

The Miseducation of Indigenous People

"The white man's superior technology, hunger for land, and ethnocentrism seemingly knew no bounds. The white threat to Indians came in many forms: smallpox, missionaries, Conestoga wagons, barbed wire, and smoking locomotives. And in the end, it came in the form of schools." -Cornell Pewewardy

Overview

Throughout history, from American colonization until the mid-1900s, the American government designed and implemented various "educational" policies designed to assimilate, "Christianize," and "civilize" indigenous peoples. With no regard for their varied and rich customs, traditions, values or lives, American Indians were subjected to numerous failed educational policies, serving as another example of the American government's oppressive failings in regards to indigenous people. In this lesson, students will learn about the history of the education, or miseducation, of Native Americans/American Indians, as well as the various ways indigenous people have fought back and persevered, through interactive discussion based on an accompanying Power Point, the examination of primary sources, and art activities. By interpreting historical facts, photographs, reports, quotes, video clips, and other information, students will glean how the forced assimilation of Native children is an important chapter in understanding the government's war on indigenous peoples, as well as how they and their cultures have survived despite such adversity.

Grades

High school

Materials

- The Miseducation of American Indians accompanying Power Point, located available here: <http://k12database.unc.edu/files/2014/10/HistoryofIndianEducationPPT.pdf>
 - To view this PDF as a projectable presentation, save the file, click "View" in the top menu bar of the file, and select "Full Screen Mode"; upon completion of presentation, hit ESC on your keyboard to exit the file
 - To request an editable PPT version of this presentation, send a request to CarolinaK12@unc.edu
 - Teacher Note: This Power Point is extensive in terms of providing an overview of American Indian education throughout history. Given the complexity of the history covered, it is important that the information not be delivered as a lecture, but rather include ample discussion and time for students to share their thoughts, process their feelings and ask questions. For ideas on how to make conveying the information in the Power Point engaging and interactive, see <http://k12database/files/2012/05/SocialStudiesStrategies.pdf>. Teachers should also determine if/how they want students to take notes based on what they learn (i.e., Cornell Notes)
- Unseen Tears: The Native American Boarding School Experience in Western New York: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioAzggmes8c> (9 minute 9-minuteip)
- Primary Source Packet – Boarding Schools, attached
- Quotes for Discussion, attached

Essential Questions

- What were the various attitudes of Euro-Americans and Americans towards indigenous people from colonization through present?
- What were the various policies of the federal government for educating American Indians?
- What were the goals and consequences of such policies?
- What were the purposes, experiences and long-term impacts of Indian boarding schools?

- How did tribal schools and their goals differ from federal schools, policies and goals?
- What are the various ways Native People have resisted oppressive policies and racist attitudes?
- What does it say regarding the strength of American Indians that despite all the effort and energy that has been spent on eradicating their culture, Native languages, spiritual practices, and other customs live on?
- What long-term impacts has the history of the government's treatment of American Indians had on their educational attainment and general well-being today?
- What are some ways people today can work to make a positive difference in terms of righting the wrongs of American Indian abuse and oppression?

Duration

Two or more 60-90 minute class periods

Teacher Preparation

- For this lesson, the terms Native American and American Indian are used interchangeably. It should be noted that while both terms are commonly, some scholars consider both terms to be oppressive. Teachers may also choose to use the terms indigenous peoples or First Nations, based on their own research and views, and/or after asking the opinion/preference of any indigenous students in your class.
- This lesson deals with a disgraceful aspect of American history: the systematic unjust treatment of indigenous peoples by the American government. Even though addressing such topics can be difficult and even controversial, it is important for students to explore a comprehensive history. In order to study this history effectively and safely however, teachers must have established a safe classroom with clear expectations of respect, open mindedness, tolerance, and civil conversation. See [Carolina K-12's "Activities" section of the Database of K-12 Resources](#) for strategies to create a classroom environment conducive to the effective exploration of controversial materials. See also our [Tips for Discussing Sensitive History & Controversial Current Events](#).

Student Preparation

- Students should have a basic background knowledge of Native American history, including an understanding of Indian Removal, the reservation system and termination.
- Students should also have an understanding of vocabulary words such as genocide, assimilation, Eurocentric, ethnocentric, and deculturalization.

