

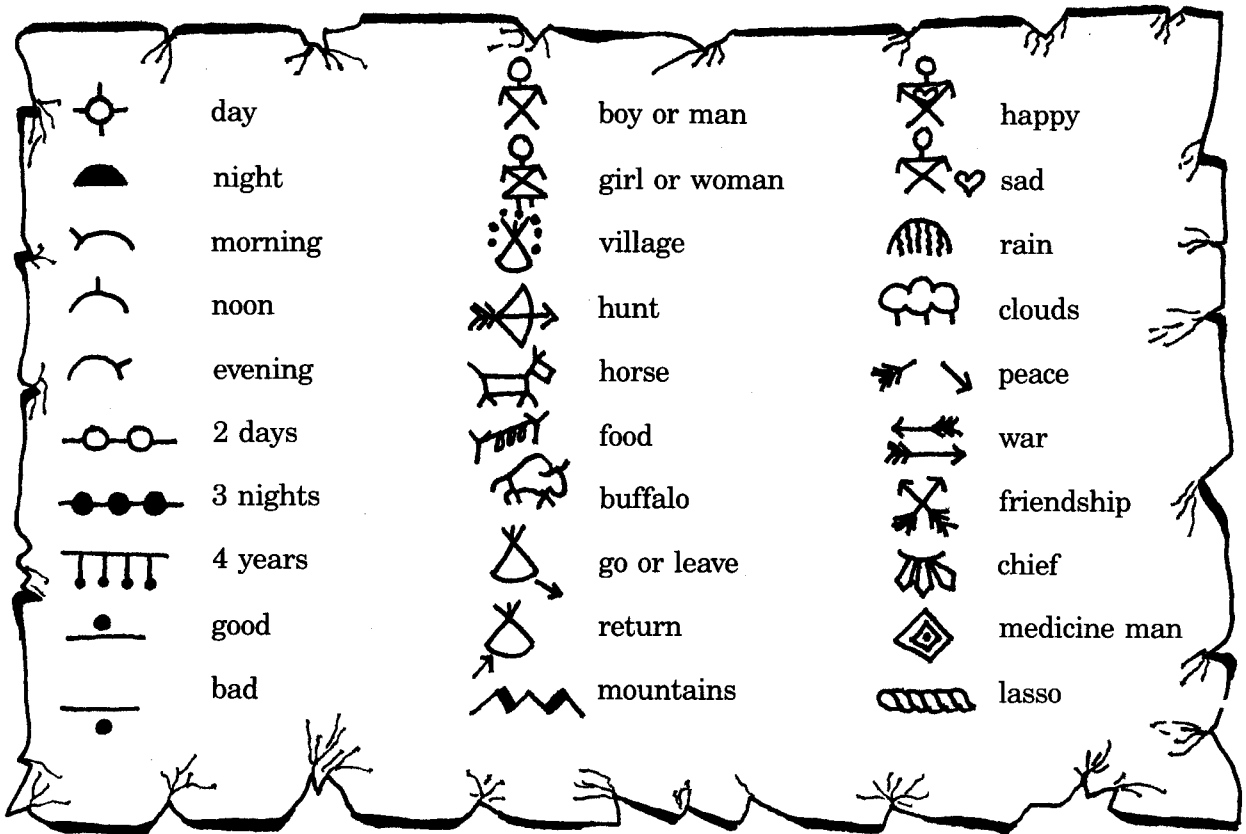
Picture Writing

There were many different tribes of Indians living on the Great Plains. Each tribe had its own spoken language. These tribes often moved from place to place and found other people speaking languages that they did not understand. To understand and communicate with each other, they used sign language and picture writing.

