

Create a Ledger Drawing

Objectives:

- Participants will compare Sioux drawings from the 1890s and 2004.
- Participants will recognize the basic elements of ledger drawings.
- Participants will create an original ledger drawing.

Background Information: Starting in the 1860s, Plains Indians used new materials to record their past. Painting on buffalo hide changed to pencil, crayon, and occasionally watercolor, work on muslin and paper. The paper most often used was from ledgers or lined accounting books. At first done only by men, early ledger drawings showed acts of bravery, battles and sacred visions, much like the buffalo hide paintings. As the old buffalo-hunting way of life disappeared, ledger drawing adapted and began showing hunting, ceremonies, courtship and daily life. Jokes and humor also began to show up in ledger drawings. Ledger drawings have lots of details. Ledger drawings recorded an Indian point of view of history and showed both work and fun.

Materials:

Example ledger drawings

Provided by instructor or participants

graph or notebook paper

colored pencils or crayons

Activity Steps:

Give participants a sheet of graph or notebook paper and have them draw their own ledger drawing using crayons or colored pencils. You may put out the ledger drawings examples provided with the exhibit to give visitors ideas or inspiration. You may also direct them to the ledger drawings that are in the exhibit itself. You can also display people's drawings and encourage visitors to discuss what they drew and why they chose to draw it.



Xi Leat
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2008