Procedure

Day 1

An Introduction to the History of American Indian "Miseducation"

1. As a warm-up, project the quote on [slide 2](#) of the accompanying Power Point and instruct students to consider the passage for a few silent moments:

"As a savage, we cannot tolerate him any more than as a half-civilized parasite, wanderer or vagabond. The only alternative left is to fit him by education for civilized life. The Indian, though a simple child of nature with mental facilities dwarfed and shriveled, while groping his way for generations in the darkness of barbarism, already sees the importance of education; bewildered by the glare of a civilization above and beyond his comprehension, he is nevertheless seeking to adjust himself to the new conditions by which he is encompassed. He sees that the knowledge possessed by the white man is necessary for self-preservation."

Discuss:

- What words or phrases stood out to you when reading this quote?
- How does the author view and characterize American Indians? What does the author think American Indians need and want?
- What overall message is this quote conveying? Whose perspective does this statement represent?

- How do you think the author would define being “civilized?” Who or what do you think this same person would consider “uncivilized?” Who gets to determine who or what is civilized and who/what is not?
 - What is your opinion of what the author is saying? How would you characterize the person who wrote this? If you had the opportunity, what would you like to say to the person who wrote this?
 - In what ways were American Indians the opposite of how this quote describes them? In what ways did Euro-Americans actually exhibit some of the traits attributed to Native Americans in the quote, such as those of parasites, the exhibition of dwarfed and shriveled mental facilities, and barbarism?
2. Explain to students that this quote is a direct phrase from the 12th Annual Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners in 1880. Explain that as soon as Euro-American colonies took root in North America, the question of how to “civilize” the indigenous peoples became a focus of the new settlers and the newly formed American government. Euro-American policy makers struggled with what they considered the “Indian problem” for decades and relied on various “educational” policies throughout history to “civilize” the very people whose land they had invaded. In the end, this became yet another way that Indian Americas were unjustly exploited by the American government. Let students know they will be learning about the history of American Indian education (or “miseducation”) in this lesson plan.
 3. Project [slide 3](#), “Education before 1492,” and point out that it is important to recognize that before Columbus even set foot in North America, the people native to the land already had their own education systems in place, just as we know they had their own customs, religions, values, traditions, etc. Nonetheless, in each of the colonies, Euro-Americans created a plan for formal Indian schooling that centered on Christianizing and civilizing Native Peoples. Share the information on [slide 4](#) and discuss:
 - Why do you think colonists thought they needed to “Christianize and civilize” the Native People? Why were Native customs, religions and practices not valued?
 - Why do you think colonial attempts to “educate” Natives failed?
 - What do you think “success” would have looked like to colonists?
 4. Share the information on [slide 5](#) and explain that even though colonial attempts to control Natives through education failed, the goal to “Christianize and civilize” Natives took root in the newly formed American government. Create two columns on the board, one titled tribal schools and one federal schools. Ask students to imagine how they think these two types of schools would have differed. Encourage students to visualize each school type, noting their thoughts in the appropriate column. Solicit student thoughts by asking:
 - What do you imagine the difference was between these two systems of education (tribal and federal?) How do you think they would have differed in their curriculum, instruction, priorities, etc.?
 - What would a classroom look like in each school? What would students be doing and learning? What types of things might you see and hear?
 - How do you imagine students felt in each type of school?
 5. Move on to [slide 6](#) and discuss tribal schools:
 - Why do you think Native People wanted to maintain their own school system?
 - According to the quote, why did tribal schools also include teaching Natives the language of the invaders?
 6. Go over [slide 7](#) and discuss federal schools:
 - Why do you think religious organizations and churches in particular were provided federal funds to run schools for Natives?
 - How do you think Native People felt attending these schools? What do you imagine they were like?
 - Based on what we’ve just discussed over the last two slides, is there anything you would add to our 2 columns regarding the difference in tribal and federal schools?

7. Move on to slides 8 & 9 and discuss:
- What impact did removal have on all aspects of Native life, including education?
 - What do you imagine the experience of American Indians was in manual labor schools?

