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FUN FOR KIDS

A COOPERATIVE PROJECT OF THE SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS AND THE EDUCATORS' ROUNDTABLE, PUBLISHED MONTHLY TO PROMOTE LEARNING AMONG YOUNG READERS IN NATURAL SCIENCE, HISTORY, TECHNOLOGY AND ART

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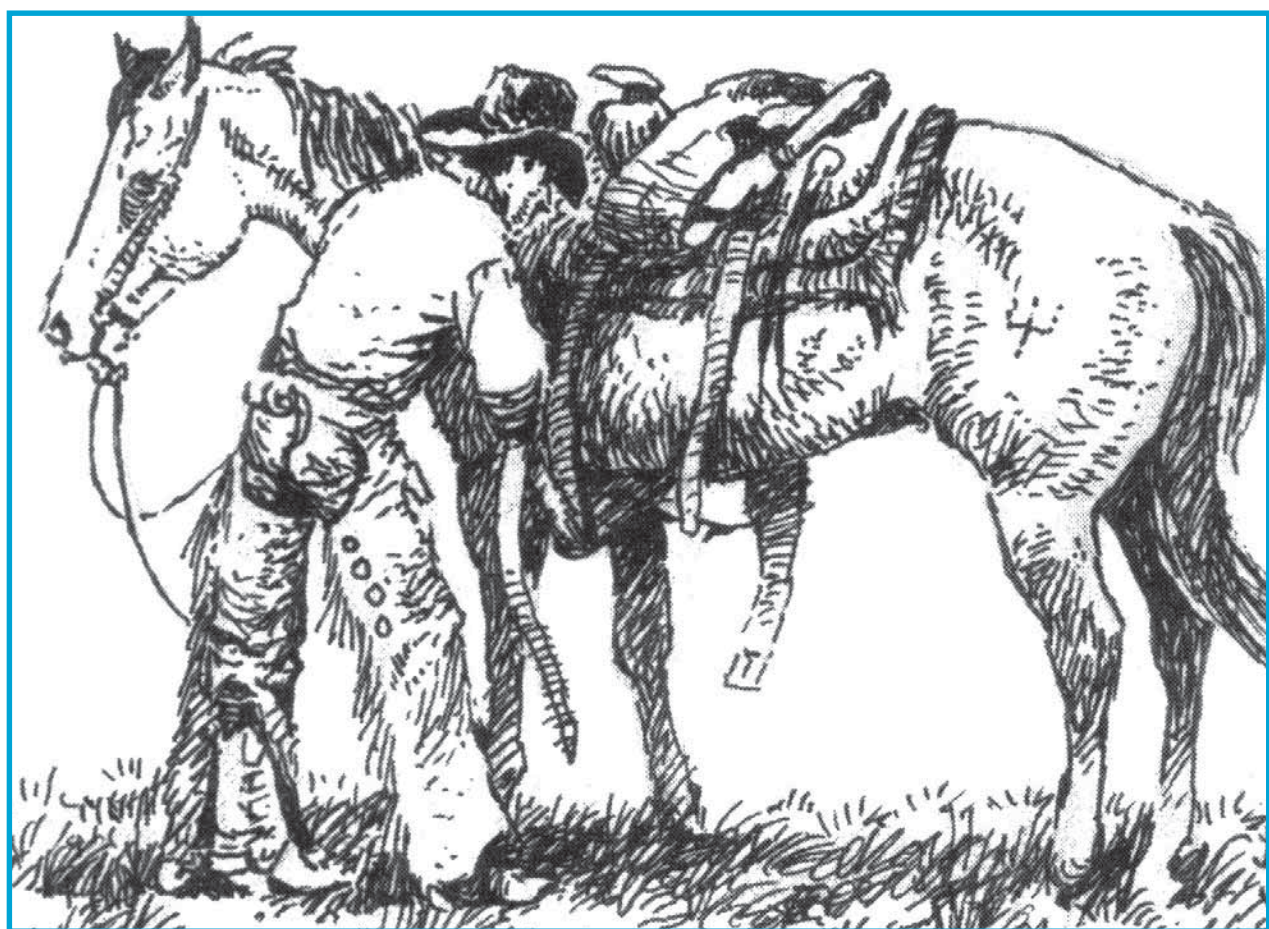
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This Month's Theme: Cowboys

Cowboys

Spanish settlers brought horses and cattle to Mexico about 400 years ago. With so much space, the horses and cattle were set free to graze and run free. Soon there were large herds and ranches in Mexico. The local Indians learned to ride horses and work cattle. They were the first cowboys and were called *vaqueros*, from the Spanish word *vaca* (cow). When cattle and ranches moved to the north, the American cowboy era began. Today, cowboys still ride horses and round up their cattle on ranches all over the western United States.



