game for food required good observation skills. Tracking wild animals meant looking closely for signs--bent grass, tracks, broken twigs on trees. Seeing and interpreting the details of the world around you could make the difference between eating and going hungry. Practice increases the ability to see and distinguish details in your surroundings. A game like Pebble Patterns is a simple, fun way to build observation skills.

Activity Steps:

1. Lay the towel on the playing surface and have the participants gather around it, turning their backs so they can't see the playing surface. Arrange the pebbles in a pattern on the towel. The number of pebbles used, and the complexity of the pattern can be adjusted to suit the group.
2. Have the participants turn around and look at the pattern for 1-2 minutes. Continue in one of the following ways:
 - a. Gather up the pebbles, and have one of the participants or several working together, try to recreate the original pattern. The pattern charts prepared ahead of time will help you remember what the original pattern looked like.
 - b. Put the second towel over the pebble pattern and have participants draw the pattern with their paper and pencils, including as much detail about pebble size, color and placement as they can remember.
3. Give the group participants about 4-5 minutes to complete their patterns.

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4. Compare the drawings to the pattern under the towel or to the charts. As the activity progresses and observation skills increase, the patterns can become more complex, or the time given to look at the pattern can be decreased.
5. The activity may continue as long as the group wishes. When the activity is finished, encourage the group participants to use their newly honed observation skills as they look at the world around them.

Note: Other natural elements, like blades of grass, small twigs, and pieces of bark can be incorporated into the patterns. Small colored pieces of cardboard could also be cut out and used.

Source: MacFarlan, Allan & Paulette. Handbook of American Indian Games.
Dover Publications, New York. c1958.

Making a Winter Count

Objectives:

- Participants will become aware of what a winter count is, how it was used, and who used it.
- Participants will brainstorm symbols that best represent events in their lives and create their own wintercounts.
- Participants will share information about their counts with the rest of the group.

South Dakota Social Studies Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
1.US.1.1		2.US.1.2 2.US.2.1	3.US.2.1 3.US.2.2 3.W.1.1	4.US.2.1 4.US.2.2 4.W.1.1 4.W.2.1		6.W.1.1 6.C.1.2 6.E.1.1

South Dakota Communication Arts Standards

K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
K.LVS.1.6	1.LVS.1.6	2.LVS.1.6	3.LVS.1.4	4.LVS.1.2	5.LVS.1.3	6.LVS.1.1

South Dakota Visual Art Standards

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
Std. 1: Visual arts as communication, benchmark 1 & 2				X	X	X	X
Std. 1: Visual arts as communication, benchmarks 1 & 3	X	X	X				
Std. 3: Relationship of art and history/culture, benchmark 1				X	X		
Std. 3: Relationship of art and history/culture, benchmarks 1 & 2						X	X
Std. 3: Relationship of art and history/culture, benchmarks 1 & 3	X	X	X				

Timeframe: 45 minutes

Materials:

Included in the kit

Overhead of *Lone Dog's Wintercount*
 Poster of *Lone Dog's Wintercount*
Wintercount Key

Provided by participants

Markers, paints, or crayons

Provided by instructor

Overhead projector (optional)
 Paper (brown paper bags with torn edges give a nice "hide" effect)

Background Information:

Europeans divided time into days, weeks, months and years. The Sioux marked time by counting nights, moons, winters, and generations. Designing a symbol for each winter and putting the symbols down in chronological order on hide, paper, or cloth created a winter count. The figures and symbols on a winter count depict a memorable event for each year. They serve as a kind of diary for a tribe. The symbols on a winter count are meaningless unless someone knows the history and stories the symbols represent. It was the count keeper's job to tell the winter count stories. Wintercounts aided the memory of the tribal historian by providing a symbol for an event during a particular year. The memory of that event then triggered other memories.

Lone Dog's winter count covers the years 1800-1871. Its symbols are organized in a spiral, starting at the center and working counter-clockwise. Lone Dog probably consulted with his tribe's elders for their advice before choosing each symbol.

Activity Steps:

1. Display the overhead of *Lone Dog's Winter Count* on the projector or show the poster of the winter count to the participants and explain what a winter count is. Ask if they see any symbols that might deal with fur traders. (Some examples would be numbers 2, 3, 18, 20, 21, 23, 29, 32, 56, and 69.) The explanations for the symbols can be found on the *Wintercount Key*. Why would the building of a trading post be the most important event of the year?
2. Give each participant a piece of paper and explain that they will be creating their own winter count. Each participant will need to think of a symbol that best represents each year of their life, or whatever years they choose to depict – doing a symbol for each year in school, for example. Participants draw their counts on the paper. Encourage them to be thoughtful and creative.
3. Once completed, the participants can share their counts with the rest of the group, sharing the stories that each of their symbols represents.

