

Northwest History Consortium

Educating American Indian Students

DonnaLee Stagl-Ritter

7th Grade

National Standard

Era 9: Postwar United States (1945-1970s) / Standard 4A

Standard 4A: The student understands the “Second Reconstruction” and its advancement of civil rights.

Washington State Social Studies EALRs

Social Studies EALR 4: HISTORY - The student understands and applies knowledge of historical thinking, major ideas, and themes in local, Washington State, tribal, and United States history in order to evaluate how history shapes the present and future.

4.4.1: The student analyzes how an event in Washington State or world history helps us understand a current issue.

Social Studies EALR 5: SKILLS - The student understands and applies reasoning skills to conduct research, deliberate, form, and evaluate positions through the processes of reading, writing, and communicating.

5.1.2: The student evaluates the breadth of evidence supporting positions on an issue or event.

BACKGROUND

"Over a century ago when American Indians were moved to reservations, their children were sent to government boarding schools and missions to assimilate them into American society or, as one enlightened individual said, to 'kill the Indian, save the child.' The schools punished children for speaking their native language, forcing them to speak English and to remain isolated from their parents and grandparents."

This was the United States' first attempt at educating American Indian children. Since FDR's Indian Reorganization Act repealed the Dawes Act (which encouraged "Americanization" of Indian children) and encouraged tribal culture and tribal government, how has the government handled education of American children, and how successful has it been in fulfilling its responsibility?

". . . with the passage of the Native American Languages Act of 1990 and the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act of 2006, more and more American Indian reservations across the country are teaching Native studies. Not only are these efforts saving languages from extinction, they are empowering Native American children with a sense of pride in their heritage. 'Our people hold our children sacred,' says Dodie White, a longtime social studies teacher at Wyoming Indian Middle School and member of the Arapaho tribe. 'They are our greatest asset, and we work to connect them with our cultural heritage, so they know who they are, so they have purpose.'"

Is including culture and language the responsibility of the American Indian reservation or the responsibility of the public school system? Which place would be the best environment for educating Native American children?

"Test scores have demonstrated that Native American students at the Indian Schools perform better academically than Native American students at schools where indigenous culture is not a part of everyday studies. Research has shown that cultural context is essential for American

Northwest History Consortium

Educating American Indian Students

Indian students to succeed in school and continue on to college. . . . White says the new approach of including cultural context in curricula is working to help students want to stay in school. Data from 2005 showed that Natives had the highest dropout rate in the country, but the graduation rate has risen every year since. The key is adding the culture."

Recent studies of Native students' test scores in public schools in Minnesota are showing little improvement. Do public schools need to include Native studies?

"Preserving the Language and Culture of Native Americans." [Buzzle.com](http://www.buzzle.com). ©2000 - 2011 Buzzle.com. Costa Mesa, CA. 29 March 2011 <<http://www.buzzle.com/articles/preserving-the-language-and-culture-of-native-americans.html>>.

PROBLEM

What effect does the inclusion or exclusion of culture in curriculum have on the success of Native American students?

SCENARIO

Recently, there has been a resurgence of studies at reservation schools across the country to ensure that Native American children don't lose touch with their ancient traditions and languages. Many people in the US believe that this is the key to academic success for Native American students, and many people believe that successfully educating all American students is the responsibility of the federal government. On the other hand, many people believe that American Indian reservations should be responsible for passing the language and culture of each tribe on to future generations.

In your school district this battle is being waged—a group of people in your school district is lobbying to include Lummi language and culture studies in the middle school curriculum, and an equally persuasive group is lobbying against this move. The school board needs to make a decision.

TASKS

The superintendent and school board of your school district have appointed you and your team members to a committee to study the issue of whether or not to include Native American language and culture in the public school, particularly your middle school. They would like you to present your recommendations and rationale for whether or not to include Lummi Studies in the middle school curriculum at the next school board meeting.

Your task is to research this issue, come to a determination based on your research, and present your findings in a report to the members of the school board, accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation for their next meeting.

Northwest History Consortium

Educating American Indian Students

RESOURCES

Books

Green, Michael W. and Carlson, Laurie Winn. Washington in the Pacific Northwest. Layton, UT: Gibbs Smith Education, 2005: 124-125.

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Hodgson, Carol M., et al. "The Reservation Boarding School System in the United States, 1870-1928." TwoFrog.com (American Indian/Native Issues). ©1999 - 2011 Sonja K. Keohane. [location unknown]. 29 March 2011 <<http://www.twofrog.com/rezsch.html#TOP>>.

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Northwest History Consortium

Educating American Indian Students

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Smith, Andrea. "Soul Wound: The Legacy of Native American Schools." Amnesty International USA (Amnesty Magazine). ©2007. New York, NY. 5 April 2011 <<http://www.amnestyusa.org/amnestynow/soulwound.html>>.

Stabler, David. "Preserving Tribal Culture Focus of National Conference, from Language to Memories to Science" from *The Oregonian*, 20 October 2009. OregonLive.com. ©2010. Hillsboro, OR. 5 April 2011 <http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2009/10/preserving_tribal_culture.html>.

