

# Comparing the Grass House, Earth Lodge and Tipi

**Overview:** This lesson will show the similarities and differences of the tipi, grass house, and earth lodge using a Kansas map, sentence strips, and graphic organizers. It requires that students already have a general knowledge of the tipi, grass house, and earth lodge. Lessons in this trunk on each of these housing styles will provide this background.

## First Grade Standards:

### History (2004):

Benchmark 2, Indicator 4: The student will compare types of shelter used by American Indians in Kansas over time (e.g., grass house, tipi, earth lodge, frame house).

Benchmark 4, Indicator 3: The student asks questions, shares information and discusses ideas about the past using resources such as maps, photographs, books and people.

## Objectives:

### Content

- The student identifies facts about the grass house.
- The student identifies facts about the tipi.
- The student identifies facts about the earth lodge.

### Skills

- The student compares three types of shelter used by American Indians in Kansas.
- The student reads the text to make comparisons.
- The student sorts facts about the grass house, tipi and earth lodge.
- The student graphs the similarities and differences between the grass house, tipi, and earth lodge.

## Essential Questions:

- How are the grass house, tipi, and earth lodge similar and how are they different?

## Materials Needed from the Trunk:

- 3 Worksheets
  - #3 – Grass House Facts
  - #4 – Tipi Facts
  - #5 – Earth Lodge Facts
- Transparency – Comparing Indian Homes in Kansas
- 30 Sentence strips and picture clue cards (10 each for tipi, grass house and earth lodge)
- Pocket chart
- Floor map of Kansas
- 3 Scale models
  - grass house
  - tipi
  - earth lodge

**Other Materials You Need to Supply:**

- Scissors (one per child)
- Overhead projector
- Pen(s) for writing on transparency

**Advance Preparation Needed:**

- Plan to divide the class into groups with 3 students per group.
- Copy worksheets #3, 4 and 5 on colored paper. Copy worksheet #3 (earth lodge) on green, #4 (grass house) on yellow, and #5 (tipi) on pink). Copy enough worksheets so that each group of 3 students has one set of these worksheets.
- Prepare the pocket chart with the Grass House sentence strips and icons already in the chart.
- Have sentence strips and icons for the Tipi and Earth Lodge ready.

**Content Background for the Teacher:**

Additional information on the grass house, earth lodge and tipi can be found in the lessons “Building a Grass House,” “Building a Tipi” and “Building an Earth Lodge”.

The three Indian homes examined in this lesson have many things in common. They are all built from available natural resources and for the environment they were part of. They all had a circular floor plan, no windows, a central fire pit, and a door that faced east that allowed the morning light to enter the dwelling. Each is also built by covering a frame of wooden poles with an outer shell of some type.

Most differences in these houses occurred because the houses were built from available resources and for life in a specific environment. The wooden frame of the earth lodge was covered with sod and earth. The wooden frame of the grass house was covered with bundles of tall grass. The wooden frame of the tipi was covered with buffalo hides. The shape of each is somewhat similar but varies due to the type of covering placed over the wooden frame.

**Lesson:**

Begin this lesson with the grass house sentence strips and icons already placed in the pocket chart.

Directions	Script
<p>1. Introduce the topic of the lesson - the comparison of three types of houses Indians built in Kansas a long time ago.</p>	<p><i>Today we are going to compare three types of houses Indians built in Kansas a long, long time ago. We are going to compare the grass house, tipi and earth lodge. We are going to find things that were the same when we compare them. We are going to find things that were different when we compare them.</i></p>
<p>2. Activate prior knowledge of the grass house, tipi and earth lodge using the <u>Kansas floor map</u>, and <u>scale models</u> of each of these housing types. Sit the class around the floor map of Kansas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Grass House Scale Model and Kansas Floor Map</b></li></ul>	<p><i>Let's review what we know about these three houses.</i></p> <p><i>This is a grass house.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>What shape was the grass house? [a beehive]</i></li><li>• <i>How many doors did the grass house have? [two] What two directions did the doors face? [east and west]</i></li><li>• <i>Did the grass house have any windows? [no]</i></li><li>• <i>The Indians cooked over a fire inside the grass house. The grass house had a hole at the top to let out the smoke. Where is the smokehole on this grass house?</i></li><li>• <i>Did the grass house stay in one place or move from place to place? [stayed in one place] It stayed in one place. The Indians that lived in grass houses raised crops and needed homes that stayed by their crops.</i></li><li>• <i>The grass house is made by covering a wooden frame with grass. Can you see part of the frame on this grass house? [the four poles sticking out the top of the grass house]</i></li></ul> <p><i>A long, long time ago some Indians in Kansas lived in grass houses. They built them where there was a lot of very tall grass. Where should we place the grass house on our Kansas map? [by the photo of the tall grass]</i></p>

- **Earth Lodge Scale Model and Kansas Floor Map**

*This is an earth lodge.*

- *What shape was the earth lodge? [a turtle]*
- *How many doors did an earth lodge have? [one]*
- *Did the earth lodge have any windows? [no]*
- *The Indians cooked over a fire inside the earth lodge. The earth lodge had a hole at the top to let out the smoke. Where is the smokehole on this earth lodge?*
- *Did the earth lodge stay in one place or move from place to place? [stayed in one place] It stayed in one place. The Indians that lived in earth lodges raised crops and needed homes that stayed by their crops.*
- *The earth lodge is made by covering a wooden frame with dirt and sod. Can you see part of the frame on this earth lodge? [poles can be seen around the entryway]*

