

# FISH CREEK FAMILIES

A Teacher-conducted history study for  
Divison I students



FISH CREEK  
ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTRE

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[www.Fish-Creek.org](http://www.Fish-Creek.org)



# Introduction

This is a curriculum-connected, full day field study complete with preparatory and post-visit activities. The intent is to offer hands-on experiences that explore aspects of the cultural history of the Fish Creek valley and Calgary area, and reflects the vision of Alberta’s Parks.

Fish Creek Provincial Park is one of Canada’s largest urban provincial parks, stretching from the western edge of the city to the Bow River. The park has a strong vision within its visitor services program plan to support and foster environmental and cultural education.

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# Facility & Rules

## THE FACILITY

The Bow Valley Ranch Visitor Centre is located in the east end of the Park, at the foot of Bow Bottom Trail SE. It offers an indoor sitting area, a small theatre and an exhibit area that showcases the history and people of the Fish Creek valley.

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The Bow Valley Ranch Visitor Centre offers you the following facilities and services:

1. Each teacher will be given an indoor space in the sitting area or the small theatre to use as their base for the day's activities. Lunches or snacks can be eaten in this area.
2. Some equipment for the day's activities will be available at the Park. It is your responsibility to count all equipment and return it at the end of the day. There is a fee charged for lost or broken equipment.
3. Washrooms and water fountains are located in the building. There are no vending machines, microwaves or coffee available.
4. A short orientation (about 15 minutes) will be provided to the entire group upon arrival to welcome and introduce everyone to the park, its rules, the program for the day and what the students may discover outside.
5. Parent volunteers will have a separate orientation (about 10 minutes). This will introduce them to the equipment provided, to a map of the activity area (maps provided), to the general flow of the day, and will answer any questions that they may have.



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## LUNCH BREAK PROCEDURES

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*Your class may eat inside the facility, within their assigned room. Please ensure that the students understand the following :*

### INSIDE THE BUILDING

- Students must be supervised by an adult while they are in the building (classrooms and washrooms).
- Classes from other schools may be in the facility at the same time. Please respect them and keep noise to a minimum, especially in the washrooms, hallways and other common areas.
- Help us keep the classrooms clean. There are garbage containers in the brown cabinets by the classroom doors.
- Recyclable containers go into the brown cabinet labelled “juice boxes, cans and bottles”. Do the students know what recycling is, how it conserves resources and how it helps the environment?
- Leftover fruit and vegetable materials, such as banana peels and apple cores, are collected in a white compost bucket in each room.

### OUTDOOR FACILITIES

The closest outdoor eating area with firepits and picnic tables is Hull’s Wood, a 15 minute walk south of the Visitor Centre. Reservations are not required, but you must provide your own wood and water bucket (fill at the washrooms), to have on hand near the firepit area.

*When using the fire pit area be sure to:*

- Provide your own roasting sticks and firewood. **Do not use branches or deadfall from the park.**
- Have a bucket of water nearby **before** the fire is lit. Check that the fire is out before you leave.
- **Do not feed or disturb wildlife.**

# Preparation Materials

## 1. Preparation Checklist

A full, detailed teacher checklist for your field trip preparation is available at the back of this resource package . These are general guidelines to assist you in planning your field trip.

## 2. Program Start and End

Program start and end times are flexible to accommodate bus availability and travel distance to the park. In general, programs start between 9:30- 10:00 am and finish between 1:45- 2:00 pm.



**For the Indoor Discover Stations, be sure to divide your class into 5 smaller groups with a minimum of one adult volunteer per group of 6 students.**

## 3. Field Trip at a Glance

<b>Group Orientation (15 minutes)</b>	Overview of park rules, safety and behaviour expectations for the day
<b>Student Snack Break Parent Volunteer Orientation (10-15 minutes)</b>	Overview of the discover stations, equipment and trail safety for parent volunteers.
<b>Educational Activities</b>	GROUP 1 (Outside): Staff or Teacher-led history tour GROUP 2 (Inside): Parent-led Discovery Stations
<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>	Environmental Educator will circulate and answer questions, show nature biofacts and ensure that the program is going smoothly.
<b>Educational Activities</b>	GROUP 2 (Outside): Staff or Teacher-led history tour GROUP 1 (Inside): Parent-led Discovery Stations
<b>Groups return to Learning Centre for Program Wrap-up</b>	GROUP 2 (Inside): Parent-led Discovery Stations

***Program Wrap-up should take place at least 15-20 minutes prior to the scheduled bus departure.***

# Pre-field Trip Activities

*Preparatory activities are essential to the success of your trip! The preparatory activities described here will introduce the field study day to your students and will allow them to practise the skills to be used during the field study day.*

*Feel free to use your own activities and the ones described in this package. Within the activities you select and present to your students be sure to consider other curriculum areas and explore how all subject areas can be connected to your field study day.*



## 1 Traditions Worksheet: No

Establish with your students a manageable definition for tradition. Discuss traditions which are observed in the students' homes. Students may be able to gather information by surveying family members through a questionnaire or by asking questions and sharing the answers with the class. Questions should be created to best survey the multicultural make up of your class. The traditions may be ones observed every day, such as who sits in what spot or customs and traditions followed on special occasions such as birthdays, Christmas, weddings, etc. The discussion should help prepare your students for the on-site games and legend activities and the discussions on their importance.



## 2 Legend of "Storm Maker's Tipi" Worksheet: Yes

Seat the class in a circle. Read the story to the class (attached in the appendix). Discuss the tradition of legend telling in First Nations culture. Legends are a form of educating and entertaining children and adults. Legends are usually told by older people like grandparents. The Blackfoot story tellers are called Elders. Legends can be exciting, scary or funny and teach history, tradition, religion and sacred rituals of the First Nations culture.



## 3 Vocabulary Worksheet: Yes

Review cultural vocabulary with the class. (attached in the appendix), This could be done in any number of ways:

- Words could be incorporated into the weekly spelling quiz
- Encourage your students to write a short story, using the animal species they may find in the park and the key vocabulary words



## 4 Beef Jerky Worksheet: No

The First Nations did not have refrigerators, so the women would dry the bison meat in the sun or smoke it over a fire. The result was "jerky", which would keep almost indefinitely. You can buy beef jerky at major grocery stores.



## 5 Connect the Dots Tipi Worksheet: Yes

Copy this worksheet (attached in the appendix) and have each student complete and decorate the tipi. Older students' version includes mathematics to make it more challenging to complete.

