

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Writing Prompts

Part 2: Friend or Foe?

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. 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 to 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.

- 1. More Soldiers!** At the beginning of Part 2, Little Fox's fears from the end of Part 1 are realized. More and more white settlers and soldiers are moving into the lands occupied by the Northern Cheyenne. The soldiers are building forts. In response, Little Fox's uncle and other Northern Cheyenne warriors decide to go to war with the white soldiers. Imagine what a white soldier's impressions would be of the battle, of the Northern Cheyenne, and of life on the Plains. How would it be different than the life and world the soldier may have known previously?
 - 2. Little Fox's First Buffalo.** While the warriors are away from camp fighting the white soldiers, Little Fox and his friends must hunt buffalo to provide food for the rest of the tribe. Little Fox is very proud that he finally kills his first buffalo. Think about a time when you accomplished something that demonstrated that you were able to take on an adult responsibility. Write a letter to Little Fox congratulating him on his accomplishment and telling him about yours.
 - 3. Who's in Charge?** Little Fox is intrigued by the story of the battle told by his uncle and is eager to fight. His uncle, however, has different plans for him based on a dream. Little Fox obeys his uncle's wishes. Have you ever been in a situation in which your parents wanted you to do one thing, but you felt you were old enough to choose to do something else? Did you do what your parents wanted? Why or why not? How does your decision compare to that of Little Fox?
 - 4. Journey to Fort Hat.** The Northern Cheyenne, like other Plains Indians, relied on oral traditions to preserve family and tribal histories. Write a story in which Little Fox describes his journey with Many Horses and his impressions of what he saw at Fort Hat to his children or grandchildren.
 - 5. A Fair Trade?** When Little Fox and Many Horses arrive at the trading post, Many Horses negotiates with Big Eared White Man. The style of exchange used is called **barter** (goods are exchanged for other goods of similar or equal value). How do the two men communicate? What does this tell you about the relations between Indian tribes and white settlers in the nineteenth century? How is this similar to or different from economic transactions in our society today?
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6. **Mother Knows Best.** At Fort Hat, it is very important that Little Fox acquire a new kettle for his mother. Why is this new kettle so important to him and to his uncle? What does Little Fox's uncle mean when he says, "When the women are content, we are all content"? To what degree does this saying apply in your family today, if at all?

7. **Whose Choice Is It?** At the end of Part 2, Little Fox's uncle asks him for his impression of Many Horses as a potential husband for his sister, Calling Bird. Do you think family members should have a say in who someone marries? Why or why not? Does a marriage impact an entire family, or just the individual getting married?