Evaluating American Indian Materials and Resources for the Classroom

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INTRODUCTION

Why Evaluating Instructional Materials for Anti-Indian Bias Matters

Textbooks and classroom materials influence millions of students of all ethnic backgrounds on a daily basis. Most often, books and instructional resources are selected by school personnel, and students are expected to accept these materials as valid and accurate. Students will use any information they are exposed to in forming their understandings of and attitudes toward American Indians. Therefore, it is very important that teachers select instructional materials that do not promote existing stereotypes, or create new ones, or prevent students from acquiring accurate and valid information.

> A textbook has no right to be wrong [about], evade, distort, falsify history, or insult or malign a whole race of people. There is a difference between a book for general readership and one accepted for classroom use. In the first case, the individual has a choice, and this choice must be protected. The student[s have] no choice. They are compelled to read from an approved text, and in this case, we must insist on the truth, accuracy and objectivity. [1]

Historically, the point-of-view of published American history has been that of Euro-American males and has been far from objective, while American Indian experiences and perspectives for the most part have been omitted or distorted. Even today, many instructional materials and books continue to provide limited and biased representations of American Indians, leading to limited and biased teaching and learning.

> Typically, when teaching about Native Americans, teachers favor two approaches . . . The first is the "dead and buried culture approach," which portrays Native Americans as being extinct . . . Second is the "tourist approach," where students "visit" a different culture [where] they experience only the unusual or exotic components of Native American cultures.[2]

The "dead and buried" approach seeks to nullify the existence of American Indians today and to render their past remote, generic, and inconsequential. The "tourist" approach fascinates students by emphasizing "different" clothing, food, celebrations, or focusing on "quaint" customs and material objects, but overlooks real people leading real lives. Both approaches teach simplistic generalizations about other peoples and lead to stereotyping, rather than to understanding."[3]

Regarding America's indigenous people as the "vanishing race" or as an interesting "tourist stop" are just two of *many* forms of anti-Indian biases prevalent in popular American culture and in educational materials. As American Indians have become more aware of the distorted representations of their cultures in American classrooms and the omissions of their histories from educational materials, they

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[1] Costo, Rupert. *Textbooks and the American Indian*. San Francisco, CA: Indian Historian Press, 1970.
[2] Almeida, Deidre A. *Countering Prejudice against American Indians and Alaska Natives through Antibias Curriculum and Instruction.* Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, 1996.
[3] D. LeeKeenan, cited in Almeida.

have inspired a deliberate and sustained effort to broaden the scope of instructional resources to include their voices and perspectives. Crucial to their success is educators' commitment to understanding what constitutes bias and to evaluating thoroughly the instructional materials they use for bias, omission, and misrepresentations.

All students benefit when educators eliminate those resources that malign or disparage American Indians, falsify information about tribes or about the U.S.-Indian relations, or perpetuate stereotypes and inaccuracies. Bias-free educational materials encourage appreciation and respect for diversity among individuals and communities of people. American Indian students gain self-confidence and respect when educational materials accurately reflect and validate their identities, cultures, and histories. Non-Indian students benefit by recognizing the complexity, diversity, and intrinsic value of American Indian cultures, as well as by acknowledging the valuable contributions American Indians have made (and continue to make) to American society as a whole. All students benefit from being able to examine historical and contemporary events, policies, and interactions from an accurate and respectful vantage point.

Teachers, librarians, and curriculum coordinators should analyze and evaluate potential instructional materials to ensure that American Indian topics are treated fairly, objectively, and accurately. This evaluation guide can help educators identify many different types of biases in educational materials (including textbooks and literature), visual data and illustrations, DVDs and films, web sites, and historical documents, so teachers can make informed decisions about the instructional material they use. These same materials should also be assessed for how thoroughly they meet the *Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians*. This way, educators and students can move beyond the "dead and buried" or "tourist stop" approaches to teaching and learning about American Indians and move toward a genuine implementation of Indian Education for All.

A Note about Definitions

Many of the terms commonly used to refer to the indigenous inhabitants of North America (singularly, in groups, or collectively) are biased terms that stem from a non-indigenous, Eurocentric point-of-view. The significance of some of these terms has changed over time, however, and their inherent biases, while still present, do not carry the same weight as they did five centuries ago. For convenience, some of these terms (and others) are defined for educators.

American Indian *or* Native American? While the misnomer American "Indian" reveals Columbus' geographical confusion of India with the Americas, the term "American Indian" persists in common usage and is generally interchangeable with "Native American" (although some individuals prefer one term over the other). Both terms refer to the descendants of the indigenous people of North America in what is now the United States. This bias is not likely to go away any time soon, although "First Nation" has replaced "Aboriginal" in Canada and "First American" is occasionally used in the United States. Whenever possible, it is preferable to use a specific tribal affiliation.

Tribe, Tribal Nation, or Nation? The word "tribe" is problematic in the same way the misnomer "American Indian" is problematic. The strict definition of "tribe" is a group of inter-related people sharing a common language and culture. When first applied by English colonialists, "tribe" conferred a

measure of judgment—as if the indigenous people whom Europeans encountered did not constitute nations (politically sovereign entities with specific geographical territories). However, military and economic treaties between colonialist governments and "tribes" recognize implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) indigenous populations as nations by acknowledging their sovereignty.

Like "Indian," the term "tribe" has evolved beyond is original, colonialist usage. Today, "tribe" does not solely imply an ethnic group, but also indicates an indigenous *nation*. It would be more correct to cease using "tribe" and "Indian" entirely, but the terms have become a solid part of the American English lexicon. If we are going to continue using these terms, we need to acknowledge the irony of their original meanings and emphasize that, as used today, they no longer connote deliberate misidentification or ethnocentric bias.

Indigenous or Native? While the term "Native" is often used to indicate the original North Americans, it is easily confused with native (with a small "n"), which merely implies a person was born in a specific location. "Indigenous" is a more accurate descriptor, as it signifies the people, cultures, languages, and ways of life that originated in North America according to indigenous peoples' own histories.

How to Use This Evaluation Guide

The purpose of this document is to help teachers, librarians, and curriculum directors evaluate classroom materials for stereotypes, inaccuracies, omissions, and biases about American Indians that are so prevalent in American literature, films, and educational materials, so educators can make informed decisions when selecting instructional materials. It is divided into several different sections:

"Applying the *Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians*" identifies the biases and omissions each Essential Understanding seeks to remedy in Montana's educational curricula. While educators may be familiar with the *Essential Understandings*, they may not realize that embedded within each of the *Essential Understandings* are significant topics frequently omitted by biased instructional materials.