# Field Trip Activity Summary

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*The following Field Trip Activities are curriculum-connected. You are certainly welcome to change, remove or follow the activities to suit the needs of your students.*

This program focuses on the Blackfoot use of the Fish Creek valley before contact with early explorers and settlers. Fish Creek is an ideal location for a program on the Plains First Nations as they have made use of the Fish Creek valley for over 8,000 years.

This program was developed by the Fish Creek Provincial Park Environmental Education staff in consultation with formal and community educators, and with input from an Aboriginal Consultation Advisor from Alberta Culture.

***The History Study will be facilitated by the Environmental Educator for half of the day. The Discovery Stations will be completed in small, parent led groups for the remaining part of the field trip.***



## Discovery Stations

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Students are introduced to First Nations life through discovery centres. These centres include putting up a miniature tipi, First Nations nourishment and the many uses of bison.



## Games

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Playing a few First Nations games provides a break and lets the children learn some ways the Blackfoot spent their spare time.



## Legend Reading in the Tipi

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Acting out a First Nations legend is one of the highlights of the visit! Another legend has been provided to read to the students.



## Bison Pound Site Visit

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Students will walk to a nearby bison pound site. There is an optional cooperative simulation tag game and you can share a story about how the bison hunt was accomplished.

# Post-field Trip Activities

In addition to a class discussion about trip highlights and favourite activities, students may need class time to complete data sheets or to share information about their discoveries.

## Make a Paper Tipi Worksheet: Yes

Tipi designs are not just decorations, they are important in representing the accomplishments of the family. Using the Make a Tipi Template, instruct your students to design and colour their own tipi cover. Follow the directions to glue the paper tipi together to become a 3D model. After the students are finished, display the class tipis as a large camp in the classroom.

Review the importance of the bison to the First Nations people of the Plains. Photocopy the worksheet and distribute to the students. Have the students draw a line from each object to the part of the bison that was used to make the object.

## Needs Then and Now Worksheet: Yes

Review how Blackfoot families met their basic needs and compare this with ways we meet our needs. Copy the Match-Up Challenge worksheet for each student and have them match the Native version with our modern version of each item. Teachers of younger students may want to print the name of each item under its picture: teachers of older students may ask the students to fill in the blanks.

Students could colour the objects.

Have students help draw a class picture or create a collage showing how the Blackfoot people met their needs.

## Legend Picture Worksheet: Yes

Make copies of “The Bear Who Stole The Chinook” picture for your students to colour and answer the question at the bottom. Make copies of the worksheet and ask the students to answer the questions.

## Construct a Parfleche Worksheet: Yes

(Pronounced par-flesh)

A parfleche was one of the many items which Blackfoot women made from the skin of the bison. They were used like suitcases to carry the family's belongings when they moved from place to place following great herds of bison.

Most parfleches were large, but some were as small as the version found in the appendices of this package and were used to carry small objects.

Give each student a copy of the parfleche pattern and have them construct and decorate their own. You can enlarge the pattern and make larger versions by drawing the pattern on a paper bag.

## Letters Worksheet: No

Write a letter to an imaginary First Nations child that lived in Fish Creek over 150 years ago and tell them about your experience in the park. If your class makes their own paper, these letters could be written on paper made to look like parchment or leather by staining the paper with tea bags.

# Planning your Field Study in the Park: Teacher Checklist

Give every driver—including the bus driver—a copy of the route map.  
Make sure all drivers know you are coming to the EAST end of the Park, near DEER RUN

## Prepare yourself

- Read the teacher package thoroughly: phone 403-297-7926 if you have any questions.
- Modify the activities to fit your lesson plans, students' skill levels and time in the park
- Check student health forms, looking for allergies to bee/wasp stings.

## Prepare the students

- Discuss how Fish Creek Provincial Park is a wild environment. Discuss the difference between wild and tame animals and environments (coyotes vs. pet dogs, Fish Creek Provincial Park vs. school yard, etc.)
  - Do not feed or disturb wildlife: Quietly observe all wildlife from a comfortable distance.
  - Leave only footprints: Share discoveries, but leave everything as they found it.
  - Pitch in: Litter should be placed in the rubbish bins provided or in a pocket.
- Discuss behavioural expectations. Explain that the field study will be another school day, just at a different place.  
All the school rules apply.
- Discuss the purpose of provincial parks and protected areas. Have the class make a list of ways they can show respect for living things during their visit to the park. *Possibilities include:*
  - Stay well back from the banks of Fish Creek
  - Leave ant hills, nests and rotting logs alone and intact. They are animal homes.
  - Walk with care and mindfulness. When leaving the trails to complete program activities take care to minimize your impact.
- Discuss outdoor safety. Students need to:
  - Stay where an adult can see them at all times.
  - Walk, do not run.
  - Keep feet on the ground: no climbing.
  - Leave dead branches on the ground: they do not make safe walking sticks.
- Discuss what to wear on the field trip
  - Hats, sunscreen, insect repellent.
  - Runners (not sandals).
  - Dress in layers: the forest can be cool in the morning.
- There is nowhere to buy anything here so bring plenty to eat and drink.
- Complete some preparatory activities, either the ones in the next section of this package or some of your own.

## Prepare the adults

- Please follow the recommended ratios as outlined in your school board regulations. Divide your class into working groups.
- Review the park rules with the adults
- Emphasize the following: there is nowhere to buy anything anything here, including coffee.
- The adults' role is to lead the activities with the same small group of students all day..

## Bring

- A cheque made payable to the *Government of Alberta* for \$7.00 per student (no charge for adults).
- Student booklets (or journals), pencils.
- A few bandaids with each adult and your first-aid kit.

Dear Adult Chaperone,

Thank you for volunteering for a field trip to Fish Creek Provincial Park! This excursion allows students to explore, discover and learn in one of the largest urban parks in North America.

Here are a few tips that may help you enjoy your visit:

- Pack a hearty and healthy lunch (snacks and water too!). There are no vending machines or stores onsite to purchase food
- Please dress appropriately for the weather. We will run our programs rain, snow or sunshine
- Ensure that you are aware of what part of Fish Creek the program is taking place. We host educational programs at the WEST end (near Woodbine) and the EAST end (near Deer Run)

Our staff will be available throughout the day to ensure that you and your group have a safe and educational experience in the park.

You are not expected to be a naturalist or science expert, but a positive attitude goes along way!

Thank you again, we are very excited to see you in the park soon.