American Indian Boarding Schools

8. Next, project the images on slide 10 and ask students to comment:
- What do you see in these images? What first strikes you?
 - What differences do you see in the two pictures? What similarities do you see? (Allow students to share their preliminary thoughts before giving any information about the image. After a few minutes, if no one has mentioned it, ensure students note that it is the same young man pictured in both images.)
 - What do you think brought about such a change in this young man's appearance? What might he have experienced to undergo such a transformation?
9. Share the quote on slide 11 and ask students to further discuss:
- What message is being conveyed? Who might have held such a view in the 1800s?
 - What are some of the attempts that we have discussed that were made to "kill the Indian in him?" What other ways might have been employed throughout the 1800s, after the Civilization Fund was repealed, to "kill the Indian in him"?
 - How do you think this quote connects to the images you just viewed?
10. Move on to slides 12 & 13 and explain to students that even with the repeal of the Civilization Fund, the American government's goals with Indian education did not change. Let students know that the government transitioned to boarding schools as a means of educating Native People. The quote just discussed is attributed to Robert Henry Pratt, who founded the first official boarding school for American Indians in 1879, called the Carlisle Boarding School. Let students know that the images they previously viewed are before and after pictures of Tom Torino, a Navajo youth who attended the Carlisle School.
- Discuss:
- Given what you have learned thus far, what do you predict happened at boarding schools? What was prioritized? How were Native Americans treated? What types of things, and in what ways, do you imagine were taught? What types of experiences do you think Tom had?
11. Share the details on slide 14 and discuss:
- Why do you think teaching "work ethic" was so central to boarding school philosophy?
 - Why do you think the government was so afraid of American Indian traditions, customs, ways of life, etc.?
 - What do you imagine it would have been like to be a young child, removed from your family, and sent to such a school, with no choice on your or your family's part?
12. To assist students in further understanding what the experience of boarding schools was like, teachers can play a short clip (9 minutes) from the documentary, *Unseen Tears: The Native American Boarding School Experience in Western New York*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioAzggmes8c>
- Start the clip at 1:08 and play it until the end. Let students know the clip will last around 9 minutes and that it is about the boarding school experience. Instruct students to jot down thoughts, emotions, questions, and other reactions they have while watching the video and listening to survivors. After watching, discuss:
- The video starts by showing a group of American Indians singing. How would you describe them? How old do they appear to be? Why do you think they are singing "10 Little Indians?" What is problematic about seemingly innocent songs like this?
 - According to Michael Martin, what was the first goal of the government, before deciding to "kill the Indian and save the man?" What was the idea behind this policy?

- Throughout the video, we meet several American Indians who went to boarding schools. What various hardships and cruelties do they recount? (i.e., poor living conditions inclusive of lice and rats; appearances forcibly changed, such as through shaving their heads and required uniforms; cruel punishments, such as being locked in dark rooms, having their mouths washed out with soap, cold showers, beatings; separation from family; forbidden to speak Native languages; etc.) How did boarding schools get by with this?
- As we saw in the beginning, many students were as young as 4 or 5 years old. Imagine being separated from your family and taken to a strange place at this age, or at any age as a child. What would be hardest about this?
- Summarize the experience Geronimo Henry had when being left as a young boy at the school (5:46). He may feel his mother had forgotten him, but for what other reasons might parents have stayed away from the schools?
- Why does Geronimo say he didn't become angry about having been put into a boarding school until after he got out (4:00)?
- What does it say about the Native Americans in this video (and the thousands of others) who not only survived this experience, but are now willing to share their experiences? What would be difficult about remembering these events for them?
- Throughout the clip, we see a few excerpts of a black and white film (2:20; 7:04; 8:57) with a government official describing boarding schools. What type of information does he share? How does this information differ from what the surviving students say? What do you think the purpose of this film was/what was it used for? (Discuss the concept of government propaganda with students.)
- At the start of the clip, (2:35) Michael Martin notes of boarding schools and related history, "This never makes it into the history books; this is never talked about." Why do you think this is the case? Why is it important that everyone know this history, even though it might be shameful and hurtful?
- Are there other historical events this history reminds you of? (Students might connect this to topics such as the Holocaust, Japanese Internment, the Jim Crow Era, etc.)

Exploring Boarding Schools through Primary Sources

- 13.** Tell students they are going to explore and discuss boarding schools further in small groups. Assign (or allow students to choose) groups of 3-5 and provide students with the attached Primary Source Packet on boarding schools. Students should review each source together, discussing the corresponding questions. After students have had ample time to review the sources and discuss the questions, debrief the materials as a class. In particular, have each group summarize their response to question V with the class. (If additional time is needed, this activity can also be assigned or finished the next time class meets.)

➤ **Teacher Notes/Options:**

- Teachers may want to copy a class set of the Primary Source Packet and instruct students not to write on the packet. This will allow the same packets to be used across various classes.
- If desired, students can complete this activity individually, rather than in groups, by answering the questions in writing on notebook paper.
- If time does not permit for working on the packet in class, students can also be given the packet to complete for homework.
- To make the activity shorter, teachers can omit sources to be reviewed, or questions to be answered, as needed.