"Identifying Biases and Stereotypes in Instructional Materials" introduces teachers to the main types of biases and stereotypes they are likely to encounter in both popular media and educational materials. This section is broken down into six categories for ease of use: **Textbooks and Literature (Main Content)**; **Author/Illustrator; Accompanying and Supplementary Materials; Illustrations, Visual Data, and Maps**; **DVDs and Film**; and **Web sites and Online Content**. Within each category, specific types of biases are defined and described, and many of them are applicable to materials beyond the category in which they are described. (For example, many of the biases described in the "Textbooks and Literature" section are equally applicable to DVDs and Films, as well as to web sites.) Once educators are familiar with these forms of bias, they can use the **"Resource Evaluation Checklist"** to assess specific instructional materials.

"Working with Historical and Primary Documents" is its own section because historical and primary documents often contain an abundance of biases, omissions, and overt prejudices that exemplify the social, political, cultural, and religious perspectives of American society during a specific era or regarding a particular event. This section offers suggestions for how to use historical and primary documents to teach simultaneously about the topic of the document and about the biases it may

include, so students will gain a deeper understanding of the origins and legacies of prejudice throughout U.S. history. This section includes a **"Historical and Primary Document Analysis Worksheet"** for student and teacher use.

"Actively Improving What You Teach and What Students Learn" reaffirms the steps teachers can take to implement an anti-bias curriculum in their classrooms.

Teachers can use the **"Resource Evaluation Checklist for Educators"** after they have familiarized themselves with the different types of biases presented in the "Identifying Biases and Stereotypes" section. The checklists can be used by librarians, curriculum coordinators, and teachers when choosing instructional materials to purchase or for culling from classroom or school libraries; students may use it to evaluate books they read, illustrations they encounter, or web sites they consult.

"Resources for Educators and Students" presents a list of print, online, and organizational resources that can aid educators in evaluating and selecting anti-bias educational materials. It also includes resources for educating students about stereotypes and prejudices, as well as links to the web sites of Montana American Indian nations.

APPLYING *ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS REGARDING MONTANA INDIANS*

The *Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians* are an essential component of anti-bias curriculum in Montana. Embedded within each of the *Essential Understandings* are concepts that are fundamental to counteracting stereotyping, biases, and prejudice. When incorporating Indian Education for All lesson plans into your curriculum, take note of the biases they seek to correct and include supplementary materials that reinforce accurate information.

Essential Understanding 1: *There is great diversity among the twelve sovereign tribes of Montana in their languages, cultures, histories, and governments. Each tribe has a distinct and unique cultural heritage that contributes to modern Montana.*

- **ANTI-BIAS CONCEPT: Cultural diversity.**

Essential Understanding 2: *Just as there is great diversity among tribal nations, there is great diversity among individual American Indians as identity is developed, defined, and redefined by entities, organizations, and people. There is no generic American Indian.*

- **ANTI-BIAS CONCEPT: Personal diversity.**

Essential Understanding 3: *The ideologies of Native traditional beliefs and spirituality persist into modern day life as tribal cultures, traditions, and languages are still practiced by many American Indian people and are incorporated into how tribes govern and manage their affairs.*

Additionally, each tribe has its own oral histories, which are as valid as written histories. These histories predate the "discovery" of North America.

- **ANTI-BIAS CONCEPTS: Indigenous cultures are not dead. Tribal histories are unique, extensive, complex, and valid. Tribal histories pre-date Columbus by many millennia.**

Essential Understanding 4: *Though there have been tribal peoples living successfully on the North American lands for millennia, reservations are lands that have been reserved by or for tribes for their exclusive use as permanent homelands. Some were created through treaties while others were created by statutes and executive orders. The principle that land should be acquired from tribes only through their consent with treaties involved three assumptions: I. Both parties to treaties were sovereign powers. II. Indian tribes had some form of transferable title to the land. III. Acquisition of Indian lands was solely a government matter not to be left to individual colonists or states.*

- **ANTI-BIAS CONCEPTS: Tribes were not given their homelands or reservations. The federal government negotiated with tribes for land on a nation-to-nation basis.**

***Essential Understanding* 5:** *There were many federal policies put into place throughout American history that have affected Indian people in the past and continue to shape who they are today.*

- **ANTI-BIAS CONCEPTS: American Indians are not extinct. American Indians have been affected by federal policies and have also influenced changes in federal policies. For the most part, interactions between the U.S. government and indigenous people have not been benign or neutral. (Examples of these interactions by policy era are specified within each policy era.*)***

Colonization/Colonial Period, 1492 – 1800s includes innumerable wars and massacres; depletion of natural resources for European trade; enormous population decline across the continent due to infectious disease epidemics; and dispossession of many eastern tribes.

Treaty Period, 1789 – 1871, includes the Removal Policy and forced displacement of many eastern tribes to west of the Mississippi; expansion of the fur trade and gold rush into the West; innumerable treaties between the United States and tribal nations; illegal trespass of settlers onto designated tribal lands; Indian Wars and massacres (1850s-1890); near extermination of the Plains bison; epidemics; and the establishment of most of Montana's reservations.

Assimilation Period, 1879 – 1934, **i**ncludes the Allotment Policy that fragmented reservations under the Dawes Act of 1887 and precipitated substantial land loss; the Boarding School Policy aimed at divesting indigenous children of their indigenous languages, cultures, and tribal connections; federal oppression of tribal spiritual practices; the passage of the 1924 Indian Citizenship Act; and, generally, extreme poverty on the reservations.

Tribal Reorganization Period, 1934 – 1953, includes the Indian Reorganization Act to establish tribal governments modeled after corporate governing boards; the Indian Arts and Crafts movement; and a lift on the ban on tribal religious and spiritual ceremonies. It also includes the rise of collective American Indian political power through organizations like the National Congress of American Indians.

Termination and Relocation Period, 1953 – 1968, includes the Termination Policy aimed at obliterating the federal government's trust responsibilities towards tribes, as well as a renewed attempt at assimilation via Relocation. This also includes non-consensual sterilization of indigenous women by government-employed medical personnel.

Self-Determination Period, 1975 – Present, includes major American Indian political activism and passage of important legislation such as the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, Indian civil rights legislation, and the Tribal Self-Governance Act, in addition to many important judicial decisions. This era is characterized by an affirmation and reassertion of tribal sovereignty. In Montana, the 1972 Constitution asserts students will study American Indians' cultures and histories.

Essential Understanding 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.*

- **ANTI-BIAS CONCEPT: American Indians' experiences of historical events frequently differ from those of non-Indians and are worthy of study.**

Essential Understanding 7: *American Indian tribal nations are inherent sovereign nations and they possess sovereign powers, separate and independent from the federal and state governments. However, under the American legal system, the extent and breadth of self-governing powers are not the same for each tribe.*

- **ANTI-BIAS CONCEPT: Tribes are sovereign nations and have not relinquished their inherent sovereignty. Tribes continue to exercise their sovereignty today.**

Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians document

IDENTIFYING BIASES AND STEREOTYPES IN INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Textbooks and Literature (Main Content)

This section defines several types of biases, explains how each one is harmful, and provides examples of each one. Anti-Indian biases can be divided into two broad categories: distortions of history and distortions of culture and identity. Both categories include misinformation, blatant inaccuracies, judgment, and omission of important information. Distortions of history prevent students from knowing what really happened, deny the validity or importance of indigenous experiences, and hinder students' understanding America's own complex history. Similarly, distortions of culture and identity prejudice students' perceptions of American Indian people by misrepresenting tribal cultures, values, and ways of life. Educators should evaluate the main content of textbooks and literature for such distortions, inaccuracies, and stereotypes. DVDs, films, web sites, and historical documents may also contain these types of biases.

