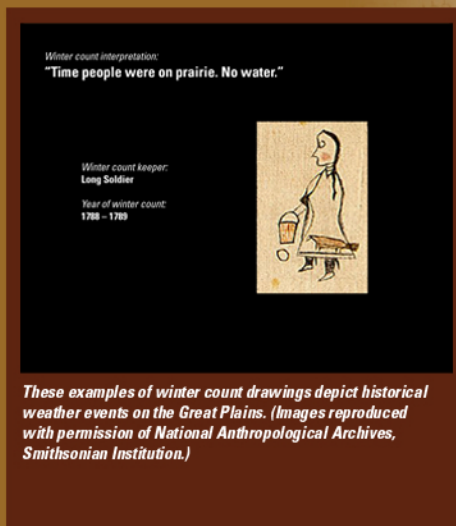


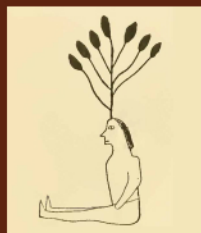
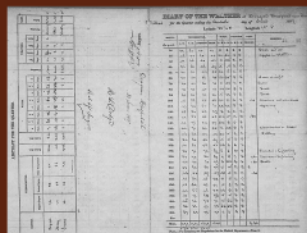
Native American Observations of Weather and Climate

Native Americans of the Great Plains recorded significant events of the past year at the start of each winter. These annual drawings, typically painted on animal hides, are known as winter counts. Winter counts often depicted major weather event impacts on plants, wildlife, waterways, and people. These observations represent a unique historical record of weather and climate.

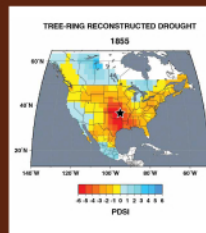
Researchers from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) are working to better understand the climate history of the Great Plains. They are comparing weather events recorded in winter counts with temperature and rainfall data compiled during the 1800s and historic drought information created from tree ring data. These diverse weather records, combined with other climate-related information, are helping researchers piece together a clearer picture of regional weather and climate during centuries past.



Winter count observations of a severe drought in southern Kansas and northern Oklahoma in 1855 are supported by historical weather records from Fort Gibson, Oklahoma, and drought records based on tree-ring data.

Example of historical weather observations from Fort Gibson, Oklahoma. (NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information)



Touch question on screen to view a video response to the question.