**Bison and the Native American Experience**

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**Lesson Description:** Students will be looking at the history of bison as a part of Native American culture and what role they played throughout Native American literature. Students will be studying American literature throughout this year, and what better way to start than with the actual foundations. They will be looking at both past history and culture, what happened to the bison throughout history, and how current issues, such as Brucellosis, are playing a part in the role that bison have in today’s culture.

**Introduction:**  For anyone to fully understand what he or she is reading, they must first understand why it was written. This is one of the first rules I explain to my students as I begin to teach them the concepts of analyzing literature. If a person does not take the time to understand the culture or the history of a people, then what they are reading is simply words. There is no heart or meaning behind it and there is no passion to what they are trying to understand.

As a connection to this, my students will begin their year by studying Native American culture and history in relation specifically to bison and their role in literature. First, they must understand what animals represent for Native Americans and how the bison have a large meaning for a variety of Native American cultures. We will also look at and spend a lot of time studying the concept of Oral Tradition as we move into the literature we will be connecting to our cultural study. We will look at a creation myth, a trickster tale, and a memoir, all of which will utilize the bison as a central figure within the literature. Once my students understand the culture and the connections to literature, we will make connections to present day by introducing the concepts of Brucellosis as well as the struggles that are happening as a result. They will be asked to ponder some big questions relating current struggles to the past struggles of the bison and of the Native Americans bringing the unit full circle. Throughout the unit, the students will write persuasive pieces and participate in Socratic seminars to help understand the main issues that are presented. They will read pieces of literature, connect to the cultures, and be able to look at the big questions throughout discussions and role playing activities. Each of these methods will help the students to understand the concept of advocacy and how to better promote and persuade someone to understand their side of an argument.

**Key Concepts:**

* Native American Culture
* History of Native American within United States and with Government
* Role of Animals within Native American Culture
* Connection of Culture to Literature
* Oral Tradition
* Creation Myths
* Trickster Tales
* Memoirs
* Current Issues with Bison
* Connection of Current Issues to Historic Issues
* Advocacy and Persuasion

**Objectives:**

* Students will be able to recognize and understand the cultural significance of the bison and other animals to the Native American Culture.
* Students will be able to understand the history of the Native American.
* Students will be able to connect history and culture of the Native Americans to the literature that they read.
* Students will be able to recognize different styles of literature important to Native American Culture (specifically oral tradition, creation myths, trickster tales, and memoirs) and will be able to illustrate the characteristics of each.
* Students will be able to illustrate through writing their understanding of the issues.
* Students will be able to illustrate their ability to choose a side of an argument and persuade others through facts and connections to understand and consent with their side.

**Content Standards:**

English/Language Arts 11.1.1-3, 11.2.1-3, 11.3.1-8, 11.4.1-4, 11.6.1-4, 11.7.1, 11.7.2, 11.7.4, 11.7.6, 11.7.7, 11.7.8, 11.7.16, 11.7.17, 11.7.18

**Resources and Materials:**

* Textbook
* Handout of Creation Myth “Buffalo Woman”
* Handout of Creation Myth “Buffalo and Eagle Wing”
* “The Way to Rainy Mountain” <http://nexuslearning.net/books/Elements_of_Lit_Course5/Way_Rainy.htm>
* “They Coyote and the Buffalo” <http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/~tomshoemaker/mourningdove/coyote05.html>
* Various Worksheets and assignment handouts
* News article on Iroquois Lacrosse Team <http://abcnews.go.com/Sports/wireStory?id=11161810>
* Powerpoint – American Bison: Then and Now, by Curts, Shover, & Symons

<http://www.indstate.edu/publiclanduse/Instructional%20Powerpoints.htm>

* Slideshow – Relevant photos from Yellowstone National Park are available at:

<http://www.indstate.edu/publiclanduse/photos.htm>

* Computer
* Projector

**Time Required:** This plan is for a comprehensive unit plan developing over a span of eleven class periods. The class periods are eighty-two minutes long and meet on alternating days. This plan culminates in a final project which will be due a week after the end of the unit.

**Procedures:**

**Day 1 –**

1. Brain dump in partners of all the stories they know with animals as characters.
2. Background information of animals and their meaning in Native American culture –Handouts on Totem animals (Native American Legends) and Animal Symbolism
3. Worksheet on animals and influence in stories – do first two columns and revisit examples in literature after reading stories.
4. Importance of bison to Native Americans.

HW: (on handout) #1 – Based on their characteristics discussed in class (or individual research) what is your totem animal and why? #2 – Why do you think the bison are so important to Native American Culture?

**Day 2 –**

1. Discuss Bison in literature – pictures, history, and examples.
2. Importance of bison – show first part of slideshow through buffalo in literature slide.
3. Discuss Oral Tradition
4. Small group activity – discuss Why bison?
5. Transition to Creation myths.
   1. Different nations.
   2. Different traditions.
   3. This is their religious beginning.
6. Notes on different types of Creation Myths and characteristics.
7. Begin reading creation myth

HW: Read “Buffalo Woman” and “Buffalo and Eagle Wing.” Answer comprehension questions.

