Learning Guide

a film by Paige Bethmann

REMAINING NATIVE



A SHE CARRIES HER HOUSE PRODUCTION IN ASSOCIATION WITH RANDOMGOOD FOUNDATION, THE DENOVO INITIATIVE FEATURING KUTOVEN STEVENS, MISTY STEVENS, DELMAR STEVENS

MUSIC BY KINO BENALLY SOUND DESIGN BY TOM PAUL COLORIST NATACHA IKOLI EDITED BY STEPHANIE KHOURY CINEMATOGRAPHY BY SHAI BEN-DOR, PAIGE BETHMANN

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REMAINING NATIVE

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REGIONAL RESOURCES

Remaining Native worked together with Indigenous educators to create sample regional resources and/or notes for educators.

These guides are meant to be resources to teachers as a jumping off point and/or inspiration as to how you can use the broader Learning Guide to create something tailored for your region and/or state. Please note, each guide is written differently given each educator's unique perspectives. They are not meant to be the singular guide per each region, but rather a jumping off point for educators in the same or nearby areas. Often, they reference state specific standards that might be helpful and include other state specific resources. Some include lessons and/or lesson recommendations.

Currently, the states represented include: Nevada, New York, and Minnesota. These materials, along with a Montana-specific guide created by the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival and a California-specific guide created by Doclands Documentary Film Festival, are available here.

If you are inspired by these resources or the Journeys in Film Learning Guide to create your own regional or state specific resources, we invite you to share those materials with us as well. The more samples we create, the more we can produce a "bank" of resources that are appropriate for a wide array of classrooms.

FACILITATION GUIDELINES

Filmmakers use immersive storytelling to produce intense thoughts and emotions in the viewer. **Journeys in Film** uses this powerful medium as a springboard for meaningful dialogue around humanity's most pressing issues. In this guide, you will find suggestions for leading productive conversations that broaden perspectives, increase global competency, encourage empathy, and build new paradigms for education.

- When watching a film or having a powerful discussion, normalize taking breaks and exercising bodily autonomy. Acknowledge that conversations around complex topics can be vulnerable, complicated, and challenging. Encourage members to voice and do what is right for them without needing to explain or apologize.
- People do their best when they know what to expect. Start and end your meetings on time.
- Share or co-create your intentions for the meeting.
- Create your space. If possible, share snacks or find other ways to create an inviting, comfortable atmosphere.
- Create a trustworthy space. Maintain confidentiality and only speak to your own experience.
- Minimize distractions while you are together. Silence cell phones and devices so you can give your full attention to the conversation.
- Practice whole-body listening. Listen to words, tone, body language, and the feeling in the atmosphere.
- Acknowledge voices that may be absent. Is there a lived experience that isn't represented in your group? Who are the bridge people who might be able to connect you with other people in your community who might bring new perspectives to the table?
- Adopt an attitude of positive intent. If someone says something that bothers you, assume positive intent and ask for more information.
- Ignite your curiosity around other people's views and opinions. Listen to understand, not to respond. You don't need to agree with
- others in your group or make it known that you are "right" to have a worthwhile conversation.
- Words matter. Be open to learning and practicing new ways to communicate with others.
- Be clear, direct, and kind in your communication. Nobody benefits when you bottle your opinions.
- Everyone has blind spots and biases; cultivate a space of grace as you enter into new territory together.
- If a conversation gets heated, practice acknowledging the tension, pausing as a group, and taking a collective breath together before diving back in or taking a longer break to reset.
- Privilege your relationships with others over the content or agenda of the meeting. Show each other kindness.
- Create a closing ritual that celebrates the time you've spent together and either gives closure or gives members something to think about before your next meeting.

NOTES TO EDUCATOR/DISCUSSION LEADER

Developed in 2026, this guide is designed to support students and educators seeking to engage with the film *Remaining Native*. **We hope the film and guide serve as an entryway to a better understanding of both the structural and deeply personal impacts of the Indian boarding school systems in North America.** This system involved nearly 600 boarding schools operating in the United States over an approximately 100-year period. By 1826, over 80 percent of all Native American children attended boarding schools.

These schools were places where violence, sexual abuse, and systemic institutional abuse took place as part of an intentional strategy put in place by the United States government. **The goal of these institutions, and the related policies focused on forced attendance, was to strip Native American children of their languages, spiritual beliefs, cultures, and relationship to the land. Many children resisted this assault on their Native identity by running away from federal and church-run boarding schools.**

***Remaining Native* thoughtfully spotlights how one family, who were deeply impacted by the boarding school system, approached this history and worked to heal.** Their experience reflects aspects of the broader experiences of generations of Indigenous families affected by this history and offers opportunities to learn more about the effects of boarding schools on various Indigenous nations. Many Indigenous people have direct family experience of this specific intergenerational trauma.

A trauma-informed approach to the film and related content is essential, as issues presented in the film may reflect experiences for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners. Please read the Health Support notes on the next page.

The advancements of technology and social connectivity have given people unprecedented access to hear the stories of many cultures and the ability to look at the primary sources and other historical information at the roots of the stories we've inherited through the United States education system.

Our communities need space to process the weight and complexity of this subject matter, past and present. Before watching or assigning the film to the class, we strongly encourage teachers to first watch the film and consider their students' backgrounds and connection to the subject matter.

Keep in mind that many students will not choose to share their personal connections; however, you can still be proactive in recognizing the relationship to Indian boarding schools in your locality and state, and in being cognizant of whose voices are or are not represented during your classroom discussions and activities.

We recommend consulting culturally responsive educational tools and resources like this one from the New York State Education Department.

This guide is intended to provide historical context as you explore the subject matter's current resonance in your community of learners. By creating space to engage with this history, your learners have the opportunity to share and/or reflect upon their own stories and to identify resources and gain new insights.

As your students watch Kutoven (Ku) Stevens run towards a future he is actively creating, we invite you to use this guide as a tool to guide your students to do the same.

Grade Levels

While we defer to educators and communities to determine readiness to engage with this material, we recommend this film for middle school to high school students as defined as grades 6–12, as well as adult learners, noting that **the content and discussions may trigger trauma responses in people of any age. It is important that educators/discussion leaders thoughtfully watch the film *before* sharing it with their learners** in order to be prepared to use these materials effectively and support learners as they navigate this content. **These social-emotional learning tools and standards from the New York State Education Department may be useful. Your state or district may have similar resources available.**

Health Support

We recommend that educators contact mental health or guidance counselors in the school or community in advance of the screening, and that they be available to learners afterward. Having tissues, water, and snacks available can also be helpful. Let learners know that they can take breaks if they are feeling triggered or overwhelmed. We also recommend, if possible, inviting an elder or a member of the local Indigenous community to offer prayer, song, or smudge before and after the screening, if possible. Invite any community members to stay for the screening, along with the mental health guidance counselor.

Please reference this guidance on best practices around inviting, gifting, and compensating elders into your classroom: https://www.indigenousprotocols.art/advisory-note-elder-fees

After watching the film, we encourage educators to give learners a short break to process. With discussion components, personal journal reflection may be an appropriate alternative to discussion if that feels more appropriate and effective for learners.

The following may also be useful: **The StrongHearts Native Helpline is available at 1-844-7NATIVE (762-8483) for 24/7 confidential support for Indigenous individuals, and the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition offers U.S.-focused healing resources.**

TRACING THE FILM



Remaining Native follows Kutoven "Ku" Stevens, a tribal citizen of the Yerington Paiute Tribe, traditionally known as "Taboose-ddukaka" (Nut Grass Eaters), as he activates his community by organizing a "Remembrance Run" from his home, which traces the 50-mile journey his great-grandfather took when he ran away from the Stewart Indian School. In the state now known as Nevada, the *Numu* (Northern Paiute), *Nuwu* (Southern Paiute), *Washiw* (Washoe), *Newe* (Western Shoshone), and *Pipa Aha Macav* (Fort Mojave) Native people still live in their traditional homelands.

While this guide uses the term "Indigenous" broadly, perspectives, protocols, and knowledge differ among First Nations, Inuit, Métis, Native American, and American Indian communities across the Americas. It is important to recognize that Indigenous people are not a monolith and that each nation and community has its own culture, history, and ways of knowing. Additionally, there are Indigenous communities around the world, including Māori, Aboriginal, and other nations who were also affected by abduction, boarding schools, adoption, and assimilation policies as a result of colonization.

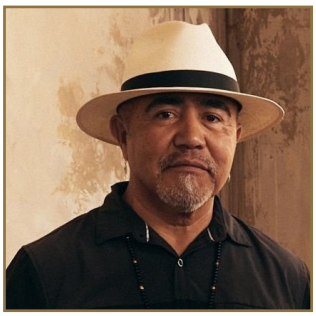
In the United States, there are more than 570 federally recognized Tribal Nations, as well as other Tribal Nations that do not have federal recognition. Additionally, many Indigenous peoples live outside of recognized Tribal Nations or away from their traditional Indigenous homelands or communities and may have differing levels of connection to their historic homes or communities. Educators and group leaders are encouraged to engage with the Indigenous community local to their classroom and, where possible, invite them to participate in the screening and discussion.

Please visit Native Land to identify the Indigenous, Māori, Aboriginal, and/or First Nations in your area or around the world.



Ku Stevens

Kutoven is a long-distance runner and student at Washington State University studying art and anthropology. In 2021, Ku organized the Remembrance Run, garnering attention from local and national news outlets such as the *Reno Gazette-Journal, New York Times, RedBull Magazine, MileSplit,* and more. Kutoven is a two-time Gatorade Player of the Year recipient and was awarded *Reno Gazette-Journal's* Citizen of the Year for his activism surrounding Indian boarding schools. Ku aspires to be a spokesperson and shoe designer at Nike.



Delmar Stevens

Delmar is an enrolled citizen and former vice-chair of the Yerington Paiute Tribe. Over the last 20 years he has served as a social worker for Child Protective Services for the State of Nevada. A strong community member, Delmar has stressed the importance of Native values and education by facilitating cultural workshops in his community. Delmar is a husband, father, and grandfather.



Misty Stevens

Misty Stevens is a community organizer, grant writer, and serves as the chair for the Ku Stevens Scholarship Award Committee. A former musician and environmental activist, Misty has blended her creativity with activism to propel efforts for social change. Misty has organized three Remembrance Runs and continues to be Ku's fiercest advocate as his Mama.



