



*Revised 4/16/20
Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge*

First Americans on the Prairie

2nd Grade

60 Minutes

Fall

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.

Next Generation Science and Iowa Core Standards

Next Generation Science

- **2-PS1-1**
 - Plan and conduct an investigation to describe and classify different kinds of materials by their observable properties.
- **2-PS1-2**
 - Analyze data obtained from testing different materials to determine which materials have the properties that are best suited for an intended purpose.
- **2-PS1-3**



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- Make observations to construct an evidence-based account of how an object made of a small set of pieces can be disassembled and made into a new object.
- **K-2-ETS1-1**
 - Ask questions, make observations, and gather information about a situation people want to change to define a simple problem that can be solved through the development of a new or improved object or tool.
- **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.

Literacy

Writing

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

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**



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- 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 and Resources

- Paper or nature journals
- Journal example & background information (see last page of this lesson)
- Excerpts from Charles Eastman journals
- Pencils
- Clip boards
- Bison bones, fur and other objects (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, and space. Ask students what these things are made 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? Make a Know/Wonder/Learn chart and record their answers.



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. Assign an adult chaperon to each group. They are going to go out into the prairie and hunt for a bison bone or object 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



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from, and how they will use it to survive on the prairie (will it be used for food, water, shelter, space, etc.).

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 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. Use a different colored ribbon to define the boundaries 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. Each group should only have one bone or object, so once someone in their group finds it, they should stop looking.
7. After about 10 minutes, call the groups back inside. When they return, have them sit on the rugs. Ask each group 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



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other uses for bison bones if students do not think of all the common ones.

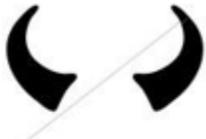
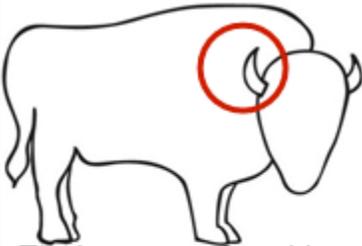
8. Collect the papers, pencils and clipboards (with the help of teachers or chaperones). Time permitting, allow the students to wander around and examine other bison parts not discussed during the lesson.
9. Remind students that they can be a hunter anytime. They can search for old artifacts, explore 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!



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Resources

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 <u>To</u> carry water To store medicine</p>	