Native American Education: Past, Present, and Future

Assimilation

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Grade Level	9th – 11th Grade	**Time Frame**	120 minutes
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	2 periods
Course	Oklahoma History, U.S. History		

Essential Question

Why did the U.S. government use assimilation to educate Native children? How did assimilation in education affect Native people?

Summary

In this lesson, students review, analyze, and evaluate the history of Native American education, focusing on boarding schools, specifically Carlisle Indian Industrial School, terminology, and their transformation over the past 150 years. Then, students analyze primary sources from the past, learn about extant boarding schools, and envision the future of Native American education.

Snapshot

Engage

Students formulate a S-I-T evaluation of a clip from the miniseries *Into the West.*

Explore

Students examine the actual student records of Native children who attended Carlisle Indian Industrial School and discuss the school's impact on their lives.

Explain

Students use the Why-Lighting strategy to read and annotate an article summarizing the history of Native American education from the past to the present. They then use the Honeycomb Harvest strategy to show their understanding of terms and concepts.

Extend

Students use the Choice Board strategy to explore three different resources focusing on the past, present, and future of Native American education.

Evaluate

Students reevaluate the essential questions and determine what the future of Native American education might look like.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

CLR401: Locate important details in somewhat challenging passages
CLR402: Draw logical conclusions in somewhat challenging passages
WME402: Interpret most words and phrases as they are used in somewhat challenging passages, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings

Oklahoma Academic Standards SOCIAL STUDIES (Oklahoma History and Government)

OKH.C.6.2: Examine government policies impacting American Indian identity, culture, economy, Tribal government, and sovereignty.
OKH.C.6.2.A: Analyze the effects of federal policy to assimilate Native children through the establishment of Indian boarding schools (e.g., Riverside Indian School, Chilocco Indian Agricultural School).

Oklahoma Academic Standards SOCIAL STUDIES (Oklahoma History and Government)

USH.C.1.4.D: Describe the intent and effects of assimilation policies including the impact of Indian boarding schools on Native culture, identity, and economic outcomes over time.

Attachments

- Carlisle School Note Catcher—Native American Education.docx
- Carlisle School Note Catcher—Native American Education.pdf
- History of Native American Education—Native American Education.docx
- History of Native American Education—Native American Education.pdf
- Honeycomb Harvest—Native American Education.docx
- Honeycomb Harvest—Native American Education.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Native American Education.pptx

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Carlisle School Note Catcher handout (attached; one per student)
- History of Native American Education handout (attached; one per student)
- Honeycomb Harvest handout (attached; one per student or small group)
- Student devices with internet access
- Pens/pencils
- Notebook paper or scratch paper

15 minutes

Engage

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to guide the lesson. Ask students take out a piece of notebook paper, or provide students with scratch paper. Begin with **slide 3** and introduce the S-I-T (Surprising, Interesting, Troubling) strategy to students. Tell students to think about something surprising, interesting, and troubling as they view a video about the first Native students to arrive at Carlisle Indian Industrial School, the first off-reservation boarding school.

On **slide 4**, play the embedded YouTube video of the clip from TNT's *Into the West*.

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=yfRHqWCz3Zw

Sample Responses: S-I-T

- **S**: I found it surprising that students received their English name by randomly pointing to one on a chalkboard.
- **I**: I found it interesting that not all teachers were okay with this method of assimilation/schooling.
- **T**: I found it troubling that the kids seemed lost and confused by all the new changes and harsh behavior from the staff at the school.

After the video, provide time for students to write down something surprising, interesting, and troubling from the video. Have students discuss their thoughts with a partner, then ask students to share their discussions with the class.

Display **slides 5–6** to review the essential questions and the learning objectives. Give students 3 minutes to identify examples from the clip in which students were forced to reject their tribal cultures. You do not need to introduce students to the term "assimilation," as they will learn it during the lesson.

30 minutes

Explore

Teacher's Note: Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center

Students will use the Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center website to research the students who are listed in the Carlisle School handout. Prior to teaching the lesson, familiarize yourself with the website by reading the instructions on the handout and looking up the records of at least one Carlisle student listed.

