

## INDIANS OF THE NORTH: CHIPPEWA

The Indians of the North lived in a large semi-arctic region that included most of what is now Canada. It was a land of cold winters and heavy snows. The North had many lakes and streams, and forests of fir, pine, spruce, and other evergreen trees.

The North was one of the most thinly populated regions of North America. The Indians who lived in this rugged region belonged to one of two major language groups - The Algonkian speakers in the east and the Athabaskan speakers in the west. In spite of their language differences, the two groups had similar ways of life.

Tribes consisted of many small bands. Each band lived in its own territory but was related through marriage to other bands in the tribe. For the most part, there were no tribal chiefs.

Food was often scarce, and the Indians moved about hunting and gathering wild plants, berries, and nuts. The growing season was too short for farming. Caribou and moose, along with elk, deer, musk-ox, and buffalo, were the main animals hunted. Fish and shellfish were important foods along the coasts, rivers, and lakes of the region.

These Indians made most of their utensils of wood. They made containers but no pottery. In the east, containers were made from bark, and in the west they were made of woven spruce roots.

The tribes of the North used caribou or moose skin to make most of their clothing. The men wore long shirts, breechcloths, leggings, and moccasins. The women had about the same clothing but wore longer shirts and shorter leggings. In winter, everyone wore robes, mittens, and fur caps for extra warmth. The Indians decorated many of their garments with quill work, embroidery, or painted designs.

Houses were made of wooden frames covered with bark, brush, or animal skins. The Indians also built dome-shaped wigwams, lean-tos, and sturdy log houses. Families that moved around a lot lived in tepees.

In summer, the Indians of the North used bark canoes to travel on the lakes, rivers, and streams in search of food. In winter, they used wooden toboggans and snowshoes for travel.

Weapons of the North included bows and arrows, spears, clubs, and knives. In the east, the tribes used stone to make arrow points and knife blades. The western tribes generally used bone and antlers to make tools and beaver teeth for making knives. The Indians spent most of their time searching for food and did little fighting.

The Indians usually had good relations with the early French fur traders. But the tribes slowly changed their way of life by hunting fur-bearing animals that they traded to the French for weapons, traps, and food. Previously, they had made most of the necessities of life from various parts of the animals they killed. Those who did not die fighting or of disease lost their land to the settlers and moved westward or onto reservations.

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## INDIANS OF THE PLAINS: SIOUX

The Plains stretched from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains and from Canada to Mexico. Few Indians lived in this vast grassland region before the arrival of the white man. But after the Spaniards brought the horse and gun to the region in the 1600's, a new way of life appeared on the Plains. On horseback, the Indians could follow the great herds of buffalo. After the new tribes and white settlers came to the Plains, fierce fighting broke out.

People throughout the world have been thrilled by stories and motion pictures of this period on the Plains. Many people - even Indians themselves - have pictured the life of the Plains Indians as typical of all Indians. But this way of life lasted fewer than 200 years and existed only on the Plains.

Most of the original Plains tribes lived in villages along the rivers and streams where the land was fertile and easily cultivated. Out on the grasslands, the tough sod was hard to farm. The women tended crops of beans, corn, squash, and tobacco while the men hunted deer, elk, and sometimes buffalo. During the summer, the Indians left the villages to hunt the vast buffalo herds on the Plains. The huge beasts were difficult to hunt on foot, so the men tried to stampede herds of them off cliffs or into areas where they could be killed more easily. In the fall, the Indians returned to the villages and harvested their crops. They pulled the slain buffalo home on travois, which were made by fastening a platform on two poles. Sometimes the Indians used dogs to pull the travois.

The early Plains Indians wore deerskin breechcloths, leggings, and simple shirts. They used buffalo hides for winter robes and moccasin soles. While in their villages, the tribes lived in earth lodges, frames of logs covered with brush and dirt. Out on the Plains, they lived in teepees made of animal skin.

The coming of the horse and gun greatly changed life on the Plains. With the horse, Indians could leave their villages and follow the buffalo herds - which they could not do on foot. Their daily life became centered around the vast herds, and buffalo meat became their main food. The flesh could be roasted over a fire, dried in the sun to make jerky, or pounded with berries and suet to make pemmican.

The Indians used buffalo skins to make clothing, bedding, and teepees. They made the bones and horns into tools and utensils and used dry buffalo manure for fuel. The whites called pieces of dry manure 'buffalo chips'. The tribes held many ceremonies aimed at assuring a large enough supply of buffalo.