Warmest regards,

Environmental Education Team

CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH PARKS



FISH CREEK  
ENVIRONMENTAL



## *Storm Maker's Tipi*

In the beginning, the Great Spirit made the first man and first woman. The Great Spirit had a special helper named Napi.

“Stay close to Man and Woman and look after all of their needs,” said the Great Spirit to Napi. Napi knew that the first people would need a shelter to protect them from the winds of winter.

While Napi was thinking about the shelter, a yellow leaf from a poplar tree blew onto his head.

“Yes, the triangle shape of the leaf is a perfect shape for a good shelter.”

Napi looked around to gather everything he would need to make a tipi for Man and Woman. Napi gathered wood poles to support the shelter, bison skin to keep them warm, chokecherry pins and rawhide rope to keep the cold wind out. Napi taught Man and Woman how to set up their tipi.

“Pitch your tipi so that the first rays of the rising Sun will shine through the door to warm your hearts. Make a circle of all your tipis and let the circle have a doorway for the rising Sun.” Napi gave the people dogs and horses so they could follow the wandering herds of bison. Then Napi told them, “I have given you tipis to protect you, but shade and warmth are not enough without the Great Spirit's blessing. He may send Bison or Otter, Bear or Snake, Rock or Crow to help you. Learn what the spirits say!”

## Vocabulary

Ensure that your students are familiar with the meaning of the following terms.

**Band-** a group of First Nations consisting of many families that live, hunt and travel together. This is also referred to as a “community.”

**Bison Pound-**a fenced area made of snow, logs or sticks used by the First Nations people to safely trap and hunt bison.

**Blackfoot-** a group of Plains First Nation people that live in Alberta. There are three tribes of the Blackfoot in Alberta: Siksika, Piikani (Peigan) and Kainaiwa (Blood). Each of these tribes is independent, but they all speak the same language and regard themselves as allies.

**Chinook-**a warm wind that often blows throughout southern Alberta during the winter. Chinook is the Blackfoot word for “snow eater.”

**Cooperate-** to work together to complete a task.

**Custom-** a social habit that has been followed for so long that it almost has the force of a law.

**Grazing-**animals feeding on grasses and other plants on the ground.

**Herd-**a group of animals that live and eat together. Herds are generally made up of the same type of animals, for example, thousands of bison living together.

**Legend-** a story, passed down through the years, which may or may not be true.

**Tipi-** a cone-shaped tent made of long wooden poles which are covered by bison skins. Used by the Plains First Nations as homes because they were easily transported to another location. The Blackfoot call their tipis lodges.

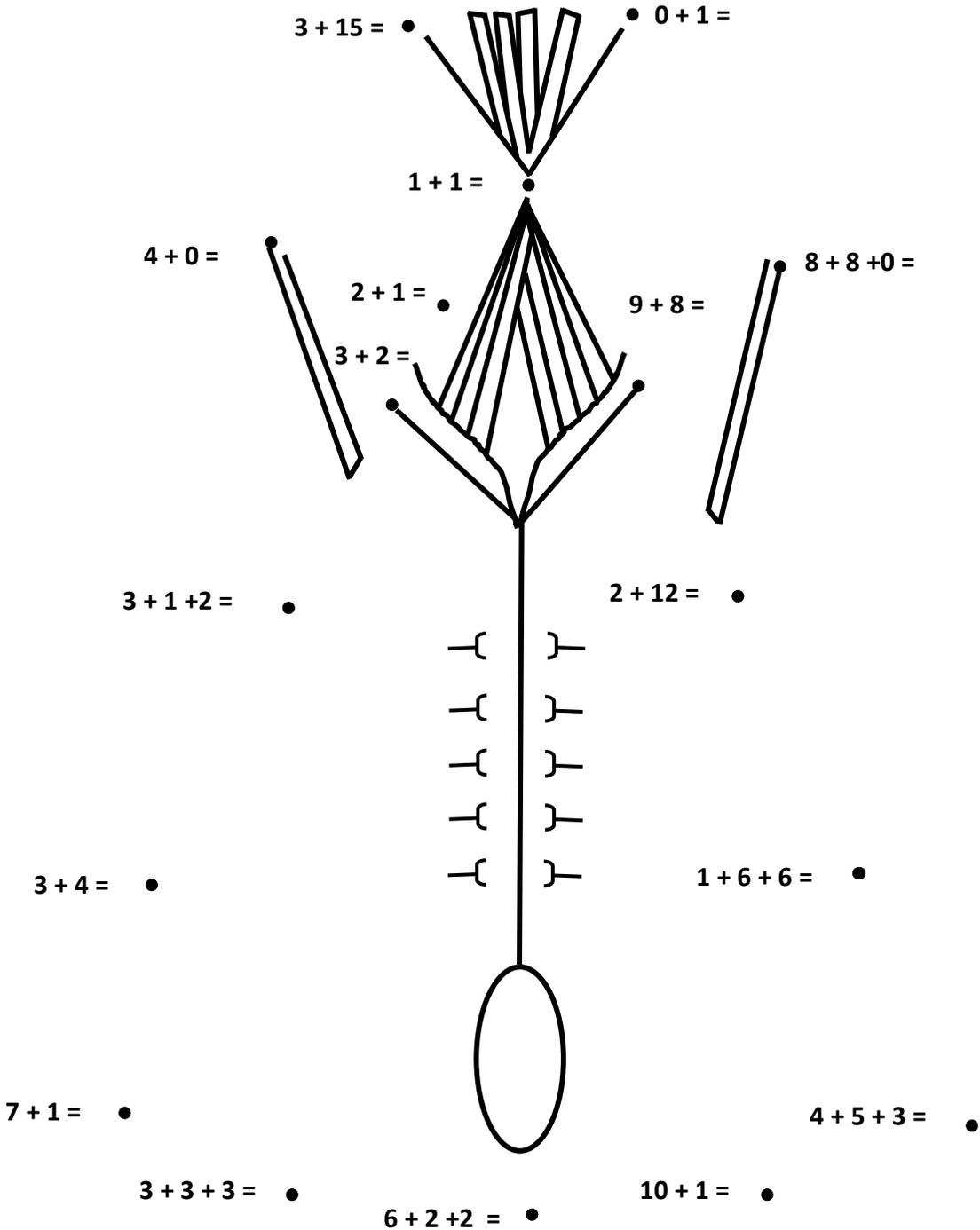
**Travois (trav-wa)** a simple device that was used by the aboriginals to move their belongings from place to place. It was made of two long poles joined together at one end to make an “A-shape” with a platform between the wide end of the poles to carry a load. Dogs and horses were used to pull the travois across the prairie, like a sled. The Blackfoot word for travois is *istuwapstop*.

