Indian Education for All Model Teaching Unit
Language Arts

Sweetgrass Basket by Marlene Carvell
Grades 6-8

Indian Education
opi.mt.gov Montana Office of Public Instruction

Indian Education for All Model Teaching Unit
Language Arts

Sweetgrass Basket by Marlene Carvell
Grades 6-8

Special thanks to Debra Westrom for
her contributions to this revision.

Revised 2016

Table of Contents

Overview....1

Rationale....1

Learning Objectives....2

Materials....2

Instructional Plan....3

Appendix A: Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians....10

Appendix B: Firsthand Testimonials from Former Boarding Schools Students and Descendants....11

Appendix C: Montana Common Core ELA Standards....15

Appendix D: Definitions; Reading and Writing Strategies; Assessment Suggestions....17

Appendix E: Extended Learning Activities....20

Resources and Links....22

Overview

Anchor Text Summary

Carvell, M. *Sweetgrass Basket*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2005.

Synopsis*

"In prose poetry and alternating voices, Marlene Carvell weaves a heartbreakingly beautiful story based on the real-life experiences of Native American children. Mattie and Sarah are two Mohawk sisters who are sent to an off-reservation school after the death of their mother. Subject to intimidation and corporal punishment, with little hope of contact with their father, the girls are taught menial tasks to prepare them for life as domestics. How Mattie and Sarah protect their culture, memories of their family life, and their love for each other makes for a powerful, unforgettable historical novel."

About the Author*

"Marlene Carvell received a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Texas at Austin. She has taught at both the high-school and college levels and currently teaches English at a rural high school in central New York State. Her first novel, *Who Will Tell My Brother?*, received a 2003 IRA (International Reading Association) Children's Book Award. *Sweetgrass Basket* was inspired by the experiences of her husband's great-aunt Margaret, who attended the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in the early 1900s. Ms. Carvell lives with her husband in Lebanon, New York."

*The above information can be found on the *Sweetgrass Basket* book jacket. Copies of *Sweetgrass Basket* were sent to all Montana public middle school libraries in 2010.

Time Frame

This unit is designed to be completed in six to seven 45-minute class periods with the reading to be done as homework or during a silent in-class reading period (such as SSR), adapting as necessary to each school's schedule and the instructor's homework expectations.

Rationale for this Unit

Sweetgrass Basket allows students to explore the identity of two Mohawk sisters as they experience the trauma of being separated from family to attend an Indian boarding school under a federal policy that mandated indigenous youth attend boarding schools. (This policy was in effect from 1879 to 1934.) This story—written as a work of poetry in alternating voices—brings to life some of the most challenging changes experienced by American Indian youth and families during the early years of the federal Boarding School period (1879-1934). Compulsory boarding school attendance was lifted in 1934. Although American Indian children are no longer forced to attend boarding schools, there remain sometimes emotionally painful and sometimes positive lasting effects within families. Students will connect with non-fiction and fictional accounts of this experience to draw conclusions, assess the credibility and accuracy of information, build knowledge, and demonstrate an understanding of how this glimpse into American Indians' boarding school experiences continues to impact American Indians in Montana and throughout the United States.

Learning Objectives

While reading and discussing the aspects of *Sweetgrass Basket* students will:

- ✓ Explore the impacts of boarding schools on indigenous languages and cultures.
- ✓ Summarize relevant and interrelated major issues, such as boarding schools' impacts on indigenous people's identities, their histories and cultures, tribal sovereignty, and current status of the American Indian people in Montana and in the United States.
- ✓ Work effectively and respectfully in a small group, listening to everyone's responses.
- ✓ Make and explain inferences and conclusions using details and connections between multiple sources related to boarding school experiences.
- ✓ Compare and contrast important print/non-print information while using background knowledge to draw conclusions about diverse boarding school experiences.
- ✓ Understand and analyze literary elements such as character and plot.
- ✓ Ask questions, check inferences, and summarize information from reading and viewing background sources related to American Indians' boarding school experiences.
- ✓ Explain similarities and differences from the sources related to these boarding school experiences.
- ✓ Respond to sources related to boarding school experiences on the basis of personal insights and respect the different responses of classmates through a blogging or journaling experience.
- ✓ Create and share with classmates (via a blog or similar technology) one's own responses to and understandings of the boarding school experiences encountered in this unit.

Materials Needed

- *Sweetgrass Basket* (one copy per student)
- Appendix A: *Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians* (one copy per student)
- Appendix B: Firsthand Testimonials from Former Boarding School Students and Descendants (one copy for class)
- Student journals (a plain lined-paper notebook with student-labeled dates specific to each journal entry works well)
- Computers, projector
- *Archival Photos of Children in Traditional and Montana Indian Boarding School Settings (slide show) from Montana OPI*

Instructional Plan

Lesson One: Building Background Knowledge on American Indian Boarding School Experiences in preparation to read *Sweetgrass Basket*

Introduction

Preparing and presenting background knowledge before reading *Sweetgrass Basket* will provide an opportunity for students to learn about historical circumstances outside of the main characters' home life. It may also create an opening for discussion about what students know about their own family histories during the early 1900s. The Resources section at the end of this unit provides a list of resources teachers may use to gather additional information. Some, but not all, of these resources are student appropriate, and all should be previewed by the teacher prior to use in the classroom.