Frank "Togo" Quinn

Ku's great-grandfather Frank Quinn was born in Smith Valley. At the age of eight, he was taken by agents and forcibly placed at the Stewart Indian Boarding School as an attempt to sever generational ties to culture, land, and family. After spending some time there, Frank chose to run away, running 50 miles back to the reservation. After being captured by authorities and returned back to the school, he made two more attempts before finally making it home where he stayed. A citizen of the Yerington Paiute Tribe, Frank was a Tribal chairman, a community leader, and an advocate for rights in Washington, D.C. He was a copper miner at the Anaconda Mine. He married Hazel Quinn and had six children.



Lupe Cabada

Lupe Cabada, who was born and raised in Nevada, is a lifelong competitive runner, coach, and outdoor enthusiast. Since 2014, Lupe has worked at Damonte Ranch High School in the counseling dept and as head coach of cross country and track, dedicated to developing student/athletes, building programs, and inspiring a life-long love of running.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



***Remaining Native* Director Paige Bethmann**

My grandmother once told me that Creator didn't give us our stories in books. Stories are spoken. Words fall off the tongue and onto the land to seep into the dirt. These stories root down and grow back sprouting as living beings to be cared for and harvested as memories to be passed down again. I think about this relationship in *Remaining Native*. The legacy of Indian boarding schools is ugly. It has thorns. Vines that are suffocating and often spread thickly over the lives of many Native American families. Including my own.

As I remember my grandmother's teachings, I now ask myself, "What story do I want to be abundant? What story do I want the next caretaker to harvest and share?" The story of Frank Quinn, escaping an Indian boarding school three times as an eight-year-old boy is profound, but the legacy he leaves behind spans generations through memories, love, and a deep connection to culture. This story flourishes and, through time, has synthesized into Ku, his great-grandson, as he stretches towards the sun, preparing to bloom.

About the Process

When I started this project in 2021, I was inspired by not only the visuals of Ku running across the desert, but also how Ku as a young person was stepping up to honor his relatives. Like Ku, I am a descendant of a Native American boarding school survivor, and the impact assimilation had on my family was felt heavily. This film is an opportunity for our team to show how love, family, and memory can provide healing, while also celebrating Indigenous resilience and forging a path for generational healing.

Upon receiving an invitation to film the first Remembrance Run, I connected with organizers and the Stewart Indian School, including those at the forefront of the Indian boarding school healing process, such as the Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS), to ensure I had support in this project. When I first met Ku, we spent a long time talking about our shared experiences and the need for healing. Following filming the first run, I decided to relocate from New York City to Reno to be closer to the Stevens family, the larger community, and the land.

On every shoot, I wanted to make sure I was invited in. I have spent a lot of time without the camera, to get to know and understand the lives of the Stevenses and others, creating space, trust, and vulnerability. Throughout our filming process, I've reviewed the footage with them, shared samples, and made sure to have consent when filming cultural moments, community events, and family time.

— Paige Bethmann

Preparing the Setting

To promote critical thinking and meaningful dialogue, in addition to the Facilitation Guidelines already included in this guide, we are sharing two additional resources that educators/discussion leaders might find helpful: Center for Innovative Teaching's Establishing Community Agreements and Classroom Norms and *Psychology Today's* The Five-Step Path From Rupture to Repair. The aim is to cultivate a respectful group dynamic in which all students' contributions are encouraged and valued, regardless of racial, religious, political and socioeconomic differences.

Pre-Screening Notes and Components

We have provided a timeline and related discussion questions and optional activities to accompany the film. It may be helpful to review the timeline as a class/group before viewing the film to offer additional context to learners. However, these materials and activities can also be used after viewing the film. Similarly, we have included background information on the Northern Paiute tribes.

It is recommended that educators build background knowledge about the Paiute people and the central themes with their learners before viewing the film. We also highly recommend the incorporation of reflection activities after viewing the film.

As such, the contextual sections in the guide can be printed and shared with students. Additionally, the Stewart Indian Boarding School currently operates as the Stewart Indian School Cultural Center and Museum. It may be useful to have learners explore, as a class or individually, the Center's photo archives, history, and more before or after viewing the film.

For Active Viewing

We are providing an Active Viewing Worksheet for learners to complete as they watch the film. This worksheet could also be a reference for learners if you choose to have them write a film review. We are also providing a worksheet for the film review exercise.

Post-Screening Dialogue Tips

- Create a shared set of principles and guidelines for the group.
- Arrange seats in a circle or horseshoe so participants can see each other.
- Provide tissues, water, traditional medicines, and quiet breakout areas for those who need space.
- Have a support person available if possible.
- Don't assume to know others' identities or beliefs.
- Remind students that there is no place for derogatory comments or any disparagement.
- Take care to protect other's confidentiality: "What is said stays in the space, what is learned leaves."
- Encourage "I" statements and recognize others as being the expert in their own experience.
- Expect and normalize uncomfortable feelings.
- Expect and accept a lack of "closure."

KEY BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND CONTEXT: INTRODUCING THE PAIUTE TRIBE

Brief Historical Overview Pre-contact to Contact

Organized by tribal groups, the Waší·šiw ("Wa-see-shoe"), the Numu ("New-Moo"), the Newe ("Knee-wee"), the Nuwuvi ("New woo-vee"), and the Pipa Aha Macav are from the lands now identified as the state of Nevada. There are 20 tribal nations that encompass 32 reservations, colonies, and communities, along with 62,000+ urban Indians from nations outside of Nevada.[1]

The Great Basin was the last territory to experience contact and colonization due to the intense climate and terrain.

Who are the Paiute of Nevada?

Paiute people traditionally occupied vast stretches of Northwestern and Southwestern Nevada, California, Arizona, and Utah. Their bands are named after their primary local food sources and geographic areas.

Northern Paiute (Numu)

- Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe: Located north of Reno, Kooyooe Tukadu (Cui-ui-eaters)
- Walker River Paiute Tribe: Situated along the Walker River, the Agai Ticutta (Cutthroat trout eaters)
- Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe: Located in Churchill County, Nevada, the Toi Ticutta (Cattail eaters), includes Northern Paiute and Western Shoshone relatives at the foothills of the Stillwater Mountains
- Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribe: Spanning the Nevada-Oregon border, representing Numu and Newe peoples. The Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribe is located approximately four miles southeast of the town of McDermitt, Nevada, and spans the Nevada-Oregon border. There are approximately 125 households living on the reservation, and approximately 450 tribal members living off reservation. Sarah Winnemuca, a notable historic figure in Northern Nevada history, was a fellow Northern Paiute. While this group is commonly referred to as Paiutes, they refer to themselves as Numu (Paiute) and Newe (Shoshone), which roughly translates to "The People." Their ancestral home-lands are in the Northern Great Basin region of Nevada, extending into both Southeast Oregon and Southwest Idaho.[2]
- Yerington Paiute Tribe: Located in Mason Valley, including the Campbell Ranch and colony lands
- Lovelock Paiute Tribe: Located in Pershing County, called the Coop Ticutta
- Summit Lake Paiute Tribe: The Summit Lake Reservation is the most remote Indian reservation in Nevada. Located in the northwest corner of Nevada, the reservation is 50 miles south of the Oregon border and 70 miles east of the California border, called the Agai Panina Ticutta (Summit Lake trout eaters).
- Winnemucca Indian Colony: A historic community of Northern Paiute people
- Reno-Sparks Indian Colony: A unique multi-tribal community with members from Paiute, Shoshone, and Washoe nations

1 *Source: NV Department of Native American Affairs*

2 *Source: https://www.fmpst.org/*

Southern Paiute (Nuwuvi) Tribes and Bands

- Moapa Band of Paiutes: Located on the Moapa River Indian Reservation along the Muddy River
- Las Vegas Tribe of Paiute Indians: Headquartered at the Las Vegas Indian Colony, descending from the desert-dwelling Tudinu people
- Pahrump Band of Paiutes: An Indigenous community maintaining historical ties to the Southern Nevada area

Traditional foods and ecology of the Great Basin

A landscape that looked mostly empty from a distance contained vital centers of life. The marshlands were small, but their importance reached far beyond their edges.

After contact with European colonizers, much of the land has changed and many of the marsh plants and willow groves can no longer be gathered (except in specific areas) due to water contamination from heavy metals, harsh chemicals, pesticides, etc. that have changed the gathering landscape. More specifically, the tubers absorb these toxins and can no longer be processed for food, baskets, decoys, etc. Willows are also often considered invasive by many ranchers, and groves are sprayed with chemicals to kill them and/or the insects that live within them.

The Great Basin is primarily high desert, open arid land with alkaline soils. Although the Great Basin receives little precipitation, its basin-and-range topography provided Indigenous peoples with small game, as well as nuts and seeds from the tree-lined mountain ridges. Its lowland perennial streams and marshes provided various waterfowl, such as ducks and mud hens, and eggs. Small game consisted of jackrabbits primarily, with occasional deer and mountain sheep. All Great Basin tribal communities harvested different plant roots and transformed them into food, clothes, baskets, and housing and hunting materials. Traditional plant staples include but were not limited to pinyon pine nuts (tuba/uvap), Indian ricegrass (wai), tule and cattail (toi), wild roots and tubers, berries, and greens. Game and fish included black-tailed jackrabbits and cottontails, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, bighorn sheep, lacustrine and riparian fish, waterfowl, and nutritious insects.[1]

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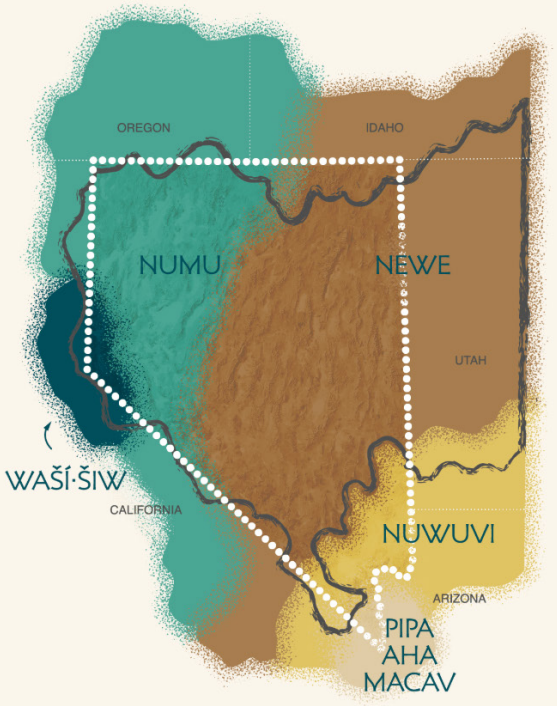
1 *Source: https://extension.unr.edu/publication.aspx?PubID=2208*