The First Nations tribes had their own language. In Blackfoot, the bison was called “**ii ni**” and was the primary source of food, shelter and clothing for the people of the prairies. Challenge your students to look up Blackfoot words or phrases prior to their visit. At the time of writing, the resource below had extensive vocabulary and audio files of Blackfoot words: <http://www.blackfootcrossing.ca/dictionary.html>.

# Connect the Dots!

## A BLACKFOOT HOME IS CALLED A

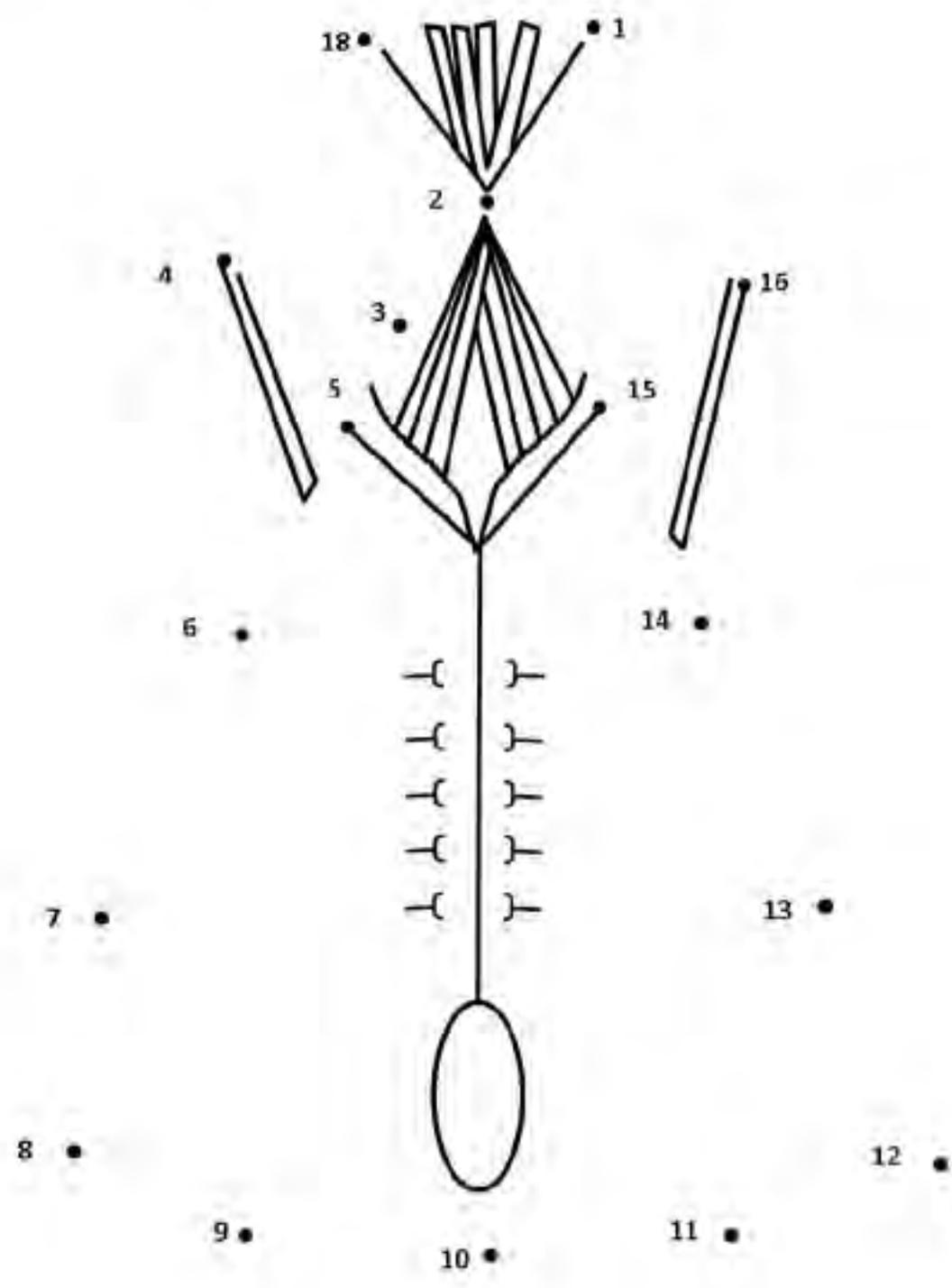
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*Connect the Dots!*

A BLACKFOOT HOME IS CALLED A

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## Make a Paper Tipi

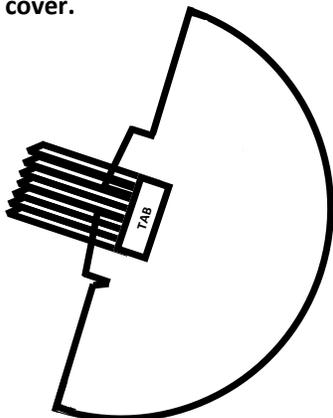
# MAKE A PAPER TIPI!



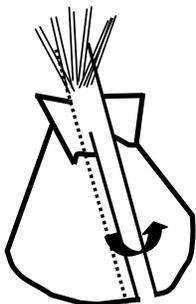
Draw and colour a design on the tipi cover.

Cut out the tipi cover on the solid line.

