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Activity Guide

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Crazy Horse's Vision

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ABOUT THE STORY

Many people have heard tales about Crazy Horse, the great Lakota warrior. This story tells about how Crazy Horse became the man he was and how he got his name.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joseph Bruchac is part Abenaki Indian. He attended Cornell University and Syracuse University and received his Ph.D. from Union Graduate School. He has written books for both adults and children, including biographies of Native American figures and retellings of Native American folktales. *Crazy Horse's Vision* has received the Parents' Choice Award and the American Library Association Notable Book Award.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

S.D. Nelson is part Lakota and a member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. His paintings are contemporary visions of traditional Lakota images and appear in books, on CD covers, and in greeting cards. His illustrations have won several awards.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask children if they know where the Lakota Indians lived. On a map, point out the border area between Wyoming and South Dakota, where the Black Hills are. Explain that the book they will read is about Crazy Horse, a great Lakota leader.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- "What was Crazy Horse's earlier name?"
- "How was Lakota life beginning to change when Crazy Horse was a boy?"
- Why did Crazy Horse want to go on a vision quest?"
- "How did Crazy Horse change after his vision quest?"
- "What do you think Crazy Horse's vision meant?" (*Analyze*)
- "Why was Crazy Horse so important to his people?" (*Draw Conclusions*)

Vocabulary

Write these verbs on the chalkboard. Ask children to act out each word.

hesitated	stumbled	trampled	witnessed
staggered	defended		

When children have shown that they understand the meaning of the words, ask them to use each word in a sentence of their own.

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Social Studies: *The Battle of Little Bighorn*

The Battle of Little Bighorn is perhaps what Crazy Horse is best known for. Ask children to work in groups to research what happened at this terrible battle. Encourage them to think about which side was in the right and which side, if either, was at fault. Have groups present the information they have found to the class and explain their opinion of the battle.

Art: *Painting a Vision*

Ask children to read the description of Curly's vision carefully. They can then translate the vision into a painting of their own. Encourage them not to look at the paintings on the pages that tell about the vision but instead to create their own version. When they are finished, hang the vision quest paintings around the classroom.

Language Arts: *Interpreting a Vision*

Go over the description of Curly's vision with children. Ask them to think about what the vision might have meant. Point out what they know about Crazy Horse's later life – how he led his people and tried to defend them against the government. Lead a discussion about how Crazy Horse's role as a leader was revealed in his vision.

Social Studies: *The Lakota Life*

Have children work in pairs to research one aspect of Lakota life: their homes, their food gathering and preparation, family life, or traditions. When children have completed their research, ask them to write what they have learned in a brief report and present it to the class.

INTERNET ACTIVITY

Before you send children to do research using any of the keywords listed below, you may wish to try them yourself to be sure the sites are suitable.

Lakota Sweat Lodges

Using the keywords *Lakota sweat lodge*, have children use the Internet to find out what role these lodges played, how they were used in Lakota life, and how they are used today. Ask them to report back to the class on what they learn.