From Cowboy Days, Stories of the New Mexico Range by Stephen Zimmer, Zon Publications.

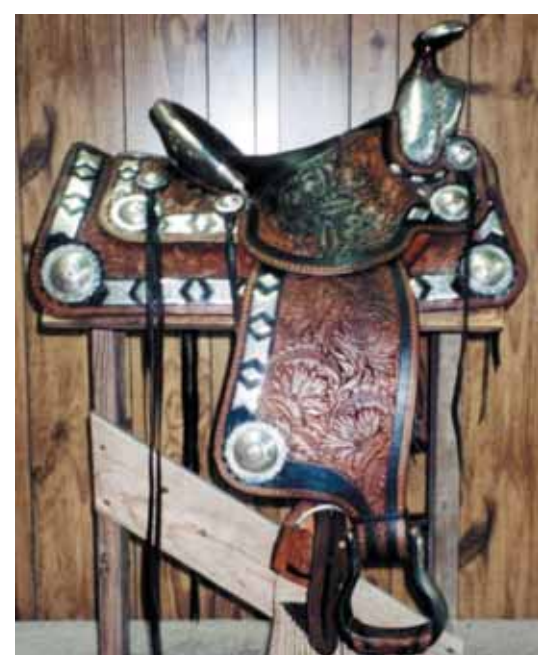
Western Gear

The American cowboy's equipment had to be useful and wearable. A cowboy usually had a horse, saddle, rope, hat, boots, spurs, bandanna, and some kind of saddlebag. The most important item to a cowboy (besides his horse) was his saddle. The first American saddles came from Mexican designs. The western stock saddle was large, comfortable, and made to last a long time. A cowboy sat on his saddle for many hours and often used his saddle as a pillow. Chaps were leather leggings worn over pants as protection from thorny bushes, rain,



Color the Cowboy and his Horse!

snow and cold. A cowboy hat protected the cowboy from the sun. A bandanna kept the dust from getting in his mouth and nose and could also be used as a towel. A saddlebag was used to carry a few of the items a cowboy owned. A rope, made out of horsehair or rawhide, was used to lasso cattle. Spurs were worn on the back of cowboy boots to make the horse go forward or backward. A metal bar called a bit was inserted into a horse's mouth to make a horse turn left or right or stop. The bit was attached to the reins held in the rider's hands to steer. Today's cowboys still use all the same gear on ranches all over the west.



Western Art

When you think of art, do you think of a painting, a drawing, or a sculpture? Many of you have used a paintbrush and paints, colored pencils and chalk, a glue stick and colored pieces of paper, or perhaps some clay. In western art, artists also paint western scenes or make beautiful sculptures of horses, cattle and cowboys. But do you know that there are other types of western art?

If you look closely at a saddle you might see beautiful hand-carved designs in the leather. Other leather items, such as cowboy boots, holsters, and saddlebags could also have carved pictures. The design or picture could be carved by hand or stamped by a machine. Designs like flowers, birds, snakes and animals are also engraved in silver on spurs, buckles, saddles, and other western equipment.



Leather and silver detail



Silver detail

Silver trimmed saddles came from old Hispanic and American traditions. They were borrowed from artists that made weapons and armor for European royalty a long time ago and from Old California vaqueros. The American silver saddle became popular in the 1920's by cowboy stars in Hollywood. Many beautiful decorated parade outfits were made for cowboy stars. When you visit the Carriage Museum you will see many beautiful saddles and silver pieces with carved designs, just like the ones in these pictures.

Cowboy Word Search Puzzle

Find the following hidden words:


BANDANNA BIT CATTLE CHAPS
COWBOY HORSE LEATHER ROPE
SADDLE SILVER SPURS VAQUERO


E L N E D Z O N Q I E R H I V T
A E C B S Y N R C P U E U A E M
M A V A Q U E R O V H P Z T G O
B L F N T H E R W S I B R E B M
E O W D T T I E B S R X O I I P
V U D A T T L S O Z I S P U R S
T A E N L D R E Y Q I I E W E T
N L W N D U J S I L O F Y V H H
M C H A P S A O C A M P W W T K
B I S H H M L T A V T K S R A N
T B I T L E F G D Q Q M E H E L
H S L T M P E M A D E E E E L A
C F T X R S T E R E V L I S T E
M I Y O H H N T U L O V S A O F
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Page by Julie A. Jeffryes, Carriage and Western Art Museum of Santa Barbara

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