**Day 3 –**

1. Discuss story and big questions – what is the role of Buffalo in the story.
2. Creation Myth Worksheet – which type of creation myth is this? What characteristics does this include?
3. Creation Myth Writing prompt – Why are stories like this creation myth so difficult for modern generations to understand? Begin brainstorming and pre-writing in class. Discuss ideas together.

HW: Finish writing prompt as homework.

**Day 4 –**

1. Think-Pair-Share- Discuss writing prompt from night before.
2. Wrap-up creation myth lesson.
3. Transition into trickster tales (share Journal from beginning of class).
4. Background of Trickster tale and archetypal Trickster character.
5. Activity – Modern day tricksters – based on characteristics of tricksters, TPS the ultimate trickster character and trickster tale.
6. Exit slip – What role do you expect the buffalo to play in “The Coyote and the Buffalo”?

HW: Read “The Coyote and the Buffalo;” do comprehension questions

**Day 5 –**

1. Writing quiz – compare/contrast the role you expected the buffalo to play with the role he actually played in the story. Does this fit with the role of buffalo in Native American culture? Why?
2. Discuss story – timeline out on board – class activity
3. Handout long-term writing assignment – compare the role of Buffalo in these two pieces. What does it say about the values of the Native American Culture? What are the similarities and differences and what do you think these show?
4. Brainstorm writing prompt ideas as a class – assignment due in 2 classes.

HW: Work on paper. Read background information in book.

**Day 6 –**

1. Background information of Native Americans and struggles with US Government.
   1. Tensions
   2. Bison issue and bison killed.
   3. Reservations.
   4. Motivations
2. Finish Powerpoint presentation.

HW: Paper due next class.

**Day 7 –**

1. Group activity – Students will be divided into groups (tribes). Each tribe member will be given a role within the group. There will be a chief, warriors, and regular tribes members. They will be given a specific area of the classroom and a quantity of “property” that they must protect from the encroaching and invading American government. They must decide, as a tribe, what they will do when faced with the situation of their livelihoods being at risk. Do they fight for everything or try to make a deal with the government. The teacher will play the role of government. Students will then come together as a class and discuss with everyone their decisions and how each tribe reacts to said decisions.
2. Writing wrap-up: What did you think of this activity? What did you think of your rival tribes’ decisions?

HW: Read article on the Iroquois Nation not being allowed to enter England and do corresponding handout. Should they be required to obtain American or Canadian passports? Can they be kept out? Be prepared to discuss in class next period.

**Day 8 –**

1. Journal – after pondering yesterday, how do you feel about it now?
2. Socratic seminar – Should the Iroquois be kept out of England and required different passports? Why or why not?
3. Check understanding of Native American background information.
4. Introduce concept of memoir – what is it? Why is it an important style of writing?
5. TPS other popular memoirs.
6. N. Scot Momoday Background information.

HW: Read “The Way to Rainy Mountain.” Comprehension questions

**Day 9 –**

1. Slideshow on my “Rainy Mountain.”
2. Heritage and tradition activity.
3. Discuss “Rainy Mountain.”
4. Small group worksheet over “The Way to Rainy Mountain.”

HW: Write 3 paragraphs on connecting the story and the background information. Include 3 examples

**Day 10 –**

1. Bison now – Brucellosis
2. Powerpoint presentation
3. Big Question – Is what is happening now, killing and slaughtering of bison for economic benefits of others, similar to what happened originally between the Native Americans and the American government?

HW: Write two paragraph comparing current issues with past issues.

**Day 11 –**

1. Quiz
2. Socratic Seminar over big question from previous class period.
3. Introduce final project – Bridging the gap.

**Final Assessment:** For the final assessment, students will produce a project based on the concept of bridging the gap between their heritage and Native American heritage. Students will be asked to investigate their own heritage and traditions. They will then be required connect these findings to the Native American traditions and culture that we have studied both through a writing project and through a visual presentation.

**Extension:**

Each class period is an extension of the previous class period.

The final assessment is an extension of the unit itself.

As the students progress throughout the semester, they will discover that all Early American Literature has foundations in Native American and will therefore connect.

**Interdisciplinary connections:**

Social studies connections with Native American background and history.

Environmental science connections with current and past bison issues.