*A long, long time ago some Indians in Kansas lived in earth lodges. Earth lodges helped keep them warm during the winter. Where should we place the earth lodge on our Kansas map? [by the winter photo]*

- **Tipi Scale Model and Kansas Floor Map**

*This is a tipi.*

- *What shape was a tipi? [cone]*
- *How many doors did a tipi have? [one] What direction did the tipi door face? [east]*
- *Did the tipi have any windows? [no]*
- *The Indians cooked over a fire inside their tipis. The tipi had a hole at the top to let out the smoke. Where is the smokehole on this tipi?*
- *Did the tipi stay in one place or move from place to place? [moved from place to place] It moved from place to place so the Indians could follow the bison herds and find food*
- *The tipi is made by placing a tipi cover over a wooden frame. Where can we see the wooden frame on this tipi? [sticking out above the tipi cover] What did the Indians use to make the tipi cover? [bison hides]*

*A long, long time ago Indians in Kansas lived in tipis. Where should we place the tipi on our Kansas map? [western Kansas]*

<p>3. Read the grass house sentence strips together. Use the <u>pocket chart</u>, <u>grass house sentence strips</u> and <u>icons</u>.</p>	<p><i>We are going to read about the grass house, the earth lodge, and the tipi.</i></p> <p><i>First, I have ten sentences here about the grass house. Let's read through them together.</i></p>
<p>4. Place the earth lodge sentence strips <b>on top</b> of the grass house ones.</p> <p>Read the earth lodge sentence strips together. Use the <u>pocket chart</u>, <u>earth lodge sentence strips</u> and <u>icons</u>.</p>	<p><i>Next, I have ten sentences about the earth lodge. Let's read through these together.</i></p>
<p>5. Place the tipi sentence strips <b>on top</b> of the earth lodge sentence strips.</p> <p>Read the tipi sentence strips together. Use the <u>pocket chart</u>, <u>tipi sentence strips</u> and <u>icons</u>.</p>	<p><i>I also have ten sentences about the tipi. Let's read these sentences together.</i></p>
<p>6. Students will compare facts about these three housing styles. Use <u>Worksheets #3, 4 and 5</u> and <u>scissors</u>.</p>	<p><i>I have three worksheets. One worksheet has facts about the grass house. One worksheet has facts about the tipi. One worksheet has facts about the earth lodge. We are going to use these worksheets to compare the grass house, the tipi and the earth lodge.</i></p> <p>[Directions for the activity can be found below.]</p>

- Divide students into groups of 3. Each group should have one copy of each worksheet. (These worksheets contain the same facts as the sentence strips the class just read.)
- Students should cut the worksheet facts apart. Each student in the group will be responsible for one worksheet.
- Each group should now have 30 individual facts (10 facts each for the grass house, earth lodge and tipi).
- Students in each group should compare the facts by sorting them.
  - Facts that are the same should be stacked on top each other. For example, all three houses have a fact that says, “House Indians lived in.” Those three would be stacked on top each other.
  - Facts that do not match anything will be by themselves. For example, only one house has a fact that says, “House with two doors.” It would not be stacked with anything else.
  - Some stacks will have 3 facts. Some stacks will have 2 facts. Some stacks will have 1 fact.

7. As a class, share comparisons and graph results using the “Comparing Indian Homes in Kansas” transparency and an overhead projector.
- Go through the facts listed on the “Comparing Indian Homes in Kansas” transparency with the class one by one. Groups should share what they learned by grouping the facts.
  - As a class, compile the information and graph it using the overhead projector and transparency. Color one block for each house the fact is representative of. The following list shows which facts are the same or different. (A sample of the completed graph is provided in this lesson.)
    - 3 – House Indians lived in. (grass house, tipi, earth lodge)
    - 3 – House that had no windows. (grass house, tipi, earth lodge)
    - 3 – House with a frame made from poles. (grass house, tipi, earth lodge)
    - 3 – House with door facing east. (grass house, tipi, earth lodge)
    - 3 – House with fire pit in the middle. (grass house, tipi, earth lodge)
  
    - 2 – House that did not move. (grass house, earth lodge)
    - 2 – House with one door. (tipi, earth lodge)
  
    - 1 – House shaped like a cone. (tipi)
    - 1 – House shaped like a turtle. (earth lodge)
    - 1 – House shaped like a beehive. (grass house)
    - 1 – House for warm weather. (grass house)

- 1 – House for cold weather. (earth lodge)
- 1 – House for warm or cold weather. (tipi)
- 1 – House covered with sod and mud. (earth lodge)
- 1 – House covered with grass. (grass house)
- 1 – House covered with buffalo hides. (tipi)
- 1 – House that moved. (tipi)
- 1 – House with two doors. (grass house)

## Comparing Indian Homes (Answer Key)

Tipi	Grass House	Earth Lodge	
			House Indians lived in.
			House shaped like a cone.
			House shaped like a turtle.
			House shaped like a beehive.
			House door faced east.
			House for warm weather.
			House for cold weather.
			House for warm or cold weather.
			House with frame made from poles.
			House covered with buffalo hides.
			House covered with grass.
			House covered with sod and mud.
			House had one door.
			House had two doors.
			House with fire pit in the middle.
			House that moved.
			House that did not move.
			House that had no windows.