WINTERCOUNT KEY

- 1800-1801** Thirty Dakotas were killed by Crow Indians. In this chart, black lines always signify the death of Dakotas killed by their enemies.
- 1801-1802** A human being with many marks was always the sign of an epidemic or some disease such as small pox or measles. The interpretation is, "many died of small pox."
- 1802-1803** A Dakota stole horses with shoes on. This means they would have had to stolen them directly from the Europeans or from some other Indians who had before obtained them from the Europeans as the Indians never shod their horses.
- 1803-1804** They stole "curly horses" or horses with curly hides, from the Crows.
- 1804-1805** The Dakota had a calumet dance and then off on a war expedition.
- 1805-1806** The Crows killed eight Dakotas.
- 1806-1807** A Dakota kills an Arikara (Ree) just as he was about to capture an eagle.
- 1807-1808** Red-Coat, a chief, was killed.
- 1808-1809** The Dakota who had killed the Ree shown in this record for 1806-1807 was killed himself by the Rees.
- 1809-1810** A chief, Little Beaver, set fire to a trading store and was killed.
- 1810-1811** This picture has to do with Black Stone, the medicine man. The symbol is a white buffalo skull over his head.
- 1811-1812** The circle is a dirt lodge, while the interior circles represent heads. Interpreted, it shows that 27 Arikaras or Mandans were killed in a dirt lodge by the Dakotas.
- 1812-1813** The device is a lasso. Wild horses were first run down and caught by the Dakotas.

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- 1813-1814** Whooping cough killed many.
- 1814-1815** A Dakota kills an Arapaho in his lodge. The symbol represents a tomahawk stuck in the man's skull.
- 1815-1816** The Sans Arcs make a dirt lodge at Peoria Bottom, near Pierre.
- 1816-1817** "Buffalo were plenty." The symbol crudely represents a side of buffalo.
- 1817-1818** A trading post of dry timber was built at Ft. Pierre by Joseph La Frombois.
- 1818-1819** The measles broke out and many died. (Note that the small pox epidemic represented in 1801-1802 showed larger marks on a human body.)
- 1819-1820** Another trading post was built. This time by La Conte also at Ft. Pierre.
- 1820-1821** The trader, La Conte, gave Two Arrow a war dress for his bravery.
- 1821-1822** This symbol represents a very brilliant meteor falling to earth.
- 1822-1823** Another trading house was built at the mouth of the Bad River.
- 1823-1824** The event portrayed is the attack of the US forces, accompanied by the Dakotas, upon the Arikara villages.
- 1824-1825** Swan, chief of the Two-Kettle tribe, had all of his horses killed.
- 1825-1826** Many Indians drowned in a horrible flood on the Missouri River. The symbol suggests heads appearing above a line of water.
- 1826-1827** Indians died a strange death after eating a rotting buffalo carcass while on the warpath.
- 1827-1828** Dead Arm, a Dakota, was stabbed by a Mandan and lost lots of blood.

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- 1828-1829** A white man named Chadron built a dirt lodge.
- 1829-1830** A Yanktonai Dakota was killed by Bad-Arrow, or “Blackfoot” Lakota.
- 1830-1831** Twenty-three were killed in a bloody battle with the Crows.
- 1831-1832** One European named Le Beau, killed another named Kermel.
- 1832-1833** Lone Horn broke his leg on a buffalo hunt.
- 1833-1834** The great meteor shower observed all over the US on the night of Nov. 12 of that year.
- 1834-1835** The chief Medicine Hide was killed.
- 1835-1836** Lame Deer shot a Crow Indian with an arrow, drew it out, and show him again with the same arrow.
- 1836-1837** Plenty of buffalo again.
- 1837-1838** One hundred elk were killed on a big hunt.
- 1838-1839** A dirt lodge was built for Iron Horn.
- 1839-1840** The Dakotas killed an entire village of Snake or Shoshoni Indians.
- 1840-1841** The Dakotas made peace with the Cheyenne.
- 1841-1842** Feather-in-the-Ear stole 30 spotted ponies.
- 1842-1843** One Feather raised a large war party against the Crows.
- 1843-1844** The Sans Arcs made medicine to bring the buffalo.
- 1844-1845** The Minneconjous built a pine fort.
- 1845-1846** Plenty of buffalo meat, which is represented as hung upon poles and trees to dry.

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1836-1847	Broken Leg died.
1847-1848	Two Man was killed.
1848-1849	Humpback was killed.
1849-1850	The Crows stole a large drove of horses (it is said 800) from the Brules.
1850-1851	An old woman was found in the belly of a killed buffalo cow.
1851-1852	Peace with the Crows.
1852-1853	The Nez Perce came to Lone Horn's lodge at midnight.
1853-1854	Striped blankets brought by Europeans to the Indians.
1854-1855	Brave Bear was killed.
1855-1856	General Harney, with a hat, makes a treaty with the Dakotas. This was at Ft. Pierre in the spring of 1856.
1856-1857	A man with four horns holds out the same kind of ornamented pipestem shown in the character for 1804-1805, it being his badge of office.
1857-1858	The Dakotas killed a Crow woman. She is pierced by four arrows, and the peace made with the Crows in 1851-52 seems to have been short lived.
1858-1859	Lone Horn made buffalo "medicine," doubtless on account of the scarcity of that animal.
1859-1860	Big Crow, a Dakota chief, was killed by the Crows.
1860-1861	The elk makes medicine.
1861-1862	Buffalo were so plentiful that their tracks came close to the tipis.
1862-1863	Red Feather, a Minneconjou, was killed.

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- 1863-1864** Eight Dakotas were killed by the Crows.
- 1864-1865** Four Crows were killed by the Dakotas.
- 1865-1866** Many horses died for want of grass.
- 1866-1867** Swan, father of "White Swan," died.
- 1867-1868** The flag indicates the treaty negotiations at Ft. Laramie that year.
- 1868-1869** Texas cattle were brought into the country.
- 1869-1870** There was an eclipse of the sun in August 1869.
- 1870-1871** The circle is a Crow fort, nearly surrounded, and the weapons used were guns for it is bullets that are flying. All but one of the Crows was killed in fact, and 14 Dakotas.