

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Document-Based Activity

Part 1: Seeing Shadows

MISSION 3: "A Cheyenne Odyssey"

Northern Cheyenne Life

A NOTE TO THE EDUCATOR:

The following document-based activity should be used after students have completed the Prologue and Part I of "A Cheyenne Odyssey," which provide an overview of Northern Cheyenne society on the Great Plains and introduce the main character of the game, Little Fox, a twelve year-old Northern Cheyenne boy.

The activity is designed as a jigsaw. Students are first assigned to one of six documents. They should use the accompanying questions below to analyze the document as part of an "expert" group.

Once the "expert" groups have completed their analysis, each student is reassigned to a "mixed" group, comprised of six students, each representing a different source. Together, the members of the "mixed" group should answer the questions, using the information provided by the documents and the game. They should use the accompanying graphic organizer below to classify the relevant information.

Steps to Complete:

1. Students should play the Prologue and Part I of "A Cheyenne Odyssey," and briefly discuss what they experienced to ensure that they understand the major points introduced.
2. Divide your students into six groups. Assign one of the six documents to each group.
3. Ask each "expert" group to analyze its source and answer the accompanying questions.
4. Reassign students to "mixed" groups comprised of six students, with each group member representing one of the sources.
5. Ask each "mixed" group to complete the "Northern Cheyenne Life" Graphic Organizer and answer the four accompanying questions, based on information from all six sources.
6. Discuss the groups' responses to the questions and review the "Northern Cheyenne Life" Graphic Organizer.
7. Extension activities can include letters to Little Fox, asking him for more information about his life as a Northern Cheyenne, or comparing students' lives to his. Students can also role-play a white newspaper journalist visiting a Northern Cheyenne camp in the 1860s, and write a newspaper article describing Northern Cheyenne life.

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Student Directions

The Prologue and Part I of "A Cheyenne Odyssey" provide an introduction to Northern Cheyenne society in the 1860s, and introduce the main character of the game, Little Fox, a twelve year-old Northern Cheyenne boy. The creation story and the brief history of the Northern Cheyenne presented in the Prologue explain that the Cheyenne did not always live on the Great Plains. For a long time, the Cheyenne lived an agriculture-based lifestyle in woodland areas in the Great Lakes region. But the expansion of other Indians groups into this territory pushed the Cheyenne westward. The Cheyenne also moved west to gain access to horses.

Part 1 of the game and the six sources in this activity portray Northern Cheyenne society as it adapted to life on the Great Plains in the nineteenth century. You and several of your classmates will be assigned one of the sources.

As an "expert" group, use the questions accompanying each source to analyze it. Remember to look closely at the source and think deeply about what it tells you about Northern Cheyenne life. In particular, consider the changes during this period brought about by the transition from an agriculture-based way of life in woodland areas to a nomadic, hunter-gatherer way of life on the Plains.

Once your group has finished analyzing your assigned source, you will become a member of a new "mixed" group, comprised of six classmates, each representing one of the "expert" groups. Share your expert knowledge on your assigned source with them. Listen carefully to your classmates as they share their expert knowledge about their sources with you.

When everyone is familiar with all of the sources, use them and what you have learned from the Prologue and from Part I of "A Cheyenne Odyssey" to answer the questions on the "Northern Cheyenne Life" Graphic Organizer.

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Source 1: Excerpt from an Interview with Iron Teeth

Iron Teeth, a Northern Cheyenne woman born in 1834, was interviewed by Thomas B. Marquis in 1929. Her memoir is a valuable source of information on Northern Cheyenne life on the Great Plains. (Excerpt from pp. 4-6.)

"My grandmother told me that when she was young our people did not have any horses. When they needed to go anywhere they put their packs upon dogs or upon little pole travois drawn by dogs. The people themselves had to walk. In those times they did not travel far, nor often. But when they got horses they could move more easily from place to place. Then they could kill more of the buffalo and other animals, and so they got more meat for food and gathered more skins for lodges and clothing.

We planted corn every year when I was a little girl in the Black Hills. With sharpened sticks we punched holes in the ground, dropped in grains of corn, then went hunting all summer. When the grass died we returned and gathered the crop. But the Pawnee and the Arikaras got to stealing or destroying our growing food, so we had to quit the plantings. We got into the way then of following all the time after the buffalo and other game herds.

We learned of vegetable foods growing wild. We gathered wild turnips, wild sweet potatoes and other root foods. We found our best places for berries. . . ."

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. How did the acquisition of horses change the Northern Cheyenne's way of life?
2. When Iron Teeth was a little girl, how did the Northern Cheyenne obtain food in the Black Hills? How did this change?
3. The Pawnee and Arikaras were other Indian tribes adapting to life on the Great Plains. Why do you think they stole or destroyed the corn planted by the Northern Cheyenne? How did the Northern Cheyenne respond to theft and destruction?
4. What can you infer about women's economic activities in this society?

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Source 2: Excerpt from *Wooden Leg: A Warrior Who Fought Custer*

Wooden Leg was a Northern Cheyenne warrior who lived during the nineteenth century. He witnessed the transition from traditional life on the Plains to life on reservations. He participated in several famous battles, including the Battle of the Little Bighorn, which the Cheyenne called the Battle of the Greasy Grass. Like other Cheyenne warriors, Wooden Leg was also responsible for hunting buffalo and other wildlife that his band depended on. In this excerpt, he describes how hunting brought the Cheyenne into conflict with the Crow, another tribe on the Great Plains.