The buffalo hunters stayed on the move continually. Large teepees, which could be moved from camp to camp, replaced earth lodges as their principal dwellings. They used horses to haul their possessions from place to place on large travois. A good hunter might need more than one wife to prepare all the buffalo hides he brought home, and many successful hunters had two or more.

Nearby tribes, and those forced westward by the advancing white man, quickly adopted the Plains way of life. These late arrivals on the Plains - the Apache, Arapaho, Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Comanche - became some of the most famous tribes.

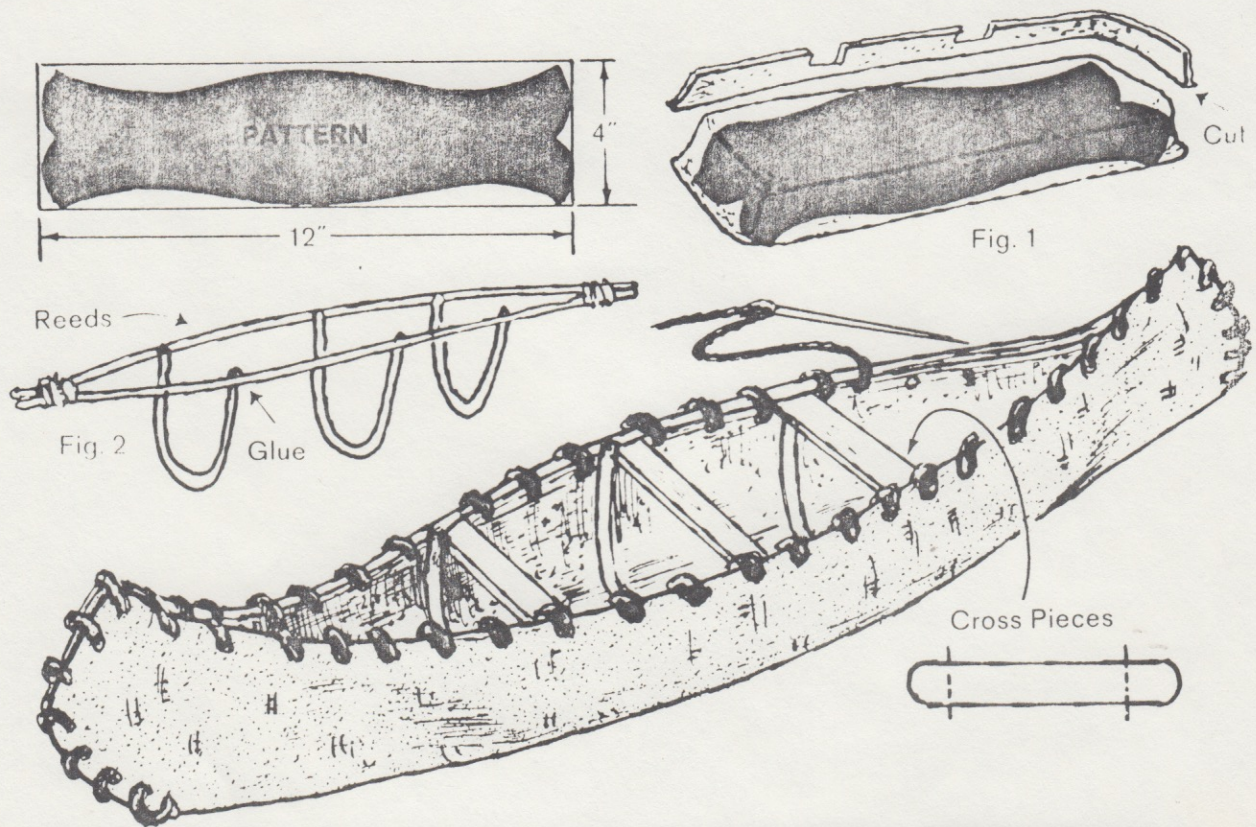
With many new tribes on the Plains, communication required some kind of common, easily understood language. This need led to the development of the Indian sign language.

The widespread killing of buffalo, particularly by white hunters, threatened to wipe out the great beasts. By 1890, the buffalo herds had disappeared - and with them, the Plains way of life. In their place came increasing numbers of ranchers and settlers who turned the Plains into cattle ranches and homesteads. The federal government moved many tribes onto reservations and hoped they would take up farming. But the Plains Indians considered farming to be woman's work. They turned instead to liquor, warfare, and religious protest movements.

