

Indian Stereotypes - Lessons to accompany the Indian Stereotypes CD and the Hands-on Stereotypes Box

Target grade: 7 or 8 – one long or two short class periods

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Maine Learning Results:

HISTORY

C. HISTORICAL INQUIRY, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION Students will learn to evaluate resource material such as documents, artifacts, maps, artworks, and literature, and to make judgments about the perspectives of the authors and their credibility when interpreting current historical events. Students will be able to...

3. Identify ethnic and cultural perspectives missing from an historical account and describe these points of view.

5. Formulate historical questions based on examination of primary and secondary sources including documents, eyewitness accounts, letters and diaries, artifacts, real or simulated historical sites, charts, graphs, diagrams, and written texts.

ELA

C. LANGUAGE AND IMAGES Students will demonstrate an understanding of how words and images communicate.

Pre-teaching (additional background materials for the Teacher are supplied separately)

1. Use the Anticipation Guide, **Indian Quiz** (in Resources Notebook) – keep this to use again at the end of the unit.
2. Review the **Vocabulary** list (all or part) with students. Most important, of course, is an understanding of "stereotype." **The Vocabulary Activity** might be assigned for homework.
3. **What is "Indian"** – lesson from Joseph E. Charnley and Caitlin LeClair (in Resources Notebook)
4. View as a class the short video **Unlearning "Indian" Stereotypes**. Although the film is "old," it provides important insights into how Native children respond to stereotypes. A short discussion about the children's point of view would be a good introduction to this activity (see accompanying lesson).
5. **Lecture** – (may be moved to the end of the activity)
 - a. Explain to students that stereotypes:
 - i. are negative tools used by one group against another
 1. for power or advantage (political, economic, land)
 2. for profit (money-making)
 3. as an excuse or rationale for actions taken
 - ii. are hurtful and insulting to the group against which they are directed
 - iii. are not confined to Native Americans
 - iv. become stronger in effect as they are used
 - v. are often found in the media (TV, movies, books, comics, magazines, art, songs)
 - vi. are hard to reverse and sometimes hard to understand
 - vii. are sometimes funny to you – are often used for humorous purposes
 - viii. put individuals and individual cultures in a "clump" with specific and unchanging characteristics
 - b. Introduce the **Four Main Indian Stereotypes** (see **Indian Stereotypes**)
 - i. Explain that stereotypes in each category use **generalizations** to make the message.

- ii. Hand out the **Look out for... stereotypes!** organizer, which covers many of these generalizations. Review the categories, having students (individually, in groups, as a class) list examples from their own lives and experiences.

Indian Stereotypes for Children Slide Show (CD/DVD)

1. **Materials:** large sheets of construction paper/easel paper, black markers, colored markers, clip boards – at least one computer for each 3 students
2. View **Indian Stereotypes for Children** slide show movie with the class (you will need projection equipment and a computer - speakers to amplify sound are optional)
3. (optional): discuss the song lyrics, style, audience – see **Ten Little Indians lyrics** – this should include a discussion of the words Squaw, Brave and Chief (see Vocabulary)
6. **Small Group Activity:**

Divide students into groups or pairs and distribute to each a copy of the slide shows on CD (no sound).

 - a. **Model/practice this activity before students do it.**
 1. Project or display the Movie called **Practice** or have each group access it on the CD.
 2. Have one student brainstorm key words and phrases in response to the image, while the other members of the group write them down – students should make a plan for doing this effectively. This can be done as a class.
 3. Reverse roles at least once to practice again.
 - b. Give each group a black marker (or 2 for groups of 3) and a blank sheet of paper.
 - c. Have students open Indian Stereotypes slide show.
 - d. Assign roles for the first round: recorder, viewer (as many as necessary)
 - e. Allow time for each group to work through the slide show, creating a list of viewer responses exactly as spoken.
 - f. Reverse roles at least once.
 - g. Allow groups at least 5 minutes to discuss/share within the group observations on the images that were most powerful to them.
 - h. Task each group to use the colored pencils/marker to **connect** or **group** related words or phrases by circling them (with the same color) and connecting them with lines. A group can contain many words. The reason for the grouping should be written on one of the lines or in a key

note: if you have never done a **Word Scatter** activity, you might begin this lesson with the general Native Peoples Word Scatter activity, attached.
 - i. Tape the papers to the bulletin board or display them on tables. Have all students move around the room, reading the words on the papers and the connecting ideas. Students should complete the **Questions/Observations** organizer as they do this.
 - j. Have individual students share Questions/Observations with the class. Help students to answer Questions, revisiting individual slides if necessary. Collect Observations.

Discussion:

In discussion, you should elicit some **summative points** about the stereotyping of Native Americans in this country. Have students write these in the space provided on the **Look out for...** organizer. These will vary, but might include comments such as those found on the **Examples of Indian Stereotypes** list.

Conclude the lesson with a silent (sound off) re-viewing of the full slide show. Students will probably have additional comments on the material. Allow 5 minutes for students to add specifics relating to the slide show to their **Look out for...** organizers.

Follow-up suggestions:

- **Stereotypes Hands-on Materials Box** – A "traveling trunk" of books and contemporary materials that convey stereotypical messages about Indians, with lessons and activities, can be borrowed by **Maine teachers** from:

Elizabeth Sky-McIlvain
Box 248
Georgetown, ME 04548
207-371-2767

A calendar showing available dates, an inventory, and details of loan is available online at: <http://www.leastern.com/Wabanaki/HandsOnBox>

- Discuss/share with the students some of the historical uses of Indian stereotypes:
 - An excuse for excessive violence against the Indian
 - A reason for sterilization, adoption and boarding school programs
 - A rationale for taking Indian land and resources (with or without compensation)
 - Arguments against Indian economic and political proposals
 - A rationale for discounting Indian culture and opinion
- **Research** – Students should research the traditional and contemporary Maine tribes (and perhaps review other Native cultures) by following one or more Middle School lesson plans. Many plans are available from Elizabeth Sky-McIlvain (see above); others can be downloaded from <http://www.leastern.com/Wabanaki/Lessons>.
- The film **Invisible** is a good culminating experience for Middle School. The accompanying Teacher's Guide is excellent. The film can be borrowed from your library.
- **Face-to-Face** – A great way to counter stereotypes is to have Wabanaki come to the classroom in their real-life roles: mothers, doctors, office worker, police, soldiers, teachers, artists, politicians, etc. You may also have students in the school district who would be willing to come forward.