

Lesson 3a: Asking Questions about Artifacts (grade 2)

Overview:

As students study the daily life of the Plains Indians they learn the process of historical research: posing questions, researching for evidence to answer the questions, analyzing the information, and interpreting their research. Students will conduct research using artifacts as primary sources. This lesson is written in three parts. (If both lessons 3a and 3b will be taught it is recommended that lesson 3a be completed before lesson 3b so that students will be unfamiliar with the objects when doing lesson 3a.)

Note:

This lesson explores the lives of American Indians who lived on the Great Plains before 1800. Many American Indians live in Kansas today. This is an important point to make in teaching this lesson as American Indians living in the Great Plains today live fairly typical 21st century lives.

Compelling Question:

What was daily life like for American Indians living in Kansas a long time ago?

Objectives:

Content:

- The student identifies what daily life was like for American Indians living in Kansas a long time ago.
- The student identifies that natural resources were important in the daily life of the American Indians living in Kansas.

Skills:

- The student generates questions about historical objects.
- The student researches a topic utilizing historical objects as primary sources.
- The student writes and illustrates explanatory text that answers the compelling question.

Trunk Materials Needed:

- Awl
- Bladder
- Cup
- Flesher
- Mitten
- Moccasin
- Parfleche

- Scapula
- Sinew
- Spoon
- USB Flash Drive “Uses of the Buffalo”
 - Photo on flash drive “Uses of the Buffalo”
 - 02kshs - Cheyenne Indians
 - Worksheet 2: Daily Life of American Indians in Kansas

Materials You Need to Supply:

- Dried meat or jerky
- Paper
- Pencils

Advance Preparation:

- Students should understand the meaning of “question” and “research.”
- Identify a visible location to list sample questions about artifacts.
- Review the lesson to determine how the class will be divided into groups.

Sample Questions:

Looking Questions

- What is it?
- What color is it?
- Is it shiny? Dull?
- How big is it?
- What shape is it?
- Is it decorated?
- Does it have pieces that come off of it? Can it be taken apart?

Touching/Feeling Questions

- Is it hard? Soft? Slimy?
- Is it wet? Dry?
- Is it cool? Warm? Hot? Cold?
- Is it rough? Smooth? Fuzzy?
- Is it sharp? Dull?
- Is it heavy or light?
- Does it fit in my hand? (Is it meant to be held?)





People Questions






- Who made it?
- Who used it?


Process Questions

- Was it handmade or purchased?
- Why did someone make this?
- What does it do?
- How did someone make it?
- What tools were used to make it?
- What is it made of?

Object Information:

Object	Text
 Awl	This is an awl. The Plains Indians made awls out of bone. They sharpened one end to a point and used it to punch holes into hides, or leather. The holes allowed the Plains Indians to sew pieces of hide together. In this way they made things like moccasins, storage containers, and tipis.
 Bladder	This is a water container. The Plains Indians made it from a buffalo bladder. Plains Indians needed to carry water many places. They needed water to drink in their village. They carried water when they traveled. They carried water when they rode a horse, and they carried water when they walked.
 Cup	This cup is made from a buffalo horn. The Plains Indians used it to hold liquids like soup. They also used it to store dried food when traveling. A buffalo horn would hold a hot, glowing ember from a fire as the Plains Indians moved their village to a new location. Putting the ember in the horn kept it hot enough to start a new fire at the end of the day.
 Flesher	This tool is called a flesher. The Plains Indians used it to clean animal hides. It is used to scrape a hide clean. A flesher is made from the leg bone of a buffalo. The buffalo's legs are very strong, and this is a very strong bone. A cleaned buffalo hide can be used to make things like moccasins, tipis, and containers to store food in.