There are ten pages in the handout to allow for research into a variety of tribes and students. Ensure that enough copies of the handout are printed based on the size of your classes. For example, 10 students will be searching 20 different Carlisle students from a variety of Oklahoma tribes. If the class has 11–20 students, make 2 copies of the entire document or 3 copies if there are 21–30 students.

Display **slide 7** and distribute the attached **Carlisle School Note Catcher** handout to each student. Have students use a personal device to access the link on the slide. Tell students the website is a historical record of Native students who attended Carlisle Indian Industrial School. Complete the first two questions on the handout as a class.

Then, ask students to search the records of the two students listed on their handout. Students can search using tribes, names, or dates. Documents found in their records may include student information cards, behavioral reports, reports after leaving, letters, financial information, postcards, pictures, etc.

While reading through the students' documents, students will jot down in their notes about what impact (positive or negative) the school had on the students.

After about 25 minutes, ask some students to share what information they have found about the Native students from the past and the impact Carlisle had on their lives.

30 minutes

Explain

Teacher's Note: Lesson Preparation

Prior to teaching the lesson, print the attached **Honeycomb Harvest** handout for each group and cut out the honeycomb cards. Consider printing on cardstock to reuse the Honeycomb Harvest in future classes.

Display **slide 8** and pass out the attached **History of Native American Education** handout to each student. Introduce students to the Why-Lighting strategy. Ask students to highlight any vocabulary that is unfamiliar to them and any interesting information. After highlighting, they should write notes in the margins that detail the reason for highlighting sections of the text. When students are finished, have students discuss what they have highlighted.

Display **slide 9** and place students in small groups of three if desired. Introduce the Honeycomb Harvest strategy to students and pass out sets of the Honeycomb Harvest cards to each student or small groups. Provide time for students to arrange the hexagons to best represent their understanding of the relationship among the terms and concepts relating to Native education. Be sure to clarify that there are no right or wrong answers as long as students can justify their choices for the arrangement of the hexagons.

Teacher's Note: Honeycomb Connections Example

Consider showing an example to help students get started. For example, you could say that the "Boarding Schools," "Off-Reservation," "Reservation," and "Missionary" honeycombs could touch since the latter three are types of boarding schools. There is no wrong answer as long as a student can justify their choices.

After providing time for students to create their honeycomb shape, have each student share their reasoning with another student. If small groups complete their harvests together, ask that they rotate to another group to see other arrangements to compare and contrast. Emphasize that it is likely that students will also produce a variety of arrangements.

30 minutes

Extend

Teacher's Note: Choice Board

Before teaching this part of the lesson, check that the link is working and verify all links are active: https://k20.ou.edu/mg.

Display **slide 10** and have students navigate to the link on the slide. Introduce the Choice Board strategy to students. The linked choice board has three columns titled: "Past," "Present," and "Future." Under each title are five sources relating to Native education from the past and present, along with implications for the future.

Ask students to choose one link from each column to view. While they are engaging with the source, they are to keep in mind the overall guiding question: "How does this type of education affect Native students of that time (Past, Present, or Future)?"

Provide time for students to explore their chosen sites as partners, encouraging students to discuss the guiding question as they view the links.

15 minutes

Evaluate

Display **slide 11**. Have the whole class share out their favorite sites and discuss how the information from those sites affected Native students' education. You can use the two guiding questions: *How has assimilation affected education in today's Native communities? What does the future of Native education look like?*

After students have answered the guiding questions, refer back to the essential questions: *Why did the U.S. government use assimilation to educate Native children? How did assimilation in education affect Native people?* Have students respond to the questions on a piece of notebook paper. Collect the handouts to review and check for student understanding of the lesson content.

Possible Student Responses

Some students may say that today's schools are more respectful of Native traditions and culture and are less reliant on assimilation. Others may talk about the few boarding schools still in operation today and the fact that more tribes are taking control of educating their citizens through tribally-controlled boarding schools or charter schools.

Resources

- Carynfmiller. (2011, September 17). Into the west-Carlisle Indian School [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfRHqWCz3Zw&t=528s
- Dickinson College. (n.d.). Carlisle Indian School digital resource center. https://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Choice boards. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/926
- K20 Center. (n.d.. Honeycomb harvest. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/61
- K20 Center. (n.d.). S-I-T (Surprising, interesting, troubling). Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/926
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Why-Lighting. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/128