



3/24/16

Teachers-Going-Green.com

First Americans on the Prairie/ Science, Literacy, & Social Studies
This lesson is a part of Project Bluestem at Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge

LESSON: First Americans on the Prairie

GRADE: 2nd

TIME: 45 min.

SUMMARY:

Students are asked what they already know about 1st American (Native American) culture and their relationship with bison, and what they would like to know. In order to answer some of their questions, students learn about and listen to readings by Charles Alexander Eastman, a native Santee Sioux Indian, naturalist, illustrator, and writer who lived during the mid 1800s. Next, students role-play and imagine that they are 1st Americans hunting and using bison. Students are divided into small groups and each group goes into the prairie to find a bison bone. By exploring the prairie through the eyes of 1st Americans, students seek answers to their questions and determine the best ways to use their bison bones and bison in general on the prairie. They will record their discoveries in their journals and share their ideas with classmates.

OBJECTIVES: Iowa Core

Science

Engineering & Design

- **K-2-ETS1-2** Develop a simple sketch, drawing, or physical model to illustrate how the shape of an object helps it function as needed to solve a given problem.



First Americans on the Prairie/ Science, Literacy, & Social Studies
This lesson is a part of Project Bluestem at Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge

Literacy

Writing

- **W.2.8.** Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Speaking and Listening

- **SL.2.1.** Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- **SL.2.4.** Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.
- **SL.2.6.** Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification.

Social Studies

Geography

- **SS.K-2.G.4** Understand how geographic processes and human actions modify the environment and how the environment affects humans.
 - Understand ways in which people depend on the physical environment.
 - Understand humans impact the environment in positive and negative ways.
 - Understand the environment impacts humans in positive and negative ways.
 - Understand areas of a community have changed over time.

History

- **SS.K-2.H.1** Understand people construct knowledge of the past from multiple and various types of sources.
 - Understand that primary sources such as artifacts, photographs, and documents are used to learn about the past.
 - Understand that people in different times and places view the world differently.



MATERIALS & RESOURCES:

- Paper or nature journals
- Journal example & background information (see last page of this lesson)
- Pencils
- Clip boards
- Bison bones (one for each group)
- Ribbon to mark where the bones are located on the prairie

PRESENTATION:

Explain to students that today, they will be learning about Native Americans on the prairie. But first, ask them about basic necessities that all people need to survive. Allow students the time to think of their own ideas. Examples should include food, water, shelter, air, etc. Ask students what these things are made out of and where we get them. Next, ask students what they already know about Native Americans or Indians. How did they live on the prairie? Where did they get their food and shelter?

DIRECTIONS:

1. Direct students' attention outside. Tell them to imagine that they are living within that wide expanse of grasses, 200 years ago. Ask them, "How many Wal-Marts do you think there were 200 years ago? How many gas stations?" Provide students time to think. Ask them how they would survive if they lived out here in the prairie? Explain that bison were a vital element of surviving life on the prairie.
2. Explain to the students that there was a man named Charles Eastman and he used to live on the prairie when he was a child- without electricity, stores, food. He lived in the Santee Sioux tribe and in his book, *Indian Boyhood*, he writes about his childhood. The Santee Sioux lived primarily in Minnesota but would travel far south into Iowa at times.



Paraphrased and adapted from the chapter “The Boy Hunter”, pages 73-83:

The Indian kids were born hunters. Every motion, every step was careful. His moccasins were like paws of a cat—noiselessly, the Indian hunt with his glittering black eyes scanned every object that appeared within view. Not a bird, not even a chipmunk, escaped his piercing glance. Our chief weapon was the bow and arrows and perhaps, if we were lucky, a knife. For fire we used a flint with a spongy piece of dry wood and a stone to strike with... We hunted in company a great deal, but a boy would set out for the woods alone too and he usually enjoyed himself. Our game consisted mainly of birds, rabbits, and ground animals. We looked for signs of animals everywhere. It was not just a hunt; we combined it with the study of animal life.”

