by Kim Doner

Kim Doner explains the Buffalo Calf Story at the beginning of her book Buffalo Dreams. You may wish to read this to students before reading the story. Then read it again after you have gone through the KWLH chart.

A beautiful spirit named White Buffalo Calf Woman came to a dying tribe. She gave them a sacred pipe and said its smoke would carry their dreams up to the heavens, or she would hear them and answer. As she left their camp, she rolled on the ground stood as a black buffalo. Three more times she rolled, and each time she changed colour, from black to brown, to read, and to white.

They smoked her pipe and slept. She heard their dreams and answered. The next day, when the tribe awoke the village was surrounded by a herd of buffalo. They were never hungry or cold again.

As explained in Buffalo Dreams
by Kim Doner

Buffalo Dreams Comprehension Lessons

Before reading the story to the children, create a **KWLH** chart to keep track of thinking as students learn about The White Buffalo Calf. You can create this lesson on a long strip of paper, separate anchor chart sheets or work through the process digitally. With younger students, it is better to lead this thinking orally through group work. Older or more independent students might do this independently.

Know	Want to know	Learned	How to learn more
Misconceptions			

1. **What I/we know about the white Buffalo**-
   - Brainstorm with the students what they already know if anything about the White Buffalo calf
   - List what they know on the chart-even if it is incorrect-teaching students how thinking changes as we learn is a valuable lesson

2. **What I/we Want to know about the white Buffalo**-

   - Once you have created a list with everything they know, show them the book. If students have no information on the White buffalo class you may need to guide them by sharing some of your own knowledge or the information in the author's note in the front of the book. Decide how much information you feel your students should know-you can read snippets or the entire page

3. **What I/we Learned about the white Buffalo**-

4. **How I/we can learn more about the white Buffalo**- discuss how students can learn more about the White Buffalo Calf today and in the past.

http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/birth-of-rare-calf-a-blessing-for-dakota-379596261.html

5. **Misconceptions**

   this is where to address thoughts students had in the beginning that have now changed. Some teachers like to say that **"***now we can delete what we thought because our thinking has changed when we learned more***"**

Buffalo Dreams Comprehension Lessons

[Comprehension Strategies](#) are well laid out in the [Saskatchewan Reads](#) document and can be taught using the [Think Aloud Strategy](#)

Be prepared to re-read the story several times to reinforce the concepts and comprehension strategies.

Vocabulary-some of the words in the story will be new to students. Be sure to explain some of them before starting the story. As you read and re-read the story you may add some words to the list. I like to keep recipe cards hand to have individual students illustrate the vocabulary words

Some suggested words to discuss with your students

- o calf
- o dream catcher
- o legend
- o headdress
- o buffalo
- o bellow
- o possum
- o towering
- o glinting
- o nuzzled
- o shaggy
- o trotted
- o erupted

Questioning- As you read the story pause every few pages and ask students if they have any questions. If they do, note the questions on a chart paper in bullet format. If you come to the answer while you are reading, write down the answer beside the question in a different colour of marker. At the end of the story go back to the questions that remain and determine how you could find the answers. If they are inferred with in the story, put a large **I** beside the question to indicate you have inferred.

Inferring- Remind students that inferring is when we use what we already know and combine it with what the author tells us to help us understand.

A good example is on the page where Joe is climbing into the pen. The author doesn't tell us "Joe is in danger" We infer it because the author describes the mother buffalo so well.

Another example is on the page where Sarah is standing with her hands out to the White Buffalo Calf and the line says: **"In a moment of forever, Sarah held magic in her hands."** We must infer what this means-the author doesn't tell us.

Buffalo Dreams Comprehension Lessons

Determining Importance at the end of the story, decide what it was the author wanted the reader to know.

Visualizing-There are some great sections in this story to stop reading and use the visualizing strategy. There are no page numbers in the book. Here are some suggestions to try:

- o On the page where the father hands the feather to Sarah-stop and visualize what you would pack to go on a camping trip. You could also have the students draw what they would take
- o Students could visualize an eagle soaring high up in the sky

- o On the page where the family is all riding in the camper Sarah wonders what would be a good dream for a baby buffalo -have students create a baby buffalo dream by drawing, painting, or using modeling clay

- o On the page where the family is all asleep in their sleeping bags, Sarah wakes up and realizes her brother is gone. Imagine that was you. Create a picture in your mind. Now tell your elbow partner how you imagined it. Would you have reacted the same way?

- o On the page where the Joe has climbed over the fence, the angry mother buffalo is eying Joe in the moonlight. What would she sound like, look like, smell like,

Make Connections

Connections are very personal and everybody has different connections. Be sure to read the story at least once before sharing it with the students. Try to make your own connections
- o Students can use basic connection stems as they listen to the story. The teacher should model saying thins such as "**That reminds me of a** …. my connection helps me understand how the character might be feeling at this point…" Does anybody else have a connection that helps you understand the story…"
  Other stems might include:
  - ▪ I remember when
  - ▪ I have a connection because
  - ▪ I felt like Sarah or Joe when…
- • It is essential that connections are useful and help the reader to understand the story.

- o At the end of the story compare your family to Sarah's family. Think about how you are the same and different. Students can use key vocabulary words such as: both, also, too, like, but same, different to fill out a large Venn Diagram