

## Fine Arts – 5 Es Lesson

### Lesson: *Wakinyan* Thunder-being, The Flying One



Symbol for *Wakinyan*

#### Objectives:

To use Lakota beliefs as the basis for creating art (symbols)

To create a symbol that has potential to stimulate memory and change some aspect of life.

#### Essential Question(s):

How are symbols a key to greater understanding?

Why is symbolism important for people?

How can you explain the relationship between *Wakinyan* and *Heyoka*?

#### Materials/Resources

#### Essential Vocabulary

#### Teacher:

Video— *Wakinyan*, (flute music with *Wakinyan*-like pictures by jimtzu) Play some of the video as students answer questions in *Engage: Activating Strategy/Hook* section and while they Google Search in section *Explore: Learning Experiences* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0imE2pOZK4>

Copies of the content information found in this lesson

Art supplies (paint, drawing paper and pencils for sketches; )

Assessment Checklist

#### Student:

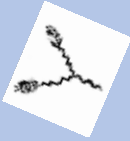

Items to use for the personal symbol (T-shirt, bandana, cap, wall hanging, etc.)

Painting materials such as fabric, tube, or acrylic paints; brushes, if needed

Sketch pad if desired for sketches

*Wakinyan*  
*Heyoka*

## Learning Experience

<p><b>Standards and Practice:</b>  <b>OSEU 2: Identity and Resiliency</b>          There is a variety among individuals within the Oceti Sakowin Oyate as indentity is developed, defined and redefined by entities, by organization, and by people. A continuum of tribal identity, unique to each individual, ranges from assimilated to traditional lifestyle. There is no “generic American Indian.”</p>	<p>Anchor Standard 2: K-12. Cr. 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.          HSa.VA.Cr.2.3          Anchor Standard 3: K-12. Cr. 3: Refine and complete artistic work.          HSa.VA.Cr3.2          Anchor Standard 6: K-12. Pr.6: Interpret meaning from presentation of artistic work.          HSa.VA.Pr.6.1          Anchor Standard 7: K-12. Re.7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.          HSa.VA.Re.7.2          Anchor Standard 8: K-12. Re.8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work          HSpVA.Re.8.1          Anchor Standard 10: K-12. Cn.10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art          HSa.VA.Cn.10.1          Anchor Standard 11: K-12. Cn.11:Relate artistic ideas and works          HSp.VA.Cn.11.1</p>
<p><b>Cultural Integration</b></p>  <p><i>Wakinyan Symbol</i></p>	<p>Why do cultures have symbols?          What symbols exist in my culture?          Why study Lakota symbols? What symbols are prevalent in society today?</p>
<p><b>I Can Statement(s):</b></p>	<p>I can see why <i>Wakinyan</i> is special          I can know how to connect Lakota beliefs with aesthetics          I can see that <i>Wakinyan</i> is more than just a bird or eagle          I can identify the Lakota X form in artwork          I can describe deep meaning of connected shapes that look like an hourglass</p>
<p><b>Engage: Activating Strategy/Hook:</b></p>  <p><i>Wakinyan</i> is most often hidden in the clouds</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Play <i>Wakinyan</i>, (flute music with <i>Wakinyan</i>-like pictures by jimtzu) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0imE2pOZK4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0imE2pOZK4</a></li> <li>2. Ask students to share thoughts after the video, ask their own questions, and respond to questions below.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is <i>Wakinyan</i> real, mythological, or a symbol?</li> <li>• Why is <i>Wakinyan</i> important to the Lakota?</li> <li>• What does <i>Wakinyan</i> have to do with me?</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><i>“From time to time a holy man catches a glimpse of a Wakinyan in his dreams, but always only a part of it. No one ever sees the thunderbird whole, not even in a vision, so the way we think the thunderbird looks is pieced together from many dreams and visions.” (Lame Deer, 1969)</i></p>

## Explore: Learning Experiences



“Thunder-being symbol is the red zig-zag, lightning-bolt design, which some people mistakenly think represents a stairway”

Thunderbirds stand for rain, and fire, and the truth ...they like to help the people. (Lame Deer, 1969).

Big Idea: How do symbols deliver messages from a story or event?

1. Google Search: Thunderbird Petroglyphs, preferably in SD and MN, first home of D/Lakota *Oyate*.
2. Copy and Paste a few of your favorite images on a Word doc.
3. Pair and Share to discuss the question: Why are these my favorites?
4. Choose one that reflects your characteristics and “copy” it OR create a personal symbol, such as an animal helper or an object that represents your own unique qualities? Group Share.
5. Where will you place your symbol? Will it be on a household item: a cup, lamp shade, wall hanging, etc.? Will it be on an item of clothing: T-shirt, bandana, jacket, cap, cell phone, purse or wallet, etc.? Pair-Share your thinking.
6. How will you paint it? Will you use a pattern or paint it free-hand? What colors will you use? Group Share.
7. More ideas: Melvin Ferguson <https://www.melvinwareagle.com/>

## Explain: Learning Experience



Image is very much like Lakota symbols for the Thunderbird

Symbols in daily life help us to think, to imagine and to recall. Symbolism is very important because it helps us create and retain mental pictures.

- What mental images live in your mind?
- Can you explain the mental images in the form of symbol (s) to tell your story?
- How can you turn your mind-messages into graphic art to save your images for a lifetime?

## Elaborate: Extending/ Defining



Impersonating *Heyoka*

Courtesy of Rev. Raymond A. Bucko, S. J., at Creighton University

Some Lakota believe *Wakinyan* helps people today by bringing thunder and lightning for rain, which is purifying in nature. *Wakinyan* can come to a person in a vision or dream. If so, there is an obligation to become a *heyoka*, a sacred clown who does things backwards and acts in ways opposite of normal behavior. The *heyoka* acts silly—clowns around and makes people laugh, however the actions are deeper. For instance, at a sun dance the *heyoka* acts as an opposite bringing humor to an otherwise serious event. In this, and at other times *heyoka* humor creates balance and a healing effect, as the saying goes: “Laughter is the best medicine.”

- What can the role of *Wakinyan* and the *heyoka* play in my life or in societies in general?
- On the side bar picture, what makes you think the artist has captured an accurate image of the Heyoka?

More: See extension, below.

**Evaluate: Summarizing Strategy**



Contemporary/Traditional

How will I describe my symbol and its meaning?  
 How have I used a symbol as a way to express my thoughts?  
 What connection can I make to Lakota beliefs about *Wakinyan* in my symbol?

**Differentiation Strategies**

**Extension**

**Intervention**

Learn more about OSEU Lesson: *Heyoka*—Dakota Clown

Students select a medium different from painting or drawing, for example a skit

Students make flash cards with images or words about *Wakinyan*. Use them to get different perspectives about the concept

**Assessment(s)**

**Formative**

**Summative**

One Minute Essay Question—with a specific goal in mind

Consider this checklist (changing as desired). Share it with the class at beginning of the lesson and determine how it will be used (as an Artist Statement etc.)

- ✓ Describe your artwork
- ✓ Describe your effort
- ✓ Share your artmaking processes
- ✓ Connect personal experiences to what you learned in this lesson
- ✓ Communicate the Lakota beliefs that led to the creation of your personal symbol to form the basis of your art
- ✓ Describe what you felt as you developed your idea and how you feel now that your artwork (symbol design) is complete

**Teacher Reflection:** (Next steps?)