

UCF Veterans Legacy Program Curricular Materials



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Lesson Title	History of the Cheyenne Prisoners Who Became Ledger Artists and/or Ledger Book Artists
Grade(s)	4
Time (Minutes/ Days)	One - two class periods

Lesson Overview

In 1875 over seventy Plains Indians were captured and taken from their homes in Oklahoma to St. Augustine, Florida, where the US military held them prisoner at Fort Marion. While there, one of the ways they documented their time in the fort was through ledger art. Students will learn about the captivity of the Plains Indians and the ledger art they created, and then create their own ledger art based on what they learn.

Essential Questions

1. How did the Cheyenne Prisoners use ledger art to tell their experiences and histories?

Florida State Standards

- SS.4.A.3.3 Identify the significance of St. Augustine as the oldest permanent European settlement in the United States.
- VA.4.C.2 Assessing our own and others' artistic work, using critical-thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills, is central to artistic growth.
- VA.4.C.3 The processes of critiquing works of art lead to development of critical-thinking skills transferable to other contexts.
- VA.4.C.3.3 Use the art-making process, analysis, and discussion to identify the connections between art and other disciplines.
- VA.4.S.1.1 Manipulate tools and materials to achieve diverse effects in personal works of art.
- VA.4.S.1.3 Create artworks that integrate ideas from culture or history.
- VA.4.H.1.1 Identify historical and cultural influences that have inspired artists to produce works of art.
- VA.4.H.1.3 Describe artworks that honor and are reflective of particular individuals, groups, events, and/or cultures.
- VA.4.H.1.4 Identify and practice ways of showing respect for one's own and

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others' personal works of art.

Oklahoma State Standards

- 4.3.1 Identify and describe early settlement patterns of regions in the United States.
 - B. Identify major American Indian groups and their ways of life in each region, including economic activities, customs, and viewpoints on land usage and ownership.
 - D. Identify push and pull factors of human migration.
 - E. Evaluate the impact of the Columbian Exchange on American Indian groups, African slaves and European settlers, including agriculture, trade, culture, military alliances, control of territory, and the sudden and significant decline of indigenous peoples.
- 4.3.2 Examine the characteristics of culture, including the distribution and complexity of the regions of the United States.
 - A. Identify the characteristics of culture (language, customs, beliefs, food, clothing, shelter) and compare the cultural characteristics of different regions of the United States.
 - B. Explain how the characteristics of culture affect the ways in which people live.
- 4.VA.CP.1.2 Apply knowledge of available resources, tools, and technologies to investigate personal ideas through the art-making process.
- 4.VA.CP.2.1 Explore and invent a variety of art-making techniques and approaches.
- 4.VA.CP.3.1 Elaborate and revise artwork on the basis of insights gained through reflection and/or discussion.
- 4.VA.P.1.1 Investigate and apply diverse resources and media (materials) for creating themed works of art.
- 4.VA.CHP.1.1 Compare and contrast works of art from various times, places, and cultures.
- 4.VA.CHP.1.2 Explore ways that people have created artwork using accessible resources.

Required Materials

- [Cheyenne Ledger Art - St. Augustine Video](#)
- [Keeping History: Plains Indian Ledger Drawings Exhibit from the Smithsonian](#)
- Graphic Organizer (See Below)
- Ledger Paper for Student Art Creation (See Below)
- Sample Ledger Art by Gordon Yellowman (See Below)

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Learning Objectives

1. Students will learn about the Plains Indians and their captivity in Fort Marion.
2. Students will interact with primary sources (ledger art)
3. Students will create their own ledger art to demonstrate their understanding of the experiences of the Plains Indians imprisoned in Fort Marion.

