

Bison and the American Indian: Lesson Plan

Objective: The purpose of this lesson is for students to explore the important role bison played in the daily life of American Indians by learning how they used different bison parts and associating historical bison parts with modern items.

Grade Levels: 4

Applicable TEKS:

1. 4th Grade Social Studies

- a. (1) History. The student understands the origins, similarities, and differences of American Indian groups in Texas before European exploration. The student is expected to:
 - (A) explain the possible origins of American Indian groups in Texas;
 - (B) identify and compare the ways of life of American Indian groups in Texas before European exploration such as the Lipan Apache, Karankawa, Caddo, and Jumano;
 - (C) describe the cultural regions in which American Indians lived such as Gulf, Plains, Puebloan, and Southeastern; and
 - (D) locate American Indian groups remaining in Texas such as the Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo, Alabama-Coushatta, and Kickapoo.
- b. (9) Economics. The student understands the basic economic activities of early societies in Texas. The student is expected to:
 - (A) explain the economic activities various early American Indian groups in Texas used to meet their needs and wants such as farming, trading, and hunting; and
 - (B) explain the economic activities early settlers to Texas used to meet their needs and wants.
- c. (19) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including technology. The student is expected to:
 - (A) differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as technology; interviews; biographies; oral, print, and visual material; documents; and artifacts to acquire information about Texas;
 - (B) analyze information by applying absolute and relative chronology through sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions;

- (C) organize and interpret information in outlines, reports, databases, and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps; and
 - (D) identify different points of view about an issue, topic, historical event, or current event.
- d. (21) Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:
- (A) use social studies terminology correctly;
 - (B) incorporate main and supporting ideas in verbal and written communication;
 - (C) express ideas orally based on research and experiences; and
 - (D) create written and visual material such as journal entries, reports, graphic organizers, outlines, and bibliographies.

Bison and the American Indian Pre-Field Trip Activity

Materials:

- Image 1 - Diagram of Bison Parts
- Bison Parts Worksheet
- Image 2 - Bison Parts and Their Uses

