

LECCIÓN 2 - THE LAKOTA SIOUX AND THE BUFFALO

THE LAKOTA SIOUX AND THE BUFFALO

It feels like an earthquake! A herd of buffalo thunders by, hooves crashing. The earth trembles. With heads down, horns thrust forward, and eyes glaring, these beasts are frightened and dangerous!

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Into their midst charges a group of brave Lakota Sioux warriors on horseback. *Warriors are people who are good fighters and are experienced in battle.* Each man has his spear or arrow ready. He will shoot as soon as he gets a bow's length away—almost close enough to reach out and touch the animal! Both of the hunter's hands are busy with his weapons, and he clings to the galloping horse by the strength of his leg muscles alone. *Galloping means that the horse was running very quickly.*



THE LAKOTA SIOUX AND THE BUFFALO

Lakota Sioux hunters shot and killed only as many buffalo as they needed for food, clothing, shelter, and tools. Sharing with others was very important to the Lakota Sioux. The buffalo killed during the hunt were divided among everyone in the tribe, including people too old or too sick to hunt for themselves.



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To have a successful buffalo hunt, both men and horses had to be welltrained. It took months of hard work to get a horse ready. The horse needed courage and speed to run through a rushing herd of buffalo, coming face-to-face with a stomping, steam-breathing, hairy beast. Horses were trained to stop immediately at the nudge of a rider's knees. Not every horse was brave and fast enough to be chosen for the hunt.



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What do you see in this picture?

Not every boy was brave and fast enough to be chosen for the hunt, either. Boys began training for buffalo hunts at a young age. They learned to ride horses well by the time they were five years old. They held riding contests to see who could ride the fastest, jump the highest, and shoot the straightest. The winners were allowed to ride with the scouts who searched for buffalo herds before the hunt.



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Boys needed lots of practice shooting at moving targets. They learned to be quick and agile *or able to move quickly and easily* by playing games with hoops and poles. Round hoops, made from bent branches, were rolled along the ground. As the hoops spun down the hillside with buffalo speed, boys aimed their poles through the center of the hoops. Something called rawhide was wrapped around the hoops *[Point to the hoops in the image.]* that the boys used for target practice. Rawhide is the tough, hard leather made from a buffalo's hide, or skin. Rawhide was used by the Lakota Sioux for many things.



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The Lakota Sioux made drums, rattles, buckets, and ropes from rawhide. Boiled rawhide was even used to make a special glue. The buffalo gave the Lakota Sioux almost everything they needed for life on the Great Plains. Rawhide was pretty tough, but the Lakota Sioux discovered ways to soften hides, turning them into soft leather with many more uses.



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From this soft leather, the Lakota Sioux women made moccasins, cradles, winter robes, bedding, shirts and dresses, pouches, and dolls.



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The Lakota Sioux often painted beautiful designs or pictures on the buffalo skin they used to make their homes. This illustration shows a tipi on which the Lakota Sioux painted horses and buffalo. A woman is kneeling in front of the tipi, tending to a fire.



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The bones of the buffalo were made into knives, arrowheads, shovels, scrapers, awls (a type of needle), and paintbrush handles. The horns were used for cups, spoons, ladles, and toys. A part of the buffalo's muscle, called sinew, was used as thread for stringing bows and arrows. The hair was used for headdresses, pillows, ropes, and ornaments.



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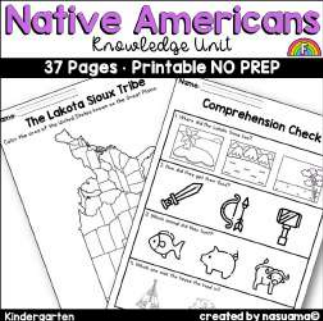
The Lakota Sioux certainly knew how to make or get the things they needed. Think of all those ways they used every part of the buffalo. Nothing was wasted. Even the buffalo meat lasted long after the hunt. The Lakota Sioux often made stew with the fresh meat. They also dried buffalo meat to eat in the winter months when food was harder to find. The Lakota Sioux pounded this dry meat and mixed it with buffalo fat to make a tasty snack called pemmican [/pem*ə*kən/].



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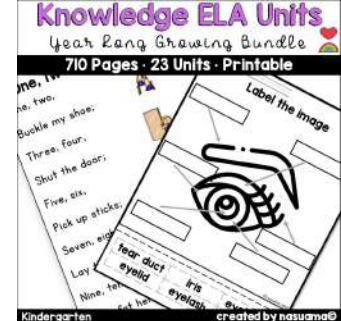
For the Lakota Sioux, the buffalo were sacred. *When something is sacred, that means it is treated with respect.* The Lakota Sioux said special prayers to the animals before hunting and killing them. Every year they performed a special ceremony, the Buffalo Dance, at the start of the summer buffalohunting season. The Buffalo Dance ceremony is something the Lakota Sioux still perform today.





NATIVE AMERICANS


BUNDLE



Name: _____

The Lakota Sioux Tribe

Color the area of the United States known as the Great Plains.



Name: _____

The Lakota Sioux

Color this buffalo and all the things that can be made from it.



DO YOU NEED EXTRA ACTIVITIES?

