

**Title:**

Passing on Lakota History through Writing

**Grade Level:**

9-12

**Theme:**

To demonstrate to children of the *Oceti Sakowin* the importance in passing on their experiences.

**Duration:**

One hour, including suggestions on topics

**Goal:**

Students will understand how the *Oceti Sakowin* used oral history with the concept of *owa* to develop their written history.

**Objectives:**

1. At the conclusion of the course of instruction, the student will have an understanding of the importance of passing on their history through their own writing by learning about petro glyphs, Winter Counts, and ledger art.
- 2) At the conclusion of the course of instruction, the student will understand contemporary methods to use in writing about their own stories.

**Cultural Background:**

The Lakota have utilized writing in various ways, beginning with petro glyphs often seen in caves, on the side of cliffs, and along major travel routes. These glyphs tell the story of those passing or living in the vicinity. Winter Counts first depicted on deer, elk, and buffalo hides developed in the 1850s, evolved into stories written on muslin and, later, on paper. Giving students a concept of passing their stories on to others coming after them.

**Cultural Concept:**

Demonstration of the ways that the *Oceti Sakowin* have told their stories through writing, with the concept of *owa*, beginning with Winter Counts ledger art, beginning in the 1850s through the early 1900s.

**Student Activities:**

1. Examine a copy of a Winter Count and decipher the glyphs
2. Think of a story you'd like to tell your sister, mother, dad, brother, friend and develop a story—either a personal narrative or fictional story.
3. Visualize a glyph that summarizes the story to tell and draw it on the paper prior to writing the story.
4. Read their stories to the class and explain their glyphs and explain how it represents their stories.

**Resources:**

1. Handout: picture and explanation of a Lone Dog Winter Count
2. Handout: picture and explanation of ledger art
3. Notebook and pen/pencil supplied by the student

**References:**

In *Lone Dog's Winter Count: Keeping History Alive*. Retrieved 22 June, 2012 from [http://nmai.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/education/poster\\_lone\\_dog\\_final.pdf](http://nmai.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/education/poster_lone_dog_final.pdf)

Burke, Christina E. (2007). Waniyetu Wowapi: An introduction to the Lakota Winter Count Tradition. In Candace S. Greene and Russell Thornton (Eds.), *The Year the Stars Fell: Lakota Winter Counts at the Smithsonian* (pp.1-11). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

In *Plains Indian Ledger Art*. Retrieved 22 June, 2012 from <https://plainsledgerart.org/>

**Assessment:**

Students will demonstrate, through writing, the concept of binding their glyphs to the story they wish to tell.

**Developer:**

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**Date:**

22 June 2012