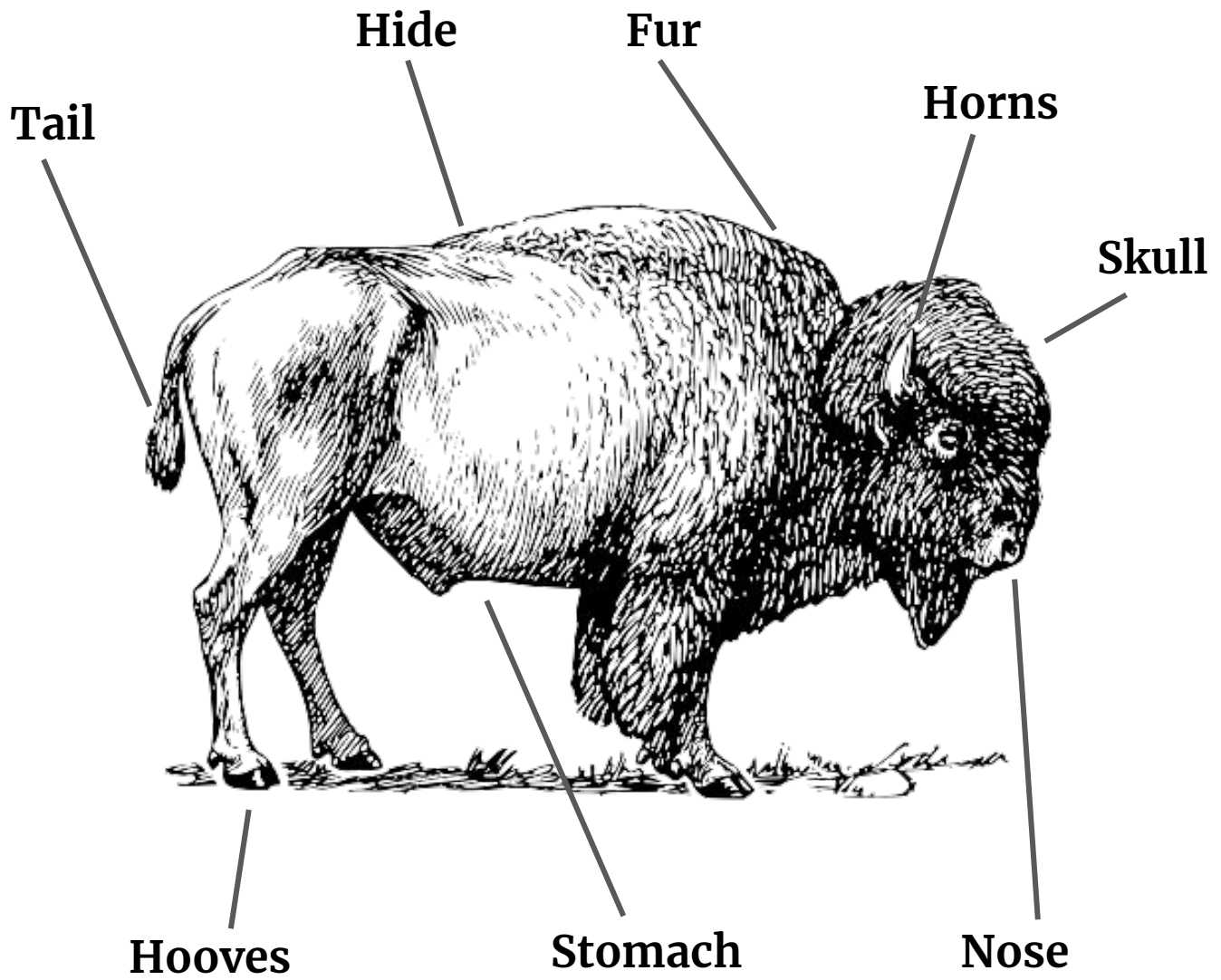
Instructions

1. To introduce the topic, start a class discussion (5-10 minutes) with students concerning where their families go to get household supplies, like food and tools. Questions you might ask include:
 - a. Where does your family go to buy groceries?
 - b. Is your family more likely to make things at home, or buy ready-to-use items at the store?
2. After the introductory discussion, pass out the Bison Parts Worksheet and the diagram of bison parts (Image 1) to individual students or groups of 2-3 students. As you do so, explain to students that ancient Native Americans did not have modern conveniences like grocery stores and restaurants. Instead, they relied on their environment to supply their needs, and different parts of animals like a bison could have a variety of uses.
3. Ask students to use the diagram of bison parts (Image 1) to match different parts of the bison to the items that could be made from them on the Bison Parts Worksheet (15-20 minutes). Emphasize to students that it is okay to not know the answer! Encourage them to make educated guesses based on the nature and function of each bison part and item.

NOTE: There are important internal parts of the bison that are not labeled in Image 1, such as bones, tendons, and meat (muscles, fat, etc). Make sure students are aware that they should consider these elements as well when brainstorming about the items.

4. After students have finished the worksheet, distribute copies of Bison Parts and Their Uses (Image 2) or otherwise display the chart so that students can check their answers. Ask students about which item-part matches confused them and explain as needed.
5. Extension: Divide students into small groups and have them brainstorm additional items that bison parts could have provided for people. Have them present their findings and reasoning to the rest of the class.

Diagram of Bison Parts



Bison Parts Worksheet

Where can you go to find all the things you need on a daily basis in one place? For most of us, that's a superstore, like Walmart. The American Bison was the historical equivalent of a Walmart for Native Americans. The bison provided the Native Americans with everything they needed for survival.

Using the bison chart (Image 1), identify which parts of the bison were used to make the following items.

Pot/storage container _____

Flyswatter _____

Cup and spoon _____

Pieces of wood/fuel starter _____

canteen/water bottle _____

Pillow stuffing _____

Beef jerky _____

Clothing/Shoes _____

Trowel/digging utensil _____

Beads (for necklace) _____

Soap _____

Small knife/sewing needles _____

Game pieces _____

Thread _____

Glue _____

Bison Parts and Their Uses

Tanned Hide:

Moccasins, Cradles, Winter Robes, Shirts, Leggings, Belts, Dresses, Pipe Bags, Quivers, Tipi Covers, Gun Covers, Dolls



Rawhide:

Containers, Shields, Buckets, Moccasin Soles, Belts, Headdresses, Medicine Bags, Drums, Ropes, Saddles, Stirrups, Knife Cases, Quirts, Armbands, Bullet Pouches



Muscles:

Sinew, Meat for Jerky



Horns: Cups, Spoons, Ladles, Headdresses



Tail:

Decorations, Fly Brush, Whips



Brains: Hide Preparation

Skull: Prayer Ceremonies

Teeth: Beads for Necklace



Fat: Soap, Cooking Oil

Tongue: Best Part of the Meat

Tendons: String, Thread

Beard: Ornaments for Apparel and Weapons

Bones: Knives, Arrow-heads, Shovels, Scrapers, Winter Sleds, Saddle Trees, War Clubs, Game Dice

Bladder: Sinew Pouches, Quill Pouches, Small Medicine Bags

Hooves: Glue, Rattles

Hair: Headdresses, Saddle Pad Filler, Pillows, Ropes, Halters



Stomach: Buckets, Cups, Dishes, Cooking Pots



Bison chip: Fuel