TRADITIONAL BOUNDARIES
PREVIOUS TO 1864

- WAŠÍ·ŠIW (Washoe)
- NUMU (Northern Paiute)
- NEWE (Western Shoshone)
- NUWUVI (Southern Paiute)
- PIPA AHA MACAV (Fort Mojave)

GREAT BASIN BOUNDARY

SCROLL



CURRENT COUNTIES
RESERVATIONS & COLONIES

1. Duck Valley Indian Reservation
2. Duckwater Indian Reservation
3. Ely Indian Colony
4. Fallon Indian Colony
5. Fallon Indian Reservation
6. Ft. McDermitt Indian Reservation
7. Ft. McDermitt Indian Colony
8. Ft. Mojave Indian Reservation
9. Goshute Indian Reservation
10. Las Vegas Indian Reservation
11. Las Vegas Indian Colony
12. Lovelock Indian Colony
13. Moapa River Indian Reservation
14. Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation
15. Hungry Valley Community
16. Reno-Sparks Indian Colony
17. Summit Lake Indian Reservation

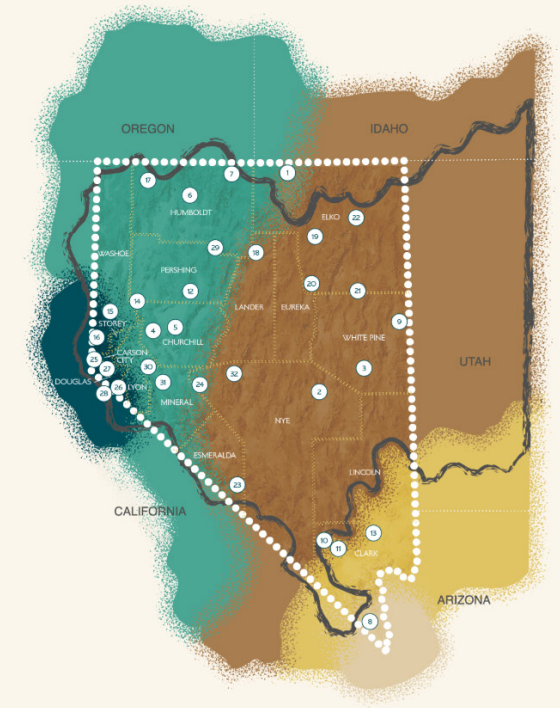
TE-MOAK SHOSHONE TRIBE

18. Battle Mountain Indian Colony
19. Elko Indian Colony
20. South Fork Reservation
21. South Fork Reservation
22. Wells Indian Colony
23. Timbisha-Shoshone Tribe
24. Walker River Indian Reservation

WASHOE TRIBE OF NV & CA

25. Carson Colony
26. Dresslerville Colony
27. Stewart Colony Community
28. Woodfords Colony Community
29. Winnemucca Indian Colony
30. Yerington Indian Reservation
31. Yerington Indian Colony
32. Yomba Indian Reservation

WASHOE (WAŠÍ·ŠIW) · N. PAIUTE (NUMU) · W. SHOSHONE (NEWE)
S. PAIUTE (NUWUVI) · FT. MOJAVE (PIPA AHA MACAV) · GREAT BASIN BOUNDARY · CURRENT COUNTIES



https://dnaa.nv.gov/tribal-nations/

INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES: ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- Before the arrival of Europeans, Indigenous peoples across what is now the United States maintained diverse nations, governments, languages, cultures, and educational systems. The Indian Boarding School system was developed as a tool for settler colonialism. Initial governmental oversight was conducted through the Bureau of War Affairs.

- This educational system corresponded with a period of rapid U.S. expansion, warfare, genocide, and forced displacement of Indigenous peoples.

- U.S. policymakers believed that removing children from their families, languages, cultures, and Tribal Nations would accelerate their assimilation into American society.

- "The Federal policy toward the Indian was based on the desire to dispossess him of his land. Education policy was a function of our land policy."[1]

- Under the Act of March 3, 1893, Congress authorized the Secretary of the Interior to withhold rations, including those guaranteed by treaties, to Indian families whose children did not attend schools.

- The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition identified 526 federally supported Indian boarding schools that operated throughout the United States.

- By 1926, nearly 83 percent of all Indigenous children in the United States attended Indian boarding schools.[2]

- Adolf Hitler frequently referenced the United States' expansion across North America as a prime example of settler colonialism and conquest and drew on its tactics as he devised his plans for German expansion and conquest in Europe.

- The U.S. Department of the Interior's Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative, launched on June 22, 2022, by Secretary Deb Haaland, has documented 973 student deaths to date; numbers are expected to rise as the investigations continue.

- Currently, communities throughout the United States are working to confront this history and its lasting consequences.

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1 Source: Kennedy Report, as qtd. In Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report by Bryan Newland (2022):
https://boardingschoolhealing.org/resource-database/indian-education-a-national-tragedy-a-national-challenge-kennedy-report/
https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/inline-files/bsi_investigative_report_may_2022_508.pdf

2 Source: National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition.

USEFUL TERMS

Historically and currently, language is wielded to destabilize communities, and is used purposefully by dominant cultures to marginalize, dehumanize, or forbid the speech of others. Language is also a pathway to connecting with others and a site for potential healing. Meanings of words and phrases change over time. Furthermore, terms and phrases hold different weights and meanings across academic disciplines. In short, terminology is never neutral and requires your critical engagement to ensure you are responsible for the information you consume and create.

Acculturation is the set of cultural and psychological changes that occur when individuals or groups are in direct, sustained contact with another culture, including changes in values, behaviors, and identity, and it can involve varying patterns of maintaining heritage culture and adopting aspects of the other culture. **Berry's acculturation framework** is often used to structure these patterns (e.g., integration, separation, assimilation, marginalization) and their associated outcomes (e.g., well-being, identity conflict, stress).

Assimilation is an acculturation pattern characterized by reduced maintenance of heritage and cultural identity practices, along with increased adoption of the dominant/host culture's practices/identity. When policies or institutions compel these changes, the process may be described as coerced or **forced assimilation.**

Captive adoption typically refers to culturally recognized practices in which some captives are incorporated into kinship structures under local governance rules, sometimes replacing or reinforcing family/community relationships with the full rights and privileges of one born into the dominant culture. By contrast, many settler-era "adoptions" occurred within coercive removal systems (e.g., policies of forced school attendance, language prohibition, and renaming) and resulted in separation from heritage, family, and second-class citizenship.

Coming to know is a phrase meaning to learn or discover something, often through the process of experience or investigation until it becomes like breathing or your heart beating; it becomes a part of who you are through the journey of learning and the gradual acquisition of knowledge.

Cultural genocide is commonly used to describe systematic efforts to destroy the cultural foundations that sustain a group's distinct identity (e.g., language, institutions, and cultural transmission), and it is often discussed in relation to, though broader than, legal genocide as defined in the Genocide Convention (1948). Article 2 of the Genocide Convention defines genocide as any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such: (a) killing members of the group; (b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Culturally relevant education is an educational system grounded in learning the "why" by experiencing the "what" and participating in the "how" to achieve holistic learning using a hybrid of contemporary and traditional methods.

Culturally sustaining education is a strengths-based approach that **centers and sustains** the cultural and linguistic identities, experiences, and ways of knowing diverse students, families/caregivers, and communities.

Dispossession is the deprivation of property and/or land-based access through coercive state or settler-aligned policies, such as forced removal, eviction, or legal transfer, that result in the loss of the material basis for livelihood and cultural continuity.

The Doctrine of Discovery refers to historical legal-theological rationales used first by the Catholic Church in the 15th century, and later by European powers, to justify territorial claims over non-European lands on the basis of "discovery." The Doctrine of Discovery underpins legal doctrines of title and occupancy that disadvantage Indigenous peoples. (E.g., Thomas Jefferson's use while he was Secretary of State (1792) and the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in Johnson v. McIntosh (1823).) This doctrine was officially renounced on March 30, 2023, by Pope Francis. Despite this renunciation, this doctrine and the worldview espoused by it still influence policy and structures in both Canada and the United States.

An **Indian reserve** is a legally recognized tract of land administered under Canadian federal frameworks for the use of a First Nation, created through historical processes of dispossession and confinement of Indigenous peoples.**Indian boarding schools, also referred to as Indian residential schools in Canada,** are government-operated or government-funded residential education programs that removed Indigenous children from their families and communities and sought to replace Indigenous languages and cultural practices with Euro-dominant norms.

Indigenous people is an umbrella term for distinct peoples with historical continuity to pre-colonial societies and territories, including First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and Indigenous peoples in the U.S. context — each with distinct nations, cultures, and governance.

Inuit refers to distinct Indigenous peoples whose homeland is Inuit Nunangat across the Arctic regions of Canada, and whose languages and governance structures are distinct from those of First Nations and Métis peoples.

Intergenerational resilience is the transfer of adaptive capacities, cultural knowledge, and inner strength from one generation to the next. Just as families and communities can pass down historical trauma, they also pass down coping strategies, meaning-making, and emotional intelligence to help descendants overcome future adversity.

Intergenerational trauma describes how trauma experienced by one generation can be transmitted to subsequent generations through family environment, parenting practices, cultural disruption, and psycho-social mechanisms, with possible biological changes being an area of active research.

Manifest Destiny was a 19th-century U.S. ideological justification for territorial expansion across North America, often framed as a providential (ordained by God) or national mission. It was used to rationalize Western settlement policies that displaced and demeaned Indigenous peoples.

Métis refers to a distinct Indigenous people with their own histories, cultures, and community governance/nationhood, arising from the historical mixing of Indigenous and European peoples in what is now Canada.

Natal alienation is a sociological concept for forced estrangement from kinship-based social reproduction (e.g., severed lineage ties, cultural memory, and inheritance) achieved through institutional practices that break continuity of community life.

Positive personal identity is the creation and ongoing cyclical development of your identity wheel, which contains your personal creation story, identifies your positive family members, brings exposure to the importance of positive role models, develops a positive belief system, and begins the vision of a positive future by learning emotional intelligence and building healthy relations to live with intention.

Acculturation is the set of cultural and psychological changes that occur when individuals or groups are in direct, sustained contact with another culture, including changes in values, behaviors, and identity, and it can involve varying patterns of maintaining heritage culture and adopting aspects of the other culture. **Berry's acculturation framework** is often used to structure these patterns (e.g., integration, separation, assimilation, marginalization) and their associated outcomes (e.g., well-being, identity conflict, stress).

