

*Dreamcatchers were used as symbols by Native Americans.  
Read the information below to discover all about them.*

## Dreamcatchers

Dreamcatchers are a very popular Indigenous symbol that has become popular even in non-Indigenous culture; you can find them in many markets and souvenir shops across Canada.

### Where do they come from?

The Ojibwe, an Indigenous people who live in Canada and the United States, originally created dreamcatchers. In Ojibwe culture, spiders are viewed as protectors. Before the Ojibwe people spread out in North America, Spider Woman would weave webs by the beds of all children to capture the rays of the sun. As the Ojibwe people spread out, Spider Woman could not reach every child, so mothers and grandmothers began to make dreamcatchers in memory of this.

### How are they made?

Dreamcatchers were traditionally made using a wooden hoop and sinew, with beads and feathers added to some designs. Now, they often use string or strips of leather instead of sinew. The string is woven around the hoop, in a design similar to a spider web. Beads are sometimes placed at random points throughout the design. The feathers are used to decorate the dreamcatcher, and are usually placed hanging from the hoop.

### What do they symbolize?

Dreamcatchers symbolize many things! The hoop symbolizes strength and unity because its circular shape has no beginning and no end. Some people believe the beads catch bad dreams, which disappear when the sun shines on them. Many dreamcatchers connect the string to the hoop at eight points, to symbolize the legs of Spider Woman. The feathers may represent breath or air, and are also helpful for entertaining babies, who dreamcatchers were initially made for. Dreamcatchers are usually placed over your bed, keeping you safe from bad dreams!



Using the following instructions, can you create your own dreamcatcher? Or you can use the template on the following page.

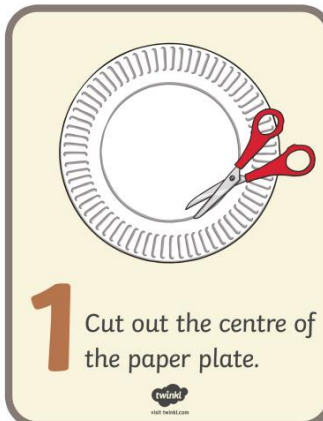
### How to Make a Dream Catcher

#### Make a Dream Catcher



What you will need:

A paper plate,  
Scissors,  
Wool,  
Beads,  
String,  
Feathers.



**1** Cut out the centre of the paper plate.



### How to Make a Dream Catcher



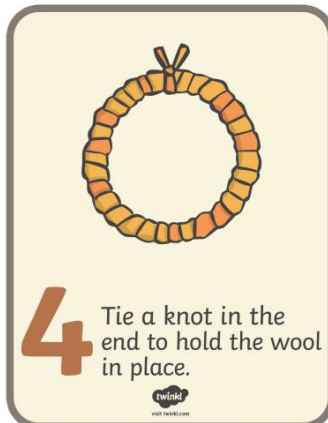
**2** Wrap the wool around a piece of card.



**3** Wind the wool around the ring. Wrap over the loose end to stop it unravelling.



### How to Make a Dream Catcher



**4** Tie a knot in the end to hold the wool in place.



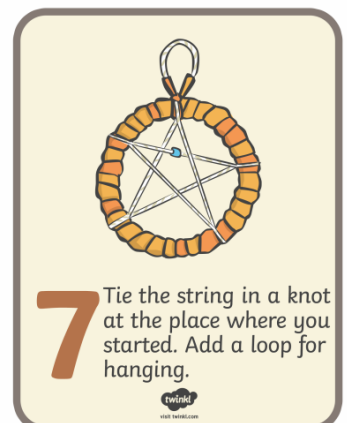
**5** Tie a piece of string to the top of the hoop (1). Wrap the string around the first position (2).



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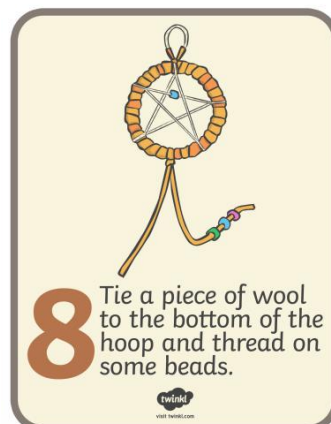
**6** Wrap the string round the other positions (3) (4) (5). Add beads to the string as you go.



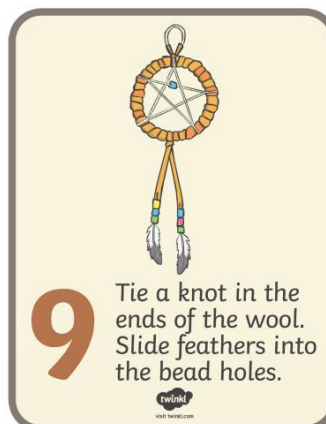
**7** Tie the string in a knot at the place where you started. Add a loop for hanging.



