

Overview

This lesson uses the buffalo as the object of conflict among the Plains Indians and buffalo hunters on the western frontier. The lesson encourages students to compare and contrast different cultural views. Students work with an 1872 diary to understand the point of view of a buffalo hunter. The lesson is written for two class sessions but can be adjusted to meet individual classroom needs.

Standards

History:

Benchmark 3, Indicator 1: The student describes the reasons for tension between the American Indians and the United States government over land in Kansas (e.g., encroachment on Indian lands, depletion of the buffalo and other natural resources, the Sand Creek massacre, broken promises).

Reading:

Benchmark 4, Indicator 9: The student uses paraphrasing and organizational skills to summarize information (e.g., stated and implied main ideas, main events, important details) from appropriate-level narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive texts in logical order.

Objectives

Content:

- The student will describe the reasons for increased tension between the Plains Indians and buffalo hunters on the frontier.
- The student will retell the impact of professional hunters on the buffalo.

Skills:

- The student will compare and contrast the views of Indians and hunters towards the buffalo.
- The student will use paraphrasing to summarize information in a primary source.

Essential Questions

- How do cultures sometimes view the same resource differently?
- Why were there tensions between the Plains Indians and the buffalo hunters?
- What effect does the depletion of a natural resource have on a society? (i.e. aquafir, oil, water, coal)



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Activities

This activity uses the following *Read Kansas!* cards:

- **A Clash of Cultures: Views of the Buffalo**
- **Diary of a Buffalo Hunter**

Day 1

1. Bring several Kansas state quarters to class and have students examine the quarters. What is the main symbol that represents Kansas? (the buffalo) Ask students why the buffalo is a common symbol for Kansas. This should activate prior knowledge.
2. Ask students to brainstorm the uses of buffalo by Plains Indians. Explain that an adult buffalo provided 500 lbs. of meat. How many quarter-pound hamburgers would that make today? (2,000)
3. Give each student a copy of the **A Clash of Cultures: Views of the Buffalo** *Read Kansas!* card. Encourage students to visualize the text while reading.
4. Ask for volunteers to read the text aloud. Once the class has read the text, ask students to share with the class how they visualized the relationship between the Indians and the buffalo. How did they visualize the relationship between white settlers and the buffalo? Are the relationships the same or different?

Day 2

1. Divide the class into pairs. Give every student a copy of the **Diary of a Buffalo Hunter** *Read Kansas!* card.
2. Explain to the class that this is a primary source. Review the introduction with the class.
3. Working in pairs have students read the diary. To record the content have them use the Reading for Content: Diary of a Buffalo Hunter graphic organizer.
4. Redistribute copies of the **A Clash of Cultures: Views of the Buffalo** *Read Kansas!* card. Working in pairs, students will use both cards to complete the **Conflicting Views of the Buffalo** graphic organizer.

Assessment

- Observe the student's ability to visualize the way the Indians and the white settlers saw the buffalo.
- Evaluate the student's ability to complete the **Diary of a Buffalo Hunter** graphic organizer.
- Evaluate the student's ability to complete the **Conflicting Views of the Buffalo** graphic organizer.

For the Teacher

If you are using the textbook, *The Kansas Journey*, use this lesson with pages 116-118.

The complete diary of Henry H. Raymond, an excerpt of which is used in this lesson, is available online at kansasmemory.org. In the original diary Henry abbreviated his brother Theodore's name as, "The." To facilitate reading for the student this abbreviation has been transcribed as "Theodore" on the **Diary of a Buffalo Hunter** *Read Kansas!* card.

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Resources for this lesson are from:

- Kansas Historical Society Collections
- Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK

Notes about using primary sources

- A primary source is a document or an artifact that was created at the time of an event or by a person who was present at the event. This makes it a first-hand account. Photographs, newspapers, broadsides, census records, letters, and diaries are all primary sources.
- Historians use primary sources to determine what happened in the past.
- Once a historian pieces together the events of the past through primary sources, he or she interprets those materials to tell the story of the past.
- When primary sources are edited they may contain bracketed words ([]). This may be done when the original word is misspelled. The word(s) in brackets indicates a word that was inserted by the editor.
- When primary sources are edited for length they will contain ellipses (...). This means there are words or sentences removed.
- When a primary source is transcribed there may be words that cannot be deciphered and they will be marked in a specific way (xxx).
- If a primary source is difficult to read and understand try reading it out loud. This generally helps with comprehension.

Answer Key for **Diary of a Buffalo Hunter**:

Date	Day of the Week	Number of Buffalo Killed	Interesting Detail*
Nov. 23, 1872	Saturday	17	Saw badger and prairie dogs.
Nov. 25, 1872	Monday	20	Saw wolves.
Nov. 26, 1872	Tuesday	20	Cold and windy.
Nov. 27, 1872	Wednesday	14	Steve and Jim fixed the cabin.
Nov. 29, 1872	Friday	13	Theodore sick.
Nov. 30, 1872	Saturday	17	Jim pegged.
Dec. 2, 1872	Monday	23	Hunted with Nixons.
Dec. 4, 1872	Wednesday	20	Three Indians in camp.
Dec. 5, 1872	Thursday	19	Abe started for Dodge City.
Dec. 9, 1872	Monday	30	Very cold.

*Content of "Interesting Detail" column may vary per student.

How many buffalo were killed in 10 days? 193

On average how many buffalo were killed per day? 19

Answer Key for **Conflicting Views of the Buffalo**:

	Plains Indians	Buffalo Hunters
Why were they hunting buffalo?	They were dependent upon the buffalo for survival.	To make a living.
For whom were they hunting buffalo?	Themselves and their families.	The railroad companies.
How did they hunt buffalo?	On horseback with bow and arrow.	With long-range rifles.
For what would the buffalo be used?	Food, housing, clothing, boats, fuel tools – the necessities of life.	Food, hides, earning cash.
How many buffalo could be killed in a day?	A limited number.	Each hunter could kill dozens a day.
What could they gain from hunting buffalo?	The things required for survival.	Cash, food.
How would they be affected if the buffalo were hunted to extinction?	They would have a hard time surviving on the plains.	They would be out of a job.

Name _____

Diary of a Buffalo Hunter

Date	Day of the Week	Number of Buffalo Killed	Interesting Detail
Nov. 23, 1872			
Nov. 25, 1872			
Nov. 26, 1872			
Nov. 27, 1872			
Nov. 29, 1872			
Nov. 30, 1872			
Dec. 2, 1872			
Dec. 4, 1872			
Dec. 5, 1872			
Dec. 9, 1872			

How many buffalo were killed in 10 days? _____

On average how many buffalo were killed per day? _____

Name _____

Conflicting Views of the Buffalo

	Plains Indians	Buffalo Hunters
Why were they hunting buffalo?		
For whom were they hunting buffalo?		
How did they hunt buffalo?		
For what would the buffalo be used?		
How many buffalo could be killed in a day?		
What could they gain from hunting buffalo?		
How would they be affected if the buffalo were hunted to extinction?		