1. **Omission** – The absence of indigenous presence, tribal histories, or American Indian perspectives in textbooks implies indigenous or American Indian peoples never existed or their experiences were not worthy of consideration. For example, most U.S. history textbooks contain a section on the Bering Strait Theory and present it as fact and as the only way North America could have been populated. This approach excludes all other archeological theories and, more importantly, denies the validity of indigenous origin stories, oral histories, and tribes' own archaeological knowledge. Along these same lines, the omission of significant American Indian content in history texts beyond a certain time period implies wrongly that American Indians and indigenous cultures are extinct.

2. **Avoidance of controversial issues** – All too often textbooks and curricula skirt around controversial issues or gloss over them to minimize their actual significance. Some examples include the ongoing, negative impacts of Indian boarding schools on generations of American Indian families; the mismanagement of tribal and individual Indian monies by the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and the genocide that accompanied the California gold rush. Such avoidance leaves students without a realistic understanding of actual events and without regard for indigenous people's lived experiences. It is imperative educators make a concerted effort to present multiple sides of controversial and complex issues rather than glossing over or avoiding them.

3. **Selectivity** – Some textbooks and literary works mention only those indigenous people (like Squanto or Sacagawea) who aided the European colonists or American settlers, while failing to feature indigenous heroes or heroines whose actions benefited their own societies. American Indians need to be included in classroom materials in all their complexity—not just for their remarkable contributions to American society, but also for their own accomplishments and on their own merits. The absence of indigenous heroes and heroines in children's literature and in films implies all students should emulate only the white role models that surround them in abundance, as if there are no indigenous heroes or heroines whose actions and values are worthy of acknowledgement.

4. **Tokenism** – Like selectivity, tokenism gives the appearance of inclusion, and yet a closer look reveals that American Indian content is superficial, isolated, or treated as an after-thought.

Tokenism is very prevalent in state and national history textbooks, which tend to mention indigenous people very sporadically and only in relation to European or Euro-American exploits: the Pilgrim's Thanksgiving, Custer's demise at Little Big Horn, and perhaps as World War II code talkers. If significant American Indian content is not infused throughout a textbook, then that resource is not doing justice to American Indian issues, people, or histories or to the full history of the United States.

5. **Ethnocentric bias** – Ethnocentric bias is the presentation of a one-sided perspective (that of one's own culture) to the exclusion or condemnation of all else. Ethnocentric bias often manifests itself in culturally biased language – for example, in claims that Columbus "discovered" America, that the West was a "vast, untamed wilderness," and that Christian missionaries "brought religion" to "heathens." While some ethnocentrism is inevitable (as every text grows from a particular context), instructional materials should take into account divergent experiences and perspectives so as to present a more complete picture.

    - **Primitivism** and **Paternalism** are two forms of ethnocentric bias the United States institutionalized when it defined American Indians as "children" who were the "incompetent wards" of the Great White Father and the federal government.

    - **Be wary of presenting information that repeatedly depicts American Indians acting exclusively in reaction to Europeans or Euro-Americans,** as doing so suggests indigenous peoples did not have their own, inherent reasons for their actions—reasons that may have had nothing to do with the actions or presence of non-Indians.

6. **Value judgment** – Ethnocentric biases often lead to value judgment: one culture sets its own standards as the *universal* standard and judges others by how well they measure up. Under this one-sided system, others' cultural attributes are only deemed virtuous when they reflect one's own values, norms, behaviors, and beliefs. Such judgment denies the inherent merits of indigenous nations and/or cultures by superimposing non-indigenous value systems. Subtly or overtly, such judgment conveys notions of superiority and inferiority and, by doing so, creates shame and encourages racism.

    Educators should examine very closely *how* texts present people, behaviors, and value systems. Is all that is "white" presented as being good, while what is "Indian" portrayed as bad? Is Christianity held to be spiritually or morally superior, while indigenous spirituality or moral principles deemed inferior? Are white people depicted as being more rationale, capable, intelligent, or compassionate than American Indian people? Teachers must be conscious of how they present information so as not to imply superiority or inferiority.

7. **Blatant inaccuracies** – Some resources perpetuate blatant inaccuracies about American Indians, such as the fallacies that reservation lands were "given" to Indians, that Indians "get free money and food from the government," and that "Indians don't pay taxes." These biases will persist if not addressed in school. Perhaps one of the biggest distortions disseminated by textbooks is that "the West was won." This idea implies the United States defeated Indian tribes and acquired dominance over the West via military conquest and surrender. No such conquest occurred, although many

violent confrontations took place. Euro-Americans did not "win" the West, nor did tribes relinquish their inherent rights, all of their land, or their sovereignty.

8. **Biased language** – Biased terminology in books distorts American Indian identities by misleading the reader. Biased language often stems from ethnocentrism. Some examples are the use of "massacre" when Euro-Americans were killed versus "battle" when whites killed indigenous people; calling white women simply "women," but referring to indigenous women as "squaws;" claiming that Europeans had "religion" but indigenous cultures had "superstitions."

9. **Stereotyping** – Literature, films, and advertising often contain stereotypes that, once acquired, can be very difficult to unlearn. Anti-Indian stereotypes promote misunderstanding, fear, and prejudice today, just as they did in the past. Historically, explorers, conquistadors, traders, colonialists, government officials, the military, churches, teachers, the media, and Euro-American citizens created prejudiced descriptions of indigenous peoples as "savage," "warlike," "treacherous," "immoral," or "uncivilized." Indigenous women have been stereotyped as subservient, toiling drudges, whose power is denied by such a characterization. These stereotypes were used to justify acts of violence, dispossession, oppression, and genocide against indigenous peoples. Other stereotypes, such as the "noble savage" or the "Indian living in harmony with nature," may *appear* to be less harmful, but still distort American Indians' identities by promoting unrealistic generalizations.

10. **Objectification** – Some resources focus exclusively on American Indians' physical appearances or athletic ability, but dismiss or deny their intellectual, emotional, or humanitarian qualities. This is objectification. Other instructional materials overemphasize tribes' material culture (clothing, tools, dwellings, crafts, weaponry, food, etc.), but fail to include significant discussion of tribes' diverse and complex social, political, and economic systems, their considerable scientific knowledge, or indigenous peoples' many achievements.