Assimilation is an acculturation pattern characterized by reduced maintenance of heritage and cultural identity practices, along with increased adoption of the dominant/host culture's practices/identity. When policies or institutions compel these changes, the process may be described as coerced or **forced assimilation.**

Captive adoption typically refers to culturally recognized practices in which some captives are incorporated into kinship structures under local governance rules, sometimes replacing or reinforcing family/community relationships with the full rights and privileges of one born into the dominant culture. By contrast, many settler-era "adoptions" occurred within coercive removal systems (e.g., policies of forced school attendance, language prohibition, and renaming) and resulted in separation from heritage, family, and second-class citizenship.

Coming to know is a phrase meaning to learn or discover something, often through the process of experience or investigation until it becomes like breathing or your heart beating; it becomes a part of who you are through the journey of learning and the gradual acquisition of knowledge.

Cultural genocide is commonly used to describe systematic efforts to destroy the cultural foundations that sustain a group's distinct identity (e.g., language, institutions, and cultural transmission), and it is often discussed in relation to, though broader than, legal genocide as defined in the Genocide Convention (1948). Article 2 of the Genocide Convention defines genocide as any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such: (a) killing members of the group; (b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Culturally relevant education is an educational system grounded in learning the "why" by experiencing the "what" and participating in the "how" to achieve holistic learning using a hybrid of contemporary and traditional methods.

Culturally sustaining education is a strengths-based approach that **centers and sustains** the cultural and linguistic identities, experiences, and ways of knowing diverse students, families/caregivers, and communities.

Dispossession is the deprivation of property and/or land-based access through coercive state or settler-aligned policies, such as forced removal, eviction, or legal transfer, that result in the loss of the material basis for livelihood and cultural continuity.

The Doctrine of Discovery refers to historical legal-theological rationales used first by the Catholic Church in the 15th century, and later by European powers, to justify territorial claims over non-European lands on the basis of "discovery." The Doctrine of Discovery underpins legal doctrines of title and occupancy that disadvantage Indigenous peoples. (E.g., Thomas Jefferson's use while he was Secretary

THE HISTORY OF INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES

For thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans, Indigenous peoples across what is now the United States maintained diverse nations, governments, languages, cultures, and educational systems. Children learned from parents, grandparents, elders, and community members through traditions and knowledge systems that had sustained Indigenous societies for generations.

The Indian Boarding School system was developed as a colonial instrument of assimilation during a period of rapid U.S. expansion, warfare, and the genocide and forced displacement of Indigenous peoples. In 1824, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was established within the U.S. War Department, reflecting the close relationship between federal Indian policy, military campaigns, and territorial expansion. Although the BIA was transferred to the Department of the Interior in 1849, federal policies toward Indigenous peoples continued to use forced education as a tool to achieve broader efforts to control Indigenous lands, cultures, and communities.

Long before the creation of federally funded boarding schools, many of which were operated by Christian denominations and the Catholic church, Indigenous children were separated from their families through mission schools, military institutions, captive schooling, and other forms of coerced education. By the late 19th century, federal officials increasingly embraced boarding schools as the preferred method of educating Native children. Policymakers believed that removing children from their families, languages, cultures, and Tribal Nations would accelerate their assimilation into American society.

The Federal government had darker designs. By the late 1870s, its goals turned toward destroying tribal identity and assimilating Indians into broader society. Achieving those goals, officials reasoned, required the "complete isolation of the Indian child from his savage antecedents." And because "the warm reciprocal affection existing between parents and children" was "among the strongest characteristics of the Indian nature," officials set out to eliminate it by dissolving Indian families.[1] This was a purposeful way of destroying the family structure.

1 *Haaland v. Brackeen, 599 U.S. 255, 298 (2023) (Gorsuch, J., concurring) (internal citations omitted).*

HIGHLIGHTS FROM INDIAN EDUCATION: A NATIONAL TRAGEDY, A NATIONAL CHALLENGE

(Kennedy Report)

1969 Report of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare,
United States Senate made by its Special Subcommittee on Indian Education pursuant to S. Res. 80

The Continental Congress, Congress of the Confederation, and United States recognized Indian Affairs as a main function of a national government. In engaging Indian Tribes, "separate sovereigns pre-existing the Constitution," and later Alaska Native Villages and the Kingdom of Hawaii, the United States pursued a twin policy: Indian territorial dispossession and Indian assimilation, including through education.

The U.S. Senate later explained that twin policy as follows: Beginning with President Washington, the stated policy of the Federal Government was to replace the Indian's culture with our own. This was considered "advisable" as the cheapest and safest way of subduing the Indians, of providing a safe habitat for the country's white inhabitants, of helping the whites acquire desirable land, and of changing the Indian's economy so that he would be content with less land. Education was a weapon by which these goals were to be accomplished.

Congress acknowledged that from "the beginning, Federal policy toward the Indian was based on the desire to dispossess him of his land. Education policy was a function of our land policy."

After 1871, Congress enacted laws to compel Indian parents to send their children to school and to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to issue regulations to "secure the enrollment and regular attendance of eligible Indian children who are wards of the Government in schools maintained for their benefit by the United States or in public schools."

For example, under the Act of March 3, 1893, Congress authorized the Secretary of the Interior to **withhold rations, including those guaranteed by treaties**, to Indian families whose children did not attend schools: "The Secretary of the Interior may in his discretion, establish such regulations as will prevent the issuing of rations or the furnishing of subsistence either in money or in kind to the head of any Indian family for or on account of any Indian child or children between the ages of eight and twenty-one years who shall not have attended school during the preceding year in accordance with such regulations." And as the Federal Government has stated, the eventual "abolition of the ration system … **which in many instances has had the effect of forcing the children into school, has been made possible through the ameliorating influence of the Government and church schools."**

Indian Boarding Schools — Their Evolution and Expansion

Indian boarding schools were not simply educational institutions. They were one component of a larger federal project that included military campaigns, treaty violations, land allotment policies, and restrictions on Indigenous governance. By separating children from their families and communities, government officials hoped to weaken Indigenous nations, undermine cultural continuity, and facilitate the transfer of Indigenous lands into non-Indigenous control.

Attendance at boarding schools involved coercion and direct enforcement, meaning this was not optional. Federal agents, missionaries, and local authorities pressured families to surrender their children, often using threats, withholding rations, restricting access to resources, or other forms of intimidation. Children were often forcibly taken from their homes, and parents who resisted faced arrest, imprisonment, or other penalties. Many Indigenous families went to extraordinary lengths to protect their children, hiding them in remote camps, mountains, and forests to avoid school authorities.

In 1879, Captain Richard Henry Pratt founded the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, widely recognized as the first off-reservation Indian boarding school in the United States. Carlisle became the model for hundreds of schools that followed. Pratt's philosophy was summarized in the phrase "Kill the Indian, and save the man," reflecting the belief that Indigenous identities, languages, and cultures should be eradicated and replaced with dominant Euro-American values and ways of life.

Over time, the boarding school system expanded across the country. The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition identified 526 federally supported Indian boarding schools that operated throughout the United States. By 1900, an estimated 75 percent of school-age Native children were enrolled in boarding schools or other federal educational institutions. By 1926, that figure had risen to nearly 83 percent, according to the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition.

Life in the schools was highly regimented. Children were prohibited from speaking their Indigenous languages, practicing their cultures, or maintaining traditional forms of dress and appearance. Hair was cut, Indigenous names were replaced, military-style discipline was imposed, and students were expected to adopt Euro-American cultural and religious practices.

Many schools operated on a labor-based model in which children spent substantial portions of their day performing agricultural, industrial, or domestic work rather than receiving academic instruction.

A central feature of the system was the "outing" program, first developed at Carlisle. Through this program, students were placed in white households, farms, and businesses, where they worked as domestic servants, laborers, and farmhands, often for little or no compensation. Supporters described the program as educational, but it also supplied nearby communities with a source of inexpensive labor and further separated children from their families and cultures. Even after boarding schools were pervasive, children were not protected from removal and placement into white households until the Indian Child Welfare Act was enacted in 1978.

Abuse was widespread throughout the boarding school system. Survivors have reported and documented physical, emotional, psychological, cultural, and sexual abuse, as well as chronic neglect, overcrowding, malnutrition, and inadequate medical care. Students were subjected to severe punishments for speaking their languages, practicing their traditions, or maintaining connections to their communities. Disease spread rapidly in many schools, and it is estimated that thousands of children died from illness, malnutrition, neglect, accidents, violence, and other causes. The exact number of children who died is unknown. Children and parents had few avenues to report mistreatment or seek protection, especially if a report was disregarded or sparked recriminations.

Despite these conditions, Indigenous children, families, and communities continually resisted. Students spoke their languages in secret, practiced their cultures underground, ran away from schools, maintained connections to their communities, and later used their education to advocate for Indigenous rights, sovereignty, and cultural survival. Indigenous resilience helped preserve languages, traditions, and identities that federal policy sought to erase.

The forced separation of children from their families disrupted the transmission of language, culture, parenting practices, and community relationships across generations. Survivors and their descendants continue to experience the impacts of this history, while Indigenous communities continue efforts to revitalize languages, recover cultural knowledge, locate missing children, and support healing.

Beyond the United States — The Influence of this Practice on Hitler

The impact of this practice spread well beyond the United States. In fact, Adolf Hitler frequently referenced the United States' expansion across North America as a prime example of settler colonialism and conquest. He admired the practices the United States put in place to seize and secure Indigenous lands for settler use as well as the confinement of Native Americans to reservations. Hitler also viewed the forced assimilation practices put in place by the United States government as an example that he could replicate in his plans for Germany to conquer Eastern Europe. Similarly, Hitler was influenced by United States reconstruction policies in the South that disenfranchised Black Americans.

Recent Efforts to Address This History

In recent years, investigations have identified marked and unmarked burial sites at former boarding school locations, prompting renewed public attention to the history and legacy of the system. The U.S. Department of the Interior's Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative launched on June 22, 2022, by Secretary Deb Haaland has documented 973 student deaths to date, but numbers are expected to rise as the investigation continues to reveal the full scope of the boarding school system and its impacts.

Efforts to address this history are ongoing. Tribal Nations, survivors, descendants, researchers, educators, and community organizations continue to document boarding school experiences, recover the names of children who never returned home, protect burial sites, and advance truth-telling and healing initiatives. Across the United States, communities are working to confront this history and its lasting consequences while supporting Indigenous-led efforts toward remembrance, accountability, and healing.[1]

We also recommend the Historical Context of Indian Boarding Schools published by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. It provides rich historical context and resources through the context of mathematical education in the United States, but this information is applicable for understanding the impact of Indian boarding schools on education more broadly in the United States.