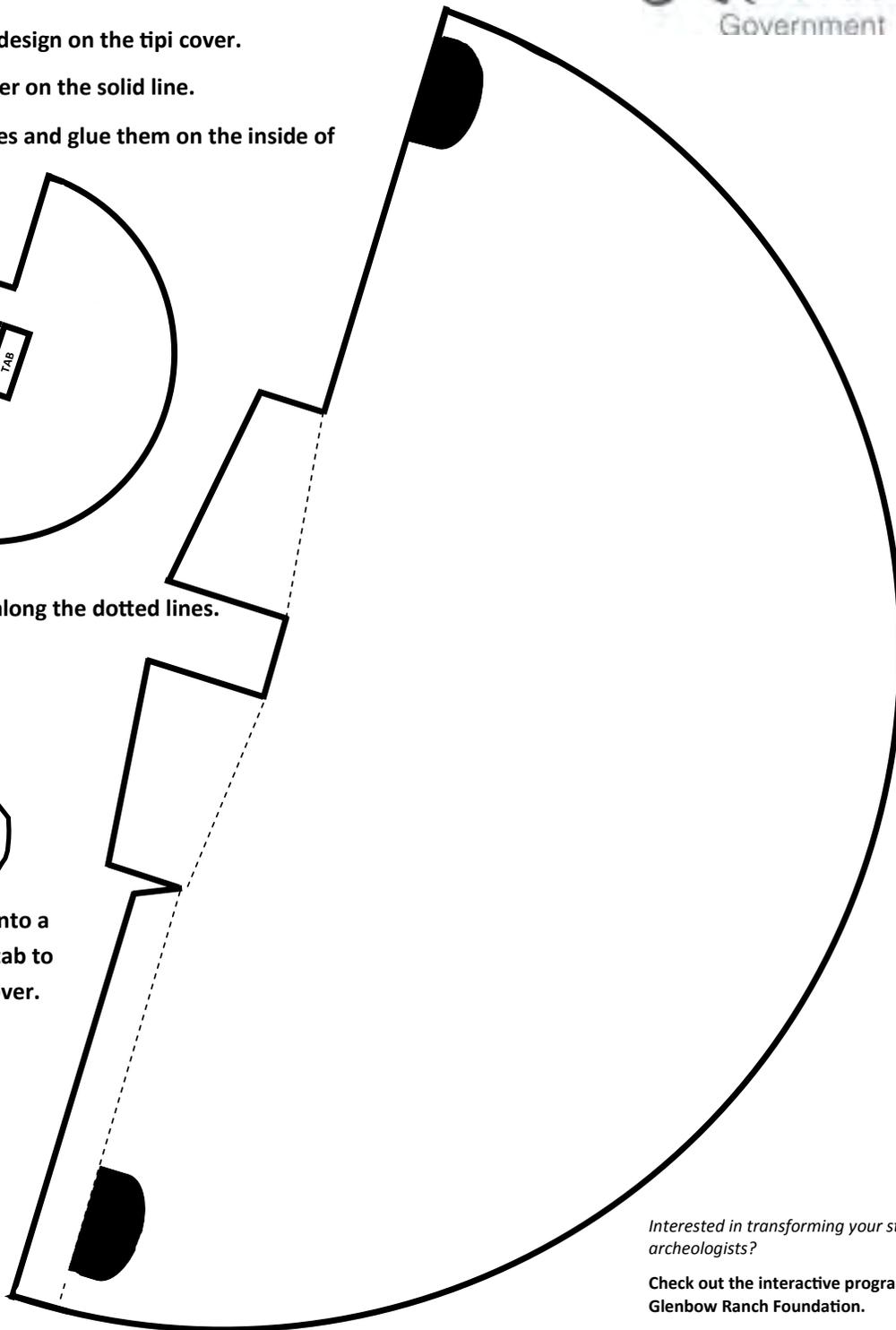
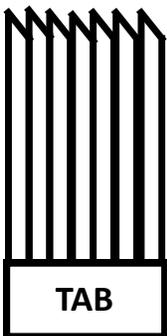
Cut out the tipi poles and glue them on the inside of the tipi cover.



Fold the smoke flaps along the dotted lines.



Roll the tipi cover into a cone and glue the tab to the inside of the cover.



*Interested in transforming your students into archeologists?*

**Check out the interactive programs at the Glenbow Ranch Foundation.**

For more information:

Email: [discoverarky@grpf.ca](mailto:discoverarky@grpf.ca)

Phone: 403-851-9053

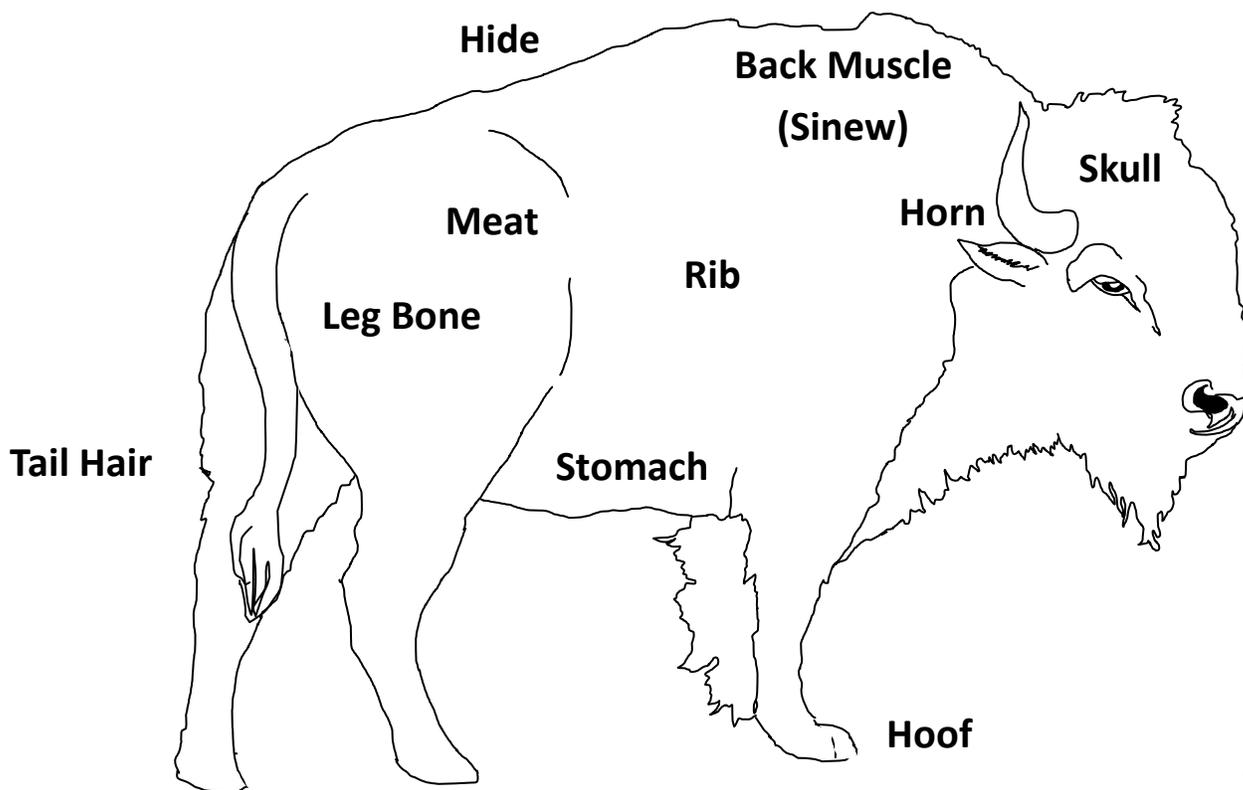
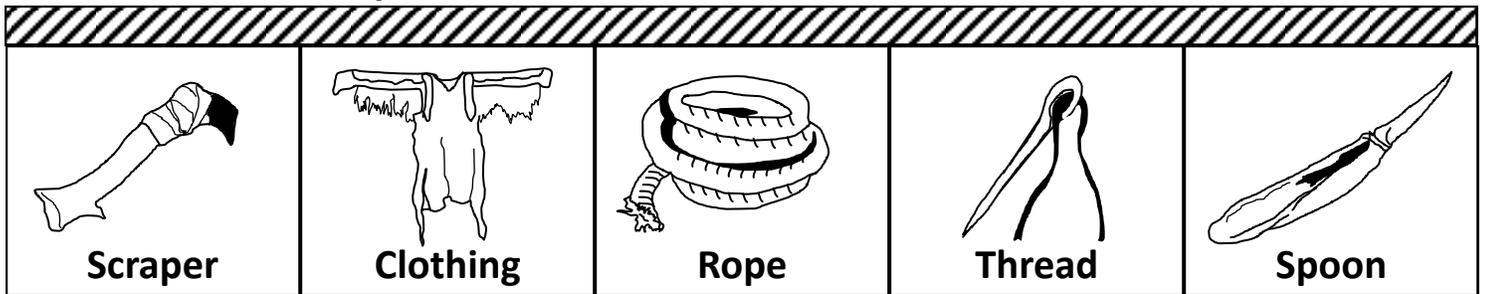
[www.discoverarchaeology.ca](http://www.discoverarchaeology.ca)