During the late nineteenth century, the United States established over one hundred on- and off-reservation compulsory Indian boarding schools in an effort to eliminate traditional American Indian ways of life and assimilate the students into "mainstream" American culture. Some of these boarding schools were operated by the US government, but others were operated by Christian missionaries. From 1879 to 1934, the US government forced many Indian families to send their children to boarding schools. Sometimes, Indian families chose to send their children because there were no other schools available or because resources at home on reservations were scarce. In 1934, the policy was amended and compulsory attendance was no longer required, but Indian boarding schools continue to operate, some now run by tribal agencies.

- To further build teacher background knowledge it is recommended that teachers utilize the *Montana Tribal Histories: Educators Resource Guide Chapter Five Tribal Histories Narrative – Boarding Schools: The Abduction of Children* pages 84-103. This resource includes model lessons if teachers want to take the subject deeper in their classrooms and/or collaborate with teachers of other content areas. The teacher may also wish to review the vocabulary terms and definitions presented in Appendix D.

Materials Needed

- Student Journals
- Appendix A: *Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians* (print one copy per student; you may wish to project these and display a copy in your classroom throughout this unit)
- Appendix B: Firsthand Testimonials from Former Boarding School Students and Descendants (print one copy and cut apart the testimonials so each one can be assigned to an individual student to read aloud in class)
- *Slide Show – Archival Photos of Children in Traditional and Montana Indian Boarding School Settings* (download prior to class)
- *Montana Mosaic: Indian Boarding Schools*
- Computer and projector

1. Introduce the journal the students will be using throughout this unit. As an introductory exercise, have students jot down a few notes about what they remember about their very first day of school – perhaps their first day of kindergarten.

- Who was their teacher?
- Were they excited?
- What did they wear?
- Did their parents bring them to the school?

2. With students, explore out loud what they know or believe about American Indians' experiences in boarding schools. If initial discussion reveals that students lack basic knowledge about this time period (1879-1934 in particular), provide opportunities throughout the unit for students to access and share accurate information. This lesson provides a means for students to contribute their real world knowledge to the discussions, at their discretion. If applicable and appropriate, American Indian students may wish to talk about boarding school experiences of family members, but please note that many families may not want to discuss their experiences.

3. Review essential vocabulary: indigenous, American Indian, culture, worldview, perspective, diversity, assimilation (Appendix D provides a starting point for definitions).

4. Distribute copies of Appendix A: *Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians* to each student. Read through each Essential Understanding as a class. After reading, ask students which Essential Understandings they might learn about in a unit about American Indian boarding schools. They will need to keep their copy of *Essential Understandings* for review throughout the unit and for the final activity. A copy could be posted in the classroom for reference.

5. Use a projector to display the Archival photos slide show found in *Montana Tribal Histories: Educators Resource Guide and Companion DVD*.

   - Discuss student responses to the photographs. What do they observe in these images?
   - Discuss which photos represent traditional settings, clothing, etc. Provide some specific information to the students about the photographs, such as location, names of boarding schools, tribes of students, etc. when that information is known.
   - Discuss the historic photographs that show varied appearances in clothing, hair styles, and adornment. Discuss the relationship between outward appearance and one's own culture.
   - How is your school alike or different from the American Indian boarding schools you see in these photos?
   - How might it feel to be separated (involuntarily) from your family for four or more years without seeing them.

6. Print one copy of Appendix B: Firsthand Testimonials from Former Boarding School Students and Descendants. Cut out each testimonial and assign each to individual students to read aloud. (All of these statements except that of Luther Standing Bear are from Montana Indians.) Discuss and compare each statement.

   - What do they have in common?
   - How do they reveal different aspects of the boarding schools or different students' experiences?
   - Which events may have been unique to just the speaker, and which ones seem to have been common to many indigenous students who experienced the boarding school system?

7. Watch *Montana Mosaic: Indian Boarding Schools* (15:10).

   - Introduce students to **D.I.C.E.** and have them respond in their journals after viewing the video: What **Disturbs; Interests; Confuses;** or, **Enlightens** you?

Homework: Students should read pages 3-25, beginning with the Pronunciation Guide and the Author's Note. Instruct students to make notes in their journals on what they learn about each character. These notes will be used during the next class. They should also list and define any unfamiliar terms.

Lesson Two: Beginning to read Sweetgrass Basket

Materials Needed

- *Sweetgrass Basket*
- Student Journals

1. Instruct students to begin today's journal entry by writing in complete sentences:
   - One thing they learned about Mattie.
   - One thing they learned about Sarah.
2. Read pages 11-19 of *Sweetgrass Basket* aloud as a class. Point out the use of voice, perspective, vocabulary, traditional Mohawk words, onomatopoeia, and figurative language.
3. Upon completion of this reading, have students continue today's response in their journals, in complete sentences:
   - What experience were Mattie and Sarah describing in the part we read today?
   - Give at least two specific examples from the story that explain your answer. Cite the page number for each example.
   - What new insight into boarding school experiences did you gain from today's reading?

Teacher Tip: It is important to remind students, as they consider what they have learned, that their discussion of boarding schools is in a historical setting, not contemporary.

Homework: Read pages 26-51 of *Sweetgrass Basket*. Students should continue to take notes about characters – their traits, actions, words – as well as about events, parts of the story that confused them, parts that moved them, and/or parts of the story they can relate to what they learned about the boarding school era at the beginning of the unit. Students may focus on the characters and how they, as readers, can relate to the characters, or relate the events or characters in *Sweetgrass Basket* to those in other texts or to other real-world people or events.

Lesson Three: Putting Student Background Knowledge to Task

Materials Needed

- *Sweetgrass Basket*
- Student Journals
- Computers if creating a digital blog
- Blogging Board (will need to be set up before class)

1. Begin today by conducting a brief discussion with students regarding the plot of the story at this point in the reading (through page 51). Move through the discussion by clarifying any misunderstandings students may have. Ensure students have a good understanding of the topics covered within the reading thus far.