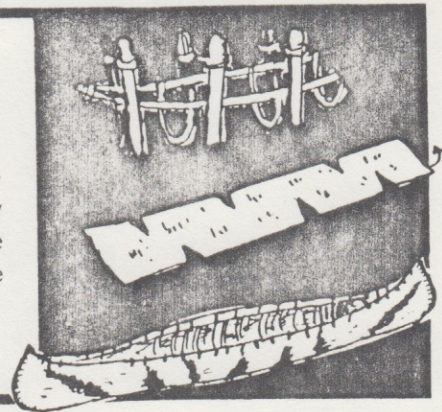
One such movement was the Ghost Dance religion, which the Indians believed would bring back the buffalo and remove the settlers from their land. The last uprising of the Plains Indians, the Battle of Wounded Knee, took place in 1890. Army troops trapped a band of Sioux on Wounded Knee Creek in South Dakota and destroyed them.

# Birchbark Canoe

To make a model about 12" long, take the lid of a molded egg carton and cut-off one end and the side with the holes (Fig. 1). Draw on the shape shown and cut it out. Soak in warm water, then bend into canoe shape. Hold with clothespins at either end, and allow to dry. Cut reeds for the sides and ribs. Soak and bend them and let them dry in position (Fig. 2). Glue in place. Thread a large needle with twine and overcast the edges, ends, and the cut sides. Cut three flat sticks for cross pieces, glue them in place. Paint canoe to look like birchbark.



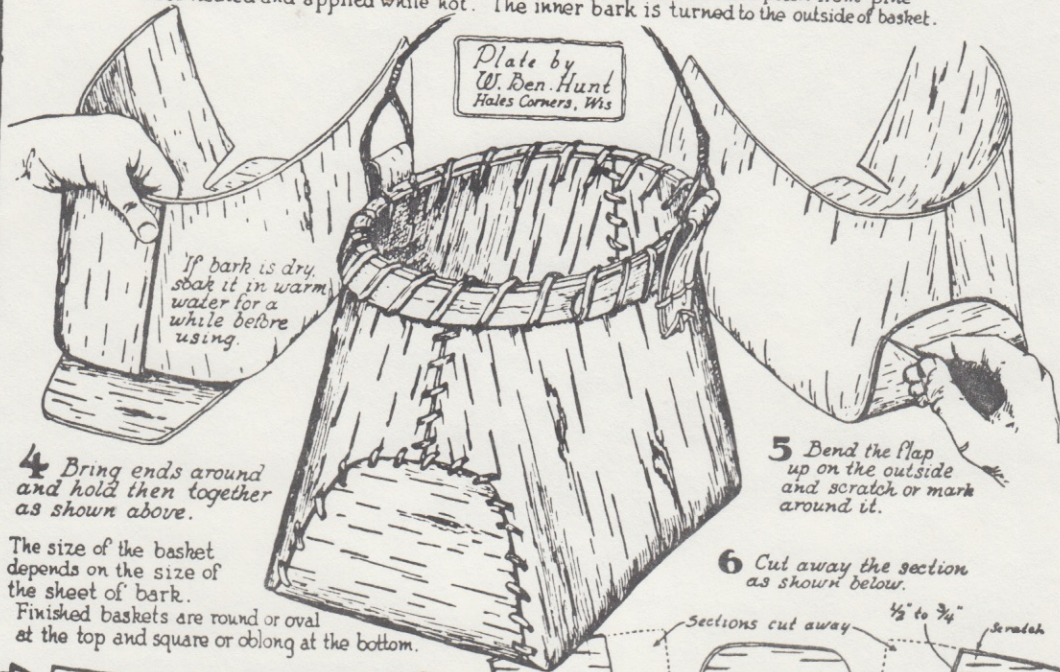
To make this kind of canoe, the Indians would cut down a large birch tree, slit the bark, and peel it off in one large piece. Saplings were bent and lashed into shape for the framework, which was then placed over the flattened birchbark. Slits were cut in the edge of the bark as necessary to fit it up and around the frame. These bark edges were overlapped and sewed in place. Then the seams were daubed with pitch to make the canoe waterproof.



# BIRCH-BARK BASKET

Baskets like these are used by the Indians for carrying and storing purposes. When used for water or maple sap, the seams are smeared with pitch from pine trees heated and applied while hot. The inner bark is turned to the outside of basket.