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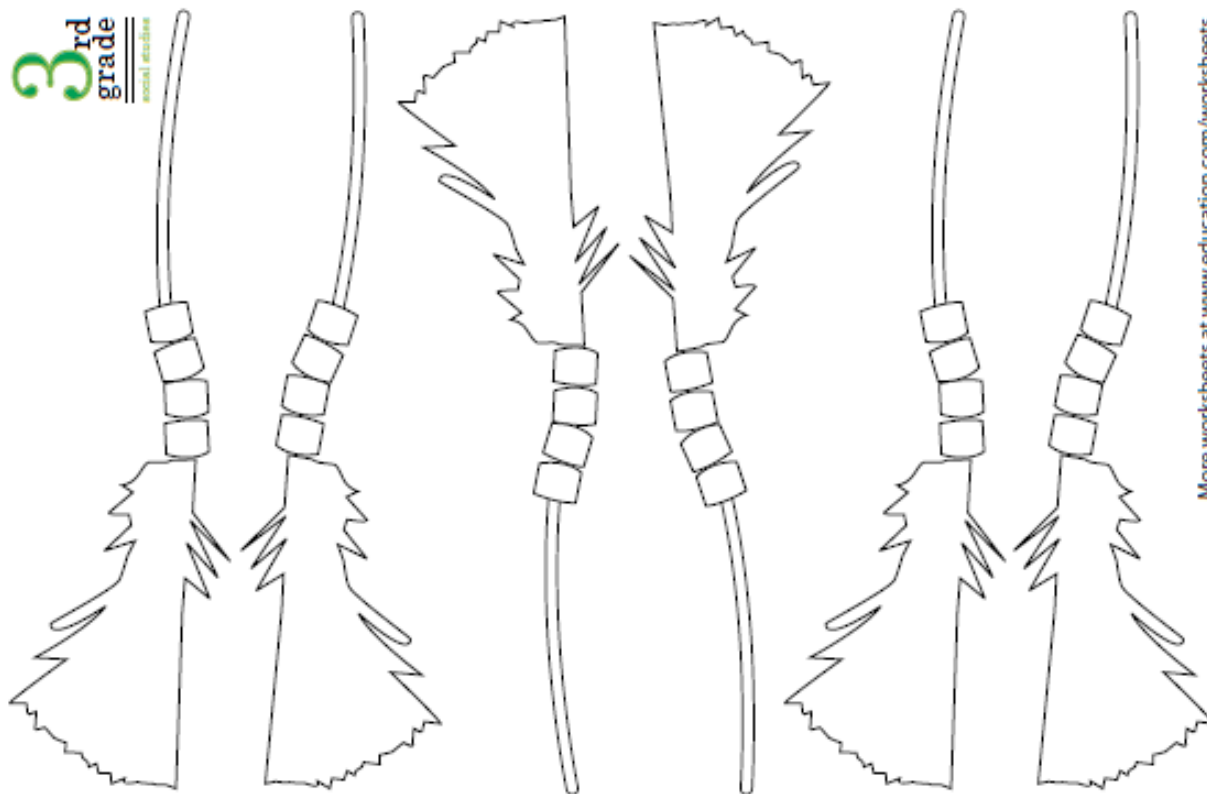
**8** Tie a piece of wool to the bottom of the hoop and thread on some beads.



**9** Tie a knot in the ends of the wool. Slide feathers into the bead holes.

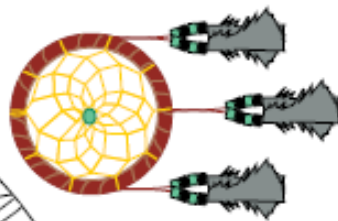
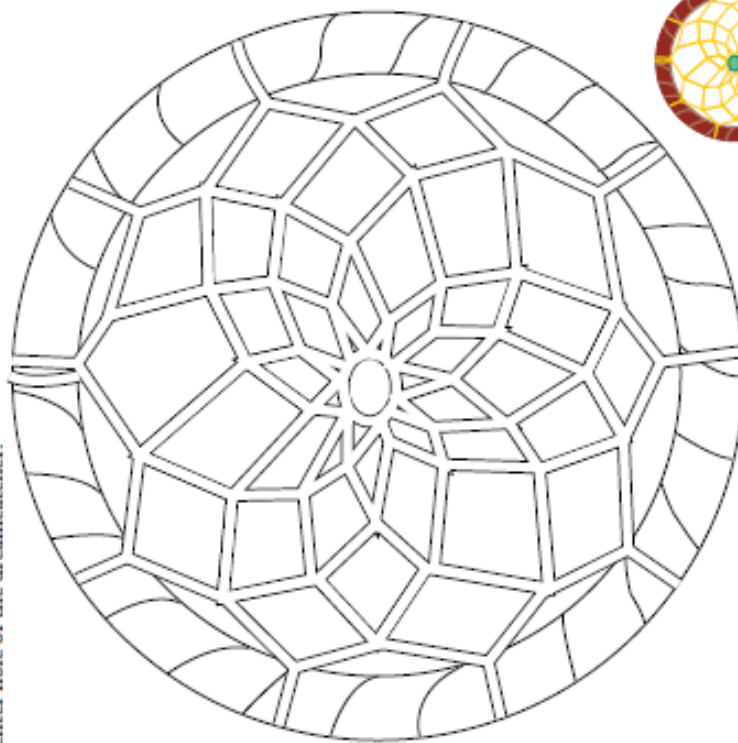


3<sup>rd</sup>  
grade  
social studies



## Native American Dreamcatcher

A dreamcatcher is a handmade object created out of weaving a loose net or web on a willow hoop. The dreamcatcher is then decorated with sacred items such as feathers and beads and hung above the beds of sleeping children. According to legend, bad dreams are caught in the web, and good dreams pass through the center hole of the dreamcatcher.



Using crayons or pencils color in the above dreamcatcher and the ornamental feather and bead strings on the right. Cut out the dreamcatcher and the feather and bead strings, then tape or paste the strings to your dreamcatcher (see the example at right for inspiration). You can attach yarn or string at the top to hang the dreamcatcher above your bed.



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