2. The second portion of the class period can be done in three ways:

    a. Students might use a computer lab for an interactive, real-time blog/journal experience that you have set up previously. You may also create a "Blogging Board" (bulletin board). To do this, have students respond to the questions below then post their responses on the "Blogging Board" when completed. Have students return to the bulletin board to retrieve another person's posts, respond to them, and return to the bulletin board. This may be repeated as many times as desired; or

    b. Students could respond to the questions below in their journals; or

    c. Students could be divided into pairs or small groups and choose a given number of questions to answer thoroughly. The students could jigsaw their responses with other groups.

Teacher Tip: Blogging provides students the opportunity to discuss, through writing, appropriate issues, decided upon by the teacher, in an interactive, engaging, and meaningful way. Creating a blog does take a bit of initial preparation on the teacher's part, but is continued with minimal preparation. In addition, blogging provides an opportunity to print the discussion if desired. There are several options for creating blogs. One can use blogspot.com. You may view an example at *http://mlenz.blogspot.com*.

Blog Response or Journal Entry: Forced Schooling vs State Laws and Compulsory Attendance

As you think about the information and experiences you are learning about boarding schools for American Indians, respond to the following questions. Make sure each part of your response is numbered accordingly and begins with your name. Support your statements with specific details.

A. Describe one experience that stands out in your mind with regard to how indigenous children were made to go to boarding school. List the source of this information.

B. How do you think the children and their families may have felt about this method of getting the children to go to boarding school? What are your reactions to this experience? Explain.

C. Today, if you live in Montana and are between the ages of 7-16, you are required by law (MCA 20-5-102) to attend school. Is this the same as being "forced" to attend school? Explain your reasoning using evidence from the book and personal experience.

D. Why do you think there are laws to make sure you go to school for a minimum of eight years?

E. How would you feel if you were told you had to go to school far from home, where no one spoke your language, and you were not likely to see your family again for years?

Extra Credit: Respond to a classmate's blog response in a respectful manner. Take his or her perspective into consideration, and support your statements with details when possible. Remember to state the classmate's name and yours on your new blog entry.

Assessment Suggestion: Today's journal entry, no matter the format, can be assessed by awarding points for participation, well-thought out responses that are supported with details, and the connections students made between experiences, sources, etc. Extra credit points could be awarded every time a student responds to another's blog. The most important part of this assessment is that the teacher has an understanding of where the students are, which can be understood when the responses are read or heard.

Homework: Read pages 52-97 in *Sweetgrass Basket*. After reading and taking any notes of important aspects of the story, respond in your journals using the **D.I.C.E.** strategy. Excellent responses will contain evidence from the text and will cite page numbers.

- What **Disturbs** you about the story so far? Why?
- What **Interests** you about the story? Why?
- What **Confuses** you about the story? Why?
- What **Enlightens** you about the story? Why?

Lesson Four: Use of Controversial Language in Literature for Emphasis and Meaning

1. In small groups have students discuss their **D.I.C.E.** journal entries completed as homework. Allow for reciprocal teaching (students teaching students) as the discussions unfold. Allow plenty of time for thorough discussion. If students have unresolved confusion about any portion of the reading, clarify the meaning before proceeding to the next activity.

2. Prepare students for the controversial language which will appear on page 152 in the next assigned reading. Historically, white men used the derogatory term, "squaw," to describe Indian women. The term carries multiple derogatory and offensive connotations. Bernard L. Azure, an Assiniboine man, makes this clear in his statement in "Celebrating Old Places and New Names" from March 5, 2009, *"…Hearing my mother called a "squaw" 35 years ago still stings me to the marrow … They are citizens of their tribes, they are citizens of the state and they are citizens of the nation – it is a unique existence that needs to be respected and dealt with honorably."*
   In fact, the term is so offensive that the Montana Legislature passed House Bill 412 in 1999, which required "…state landholding and land managing agencies to identify all geographic features and places under their jurisdiction using the word 'squaw'; … the agencies to remove the word 'squaw' from any maps, signs, or markers…; and providing for appointment of an advisory group to develop replacement names and notify appropriate agencies." For more information, see U.S. Board on Geographic Names and *Ceremony celebrates new names for old places*. *Additional resources on this issue are listed in the Resources pages.*

3. Spot check journals as a formative assessment to see if additional teaching of any concepts is necessary.

4. If time allows, students might begin their next reading in *Sweetgrass Basket* pages 98-165.

Homework: Read *Sweetgrass Basket* pages 98-165. Choose six of the following questions to answer in your journal:

- What does it mean to be homesick? Have you ever been homesick? If yes, describe one experience. Describe one thing or experience that made Mattie and Sarah homesick.
- For what offense does Mrs. Dwyer yell at Mattie?
- Why is Mattie confused about why Mrs. Dwyer is so angry? How would you feel if you were in a similar situation like this?
- What does Sarah give Mattie to make her feel better? What is the meaning behind this object?
- Why is it important that nobody finds Mattie's basket?
- Who are the Thunder Beings?
- How can the girls tell Miss Weston is afraid of them?
- Why is Sarah glad there is a storm?
- What do you think Ida means when she says, "I have my ways."?

- Why was Mrs. Dwyer angry with Mattie on page 100?
- What do you think Mrs. Dwyer wants on page 121? Explain your thinking.
- How did the situation that occurs from pages 149-153 make you feel? Explain.