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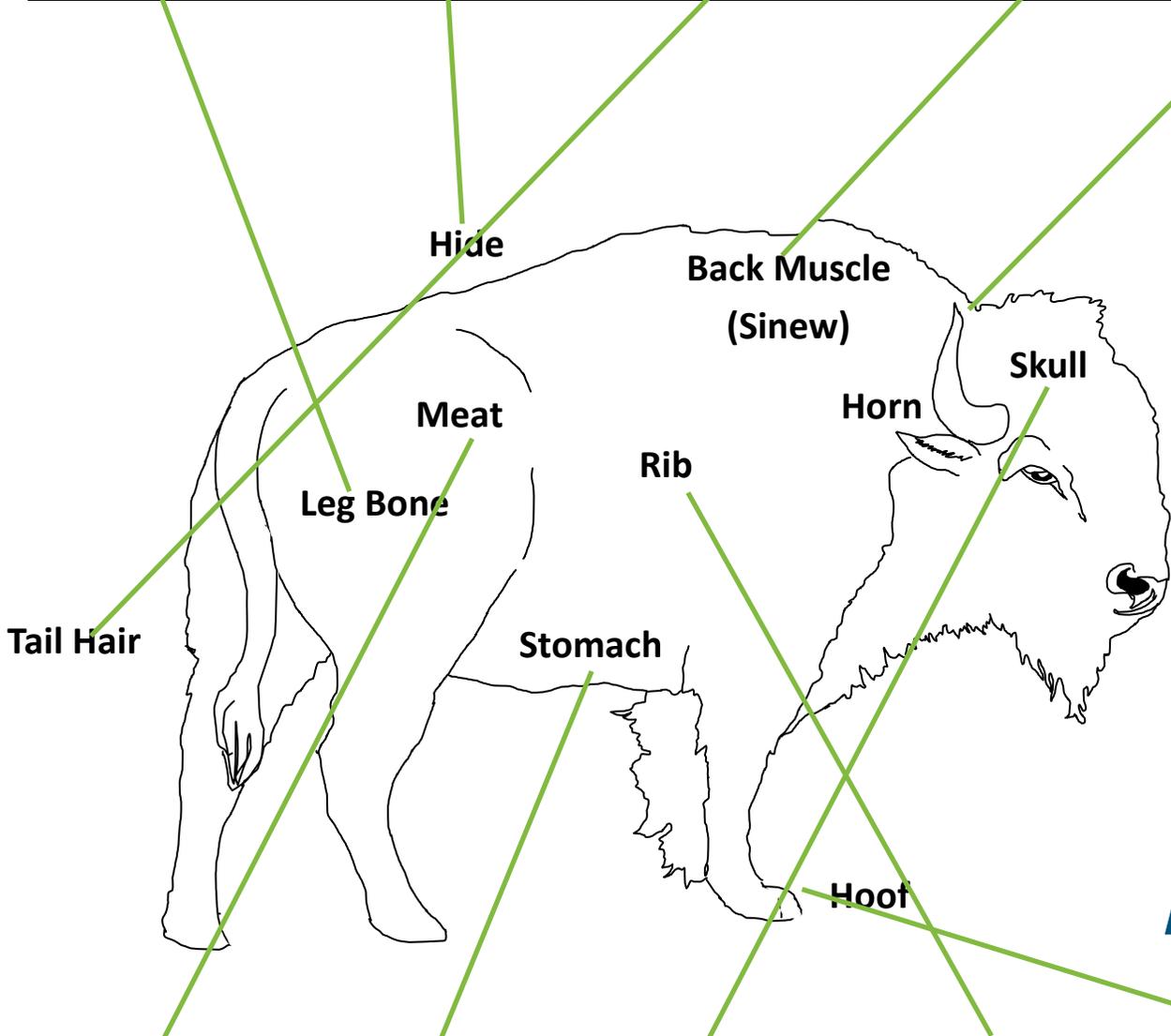
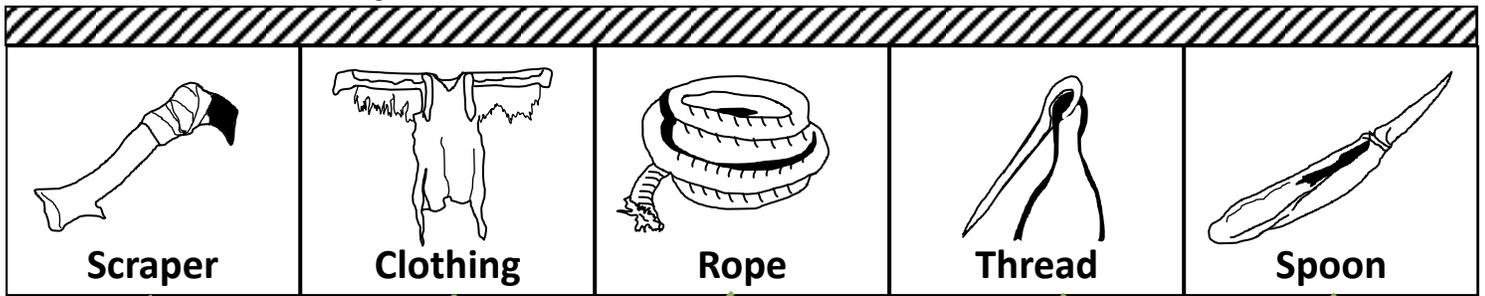
## Uses of the Bison Worksheet

The bison was a useful animal to the Blackfoot First Nations. Draw a line from each part of the bison to the items that were made.



