

Plan a "Possibles Pouch"

OBJECTIVES:

Students will be able to:

- a. Describe what a "Possibles Pouch" is and how it was used
- b. Offer functional explanations for the contents of their personal "Possibles Pouches"

MATERIALS:

- Source of information about fur trappers and mountain men
- An historic photograph, drawing, or painting that shows a "Possibles Pouch" being worn
- Leather or cloth scraps and ties (could use shoe strings) - enough for each student
- Beads and/or sequins
- Scissors and glue

INTRODUCTION:

- Review fur trapping history (both local Spokane history and regional Washington history)
- Discuss why fur trappers, mountain men, and tradesmen would carry "Possibles Pouches"
- Show artwork and/or historic images which reflect historical characters wearing or using their "Possibles Pouch"
- View an historic "Possibles Pouch" via a museum collection exhibit or web site
- Read a diary or journal entry written by someone in the 1800s which references the use of a "Possibles Pouch"

ACTIVITY:

- Lead the students in a brainstorming session about what items they would choose to place into their personal "Possibles Pouch", identifying not only the item but also why it would be used.
- Pass out one piece of cloth or leather and a strap to each student.
- Each student will need a pair of scissors and some glue.
- Provide beads and other decorations that will personalize the pouches; discuss why some items were more likely to be used for decoration and others were not (1800-1850 trade goods) during the fur trade era.
- Have the students decorate their "Possibles Pouches".

- Once the pouches are complete, have the students write a description of their pouch. Ask them to describe why they chose the decorations they did and also explain what items they plan to place in their pouches.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

- Take a field trip to Riverside State Park and visit the Spokane House Interpretive Center.
- Invite a local re-enactment group to make a presentation in the classroom about the fur trade era; they often times can come dressed in period costume and may have replica artifacts to show the class (Friends of Spokane House is one such group).
- Attend a rendezvous encampment with your class.
- Visit a local museum or historical society to see any artifacts they may have on exhibit reflecting the fur trade era.

ASSESSMENT:

- On the written assignments, evaluate spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
- Their written description should include the identification of and the rationale behind items they would choose to put into their pouches.
- During the brainstorming session, assess their processes of creative thinking and problem solving.

