

Chapter 4

Dislocation / Relocation

(17:02 minutes)

Synopsis

This 17-minute video describes the boarding school experience of Native American children during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. To fulfill their assimilationist mission, these schools undermined Indian culture while insisting on the superiority of non-Indian culture. The video traces the effects of the boarding schools on Indian children and Indian culture and their lingering legacy in Montana.

► The video begins with students giving their best answer to the question: **“What do you think of when you hear the term ‘boarding school’?”** Teachers may wish to ask their students the same question before viewing the episode.

The narrator answers the focus question:

“Boarding schools were part of an ‘assimilation strategy’ that existed on, near and far removed from reservations. Boarding schools often separated students from their families and cultural traditions. Further to strip Indian children of their heritage, many boarding schools invoked extreme practices. The boarding-school experience still casts a long shadow over the lives and the culture[s] of many Montana Indians.”

Post-viewing Discussion Questions

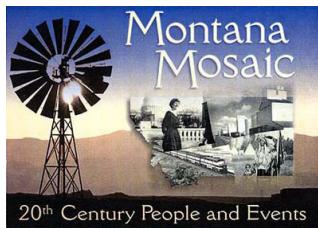
Engage students’ critical thinking skills and elicit their emotional responses with the following four questions, most easily remembered through the acronym DICE: What **disturbed** you? What **interested** you? What **confused** you? What **enlightened** you?

“Getting at the Meaning” Questions

1. Based on what you saw in the video, what does the placement of boarding schools away from the reservations suggest about the schools’ goals?
2. How did the education that Indian children received at boarding schools reinforce or contradict what they learned from their parents and their tribes?
3. What problems/struggles might a boarding school student face on his or her return home?
4. What long-term repercussions of the boarding school era can still be seen in Montana today?
5. Do you think the video presented a balanced view of boarding schools? Why or why not?

Vocabulary Terms

Assimilation: a United States government policy that began late in the 19th century. Under this policy, the government systematically tried to dissolve Indian tribes and to absorb Indian people into mainstream society. Instead of isolating Native Americans on reservations, the assimilation policy’s objective was to destroy traditional Native American culture and tribal affiliations and to integrate Indian individuals into Euro-American society. The division of reservations into allotments was also intended to weaken tribal identity. (Information from http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761568496/Native_American_Reservations.html#p3, accessed 10/6/2009.)



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Additional Resources

For more information on topics addressed in this episode, see *Montana: Stories of the Land*, Chapter 11, "The Early Reservation Years, 1880–1920" (<https://mhs.mt.gov/education/textbook/chapter11/Chapter11.pdf>).

Indian Education for All, A History and Foundation of American Indian Education Policy, by Stan Juneau (Helena, MT, 2001): 20–28, available online at http://opi.mt.gov/Portals/182/Page%20Files/Indian%20Education/Indian%20Education%20101/History_FoundationAmindianEd.pdf.

Content Standards

IEFA Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians

EU 5. There were many federal policies put into place throughout American history that have affected Indian people and continue to shape who they are today. Many of these policies conflicted with one another. Much of Indian history can be related through several major federal policy periods:

- Colonization/Colonial Period, 1492–1800s
- Treaty-Making and Removal Period, 1778–1871
- Reservation Period – Allotment and Assimilation, 1887–1934
- Tribal Reorganization Period, 1934–1953
- Termination and Relocation Period, 1953–1968
- Self-Determination Period, 1975–Present

EU 6. History is a story most often related through the subjective experience of the teller. With the inclusion of more and varied voices, histories are being rediscovered and revised. History told from American Indian perspectives frequently conflicts with the stories mainstream historians tell.

Montana State Social Studies Standards

SS.K12.3. Compare and evaluate sources for relevance, perspective, and accuracy.

SS.G.6-8.6. Identify how the historical and contemporary movement of people, goods, and ideas from one area can impact change, conflict, and cooperation in other areas.

SS.H.6-8.2. Analyze how the historical events relate to one another and are shaped by historical context, including societies in the Americas.

SS.H.6-8.3. Analyze how, since European contact, historical events and policies have mutually impacted American Indian and European societies.

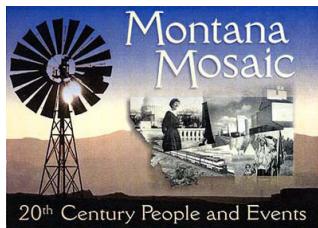
SS.H.6-8.5. Explain how Montana has changed over time and how this history impacts the present.

SS.H.6-8.6. Understand that there are multiple perspectives and interpretations of historical events.

SS.H.6-8.7. Analyze how people's perspectives shaped the historical narratives they created.

SS.H.6-8.8. Identify limitations and biases in primary and secondary sources, specifically regarding misinformation and stereotypes.





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SS.H.9-12.1. Analyze how unique circumstances of time, place, and historical contexts shape individuals' lives.

SS.H.9-12.5. Explain events in relation to both their intended and unintended consequences, including governmental policies impacting American Indians.

SS.H.9-12.7. Analyze how historical, cultural, social, political, ideological, and economic contexts shape people's perspectives.

SS.H.9-12.8. Analyze the ways in which the perspectives of those writing history shaped the history they produced.

SS.H.9-12.10. Analyze perspectives of American Indians in US history.