We also recommend learning more through the resources available from the National Native American Boarding School (NABS) Healing Coalition and HR 7325, which establishes the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian boarding school policies in the United States. The NABS link regarding these bills is particularly helpful.

1 Source: https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/inline-files/bsi_investigative_report_may_2022_508.pdf

THE STEWART INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOL



The Stewart Indian Boarding School is central to *Remaining Native*. This boarding school is the school that Ku's great-grandfather, Frank "Togo" Quinn, was forced to attend. He ran away from the school more than once, prompting Ku's own 50-mile Remembrance Run which is highlighted in the film.

The Stewart Indian Boarding School opened in 1890 and did not close until 1980. Today, it operates as the The Stewart Indian School Cultural Center and Museum. We have included an activity in this guide regarding the current usage of the space.

The Stewart Indian Boarding School and the McDermitt Boarding Schools operated in Nevada. Other communities had day schools in more rural areas. They were both military-focused and not parochial, but there was a church on the Stewart Campus.

During the period from 1900 to 1925, eight rural Nevada State Historic Preservation Office communities operated federal Indian day schools: Walker, River, Wadsworth, McDermitt, Moapa, Las Vegas, Reno, Fallon. (Note: Earlier records from the 1890s also listed day schools operating in Wadsworth and Walker Lake, alongside boarding schools like Pyramid Lake and Carlin Farms.)

Initially, students at the school were taken from the Washoe, Western Shoshone, and Northern and Southern Paiute nations, but eventually students from over 200 Native American nations throughout the United States would attend the school. At first, there were 37 students in attendance, but soon it was typical for 200 students to attend during a typical school year. By the 1930s, this number reached 400–500 students in attendance.

From its opening in 1890 until 1934, students were prohibited from speaking their Native languages or engaging in any Native customs, with harsh punishments. Though this practice lessened in 1934, the damaging effects of the separation of children from their Native language, culture, communities, and families is still felt today.

Like other boarding schools throughout the United States, Stewart was a harsh place in which physical, emotional, and sexual abuse of students occurred, as well as forced unpaid labor.

Linda Eben Jones (Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Northern Paiute), who attended the school and graduated from it in 1966, returned to it as a volunteer when it became the Stewart Indian School Cultural Center and Museum. Here she speaks about the school's impact on her family:

> *"My family attended Stewart. My father graduated in 1938, my mother in 1941, my brother in 1966, and my sisters in 1972 and 1974. We all had different memories of Stewart; my father never spoke too much about this school. He was kidnapped from Fort Bidwell when he was about ten years old and so he didn't share his memories with me. My mother talked about working in the bakery and the laundry. My sisters and younger brother have good and bad memories. They had better experiences and better classes than I did."* [1]

For her, like Ku and the many others who return to Stewart as part of the annual Remembrance Run, revisiting this place of pain has become part of an important healing and reclamation process.

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1 Source: https://ncph.org/history-at-work/centering-indigenous-voices-at-the-stewart-indian-school-cultural-center-museum/

BRIEF TIMELINE OF FEDERAL INDIAN POLICY AND INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES

1492–1871 **Colonization and Early U.S. Expansion**
European colonization and the expansion of the United States resulted in the displacement of Indigenous peoples, warfare, land dispossession, treaty-making, and efforts to assimilate Native peoples into settler society.

1778–1871 **Treaty-Making Era**
The United States entered into hundreds of treaties with Tribal Nations. During this period, many Indigenous communities were forcibly removed from their homelands, including through the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Congress ended treaty-making with Tribal Nations in 1871.

1870s–1934 **Reservation, Allotment, and Assimilation Era**
Federal policy increasingly focused on confining Indigenous peoples to reservations and assimilating Native peoples into Euro-American society. Indian boarding schools became a central tool of this policy.

1879 **Carlisle Indian Industrial School Opens**
Founded by Richard Henry Pratt in Pennsylvania, Carlisle became the model for the federal Indian boarding school system and hundreds of schools that followed.

1891 **Compulsory Boarding School Attendance Authorized**
Congress authorized federal officials to compel Native children to attend school and withhold rations from families who resisted, significantly expanding the reach of the boarding school system.

1887–1934 **Allotment and Assimilation Period**
The Dawes Act of 1887 authorized the division of communally held Tribal lands into individual allotments. During this period, Indian boarding schools reached their greatest extent. By 1926, more than 80 percent of school-age Native children were enrolled in boarding schools or other federal educational institutions.

1934 **Indian Reorganization Act**
The Indian Reorganization Act marked a shift away from allotment and encouraged limited Tribal self-government, although many assimilationist policies remained in place.

1953–1968 **Termination and Relocation Era**
Federal policy sought to terminate the government-to-government relationship between Tribal Nations and the United States and encouraged Indigenous people to relocate from reservations to urban centers.

1975–Present **Self-Determination Era**
Federal policy increasingly recognized Tribal sovereignty and supported Tribal control over education, health care, and other governmental services.

1978 **The American Indian Religious Freedom Act Passed**
This act restored basic religious liberties to Indigenous peoples in the United States, overturning imposed federal policies that criminalized traditional Native American, Inuit, and Native Hawaiian spiritual practices after almost a century.

1978 **The Indian Child Welfare Act**
The Indian Child Welfare Act was enacted to ensure that children's Tribal Nations and families are informed and involved in child placements. It mandates efforts to keep families intact, and prioritizes out-of-home placements within the extended family.

2021 **Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Announced**
The U.S. Department of the Interior launched a nationwide investigation into the history and legacy of the federal Indian boarding school system.

2022–Present **Truth, Healing, and Accountability Efforts**
Federal, Tribal, state, and local initiatives continue to investigate boarding school histories, identify burial sites, document survivor experiences, and advance truth-telling and healing efforts.

2025–2026 **Truth and Healing Commission Legislation Advances in Congress**
Bipartisan legislation to establish a Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the United States was reintroduced in Congress, reflecting growing national attention to the history and legacy of the boarding school system.

Extensive Historical Timeline of Documents:
An overview of significant events, policies, legislation, and documents in the history of Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations in what is now the United States.

https://amin.las.iastate.edu/historical-timeline/

ACTIVE VIEWING WORKSHEET AND ACTIVITY

Screening Note: *Encourage students to approach the film as an immersive experience. Please discourage use of cell phones, tablets, or personal electronic devices during screening to fully engage with the film's imagery, sound, and storytelling. Pen and paper may be useful for recording observations, questions, and reflections that can enrich post-screening activities and discussions. If you would like, you can use this Elements of Documentary Notecatcher Worksheet with students as they watch the film. You may want to review and discuss the worksheet before students use it so that learners have clear expectations around active listening.*

Film Discussion Questions

1. What is the significance of the film's title, *Remaining Native*? How does it relate to the film's themes and the film's message?

2. What role does storytelling play in preserving cultural traditions? How do the documentary's visual storytelling techniques convey themes of identity, resilience, and cultural heritage?

3. What are the various forms of adversity depicted in the film? How did Ku and his community demonstrate resilience? What lessons can be drawn from their experiences?

4. How does running function as a metaphor in the film for identity, resilience, healing, or resistance? In what ways does his journey connect to the broader historical or contemporary struggles of Indigenous peoples?

5. How does Ku's story reflect the power of youth voices in creating change? What challenges do young activists face, and how can they make their messages heard in meaningful ways?

6. What can Ku Stevens's story teach us about the importance of remembering history while pushing for change? How does his journey connect to contemporary movements for Indigenous rights, historical justice, and youth activism today?

WRITING A FILM REVIEW

Taking Active Viewing a Step Further: *It can be helpful for students to write a film review after viewing the film in order to engage with the film's content and track their thoughts and feelings about the film. We are providing a handout to help them organize their thoughts and notes before writing their film review. We recommend having students complete the handout provided, engage in any related research, and then write their film review. This activity can be completed with pen and paper during class time.*

Use the following questions to collect your ideas for the film review you are going to write:

1. Make preliminary observations about what you remember about one important theme in the development of the movie. Why is this a primary theme and how does it affect the film and the viewer?

2. Identify character contributions. What are a few ways that Ku's actions contribute to the expression of this theme in the film?

3. Create connections. List connections between your theme and current events.

4. Identify moments in the film when the theme is evident. Include clear details.

5. Pinpoint related topics that need additional clarification and conduct relevant research for your review.

6. Plan the content of your review, using some or all of the ideas you have described above. When you have outlined your ideas, create a guiding thesis statement that summarizes and gives direction to the review and engage in any final research needed before writing your review.



Note to Educator: You may wish to print the timeline provided in this guide and share it with students for reference as they engage with these questions and activities.

DRIVING QUESTION

How do schooling experiences shape identity, family life, and community across generations?

Personal Reflection

Imagine yourself as someone's ancestor. What is the story of your life you would want them to carry forward? Or focus on the values and beliefs you would like carried into the future. This scene from *Reservation Dogs* may expand the responses and prompt for students. Consider sharing it as students reflect on this question.

Discussion Questions

1. From policy to people: The timeline shows boarding schools expanding through laws and enforcement. What connections can you make between "policy actions" (like compulsory attendance and rations) and "human outcomes" (trauma, language loss, family separation)?

2. Memory and place: *Remaining Native* uses running and landscape as a way to reconnect to history. Why might movement and place help people process generational trauma or learn family history?

3. Continuities and change: The timeline moves from removal and allotment to reorganization, termination/relocation, and then self-determination. As you look at how U.S. policy has changed over time, do you feel we are making progress and/or are there aspects that feel well-intended, but may have unintended consequences?

4. Truth and accountability: The timeline references the 2021 Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative and ongoing truth/healing work. What do you think "accountability" should look like (documents, burial site research, survivor testimony, curriculum changes, policy reform)?

Extension Activities

1. Timeline Trace

Part 1: Individually or in small groups, have learners select three events from the boarding school era in the timeline (e.g., Carlisle opening in 1879, compulsory attendance authorization in 1891, and the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act).

Part 2: For each event, learners should label a page with three columns: "Policy Action," "Community/Personal Consequences," and "Continuing Influence." Learners will fill in the columns as follows:

Policy Action: What the policy did.

Community/Personal Consequences: Likely effects on children/families/community life.

Continuing Influence: What you can connect today (education inequities, language recovery, cultural survival, legal responsibilities, identity).

