

# THE SCULPTURE PROJECT

PASSAGE OF WIND & WATER

Essential Question for this lesson:

## **What can we learn about responsibility when we observe animals?**

*The Sculpture Project: Passage of Wind and Water* is at Main Street Square in Rapid City, South Dakota. This art project is about nature and how people are connected to nature. The art helps people think about their connections to nature.

When we think about it, we learn that people and animals share some connections to nature. For example, wind and water are important to people and to animals. Both people and animals drink water to stay alive. Both people and animals seek shelter from strong wind. By observing animals, people can learn about the world.

Oceti Sakowin people have been observing animals and learning from those observations for thousands of years. One Oceti Sakowin author, Luther Standing Bear, wrote a book for children in 1931 called My Indian Boyhood. In his book, he writes about his observations of many animals. People can learn from observing animals and how they behave in nature.

Luther Standing Bear writes about how mother bears and their cubs behave in nature. Mother bears are responsible for taking care of their cubs, just as human mothers and fathers are responsible for taking care of their children.

As you read the passage from Luther Standing Bear's book on the next page, think about how the bears are behaving. You will then get to show what you think people can learn from the bears!

Your thinking is important! People want to read about your ideas.

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**A mother bear is very wise, and if she sees that she is being pursued by a hunter, she gets her little ones away as fast as possible. With her left paw she throws a cub some distance. Picking up the other cub, she runs to the spot where the first little one has landed. She then throws the one in her arms some distance, picks up the one on the ground and runs again. Each baby stays where he lands and awaits his mother. In this way she covers the ground quite rapidly. Ordinarily the bear is a slow-moving and dignified animal, yet, when necessary, can get over the ground very fast...<sup>1</sup>**

*-from My Indian Boyhood, by Luther Standing Bear*

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<sup>1</sup> Standing Bear, Luther. *My Indian Boyhood*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006, 50.

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## Thinking About the Project

Please write your thoughts about the questions below. We are looking for your **original thinking**: what actually comes into your mind as you carefully read the questions. Your answers may be clear bullet points or clear, complete sentences.

1. What parts of this text about bears show you that the mother bear is responsible for the safety of her cubs? Please use words from the text in your answer.

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2. How many bear cubs do you notice in the text?  What words from the text show readers how many cubs there are?

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3. What danger are the mother bear and cubs escaping?

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4. Please describe what you like about Luther Standing Bear's description of bears.

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5. Write your ideas about what human parents could learn from observing responsible animal parents. Please use examples to support your thinking.

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## Notes for Teachers

The lessons connected with *The Sculpture Project: Passage of Wind and Water* are designed to be used with students in many grade levels. You may need to provide scaffolding in order to help your students access the text. To help with this, we have included this vocabulary bank. This bank can be easily used with the existing word study procedures you use with students.

- responsibility
- observe
- Oceti Sakowin
- observations
- behave
- responsible
- pursued

- rapidly
- dignified
- necessary
- escaping
- describe
- description
- kits

## CCSS Language Arts Anchor Standards Addressed:

- R1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- R10: Read and comprehend complex informational texts independently and proficiently.
- W9: Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- SL1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- L4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting reference materials as appropriate.
- L6: Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career-readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge.

## South Dakota Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings and Standards Addressed:

EU 1.2: Analyze interrelationships of Oceti Sakowin people, places, and environments.

EU 5.1: Analyze Oceti Sakowin culture through oral tradition and unbiased information.

Note: The text excerpted here is from a primary source document; Luther Standing Bear's book is an account of his own experiences living on the Great Plains before the reservation era. Standing Bear's written account of his boyhood training and family life is unbiased information.

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## More Notes on the Standards and Student Work

*The South Dakota Department of Education adopted the Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings and Standards in 2011. The document is available on the SD DOE website under "Oceti Sakowin Project." All South Dakota teachers should be employing these standards across the curriculum. These standards represent essential learning for all South Dakotans.*

*We have included here the reference numbers and a basic description of each Oceti Sakowin Essential Understanding and Standard that this lesson addresses. For full articulations of all of these cultural standards, please consult the official state document:  
<http://indianeducation.sd.gov/documents/OcetiSakowinEUS.pdf>*

*While this lesson was built for students in grades 3-5, many teachers will use it with students in grades K-2. Some teachers will project this text on a smartboard and read it aloud while students follow the text with their eyes. This lesson has been field tested with K-2 students with success. K-2 students can also use the version built for them (called "We Learn from Animals"), which uses the same excerpt from Luther Standing Bear with different critical thinking and discussion preparation work.*

*This text and the accompanying critical thinking questions are considered informational texts. They are real-world texts about a current public art project and an important Oceti Sakowin author. The excerpt from Luther Standing Bear's 1931 book My Indian Boyhood is literary nonfiction.*

*The questions are designed to elicit high-level thinking and need no answer key. If students are showing their original thinking, engaging with the topic and the ways in which they perceive the project, then they are doing good work. Teachers will have success when they encourage students to show and explain their thinking. Great student discussions can follow!*

*The next page contains a graphic organizer that can help thinkers prepare for their discussions. This process of preparing for and engaging in peer discussions addresses the CCSS Speaking and Listening Standard SL.1!*

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## Learning from Animals

Put your thinking inside the shapes, then discuss!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of discussion \_\_\_\_\_

Foxes teach their kits to hunt. What are two things you think human parents teach their young?

Young deer, called fawns, wait quietly for their mothers while the mothers eat grass. How do you think the mothers know if their fawns are safe?

Bird parents bring food to their chicks and drop it in their beaks. How do humans feed their young?

Mother bears pick up their cubs and toss them ahead when escaping danger. How do you think the mothers make sure the cubs don't get hurt when they land?

Ducklings follow their mothers in a straight line. What are some skills you think ducks learn as they follow their mothers?