Plate by  
W. Ben Hunt  
Hales Corners, Wis



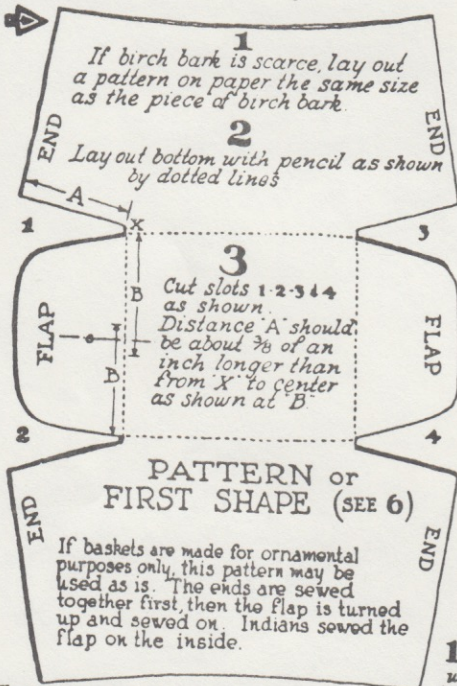
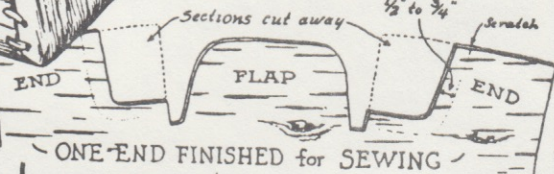
If bark is dry, soak it in warm water for a while before using.

4 Bring ends around and hold them together as shown above.

5 Bend the flap up on the outside and scratch or mark around it.

6 Cut away the section as shown below.

The size of the basket depends on the size of the sheet of bark. Finished baskets are round or oval at the top and square or oblong at the bottom.



1 If birch bark is scarce, lay out a pattern on paper the same size as the piece of birch bark.

2 Lay out bottom with pencil as shown by dotted lines

3 Cut slots 1-2-3-4 as shown. Distance 'A' should be about 7/8 of an inch longer than from 'X' to center as shown at 'B'

If baskets are made for ornamental purposes only, this pattern may be used as is. The ends are sewed together first, then the flap is turned up and sewed on. Indians sewed the flap on the inside.



7 Turn up flap 'A' and bend the ends around and over it. Sew seam 'B' first and then sew around flap as shown at center top.

8 Sew with inner bass-wood bark which should first be well dried and then soaked in water before using, or use wet raffia.

9 After both ends are sewed, level off the top edge with a sharp knife or shears.

10 The top rim band is then whittled out of some green wood 1/2 to 1 inch wide and from 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick.

11 Sew it to the outside of the bark as shown in the upper center drawing.



12 Cut two loops of birch bark and sew them on as shown at upper center.

13 Make pole or handle of rope or twisted bass-wood bark or raffia as the case may be.

14 Seams and cracks may be sealed with pine pitch which should be heated in a small can and applied to seams while hot. Large cracks should be sewed up before pitch is applied.

Baskets for berry picking should not be pitched.

The best time to get birch bark is in spring or early summer & it should be use while it is still fresh.

## Birch-Bark Baskets

Paper or canoe birch has always been a boon to Indians and backwoodsmen. Beautiful and serviceable canoes were made from it, and it was used to cover wigwams, baskets, and pails. Birch is getting scarce, and the bark should not be peeled from living trees. But should a tree be blown down, or cut down to make room for roads or for building houses, it would be a shame to let the beautiful bark go to waste or be burned. Baskets and pails made of birch-bark will last a long time, because the wood is resinous and therefore almost waterproof. The birch-bark basket shown in the plate opposite was used for collecting maple sap.

Another type of basket which may be used for gathering berries and the like, is shown in the sketches in Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 shows how the bark