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| [**[Native American Icon](http://www.legendsofamerica.com/na-nativeamericans.html)**](http://www.legendsofamerica.com/na-nativeamericans.html)**NATIVE AMERICAN LEGENDS**  **Native American Totems & Their Meanings** | |
| A totem can be the symbol of a tribe, clan, family or individual. [Native American](http://www.legendsofamerica.com/na-nativeamericans.html) tradition provides that each individual is connected with nine different animals that will accompany each person through life, acting as guides. Different animal guides come in and out of our lives depending on the direction that we are headed and the tasks that need to be completed along our journey.    Native beliefs further explain that a totem animal is one that is with you for life, both in the physical and spiritual world. Though people may identify with different animal guides throughout their lifetimes, it is this one totem animal that acts as the main guardian spirit.    With this one animal a connection is shared, either through interest in the animal, characteristics, dreams, or other interaction.  This Animal Guide offers power and wisdom to the individual when they "communicate” with it, conveying their respect and trust. This does not necessarily mean that you actually pet or spend time with this animal, more that you are open to learning its lessons. | [Totem Pole at Pioneer Square in Seattle Washington](http://www.legendsofamerica.com/photos-nativeamerican/seattletotempostcard.jpg)  Totem Pole at Pioneer Square in Seattle,  [Washington](http://www.legendsofamerica.com/wa-mainpage.html) , vintage [postcard](http://www.legendsofamerica.com/postcards.html). |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | For some, knowing what is their totem animal is almost an innate process. It’s as if they’ve always known, inexplicably drawn to the animal or having a special feeling for the animal’s energy. For others, they wonder how to tell what their animal totem is.  Here are some questions to ask yourself if you’re wondering what your animal totem is:   * Have you ever felt drawn to one animal or another without being able to explain why? This could be animal, including birds and insects. * Does a certain kind of animal consistently appear in your life? This doesn’t necessarily have to be a physical appearance, it could be represented in other ways such as receiving card and letters with the same animal pictured over and over, unexplainable dreams of a particular animal, watching television and seeing the same animal featured time and time again, or, actually having the animal show up. * When you go to the zoo, a park, wildlife area, or forest, what are you most interested in seeing? * Are there any animals that you find to be extremely frightening or intriguing? * Is there a particular animal that you see frequently when you’re out in nature? * Have you ever been bitten or attacked by an animal? * Have you ever had a recurring dream about a certain animal, or a dream from childhood that you have never been able to forget? * Are you drawn to figurines or paintings of a specific animal?   The totem itself is a symbol that represents this animal.  This could be any number of items - a crest, a totem pole, an emblem, a small figurine or anything else that depicts your animal guide.      ***Note:***  [Native American](http://www.legendsofamerica.com/na-nativeamericans.html) totems did not include all of the animals listed below, as many of these creatures did not existed in North America. However; the concept of "totems," by whatever name they were called, have been known throughout the world since the earliest days of Greek Mythology. Though the unicorn is generally accepted as a centuries old mythical creature of Europeans, pictures of this fabled animal have been found in [Native American](http://www.legendsofamerica.com/na-nativeamericans.html) tapestries and pictographs      **Animal Characteristics & Meaning** |  | | |
| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | http://www.legendsofamerica.com/photos-nativeamerican/Antelope.jpg | **Alligator** | Maternal, revenge oriented, quickness, aggression, and basic survival instincts. | | **Ant** | Group minded, determination, patient, active, and industrious | | **Anteater** | Lethargy, curiosity, nosiness. | | **Antelope** | Active, agile, jumpiness, and willing to sacrifice | | **Armadillo** | Safety oriented, grounded, and has boundaries | | http://www.legendsofamerica.com/photos-nativeamerican/bear.jpg | **Badger** | Courage, aggressive, healer, having problems relating to others, and energy conduit | | **Bat** | Rebirth, longevity, secrecy, initiation, good listener, and long life | | **Bear** | Industrious, instinctive, healing, power, sovereignty, guardian of the world, watcher, courage, will power, self-preservation, introspection, and great strength. | | **Beaver** | Determined, strong-willed, builder, overseer, and protector | | http://www.legendsofamerica.com/photos-nativeamerican/buffaloclip.jpg | **Bee** | Organized, industrial, productive, wise, community, celebration, fertility, defensiveness, obsessive nature, and enjoys life | | **Boar/Pig** | A very powerful totem - prosperity, spiritual strength, organized, self-reliant, fearless. | | **Buffalo** | Sacredness, life, great strength, abundance, gratitude. | | **Bull** | Insight into the past, fertility, rushing into things without proper preparation. | | **Butterfly** | Metamorphosis, transformation, balnace, grace, ability to accept change | | **Camel** | Survival, positive, accomplishments | | **Caribou** | Traveler, mobility, preference to be nomadic, adaptability to adversity | | http://www.legendsofamerica.com/photos-nativeamerican/cow.jpg | **Cat** | Guardianship, detachment, sensuality, mystery, magic, and independence | | **Cheetah** | Swiftness, insight, focus | | **Cougar** | Leadership, loyalty, courage, taking responsibility, foresight | | **Cow** | Swift, insightful, and focused | | **Coyote** | Trickster, intelligence, stealth, wisdom and folley, guile and innocence | | **Cobra** | Swift and decisive | | http://www.legendsofamerica.com/photos-nativeamerican/Deer.jpg | **Crab** | Good luck, protection and success | | **Crane** | Solitude, justice, longevity, independent, intelligent, and vigilant | | **Crocodile** | Ensuring your emotions are displayed accurately/appropriately | | **Crow** | Justice, shape shifting, change, creativity, spiritual strength, energy, community sharing, and balance | | **Deer** | Compassion, peace, intellectual, gentle, caring, kind, subtlety, gracefulness, femininity, gentleness, innocence, and seller of adventure | | **Dog** | Noble, faithful, loyal, teaching, protection, and guidance | | |
