

McLaughlin Modeling for 7th Grade Reading

“Reflections on Boarding Schools”

Common Core State Standards:

7.RL.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.7.7 - Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium’s portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).

SL.7.1 - Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

OSEU:

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING 2: There is variety and resiliency among individual Tribal people as identity is developed, defined and redefined by entities, organization and people. A continuum of tribal identity, unique to each individual, ranges from assimilated to traditional lifestyle. There is no “generic American Indian”.

OSEU2.1.9-12: Students are able to personalize topics on assimilation; examples are boarding schools, relocation, religion, etc.

Opening:

Begin by sharing the picture of the students outside of the Carlisle School in PA. Ask students if they have any idea what the picture is. Have they seen it before? Does it remind them of anything? How does it make them feel? Explain that we will be talking about two different experiences of Native American Boarding Schools.

Lesson:

Share the essay by David Little Elk.

Questions:

Share [Sid Byrd’s video](#): Walk students through the self-paced video, questions, and response time. Students use the included framework to help frame their thinking as they reflect. Have students engage in small group discussions about the questions on which they reflected.

Closing:

In large group compare and contrast the two different stories and perspectives of the storytellers and summarize them. How were the experiences similar? How were they different? How does growing in understanding of those who were a part of the boarding school system help us better understand ourselves?



Photo Courtesy of Cumberland County Historical Society, Carlisle, PA.

LOOKING THROUGH LAKOTA EYES

Excerpts from an Essay by David Little Elk



To speak the Lakota Language, one needs to be aware of the Lakota perspective so that the correct words will be used. This is achieved by either growing up among Lakota People whose first language is Lakota and who live in their homelands. Or it can be introduced by a Lakota who has lived that perspective all of his life. Because of the experience of Natives with western civilization, meanings of some words were altered by those from the dominant society to attempt to change and control the Natives. They did this hoping it would tame us.

During the early part of the 20th century, the American government set up boarding schools to "civilize" Native children so that they would be able to function within American society. They realized that the earlier they took the Native children away from home, the easier it was to transform them. They also realized that the further away from home they took these Native children, the easier it was to break them down emotionally. These schools offered low paying salaries and not much for benefits. Thus, a lot of teachers of questionable character were hired to "civilize" these Native children.

These children were taken hundreds of miles away from their extended, loving families to these boarding schools. When they arrived there, one of the first things they had to do was to stand in a line to get their hair cut. In most Native cultures, hair contains the essence of the soul, and this is why most Native peoples grew their hair long. The only time when they were to cut their hair was when a relative died. This hair cutting was done in a ceremoniously way, as this was a cultural rule. Thus as these children were forced to stand in line to have their hair cut was really shocking. So these children thought that someone in their families must have died. And since they all had to stand in the same line, they thought that all of their families must have died. And then they felt that they were now facing death, as well. That had to have been a most traumatic shock experience.

Then they were told their language and culture was evil and from them devil. When these Native children spoke their language or talked about their culture, they were severely beaten, molested and made to feel ashamed to be Native. Soon many of them died in those schools from broken hearts, as

well as the physical, spiritual and emotional abuse. And some adopted the abusive ways of the teachers, priests and other authority figures in these schools, as the older students began to abuse those they considered weaker than themselves. Thus, these children grew up away from their extended families that normally would have helped them to learn to process their emotions and thoughts, as they grew to become adults. And instead they grew up facing constant abuse and with no emotionally healthy adult role models to emulate.

Reflections on Boarding Schools

Ideas shared in video or text	My personal connection