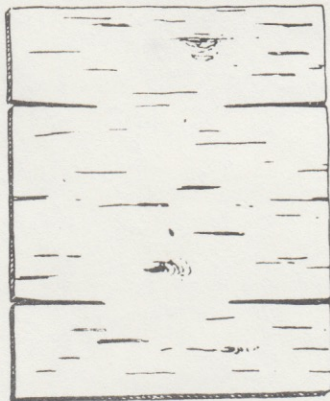


Fig. 1

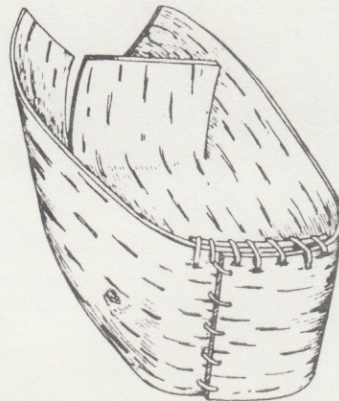
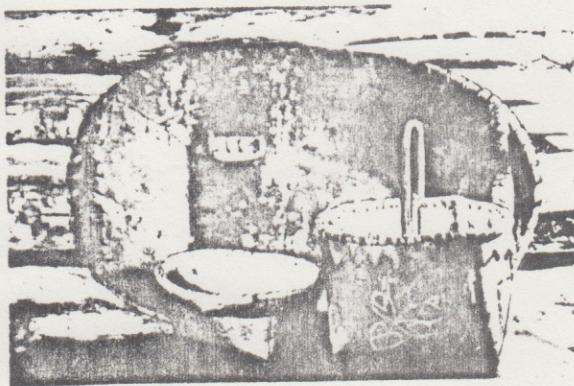
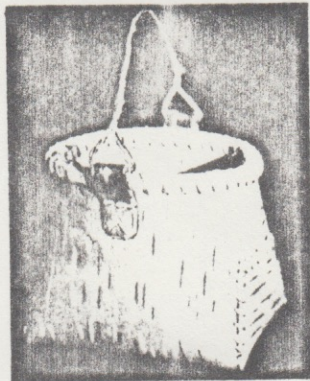


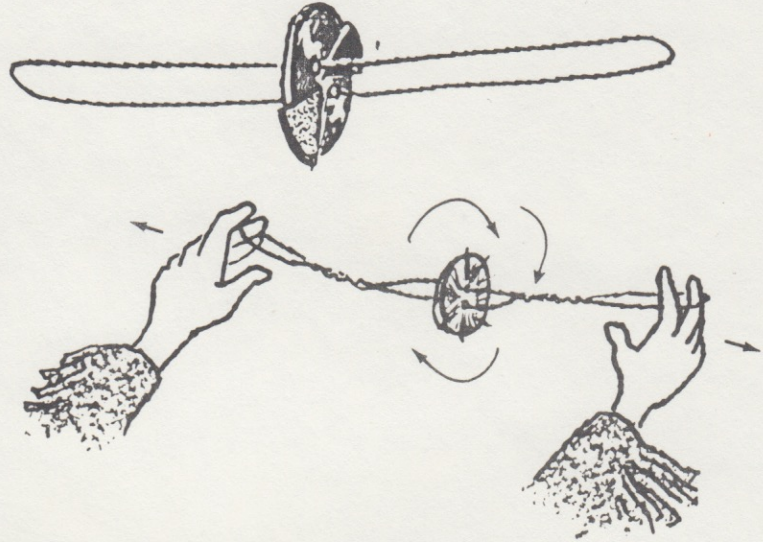
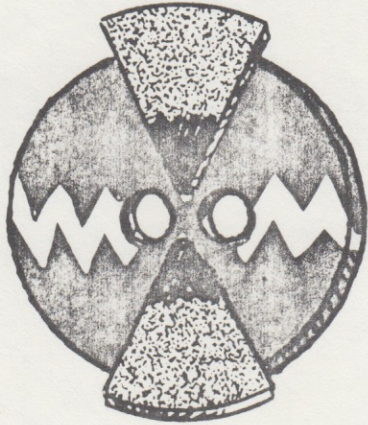
Fig. 2

is cut. Then the flaps are turned up, after which the ends are folded around them. In Figure 2, one end is shown completed and the other end is partly bent in place. These baskets are not as picturesque as the one on the opposite page but they do very well in an emergency, and they are very useful.