Part 3: Once the columns are complete, learners will reflect on how the three events they selected are connected. In one paragraph or through short discussion, learners should address this question: *"What does this timeline teach us?"*

2. Present, Past, Practice

Part 1: Label a paper with three columns: "Present," "Past," "Practice".

Part 2: Using the timeline above and *Remaining Native* as information and inspiration, have learners fill each column with words and phrases. "Present" could include current events or be focused on the present in the learners' lives. For the "Past" column, learners can use events from the timeline or from their own past. Finally, in the "Practice" column, encourage learners to focus on words and phrases that are action oriented. (E.g., from the film, words and phrases related to running or community organizing might resonate).

Part 3: Encourage learners to use these words in various arrangements to create a poem. This may include cutting up the words on their page and arranging and re-arranging them to create various poetic offerings.

3. Human Rights and Genocide: Deeper Understanding

Part 1: Have learners read the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Part 2: Using *Remaining Native* and additional understandings learners have about Indian boarding schools, have learners identify articles in each document that were violated by this forced educational practice.

Part 3: Encourage learners to read more about how genocide is defined and its history in the context of international law, then have learners write in-class responses to the following questions:

a. Why was it important to give a name to actions and label them as genocide?
b. How might governments avoid the use of the term genocide even if an action or event meets the criteria?
c. How can accountability regarding genocide, current and past, be improved?

4. Exploring the Indian Boarding School Report

Part 1: Have learners read the Recommendations of the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Bryan Newland in the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report. Consider having students annotate this section of the report as well. (We recommend giving context for the report before they read this section.)

Part 2: Individually or in small groups (we recommend mixed-ability groups), have students select one of the recommendations to focus on. Students will outline their own ideas for the implementation of this recommendation. When relevant, have learners bring in local connections or community actions that connect with the recommendation. (E.g., Students could design a federal memorial in line with the last recommendation or identifying a local site and memorial action or monument to be erected there.)

Part 3: Take it further (extra credit or further learning extension) — Have students select another section of the report to read and either annotate or create an oral and/or visual presentation to share with the class about that section of the report.

5. Connecting History, Stories, and Science

This Indigenous STEAM Introduction to the Plant Arc lesson can be used to extend *Remaining Native* into science classrooms or to bring in scientific connections to your social studies or English language arts learning environments.

It includes an Anishinaabe maple sugar story (in the form of a seven-minute video) and a Samish Grandmother Cedar Story. (The hyperlink in the lesson PDF is broken, so we are providing it here.)

Also included is an introduction to Indigenous Science, multiple hands-on activities, handouts, worksheets and wellness connections.



In *Remaining Native*, Ku's ending destination is the school his great-grandfather was running from. When his ancestor attended, it was called the Stewart Indian School. Presently, in 2026, it is the Stewart Indian School Cultural Center and Museum. For this section, the background information about Indian boarding schools and about the Stewart Indian Boarding School will be useful.

Share the mission of the Stewart Indian School Cultural Center and Museum with your students:

"The mission of the Stewart Indian School Cultural Center and Museum is to tell the stories of the thousands of American Indian children from western tribes who were educated at Stewart. These stories tell of a complex past that changed the course of generations of these children. The countless stories of hardship, resilience, strength, and triumph are at the core of the current efforts to preserve the Stewart campus and are illustrated in the exhibits at the museum. In addition to sharing Stewart's history, the museum is a place of living heritage through exhibits of contemporary Native art, storytelling, arts and crafts demonstrations, lectures, public programming, and educational activities. The museum serves as a research facility for Stewart students, staff, faculty, alumni, and the general public. This museum is not a museum in the Western sense, but a gathering place for Stewart alumni and their families."

DRIVING QUESTION

How do names and labels of places contain information about the place's history and about its present use?

Personal Reflection

How does your first, middle, and/or surname connect you to people and places now and in the past? If you don't feel it does, what story does your name tell? Consider sharing this video with learners about Native names being changed.

Discussion Questions

1. Like many sites in the United States, the Steward Indian School has a long and complex history. Some people visiting this site see themselves as "survivors," others as "alumni," and yet others, like some of those who ran with Ku, are "allies." What do these different identifications mean? How might they influence the person's approach to the space?

2. If you came upon another person who had a totally different lived experience with a place or object, what would be most important to you?

a. having your own viewpoint heard and understood
b. hearing and understanding the other person's experience
c. coming to a shared understanding

3. What is the value of memorials and museums? How does visiting a memorial or museum increase one's understanding of that place's history? How can that history be shared without one's visiting the place? (E.g., through a film like *Remaining Native*.)

Extension Activities

1. History of the Land and Language

Part 1: Allow learners some time to explore Native Land Digital. The site disclaims: "Our map is not a legal document. It is a living, evolving educational tool. We encourage all users to do their own research, engage with local Indigenous communities, and understand there is no single authoritative version of land–only many lived, relational truths."

Part 2: Have learners engage with the mapping tools on the site and input their address to see what tribes, languages, and treaties are connected to the place they live. Have learners enter other addresses to learn more about other areas.

Part 3: In small groups, have learners create a short presentation to share what they learned from the site.

2. Language Collaging

Part 1: In small groups, have learners share the different languages that show up if they trace their lineage back through time. Have learners consider what languages their ancestors spoke or might have spoken.

Part 2: Provide learners with time to research a few words or sayings from each language they identified.

Part 3: With their lists, learners can now create a visual collage of words, sounds, and images that represent the languages their group is connected to.

SECTION 3: THINKING IN GENERATIONAL TIME, WRITING TO REPAIR



Through Kutoven Stevens's goal of becoming a runner at the University of Oregon, *Remaining Native* opens story pathways to learn about previous generations of the Stevens family and draws connections to how Ku is creating his personal identity through both reflection and practice.

> *"I get lost in my thoughts. The miles start to melt away. And I float along the trails. But out here, there's a history. I think about my great grandfather, Frank Quinn, being eight years old, running away over 50 miles from a boarding school."* — Ku Stevens

Families: Roots and Branches

While Ku Stevens has strong connections to his biological parents and community, that is not everyone's experience. In fact, perhaps one of the reasons Ku's story is so poignant is that his story is juxtaposed against the stories of many other Native Americans who were severed from their families of origin, with little to no access to their homeland, language, and family or cultural practices.

For the following discussion and activities, adopt the following guidelines:

1. Broaden the definition of "family history."

Instead of focusing solely on biological lineage, explore:

- chosen family and friends
- cultural or community traditions
- important adults in your life
- neighborhood or local histories
- community archives or public records
- collective identities you participate in (sports, church, clubs, etc.)

2. Recognize and build psychologically safe environments.

Genealogical and historical inquiry can evoke strong emotions. Normalize diverse family experiences and emphasize that identity is shaped by many forces, not only ancestry.

Pay attention to the sensations in your body as you watch and discuss the film. Are there areas in your body where the muscles tighten, or are there any differences in how deep or quickly you are breathing? Are any strong emotions or thoughts coming up? Recognize you always have the right to opt out, step away, or choose a different activity.

By creating flexibility, honoring privacy, and recognizing diverse lived experiences, each member of the group can engage meaningfully with the film's themes of memory, identity, justice, and repair.

3. Avoid assumptions of identity and experience.

We all carry preconceived notions of the world based on our own experience and inherited knowledge. Begin to recognize when your thoughts or speech include a pre-loaded assumption. Experiment with language that creates space for more expansive and honest dialogue. For example, instead of "Tell me about your parents," which assumes someone has that relationship to draw from and that they want to share their story with you, try: "Will you tell me about the people who influence you?" or "Do you have a story to share about a tradition that shapes your identity?" Conversely, if you are engaged in a conversation with someone who you feel has made an assumption about your experience, try countering in the moment. For example, "Actually, that isn't my experience."

By both becoming more aware of our own biases and assumptions, and taking responsibility for the quality of all our communications, we are actively participating in relationships that have the opportunity to become more dynamic and generative.

4. Widen the lens.

Even if you have direct experience with a subject, you are in no way obligated to share your story. You can actively engage in a topic without making personal disclosures. Consider:

- researching local historical sites
- interviewing a mentor or community elder
- analyzing a cultural practice
- reflecting on the stories of people in your community, school, or neighborhood
- exploring a historical event connected to your identity

5. Find alternative spaces.

You may find that you are interested in exploring a topic or experience, but that this particular group environment is not the right place for that exploration. Consider:

- journaling privately
- creating fictionalized narratives (be clear when sharing if you are presenting fiction)
- connecting with outside groups that gather around shared identity or experiences

DRIVING QUESTION

How can personal goals and everyday practices (like running) become a way to reconnect with family histories and shape one's identity in the present?

Personal Reflection

Ku's quote connects running to both his personal history and the history of the United States. What is one story (from your family/community or from society) that you carry? How does it shape what you want to become or what you choose to practice today?

Alternatively, create a fictional main character and describe a story that shapes who they want to become or the kinds of actions they wish to take in their community. The character's personal or cultural story can be from a fictionalized or real society.

Discussion Questions

1. Generational connection: Ku's great-grandfather Frank Quinn ran away from a boarding school as a child more than once. How does learning about past generations change the meaning of Ku's present journey?

2. Identity building through practice: In what ways do reflection (thinking, remembering, processing) and practice (training, running, showing up) work together to form identity?

3. Story pathways: The text says the film "opens story pathways" to learn about previous generations. What kinds of stories do you think matter most for rebuilding understanding — family stories, community stories, or institutional records? Why?

Extension Activities

1. Imaginative Council of Elders — Creative Writing Assignment #1

Part 1: As a group or individually, have learners list their community's most pressing problems and/or needs.

Part 2: As a group or individually, have learners list all the known obstacles to solving these problems or addressing these needs (or some of the problems and/or needs).

Part 3: Individually, have learners select one of the issues from their list. Then have learners write a letter
to themselves from a wise elder from the future that
includes information about how they solved the problem. This is a creative thinking/writing endeavor! Encourage learners not to censor or edit their imagined elder!

Part 4: Have learners share the letters from the wise elders from the future. Without judging them or pulling apart their arguments, make a classroom/group list of wisdom presented in the letters.

2. Origin Stories: Creative Connections — Creative Writing Assignment #2

Part 1: Learners will be creating an origin story for themselves or someone like them. Have them begin by creating a list of the places, activities, people, identities, etc. that are important to this character.