Object	Text
<p data-bbox="233 239 467 352"><i>Supplied by the person borrowing the trunk.</i></p> <p data-bbox="233 407 305 436">Meat</p>	<p data-bbox="516 239 1534 485">This is dried meat. The Plains Indians got meat from the buffalo. A successful hunt was very important because it meant that the village would have food to eat for many months. They ate some meat right away. Most of the meat was dried so that it did not spoil before it could be eaten. The Plains Indians did not have refrigerators or freezers. Drying food was how they kept food from spoiling before they ate it.</p>
 <p data-bbox="233 695 337 724">Mittens</p>	<p data-bbox="516 533 1534 779">These are mittens. The Plains Indians needed to keep their hands warm during cold snowy winters. Mittens made from the tanned hide of a buffalo made good mittens. The thick buffalo fur on the inside of the mittens kept their hands warm. Warm hands were so important that the Plains Indians tied long leather cords to their mittens. They put the cord around their neck so they couldn't drop a mitten when they took one off.</p>
 <p data-bbox="233 989 363 1018">Moccasin</p>	<p data-bbox="516 827 1534 1031">This is a moccasin. The top is made from soft tanned hide. The sole is made from the thick, tough rawhide made from a buffalo hide. The Plains Indians wore moccasins to protect their feet from rough or sharp objects on the ground. During the cold winter months the Plains Indians stuffed their moccasins with buffalo fur to keep their feet warm.</p>
 <p data-bbox="233 1220 380 1333">Parfleche <i>pronounced 'PAR flesh'</i></p>	<p data-bbox="516 1079 1534 1283">This container is made from buffalo rawhide. It is called a parfleche. This is very small for a parfleche. Most were made about the size of a suitcase. Plains Indians needed containers for storing things, and the parfleche worked well for this. The Plains Indians moved from place to place and needed to carry food, tools, supplies, and other things with them.</p>
 <p data-bbox="233 1444 342 1474">Scapula</p>	<p data-bbox="516 1331 1534 1577">This is a buffalo's scapula bone. This bone is often called a shoulder blade. The Plains Indians used it to move soil. They prepared the bone by sharpening its edge and fastening it to a handle made from a wooden stick. Being able to move soil around easily was important. This tool was used a lot in caring for their crops of beans, corn and squash and when building their earthlodge or grass lodge homes.</p>
 <p data-bbox="233 1780 321 1810">Sinew</p>	<p data-bbox="516 1625 1534 1787">This is sinew, the tissue that connects muscles and bones together. It is tough and flexible. The Plains Indians dried the sinew and used it to make bowstrings for their bow and arrows, thread for sewing pieces of hide together, and cord to lash two things together such as an arrowhead to a wooden arrow shaft.</p>

Object	Text
 <p data-bbox="235 317 321 352">Spoon</p>	<p data-bbox="516 241 1542 436">This is a spoon. The Plains Indians made spoons from buffalo horns. They set the horn near the fire to make it flexible. They could easily cut and shape the flexible horn. They used grease to polish the finished spoon. The Plains Indians used spoons to eat soup and other foods. Spoons were often hung by their leather thong when not in use.</p>

Lesson:

Directions	Script
<p>Day One</p> <p>1. Introduce lesson</p> <p>a. Use <u>photo #02kshs: Cheyenne Indians</u> to activate prior knowledge about American Indians in Kansas before statehood.</p> <p>b. Questions are an important part of doing research.</p> <p>c. Artifacts are one source of information about the past.</p>	<p><i>We are going to learn about the American Indians who lived in Kansas a long time ago. It is important to remember that we are going to talk about people who lived a <u>long long time ago</u>. There are many American Indians living in Kansas today. They drive cars, wear blue jeans and t-shirts, live in houses and apartments, and shop in stores. Their lives are very different than the American Indians who lived a long long time ago. We are not talking about American Indians who live in Kansas today just those who lived here a long time ago.</i></p> <p><i>This is a photo of some American Indians who lived in Kansas a long, long time ago. These are the people we're going to talk about today. They lived here before Kansas was a state. They lived here before the first wheat was planted, before the first road was built, before any stores were built. Their lives were very different from our lives today because they didn't have roads or stores or school buildings. What else didn't they have? [ex: cars, airplanes, McDonalds, iPods, phones, movies, books] These are the people we'll be talking about today.</i></p> <p><i>There are many different ways to learn about the past. For example, if you want to learn about the American Indians who lived here a long time ago you could read a book about them. What are some other ways you could learn about them?</i></p> <p><i>Asking questions is important when doing research. They are so important that research begins with one big question that the researcher wants to find an answer to.</i></p> <p><i>Our big question is, "What was the daily life like for the American Indians living in Kansas a long time ago?" I'm going to write this question across the top of the board so that we will remember as we look for an answer, or answers, to it. We have our question, now we need to see if we can find an answer.</i></p> <p><i>One way to learn about them is to look at things they made and used. Artifacts are things people made and used, and we're going to look at artifacts to learn about the American Indians who lived here long ago. We can use artifacts to research the past. People who want to learn about the past need to research. What does the word research mean? [Carefully studying something to learn about it.] Doing research helps people learn. Research gives people information. They can then use the information to do a variety of things like write a book or</i></p>