11. **Dehumanization** – At their worst, judgment, biased language, and stereotyping present indigenous people as less than human. Since colonial times, Europeans and Euro-Americans have dehumanized indigenous people in order to justify killing, overthrowing, or dispossessing them. Today, dehumanization may not be as obvious, but it does persist. Children's books that depict animals dressed in "Indian" clothing subtly perpetuate notions of Indians being less than human, as do films or literature describing Native peoples as behaving with "savage animal aggression" or "wildly."

12. **Generic Indian identity** – Educators should avoid materials that imply there is a generic "American Indian" identity or that suggest American Indians are mono-cultural or mono-linguistic. At the time of European contact, there were over 1,000 unique indigenous groups in what is now the United States, each with its own language and culture. Today, there are over 500 different federally recognized tribes who speak over 300 distinct languages. Indigenous languages are not dialects, and most are not mutually intelligible. Some are language isolates (languages that are unrelated to any other existing language). Beware of instructional materials and literary works that mix and match tribal attributes without distinction. Even today, all tribes do not share the same values, norms, spiritual beliefs, customs, kinship systems, material culture, economies, political systems, physical attributes, or specific histories.

13. **Historicizing –** Materials that consistently refer to American Indians in the past tense (or only show images of historical indigenous people) imply American Indians and/or their tribes are extinct. Similarly, those resources that dismiss contemporary American Indians as not being "*real* Indians" hold contemporary people to an unrealistic, static identity. (Imagine if today's "real" European-Americans had to wear bonnets or wooden clogs, were expected to speak Shakespearean English, or had to know how to spin wool into yarn.) Historicizing denies the existence of real people who are the descendants of this continent's indigenous populations.

Author and Illustrator

Evaluating the author and illustrator of a product is another important step in assessing the material for biases. This step is especially important when evaluating Native American-themed children's or young adult literature, illustrations, and films, because these materials claim to relate American Indian experiences via American Indian characters or purport to recount American Indian traditional stories or histories. Librarians and teachers will need to take extra care when assessing any material claiming to be about "Native Americans," "American Indians," or even a specific tribe. Consider the following criteria:

1. **Connection:** Does the author or illustrator have a genuine and solid connection to the culture or tribal nation featured in the book, illustration, or film? If not, did a tribal member, historian, or cultural committee provide consultation or review the product for accurate and respectful representation of that specific tribe? Look for reviews by American Indian media reviewers and by members of the tribe the resource claims to be about. Be wary of authors or illustrators whose connections are dubious or insubstantial.

2. **Acknowledgement:** Does the author or illustrator acknowledge the indigenous source of the story or images? Is the author or illustrator seeking to make a profit off someone else's tradition and culture?

3. **Insider viewpoint:** Does the author or illustrator of the product have a genuine understanding of the story or image, and can she/he present it from a cultural insider's point-of-view? Avoid materials by authors or illustrators who present American Indian characters or themes from a non-Indian perspective while claiming to represent an American Indian perspective, those who claim a generic "American Indian" identity, and those who seek to validate their "expertise" by claiming a remote indigenous ancestor.

4. **Non-indigenous variations on traditional stories:** Some non-Native authors or illustrators superimpose non-indigenous themes, values, and behaviors on indigenous characters, sometimes altering an indigenous tradition to make it appeal to non-Indian audiences. Close scrutiny of the author or illustrator might reveal a likelihood of this bias, as might checking with a reputable reviewer.

5. **Judgment:** Superimposing an outsider's judgment over another culture's subject matter can be as subtle as calling an indigenous oral history a "myth." Look for value-based language, stereotyping, and overt or implicit shaming, as well as the author's tone. (See **Textbooks and Literature – Main Content** for more information about judgment, stereotypes, and value-based language.)

6. **Imitation:** In the early twentieth century, American and European composers, fashion designers, and choreographers created musical scores, textiles, dresses, and dances that mimicked indigenous artistic elements, mixing and matching attributes from many different tribes. Often, these imitations more closely resembled the non-Indians' *perceptions* of indigenous material, leading to generic "Indian" themes. Similarly, many authors and illustrators have made their careers creating imitations – stories or illustrations "in the style of" traditional indigenous stories, oral histories, or visual imagery. Imitation does not promote genuine appreciation for authentic indigenous stories or histories, and mimicking a tribe's story-telling style or imagery does not show respect for the actual people whose culture is being imitated.

For more points to consider when evaluating an author or illustrator of "American Indian" literature, see Oyate's Additional Criteria.

Accompanying and Supplementary Materials

When examining and evaluating instructional materials (particularly literature and textbooks), educators should consider the accompanying and supplementary materials as well as the main content.

1. **Index:** The index of the book will give an indication of the amount and extent of American Indian-related content. Are the terms used in association with particular tribes (or in reference to events affecting American Indians) biased, inaccurate, or misleading? Check for variety of American Indian-related topics, as well as specificity and accuracy.

2. **Teacher's Guide:** Do the objectives and learner outcomes listed in the teacher's guide or in the lesson plan include specific objectives relating to the American Indian content? Are these objectives consistent with the *Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians*? Does the teacher's guide provide enough information to assist the teacher in meeting these objectives? If the Index and the Teacher's Guide both lack substantial reference to American Indian issues, people, histories, or specific cultures, the textbook is unlikely to contain significant and diverse American Indian content.

3. **Discussion Questions:** Do a significant number of discussion questions address American Indian people, issues, experiences, or histories? Are students asked to consider multiple sides of a controversial issue or diverse effects of a policy, including impacts on American Indians? Are the questions phrased in a biased way so as to force a particular conclusion? As is relevant to the topic, do the questions address contemporary American Indian issues as well as historical ones? Finally, do the questions reflect the *Essential Understandings*?

4. **Suggested Activities:** Do the activities promote respect, appreciation, and understanding of American Indians? Do they encourage students to learn more about specific American Indian people or topics? Conversely, do they encourage "playing Indian" or other disrespectful imitation based on stereotypes? If the suggested activities lack substantive American Indian content, help students make significant connections between the topic and American Indian cultures, histories, or people.

5. **Further Reading:** Do the suggestions for further reading contain significant content about American Indians? Check with American Indian book-review web sites, individuals, or organizations for reviews on recently published materials.

6. **Copyright Date:** When was the instructional material first published and when was it most recently revised? It is important to examine critically any textbook printed originally in the mid-twentieth century to see if the changes are substantive or mere tokenism. Quick revisions in a few paragraphs or illustrations will not create a textbook with significantly improved American Indian content.

Illustrations, Visual Data, and Maps

Visual information has a very important function in the learning process. This is true for people of all ages, but particularly true for young children who have not yet learned how to read. Images leave immediate, powerful impressions that shape viewers' perceptions of the subject.

Many students come to the school environment with pre-formed negative stereotypes they learned through exposure to biased or inaccurate visual imagery from television, movies, or picture books. By conveying inaccurate and disparaging notions, such imagery transmits prejudice with immediacy.

