

Title:

Lakota Winter Count

Grade Level:

5th

Theme:

The winter count (waniyetu wowapi) is a community history Project.

Duration:

The first lesson of the winter count would be an introduction to the winter count idea.— using a story about a winter count. (?) Begin by introducing Winter Counts and explaining them, Show examples of winter counts from websites, photographs, or from books. Our Lakota teacher, Gloria, would be an additional resource. This entire process could be extended beyond the first day to a week long lesson or continued throughout the semester or year.

Goal:

Students will gain an understanding of how a winter count is produced.

Students will produce, in “communities”, a winter count. As they work on their winter counts, they will work on problem solving skills, as a “community”. They will work in each group as recorder of the event, artist, leader, and storyteller.

Objectives:

Students will be able to produce a winter count for a specified period of time, as a “community”. This specified period of time will be a two week or one month period. They will determine which format will be used for their winter count: a spiral, square, or linear, left to right or right to left. As a “community”, each group will successfully choose one event from each time period, (i.e. bi-weekly, monthly).

South Dakota Standards:

5.R.1.1.; 5.R.5.3.; 5.US. 1.1.; 5.W.1.1.;

Cultural Concept:

The cultural concept will be showing the importance of recording historical events to the Lakota people, and how it was done.

Cultural Background:

As a **community**, the Lakota would discuss the events of each year to determine which one was the most important to their group. One man was chosen to draw the glyph for that event, and to remember the narrative to present orally. These events can be verified with written records. The medium on which the winter counts were recorded varied from hides, initially, to cloth, to paper and wood. These winter counts covered a one year

period of time, which did not follow the Gregorian calendar used by non-Indians. The types of formats used in creating the winter counts were spiral, linear, or a square. The direction of the glyphs could flow from right to left or left to right. Figures were most often drawn facing to the left.

Student Activities:

Student groups will view winter counts:

- to research common events depicted on winter counts.

- to try to figure out what some of the glyphs represent.

Recorders of events will record on paper the narrative of the event. Artists will be responsible to draw the glyph and affix it to the “hide” or winter count medium (poster board or bulletin board paper-brown in color). Leaders will keep the group on task, and the storyteller (orator) is responsible to memorize the narrative and tell it to the group/class.

Each group will rotate “community” responsibilities on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

Resources:

Internet, libraries, books, videos, field trip to a museum, (Journey Museum?), the school Lakota teacher.

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.

Howe, Craig, (2002). [Excerpt from Keep Your Thoughts Above the Trees: Ideas on Developing and Presenting Tribal Histories]. In Nancy Shoemaker (Ed.), *Clearing a Path: Theorizing the Past in Native American Studies* (pp.161-167). New York: Rutledge.

Lone Dog Winter Count. (n.d.). In Buffalo and the Plains Indians. *South Dakota State Historical Society Education Kit* (pp. 39-44) Retrieved June 15, 2009, from <http://sdhistory.org/mus/ed/Buffalo.htm>

Assessment:

The “community” winter counts would be one assessment tool to determine student understanding of winter counts. The finished product will show a specified period of time, and show one of the formats (i.e. spiral, linear, square) of winter counts.

Another assessment would be a written document in which each student would explain how he or she came to agree on the event and glyph.

Materials needed:

Large brown paper grocery bag or brown bulletin board paper, pencil, crayons, colored pencils or permanent marker – medium point, black. (Initial drawing on a 4” x 4” piece of paper.)

Developer:

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Date:

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