Day 2

14. As a warm-up and reminder of the previous lesson, project [slide 15](#) and instruct students to design a resistance t-shirt that addresses what they have learned thus far regarding the history of American Indian miseducation in some way. Provide art paper and colored pencils and instruct students to hang their t-shirt designs around the room once finished. (Provide around 8 minutes.) Teachers can then give each student a Post-It Note and provide a few minutes for students to circulate around the designs, sticking their Post-It by the design they like the most. Use the completed t-shirt designs as a basis for a review discussion of material covered previously.



15. Return to the Power Point at [slide 16](#) and discuss:

- Why did boarding schools fail?
- What does it say regarding the strength of American Indians that despite all the effort and energy that was spent on eradicating their culture, Native languages, spiritual practices, and other customs lived on?
- In 1906, the government decided to start shifting American Indians into the public-school system. What were schools in North Carolina like in the early to mid-1900s? What do you already know about this time period, referred to as the Jim Crow Era?
- With segregation in full effect, where do you think American Indians were expected to go to school? What experience do you think they had in public schools during this period of Jim Crow and segregation?
- What impact do you think experiencing racism and prejudice throughout this time had on the education of Native People in public schools?

The Fight for Civil Rights

16. Move on to [slide 17](#) and [18](#) and discuss:

- Why do you think it took so long for attention to be paid to the terrible aspects of boarding schools and the government's policies regarding American Indian education?
- The report called for a child-centered, culturally appropriate education for Native People. Do you think they would get this in public schools in the 1900s? Why or why not? Where could they receive an education like this?
- Why do you think the Meriam Report said that what was most needed in Indian education was a "change in government attitude"?
- What changes in thinking begin to become more prominent with John Collier's Indian New Deal? (i.e., free the Indian from government control as opposed to "kill the Indian, save the man")

17. Go thorough [slides 19-21](#) and discuss:

- Why do you think American Indian civil rights leaders stressed an agenda of "self- determination"?
- It is important to note that throughout history, even with so much stacked against them, Native Peoples have done their best to stand up for their rights to the best of their ability. What does such a will to fight and move forward in the face of such adversity say about a people? It is very easy to give up fighting and surrender (physically, emotionally, psychologically, etc.) What has kept so many Native People from doing just this?
- What difference did the actions of civil rights activists, Native and non-Native, make? Why is it important to be civically active in his way and stand up for your rights and beliefs, even if, and especially if, others are constantly trampling on those rights and beliefs?
- What are the benefits of tribally controlled schools?
- How are tribally controlled schools, such as the Haliwa-Saponi Tribal School, different than boarding schools?

- Why do you think the Education Act of 1975 specifically advocated for parent involvement in program planning, for the establishment of community-run schools, and for culturally relevant and bilingual curriculum materials? Why are these things so important?

A Lasting Impact on American Indian Youth

18. Share the information on slides 22-24 and discuss:

- Why do you think the statistics regarding the education of American Indian children are so negative?
- Who/what is at fault for low achievement rates and high dropout rates? (Have students discuss the various aspects of history that have contributed to this, as well as discussing how the issues noted – poor teaching, Eurocentric curriculums, limited access to multicultural curriculum, etc. – also play a part.)
- What does it mean when we say that centuries of racism, genocide and assimilationist policies cannot be undone in a matter of years?
 - Teachers might choose to use a race analogy with students. If everyone lines up at the starting line for a race, but for no reason, a certain group of people are forced to start one mile behind the starting line, the majority of those people will have trouble catching up to those who started at the rightful beginning of the race. Some will catch up, but likely due to working extremely hard, or perhaps even having some type of luck involved. The point is that it's unjust that the race is rigged in this way.
- Are you surprised to hear that overall, Indian youth (12-17 yrs.) engaging in drug and alcohol use is higher than the national average? Why do you think this is the case?
- Native leaders see a direction for how to improve student achievement and academic prosperity, including through the preservation of tribal cultures and languages. Do you agree this will help? What else is needed, in your opinion?