Subtly or overtly, biased imagery creates prejudiced perceptions. Educators need to be wary of illustrations that generalize American Indians' appearance or disparage American Indian cultures, as well as those that historicize American Indians or pigeon-hole them into a single economic status, social role, or way of life. When biased, negative, or inaccurate images of American Indians are used, non-Indians do not perceive actual American Indian people or their cultures *as they really are.* American Indian children may feel inferior, embarrassed, or ashamed when images or illustrations depict American Indian people or indigenous cultures in a negative, distorted, or dehumanizing way.

Teachers should select books with illustrations and visual data that present accurate images of American Indians in order to promote better understanding of the diversity of the American Indian population today and in the past. Educators must work diligently to eliminate materials that overtly or covertly promote prejudice or foster notions of racial or cultural inferiority.

When evaluating illustrations and visual data, particularly in textbooks and literature, teachers should ask several questions, such as:

- Does the visual resource contain caricatures of American Indians, portray a generic culture, or perpetuate stereotypes about American Indians?
- Are the cover and content illustrations culturally and temporally accurate?
- Does the illustrator have significant connections to the people or culture being portrayed?
- Would any of the images embarrass or shame any American Indian students?

The following guidelines, expanded and adapted from "*'I' Is Not For Indian*" by Naomi Caldwell-Wood, can help the teacher or librarian select appropriate visual materials:

1. **For textbook illustrations and visual data, always check the illustration captions for accuracy, bias, stereotypes, omission, etc., just as you would examine any other text.**

2. **Illustrations, including those on book or DVD covers, should not reinforce negative stereotypes about American Indians.** Avoid, for example, images of wagon trains being attacked by Indians or pictures of menacing-looking indigenous men wielding tomahawks, which erroneously suggest that indigenous people were or are a threat to Euro-Americans. Also, avoid sexualized images of "Indian maidens" in short or low-cut fringed dresses.

3. **Illustrations should not portray American Indians as cartoonish caricatures with exaggerated physical features, animals, or as counting objects.** Beware of illustrations showing Indians as war-bonneted chiefs with large hooked noses, as wooden Indians, in "how" gestures, or as counting objects (like "Ten Little Indians"). Pictures of animals in generic "Indian" clothing are also dehumanizing and do nothing to promote respect for *actual* American Indians, past or present. Such illustrations ridicule American Indians and mislead all students.

4. **Illustrations of American Indians should not simply color over Caucasian features or portray a generic "Indian" phenotype.** American Indians have a wide variety of skin tones and diverse physical features. They should never be depicted as having red skin. Similarly, illustrations should also not mix and match clothing, hairstyles, phenotypical features, dwelling types, or symbols from many different tribes as if there are no cultural distinctions.

5. **Illustrations should show American Indians in clothing and hairstyles contemporary to the place, culture, and era being depicted.** Too often, illustrations perpetuate the stereotype that American Indians walk around all the time in feathers carrying bows and arrows. When contemporary American Indians are shown in traditional dress or regalia, the teacher can explain to students that today's American Indians usually only wear traditional dress or regalia for special occasions, celebrations, certain ceremonies, and powwows.

6. **Illustrations should portray American Indians in a variety of socio-economic settings, as one would expect to see other Americans.** They should be shown living in the same variety of homes as other Americans live. If poor conditions are repeatedly portrayed, students may wrongly assume that all American Indians live in poverty.

7. **Illustrations should depict American Indians in a wide range of occupational roles, including executive, professional, and vocational occupations accurate to the context of the story.** These more accurate images provide positive role models for American Indian children and also help break down misconceptions that *all* American Indians are unemployed or *only* work in occupations limited to crafts, such as pottery, jewelry making, blanket weaving, and beading.

8. **Historical photographs sometimes may also be inaccurate or inauthentic, and some research on the photographer is essential.** Some historical photographers staged their photographs of American Indians to make them appear "more Indian" – in other words, more like the *stereotypes* non-Indians had already created for them. Other photographers took more candid photographs and provided sufficient descriptive text to identify the tribe, place, date, and activity being depicted in the photograph. Distinguish between the two.

9. **Textbook maps should be historically and geographically accurate.** The location of the tribes should be correct, specific, and accurate for the time period. Many English names for tribes are not

the same names tribes use for themselves. Most maps are inherently biased in that they are ethnocentric; very few contain tribes' own place names, for example.

10. **Statistics in textbook graphs, charts, and tables should be figuratively and numerically accurate and up-to-date.** The source of information for the data should always be included.

DVDs and Film

The Hollywood Indian is the preeminent American Indian stereotype of the 20th century. Most films made during this era contain extreme inaccuracies that perpetuate misinformation and prejudices. DVDs and films featuring or about American Indians should be evaluated for biases using the same criteria as print resources – looking at the quality of the main content, investigating the creators (including consultants) and their connections to the tribe(s) portrayed in the film, and assessing the visual images for distortions. Additionally, educators should consider several other factors when assessing DVDs and films:

1. **Who are the actors that portray American Indians in the film?** Are they actual American Indians or non-Indians dressed up? Are they playing generic "Indian" characters or do they accurately represent specific tribes?

2. **What are the American Indians characters wearing?** Is the clothing stereotypical breech clothes, fringed dresses, and feathers? Or is a real attempt made to show culturally and historically accurate clothing specific to a particular tribe?

3. **What languages are being spoken in the film?** If indigenous languages are spoken, are they translated? Many older films featured fake "Indian" languages or did not bother to translate what was being said.

4. **Do the American Indians in the film speak broken English (in a stereotypical fashion, like the Lone Ranger's sidekick)?**

5. **Is the setting accurate (time, place, tribe), and are the dress, material culture, personal behavior, and language accurate to a specific tribe.**

6. **Is the soundtrack "generic Indian" style—flutes or drums, not associated with any actual tribe?** Many Western films and cartoons from the mid-twentieth century feature a fake, four-count "Hollywood beat" that imitated a non-Indian's interpretation of "Indian" music. Similarly, many cartoons show indigenous people chanting in nonsense syllables while marching around a fire. These misinterpretations or generalized stereotypes insult actual indigenous musical traditions, which vary from tribe to tribe.

7. **Are American Indian heroes and heroines represented in the film?** Beware of movies that elevate only the "friendlies" over the "hostiles" by making those individuals who helped white settlers the "good guys" while those who defended their own homes or way of life into the "bad guys."

8. **How are gender roles represented?** Are American Indian women consistently played as subservient or only seen in the background? Are men always warriors or violent?

9. **Be aware of the perspectives presented in films.** Does the film *only* present its material from a "white" point-of-view (ethnocentrism), while portraying indigenous people as a threat or an obstacle? Or are American Indians depicted *only* as helpless victims or as spiritually supreme "noble savages," but never as ordinary people?