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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Dolphin** | Kind, salvation, wisdom, happiness, playfulness, prudent, capable of deep emotion, and happy. | | **Dove** | Cross-world communication, spirit messenger, peace, gentleness, love | | **Dragon** | Longevity, richness, prosperity, infinity, wisdom, power, and fiery | | **Dragonfly** | Flighty and carefree, strong imagination, higher aspirations. | | **Duck** | Water energy, helper of seers, can clearly see/deal with emotions | | **Eagle** | Divine spirit, sacrifice, connection to creator, intelligence, renewal, courage, illumination  of spirit, healing, creation, freedom, and risk-taker | | **Elephant** | Strength, power, affection, loyalty, royalty, and wisdom | | **Elk** | Strength and agility, pride, majestic, independence, purification, strength, and nobility | | **Falcon** | New beginnings, adventure, passionate, and leadership. | | **Fish** | Graceful, slyness, open-minded, quick to change one's mind. | | **Flamingo** | Heart healing, psychic, people person, flirtatious. | | **Fox** | Cunning, agility, quick-witted, diplomacy, wildness, feminine magic of camouflage,  shapeshifting and invisibility | | **Frog** | Water energy, cleansing, rebirth, sensitivity, medicine, hidden beauty, peace, adaptability,  poor character judgment and power. | | **Gazelle** | Aggressive | | **Giraffe** | Communication, intuition, attaining the unreachable, seeing the future | | **Goat** | Surefootedness, stubbornness, independence, diligence, lack of foresight. | | **Goose** | Self-demanding, reliable, prudent, rigid, vigilance, parenthood, and productive. | | **Gorilla** | Family-oriented, intelligence, strength, environmental protector, keeps peace through aggression. | | **Grasshopper** | Good luck, abundance, forward, progressive. | | **Grouse** | Personal power, enlightenment. | | **Hawk** | Messenger, intuition, victory, healing, nobility, recollection, cleansing,  visionary power, and guardianship. | | **Heron/Egret** | Aggressive, self-determined, self-reliant, multi-tasking, balanced. | | **Hippopotamus** | Power, creation, imagination, healing. | | **Horse** | Freedom, stamina, mobility, the land, travel, power, and freedom. | | **Hummingbird** | Messenger, timelessness, healing, and warrior. | | **Jaguar** | Chaos, shape-shifter, aggressiveness, power. | | **Kangaroo** | Forward, balance, creative, stamina. | | **Lion** | Family, strength, energy, courage, guardian and protector. | | **Lizard** | Conservation, vision, self-protection, hidden defenses. | | **Llama** | Comforting to others, secure. | | **Lynx** | Keeper of secrets, guardian, listener, and guide. | | **Mole** | Sensitivity, guidance, searching. | | **Monkey** | Ability to change the environment, health, success. | | **Moose** | Headstrong, longevity, steadfastness, and wisdom. | | **Mouse** | Scrutiny, order, organizer, and an eye for details. | | **Octopus** | Intelligence, camouflage, nocturnal. | | **Opossum** | Diversion, strategist, and deceiver. | | **Ostrich** | Grounded, practical. | | **Otter** | Playful, friendly, dynamic, joy, helpfulness, and sharing | | **Owl** | Deception, clairvoyance, insight, messenger. | | **Ox** | Sacrifice, chastity and self-denial | | **Panther** | Protection, hidden emotions, introspection, caution, careful decisions | | **Parrot** | Communication, beauty, guide for wisdom, mockery, thinking before speaking | | **Peacock** | Immortality, dignity, and self-confidence | | **Pelican** | Resilient, unselfish, rising above. | | **Penguin** | Self-discipline, grace, self-confidence, spiritual | | **Porcupine** | Innocence, companionship, and trust | | **Prairie Dog** | Swiftness, industrious, constructive, preparedness | | **Puma** | Companion on journeys to other worlds, grace, silent power | | **Quail** | Group-work, team play, creator of harmony and group tolerance,  protectiveness (especially toward children) | | **Rabbit** | Fear, timidity, nervousness, humility, rebirth, | | **Raccoon** | Curiosity and cleanliness | | **Ram** | Stoic, sensitive, persevering, curious, imaginative. | | **Rat** | Fertility, stealth, scavenging, intelligence, enjoys luxury | | **Raven** | Introspection, courage, self-knowledge, magic | | **Rhinoceros** | Wisdom, solitary, insightful, solid. | | **Roadrunner** | Mental agility, speed, opportunistic. | | **Rooster** | Vanity, likes to be showered with gifts and attention, early riser,  settling for nothing less than the best | | **Salmon** | Proud, intense, confident, wisdom, inspiration | | **Scorpion** | Transforming, strong, inspiring, chaotic,  passionate | | **Seagull** | Versatility, loud, easy-going nature, creativity, laziness | | **Seahorse** | Confidence and grace | | **Seal** | Love, longing, dilemma, active imagination, creativity | | **Shark** | Hunter, survival, and adaptability | | **Skunk** | Reputation, presence, and strength | | **Snail** | Protective, aware, solitary. | | **Snake** | Impulsive, shrewdness, rebirth, transformation, initiation, and wisdom | | **Spider** | Balance, wisdom, creativity, communication | | **Squirrel** | Planner and gatherer | | **Stag** | Lord of the forest, masculine power of regeneration, signs. | | **Swan** | Grace, balance and innocence, soul, love, beauty, of the self | | **Tiger** | Strength, valor, power, and energy | | **Toad** | inner strength, luck, self-examination | | **Turkey** | Generosity, life-giver, and sharer | | **Turtle** | Nurturer, shy, and protecting | | **Unicorn** | Purity, innocence, dreamer, personal power, gentle | | **Weasel** | Strength, energy, ingenuity and stealth | | **Whale** | Wisdom, provider, intelligence, and kindness. | | **Wolf** | Loyalty, perseverance, success, intuition, and spirit | | **Woodpecker** | Sensitive, protective, and devotion | | **Zebra** | Agility and individuality | | |