Lesson Five: Conducting a Literature Circle Discussion

1. Divide students into working groups of three to four students. Have students discuss the answers they recorded as a part of the previous homework assignment where they chose six questions to answer from the list provided. Prompt students to provide evidence from the text or, if recounting a personal experience, encourage them to describe their experiences with thoughtful, descriptive language. Allow ample time for each student in the group to speak and for others to respond.
2. Following the discussion of the students' responses, have each group re-read pages 149-153 aloud. Assign the groups this topic of discussion: The author used very controversial language in this passage. How did this language affect you? How did it influence your emotions and feelings as you finished the excerpt? Do you feel that the language she used was appropriate for the situation? Did it help you understand the situation better? Why or why not?

Blog or journal assignment: Respond briefly to this question: How do derogatory words and insults affect the individual person or group of people they are aimed at? How might they shape the insulted one's sense of self? Explain.

Homework: Read pages 166-213 in *Sweetgrass Basket*. Students continue journaling about their observations and feelings as they read through the story. If appropriate for class content, students might focus on character traits and the evidence they used to determine those traits.

Lesson Six: Evaluating the Use of Figurative Language

1. Discuss or review the different types of figurative language Carvell uses throughout the book: metaphor, sensory images, hyperbole, idiom, personification, and simile.
2. The author uses strong figurative language throughout *Sweetgrass Basket*. Page 186 contains an excerpt with several examples, from "with my salvation in my arms," to "faster than tired legs can go." One such example is the metaphor she creates between the train and the boarding school experience. Guide students through a discussion about the similarities and differences between these two very powerful forces. Be sure to discuss the words Carvell uses to create this metaphor.
3. Instruct students to work in pairs to find examples of Carvell's use of figurative language from pages 154 to 187. Students should:
    - Record the excerpts they have chosen in their journals;
    - Explain what kind of figurative language and actual words Carvell is using;
    - Describe how those words affect him/her as the reader.

Blog or journal entry: Choose what you thought was the most powerful example of figurative language from pages 166-213. Write it down and cite the page. Then explain why you found this example to be particularly powerful in a literary sense.

Homework: Read pages 214-243 in *Sweetgrass Basket*. In their journals have students summarize the final reading to the best of their ability and answer the following questions:

- What was your reaction to the end of the story? Explain your feelings.
- What are your final thoughts regarding *Sweetgrass Basket*?

Lesson Seven: Wrapping up Sweetgrass Basket and Revisiting the Learning Journey of this Unit.

1. Ask students to recall the first day of this unit. Dialogue with the class using the following questions:

    - Have their perspectives on their own school experiences changed after learning about American Indian boarding schools and reading about Mattie's and Sarah's experiences?
    - How would they feel being removed from their homes, sent away from their families, and forced to speak a language they had never heard before?
    - If they could say anything to Mattie and/or Sarah, what would they say and why?
    - As deemed appropriate, invite other thoughts and feelings about what they have learned.

2. Have students re-read *Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians* in pairs. Have students identify in writing or aloud examples that demonstrate a basic understanding of relevant Essential Understandings that apply to *Sweetgrass Basket* and to this unit. Students should be prompted to consider specifically EU 2 (individuality), EU 3 (beliefs and spirituality persist), EU 5 (Federal Policy Period: Assimilation – Boarding Schools), and EU 6 (histories are subjective). This exercise may be used as an assessment of student understanding of the novel's themes and of their ability to apply the Essential Understandings to what they have read.

3. Revisit the archival photos slide show.

    - Do these photos hold a different meaning for students now, after reading the book?
    - Are there any photos that make more sense now? How? Why?
    - Does it feel any different to see some of these photographs now? Explore what students might be feeling: sadness, confusion, guilt, understanding, interested in learning more….

4. Finally, have students re-read the Firsthand Testimonials from Former Boarding School Students. Do these voices sound different now? Do their messages make more sense? How and why?

Appendix A: *Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians*

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.

Essential Understanding 2

Just as there is a 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.

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 pre-date the "discovery" of North America.

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.

Essential Understanding 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/Colonia 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

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 Indian perspectives frequently conflicts with the stories mainstream historians tell.

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.

Appendix B: Firsthand Testimonials from Former Boarding School Students and Descendants

Boarding Schools and Montana

(Source: Excerpt from *History and Foundation of American Indian Education*, pp 23-25.

Many members of Montana's Indian tribes were "rounded up" and sent to boarding schools to receive their formal education. Colonel Pratt arrived in Montana in 1890 to "collect" the young people slated to attend this school. The push was to augment the enrollment at Carlisle Indian School of Pennsylvania, and he wanted to increase the participants from each of Montana's reservations from 40 students to about 175 from each agency.

Federal boarding schools continued to be created in other states into the 1900s, and indigenous students from Montana continued to attend schools located in Pennsylvania, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, California, Oregon, South Dakota and other states. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) began to create schools in Montana after 1900 to allow Indian students to attend an education institution closer to their family. These schools were of two types - one was a complete boarding dormitory with education facilities, and the other was a day school where students attended but lived at home. . .

Today, some Montana Indian students still attend federal boarding schools, primarily in South Dakota, Kansas, and Oregon, but most attend public education systems in their home communities. The BIA continues to operate a live-in boarding dormitory on the Blackfeet Reservation in Browning. Tribal governments now operate the Two Eagle River School at Pablo and Northern Cheyenne TribalSchool [at Busby] under contract agreements with the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE).

