Native American Pictographs

An ancient form of writing gets new life in an activity designed to help your child read, and write Native American pictographs and better understand what life was like back then.

What You Need:

- List of common Native American pictographs, Search online for one or start here.
- Paper
- Pencil
- Colored pencils

What You Do:



- 1. Explain to your child that a "pictograph" is a picture that represents a word or an idea. Some languages use a pictograph writing system, such as Chinese. Native Americans living in early America used pictographs as their writing system. Some Native Americans still use pictographs today!
- 2. Show your child some common Native American pictographs such as those found here.
- 3. Notice that there are symbols for various kinds of weather, people, places, and feelings. Have your child try to write a "sentence" by drawing some pictographs together. For example, he could draw the pictographs for "Summer", "Man", "Happy" to express his love for summertime.
- 4. If more than one child is doing this activity, they could each write some "sentences" and then try to decipher each other's sentences.
- 5. When he's finished writing, your child may want to add color to his pictograph sentences using colored pencils over the penciled drawings.
- 6. Have your child think of a person, place, kind of weather, or emotion that is important in his own life. He could make up some new pictographs for one or several of these words, and sketch them on his paper. If he likes his new pictographs, he can color those also with colored pencils.