Part 2: In three paragraphs, have learners describe the character's past, present, and future. In paragraph 1, learners will describe the character's origins. Learners should focus on where the character came from and who they are. In paragraph 2, learners should focus on where the character is now in their life. What are their current concerns? How do they spend their days? What do they want and are there any obstacles to achieving their dreams? Finally, in paragraph 3, learners should work toward their character's "happy ending" with emphasis on actions the character would take to achieve their own version of success. Remind learners to think broadly. For example, Ku set a goal regarding the University of Oregon, but then realized, once he achieved this goal, that there was something more. In essence, he reconsidered the traditional narrative and assumptions about success and set a new standard of success connected to his family and history.

Part 3: Have learners compare and contrast their character to the real story of Ku Stevens as told in *Remaining Native*. Learners should identify similarities and differences in content and structure.

Part 4: In small heterogeneous groups, have students research Indigenous Futurism and then reconsider their narratives through a futurist lens. Emphasis Indigenous Joy and non-traditional narratives.

3. Poetry from Pain

Part 1: Read "Indian Boarding School: The Runaways" by Louise Erdrich together as a class.

Part 2: As a class, or in small groups, have learners compare and contrast the effect of the poem and the film. What are the strengths of each? How does one inform the other? Discuss the value of different art forms in addressing history, trauma, and memory as a way to heal and offer healing to others.

Part 3: Using this poem and *Remaining Native*, have learners write their own free-form poem focused on current events and personal histories that resonate with them, or a free-form poem about Indian boarding schools based on what they've learned from the film.

"Indian Boarding School: The Runaways"

BY LOUISE ERDRICH

Home's the place we head for in our sleep.
Boxcars stumbling north in dreams
don't wait for us. We catch them on the run.
The rails, old lacerations that we love,
shoot parallel across the face and break
just under Turtle Mountains. Riding scars
you can't get lost. Home is the place they cross.

The lame guard strikes a match and makes the dark
less tolerant. We watch through cracks in boards
as the land starts rolling, rolling till it hurts
to be here, cold in regulation clothes.
We know the sheriff's waiting at midrun
to take us back. His car is dumb and warm.
The highway doesn't rock, it only hums
like a wing of long insults. The worn-down welts
of ancient punishments lead back and forth.

All runaways wear dresses, long green ones,
the color you would think shame was. We scrub
the sidewalks down because it's shameful work.
Our brushes cut the stone in watered arcs
and in the soak frail outlines shiver clear
a moment, things us kids pressed on the dark
face before it hardened, pale, remembering
delicate old injuries, the spines of names and leaves.

Copyright Credit: Louise Erdrich, "Indian Boarding School: The Runaways"
from *Original Fire: Selected and New Poems.* Copyright © 2003 by Louise Erdrich.
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Source: *Original Fire: Selected and New Poems* (HarperCollins Publishers Inc, 2003)

SECTION 4: BEYOND THE NUMBERS: HOW POLICY INFLUENCES PEOPLE



In the United States, there are currently 574 federally recognized Indigenous tribes, as well as other nations still seeking official recognition. Forced schooling systems that separated Indigenous children from their families, language, culture, and communities were established in both the United States and Canada. Similar assimilation regimes existed in Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and elsewhere — a global pattern of separating Indigenous children from their families and suppressing their cultures.

In 2021, the Department of the Interior announced it would "undertake an investigation of the loss of human life and lasting consequences of the Federal Indian boarding school system." The Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative, led by Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland, acknowledged that, for nearly two centuries, the federal government operated or oversaw Indian boarding schools across the United States and its territories and was in a unique position to support efforts to recover their histories. Furthermore, the United States has treaty and trust responsibilities — i.e., a legal obligation to protect Indian treaty rights, land, and assets of Indian Tribes, Alaska Native Villages, Alaska Native Corporations, and the Native Hawaiian Community.

In the 2022 report, Bryan Newland, Assistant Secretary, Indian Affairs, writes:

> *"…that between 1819 and 1969, the United States operated or supported 408 boarding schools across 37 states (or then-territories), including 21 schools in Alaska and 7 schools in Hawaii. This report identifies each of those schools by name and location, some of which operated across multiple sites.*
>
> *This report confirms that the United States directly targeted American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children in the pursuit of a policy of cultural assimilation that coincided with Indian territorial dispossession. It identifies the Federal Indian boarding schools that were used as a means for these ends, along with at least 53 burial sites for children across this system- with more site discoveries and data expected as we continue our research."*

Long before the United States came to be, mission schools were established, beginning in the 1600s, where Native Americans were schooled with the intention of assimilation. This short string of dates, covering hundreds of years, could inadvertently orient the reader to situating Indian boarding schools as "in the past"; however, *Remaining Native* brings this "history" fully into the present moment and drives home, through one young person's story, that the legacy of Indian boarding schools is relevant today, particularly in relation to education, human rights, and geopolitics.

DRIVING QUESTION

How do historical policies of assimilation — like federal Indian boarding schools — continue to shape education, human rights, and community life today?

Personal Reflection

What is one way you will change how you think or talk about "history" after learning about Indian boarding schools and learning Ku Stevens's story? If your thinking hasn't changed, how do you feel *Remaining Native* has reinforced or strengthened your beliefs?

Discussion Questions

1. "In the past" vs. "in the present": The text warns that a timeline can make Indian boarding schools feel like something finished long ago. How does watching a film like *Remaining Native* differ from reading about facts and dates? Which form of information sharing resonated with you? Why?

2. Scale and purpose: The text references 408 boarding schools across a span of 150 years. What might the scale of the system suggest about the strength and consistency of the assimilation policies in the United States and how their legacy is still active in our communities today?

3. Cultural suppression and identity: Ku Stevens has his family and community's support. How do you explain his family's resilience after undergoing the trauma of an ancestor being separated from his language, culture, and family?

Extension Activities

1. Words Matter: Rewriting

Part 1: Have learners select one or two sentences from Bryan Newland's text and rewrite it in a way that aligns with their values and their understanding of this issue given their research and the personal testimonies they heard in *Remaining Native*. Consider the way the past still affects people today.

Part 2: Have learners share their new sentences with the class or in small groups, explaining the choices they made.

Part 3: Collectively, as a class/group, write a statement of acknowledgement regarding Indian boarding schools with corresponding recommendations and/or actions that could be taken to address this painful history and its continued influence on families, communities, and learners today.

2. Who Is in the Room?

Part 1: On large paper, write the following terms: "Languages," "Religion/Spirituality," "Sports," "Music," "Foods," "Performance/Dance," "Important Places," and "Geographic Locations." Tape each paper around the room.

Part 2: In three paragraphs, have learners describe the character's past, present, and future. In paragraph 1, learners will describe the character's origins. Learners should focus on where the character came from and who they are. In paragraph 2, learners should focus on where the character is now in their life. What are their current concerns? How do they spend their days? What do they want and are there any obstacles to achieving their dreams? Finally, in paragraph 3, learners should work toward their character's "**Part 2:** Have learners walk around the room and visit each "station." Using Post-it notes (or paper with tape), have learners represent themselves by sticking their responses to each station's prompt. For example, at the "Geographic Location" station, a learner might represent themselves with five sticky notes, each labeled: 'Chicago, Illinois"; "Los Angeles, CA"; "Ireland"; "Mexico"; "Madrid, Spain."

Part 3: Once students have placed their Post-its at each station, allow them to roam around the exhibit they co-created to see "who is in the room."

Part 4: Distribute the **"Listening Skills Workshop" Handout**. In small groups or as a whole group, review the handout. Then ask students to share their thoughts on who is (or is not) represented in the room. Their discussion should be informed by the handout. Learners may want to add to their initial responses as the discussion progresses.

LISTENING SKILLS WORKSHOP: STARTER PROMPTS AND SAMPLE TOPICS

To help practice paraphrasing, clarifying questions, and nonverbal attentiveness, begin with topics that feel light and low-stakes. This keeps the focus on how we listen rather than what we talk about.

Prompts to Begin the Conversation

- Describe something you love doing and why.
- Share a moment from this week that felt memorable in a good way.
- Tell me about something you want to learn or try this year.
- What is something in your daily life that brings you joy or calm?

Starter Phrases and Questions for Learners

To help guide conversations, offer simple sentence stems:

Paraphrasing Starters

- "So what I hear you saying is…"
- "It sounds like…"
- "If I'm understanding correctly…"
- "What I'm taking away from that is…"

Clarifying Questions

- "Can you tell me more about that?"
- "What made that experience meaningful for you?"
- "What do you enjoy most about it?"
- "How did you get interested in that?"
- "What happened next?

Examples of Easy, Low-Stakes Topics

These topics are light enough to keep the activity safe, but open enough to allow genuine conversation.

- A favorite childhood game or activity
- A hobby or skill they enjoy learning
- A place they like to visit in their community
- A meme, song, show, or trend they find interesting
- A food they love (or dislike) and why
- A goal they are working toward this year
- A recent moment that made them laugh
- Something they wish more people knew about them
- A favorite class, teacher, or school experience
- A tradition or routine they enjoy

Debrief Suggestions

After listening activities, spark discussion using prompts such as:

- What behaviors or phrases helped you feel heard?
- What made listening difficult?
- What nonverbal cues helped build trust?
- What cues created possible distance or disconnection?
- How might these skills support conversations about difficult topics in the future?

DURING VIEWING
ELEMENTS OF DOCUMENTARY NOTECATCHER

Directions:
The elements of documentary are the different types of sound and image used to explore the subject of the film. There are six basic elements that can be found in all documentaries, though a film might not use all of them. While viewing, use the chart below to record impactful moments and scenes from the film in the appropriate box based on what element of documentary filmmaking is used. Then, after viewing, briefly analyze which of the elements were used most effectively in this film.

Narration Narration is the spoken word heard throughout a film. Sometimes the narrator is a person in the film, and sometimes it is a disconnected observer.	**Actuality Footage** Actuality footage refers to the unscripted footage recorded in the making of the documentary.	**Archival Materials** Archival materials are the pieces of film, video, photographs, documents, and sound recordings that were created for other uses prior to the documentary.
On-Screen Text Text is often used throughout a documentary to provide important facts, identify people, and present additional information.	**Interviews** Interviews are the recorded conversations with a person who has some connection to or knowledge about the subject of the film.	**Animations/Reenactments** Documentaries will sometimes use animation or staged recreations of situations and events in order to tell a story.

Which of the elements of documentary filmmaking were used most effectively in this film?	Explain Your Reasoning.

From CAFILM Education Resources: Documentary Film Analysis Toolkit
https://www.cafilmedu.org/curriculum-resources/

Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report

May 2022

Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs
Bryan Newland

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

19. Recommendations of the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Bryan Newland

For nearly two full centuries, the United States pursued, embraced, or permitted a policy of forced assimilation of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian people. The Federal Indian boarding school system was developed to target Indian children to accomplish this policy objective for over 150 years and influence U.S.-Indian relations and U.S.-Native Hawaiian relations. The Department must fully account for its role in this effort and renounce forced assimilation of Indian Tribes, Alaska Native Villages, and the Native Hawaiian Community as a legitimate policy objective.