George Horse Capture, Gros Ventre:

(Source: The Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania 1879-1918 by Linda F. Witmer, page xvii. (Carlisle, PA: Cumberland County Historical Society, 2000)

"One 4th of July, while visiting at Lame Deer, Montana, on the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, I enjoyed the pow wow. It was a hot Saturday afternoon and the families sponsored a series of specials, one called a "giveaway." A giveaway identifies an activity when a family gets together and saves money and materials all year and gives them away in honor of some member of their family. They give these materials as a point of pride and so people will always remember this important event.

The thing that I'll always remember at this give away is after many speeches one family member said that they wanted to have this giveaway in honor of their young daughter, who just accomplished a wonderful goal; she had just earned her Master's degree! Culminating the event was the honor dance with this bright young woman wearing a colorful shawl, leading her family and friends in an ancient tribal ceremony. It was a wonderful time for me, because I knew right then that we would survive.

We had made the transition, from the old to the new. Because education is so instrumental to our survival we had just made it a traditional honor to be educated. That was quite a day.

So we continue with our education, and no one knows where the future will take us, but it is a part of our tradition now and we need it for survival. We must remember these old Buffalo Indians who went to Carlisle, for they are our ancestors. We will continue the job they began as our history continues."

Everall Fox, Gros Ventre:

Source: Regional Learning Project interview

"But as far as it relates to culture, it [Catholic boarding school] really did do a lot of damage to the culture, especially the Gros Ventre people because I always tell people that the Catholic Church really did a good job up there because they were in fact responsible for, I guess, almost erasing the language and taking away a lot of the culture. And I say that as a person that's Catholic myself, and just understanding that at least three generations of people that would have grown up there didn't have access to the language because it was not spoken or people were encouraged not to speak it. And they had really taken away a lot of the cultures and the, especially the religious ceremonies were taken away or were lost."

Nadine Morsette, Chippewa Cree:

Source: Regional Learning Project interview

"I did not speak English until I went to, they had schools, different districts. And, I went to below Baldy Butte this mountain, there's a day school there. That's where we used to walk. And, there's a, I had a bad time when I was growing up trying to learn English, I was punished when I didn't understand. And my teacher, she appeared like a[n] elderly lady, but she must have been middle-age, oh, I don't know. Anyway, she would come by, walk between the desks. If I didn't understand—a lot of us went through this— if I couldn't respond, we couldn't speak our language, 'You may stand.' That's the phrase I heard many, many times. Then she'd make me stand, march me to the corner, face the wall. Those are the bad days."

Charlotte Kelley, Assiniboine:

Source: Regional Learning Project interview

"And then at the end of the eighth grade, well, I went to Flandreau, South Dakota, which is a government Indian boarding school. And there were kids from Wyoming, Montana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Nebraska and North

and South Dakota there, from the different tribes . . . all of my family, all of my brothers, I have three brothers and two sisters, we all graduated from that school, and left to go there. And we stayed there, we left in September and we came back in May. We didn't get to come home for vacation or anything like that. . . I've heard really bad stories about people that left their reservation and went to boarding schools, but that wasn't my experience. I really enjoyed it for a lot of reasons. One reason is when, the home that I had, where I grew up, we didn't have running water or electricity. And, so when we went to boarding school, we had all of that. And that, to me, was, you know, really important to me. The teachers and the, the people that worked in the dormitories, the support staff, they were all good to me, I mean I had no, there was never any kind of abuse or anything in that way. And so, I can't, you know, say anything bad about the boarding schools. And, I think, that if I didn't have the opportunity to go to a boarding school, I would not have had the opportunity to finish schooling and go onto to do something else."

Selena Ditmar, Assiniboine:

Source: Regional Learning Project interview

"Our young people have not been taught any of this. We have, they have not been taught and the problem is, from their parents and their grandparents, I think that's because we were made to feel ashamed of who we were, you know. And, it was imparted to us, you know, that feeling. And I heard people say that the reason they did not teach their children the language and customs was because they were mistreated so badly, looked down upon, and they did not want their children to be subjected to that same kind of, of treatment. In my family, well, like I say, my first language was Nakota, and we all spoke the language. And inadvertently, in my family, we lost it because my parents died, my grandparents, all my extended family slowly, one by one passed on, and we started speaking the English language at our home and to where we, we lost our language. In my family … only my oldest daughter still understands what I say, but she does not speak the language. And, my other two, when they were little, they were subjected to this language, they heard it all the time, understood it, but they were little when they all died and so they lost, they lost it all. It wasn't only in my, our tribe. It, I think that has happened in every, every tribe that parents have not passed on a lot of this."

Lone Wolf, Blackfoot:

(Source: Nabokov, Peter. *Native American Testimony.* New York: Penguin Books, 1999: 220.)

"School wasn't for me when I was a kid. I tried three of them and they were all bad. The first time was when I was about 8 years old. The soldiers came and rounded up as many of the Blackfeet children as they could. The government had decided we were to get White Man's education by force.

It was very cold that day when we were loaded into the wagons. None of us wanted to go and our parents didn't want to let us go. Oh, we cried for this was the first time we were to be separated from our parents. I remember looking back at Na-tah-ki and she was crying too. Nobody waved as the wagons, escorted by the soldiers, took us toward the school at Fort Shaw. Once there our belongings were taken from us, even the little medicine bags our mothers had given us to protect us from harm. Everything was placed in a heap and set afire.

Next was the long hair, the pride of all the Indians. The boys, one by one, would break down and cry when they saw their braids thrown on the floor. All of the buckskin clothes had to go and we had to put on the clothes of the White Man.

