



Sioux Scavenger Hunt

Read the passage below and answer the questions

Sioux Culture In the Sioux culture, men were the providers and women tended to the home and cooked. In fact, the home belonged to the woman, and she was in charge of every aspect involved in caring for and maintaining it. Since there were often more women in a village than men, many Sioux men had several families and killed enough buffalo to feed them all.

Children were thought of as sacred in Sioux culture and were rarely punished. When they were punished, the adult usually confiscated an item that was loved. Adults often hung “dream catchers” above the cradles of their children to “catch” bad dreams” in the web.

Only men could become “chiefs” in Sioux society. Unlike in some Native American tribes, however, the title of “chief” was earned rather than inherited. Sioux warriors used bows and arrows, clubs, and spears when hunting or defending the tribe. “Fighting” between Indians was often non-violent and usually involved stealing horses, or proving bravery.

Like most tribes, the Sioux were very spiritual. They believed in Wakan Tanka (The Great Mystery of The Thunderbird), a God who created all living things. Wakan Tanka lived in a grand tepee in the Black Hills of South Dakota, one of the most sacred areas in Sioux culture. The Sioux also believed in the spirit of the White Buffalo Calf Maiden. This spirit first appeared to the Sioux in human form but was actually a white buffalo calf. She taught the Sioux lessons to avoid ignorance, evil, and self-destruction. She also introduced the sacred pipe, which was the center of seven secret ceremonies performed during times of religious persecution. Among these ceremonies was the Sweat Lodge Ceremony, in which Sioux villagers purged themselves of guilt, burden, and evil, by smoking the pipe in a “sweat lodge” (a dome-shaped tent made of willow branches, furs, and hides with a fire pit in the center) before an important event. The ceremony was also thought to bring its participants closer to Wakan Tanka. Another ceremony was known as The Vision Quest. In a Vision Quest, an individual would purify himself in the sweat lodge before isolating himself on a mountaintop, forest, or desert without food. The object of the Vision Quest was to help the participant seek oneness with all living things and to learn about his future in the form of a vision. The participant would then communicate his vision to the village shaman (medicine-man) who would interpret it. Based on the interpretation, a medicine bundle (a bag of tokens and items that had special meanings to the owner) would be prepared with various items to represent the guiding spirit. This is a just a small sampling of Sioux spiritual beliefs. It is important to note that there were many more spiritual ceremonies that may be interpreted in a variety of ways.



USE THE PASSAGE ABOVE TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BELOW

- 1.) Sioux Men often had more than one family: TRUE | FALSE
- 2.) In Sioux Culture, children were (circle the correct answer)
often punished | never punished | rarely punished
- 3.) _____ were hung above the cradles of children to "catch" bad dreams.
- 4.) What was the name of the Sioux God who created all living things?
- 5.) The _____ of South Dakota was one of the most sacred areas in Sioux culture.
- 6.) The _____ taught the Sioux lessons to avoid bad things.
- 7.) What ceremony did Sioux villagers go through after smoking a pipe in the sweat lodge?
- 8.) After the Vision Quest, the Sioux would communicate their vision to a _____.
- 9.) After the vision was interpreted, a _____ was prepared with various items to represent the guiding spirit.
- 10.) The object of a vision quest was to seek oneness with all _____.

ANSWERS

1.) Sioux Men often had more than one family: **TRUE** | FALSE

2.) In Sioux Culture, children were (circle the correct answer)

often punished | never punished | **rarely punished**

3.) **Dream Catchers** were hung above the cradles of children to "catch" bad dreams.

4.) What was the name of the Sioux God who created all living things?

Wakan Tanka

5.) The **Black Hills** of South Dakota was one of the most sacred areas in Sioux culture.

6.) The **White Buffalo Calf Maiden** taught the Sioux lessons to avoid bad things.

7.) What ceremony did Sioux villagers go through after smoking a pipe in the sweat lodge?

Vision Quest

8.) After the Vision Quest, the Sioux would communicate their vision to a **shaman**.

9.) After the vision was interpreted, a **medicine bundle** was prepared with various items to represent the guiding spirit.

10.) The object of a vision quest was to seek oneness with all **living things**.