



# Bringing Back the Buffalo Teachings

**Strand:** VISUAL  
**Grades:** 5 - 8  
**Content:** 45 minute broadcast + hands-on activity

## Classroom Setup:

- Students will need a desk to work at.
- Stations for materials are recommended.
- Projector
- Speakers (good sound level is important for this lesson)

## Materials:

For each student:

- Canvas or heavy paper stock (8.5"x11" size or smaller)
- Gathered sticks (willow is best) or dowel
- String (30 cm)
- Acrylic or tempera paint
- Glue stick
- Paintbrushes
- Buffalo templates (provided)
- needle
  - OPTIONAL
- Books about buffalo
- Ribbons

## Overview

Artists Lorne Kequahtoway and Joely BigEagle-Kequahtoway will teach students about the history of buffalo in North America. Lorne begins the discussion with a smudge of sage and invites all students/staff/teachers to participate. They explain the purpose of smudging ceremony.

Students will then create their own buffalo flags/banners to celebrate their role in shaping the current environment, while reflecting on the lesson.

## **Artist Bios**

Joely BigEagle-Kequahtoway is an inter-disciplinary artist whose main source of inspiration is Tatanga aka Buffalo. She is a fashion and textile designer, visual artist, beader, storyteller and co-founder of the Buffalo People Arts Institute. She comes from a long line of Buffalo hunters and is Nakota/Cree/Saulteaux from the White Bear First Nations - signatory to Treaty 4. She has degrees in Civil Engineering from the University of Calgary and Mathematics from the First Nations University of Canada. She loves to incorporate mathematics and geometry in her artwork and is inspired by the perfect symmetry in nature. Her mantra envelops everything Buffalo as it connects her to ancestral memories, the land and is the manifestational glue that keeps her world together.

Originally from Treaty 4 area, Zagimē Anishnabēk, Lorne Kequahtoway is dedicated to sharing and preserving his culture with others in Saskatchewan.

Lorne is a co-founder of Buffalo People Arts Institute where he currently works full time as an Artist. He teaches cultural awareness through storytelling and community engagement around an interactive buffalo hide-tanning experience. He was part of the Management Team of Tatanka Boutique and prior to that his experience includes 18 years in the IT Industry as Entrepreneur, Solutions Architect and Project Management.

Lorne has volunteered and contributed many hours to other community development initiatives such as Board of Director on the following boards: Regina Food Bank; Treasurer, Cornwall Alternative School; Regina Urban Aboriginal Strategy – Co-Chair & National Representative; Treasurer, Regina Aboriginal Professionals Association; YTC Business Developments Ltd; Chair, Buffalo People Arts Institute Inc.; Chair, Four Horse Developments Ltd.; Nature Conservancy of Canada, Indigenous Advisory committee member; and most recently Environment and Climate Change Canada, Indigenous Advisory committee member.

### **Curriculum Aims & Goals**

**Aim:**

The aim of K-12 Arts Education is to enable students to understand and value arts expressions throughout life.

**Creative/Productive:**

Students will inquire, create, and communicate through dance, drama, music and visual art.

**Critical/Responsive:**

Students will respond to artistic expressions of Saskatchewan, Canadian and International artists using critical thinking, research, creativity and collaborative inquiry.

**Cultural/Historical:**

Students will investigate the content and aesthetics of the arts within cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts, and understand the connection between the arts and human experience.

## Creative/Productive

**CP5.8** Create art works using a variety of visual art concepts (e.g., positive space), forms (e.g., graphic design, photography), and media (e.g., mixed media, paint).

**CP6.11** Investigate and use various visual art forms, images, and art-making processes to express ideas about identity.

### **CP7.10**

Create visual art works that express ideas about the importance of place (e.g., relationship to the land, local geology, region, urban/rural landscapes, and environment).

**CP7.12** Use image-making skills, tools, techniques, and problem-solving abilities in a variety of visual art media.

**CP8.10** Create visual art works that express student perspectives on social issues (e.g., poverty, racism, homophobia, sustainability).

## Critical/Responsive

**CR6.1** Create personal responses to a variety of arts expressions (e.g., respond to music using poetry, or respond to visual art using music).

**CR6.2** Investigate and identify ways that the arts can express ideas about identity.

**CR7.3** Examine and describe how arts expressions of various times and places reflect diverse experience, values, and beliefs.

**CR8.2** Investigate and identify ways that today's arts expressions often reflect concern for social issues.

## Cultural/Historical

**CH5.2** Compare traditional and evolving arts expressions of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit artists from different regions of Canada, and examine influences of pop culture on contemporary arts.

**CH5.3** Analyze and describe how arts and pop culture expressions convey information about the time and place in which they were created.

**CH6.2** Identify ways that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit artists express cultural identity in contemporary work.

**CH7.2** Investigate how Indigenous artists from around the world reflect the importance of place (e.g., relationship to the land, geology, region, urban/rural environments).

### **CH8.1**

Research and share insights about arts expressions that incorporate social commentary.

### **CH8.2**

Analyze the influence of social issues on the work of contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit artists, and share results.

# **Teacher Guided Post-Broadcast Activity (45 min.)**

## **Creating and Colouring/Painting Buffalo Banners**

### **Prepare for the Activity**

- Get all the materials ready before starting this activity (list on first page). You may include a nature walk where students each collect 2 sticks(30cm) for the frame of their artwork.
- Make sure you print off the drawing templates.

### **Post-Activity Description**

1. Students should be at their desks. Hand out art supplies or prepare desks prior to activity.
2. Students will use the buffalo templates to trace a buffalo image onto the canvas sheet, using pencil. Alternately, we offer the children a chance to use their inner artist and they can also draw their own animal they prefer and free hand draw. It is an opportunity to reinforce the lessons learned with art in any style that makes the child happy.
3. Using pencil, children can embellish their buffalo art with other images such as the sky, sun, grass, other animals grazing, houses, etc. In addition, think about the lesson from Lorne and Joely. See if you can connect your background choices to social issues.
4. While the students are working, teacher can ask questions such as:
  - a. What kind of environment would buffalo live in?
  - b. What would they be eating?
  - c. What kinds of other animals would be around them?
  - d. Where are the buffalo?
  - e. Who is responsible for the buffalo?
  - f. Can we bring back the buffalo?
  - g. What does the buffalo represent in symbolism and in contemporary times?
5. After pencil drawing, students can then use paint, markers, etc. to colour their artwork.
6. Once the student has completed their buffalo banner, add the stick with glue and sew some sinew or thread to attach and to hang it. If there is time, add some ribbon too.
7. Have a circle with the children with a question and answer period about buffalo. Ask them what kinds of things they can make from a buffalo, including things like rawhide art, buffalo meat soup, tools, etc. Have students discuss social issues related to the history, sustainability and significance of the buffalo according to First Nations and Métis perspectives. Invite an Indigenous resource person to speak to students about this knowledge.
8. Choose a place to display the banners at the school until sending them home.
9. Optional Homework: Have the students write on what they learned in the presentation and how important buffalo are to Indigenous people in today's world.