Procedure

1. The teacher will briefly talk about the idea of forced migrations of Native American peoples in the 19th century. Ask students what they know about the ways that Native Americans were treated and why they were removed from their land.
2. The teacher will play the introduction video (linked in the required materials.) This video focuses on Norene Starr and Gordon Yellowman, who both discuss the importance of ledger art and its meaning.
 - a. Optional: have the students fill out the notes graphic organizer below while they watch the video.
3. Students will examine pages 3, 4, and 6 of the Smithsonian exhibit Keeping History: Plains Indians Ledger Drawings and answer the questions in the graphic organizer below. Students can work individually or in pairs to answer the questions.
4. Students will create their own ledger art using the ledger art paper (below) to depict what they learned about the ledger artists and their experiences in Fort Marion. They should use the following colors for their artwork: red, yellow, blue, green, and black.
 - a. While they draw, display samples of ledger art, including the piece done by Gordon Yellowman (below) to help inspire them.
 - b. On the back of their artwork, students should write 1-2 sentences explaining what the image depicts and what they learned about the Plains Indians who were imprisoned at Fort Marion and their ledger art.
5. Optional: Do a gallery walk with the ledger art the students create. Split the students into small groups and have them look at the pieces together and talk about what they see in the images that relates to what they learned. Then hang the ledger art on the classroom walls.

Teachers may wish to watch this video which provides context before beginning the lesson: [Plains Tribal Veterans at Fort Marion](#). Dr. Amy Giroux made/showed this video to tribal leaders in Oklahoma during the Fort Marion Symposium in November 2024.

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Bibliography for Further Reading/Teacher/Student Use

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"Comanche (Tribe)." The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture. Oklahoma Historical Society, Accessed March 15, 2024.

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"Keeping History: Plains Indian Ledger Drawings." Albert H. Small Documents Gallery. Smithsonian, Accessed August 14, 2024.

https://americanhistory.si.edu/documentgallery/exhibitions/ledger_drawing_1.html

What is Ledger Art?

It is a term for Plains Indian narrative drawing or painting on paper or cloth. Ledger Art and/or Ledger Book Art flourished, from the 1860s to 1920s-The term came from the account ledger books that were a common source of paper during the late 19th century. Ledger books originally used for financial accounting of mercantile stores and banks and business establishments.

Fort Marion, Florida, in 1875 seventy-one Indians from the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa, and Comanche tribes plus one lone Caddo were arrested at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and sent to Fort Marion, Florida, near St. Augustine. Upon the prisoners arrival they began to create ledger art, which became more prolific among the Cheyenne, Arapaho, and the Kiowa of the southern plains, due to the common experience of their incarceration in Florida.

There, under the supervision of Capt. Richard Henry Pratt, they began a program of presumed rehabilitation. One of the activities Pratt encouraged was the use of paper, colored pencils, and watercolors to produce images of their personal experiences. During their three years in Florida these American Indians produced a tremendous artistic outpouring.

In 1878 the government released the sixty-two surviving members of the group. Most returned home to Oklahoma, but twenty-two remained in the East at Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in Virginia. In 1879 eleven of those went on to the Carlisle Indian School at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. By 1881 all of them were back in Oklahoma.



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Cheyenne Ledger Art Video Notes

<p>The Plains Indians were taken from their home to St. Augustine, Florida. Where was home for these people?</p>	
<p>What does Norene Starr compare the ledger art books to?</p>	
<p>What does it mean to be a contemporary ledger artist?</p>	
<p>What are the two different kinds of ledger books the Cheyenne encountered and used for their art?</p>	
<p>What do you think is the main purpose of ledger art?</p>	



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Let's Look at Some Ledger Art!

[Go to this page](#) in the ledger art exhibit from the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. You will read through pages 3, 4, and 6

Page 3- "Kill the Indian and Save the Man"

What does "Kill the Indian and Save the Man" mean?
What differences do you see in the two images of the prisoners arriving at Fort Marion in 1875 compared to the prisoners in 1878?



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Page 4- The History They Kept

What main subjects/ideas did the ledger artists draw?

Look at the two pieces of ledger art by Bear's Heart, a Cheyenne ledger artist. What sticks out to you the most and why?

Look at ledger art by Koba, a Kiowa ledger artist. In your own words, describe what is happening in the image.