3. After reading, explain that today students will get the chance to imagine what it must have been like on the prairie as a Native American. Tell students that they are going to work in groups and each group is going to be a tribe. Assign an adult chaperon to each “tribe”. Each tribe will have an adult chaperone, or a “chief.” They are going to go out into the prairie and hunt for a buffalo bone that was left behind. Once they find their bone, they will have to take careful notes about the bone, what part of the bison it came from, and how they will use it to survive on the prairie.
4. Pass out journals, paper, and pencils to students. Help students set up their journal entry by modeling it on the easel. (See example, below Directions) Draw a horizontal line across the entire easel. Draw a vertical line bisecting the top half, creating three boxes. As a demonstration on the easel drawing, use the bison jaw (or a different body part that will not be given to any of the student groups). In the upper-left box, draw the bison body part. In the upper-right box, draw a bison. Ask the students where the body part is on an actual bison; in this case, circle the head. Tell them they’ll need to circle the area their specific body part came from. In the large, bottom box, hypothesize with the students about how a bison jaw might be used to survive on the prairie. Stress creativity, not being “right.” Draw one of their suggestions in this bottom area. In all boxes, write descriptive words or sentences.

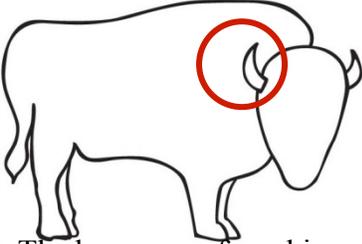


5. Once students have their journals organized, explain that now they are going to go on their great bison hunt. Have students line up at the door. Remind them that today they are Indian buffalo hunters- they should be noiseless, quiet, and aware of everything around them. Ohiyesa did not miss one single animal sign when he hunted; they could be just like him.
6. Once the class is outside, explain that there are bison bones hidden in the prairie and that you will help them by pointing them in the right direction. Each bone should have a ribbon or flag near it so it does not get lost in the prairie. Help adult chaperons and students look for the bones in the prairie if they need help. Once they find their bone, have them quietly sit down and complete their journal entry.
7. After about 10 minutes, call the groups back inside. When the tribes return, have them sit on the rugs. Ask each tribe to share their discoveries about their bone, its uses, and animal life they observed. Give each person a chance to talk and share their ideas. Accept all suggestions as *possible* uses (rather than saying the students' suggestions are "wrong"). Share other uses for bison bones if students do not think of all of the common ones.
8. Collect the papers, pencils and clipboards (with the help of teachers or chaperones). Time permitting, allow the students to wander around and examine other bison parts not discussed during the lesson.
9. Remind students that they can be a hunter anytime. They can search for old artifacts, explore nature, and contemplate and make objects that they could use to survive in their present lives! Everyday there is an opportunity to be an explorer, adventurer, or naturalist!



First Americans on the Prairie/ Science, Literacy, & Social Studies
This lesson is a part of Project Bluestem at Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge

REFLECTION/JOURNAL PROMPT:

<p><u>Bone Drawing</u></p>  <p>I think it is a horn. It is grey & scratchy.</p>	<p><u>Bison Drawing</u></p>  <p>The horn came from his head.</p>
<p><u>How to Use</u></p> <p>A cup to drink out of A horn to blow into To carry water To store medicine</p>	

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Using following body parts provides a nice variety of shapes, textures and practical uses:

- **Rib bone:** when combined with numerous other rib bones, the rib bone makes a nice sled. Native Americans would also cut notches into rib bones to use them as saws.
- **Mandible (jaw):** when holes are pierced through the teeth, they can be strung on a necklace.
- **Dung:** can be burned whole as fuel, can also be crushed into powder to use as diaper powder.
- **Horn:** can be used as a drinking cup, could hold small items or food, perhaps also used as a musical instrument (bugle).
- **Scapula (shoulder blade):** can be used as a garden hoe, shovel, paddle, or a dinner plate.
- **Clump of hair:** an insulator for warmth; stuffed into pillows, blankets.