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My Indian Boyhood, New Edition



Synopsis

Although the traditional Sioux nation was in its last days when Luther Standing Bear was born in the 1860s, he was raised in the ancestral manner to be a successful hunter and warrior and a respectful and productive member of Sioux society. Known as Plenty Kill, young Standing Bear belonged to the Western Sioux tribe that inhabited present-day North and South Dakota. In *My Indian Boyhood* he describes the home life and education of Indian children. Like other boys, he played with toy bows and arrows in the tipi before learning to make and use them and became schooled in the ways of animals and in the properties of plants and herbs. His life would be very different from that of his ancestors, but he was not denied the excitement of killing his first buffalo before leaving to attend the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you want your children to have an increased respect for and understanding of other cultures, read this book to them. It has nothing in it that would be inappropriate for them to hear. There is no discussion of battle or even hatred toward others. Chief Luther Standing Bear describes what his life was like growing up as a young Lakota boy. He does more than just paint a picture, he shares about what he learned at an early age that prepared native children for life. Each chapter focuses on a different skill, describing it enough to at least make a reader curious, if not wanting to actually go out and try it. You learn, for example, how long your arrows should be and what kind of wood to make a bow out of. You read about learning to ride a pony and how to perfect your aim by flinging rocks with

a stick. The stories may make your children question whether our lives today are actually better or if being stuck with computers for toys is a step down. Chief Standing Bear's greatest achievement was chasing down and killing a young buffalo by himself. I was amazed and it was easy to appreciate his father's pride in his achievement. But then the book wraps up very abruptly when the white people came to take the Lakota children away to school. The life of an Indian boy would never be the same and nothing could have painted this sad picture more beautifully.

I am the father of 7 kids and am reading ahead of them. Found this book pretty good, but not riviting. Less dark than many of these autobiographical Indian-meets-the-whites books. Chief Standing Bear's memories of the pre-white-man days were a bit optimistic. Apparently baldness only happened to Indians if they met "the whites", and they never died of blood poisoning (bacteria), etc. Let's leave it at: "He does a good job of remembering the bright spots." I think maybe 10yo+ boys would be the most interested.

This was purchased as a Birthday present for our 11 yr. old son. He couldn't put it down! We were regaled every evening at dinner with the story he had read that day! Very fascinating, 1st person look at the life of the Lakota Sioux.

I use this book for teaching Native American Culture at a community college. It is an historically accurate document. I then ask my students to pass the book on to a child.

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