"Great herds of buffalo west of the Bighorn used to draw the Cheyenne over into that Crow country for the hunt. We camped on the eastern side but our hunting parties crossed the river and went as far as Shooting at the Bank Creek. Each hunter led one or more pack horses to carry the meat and skins taken... As we were camped on the east side of the Bighorn...three Crows were seen one day chasing antelope on our side of the river. Report of their presence there was brought to our camp. An old man herald mounted his pony and went about the camp circle calling out: 'Crows are after our antelope herds. They may steal our horses.' Six Cheyenne young men got their war clothing packs, mounted their war ponies, and set out to find the bold Crows... They crossed the Bighorn River...During the course of the pursuit they killed two Crows. The third one was followed on to the main Crow camp beside Shooting at the Bank Creek. The six Cheyennes lingered there to spy upon the camp. The lingering was too extended, for soon they found themselves engaged in a fight with a much larger band of Crows. A Cheyenne wearing a double tailed warbonnet had his horse shot down, then the man himself was shot through the thigh, this disability rendering him an easy mark for fatal blows that soon fell upon him.

Excerpted from Marquis, Thomas B. *Wooden Leg: A Warrior Who Fought Custer*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1957. [Originally published as *A Warrior Who Fought Custer* in 1931.]

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. According to Wooden Leg, why did the Cheyenne cross the river into Crow territory?
2. Horses allowed Plains Indians to hunt buffalo over larger territories. What does Wooden Leg say are two other uses for horses? Why do you think the Cheyenne were so concerned that the Crow would steal their horses?
3. What does Wooden Leg's description tell you about the life of young men in a warrior society?

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Source 3: Tipis



Plains Indians tribes like the Northern Cheyenne used tipis for shelter. Tipis were made of buffalo hides attached to wooden poles, and could be quickly assembled, dismantled, and transported. Usually, the members of one family slept in a single tipi. Tipis and outdoor cooking were the domain of women. Most of the family's work was accomplished outside the tipi, as the Cheyenne took advantage of natural light and avoided the danger of large fires inside the tipis. Women also made the tipis, and were responsible for setting up, taking down, and transporting tipis and their contents.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. Why was it so important that tipis were easy to build and transport? How are they an example of the Northern Cheyenne's adaptation to life on the Great Plains?
2. What do tipis tell you about the importance of the buffalo in Northern Cheyenne society?
3. How did women's labor support the nomadic way of life on the Great Plains?

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Source 4: Travois



Left: Library of Congress, Atsina Indian on horse pulling travois; photographed by Edward S. Curtis, 1908. Right: "Mrs. Black Horse, Tse-Tsehese-stahase, with dog. No. 26," in the Walter S. Cambell Collection, Western History collections, University of Oklahoma Library.

Travois (pronounced "truh-VOY") were wooden frames used to drag heavy items over land. The travois poles were the same poles used to assemble tipis. Originally, travois were pulled by Indian women or by pack dogs. By the nineteenth century, travois were pulled by horses, which allowed for longer poles and therefore, larger tipis. While the main component of a travois was wood, buffalo hides were used to line the basket and to attach the pieces of wood to each other.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. What were travois used for? Why were they more important to the Northern Cheyenne once they migrated to the Great Plains than they were previously?
2. What were the differences between a dog travois and a horse travois?
3. Both of these images show women handling the travois. Why do you think that might be the case?

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Source 5: Bladder Bag



In the nineteenth century, the Northern Cheyenne and other Plains Indians used bags made from the bladders of buffalo to transport various materials, including water. After a buffalo was killed, its bladder was inflated with air and then dried. The bags were then rubbed between the hands to soften them. They held about two liters of liquid. Source: <http://www.kshs.org/p/american-indians-and-the-buffalo/16095>

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

1. Which members of Northern Cheyenne society do you think made bladder bags? Why do you think so?
2. Who do you think used bladder bags and in what ways?
3. In what ways was the practice of using bladder bags an adaptation by the Northern Cheyenne to life on the arid Great Plains?

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Source 6: Plains Ledger Art



Ledger Art was a new form of artistic expression that emerged among Plains Indians during the nineteenth century. Traditionally, Indian artists painted scenes of military and personal heroism on buffalo hides as a way to document their history. But with the disappearance of the buffalo herds, painting and drawing on paper became popular. A ledger is a hard covered notebook containing lined paper, and is typically used by accountants to keep records. Plains Indian artists acquired ledger books at trading posts and reservation agencies. The images were usually created using lead and colored pencils. This image is from the ledger created by Black Horse, a Northern Cheyenne leader, between 1879 and 1885.

Source: <https://www.plainsledgerart.org/plates/view/2039/3613/924>.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. What does this image tell you about the relationship between the Northern Cheyenne and other Indians on the Great Plains?
2. What role did horses play in Northern Cheyenne society?
3. What does the image suggest about the roles of men in Northern Cheyenne society?

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Northern Cheyenne Life Graphic Organizer

Using the information from the six sources you have examined and discussed--as well as the Prologue and Part 1 of "A Cheyenne Odyssey"--complete the chart below. After completing the chart, answer the four questions at the bottom of the page. Be prepared to discuss your answers with the rest of the class.

	Life in the Woodlands	Life on the Great Plains
How were food and other resources acquired?		
What roles did men play in Northern Cheyenne society?		
What roles did women play in Northern Cheyenne society?		
How did the Northern Cheyenne interact with other Indian tribes?		

1. What were some of the main characteristics of Northern Cheyenne life on the Great Plains in the nineteenth century? How did this nomadic lifestyle differ from the agriculture-based lifestyle of the Northern Cheyenne when they lived in the woodlands?
2. What tools, technologies, and strategies did the Northern Cheyenne develop to live on the Great Plains?
3. What specific activities did men and women do in this nomadic, hunting-based way of life?
4. How did transition to life on the Great Plains affect the relationship between the Northern Cheyenne and other Indian tribes?