

Participatory Activity tour : 2-14-2017 4 PM

Introduction: (Kathleen) 2 minutes: Our tour focusing on Symbols and the stories they tell in Art Throughout the world has led us from Chinese Robes with Dragons symbolizing the Emperor and Peaches Symbolizing eternal life, to the Judaica gallery and the symbols for the 12 tribes of Judah. Here in the Native American Gallery we will see how the Lakota communities kept track of their history using pictures as aids to memory in story-telling. We know we can look at a symbol and imagine what it represents; but the back story isn't so obvious. For example: the snowshoe/corn

Intro the Winter Count (Mary Ann) 2 minutes: Winter Counts are histories that were kept by many communities across the Plains as a sequential structure to determine the passage of time. A symbol, object or simple scene served to represent an entire year. Each pictograph illustrated the most memorable event of the year. The "Keeper of the Count" with the counsel of the elders, usually men, would decide which event best symbolized the year and add it to the buffalo hide (or later muslin cloth) kept for this purpose. It would be used to tell the stories of the people. (ADD MORE DETAILS HERE) Take a few minutes (2 minutes) to examine this Lakota Winter Count. What events can you imagine are represented here (2 minutes max)

Intro the Activity (Bill) (discussion & drawing time – 5 minutes)

At the beginning of our tour today you all agreed to try out our Participatory Activity today.

As a community of Red-Dot Docents we have spent nearly 2 years working together and we would like to spend the next few minutes creating our own Community "Winter Count". Winter Counts were used by COMMUNITIES with Shared Cultures/Values. And keep in mind that symbols can be interpreted differently by different cultures and age groups and thus change the story. (Example – Snowshoe that also looks like an ear of corn.) At the end of our activity, Kathleen will play the part of a "Retired Senior Docent" who was traveling for the year and hasn't even been in contact with the Museum. She will LEAVE NOW and return to view and give her interpretations of our drawings.

Please break into groups of 3 "elders" and spend time together:

Step 1: Discuss and agree to one memorable event for the time we have spent together. Your event can be humorous or serious. But it should be related to our training. It should not be "Political". Be creative!

Step 2: Agree on an image or symbol that is easily understood (AND easy to draw) that will represent this event and draw it on a Post-It note.

Step 3: Place your Post-It on our Winter Count Cloth (Board).

Step 4: Kathleen will return and give her interpretations of your symbols.

Step 5: We will then ask for another Volunteer Elder to listen as each group tells us their ONE SENTENCE Story.

Step 6: Our Volunteer Elder will then recite the entire story again. We will all pay attention and wait respectfully until this second Elder has completed and we can then add our small group corrections.

Note: We should not encourage "obscure" symbols. They should be easily identifiable and easy to draw.

TRANSITION: As we have seen in this exercise, Symbols and Stories can be interpreted in many ways. Our next object in the African Galleries is covered with strange carvings and tells lots of stories: The Benin Elephant Tusk. (Mary Ann)

