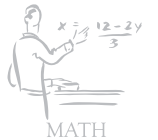


# Buffalo Robe and Native Americans

*When completing a unit on the Native Americans, this craft will give students exposure to both Native Americans and the use of art in their culture.*

**3-4**

GRADE LEVEL



## Objectives

- Students will be able to explain how art was a part of the Native American culture.
- Students will be able to create their own Native American Buffalo Robe, using the given materials.

## Materials

- The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush by Tomie dePaola
- Photographs of the Native Americans and Native American art
- Jazz paint in assorted colors
- Large sheets of brown kraft paper or large kraft paper bags (cut down side and across bottom to use large interior area.)
- Bucket of water
- Paint brushes
- Paint trays
- Newspaper or large sheet of butcher paper

## Procedure

1. Read the story The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush to the class. At the end of the story go back and discuss what the students see in the illustrations. Discuss Little Gopher's Dream Vision and the paintings he makes throughout the story.
2. If possible, show the children some real photographs of Native Americans and some of the art they created. Have the children discuss what they see in the pictures.
3. Next, explain to the students that some Native Americans used the hide of a buffalo like an artist's canvas to record important events in their lives. The completed paintings became autobiographies of their lives.
4. Ask the students to think about important events in their own lives that they would want to include if they were to make a Buffalo Skin picture. Have the students write down some of their ideas.

*Continued on the back...*

## *“Buffalo Robe” project continued...*

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5. Now have the students make symbols for the important events and people in their lives. They can make up their own symbols or use symbols from the Native Americans. Have the students consider events such as their birthdays, the first day of school, or special interests.
6. Next, explain to the students that they are going to create their own Native American Buffalo Robe that tells a story about their own lives.

### **Directions**

1. Cover work area with newspaper.
2. Tear (do not cut) the shape of a buffalo or cowhide from the brown kraft paper or bag.
3. Crumple the paper well with hands.
4. Immerse the “hide” in a bucket of water to which one cup of brown Jazz tempera paint has been added.
5. Knead the “hide” gently but firmly in water/paint solution.
6. Lay the hide out to dry on newspaper/butcher paper.
7. Paint symbols or designs onto the “hide” using various colors that relate to a story or series of events in the students' lives.
8. Let dry.
9. Have the students share their completed projects with their classmates.