Native American Animals and Their Meanings

**Buffalo** – The Native American used every part of the Buffalo they hunted and thus the buffalo became a symbol for abundance, prayer, and gratitude. When you are attracted to buffalo you are being asked to renew your connection to higher power through prayer and thankfulness for all you have. In doing so, you will attract more into your life. Buffalo teaches that what you need will always be provided.

**Eagle** – Eagle flies high, close to God. He focuse the big picture but with his eyesight he can also perceive the most minute details. The eagle is the symbols for spirit. If he is in your life, you are likely to be going through a time of great spiritual growth, initiation, and change.

**Bat** – Transition, rebirth, understanding of grief, invisibility, transition.

**Cow** – The cow is a nurturing mother goddess who reminds you to be gentle with yourself and to take better care of yourself. If she shows up around you, slow down, take joy in simple pleasures, and pay attention to your needs.

**Coyote**- Almost universally the coyote is the trickster or the sacred clown. His antics make us laugh and he reminds us not to take life so seriously. Sprit influence includes understanding all things yet nothing is sacred, stealth, and intelligence. If coyote comes in your life things may look all messed up for a while until you discover that life is really working in your favor. Develop a sense of humor and go with the flow.

**Elk** – Elk’s wisdom includes stamina, strength, sensual passion, honoring those of your gender, and the ability to pace oneself in tasks. The elk is a strong animal that migrates for long distances. Call on him when you need the strength and stamina to keep going forward in your life.

**Horse** – The horse is a symbol for personal power. Real power inspires others and motives you to act in life. Qualities include power, stamina, endurance, faithfulness, freedom to run free, control of the environment, expanding one’s abilities, friendship and cooperation, travel, warning of possible dangers, and guiding to overcome obstacles.

**Deer** – Characteristics include gentleness in word, thought and touch, the ability to listen, grace and appreciation for the beauty of balance, understanding of what’s necessary for survival, power of gratitude and giving, ability to sacrifice for the higher good, and understanding there are alternative paths to a goal. The deer teachers us to be gentle with ourselves and also to honor our guests.

**Wolf** – The wolf is a path finder and teacher who is not afraid to go off and explore the many trails in the forest before coming back to share its adventures with the pack. The wolf’s sprit influences include death and rebirth, spirit teaching, guidance in dreams and meditations, instinct linked with intelligence, social and familial values, outwitting enemies, steadfastness, and the skill to protect not only oneself but one’s family as well.

(all information from Snowowl.com)

**Animals and Symbols in Native American Literature**

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| **Animal or Symbol** | **Meaning** | **Example in Literature** |
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English 11 – HW questions.

1. Based on their characteristics discussed in class (or individual research) what is your totem animal and why?
2. Why do you think the bison are so important to Native American Culture?

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**Buffalo Woman**

**Native American Lore**

Once, long ago, all things were waiting in a deep place far underground. There were the great herds of buffaloes and all the people, and the antelope too, and wolves, deer and rabbits, everything, even the little bird that sings the tear-tear song. Everything waited as in sleep.

Then the one called Buffalo Woman awoke, stretched her arms, rose and began to walk. She walked among all the creatures, past the little tear-tear bird, the rabbits and all the rest and through the people too, and the buffaloes. Everywhere as she passed there was an awakening and a slow moving, as when the eyes were making ready for some fine new thing to be seen. Buffalo Woman walked on in the good way, past even the farthest buffaloes, the young cows with their sleeping yellow calves. She went on to a dark round place that seemed like a hole and she stood there a while, looking. Then she bowed her head a little, as one does to pass under the lodge flap, and she stepped out. Suddenly the people could see there was a great shining light all about her, a shining and brightness that seemed blinding as she was gone.

And now a young cow arose and followed the woman, and then another buffalo and another, until a great string of them was following each one for a moment in the shining light of the hole before he was gone, and the light fell upon the one behind. When the last of the buffaloes was up and moving, the people began to rise, one after another, and fell into a row too, each one close upon the heels of the moccasins ahead. All the people, young and old and weak and strong, went so, out through the hole that was on Pahuk, out upon the shining, warm, and grassy place that was the earth, with a wide river, the Platte, flowing below, and over everything a blueness, with the tear-tear bird flying toward the sun, the warming sun. The buffaloes were already scattering over the prairie feeding, spreading in every direction toward the circle that is the horizon. The people looked all around and knew this was their place, the place upon which they would live forever, they and the buffaloes together.