<p>d. Artifacts become sources of information about the past as we study them and ask questions about them.</p>	<p><i>make a movie. Examining artifacts is one way to research the past. This is what we will be doing today.</i></p> <p><i>We are going to learn about these people by examining artifacts. We will be using the artifacts to do research, and we'll do that by asking questions about them and looking for answers to those questions. We'll be asking questions about things they made and used. We're going to look at an artifact, and we're going to ask questions that will help us learn about it. After we ask questions we'll examine the artifact. We may be able to answer some of our questions by examining the artifact, and we may come up with more questions as we examine them. We may not find answers to all of our questions, but we'll find answers to some of them. Where can we look for answers to some of the questions we aren't able to answer? [books, internet, teacher, etc.] Some questions we may never find answers to, and that is okay.</i></p>
<p>2. Practice asking artifact questions together.</p> <p>a. Show students an object without passing it around. Ask for questions. List questions where students can see them. Limit list to about 10 questions to keep it manageable. List should include: What is it? Who used it? What is it made of? How was it used?</p> <p>b. Pass the object around for students to examine. Initiate discussion about whether some of these questions can be answered by looking closely at the artifact.</p> <p>c. Discuss other places to look for answers. Not all questions can be answered.</p>	<p><i>We are going to look at the first object together and ask questions about it together.</i></p> <p><i>This is the piece we're going to research first. What are some questions we can ask? What do you want to know about this object?</i></p> <p><i>We have a list of questions about this piece that we would like answers to. How can we find answers to some of these questions? Let's look closely at this piece and see if we can answer any of these questions. I'll pass it around so that each of you has a chance to hold it. Each of you can try to answer one of the questions we've come up with as you look at it. We'll start with the first question and go through them one by one. Remember, we won't be able to answer every question just by looking at it and holding it.</i></p> <p><i>We've answered some of the questions by looking at this piece, but there are still other questions that we don't have answers to. Where might we go to find answers to these other questions? [books, internet, teachers, talking to people] That's right, there are a lot of ways we</i></p>

<p>d. Read the object card for this artifact. Review questions to see if any were answered.</p> <p>e. Reiterate importance of asking questions to learn more information.</p> <p>f. Copy the list of questions onto a piece of paper. Below the list leave space for the addition of two more questions. Each group will receive a copy of this list to work with on Day Two.</p>	<p><i>can look for answers like visiting the library, talking to people who have studied the American Indians who used to live in Kansas, looking on the internet, or visiting a museum. Even with all of this there may still be questions we can't find an answer for, but that's okay.</i></p> <p><i>I don't have a book, but I do have some information about this piece that I got from a museum. The people who work at the museum and who wrote this know a lot about artifacts from the past so they are a good place to learn more about this piece. I'll read the information to you. Listen as I read to see if we can find answers to any of our unanswered questions.</i></p> <p><i>Asking questions is a good way to learn. When we look for answers to our questions we find more information; we learn more. Good questions make researchers want to look for more information so they can find answers. We still have questions that we don't have answers to, but if we had more time there are more places we could look for answers to some of our other questions.</i></p>
<p>Day Two</p> <p>3. Examine and ask questions of remaining artifacts.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Divide class into groups. Give each group one artifact, the list of questions from Day One, and instructions to develop two additional questions for their artifact. Groups should examine their object and answer as many questions as possible. 	<p><i>Yesterday we talked about research and that asking questions is one step in researching something. Together we practiced asking questions about one object. Today I have some more things that were used by the American Indians who lived in Kansas a long time ago.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I'm going to divide you into groups. I am giving each group a list of the questions from yesterday. Let's read through the questions so that everyone remembers them.</i> <i>Next I am going to give each group an artifact. I want you to examine it and come up with two new questions that you would like to know the answers to. Write the two new questions below the list of yesterday's questions. Let everyone in your group have a chance to look it over and hold it. Try to answer as many questions as you can by examining it.</i> <i>Be prepared to show your artifact to the class, share the two questions your group asked and your responses to the questions.</i>