10. **Play close attention to the overall tone of the film.** Is it mocking, disrespectful, humiliating, dehumanizing, or otherwise insulting? The overall tone of the film will influence children's perceptions of American Indian people and their cultures. Be especially cautious of animated films' presentation of American Indians, as it is often degrading and stereotypical.

11. **Help students understand the context in which films take place.** Encourage students to seek more information and determine for themselves the accuracy of films' portrayal (or omission) of American Indians. (Students can use the resources for analyzing historical and primary documents to analyze films and DVDs. See the **Resources** section.)

12. **Whenever possible, seek out reviews by American Indian reviewers.**

Culturally and historically accurate films can be a valuable asset to educators and students. PBS has produced several excellent documentaries on American Indians in U.S. history. The series ***We Shall Remain*** investigates five specific historical topics from relevant indigenous perspectives, providing detail and depth not often achieved in other films. Each episode includes supplementary education materials and lesson plans. Grades 6-12.

REEL Injuns is a documentary about how Hollywood films have portrayed American Indians and tribes from the 1920s through the 1990s. It is suitable for use in the classroom, but does contain brief nudity. Grades 8-12.

Web sites and Online Content

The abundance of web sites claiming to be "Native American" suggests close scrutiny of their contents and creators. Educators can use the same criteria for evaluating print resources (main content, authors/illustrators, visual imagery, and supplemental material) and DVDs/film to assess web sites and online content. *In addition to* these criteria, educators should ask the following questions:

1. **What purpose does the web site serve?** Is its intention to educate, to sell products and/or services, or to entertain?

2. **Examine the creators/publishers of the web site and the sources of the site's information.** Are tribal affiliations specified? If the site was created by non-tribal entities, is credit for the American Indian content documented?

3. **Is the web site specific to a particular tribal nation or group of tribes (such as tribes from a particular region)?** *Be especially cautious of any generic "Native American" site or material that is*

not clearly attributed to a specific tribe or individual. Tribal nations have their own official web sites. Other web sites may contain accurate or inaccurate information about tribes, and the information they provide can be cross-checked with official tribal web sites, reliable print resources, or tribal culture committees.

4. **If not about a specific tribe, is the web site or content specific to a particular issue or topic?** Or does it contain a jumble of different American Indian-related content? Also, is the content well documented? For example, do web sites that recount American Indian stories give credit to the specific tribe for each story as well as to the storyteller? Is there additional content about the tribe to provide an accurate cultural context for the story?

5. **Check any links provided on the web site.** Do they lead to reputable and relevant sites?

Links to web sites for Montana tribal nations are available in the *Directory of Indian Education Programs in Montana*.

Another useful web site for accurate information on regional tribes is Trail Tribes. Created by the Regional Learning Project of the University of Montana, this web site contains a wide range of historically accurate information (including primary source material, layered maps, and images) about tribes encountered by Lewis and Clark. Information spans the pre-expedition era to the present. Grade 3-12.

For additional information on evaluating web sites and online content for anti-Indian biases, see "Techniques for Evaluating American Indian Web sites" by Elizabeth Cubbins.

WORKING WITH HISTORICAL AND PRIMARY DOCUMENTS

Challenges of Working with Historical and Primary Documents

Historical and primary documents – including letters, newspaper articles, treaties, journals, photographs, census reports, cartoons, and government documents – reflect the social, political, historical, and cultural contexts in which they were created, including the biases and prejudices. These documents can be used effectively in the classroom to examine the prevalence of certain biases at particular eras in American history and to investigate how such views influenced public policies, institutions, and people's lives.

Educators can teach students how to assess primary and historical documents for bias by asking students to examine critically the language, perspective, values, and objectives present in these documents as well as to identify what has been omitted, denigrated, or de-valued. By investigating historical biases, students can make connections between the biases prevalent at a certain era (as revealed in historical documents) and the events they precipitated. Students will develop a greater awareness of how biases have shaped American society, policies, and institutions. Understanding the development and impacts of historical prejudices and other biases in the United States is a critical part of acquiring a more accurate and comprehensive picture of our national history and our present circumstances.

Students can use the **Historical and Primary Document Analysis Worksheet** or one of the worksheets provided in the **Resources** section. As students analyze and discuss the documents, educators will need to keep several important things in mind:

1. Always remind students to examine historical and primary documents in the context in which they were created. Context includes time, place, author, function/purpose, cultural perspectives, and intended audience. Help students seek more information, if necessary, to understand the context adequately for analyzing the document.

2. Help students work through feelings of self-reproach regarding issues, attitudes, and events they did not participate in. Help them move beyond shame and blame, as these attitudes prevent students from examining issues of bias and developing self-awareness.

3. Remind students the primary purpose of studying stereotypes, biases, and prejudices from the past is to learn how to be more aware of parallel biases or similar prejudices today, so they may understand that prejudices create lasting effects on real people's lives.

4. Encourage students to make connections between historical prejudices and contemporary issues, policies, events, and attitudes – including their own. Self-awareness will help students develop their ability to address issues of inequity.

5. As they make real-life connections, students can be empowered to take action (in the form of creative expression, written work, or social action) to confront such injustices.

Historical and Primary Document Analysis Worksheet

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Title of Document: _____

Date of Document: _____ Location (published or created): _____

Author/Illustrator/Creator: _____

Document Type (letter, newspaper article, treaty, political cartoon, drawing, etc.):
_____

Who was the intended audience for this document? _____

How is this document related to events that were happening when and where it was created?
_____

What is the main topic of the document? _____
_____

Does the creator of the document use words, phrases, or images in order to influence the viewer's opinion on this topic? _____ If so, what words, phrases, or images did the creator use to influence the viewer's opinion? _____
_____
_____

Does the creator of this document try to persuade the reader/viewer to take action? _____
If so, what action? _____

What words, phrases, or images suggest this action? _____
_____

List any words, phrases, or visual imagery from this document that *you* interpreted as being
- value judgments: _____
- stereotypes: _____
- distortion: _____
- ethnocentrism: _____
- other forms of bias: _____

When *you* read this document, how did it make you feel or what did it make you think? Why?
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

ACTIVELY IMPROVING WHAT YOU TEACH AND WHAT STUDENTS LEARN

Critically evaluating instructional materials is essential for preventing the perpetuation of misinformation, biases, and stereotypes. When deciding what materials to use in your classroom, be mindful to choose literary works, textbooks, visual materials, and digital resources that:

1. **Integrate significant American Indian content throughout the text and include input from multiple tribes.** Incorporate materials that represent a wide variety of tribal cultures and a broad spectrum of American Indian people, so students understand that tribes are diverse and unique. Information about American Indians should be integrated throughout textbooks and the curriculum, not isolated or treated as an after-thought.

2. **Encourage students' understanding of inherent sovereignty.** Materials should recognize and respect that tribes have inherent sovereignty. Tribal nations have a unique relationship to the United States based upon their status as nations; they are not ethnic minorities in the same sense as other ethnic groups who lack this sovereign status. Tribal nations did not relinquish their inherent sovereignty and continue to exercise it today when upholding their treaty rights and implementing self-determination. (See *Essential Understanding* 7.)