Callenbach, Ernest. *Bring Back the Buffalo: A Sustainable Future for America’s Great Plains.* Berkley: University of California Press, 1996. 66. Print.

**Buffalo and Eagle Wing**

**Native American Lore**

A long time ago there were no stones on the earth. The mountains, hills, and valleys were not rough, and it was easy to walk on the ground swiftly. There were no small trees at that time either. All the bushes and trees were tall and straight and were at equal distances. So a man could travel through a forest without having to make a path.

At that time, a large buffalo roamed over the land. From the water, he had obtained his spirit power--the power to change anything into some other form. He would have that power as long as he only drank from a certain pool.

In his wanderings, Buffalo often travelled across a high mountain. He liked this mountain so much that one day he asked it, "Would you like to be changed into something else?"

"Yes," replied the mountain. "I would like to be changed into something nobody would want to climb over."

"All right," said Buffalo. "I will change you into something hard that I will call 'stone.' You will be so hard that no one will want to break you and so smooth that no one will want to climb you."

So Buffalo changed the mountain into a large stone. "And I give you the power to change yourself into anything else as long as you do not break yourself."

Only buffaloes lived in this part of the land. No people lived here. On the other side of the mountain lived men who were cruel and killed animals. The buffaloes knew about them and stayed as far away from them as possible. But one day Buffalo thought he would like to see these men. He hoped to make friends with them and persuade them not to kill buffaloes.

So he went over the mountain and travelled along a stream until he came to a lodge. There lived an old woman and her grandson. The little boy liked Buffalo, and Buffalo liked the little boy and his grandmother. He said to them, "I have the power to change you into any form you wish. What would you like most to be?"

"I want always to be with my grandson. I want to be changed into anything that will make it possible for me to be with him, wherever he goes."

"I will take you to the home of the buffaloes," said their guest. "I will ask them to teach the boy to become a swift runner. I will ask the water to change the grandmother into something, so that you two can always be together."

So Buffalo, the grandmother, and the little boy went over the mountain to the land of the buffaloes.

"We will teach you to run swiftly," they told the boy, "if you will promise to keep your people from hunting and killing buffaloes."

"I promise," said the boy.

The buffaloes taught him to run so fast that not one of them could keep up with him. The old grandmother could follow him wherever he went, for she had been changed into Wind.

The boy stayed with the buffaloes until he became a man. Then they let him go back to his people, reminding him of his promise. Because he was such a swift runner, he became a leader of the hunters. They called him Eagle Wing.

One day the chief called Eagle Wing to him and said to him, "My son, I want you to take the hunters to the buffalo country. We have never been able to kill buffaloes because they run so very fast. But you too can run fast. If you will kill some buffaloes and bring home the meat and the skins, I will adopt you as my son. And when I die, you will become chief of the tribe."

Eagle Wing wanted so much to become chief that he pushed from his mind his promise to the buffaloes. He started out with the hunters, but he climbed the mountain so fast that they were soon left far behind. On the other side of the mountain, he saw a herd of buffaloes. They started to run in fright, but Eagle Wing followed them and killed most of them.

Buffalo, the great one who got his power from the water, was away from home at the time of the hunt. On his way back he grew so thirsty that he drank from some water on the other side of the mountain not from his special pool. When he reached home and saw what the hunter had done, he became very angry. He tried to turn the men into grass, but he could not. Because he had drunk from another pool, he had lost his power to transform.

Buffalo went to the big stone that had once been a mountain.

"What can you do to punish the hunter for what he has done?" he asked Stone.

"I will ask the trees to tangle themselves so that it will be difficult for men to travel through them," answered Stone. "I will break myself into many pieces and scatter myself all over the land. Then the swift runner and his followers cannot run over me without hurting their feet."

"That will punish them," agreed Buffalo.

So Stone broke itself into many pieces and scattered itself all over the land. Whenever the swift runner, Eagle Wing, and his followers tried to run over the mountain, stones cut their feet. Bushes scratched and bruised their bodies.

That is how Eagle Wing was punished for not keeping his promise to Buffalo.

http://www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/lore24.html

**Creation Myth Comprehension Questions**

**Buffalo Woman**

1. What was the world like in the time before the changes took place?
2. What began this transformation?
3. What did the Buffalo Woman do for this transformation to take place?
4. Why were the animals so intrigued by the light?
5. What happened when the animals went into the light?

**Buffalo and Eagle Wing**

1. What was the world like in the time before the changes took place?
2. What began this transformation?
3. What promise did Eagle make?
4. How did Eagle break this promise?
5. How was Eagle punished by Buffalo?