To begin the process of healing from the harm and violence caused by assimilation policy, the Department should affirm an express policy of cultural revitalization—supporting the work of Indian Tribes, Alaska Native Villages, and the Native Hawaiian Community to revitalize their languages, cultural practices, and traditional food systems, and to protect and strengthen intra-Tribal relations.

To complete the Secretary's objectives of the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative, and to begin the pursuit of this express policy, the Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs provides the following recommendations based on the current findings:

1. Continue full investigation.

Support Secretary Haaland to authorize further investigation of the Federal Indian boarding school system to complete a comprehensive review of records under the Department's control. Congress appropriated $7 million in new funds through the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Consolidated Appropriations Act (Public Law 117-103) to authorize action by the Department to expand its investigation of the Federal Indian boarding school system, with funds that are continued as part of the FY 2023 President's request.

Conduct several additional, critical research priorities including digitization, examination, and analysis of records from both AIRR and NARA. The BTFA identified 39,385 boxes in AIRR with potentially responsive documents (approximately 98.4 million sheets of paper).

Recognize that specific needs and priorities include, but are not limited to, identification and evaluation of available records, such as Indian boarding school facilities and planning

documents, enrollment records and vital statistics, correspondence, maps, photographs, and administrative reports, that:

- Approximate the total number of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children that attended Federal Indian boarding schools;
- Approximate the total number of marked and unmarked burial sites associated with Federal Indian boarding schools;
- Locate marked and unmarked burial sites associated with a particular Indian boarding school facility or site, which may later be used to assist in locating unidentified remains of Indian children, Indian Prisoners of War, and Freedmen from the Five Civilized Tribes;
- Expand the summary profiles of individual Federal Indian boarding schools;
- Detail the health and mortality of Indian children who experienced the Federal Indian boarding school system, which may later be used to develop dataset(s) for analysis of health impacts of Indian boarding school attendance, including an approximate mortality rate for attendees, as the Department was responsible for the health care of American Indians and Alaska Natives until 1954;
- Identify documented methodologies and practices used in the Federal Indian boarding school system that discouraged or prevented the use of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian languages or cultural or religious practices;
- Approximate the amount of Federal support, including financial, property, livestock and animals, equipment, and personnel for the Federal Indian boarding school system, recognizing that some records are no longer available;
- Approximate the amount of Tribal or individual Indian trust funds held by the United States in trust that were used to support the Federal Indian boarding school system, including to non-Federal entities and, or individuals, recognizing that some records are no longer available;
- Identify religious institutions and organizations that have ever received Federal funding in support of the Federal Indian boarding school system;

- Identify States that may have ever received Federal funding in support of the Federal Indian boarding school system;
- Identify nonprofits, associations, academic institutions, philanthropies, and other organizations that may have received Federal funding in support of the Federal Indian boarding school system;
- Confirm additional sites within the Federal Indian boarding school system;
- Examine the connection between the use of Federal Indian boarding schools and subsequent systematic foster care and adoption programs to remove Indian children, including the Indian Adoption Project established by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Child Welfare League of America, that were not repudiated by Congress until the enactment of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978.

With additional investigation, produce a second report by the Department, including the following: (1) determining locations of marked or unmarked burial sites associated with the Federal Indian boarding school system; (2) identifying names, ages, and Tribal affiliations of children interred at such locations; and (3) approximating a full accounting of Federal support for the Federal Indian boarding school system, including a proactive approximate accounting of any Tribal and, or individual Indian trust funds held in trust by the United States used to support the Federal Indian boarding school system. The portions of that report that contain sensitive information such as individual names or locations of burial sites will not be released to the public.

Continue departmental engagement and support of relevant Federal agencies that have control or possession of records pertaining to the Federal Indian boarding school system.

2. **Identify surviving Federal Indian boarding school attendees.** Develop a system for voluntary identification of surviving now-adult attendees, including communication methodologies.
3. **Document Federal Indian boarding school attendee experiences.** Develop a platform for now-adult Federal Indian boarding school attendees and their descendants to formally document their historical accounts and experiences, and understand current impacts such as health status, including substance abuse and violence.

4. **Support protection, preservation, reclamation, and co-management of sites across the Federal Indian boarding school system where the Federal Government has jurisdiction over a location.**

5. **Develop a specific repository of Federal records involving the Federal Indian boarding school system at the Department of the Interior Library to preserve centralized Federal expertise on the Federal Indian boarding school system.**

6. **Identify and engage other Federal agencies to support the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative, including those with control of any records involving the Federal Indian boarding school system or that provide health care to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, including for the provision of mental health services to students attending Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) operated and funded schools.**

7. **Support non-Federal entities that may independently release records under their control.** To make the Federal investigation more thorough and accurate, support non-Federal entities, such as States and religious institutions and organizations, including those that have received Federal funding to operate Federal Indian boarding schools, that may independently release records relating to the Federal Indian boarding school system such as those that cover Indian child removal and provision of health care services to Indians, including at military installations.

8. **Support Congressional action involving the following policies:**

    - **NAGPRA.** Support exemptions from Freedom of Information Act requests to protect sensitive, specific information on burial locations across the Federal Indian boarding school system that contain remains of Indian children to prevent against well-documented grave-robbing, vandalism, and other disturbances to Indian burial sites.

        - Support action to direct Federal agencies that control cemeteries to allow the reburial of remains of Indian children and funerary objects repatriated pursuant to NAGPRA, and consistent with specific Tribal practices. Amendment of the Recreation and Public Purposes Act may be needed to facilitate use of BLM lands for this purpose.

- Support action to increase appropriations and professional staffing for programs in Federal agencies that are responsible for agency compliance with NAGPRA.

- Support action to authorize the appropriate agencies to disinter or repatriate, under the direction of an Indian Tribe, Alaska Native Village, or the Native Hawaiian Community, or family with an identified interest, and consistent with specific Tribal practices, any remains of Indian children discovered in marked or unmarked burial sites associated with the Federal Indian boarding school system.

- **Advance Native language revitalization.** Support funding for the expansion and development of programs implementing or supporting Native language revitalization for Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) operated and funded schools, as well as non-BIE schools. Also work to seek funding for the expansion and development of programs outside BIE schools implementing or supporting Native language revitalization, including language immersion schools and community organizations.

- **Promote Indian health research.** Support scientific studies that turn discovery into health by appropriating specific funds to authorize Federally funded research on the Federal Indian boarding school system, including health impacts on Indian Tribes, Alaska Native Villages, and the Native Hawaiian Community and individual American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians.

- **Recognize the generations of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children that experienced the Federal Indian boarding school system with a Federal memorial.**

DIGITAL DEEP DIVE: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS AND LEARNERS

Art Resources

Infinity of Nations: Art and History in the Collections of the National Museum of the American Indian — George Gustav Heye Center, New York

Books

Knowing Home: Braiding Indigenous Science with Western Science, Book 1 edited by Gloria Snively and Wanosts'a7 Lorna

There There by Tommy Orange

Wandering Stars by Tommy Orange

Educator Resources

Americans — A Dialogue Toolkit for Educators

Education Resources from the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition

How Indigenous Knowledge Drives Scientific Discovery, UNESCO

Native American Boarding Schools | Classroom Materials at the Library of Congress

Native American Representation in STEM: Indigenous Innovation, National Museum of the American Indian (Smithsonian)

Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct (updated 2023)

Traditional Knowledge and Climate Change, Indigenous Climate Hub

What Does It Mean to Remove a People? — Teacher Materials — Full Lesson

Films and Media Resources

Daughter of a Lost Bird, Documentary feature film

Dawnland, documentary feature film

Dawnland Teachers' and Viewers' Guides from Upstander Project

Indian Horse

"Pow!" Animated Short Film

Smithsonian NMAI YouTube Channel (The National Museum of the American Indian)

Sugarcane, documentary feature film

Sugarcane educational materials from Journeys in Film

"Unseen Tears," documentary short film

Primary Sources and Resources for Additional Student Learning and Research

Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center

Dawes Records of the Five Civilized Tribes | National Archives

Digital Collections - Indian Removal Act: Primary Documents in American History - Research Guides at Library of Congress

Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report

First-ever Oral Histories of Indian Boarding School Survivors, Collected with Care, Imprint News.

Historical Timeline of American Indian Policies, American Studies Program, Iowa State University, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

"Interactive Time-Lapse Map Shows How the U.S. Took More Than 1.5 Billion Acres From Native Americans." Onion, Rebecca and Claudio Sant. Slate Magazine.

National Atlas, Indian Tribes, Languages and Cultures, Library of Congress.

The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition.

Native American | Immigration and Relocation in U.S. History | Classroom Materials at the Library of Congress

Native American Primary Sources - Native American and Indigenous Studies * - Research Guides at University of Southern California

National Indian Boarding School Digital Archive

Primary Source Sets | DPLA

Stewart Indian School

Tribal Leaders Directory

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Ewing, Eve L. *Original Sins: The (Mis)education of Black and Native Children and the Construction of American Racism.* One World New York, 2025.

Givens, Jarvis R. *American Grammar: Race, Education and the Building of a Nation.* Harper, 2025.

U.S. Congressional Bills and Resolutions

United States, Congress, House of Representatives, H.R. 5444, 1st Session, September 30, 2021. https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/hr5444/BILLS-117hr5444ih.htm

United States, Congress, Senate, S Con Res 28, 2nd Session, 2025-2026. https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/sconres28/BILLS-117sconres28es.pdf

Web Resources

Beginning Courageous Conversations about Race

Dartmouth Libraries Online resources to learn more about documentary filmmaking.

Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report

Historical Timeline of American Indian Policies, American Studies Program, Iowa State University, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

"Interactive Time-Lapse Map Shows How the U.S. Took More Than 1.5 Billion Acres From Native Americans." Onion, Rebecca and Claudio Sant. Slate Magazine.

National Atlas, Indian Tribes, Languages and Cultures, Library of Congress.



FILM CREDITS

To request a full list of credits, please contact the film team.

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IN ASSOCIATION WITH

The Random Good Foundation, The Denovo Initiative

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DOC SOCIETY CLIMATE STORY UNIT

Fund for Nonviolence

Puffin Foundation

Running Strong for American Indian Youth

The Perspective Fund

The Redford Center

Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation

Educating for Global Understanding

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