

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Writing Prompts

Part 1: Seeing Shadows

MISSION 3: "A Cheyenne Odyssey"

A NOTE TO THE EDUCATOR:

You will need to decide how best to share these writing prompts with your students. You might share them all and ask students to choose one to respond to. You may assign one or more to the entire group. You might make one or more of the topics the basis for in-class discussions. Where there are multiple questions in a single prompt, choose the question or questions that best suit your students. Make your decisions according to the needs of your group.

You may notice that many of the topics contain some version of the phrase, "Write about a time in your life..." The intention of these prompts is twofold: first, since students remember the content of their own lives, they can more easily respond to the questions, and they are more likely to want to express themselves if they feel competent to do so; second, these questions can form a meaningful bridge between what happens in the lives of ordinary people today and the lives of people in history or in historical events. For these reasons, you might decide to use some of the prompts before students encounter the history, because thinking about them sets the students up to understand and relate to it better.

Since students vary in their degree of comfort and skill in writing, you should decide when and how much students should write. We suggest that since students need to share their writing with each other to make personal and historical connections, you should encourage them to focus on content rather than mechanical skills. Pieces can be revised and edited later if you decide they should be shared formally (such as on a bulletin board or in a newsletter).

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Read through all the topics first, and then choose one of them to write about. Write the title of the piece at the top of your page. Write in complete sentences. After you are finished, proofread your work for correctness.

IMPORTANT HORSES. At the beginning of Part 1, Little Fox and his friend Crooked Rabbit go on a quest to find the tribe's missing horses. Based on what you have seen in the game, why do you think horses are so important to the Cheyenne? How and when do you think they were used?

OTHER INDIANS, OTHER TRIBES. Throughout Part 1, Little Fox directly and indirectly encounters Indians from tribes other than his own, the Northern Cheyenne. How would you describe these encounters? What do they tell you about inter-tribal cooperation and competition on the Great Plains in the 19th century?

MIND YOUR MANNERS. By twelve or thirteen years of age, younger brothers were no longer allowed to speak to their older sisters in Northern Cheyenne society. To some degree, this tradition is maintained even today among the Northern Cheyenne to show respect and allow for privacy. What social rules or customs are followed in your family? Are there particular rules for how you interact with your siblings, with older family members, or with other adults? What are they?

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE. When Little Fox learns that some of the horses, including his uncle's favorite, are missing, he must make a difficult decision: does he try to resolve the problem by himself, or does he seek help from older, more experienced relatives? What choice did you make for Little Fox? What were the consequences of your choice? Have you ever been in a similar situation in which you had to make an adult decision? What were the circumstances, and what did you decide to do? What were the repercussions of your decision, and what did you learn from the experience?

DOUBLE DARE. When Little Fox arrives at the creek to get water for his mother, his friend, Crooked Rabbit, teases him for doing the work of a baby, and challenges him to prove that he is not a child by walking across a slippery tree limb suspended in the water. Have you ever been in a situation in which someone challenged you to do something dangerous or foolish in order to prove your worth? Did you accept the challenge? Why or why not?

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THIS LAND IS OUR HOME. Throughout Part 1, there are many images of the land inhabited by the Northern Cheyenne. What types of physical features (mountains, hills, plains, bodies of water) did you see? What types of natural features (trees, plants, grasses) did you see? Write a descriptive paragraph explaining what Little Fox's homelands are like in Part 1 of the game.

OBJECTS FROM ANOTHER WORLD. Throughout Part 1, there are many images of traditional Cheyenne objects. At certain key points, there are objects introduced from the culture of white Americans. What traditional Northern Cheyenne objects do you remember from the game? What objects did you encounter that might be from white Americans? Why do you think the Northern Cheyenne may have accepted these objects into their society?

TIMES ARE CHANGING. At the end of Part 1, Little Fox sees a line of American soldiers on horseback in the distance, and he acknowledges that Northern Cheyenne society is about to change dramatically. What do you think he means? How do you think he feels about the impending changes? What do you think those changes will be?