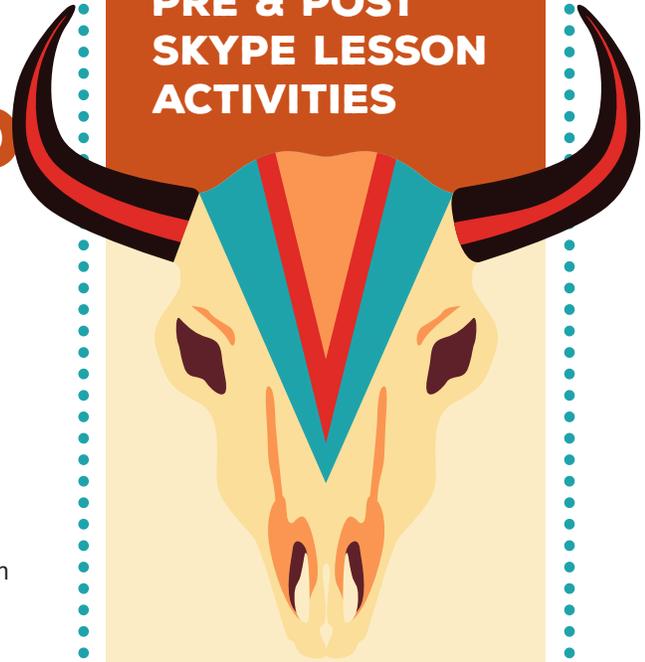


# Stories and Cultures of PLAINS INDIANS AND THE BUFFALO

GRADES K-12

## PRE & POST SKYPE LESSON ACTIVITIES



### SKYPE LESSON DESCRIPTION

Imagine not being able to buy your clothes, tools, food, and household items at a store! During this lesson students will challenge themselves to think about how they would meet their needs using the natural environment around them. They will discover that long ago many Plains Indian tribes had to use the natural resources around them to survive.

### OBJECTIVES

- To teach students how human needs and concerns are addressed within cultures.
- To learn how the tipi was an important part of family history to the Plains Indians.

### PRE-LESSON ACTIVITIES

**Introduce Vocabulary** | *Discuss the vocabulary terms below.*

- **Buffalo hide** – the pelt or skin of the buffalo; used for many different purposes by the Plains Indians
- **Canvas** – a durable waterproof material introduced to the Plains Indians through trade with Euro-Americans
- **Culture** – a shared pattern of learned behavior; a shared way of thinking, believing and acting that is passed from generation to generation. Examples include language, stories, folktales, music, roles of men, women, elders, and children, spiritual beliefs, and economic development
- **Earth Lodge** – a Plains Indian home often built by agricultural tribes such as the Mandan and Hidatsa
- **Euro-American** – United States citizen of European ancestry
- **Language** – spoken or written communication
- **Parfleche** – a folded rawhide carrying case for food, clothing, and other items
- **Reservation** – area of public land set aside by the United States government for the use of American Indians
- **Tipi** – the home of Plains Indian people, typically made from buffalo hide or canvas and long sticks
- **Tradition** – custom or belief passed down from generation to generation

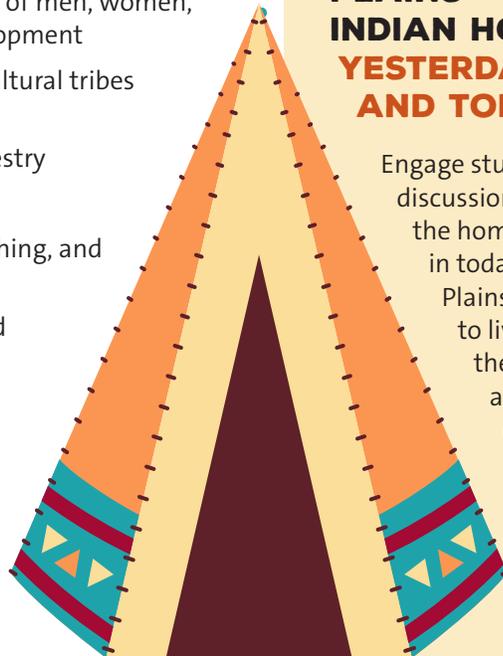
### WHO ARE THE NORTHERN PLAINS INDIAN TRIBES?

Help students define the Native American tribes of the Northern Plains. Review the list of tribes below that make up these groups of people.

- Shoshone
- Crow
- Arapahoe
- Cheyenne
- Lakota
- Hidatsa
- Mandan
- Nez Perce
- Arikara
- Blackfeet

### PLAINS INDIAN HOMES YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Engage students in a discussion comparing the homes they live in today to the tipis Plains Indians used to live in. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each.



## POST-LESSON ACTIVITIES

### Make a Plains Indian Parfleche (Grades K-5)

refer to lesson launch page to download the directions and template for this activity

### Build a Home (Grades K-5)

Materials: drawing or construction paper, crayons, markers, colored pencils

Have students draw or construct a model of their own home and yard. Provide time for students to show their classmates the differences between their model home and a tipi.

