

Signs of the Seasons

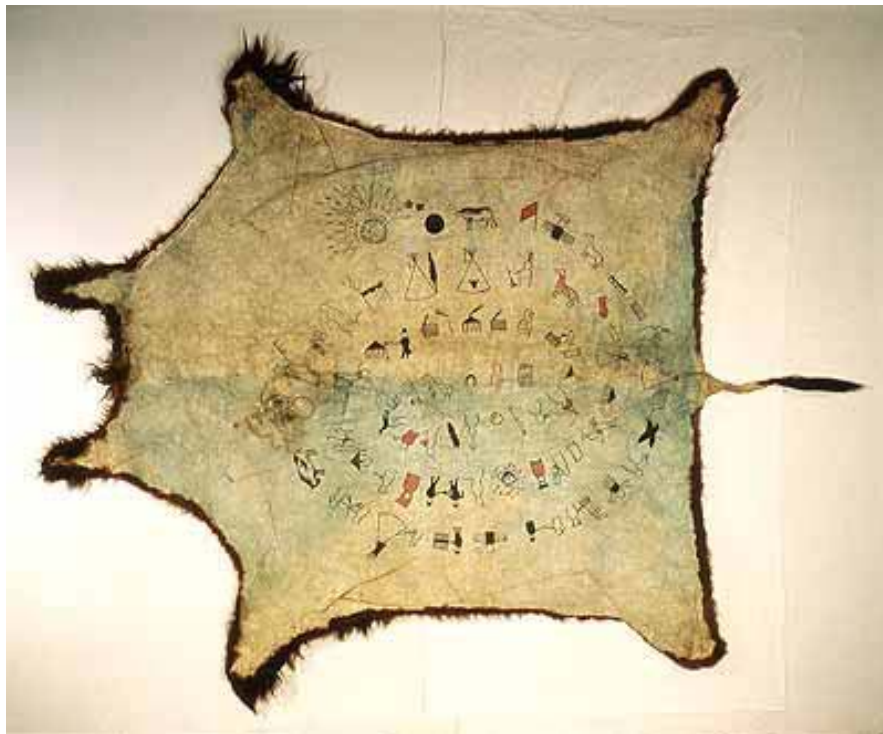
Teacher Post-visit

- Target Grade:** 1
- Standard V:** Students will observe and describe the basic components of weather as related to the activities of plants, animals, and people.
- Objectives:** Students will draw pictures to create a story of seasonal change. Students will become familiar with the Plains Indians' use of buffalo hides to record living histories.
- Materials:** Half of a paper grocery bag for each student, crayons and markers, or paint
- Time:** 25 minutes

Background Information:

The Plains Indians used buffalo hides and pigment paints to record a journal of each year for the tribe. Some tribes used hide paintings to record their history. Tribal leaders chose the single most important event of each year, and added one picture representing that event to the hide painting. Members of the tribe often identified the year they were born by referring to the event depicted on these "winter count" hides.

Shunka Ishnala (Lone Dog), Yanktonai. About 1870. National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution. Photo by Janine Sarna Jones.



Lesson Plan:

1. You can do a simple variation of this living history with the students after they have come to the Stokes Nature Center. Instruct the students that they are going to record a story of seasonal change on their “buffalo hides.” Have the children tear half of a brown paper grocery bag into a buffalo hide shape. Next have them think back to their visit to the Stokes Nature Center, then have them begin their story of seasonal change by creating a drawing on their “buffalo hide” that shows how plants, animals or people change throughout the seasons.

2. Encourage the students to focus on natural events for their seasonal change story. In this way the student begins the process of keeping a nature journal. It is also possible for you the teacher to make a large “hide” which could be posted in the classroom and maintained throughout the school year to record the seasonal change story of the class or “tribe” that includes natural as well as cultural events.

This is a quiet activity, once the tearing stage is over, and could be beautifully backed by Native American flute music or similar music of your choice.

For additional information:

http://americanhistory.si.edu/hohr/buffalo/mypainting_frmset.html

Buffalo Hide Outline

Have your students tear this general shape out of a half of a paper bag to use as their buffalo hide.