19. Share slide 25 and discuss:

- According to the quote, why is a Treaty of 1992 needed? What do you think the authors would argue needs to be included in such a treaty? What do you think should be included?
- Why do you think leaders believe that change will only occur when Native and nonnative societies make the commitment to work together? Do you agree? What might be difficult about this type of collaboration? (i.e., mistrust based on historical realities)

20. To begin a culminating discussion, have students gather into groups of 4-5 and provide each group with one of the attached quotes. Project slide 26 which contains guiding questions for groups to answer. Tell students to be prepared to share with the remainder of class. Once students have had 5-7 minutes to talk in groups, bring the class back together, project the quotes on slide 27, and have students report out regarding their discussions. Further discuss:

- We've discussed how boarding schools were used in an attempt to force American Indians to assimilate into the "mainstream" culture. Can you think of moments throughout history, or in current events, when education has been used in similar ways with other groups?
- Now that you are educated on the history of American Indian education (or miseducation), what are you left thinking or feeling?
- It is understandable to be angry regarding history such as this. While the government has made progress, and while society may be more accepting today of differences, we still have far to go. What are some ways emotions such as anger can be channeled productively to make a difference and ensure things continue to improve? Some people may feel like it's not worth even bothering to change anything, when so much is stacked against them. Why is allowing anger, hate and apathy to take over dangerous?
- Remember that throughout history, even with so much stacked against them, Native Peoples have done their best to stand up for their rights. What does such a will to fight and move forward in the face of such adversity say about a people? It is often easier to just give up; why is it crucial to not do this?

- What are some ways you can make a positive difference in terms of righting the wrongs of American Indian abuse?

Culminating Assignment: The Legacy of American Indian Education

- 21.** As a culminating activity, have students examine the historical marker for the Carlisle Indian School, located on [slide 28](#). Discuss:
- Have you seen markers such as this at various historic sites? Is this an effective way to educate passerby's regarding the history of a place? Why or why not?
 - Do you feel this sign and its text does justice to telling the history of the Carlisle School? Why or why not? What is included? What is left out? What (if anything) is misleading?
 - How should this aspect of history be told and properly remembered? If you were asked to redo this sign, or think of another way to educate people regarding the Carlisle School, or the history of American Indian education in general, what ideas would you pose?
- 22.** Tell students to imagine that they have been tasked with designing a new historical monument or marker that relates to what they have learned about the history of American Indian education/miseducation in some way. They can create their design on paper (i.e., a blueprint of what their memorial/marker would actually look like); in 3-D form using clay, wire, cardboard, etc.; with a computer; or in any creative way desired. The final project can be literal or abstract, but must relate to American Indian education in some way. For example, final projects might:
- Tell a true and comprehensive history regarding the education/miseducation of Native People
 - Focus on one particular aspect of what we have learned (such as boarding schools in general, on one particular boarding school, tribal schools, etc.) or focus on the general history via a more thematic design
 - Focus on the resilience and resistance efforts of American Indians
 - Honor the memory of the American Indians who experienced miseducation
 - Offer inspiration for Native and nonnative societies to make the commitment to work together regarding the education of American Indians today
 - Heal wounds and work towards reconciliation; foster hope by envisioning an inclusive society

Teachers should determine how long they will provide for students to work on this in class and/or for homework. Let students know when their final project is due in class, as well as how they will be presenting it. (For example, students might post/set up their work around the classroom on the due date. Teachers can give students time to freely rotate among the designs then hold a vote where the class determines which memorial/marker most impacted them.)

Group Members: _____

Primary Source Packet – Boarding Schools

I. Quotes: Read each quote and discuss the questions that follow.

"I do not believe that Indians...people who for the most part speak no English, live in squalor and degradation, make little progress from year to year, who are a perpetual source of expense to the government and a constant menace to thousands of their white neighbors, a hindrance to civilization and a clog on our progress have any right to forcibly keep their children out of school to grow up like themselves, a race of barbarians and semi-savages." *T.J. Morgan, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1889-1893*

- 1) How does T.J. Morgan view Native People?
- 2) What argument does he make for boarding schools?
- 3) If you had the change to argue against the ridiculous points made by Morgan, what are three things you would point out to him?

"If the Great Spirit had desired me to be a white man he would have made me so in the first place. He put in your heart certain wishes and plans; in my heart he put other and different desires. Each man is good in the sight of the Great Spirit. It is not necessary, that eagles should be crows."
Sitting Bull (Teton Sioux)

- 4) What message is Sitting Bull sending with this statement?
- 5) How would Sitting Bull respond to T.J. Morgan regarding whether Native People should attend boarding schools?