Tippeconnic, John W., III. "The Use of Academic Achievement Tests and Measurements with American Indian and Alaska Native Students" from *Eric Digest*, December 2003, ED482322. EricDigests.org (Michigan State University Library). ©2003 - 2005. East Lansing, MI. <<http://www.ericdigests.org/2005-2/tests.html>>.

Weber, Tom. "Study: Few Academic Gains for American Indian Students." 30 June 2010. MPR News (Minnesota Public Radio). ©2011 Minnesota Public Radio. Saint Paul, MN. <<http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2010/06/30/america-indian-students/>>.

Northwest History Consortium

Educating American Indian Students

ASSESSMENT

Persuasive Essay Assessment Rubric

Category	Advanced (4)	Proficient (3)	Basic (2)	Incomplete (1)
Content	Topic is clearly focused and reasons fully support position. Counter-argument is addressed. Understanding of research and historical connection is evident.	Topic is focused and reasons support position. Counter-argument is addressed. Understanding of research and historical connection is present.	Topic is generally focused, with some lack of clarity. Reasons are flawed but present. Counter-argument is not clearly addressed. Evidence of research is present.	Topic is not clear or focused. Support is lacking. Counter-argument is not addressed. Some evidence of research is present, but with no real historical understanding.
Organization	Introduction creatively presents thesis. Body is purposefully arranged in a logical pattern, and transitions provide cohesion. Conclusion provides thought-provoking resolution and clear call for action	Introduction presents thesis and provides reader with direction. Body is arranged in a logical pattern with transitions to provide sequence. Conclusion presents a resolution with a call for action.	Introduction presents a topic and some sense of direction. Body has an “outline-like” organization with repetitive transitioning. Conclusion is limited and merely restates main points.	Introduction is missing and provides little or no direction. Body is randomly ordered with no transitions. Conclusion is missing or merely restates the topic.
Style	Sentences vary in structure and length and flow easily. Word choice is vivid and precise. Voice is engaging and confident.	Sentences show attempt at varying structure and length and flow smoothly. Word choice is specific and active. Voice shows commitment and reader-writer interaction.	Sentences have some variety but are awkward and not easily read aloud. Word choice is limited and does not enhance meaning. Voice is lacking in commitment and inconsistent.	Sentences are similar in beginnings, length, and/or structure. Word choice is redundant and often incorrect. Voice is lacking.
Conventions	Excellent command of conventions; applies usage, spelling, and punctuation to enhance meaning.	Competent use of conventions; mostly and consistently applies correct usage, spelling, and punctuation; does not interfere with meaning and/or readability.	Consistently applies usage, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and paragraphing; minimal errors do not interfere with meaning and/or readability.	Inconsistently applies usage, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and paragraphing; errors interfere with meaning and/or readability.

Northwest History Consortium

Educating American Indian Students

PowerPoint Presentation Assessment Rubric

CATEGORY	Advanced (4)	Proficient (3)	Basic (2)	Incomplete (1)
Content - Accuracy	All content throughout the presentation is accurate. There are no factual errors.	Most of the content is accurate, but there are one or two pieces of information that seem inaccurate.	The content is generally accurate, but some information is clearly inaccurate.	Content is confusing or contains many factual errors.
Sequencing of Information	Information is organized in a creative, clear, and logical manner. It is easy to anticipate the next slide.	Most information is organized in a clear, logical way. One slide or piece of information seems out of place.	Some information is logically sequenced. Occasional slides or pieces of information seem out of place.	There is no clear plan for the organization of information.
Effectiveness	Project includes all material needed to give a good understanding of the topic. The project is consistent with the driving question.	Project is lacking one or two key elements. Project is consistent with driving question most of the time.	Project is missing more than two key elements. It is rarely consistent with the driving question.	Project is lacking several key elements and has inaccuracies. Project is completely inconsistent with driving question.
Use of Graphics	All graphics are attractive (size and colors) and enhance the topic of the presentation.	Most graphics are attractive and support the topic of the presentation.	Most graphics are attractive, but a few do not support the topic of the presentation.	Several graphics are unattractive AND detract from the content of the presentation.
Text - Font Choice & Formatting	Font formatting (color, bold, italic) has been carefully planned to enhance readability and content. An appropriate amount of text is included on each slide.	Font formatting has been planned to support readability. An acceptable amount of text is included on each slide.	Font formatting has been somewhat planned to support content. It may be a little hard to read. Too much or too little text is included on each slide.	Font formatting makes it very difficult to read the material. No consideration has been made to plan amount of text on each slide.
Spelling and Grammar	Presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors.	Presentation may have two or three misspellings or grammatical errors.	Presentation has several grammatical errors or misspellings.	Presentation has many grammatical and/or spelling errors that seriously detract from the presentation.
Cooperation	Group has shared tasks, and all members have performed responsibly all of the time.	Group has shared most tasks and performed responsibly most of the time.	Group has shared tasks and performed responsibly some of the time.	Group often is not effective in sharing tasks and/or sharing responsibility.

Northwest History Consortium

Educating American Indian Students

REFERENCES/CITATIONS

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