# Uses of the Bison Answer Key

The bison was a useful animal to the Blackfoot First Nations. Draw a line from each part of the bison to the items that were made.



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### Needs Then and Now

Write the name of the picture in the spaces below. Draw a line to match the food, transportation and shelter from the traditional First Nations to modern.



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



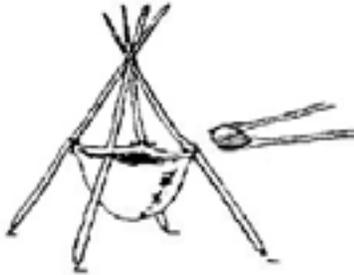
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# The Bear Who Stole the Chinook



Who is your favourite character in the story? Why?

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# The Bear Who Stole the Chinook Worksheet

1. Help the orphan boy write the names of his animal friends.



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

Hint:  
Coyote, weasel, magpie, owl



\_\_\_\_\_

2. A Chinook is special because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Based on the Legend

Owls have large eyes because

Prairie chickens have spotted feathers because

Bears hibernate and wake up very angry because:

Please cut out and glue.

# Constructing a Parfleche

Materials: parfleche pattern sheets (see next page), scissors, 3-hole punch, 2 - 15 cm pieces of yarn per student, crayons, circular hole reinforcements

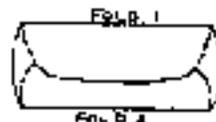
Instructions:

1. Make a copy for each student of the parfleche pattern from the master sheet, provided on the following page.

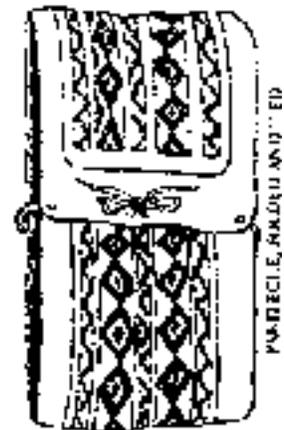
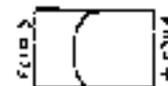
2. Have the students cut off the corners on the lines shown on the pattern.



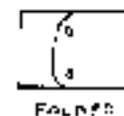
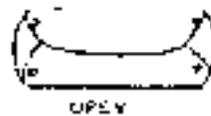
3. Have the students lay the pattern on a flat surface in front of them. Students should fold along the two lines marked Fold 1 and Fold 2. They fold forward and overlap in the middle.



4. Ask the students to then fold along lines marked Fold 3 and Fold 4. These also fold toward the middle and overlap.

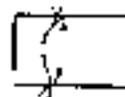


5. Set a 3-hole punch on numbers 1 and 5. Punch holes in both ends of the parfleche. These holes should line up as closely as possible when the parfleche is completely folded up. Attach reinforcements to the inside layer to strengthen the holes when the yarn is tied through the holes.

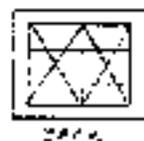


6. Insert the two pieces of yarn through the holes and tie them together loosely, so they can be untied later.

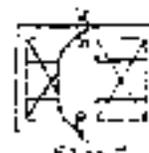
7. Decorate the parfleche. The Blackfoot usually used geometric patterns made up of straight lines and circles.



