

## Animate a Running Bison Zoetrope

### Featured Artwork

*We Had Plenty* depicts an everyday scene of the Kiowa people in the years before European settlement. As a nomadic tribe of the Great Plains, the Kiowa hunted herds of bison and gave thanks to the animal for its plentiful provisions of food, clothing, and tools. However, in the late 1800s the population of bison was brought to near extinction. As well, in 1867 the Kiowa were forced to leave their homes and adjust to a new way of life on a reservation in Oklahoma. The tribal nation remains strong and active there today.

In the painting to the right, Harjo has captured the spirit of the Kiowa hunter in two-dimensional detail on a solid yellow background. This style reflects historic ledger art, a type of drawing or painting on recordkeeping paper that was practiced by Plains Indians to record stories and experiences. Some of the most well-known examples of ledger art were created by the Southern Plains warriors that were imprisoned at Fort Marion in Saint Augustine, Florida from 1875 to 1878.

### About the Artist

Sharron Ahtone Harjo (born 1945) is a Kiowa artist from Oklahoma. When she was a young girl, Harjo's grandparents gifted her with a ledger book filled with the stories of her family history. These images of her ancestors have often inspired her work and have shaped her painting style throughout her career.

### Learning Objectives

- Create a zoetrope of a bison running on a continuous loop.
- Observe how a sequence of still images creates the optical illusion of movement when viewed through the openings of a spinning cylinder.
- Reflect on the importance of the American bison to the Great Plains and to Indigenous peoples.

[Click here to zoom in](#) ↗

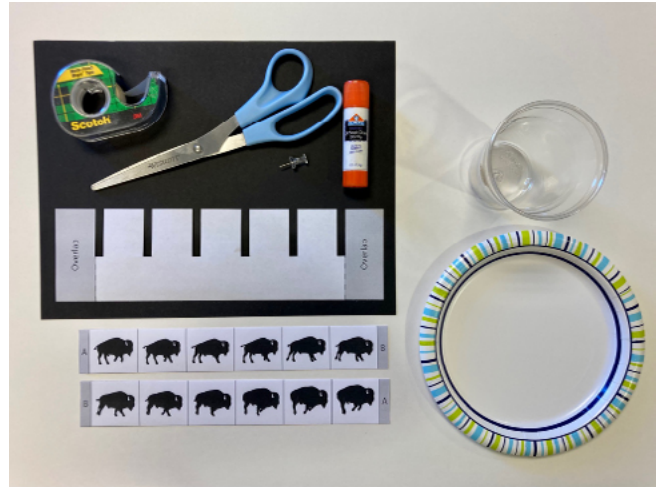


Sharron Ahtone Harjo (Kiowa), *We Had Plenty*, 1989, oil on canvas, gift of the Friends of the Center for Great Plains Studies.

# Art Activity

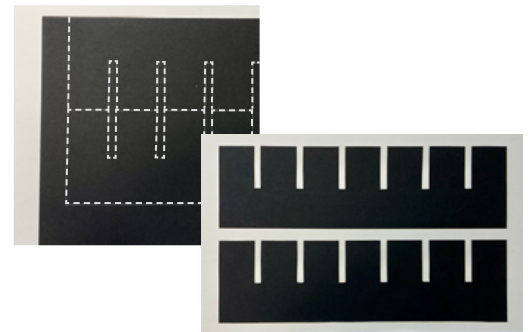
## You will need...

- Zoetrope template (pg. 4)
- Black/dark construction paper
- Bison animation strip (pg. 5)
- Small paper plate
- Cup with a flat base
- Push pin or thumbtack
- Tape
- Glue stick
- Scissors

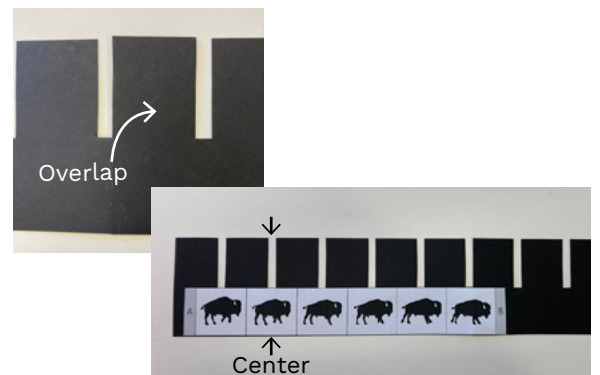


## Instructions:

**1** Print out the zoetrope template and bison animation strip. Cut out. Trace the zoetrope template onto black construction paper and cut out two of these.



**2** Overlap the ends of the two zoetrope pieces and glue/tape to secure. Glue one bison animation strip to the bottom of the zoetrope, ensuring each image is centered under a gap. Next, cut off the A and B ends of the other animation strip. Glue this strip to the bottom, matching ends with the previous strip. Leave the last image square open to close the cylinder in the round.



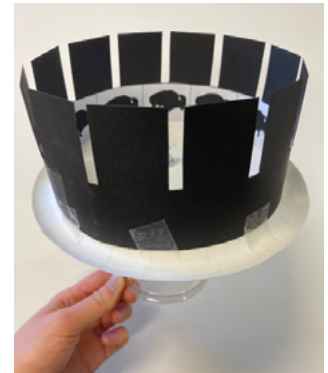
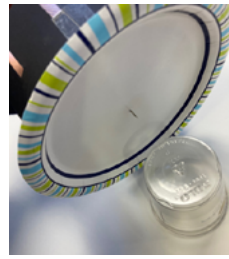
**3** Overlap the last end of the zoetrope and glue/tape to form a cylinder. Next, overlap the bison animation strip and glue to secure.



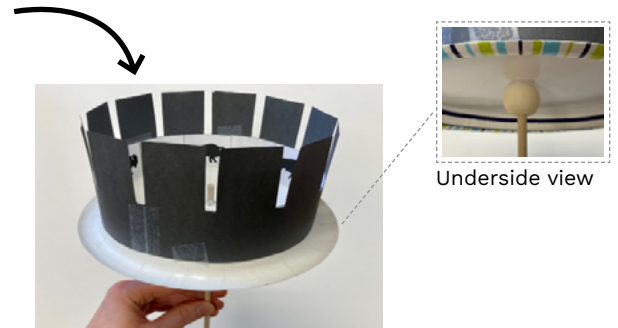
**4** Flip the plate over and mark a dot to find the center. Next, fit the zoetrope around the raised edges. Tape the bottom of the zoetrope to the plate.



**5** Find the center of the cup and carefully poke a hole through with a push pin. Find the center of the plate and push the push pin through. Attach the plate to the cup. You may need to wiggle the push pin some to loosen up the attachment for spinning the zoetrope.



**Tip:** You can also create a spinning attachment with a pencil or wooden dowel. Use hot glue to support the base with a cup, piece of cardboard, or wooden bead.



**6** Spin the zoetrope counter-clockwise and look up-close through the gaps to see the bison running on a continuous loop!



## Share!

Share your new creation with family and friends. Or show us your work! Use #GreatPlainsArtMuseum.

## Explore more!

Create your own zoetrope of an animal, sport activity, or landscape scene. Anything you can imagine! Look for a blank template on page 5.