**Characteristics of a Creation Myth**

Creation myths typically have very specific characteristics. The world is usually created in one of four specific ways and characters have particular meanings. Also both the plot and setting help to describe the religion of a specific group. While creation myths are sometimes difficult to understand, much of this comes from the fact that they are very different than what we know.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type of creation used:** | **Explanation:** |
| **Plot Points:** | **Explanation:** |
| **Setting:** | **Importance:** |
| **Animal/Symbol:** | **Importance:** |
| **Animal/Symbol:** | **Importance:** |
| **Animal/Symbol:** | **Importance:** |

**English 11 Reading Prompt**

Often we struggle with understanding creation myths. They are beautiful and interesting stories, but why do we struggle with them so much? Is it a generation gap, a culture gap, or more? Why are stories like this creation myth so difficult for modern generations to understand?

Use the space below and on the back of the handout as a place to pre-write and brainstorm your ideas. For this prompt we will be concentrating on ideas and content. Remember this as you begin your writing! I expect your writing to be five paragraphs and for you to do so on a separate piece of paper.

**English 11 – Quiz – “Coyote and the Buffalo”**

1. Compare and contrast the role you expected the Buffalo to play with the role he actually played in the story. Does this fit with the role of the Buffalo in Native American culture and literature? Why?

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**English 11 – Writing Assignment**

So far, we have read two pieces of Native American literature. We have read both a creation story and a trickster tale. Both of the stories rely heavily on the concept of oral tradition and utilize buffalo as characters. While “Buffalo Woman” (creation story) and “The Coyote and the Buffalo” (trickster tale) have many similarities, they also have many differences. And, more importantly, the role of the Buffalo is very interesting in both pieces.

**Prompt:** Compare the role of the Buffalo in “The Buffalo Woman” and “The Coyote and the Buffalo.” What are the similarities and differences and what do you think these show? What does this say about the values of the Native American culture?

**Requirements:**

* Concentrate on Ideas and Content and Organization.
* Use good writing conventions.
* Pre-writing is required.
* Turn in all pre-writing and drafts.
* Typed, double spaced, 1 inch margins!
* 2 pages, 12 point times new roman font.

**Date Due:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**UK Won't Let Iroquois Lacrosse Team Go to Tourney**

UK won't let Iroquois lacrosse team go to England for tourney without US or Canadian passports

**By SAMANTHA GROSS**

**The Associated Press**

**NEW YORK**

An American Indian lacrosse team will not be allowed entry into England for the world championship of the sport the Iroquois helped invent unless members accept U.S. or Canadian passports, the British government said Wednesday.

The Iroquois Nationals team won't be attending the tournament in Manchester unless the British government reverses its decision and allows them to use passports issued by the Iroquois Confederacy, said Tonya Gonnella Frichner, a lawyer for the team.

"They're telling us: 'Go get U.S. passports or Canadian passports,'" Frichner said Wednesday shortly after getting the news. "It's pretty devastating."

The team's 23 players — who are all eligible for passports issued by those nations — say that accepting them would be a strike against their identity.

In a statement, the U.K. Borders Agency said: "Like all those seeking entry into the U.K., they must present a document that we recognise as valid to enable us to complete our immigration and other checks."

The British government's decision was announced hours after the U.S. cleared the team for travel on a one-time waiver at the behest of Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. U.S. authorities initially had refused to accept the passports issued by the Iroquois Confederacy, which lack new security features now required for border crossings because of post-Sept. 11 crackdowns on document fraud and illegal immigration.

Asked why the State Department had dropped its opposition, spokesman P.J. Crowley said: "There was flexibility there to grant this kind of one-time waiver given the unique circumstances of this particular trip."

U.S. Rep. Dan Maffei, D-N.Y., urged the British to reconsider their decision.

"If the British or any national entity seeks to sever this Iroquois Nationals team from their own national identity, then they're asking them to not be the athletes that they are," he said in a statement, calling it an "international embarrassment" if they're not allowed to compete.

Federation of International Lacrosse spokesman Ron Balls said in a statement on the championship website that the Iroquois team would forfeit the opening game against England on Thursday night if it didn't arrive on time. But Frichner and other team supporters had held out hope that the game would be rescheduled.

The Iroquois team is ranked No. 4 by the Federation of International Lacrosse and represents the Haudenosaunee — an Iroquois Confederacy of the Oneida, Seneca, Mohawk, Tuscarora, Cayuga and Onondaga nations, whose land stretches from upstate New York into Ontario, Canada.

The Iroquois helped invent lacrosse, perhaps as early as 1,000 years ago. Their participation in the once-every-four-year world championship tournament is a rare example of international recognition of their sovereignty.

U.S. authorities had said the issue was a matter of border security rather than Iroquois sovereignty.

"For other countries, including the United States, that is not a travel document that is on par with a U.S. passport," Crowley said of the Iroquois documents. He noted that the Iroquois have had similar problems with their passports in foreign countries before.

"The best way to open doors around the world is to obtain a U.S. passport," he said.

New U.S. passports contain embedded radio-frequency identification chips, similar to the ones inside highway toll transponders. The Iroquois documents look similar to U.S. passports but are emblazoned with a Haudenosaunee insignia featuring a tree and animal emblems. The simple blue booklet is made with thinner paper than U.S. passports, has no high-tech chips and some information is handwritten.