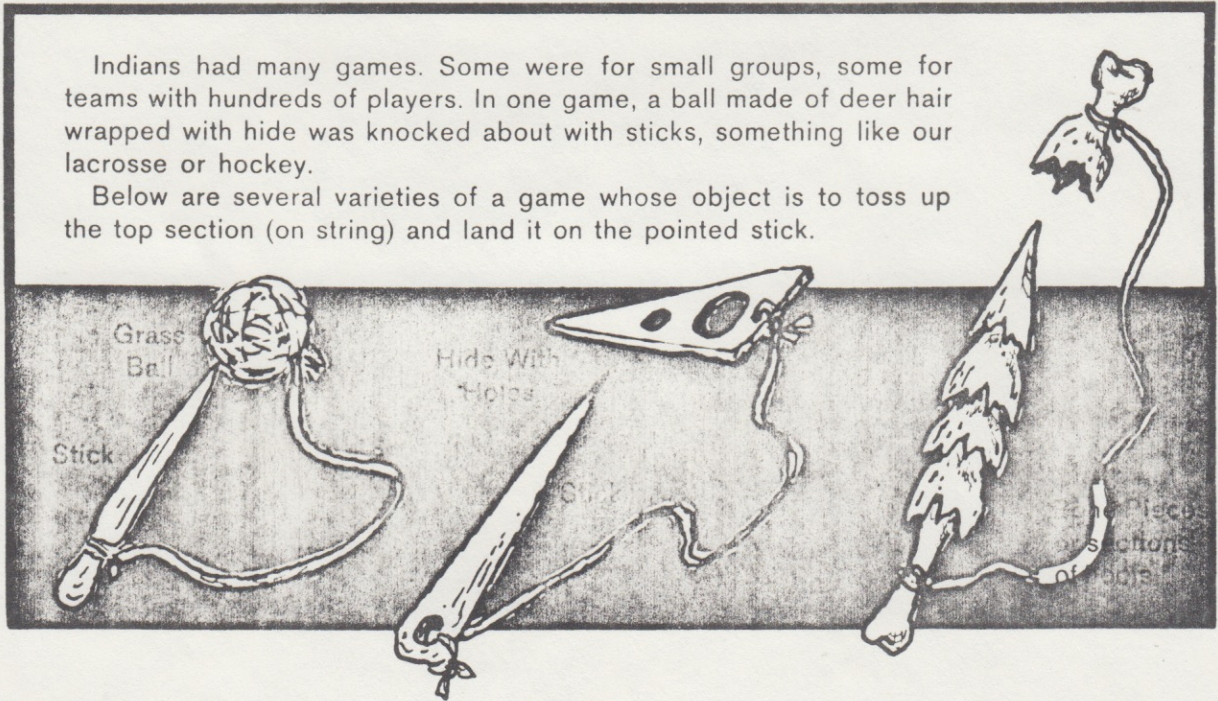
# Humming Toy

To make a "hummer," cut a 2½" circle from ¼" thick wood. Drill two holes in the center. (A large coat button could also be used.) Cut two "V" shapes of cardboard and glue them on as shown. Paint bright designs on each side. Run a 36" piece of heavy string through the holes and tie. Swing the disk until the cord is tightly wound. Then as you pull the string the toy will unwind rapidly, making a humming sound.



Indians had many games. Some were for small groups, some for teams with hundreds of players. In one game, a ball made of deer hair wrapped with hide was knocked about with sticks, something like our lacrosse or hockey.

Below are several varieties of a game whose object is to toss up the top section (on string) and land it on the pointed stick.





MAN WOMAN CHILD OLD MAN CUB SCOUT BOY SCOUT EAGLE SCOUT

SCOUTMASTER PATROL CROWD MINISTER

GOOD BAD FRIEND FOE ALWAYS NUMEROUS DANGER

BLOCKADE SLOW FAST IMPOSSIBLE LETTER CANOE TRAIN

SEE ANGER JOY SADNESS LIFE HEAVEN EARTH CLOUDS RAIN SNOW

SUN STARS MOON THUNDERSTORM FOG WIND WATER RUNNING WATER LAKE

SEA ISLAND DRINKING WATER POLLUTED WATER FIRE MOUNTAINS TREES

FOREST GRASS MARSH TRACKS HARVEST COW HORSE

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

DAY MORNING EVENING MOON FORENOON AFTERNOON YESTERDAY

DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY TOMORROW IN 3 DAYS NIGHT MID-NIGHT MONTH YEAR 2 YEARS 7 HOURS

THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY 1 WEEK

FOOD TENT OPEN CLOSED VILLAGE CITY HOUSE

FACTORY CHURCH HOME POST OFFICE TRAIN STATION HOSPITAL CASTLE

WALK RUN SIT LOST FOUND EAT HUNGRY SPEAK

ASK HEAR WRITE READ LIE THINK SLEEP PRAY

VACH COLLECTION

Illus. 8. Examples of picture writing symbols.



Peeling birch bark and building a canoe

*Máh-ni-wi-gwah-say ji-mah-ni-kay*



**Making birch-bark trays and baskets**

*Wee-gwah-si mah-kah-koo-kay*



# AUTUMN

Dah-gwah-gin

## A wild rice camp on the lake shore

May-no-mi-ni-kay ayn-dah-wad jeegi-beeg



Eating a sugar cone and playing a popular game

Zi-gah-e-gun oo-mi-jin bi-peenji-gah-nah-oo