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Page 6- Fort Marion History Keepers

Choose one of the ledger artists and their art. Explain who they are and describe their ledger art in your own words.



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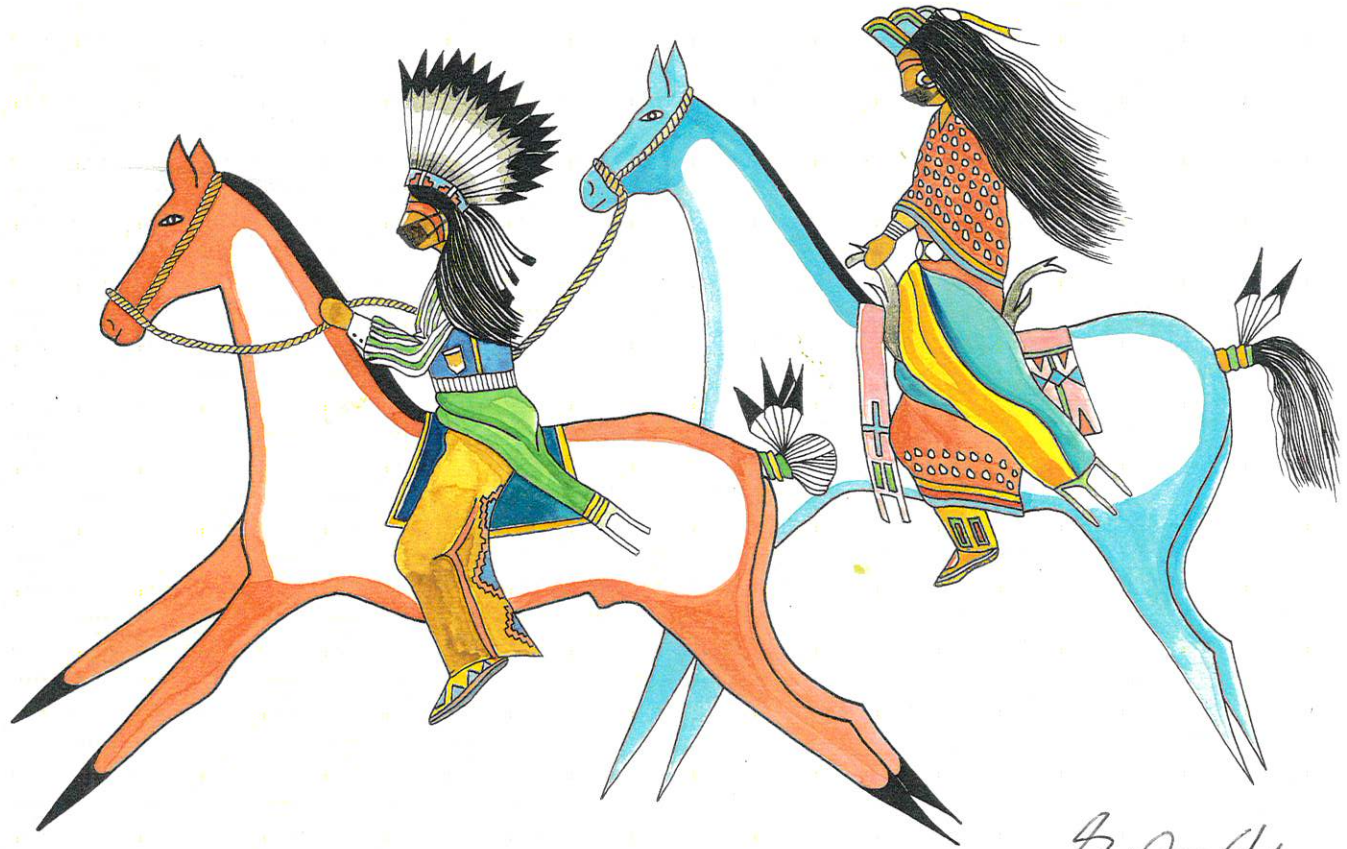
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Gene G.