3. **Incorporate and respect diverse perspectives.** Materials should provide multiple and divergent perspectives (including diverse American Indian perspectives) and should do not elevate one culture or over another. (See *Essential Understanding* 6.)

4. **Recognize and honor the intrinsic value of indigenous cultures**, **instead of just describing how indigenous peoples have contributed to American society or have been succeeded by non-Indian standards.** The original inhabitants of the continent have vast, diverse, and important histories and cultures which they have documented through oral histories, place names, stories, visual imagery, and individual memories. American Indian histories, cultures, and accomplishments are as complex, varied, valid, and worthy of study as those of any other peoples or nations.

5. **Challenge stereotypes.** Incorporate an abundance of very specific, non-fiction materials about actual American Indian people from different tribes and from different periods in time. Choose materials that emphasize individual behaviors and personal qualities that are valued within their own cultures as well as those valued within indigenous and non-Indian societies alike (such as compassion, generosity, honesty, integrity, intelligence, humility, and courage). Materials should depict American Indians as having a full range of human abilities, emotions, interests, and talents. They should reveal the social, political, cultural, spiritual, and economic complexities of different tribes, rather than implying that American Indians or tribal cultures are one-dimensional, frozen in time, or mon-ocultural.

6. **Promote respect for American Indian women and girls.** Throughout history, indigenous women fulfilled important roles in their tribes' cultural societies, economies, and political systems. In some indigenous societies, women held leadership positions, presided over intra- and inter-tribal affairs, and controlled tribal economies. They were healers, midwives, skilled laborers, diplomats, and

even warriors. Today, American Indian women continue to have important social, leadership, and professional roles in both their tribal and non-tribal communities.

7. **Nurture American Indian students' self-worth.** American Indian children need to see their own cultures reflected positively in school curricula, as do non-Indians. Emphasize materials that promote a sense of cultural self-worth and pride in one's culture, ancestry, and heritage. Include an abundance of materials featuring indigenous heroes and heroines (including contemporary American Indians, like Eloise Cobell), whose lives and accomplishments are not often included in written and oral tribal histories. This will help *all* students develop a richer understanding of indigenous cultures and a deeper appreciation for American Indian people.

8. **Emphasize that American Indians and indigenous cultures are still alive today.** Provide your students with resources about both historical and contemporary American Indians.

Always set a positive example for your students by demonstrating respect and modeling self-awareness. *Remember that language and tone of voice convey ideas about the subject matter. Your approach to implementing Indian Education for All will inspire or discourage your students, and the materials you feature in your classroom will leave lasting impressions on them.*

RESOURCE EVALUATION CHECKLIST FOR EDUCATORS

Title of Resource: _____

Type of Resource: _____ **Fiction:** ____ **Non-Fiction:** ____

Publisher or Web site: _____ **Publication Date:** _____

Creator (author, illustrator, director): _____

General Questions:

1. Which tribe or tribes are identified in this resource?

2. If the creator of this resource is *not* a tribal member, were tribal members, cultural committees, or knowledgeable experts consulted about the American Indian content in this resource?

3. Has this resource been reviewed by a tribal cultural committee, tribal historian, or other well-qualified reviewer?

4. Is there anything about this resource that leads you to question the validity, accuracy, or authenticity of the information it presents about American Indians?

What to watch out for:

Does the resource…

___ mix and match cultural attributes or characteristics from different tribes?

___ feature generic "Indians" or a vague "Native American" identity?

___ imply all indigenous peoples from North America have the same language, culture, history, spiritual traditions, or way of life?

___ promote stereotypes or caricatures of American Indian people, tribes, or cultures?

___ imply American Indian people or cultures are inferior or bad?

___ use biased language to create prejudiced impressions of indigenous people or cultures?

___ perpetuate blatant inaccuracies about American Indian people, histories, or cultures?

___ omit, avoid, or minimize indigenous histories, people, or experiences?

___ imply that all American Indians and/or indigenous cultures are identical or extinct?

___ present only a non-Indian point-of-view of history or events?

___ mention only American Indians who were useful to Europeans or Euro-Americans?

___ avoid controversial or complex issues or gloss over harm inflicted by the policies, non-Indian citizens, military, or government of the United States?

___ deny or seek to undermine tribal sovereignty, cultural self-worth, or linguistic value?

___ contain any material that would shame or embarrass an American Indian student?

___ contain any material that would cause any student to think American Indians or indigenous cultures are inferior, bad, or unimportant?

What to include:

Does the resource…

___ correctly locate and identify tribes?

___ acknowledge the cultural, physical, and linguistic diversity between tribes?

___ present information about American Indians respectfully and accurately?

___ acknowledge tribal sovereignty and promote a better understanding of the unique relationship between tribes and the federal government?

___ recognize and honor the intrinsic value of indigenous cultures as well as the importance of continued cultural and linguistic survival?

___ acknowledge indigenous contributions to American society, history, politics, and culture?

___ include American Indian perspectives and experiences in a respectful manner?

___ address controversial or complex subjects by giving equal voice to all sides, including American Indian people?

___ depict the cultural, religious, political, and economic diversity among present-day American Indians?

___ recognize and honor contemporary and/or historical American Indians who are heroes or heroines within their own tribes?

___ portray American Indian people as intelligent, capable, trustworthy, and caring human beings?

___ nurture cultural and personal pride in American Indian students?

___ provide positive American Indian role models for all students?

___ encourage all students to respect American Indian people, histories, and cultures?

___ inspire all students to learn more about American people, histories, and cultures?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS

Most of the resources listed below are intended for teachers, librarians, and other educators; when resources are also useful for students, grade level is indicated.

Print and Online Resources for Addressing Biases and Stereotypes

A Broken Flute: The Native Experience in Books for Children. (Book, 476 pages) Doris Seale (Santee/Cree) and Beverly Slapin, eds. Series: Contemporary Native American Communities (Book 14). AltaMira Press, 2006. Montana OPI has provided this book to public school libraries.

American Indian Library Association. (Organization)

- ***"I" Is Not For Indian: The Portrayal of Native Americans in Books for Young People.*** (Selective Bibliography and Guide) Compiled By Naomi Caldwell-Good and Lisa A. Mitten for the Program of the ALA/OLOS Subcommittee for Library Services to American Indian People. Atlanta, Georgia, June 29, 1991. This extensive bibliography includes recommended titles, titles to avoid, and a guide to selecting books, plus sources of book reviews.