If we thought that the days were bad, the nights were much worse. This was the time when real loneliness set in, for it was then that we were all alone. Many boys ran away from the school because the treatment was so bad but most of them were caught and brought back by the police. We were told never to talk Indian and if we were caught, we got a strapping with a leather belt. I remember one evening when we were all lined up in a room and one of the boys said something in Indian to another boy. The man in charge of us pounced on the boy, caught him by the shirt, and threw him across the room. Later we found out that his collar-bone was broken. The boy's father, an old warrior, came to the school. He told the instructor that among his people, children were never punished by striking them. That was no way to teach children; kind words and good examples were much better.

Then he added, 'Had I been there when that fellow hit my son, I would have killed him.' Before the instructor could stop the old warrior he took his boy and left. The family then beat it to Canada and never came back."

"**New Student**"

(Source: Excerpt from *A Pretty Village,* Catholic Papers and Records for the Flathead Indian ReservationBob Bigart, Editor, Salish Kootenai College Press, 2008.)

This narrative is an excerpt from Brother E. de Rouge, Jesuit Priest working at the St. Ignatius Mission on the Flathead Indian Reservation in 1882:

"When a new student comes to us, we start with the dressing ceremony and the haircut ceremony.

Our boarders must sacrifice the three braids that encircle and decorate their heads. Our students belong to different tribes. The Flathead, the Pend d'Oreilles, the Kootenai and the Nez Perce. Our purpose is to completely civilize our natives by habituating these students to work, particularly agriculture; by teaching them English which will serve them later." (p. 90)

Another first-hand account (not from Montana) is that of Luther Standing Bear (Teton Sioux), one of the first students at Carlisle Indian Industrial School. The following quote comes from his book, *The Land of the Spotted Eagle*:

Luther Standing Bear, Teton Sioux (Lakota):

"Although we were yet wearing our Indian clothes…one day when we came to school there was a lot of writing on one of the blackboards. We did not know what it meant, but our interpreter came into the room and said, 'Do you see all these marks on the blackboards? Well, each word is a whiteman's name. They are going to give each one of you one of these names by which you will hereafter be known.' None of the names were read or explained to us, so of course we did not know the sound or meaning of any of them. Each child in turn walked to the blackboard with a pointer and selected his future Anglo name."

Appendix C: Montana Common Core ELA Standards

Critical Shifts to the Common Core Standards

1. Regular practice with complex text and its academic language

2. Reading, writing and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational

3. Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction

The use of comparison is a major focus of the unit not only within the text structure, dialogue, and characters themselves, but also with informational texts, other types of texts, and video. The objectives listed below meet specific standards in a variety of ELA areas and are dependent upon teacher questioning and vocabulary development while reading *Sweetgrass Basket.*

- ✓ Students will be asked daily to read and make inferences regarding the characters and how they evolve throughout the text. CCRA.R.1 (Reading)
- ✓ Through journaling, students will be asked to summarize daily readings and reflect on what is happening. CCRA.R.2 (Reading)
- ✓ Over time, students will be asked to make observations and inferences regarding character development and story development. CCRA.R.5 (Reading)
- ✓ Students will be exposed to a variety of language techniques used by the author. The use of bold vs. regular text is important to character development. The use of vocabulary, traditional Mohawk words, onomatopoeia, and figurative language should be a major topic of discussion. Controversial language is used in the novel and it is important to understanding author's purpose. CCRA.L.3 (Language)
- ✓ Students will be asked to write and reflect daily through journaling, interact with their peers through blogging/journaling, and produce a final written project. CCRA.W.10 (Writing)
- ✓ At the start of the unit, students will build background knowledge regarding the Indian Boarding School Era through the use of photographs and primary source documents. CCRA.WHST.6-8.10 (Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects)
- ✓ Using videos, students will be asked to compare and contrast Native American boarding school experiences from other nations. CCRA.RH.6-8.7 (Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies)

Montana College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards (CCRA) for Reading

CCRA.R.1 – Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCRA.R.2 – Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCRA.R.3 – Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

CCRA.R.4 – Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

CCRA.R.5 – Over time, students will be asked to make observations and inferences regarding character development and story development.

CCRA.R.6 – Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

CCRA.R.7 – Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

CCRA.R.8 – Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

CCRA.R.9 – Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

CCRA.R.10 – Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Montana CCRA Standards for Language (L)

CCRA.L.3 – Read and understand use of controversial language and written technique by the author.

Montana CCRA Standards for Speaking and Listening (SL)

CCRA.SL.1 – Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCRA.SL.2 – Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCRA.SL.3 – Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

CCRA.SL.4 – Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Montana CCRA Standards for Writing (W)

CCRA.W.1 – Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCRA.W.2 – Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCRA.W.3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCRA.W.4 – Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCRA.W.5 – Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

CCRA.W.7 – Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCRA.W.8 – Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

Appendix D: Definitions; Reading and Writing Strategies; Assessment Suggestions

Working Definitions

CCRA.R.4 - Through the discussion of culture, history, personal experience, and perspective, students may construct some working definitions that they will re-examine and possibly change as the unit progresses. The following preliminary definitions might help students:

CULTURE: Culture includes systems of language, governance, economics, religion and ceremony, education, defense (health and political), ways of defining identity, ways of manipulating space and time and giving them meaning, forms of recreation, and values systems surrounding truth, faith, justice, love, and beauty.

WORLDVIEW: Worldview is the underlying set of beliefs that define your sense of the world and your place in it. It is the way you interpret events such as time, space, happiness, well-being, what is good, what is important, what is sacred, etc. Worldview is shaped by one's culture and values and, in turn, shapes your relationship to your surroundings, other living beings, the natural environment, and events.