"They told us that Indian ways were bad. They said we must get 'civilized'....It means 'be like the white man'... And the books told how bad the Indians had been to the white men—burning their towns and killing their women and children. But I had seen white men do that to Indians. We all wore white man's clothes and ate white man's food and went to white man's churches and spoke white man's talk. And so after a while we also began to say Indians were bad. We laughed at our own people..." *Sun Elk, Taos Pueblo, a student at Carlisle Boarding School, 1890*

- 6) How would you describe the "education" Sun Elk received at Carlisle Boarding School?
- 7) Why did Sun Elk and his classmates begin to say that Indians were bad and laugh at their own people?
- 8) What hypocrisy does Sun Elk point out regarding white men? In what additional ways are boarding schools and the government's justification of such hypocritical?
- 9) What would Sun Elk and others need after leaving Carlisle in order to rightfully respect their heritage?

II. Before and After Photos of Students at the Carlisle Indian School



Apache children when they arrived at the Carlisle school in 1886: Hugh Chee, Bishop Eatennah, Ernest Hoguee, Humphrey Escharzay, Samson Noran, Basil Ekarden, Clement Seanilzay, Beatrice Kiahtel, Janette Pahgostatam, Margaret Y. Nadasthilah, Fred'k Eskelsejah.



4 months later: Samson Noran, Fred'k Eskelsejah, Clement Seanilzay, Hugh Chee, Ernest Hoguee, Margaret Y. Nadasthilah, Humphrey Escharzay, Beatrice Kiahtel, Janette Pahgostatam, Bishop Eatennah, and Basil Ekarden.

- 10) Compare the two images of the same students before and after they entered the Carlisle School. What is different about them?
- 11) What do you imagine the process of this transformation was like for these children?
- 12) Focus on the first image. What types of negative assumptions might you make based on the appearances of the students in the first image? (Create a two-column chart and note these in the left column of a chart.)
- 13) For each assumption you made, consider another more positive assumption that you can make. (For example, if you said you might assume these children are poor, you could also assume they are hard workers.)

III. Excerpt from writings of Richard H. Pratt, founder of the Carlisle School, 1892

A great general has said that the only good Indian is a dead one, and that high sanction of his destruction has been an enormous factor in promoting Indian massacres. In a sense, I agree with the sentiment, but only in this: that all the Indian there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him, and save the man....

It is a great mistake to think that the Indian is born an inevitable savage. He is born a blank, like all the rest of us. Left in the surroundings of savagery, he grows to possess a savage language, superstition, and life. We, left in the surroundings of civilization, grow to possess a civilized language, life, and purpose. Transfer the infant white to the savage surroundings, he will grow to possess a savage language, superstition, and habit. Transfer the savage-born infant to the surroundings of civilization, and he will grow to possess a civilized language and habit...

Carlisle fills young Indians with the spirit of loyalty to the stars and stripes, and then moves them out into our communities to show by their conduct and ability that the Indian is no different from the white or the colored, that he has the inalienable right to liberty and opportunity that the white and the negro have. Carlisle does not dictate to him what line of life he should fill, so it is an honest one. It says to him that, if he gets his living by the sweat of his brow, and demonstrates to the nation that he is a man, he does more good for his race than hundreds of his fellows who cling to their tribal communistic surroundings. . . .

- 14) How does Pratt view the killing of Indians?
- 15) According to Pratt, why are Indians savages?
- 16) Is Pratt advocating for rights for American Indians? Explain.
- 17) What is Pratt's overall message? Overall, how would you characterize him and his words regarding Native People?

IV. Images from the Albuquerque Indian School



Albuquerque Indian School, 1895



Albuquerque Indian School, 1910

- 18) Based on these images, what types of things were students “taught” at boarding schools?
 - 19) How might a tribal school, operated by American Indians themselves, look differently?
- V. **Based on the primary sources you have reviewed, how would you describe the American government’s policies regarding boarding school education for Native People? Even though it is disturbing, why should every American learn about this painful history today?**

Quotes for Discussion

"The white man's superior technology, hunger for land, and ethnocentrism seemingly knew no bounds. The white threat to Indians came in many forms: smallpox, missionaries, Conestoga wagons, barbed wire, and smoking locomotives. And in the end, it came in the form of schools."

Cornell Pewewardy

"Understanding the "the Indian problem" is not a problem of children and families but rather a problem that has been consciously and historically produced by and through the systems of colonization: a multidimensional force underwritten by Western Christianity, defined by white supremacy, and fueled by global capitalism."

Sandy Grande

"Indian education was never simply about the desire to "civilize" or even deculturalize a people, but rather, from its very inception, it was a project designed to colonize Indian minds as a means of gaining access to Indian labor, land, and resources."

Sandy Grande