

Dances with Wolves- Student Journal Assignment

For each day you will be watching the movie, answer the 5 questions in complete sentences. Then write a paragraph of 4 or more sentences addressing the Journal Prompt. Complete all items on a separate sheet(s) of paper.

Day One

Day 1 Questions

1. Why did John Dunbar leave the field hospital and later ride out into the field in front of enemy soldiers?
2. John was given transport to any station he desired. Why did he choose the post he did?
3. Who went with John Dunbar to the West frontier? What was he like?
4. What was the condition of his post at Fort Sedgwick when Dunbar arrived?
5. What does he discover as he cleans up the post and goes to fetch water? What might this mean?

Day 1 Journal Prompt: Pretend you are Lt. John Dunbar, a soldier in the Union Army during the Civil War. Describe some of the following: how you feel about fighting in battle, medical treatment available in your time, facing amputation of your foot, being awarded a medal, the choice of any military post you would desire, seeing the frontier and staying at a post that is isolated and rundown.

Day Two

Day 2 Questions

1. Why do the children steal Dunbar's horse?
2. Why are the Indians hesitant to kill a white man?
3. Why does Dunbar go to the Indian village the first time?
4. What were the first gifts Dunbar gives the Indians?
5. How did the tribal leaders react when Dunbar came to the tribe with the woman?

Day 2 Journal Prompt: Pretend you are Stands with a Fist, a white woman living among Native Americans. Describe some of the following: how did you come to live with the Native Americans, what was the adjustment like when you first came, how do you feel now about your life, why are you afraid of white men, why did you try and kill yourself and how do you feel about John Dunbar?

Day Three

Day 3 Questions

1. What did Dunbar do that helped gain the respect of the Indians?
2. What did Wind in his Hair and Dunbar do with the buffalo Dunbar killed?
3. What trade does Dunbar make with Wind in his Hair?
4. Why is Dunbar given the name Dances with Wolves?
5. Why does Dances with Wolves (Dunbar) want to join his Sioux friends in a War Party against the Pawnee?

Day 3 Journal Prompt: Pretend you are Wind in his Hair. Describe some of the following: how did you feel about Dunbar when he first came, what do you believe about white men in general, how do you see your role in the tribe, why is the buffalo important for your people, how do you feel about the butcher of buffalo by whites for sport, what will happen to your people if the buffalo are gone, what has Dunbar done that has changed your attitude towards him, how do you feel about Dunbar now, what do you fear or hope for in the future.

Day Four

Day 4 Questions

1. How did the white girl Christine get the name Stands with a Fist?
2. What does Dances with Wolves finally get Two Socks to do?
3. Why does Dances with Wolves provide the Sioux with guns to protect their village from Pawnee attack even though military regulations would not have allowed it?
4. How did Dances with Wolves see the battle to protect the Sioux village from a Pawnee attack as different from the other battles he'd fought in the past?
5. Why do the people of the Sioux village see the match between Dances with Wolves and Standing with a Fist as a good one?

Day 4 Journal Prompt: Pretend you are Dances with Wolves. Describe some of the following: how have your feelings changed since you came to the fort, what is important to you now, why you no longer stay at the fort, what traits you admire in the Sioux people, how you feel about your experiences with nature (Two Socks, life on the prairie, buffalo hunting), how the Indians have won your respect, your marriage to Standing with a Fist, what you think about the many whites that you know will be coming to take the Sioux lands, what you fear or hope for in the future.

Day Five

Day 5 Questions

1. What does Dances with Wolves go back to Fort Sedgewick to get?
2. What happened when he arrived back at the Fort?
3. Why did the soldiers shoot Two Socks?
4. Why did Dances with Wolves and Stands with a Fist leave the Sioux village?
5. What does the movie tell us happened to the Sioux people 13 years after the end of this *fictional* story?

Day 5 Journal Prompt: Pretend you are Kicking Bird. Describe some of the following: why you wanted to give the white man Dunbar a chance in the beginning of the story, what caused you to begin to trust and respect him, why you chose him to watch over your family when you had to leave with the War party, how you felt when you found out Dances with Wolves and Standing with a Fist were in love, how you felt when your friend Dances with Wolves decided to leave the village to protect your people, what you think will happen when the whites come, what your fears or hopes for the future are.

Final Homework

Reflection Page

For this Journal Page you should write a paragraph of 4 or more sentences on the following prompt.

Agree or Disagree: The US government pursued the correct policy with regard to Native Americans. You may address whether or not the US committed a genocide against Native Americans and/or how the US might be different today if another policy had been followed. Be sure you explain and support your argument with information you have learned in class or through the film.