<p>d. Groups take turns sharing with the class their artifact, their two new questions and any information they learned by examining the piece.</p> <p>e. Read the object card included in the trunk for each object. Determine if any additional questions can be answered with this information.</p>	<p><i>Now that everyone has had time to examine their object and try to answer questions we're going to take turns sharing with the rest of the class. When I call on your group I want one person to show your object to the class. As I read through the questions from yesterday you can tell us if you were able to answer it by examining the object. Then someone in your group should share your two new questions and any answers you have. Remember, questions are important when doing research and learning, but we won't be able to answer every question. It is okay if there were questions you were not able to answer by examining the object.</i></p> <p><i>I have some written information from a museum about this object also. Listen as I read it. Are any more of our questions answered by this information? Did we learn something we did not know before?</i></p>
<p>Day Three</p> <p>4. Compiling the Research</p> <p>a. Project <u>Worksheet #2: Daily Life of American Indians in Kansas</u>, and, together as a class, sort information recorded during research. Use the "How was it used?" column to sort the uses of the objects into a few general categories (e.g., food, clothing, shelter).</p> <p>b. Review the information compiled on the graphic organizer. Look for patterns and their connections to daily life.</p>	<p><i>We researched American Indians who lived in Kansas a long time ago by examining things they made and used and by reading information about these pieces. We asked a lot of questions to help us learn.</i></p> <p><i>Now it is time to sort our research. Sorting the information we gathered will help us see patterns. We'll use the graphic organizer I'm showing you, "Daily life of American Indians in Kansas." I'm going to start with the first piece that the entire class researched together.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>What is it?</u> [write name of object] • <u>Who used it?</u> [American Indians in Kansas] • <u>What is it made of?</u> • <u>How was it used?</u> [ex: food, clothing, shelter] <p><i>Next I'm going to call on each group and I want you to answer each question for your object. I'll write down your answers.</i></p> <p><i>Look at how much information we have! We've done a lot of research. Remember, one reason we sorted through our research on this graphic organizer was so that we could see patterns. Do you see any patterns? What are they? [Everything was both made and used by American Indians in Kansas a long time ago, each piece was part of their daily life, each piece was made using only natural resources, and the buffalo was the one natural resource used in making every piece.]</i></p>

<p>c. Use the research to answer the lesson’s compelling question, “What was daily life like for American Indians living in Kansas a long time ago?”</p>	<p><i>We really have learned a lot about the American Indians in Kansas. We asked a lot of questions and then we looked for answers to them. When we started we had one big question we were trying to find an answer to. Can anyone remember what that question is? [What was daily life like for American Indians living in Kansas a long time ago?]</i></p> <p><i>Can we answer that question now? [yes] What was their life like? If we could watch them for one day what might we see?</i></p>
<p>5. Conclusion – Students will draw a picture illustrating one aspect of daily life of the American Indians in Kansas and write a label about what they drew. The drawing should include at least one of the objects studied in this lesson. Consider compiling these into a class power point or book.</p>	<p><i>I would like each of you to take out a piece of paper. On the paper I want you to draw something the American Indians in Kansas would have done as part of their daily life a long time ago. The drawing needs to include at least one of the objects we researched and one natural resource the American Indians in Kansas used a long time ago. You can choose any object you like. Under the drawing you should explain your drawing.</i></p>

Assessment:

- Observe the student’s ability to work together in small groups.
- Assess the student’s ability to ask research questions of artifacts.
- Evaluate the student’s ability to compile research and look for patterns in it.
- Evaluate the student’s ability to interpret their research through their illustration and label.

Daily life of American Indians in Kansas

What is it?	Who used it?	What is it made of?	How was it used?
Water Container	Plains Indians	buffalo bladder	container used to hold or carry water
Cup	Plains Indians	buffalo horn	container to hold food or coals to start a fire
Hoe	Plains Indians	buffalo bone (shoulder blade)	growing food and building houses
Moccasin	Plains Indians	buffalo hide (tanned and rawhide)	clothing, protect feet
Mittens	Plains Indians	buffalo hide	clothing, to keep warm
Parfleche	Plains Indians	buffalo hide (rawhide)	container to store food, clothing, etc.
Sinew	Plains Indians	buffalo sinew (tendon or ligament)	used with awl and hides to sew hides together when making clothing and tipi cover
Awl	Plains Indians	buffalo bone	to punch holes through leather so pieces can be sewn together
Flesher	Plains Indians	buffalo bone (leg bone)	cleaning buffalo hide after the hunt to prepare it for making clothing, tipi cover, etc.
Meat	Plains Indians	buffalo	food
Spoon	Plains Indians	buffalo horn	eating food

