

Hands-On Stereotypes Box

Task Card

Item: Cartoon — These cartoons are from contemporary journals and newspapers.

Tasks: Answer on a separate piece of paper.

1. Identify the cartoon in some way (its "tag line" or "dialogue box" will do).
2. If the cartoon is alluding to (making you think about or remember) the past, what is the specific historical or cultural event?
3. Is the representation of the history accurate? If not, specifically why not?
4. List the Indian Stereotypes you find in the cartoon. After each, tell **specifically** where or how you see this.
5. Is this cartoon funny to you? Why or why not? How does the cartoon make you feel?
6. If the cartoon contains a caricature of non-Native peoples, is there another population that might be upset by this cartoon? **Explain** your answer.

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Task Card

Item: Book for Older Readers

Tasks: Answer on a separate piece of paper.

1. Locate and read the passage or pages noted on the label in the front of the book.
2. In what way(s) are Indians portrayed through one or all of the following:
 - a. language
 - b. description
 - c. their actions
 - d. the actions of non-Native characters
 - e. the setting
 - f. the situation
3. **Analyze** this portrayal – in what ways is it stereotypical? If you do not find it stereotypical, defend this position.
4. Write a letter to MAMLE (Maine Association of Middle Level Educators) advising Language Arts teachers to teach or **not** to teach this book. Give reasons for your advice, focusing upon the notes you have taken.

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Task Card

Item: Children's Toy or Activity – Most of these toys and activities can be purchased in Maine today. Some of them have gone out of production.

Tasks: Answer on a separate piece of paper.

1. Write the exact name of the toy.
2. **Describe** the toy.
3. In what ways is this toy stereotypical physically (the toy itself, the package or illustration)?
4. How do children play with or use this toy?
5. What messages are conveyed about Native Americans by the way children play with the toy?
6. These toys have been around for a hundred years. What has made them so popular?
7. Do you think this toy is still being produced? What makes you say this?
8. Write a letter to the manufacturer or distributor of the toy or activity expressing your concern about stereotyping. Will you recommend that production be stopped? (If you think production has been stopped, was this a good idea?)
9. **Challenge:** Design a similar toy that takes its theme from Native life in Maine today. **Describe** it or make it. Would any child like to play with this toy? Why or why not?

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Task Card

Item: Commercial Product – These products are all available in Maine today.

Tasks: Answer on a separate piece of paper.

1. **Describe** the product in detail.
2. **Describe** the use(s) of this product. Why would people purchase it?
3. In what ways is the product stereotypical? Consider the portrayal of the Native Americans **and** the use of the product itself.
4. Do you find this product to be offensive? Why or why not?
5. **Describe** other Indian stereotypical products you have seen – in the store or in a home.
6. Would a similar product that had a Chinese, Jewish or Italian theme be less stereotypical? Explain your answer.
7. Write a letter to "**Any Store**" (give it an address) expressing your concerns about this product. Will you recommend that it be taken off the shelves?

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Task Card

Item: Children's Picture Book with a non-Indian theme – marked with a blue dot on the label.

Tasks: Answer on a separate piece of paper.

1. Write down the following information about your book: Title, Author, Date of Publication.
2. Skim through the book. Locate the stereotypical **illustrations**. In some cases there will be more than one illustration to find. On your paper, **describe** what you see. Indicate the page number, if possible, for each illustration.
3. For each illustration that you have selected, **explain** how the illustration is a stereotype. You don't have to repeat yourself if there are multiple, similar illustrations. You should refer to the list of Negative stereotypes.
4. Is there also offensive **text** in the book? If so, quote some of it and **explain** the stereotype.
5. Are there other cultures or ethnic groups that are stereotyped in this book? If so, **describe** the stereotyping.
6. Is this stereotyping essential to the book? How would the book change if the stereotypical illustration, character or text were omitted?
7. If you were asked to illustrate a new edition of this book, how would you change it?
8. Write a letter to the publisher of the book expressing your concerns. Be specific in referring to illustrations or text.

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Task Card

Item: Children's Picture Book with an Indian theme – marked with a red dot on the label.

Tasks: Answer on a separate piece of paper.

1. Write down the following information about your book: Title, Author, Date of Publication.
2. Study the **illustrations**. For each of the following stereotypes that you can find, write the page and a short description:
 - a. Chief
 - b. Frozen in time
 - c. Silent hunter, stealthy
 - d. Spiritual connection to nature, horses
 - e. Vanishing race
 - f. Savage savage
 - g. Noble savage
 - h. Historical inaccuracies
 - i. Generic dress, objects, ornaments
 - j. Other:
3. Study the **text**.
 - a. What is the message of the story?
 - b. Are "Indian" characters essential to the message of the story? In what way?
 - c. What about the text is stereotypical, hurtful or offensive?
4. Write a letter to the publisher of the book expressing your concerns. Be specific.