- ***"I" Is For Inclusion: The Portrayal Of Native Americans In Books For Young People.*** Compiled by Naomi Caldwell, Gabriella Kaye, and Lisa A. Mitten, for the Program of the ALA/OLOS Subcommittee for Library Services to American Indian People. American Indian Library Association, American Indian Children's Literature: Identifying and Celebrating the Good. Washington, D.C., June 23, 2007. Revised, October, 2007. The second of AILA's substantial bibliographies includes Native American authors' books published between 1991 and 2007, and reviews for books about contemporary American Indians. It includes "Books We Love to Hate" – books these reviewers found significantly problematic—as well as an updated list of resources for evaluating materials and sources for purchasing American Indian literature.

American Indians in Children's Literature. (Web site/blog) Debbie Reese (Nambe Pueblo). Established in 2006, American Indians in Children's Literature (AICL) provides critical perspectives and analysis of indigenous peoples in children's and young adult's books, school curriculum, popular culture, and American society. This extensive web site includes links to book reviews, Native media, and illustrations.

American Indians: Stereotypes and Realities. (Book, 154 pages) Devon A. Mihesuah (Choctaw). Clarity Press, Inc., 2009. Mihesuah's book addresses common stereotypes as well as subtle forms of anti-American Indian racism in literature, film, sports, and American institutions; handy for educators and librarians. Grade level: high school, educator.

An Updated Guide for Selecting Anti-Bias Children's Books. (Webpage) Louise Derman-Sparks. Teaching for Change Books, 2013.

Anti-Bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves. (Book, 166 pages) Louise Derman-Sparks. National Association for the Education of You, 2009.

Countering Prejudice against American Indians and Alaska Natives through Antibias Curriculum and Instruction. (Article) Deirdre A. Almeida (Lenni Lenape/Shawnee). Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, 1996. ERIC Identifier: ED400146.

In Whose Honor? American Indian Mascots in Sports. (DVD, 86 minutes) Produced by Jay Rosenstein, New Day Films. PBS: POV, 1997. Grades 7-12.

Myths and Stereotypes About Native Americans. (Essay) Walter C. Fleming (Kickapoo). Reprinted in Phi Delta Kappan, November 7, 2006. Grades 9-12.

Oyate. (Organization) Oyate provides critical reviews of literature and media resources related to American Indians. Educators and the public can e-subscribe to their reviews and can order a variety of American Indian children's literature through the web site. Additionally, Oyate offers helpful checklists for evaluating print and digital materials for anti-Indian biases, stereotypes, and misinformation.

- **"How to Tell the Difference"** page for assessing literature

Teaching About Native American Issues. (Webpage)

Techniques for Evaluating American Indian Web sites. (Web article, n.d.) University of Arizona.

Unlearning "Indian" Stereotypes. (Slideshow on DVD, 12 minutes.) Originally produced by the Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1977. Enhanced by Rethinking Schools, 2008. Grades 3-12. Can be purchased through Rethinking Schools:

Washington Models for the Evaluation of Bias Content in Instructional Materials. (Article) Washington Office of Public Instruction, 2009. Defines various general biases in a format that allows students and educators to assess educational media. Not specific to American Indian content. For educators and older students.

Resources for Analyzing Historical and Primary Documents

The resources listed below can also be used by students to analyze contemporary documents.

Coming to Light: Edward S. Curtis and the North American Indians. (DVD; 85 minutes.) Anne Makepeace, Director. PBS: American Masters (season 15, episode 8), 2001.
A critical analysis of Edward S. Curtis' photographs of American Indian people, this investigative film encourages viewers not to accept all photographs at face value. Grades: 6-12.

Document Analysis Worksheets. National Archives.
This includes worksheets for text documents, photographs, cartoons, posters, maps, artifacts, motion pictures, and sound recordings. Grades: 1-5.

Teacher's Guides and Analysis Tool. Library of Congress.
This presents a non-technical approach for undertaking an interpretive analysis of a variety of document types and media, but does not directly address the presence of stereotypes, biases, or

potential misinformation. Although these guides were created for teachers, they are suitable for all grade levels.

Using Primary Sources. Library of Congress.
This resource encourages readers to look critically and thoroughly at primary documents and assess them with multiple criteria in mind, including presence of stereotypes and biases, creator's intentions, and context of the primary document. For educators and all grade levels.

Montana IEFA Lesson Plans on Stereotypes, Biases, and Quality of Information

Fact or Fiction? Montana Office of Public Instruction, Indian Education Division. Grade: 1.

Stereotypes. Montana Office of Public Instruction. Indian Education Division. Grade: 3.

Strategic Skill: Evaluating Information Quality Using Electronic Sources. Indian Education Division, Montana Office of Public Instruction, Indian Education Division. Grade: 4.

Identifying Stereotypes and Countering Them. Montana Office of Public Instruction. Indian Education Division. Grade: 4.

Quality of Information: Point of View and Bias. Montana Office of Public Instruction. Indian Education Division. Grade: 5.

Historical Inaccuracy in Movies – The Pocahontas Myth. Montana Office of Public Instruction. Indian Education Division. Grades: 7-8.

Point of View, Misconceptions, and Errors of Omission – Perspectives on the Battle of the Little Big Horn. Montana Office of Public Instruction. Indian Education Division. Grades: 7-8.

Analyzing Multiple Viewpoints – The Lewis and Clark Expedition. Montana Office of Public Instruction. Indian Education Division. Grades: 9-12.

Montana's Landless Indians in the Era of Assimilation: A Case of Contradictions. Written by Laura Ferguson for the Montana Historical Society and the Montana Office of Public Instruction, Montana Historical Society Education Office, 2014. This week long lesson plan involves extensive primary document analysis and assessment for biases while investigating how landless Indians were portrayed by the press, governmental officials, and Montana citizens between 1885 and 1915. Grades: 8-12.

Montana Indians: Their History and Location. Montana Office of Public Instruction, Indian Education Division. 2015 (revised).

Helpful Montana Resources

Indian Education, Montana Office of Public Instruction

Montana Tribes. Created by the Regional Learning Project of the University of Montana Missoula in conjunction with the Indian Education Division of the Montana Office of Public Instruction, this web site provides video introductions to the Essential U*nderstandings Regarding Montana Indians*.

SOURCES

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Cunnion, Anh-Thu, with Ann Kaupp, Lynne Alstat, and Genevieve Simermeyer. *Cultural Considerations***.** Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institute, 2005.

De Usabel, Frances, and Jane A. Roeber. *American Indian Resource Manual for Public Libraries.* Madison, WI: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1992. Publication No. 92429.

Heinrich, June Sark. "Native Americans: What Not to Teach." In *Unlearning "Indian" Stereotypes, A Teaching Unit for Elementary Teachers and Children's Librarians.* New York, NY: Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1977.

Oyate's Additional Criteria. Oyate, 2015.

Pepper, Floy C. *Unbiased Teaching About American Indians and Alaska Natives in Elementary Schools.* Charleston, WV: ERIC Digest ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, 1990.

Seale, Doris, and Beverly Slapin. *How to Tell the Difference: A Guide for Evaluating Children's Books for Anti-Indian Bias.* Berkeley, CA: Oyate, 2000.

Design: Ellen Leidl

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