At least four Indian nations, including the Kootenai of Idaho; the Pasqua Yaqui of Arizona; the Tohono O'odham Nation of Arizona and Mexico; and the Seneca of New York have been working with federal officials to develop ID cards that meet new security guidelines, but they would be good only for arrivals in the U.S. by land or sea, according to the Department of Homeland Security.

Frichner, who also is the North American Regional Representative to the U.N. Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, said the Iroquois have almost completed a transition to higher security passports. The process has cost the six-nation confederacy more than $1.5 million, she said.

Native Americans are not the only ones that have been asked to beef up travel document security features in recent years.

Since the Sept. 11 attacks, the U.S. has tightened up identification rules for foreign travelers from close U.S. allies such as France, Germany and the United Kingdom. A growing number of visitors from those countries who wish to travel to the U.S. without a visa must now present passports containing digital photographs and embedded electronic information.

The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative also began requiring most U.S. citizens to present their passports when re-entering the country from Canada or Mexico. Previously, travelers needed only to show a driver's license and orally declare their citizenship.

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Associated Press writers Verena Dobnik in New York, Matthew Lee in Washington and Sylvia Hui in London contributed to this report.

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**Iroquois Nation and Passports**

First, read the handout about the Iroquois and the English government denying their admittance into the country.

**List 5 Main Points from the article below.**








Answer the following prompt: Should they be required to obtain American or Canadian passports? Can they be kept out? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**English 11 Writing Prompt – “The Way to Rainy Mountain”**

Write three paragraphs with connecting the story, “The Way to Rainy Mountain” and the background information you recently learned. Make sure to include at least three examples.

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**English 11 Writing Prompt – Current and Past Issues**

Write two paragraphs comparing current issues of Bison and Native Americans with past issues that plagued the area. Make sure to include specific examples.

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**Bridging the Gap:**

**English 11 Native American Experience Project**

Everyone has a history. Every family comes from some place and every person has roots. This is clearly shown in the Native American literature we have read. All that they do and believe is based around their tradition and their roots. Like the Native American stories we have read, we are all founded upon our own tradition and roots. Sometimes though, we forget just what those roots really are.

Your task for this project is going to be to bridge the gap between yourself and the Native Americans we have read about this year. To do so, you will be starting with the most basic means of understanding oneself; your own roots and heritage. You will be researching your family’s roots, heritage, and traditions in an attempt to understand not only where you come from, but also how you relate with the Native American tribes and their traditions. Essentially, you will be bridging the gap between your culture and theirs.

For this to be successful, you will have three main parts you must accomplish.

1. **Research-** First, you must research your past and roots. You need to find a tradition or a story from your family’s heritage that means something to you. To accomplish this, interview family members, look at old photo albums and ask questions, talk to the older members of your family about how your family came to be where they are. Maybe, someone in your family fought in a war, or maybe someone in your family accidentally cooked the wrong food one Christmas and that is why you eat what you do. Maybe, you come from a long line of farmers and your heritage and traditions revolve around the land. Maybe, you don’t know your family or don’t know much about who you are. You still have a history and still ended up where you are somehow. Whatever your story is, that is what you are looking for.
   1. Make sure to take notes on interviews.
   2. Turn in any and all notes and information found during this part of the project.
2. **Visual Representation –** The rest of the class will want to know all about you. So, you will need to make a visual representation of the amazing stories and information you find out through your research. Whether this is a collection of pictures illustrating a family tradition or a family tree showing your roots, somehow you need to show visually what you plan to explain. We want to see your roots. The options here are endless.
   1. All visual projects must be cleared with teacher beforehand.
   2. Date for Visual projects to be checked is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
3. **Written Connection –** The written aspect of the project will incorporate multiple connections. First, your story. Tell us what you discovered about your family. What tradition do you want to share? What is your heritage? Whatever aspect you choose to focus on in parts 1 and 2, here is where you write about it firsthand. Act as if you are N. Scott Momaday writing a memoir about said tradition or story. Write and tell us its importance to you and your family. Or, tell us strictly about your family and its heritage or roots. Whichever you have chosen, just remembered to make it real.

Second, discuss what you discovered about yourself and/or your family while researching this information. Maybe you didn’t discover much. But, on the other hand, maybe you learned more about yourself than you could have imagined. So, how did it change you and what did you learn?

Finally, how do you connect all of this to the Native Americans and their culture? Essentially, how do you connect your culture (your heritage and story) to their culture (their heritage and story)? Think about what we have learned about their culture and what is important to them. Think about the different things they value and what means the most to them. Then compare those values to what you found during your research. Dive deep to see what connections are there.

**Requirements:**

* Focus on: (Ideas and Content) Organization, Voice!
* Typed, 12 point times new Roman Font, Double Spaced, MLA heading
* 3-4 Pages.
* Visual representation is separate from 3-4 Pages.
* HAVE FUN!!! This project could be loads of fun if you let it be!

Date Due: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_