### Using What Is Around You (Grades K-8)

Materials: pictures of woodland, beach, and plains habitats, habitat resources, drawing or construction paper, crayons, markers, colored pencils

Show students pictures of different habitats that make up the United States, such as woodlands, beaches, and plains. Think about including pictures that also represent Hawaii and Alaska. Explain that they are going to design a home that is appropriate for one of these habitats. Work with students to help them identify the resources that include information about these habitats. Have students brainstorm what they would need to build their home if they could only get materials from their environment. Ask students:

- What would your home look like?
- What materials would you use to make your home?
- What tools would you use to make your home?
- What would you call your home?

Allow students to create a drawing of their home. Finish by showing students different homes that American Indians have lived in such as wigwams, longhouses, earth lodges, igloos, etc. Explain to students that now American Indians live in homes just like they do.

### Natural Dye Art Project (Grades K-12)

Materials: flowers, berries, vegetables, 3 pots, water, stove or hot plate, paint brushes, coffee filters, paper

Bring various examples of flowers, fruits, and vegetables that are easy to obtain. If you do not use native flowers, fruits, or vegetables, explain to students at the beginning of this activity that Plains Indians used plants that grew in the environment around them.

Set up a hot plate or use a stove for boiling water. Choose one flower, one fruit, and one vegetable. Boil each in a pot of water or steep a small amount of water for 30 minutes. Students can observe and record the progress during the 30 minutes. Students can measure progress by placing the plant/dye materials in the coffee filter to mash, or they can look at the color by dipping the coffee filter in the water. Note that you may need to mash up some of flowers, fruits, and vegetables to achieve optimal color.

Students can experiment with the paints by creating their own individual artwork after the paints have cooled.

### Make a Plains Indian Tipi (Grades K-5)

refer to lesson launch page to download the directions and template for this activity

### Iktomi's Gets in Trouble Again (Grades K-5)

Materials: supplies or computer to create a short illustrated book

Review with students the story, Iktomi and the Buffalo Skull by Paul Goble. Have students create a sequel to the book telling the story of Iktomi's next misadventure. Encourage students to use illustrations and creative writing to tell the story in a unique way. Younger students can create a story with drawings and dictate their story to teachers.

### Comparing Cultures and Traditions (Grades K-12)

Have students summarize the culture of their home, family, and community. Then have them compare their own culture to that of Plains Indians today. They should base this comparison on what they learned during the skype lesson. Encourage older students to interview family members to learn about their own rich culture.

### Tribes of your Region (Grades 4-12)

Have students research the different tribes that are native to their region or area. Research should focus on comparing and contrasting the tribes' beliefs and traditions. Allow time for students to present their findings to their classmates through creative methods of delivery, such as skits, artwork, journal entries, photographs, and multimedia.



# BUFFALO BILL CENTER OF THE WEST

## Buffalo Bill Center of the West Resources

Visit our website at  
[www.centerofthewest.org](http://www.centerofthewest.org)

### Plains Indian Art Trunk

*available through our lending  
program*

This trunk fosters an understanding and appreciation for the culture of Plains Indian people. Materials in the trunk include examples of traditional Plains Indian arts such as beadwork, quillwork, and rock art. A new teacher's guide is included.

### Powwow Trunk

*available through our lending  
program*

Music and dance have long been central to American Indian cultures, and today's powwow is a celebration of that heritage. Learn about powwows in their present form and the history behind them with a video, dance outfits, musical instruments, accessories, and a teacher guide.

## Explore Plains Indian Culture and History

Looking to enrich your curriculum with primary resources through photos, art, and oral histories? This rich content will help teachers and students, whether they have visited the Center or not. Visit the following links to explore Plains Indian culture and history.

**1. Land of Many Gifts** – Learn about village life from the historic era.  
<https://centerofthewest.org/exhibit/pim-land/>

**2. Buffalo and the People** – Explore the economic and spiritual importance of buffalo to the Native people of the Plains.  
<https://centerofthewest.org/exhibit/pim-buffalo/>

**3. Honor and Celebration** – Discover the ceremonial aspects of Plains life.  
<https://centerofthewest.org/exhibit/pim-honor/>

**4. Adversity and Renewal** – Reflect on the changes and innovation that have taken place in the cultures of Plains people since being placed on reservations.  
<https://centerofthewest.org/exhibit/pim-adversity/>

## Plains Indian Map Project

The Plains Indian Map—created with generous funding from The Brown Foundation, Inc., of Houston—is a fusion of scholarship and educational interpretation. The map represents 230 years of movement on the Plains amongst more than 45 different Indian cultures. Territorial, treaty, reservation, and state boundaries flow in an animated timeline. Visit this link to view the map: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=1&v=f83rCIXOVWU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=f83rCIXOVWU).

## Other Resources

*Do All Indians Live in Tipis? Questions and Answers from the National Museum of the American Indian* (Smithsonian) by National Museum of the American Indian

*Native American Stories* (Fulcrum Publishing) by Joseph Bruchac

*Iktomi and the Buffalo Skull* (Orchard Paperbacks) by Paul Goble (note: Paul Goble wrote a series of books with Iktomi as the central character)

*The Return of the Buffaloes* (National Geographic Society) by Paul Goble

*Tipi: Home of the Nomadic Buffalo Hunters* (World Wisdom) by Paul Goble