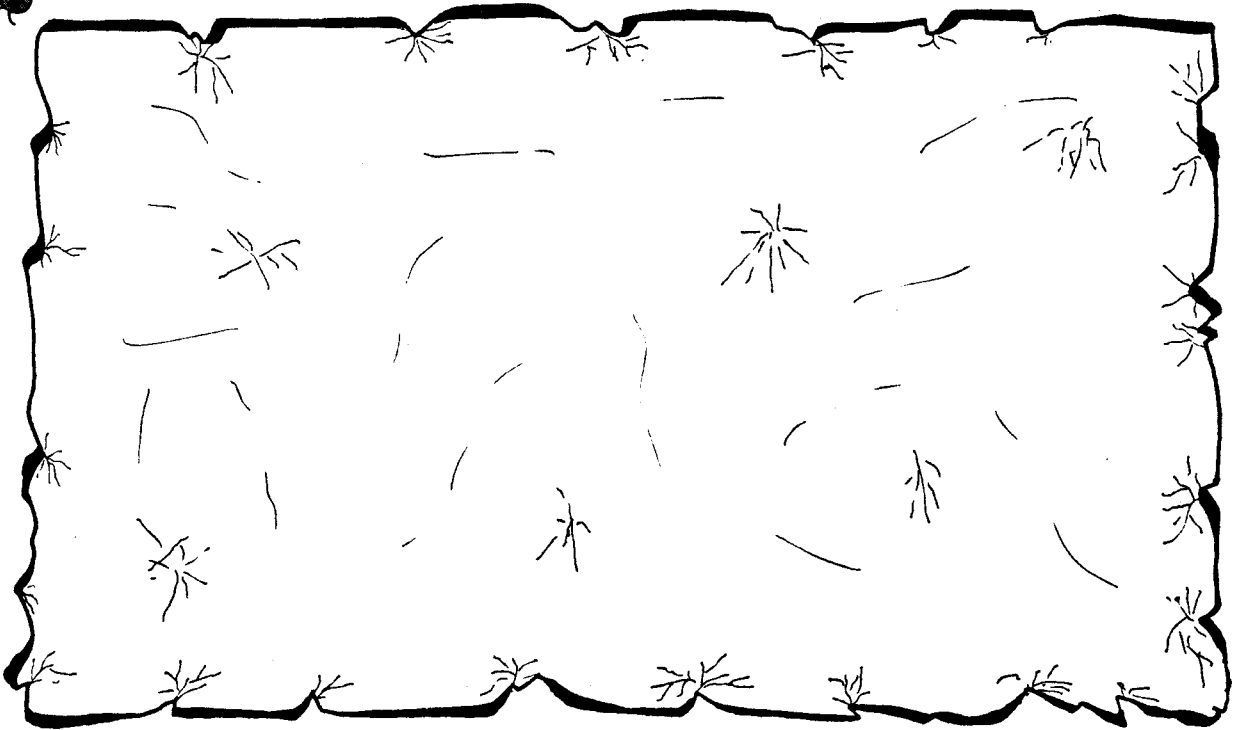
In sign language, the Plains Indians moved their hands and fingers in certain ways to make signs that other Indian tribes understood. In picture writing, the Plains Indians used small drawn symbols that stood for words and ideas. Picture writing was used to decorate their homes and often painted on buffalo hides to record important events in the life of the tribe. Usually, stories were written in a circle instead of on lines like we use for writing.

On the lower part of this page are some Plains Indian symbols that were used in picture writing. Look at them carefully to see what each symbol means. Then, on the next page try to write your own picture story. Remember the "little words" we use every day are not written. The pictures tell the story.

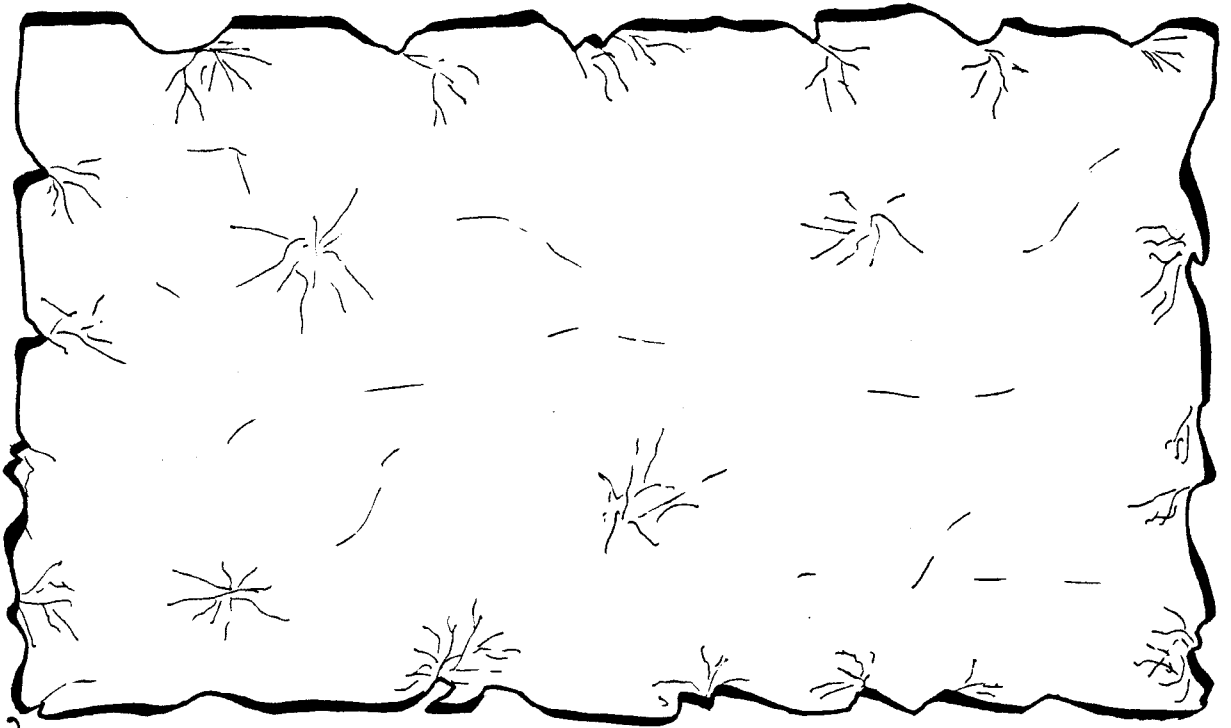
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Write your own story on the buffalo hide below.



Picture Writing Stories



Can you write a story in a circle?