PERSPECTIVE: "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 an Indian perspective frequently conflicts with the stories mainstream historians tell." Essential Understanding #6, Appendix A

Additional vocabulary will be encountered during this unit. Teacher and students should be familiar with the definitions of *assimilation, diversity,* and *indigenous*. Teachers should emphasize the cultural and linguistic diversity of the indigenous peoples of this continent, so students are not under the impression that all "American Indians" share a single culture, history, or language. Although the terms American Indian and Native American are used interchangeably throughout this unit, it should be noted that until 1924, indigenous peoples in the United States were not considered universally to be citizens of the United States and, thus, were not "American Indians" or "Native Americans" but were citizens of their own indigenous nations.

Text-dependent Questions

Good text-dependent questions will often linger over specific phrases and sentences to ensure careful comprehension of the text. They help students see something worthwhile they would not have seen on a more cursory reading. Typical text dependent questions ask students to perform one or more of the following tasks:

- Analyze paragraphs on a sentence by sentence basis and sentences on a word by word basis to determine the role played by individual paragraphs, sentences, phrases, or words.
- Investigate how meaning can be altered by changing key words and why an author may have chosen one word over another.
- Probe each argument in persuasive text, each idea in informational text, each key detail in literary text, and observe how these build to a whole.
- Examine how shifts in the direction of an argument or explanation are achieved and the impact of those shifts.
- Question why authors choose to begin and end when they do.
- Note and assess patterns of writing and what they achieve.
- Consider what the text leaves uncertain or unstated.

Close Reading with Text Dependent Questions

Complete Guide to Creating Text Dependent Questions

While there is no set process for generating a complete and coherent body of text-dependent questions for a text, the following process is a good guide that can serve to generate a core series of questions for close reading of any given text.

Step One: Identify the Core Understandings and Key Ideas of the Text

As in any good reverse engineering or "backwards design" process, teachers should start by identifying the key insights they want students to understand from the text—keeping one eye on the major points being made is crucial for fashioning an overarching set of successful questions and critical for creating an appropriate culminating assignment.

Step Two: Start Small to Build Confidence

The opening questions should be ones that help orient students to the text and be sufficiently specific enough for them to answer so they gain confidence to tackle more difficult questions later on.

Step Three: Target Vocabulary and Text Structure

Locate key text structures and the most powerful academic words in the text that are connected to the key ideas and understandings, and craft questions that illuminate these connections.

Step Four: Tackle Tough Sections Head-on

Find the sections of the text that will present the greatest difficulty and craft questions that support students in mastering these sections (these could be sections with difficult syntax, particularly dense information, and tricky transitions or places that offer a variety of possible inferences).

Step Five: Create Coherent Sequences of Text Dependent Questions

The sequence of questions should not be random but should build toward more coherent understanding and analysis to ensure students learn to stay focused on the text to bring them to a gradual understanding of its meaning.

Step Six: Identify the Standards That Are Being Addressed

Take stock of what standards are being addressed in the series of questions and decide if any other standards are suited to being a focus for this text (forming additional questions that exercise those standards).

Step Seven: Create the Culminating Assessment

Develop a culminating activity around the key ideas or understandings identified earlier that: (a) reflects mastery of one or more of the standards; (b) involves writing; and (c) is structured to be completed by students independently.

Assessment Suggestions

- Writing assignments for grade level expectations, which include narrative, essays, and research topics.
- Formative assessments as indicated throughout the lesson provide individual student responses.
- Journals can be assessed on completion of all journal assignments (group entries and individual journal entry assignments) both in the areas which align with the MCCS English Language Arts Standards, specific research, and personal reflections/arguments/opinions.
- Formative assessments for student responses to Text Dependent Questions (TDQ).
  Complete Guide to Creating Text-Dependent Questions
  Collaboration in student groups as outlined in each chapter.

Appendix E: Extended Learning Activities

A. Check out the learning trunk: To Learn a New Way. This is a hands-on history footlocker available from Montana Historical Society. It contains additional lessons about boarding schools, archival photos of Montana Indian boarding schools and clothing. See loan information at *To Learn a New Way User Guide*

B. Organize a fieldtrip to a boarding school. If the opportunity arises to visit the site of one of the boarding schools, such as St. Labre or St. Ignatius Mission School, it can be an interesting event for the students. There may or may not be original buildings left on the site, but there may be historical markers or exhibits that can share information from this era. These sites may also provide an opportunity for people to come and talk about their experiences. The Glacier County Museum also has a boarding school exhibit.

C. Watch DVD *Playing for the World* - DVD sent to all Montana public high schools libraries or on line. For additional lesson plans click on this link: *Playing for the World Language Arts Unit*

D. Read Jim Thorpe's Bright Path (sent to Montana public school libraries with Grades 4-8) aloud. *OPI Model Teaching Unit regarding Thorpe's Bright Path.* There is also a DVD, *Jim Thorpe: The World's Greatest Athlete* that may be available via interlibrary loan.

E. Read "The School Days of an Indian Girl" by Zitkala-Ša [aka Gertrude Simmons Bonnin] (1876-1938), in *American Indian Stories* by Zitkala-Ša. Washington: Hayworth Publishing House, 1921. pp. 47-80. This is also available online.