YARN THROUGH BOTH HOLES

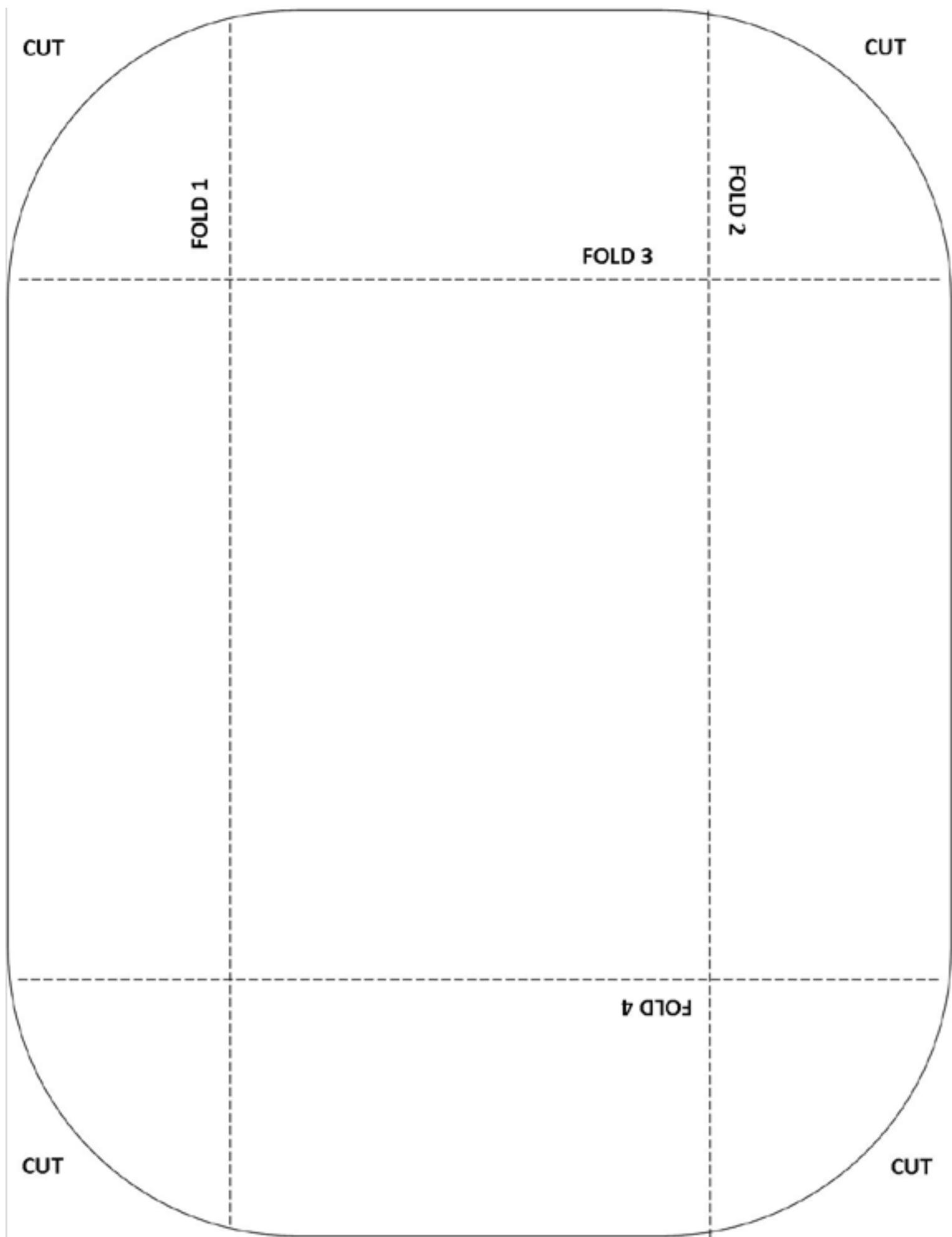


DECORATE



FINISH

© 2000 P. J.



CUT

CUT

FOLD 1

FOLD 2

FOLD 3

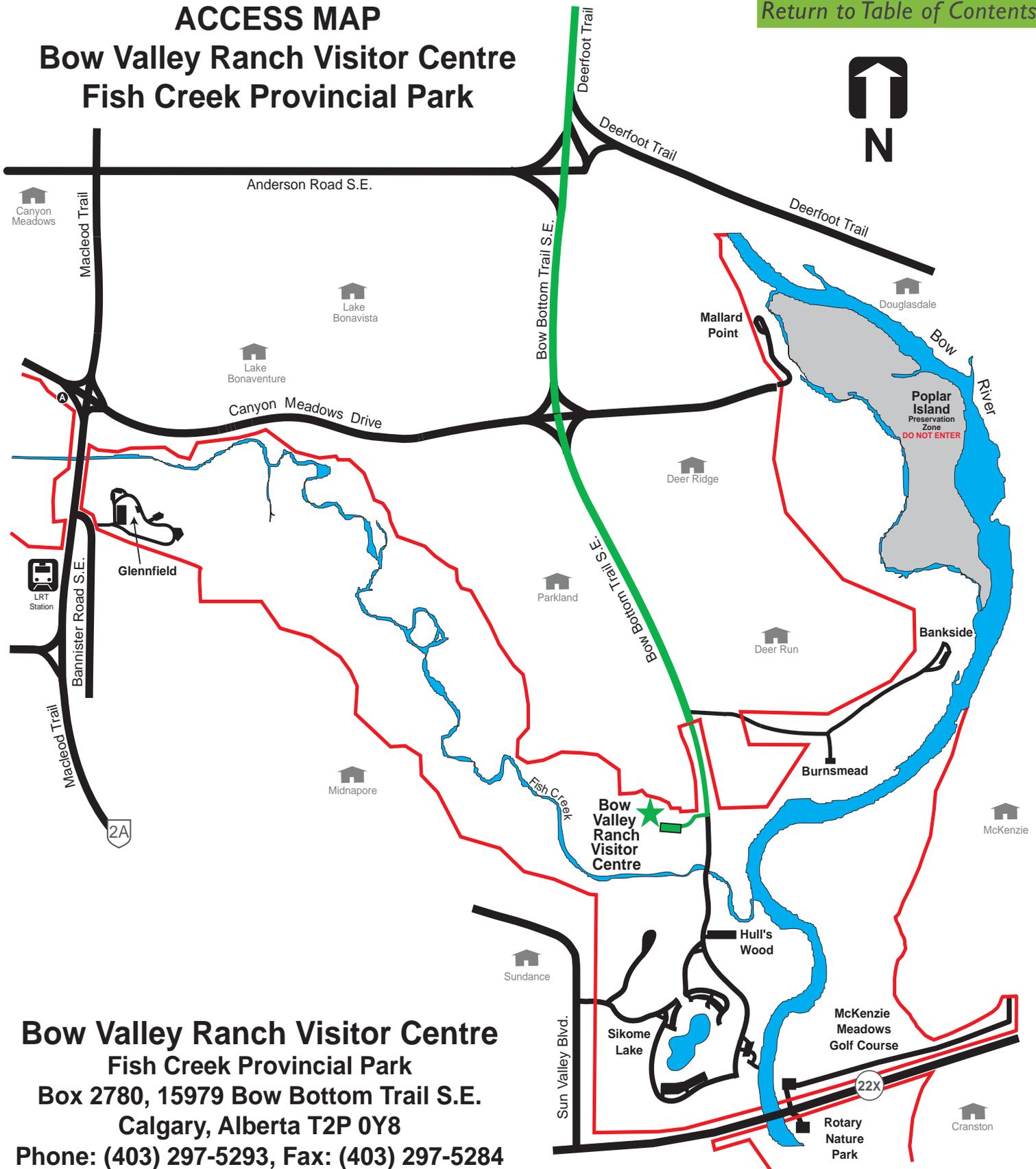
FOLD 4

CUT

CUT

# ACCESS MAP

## Bow Valley Ranch Visitor Centre Fish Creek Provincial Park



**Bow Valley Ranch Visitor Centre**  
**Fish Creek Provincial Park**  
Box 2780, 15979 Bow Bottom Trail S.E.  
Calgary, Alberta T2P 0Y8

Phone: (403) 297-5293, Fax: (403) 297-5284

**Directions:** Take Deerfoot Trail South and get onto Bow Bottom Trail South. Follow Bow Bottom Trail south until you come into Fish Creek Provincial Park where the road has narrowed into two lanes and the speed limit is now 30 km. Once in the Park, take the first turn on the right into the Bow Valley Ranch area. Park your vehicle in the parking lot and proceed to the Visitor Centre. There is **NO access** to the Bow Valley Ranch Visitor Centre from Sun Valley Blvd.

**NOTE:** Park speed is 30 km/hr. **DO NOT** leave valuables in your vehicle.