



History Along NEBRASKA'S BYWAYS

Buffalo Hide Paintings

Activity Summary

To add on to what your students have learned about all the ways the Native Americans used the buffalo, they will decorate their own "buffalo hides" to tell a story.

Discussion Topics

- How Native Americans used buffalo hides
- What petroglyphs are
- How Native Americans told stories on buffalo hides using petroglyphs
- What was used for paint

List of Supplies

- Brown craft paper pieces (approximately 24" x 24")
- Pencils
- Markers
- Tempera paint in a variety of colors
- Paint brushes
- Paint palette trays
- Cups of water for washing out brushes
- Paper towels

Activity Directions

1. Prepare the "hide" by crumpling the craft paper. Spread it out and then crumple it again. Repeat until the paper is very wrinkled.
2. Since buffalo hides would not be square, tear away some of the edges of the paper to give it an irregular shape.
3. Draw symbols on the hide with a pencil. You can use symbols that may have been petroglyphs for the Native Americans or symbols that tell your own story. You can also draw a border around the edges. (Note to teacher: Consider drawing a number of examples on the board.)
4. Paint the symbols using a variety of colors. Some symbols can be outlined in marker instead of paint if you prefer. Let the paint dry completely.
5. Outline the symbols with a marker.