F. Explore additional lessons, primary documents, and pictures about American Indian boarding school experiences at *Digital Public Library of America.*

G. Bring in guest speakers and elders. It can be a valuable learning experience for students to listen to the stories and experiences of Native Americans who attended a boarding school or day school, during this era. This can be a very sensitive topic for those who have had this experience. For some this was a positive time with positive outcomes. For others, it was a negative time with lasting negative outcomes. Students need to be respectful of this. You might ask a tribal elder to go on the field trip with you or visit your school. In this case, it is best to ask elders you know have boarding school experiences if indeed they are comfortable sharing and if their experiences are appropriate for your class to hear. You may also suggest that speakers address both the positive and the negative aspects of boarding school so that students can hear both perspectives.

H. Watch and discuss *Rabbit Proof Fence* about an Australian Aboriginal boarding school experience. Noyce, P. (Producer), Olsen, C. (Producer), Winter, J. (Producer) & Noyce, P. (Director). *Rabbit Proof Fence* [Motion picture]. Australia: Miramax Films. 2002.

I. Read the picture book *Shi-Shi-Etko* for a story about a young girl headed to boarding school in Canada.

Introduce *Shi-Shi-Etko* by explaining that Shi-Shi-Etko is a young girl who lives in Canada. Explain she is leaving to attend a residential school. Ask if anyone knows what a residential school is. Help students make a connection to the synonymous term boarding school, commonly used in the United States. Explain that the Indian boarding schools that are being examined throughout the unit are historical. Explain that the first Indian boarding school in America began in 1879 and that various boarding schools still exist in America and throughout the world today. Help students to understand there are many types of boarding schools and that today, people often choose to attend them.

Introduce the book, author and illustrator of *Shi-Shi-Etko*. Do not read the Author's Note opposite of the copyright page. Read the entire *Shi-Shi-Etko* story aloud.

Upon completion of the story, explain that students must complete their "Exit Ticket" assignments before they may leave the class. You may write the following assignment on the board, in a PowerPoint presentation, in a SMART Notebook page, or wherever you would like. If you choose one of these options, have students use a piece of their own paper to complete the assignment.

Your "Exit Ticket" for today is to:

Describe how this character is similar to the characters of Mattie and Sarah in *Sweetgrass Basket*. Extra Credit will be given for any personal thoughts, feelings, hopes, or realizations you may have had reading this story.

Collect Exit Tickets as students are dismissed.

Resources

These resources are intended to provide teachers a thorough understanding of the federal government's compulsory Indian boarding school policy and the experiences of indigenous youth who attended such schools. *Not all of these resources are appropriate for grades 6-8 students.* It is recommended strongly that the teacher preview any resource to determine its appropriateness for sharing with students. *In the White Man's Image* is rated as suitable for showing to students in grades 6-8, but should be previewed. The works by Zitkala-Ša and Luther Standing Bear are also useful for middle-school grades, as is Hillary Brady's "American Indian Boarding Schools Primary Source Set."

Print Resources

Adams, D. W. *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience 1875 - 1928*. Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1995.

Archuleta, M. L., Child, B. J, & Lomawaima, K. T. *Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Experiences, 1879-2001*. Phoenix: Heard Museum, 2000.

Campbell, N. I. *Shi-Shi-Etko*. [picture book] Toronto, Canada: House of Anansi Press, 2005.

Standing Bear, Luther. *My Indian Boyhood*. [non-fiction] Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1931. Reprinted, 2006.

Standing Bear, Luther. Land of the Spotted Eagle. [non-fiction, a new Bison Books edition with an Introduction by Joseph Marshall III] Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2006 (reprinted).

Sterling, S. *My Name is Seepeetza*. [fiction based on a true story] Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Groundwood Press, 1992.

Zitkala-Ša (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin). "The School Days of an Indian Girl." In *American Indian Stories* by Zitkala-Ša. Washington: Hayworth Publishing House, 1921. pp. 47-80. Also available online.

Digital Resources

"American Indian Boarding Schools Primary Source Set." [webpage with links to additional resources] Hillary Brady. *Digital Public Library of America*. This page also has access to additional resources and a teaching guide.

"American Indians Celebrate Removal of Term 'Squaw' from around State." [article] C.S. Johnson.

Charles S. Johnson, *"American Indians celebrate removal of term 'squaw' from around state,"* Missoulian. March 6, 2009.

"Assimilation through Education: Indian Boarding Schools in the Pacific Northwest." [essay] C.J. Marr. American Indians of the Pacific North West. *University of Washington Library*

Montana Code Ann. Sec. 2-15-149. Naming of Sites and Geographic Features -- Replacement of Word 'squaw", "half-Breed', Or "breed" -- Advisory Group

Sherrie Devlin, *"Mountain of pain,"* Missoulian, May 5, 2002.

"Native Words, Native Warriors: Boarding Schools." [webpage] National Museum of the American Indian. Retrieved December 29, 2008, from *"Native Words, Native Warriors: Boarding Schools."*

Video Resources:

In the White Man's Image. [documentary, VHS/DVD, 58 minutes] WBGH Boston, 1992. DVD ©2007. This can be ordered from Amazon.com.

Our Spirits Don't Speak English. [documentary, DVD, 80 minutes] Steven R. Heape, executive producer. Dallas, Texas: Rich Heape Films, 2008.

Rabbit Proof Fence [Motion picture, based on true events]. Noyce, P. (Producer), Olsen, C. (Producer), Winter, J. (Producer) & Noyce, P. (Director). Australia: Miramax Films. 2002. (Check with your school librarian about inter-library loan for this film.)

Unspoken: America's Native American Boarding Schools. [documentary film, 57 minutes] University of Utah: KUED, 2016. Available online at *PBS Utah*

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

ELSIE ARNTZEN, STATE SUPERINTENDENT