

# Cars, Helicopters, Motorcycles and American Indians - Analysis of American Indian Logos and Imagery in Transportation

## Fast Facts

Curriculum Area: Auto Shop / Social Studies

Grade Level: High School

Suggested Duration: 2-3 Class Periods

Special thanks to Dan Chapweske, Miles City Automotive Instructor, for the lesson plan concept and outline.



*Geronimo at the Wheel 1904 (National Archives, 75-1C-1)*

## Stage 1 Desired Results

### Established Goals

- (4) The history content standards for ninth through twelfth grade are that each student will:
- (g) analyze how historical, cultural, social, political, ideological, and economic contexts shape people's perspectives;
- (k) evaluate the limitations, biases, and credibility of various sources, especially regarding misinformation and stereotypes.

CTE.9-12 Career and Technical Education Standards for ninth through twelfth grade

CTE.9-12.1.12 work productively in teams while using cultural/global competence by collaborating to address geographic, economic, cultural, or political issues considering multiple perspectives

### Understandings

- Being aware of a bias, and/or stereotype is basic to changing your perception and point of view.
- Stereotypes, and biases originate from misinformation, misperception, omission, and the distortion of information and ideas.
- Be aware of how American Indians have been misrepresented in American culture using Native American imagery and names of products.
- Students will further their knowledge of the [Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians](#).

### Essential Questions

- What purpose does a product logo and/or name serve?
- What are some general stereotypes and biases regarding American Indians?



- Why might someone (may not necessarily have to be an American Indian) be offended by how automobiles are named and marketed using tribal imagery and names? What actions might be considered offensive?
- Do some American Indian logos and names of products perpetuate stereotypes?

Students will be able to...

- critically examine contemporary and historical portrayals of American Indians as logos and names for products such as cars and other types of transportation.
- define stereotypes, bias, discrimination and use correct information in discussions.
- apply criteria to evaluate the origin, authority, accuracy, bias, and distortion of information and ideas pertaining to the representation of American Indians in popular culture.

Students will know...

- stereotypes, and biases originate from misinformation, misperceptions, and distortion of information.
- how American Indians have been misrepresented in American culture by the inappropriate use of Native American imagery and names.

## Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

### Performance Tasks

1. Analyze, and evaluate multiple issues and perspectives regarding American Indian stereotypes and the issue of logos and commercial names for products.
2. Build background knowledge via videos, class discussion and readings
3. Extension Activity - Suggested assignments to gauge student understanding might include a short research paper, poster presentation, participation in on-line discussion forums, or multimedia presentation formats such as a video or slide show.

## Stage 3 Learning Plan

### Learning Activities

One class period is to introduce the topic and to facilitate a discussion regarding issues of representation. The next class period is for watching the videos and taking the quizzes and the third class period is for reviewing the quizzes and the information covered in the clips. Suggested assignments are included in this lesson.

### Building Students' Background Knowledge

#### Day 1

Show the following [video from the National Congress of American Indians](#) as a way to introduce the topic. Ask students to write down a few notes regarding the clip utilizing a 3-2-1 prompt: three things you saw in the video that caught your attention, two questions you have about information presented

### Analysis of American Indian Imagery and Logos in Transportation

in the video, and one thing you really enjoyed. Facilitate a brief class discussion. Define stereotypes, bias, discrimination, and appropriation.

Now transition to the topic of automobiles and Native Americans. Have students brainstorm a list of all the different types of vehicles with Native American names and imagery. Google the terms American Indians and automobiles and click on the images tab to view pictures of vehicles with American Indian names and logos. Next, do a search on Native Americans and helicopters and see what comes up. Be sure to incorporate relevant Essential Understandings into your discussion to provide a culturally relevant context for American Indian perspectives regarding this issue.

Share one of the suggested videos and facilitate a class discussion. Close out the class and tell students that they will be watching similar videos during the next class period and that there will be a short quiz after each video. Share links to the recommended articles and/or have printed copies for students and ask them to read them before the next class.

### Day 2 / Day 3

Share the videos and take the quizzes.

Go over the answers and facilitate a class discussion over some of the main points and key concepts from the lesson plan.

### Assessment Suggestions

- ✓ Have students watch the videos and then take the quizzes.
- ✓ Students could debate the issue at multiple levels. Give students one-two class periods to gather background information. Require students to find at least five different resources.
- ✓ Have students check out websites for automobiles and other types of vehicles that use American Indian logos and names. Do they provide any statements about why their product has an American Indian name and/or logo?
- ✓ Each group will be provided with an opportunity to present their side of the issue using supporting evidence. Students will demonstrate an understanding and awareness of the issue through in-class presentations.
- ✓ Students could write a brief essay on the issue. Where do they stand and why?
  - Are you familiar the issue?
  - Do you think American Indian logos and imagery perpetuate stereotypes?
  - What is the purpose of a logo and commercial imagery?

### Background Information, Links to Videos News Articles

Video links for use with the quizzes. Sample quizzes for each video are included at the end of this lesson.

[Here's why Army helicopters have Native American names](#)

[Why Army Helicopters have Native American names](#)

[Video clip for Jeep and Cherokee Nation Controversy](#)

[Video clip for Understanding the Naming of Indian Motorcycles](#)

[Video clip for Cars Named After Tribes: Cultural Appropriation or Respect?](#)

[Recent news article from the Washington Post – Cherokee and Jeep Name](#)

[Apache, Blackhawk, Chinook: Why Army helicopters are given Native American names](#)

[The legacy of naming Army helicopters after Native Americans](#)

[Why Army helicopters have Native American names](#)

Lakota examples to use as a discussion starter –Lakota horse trailer, Lakota helicopter, Lakota Star Trek spaceship, Lakota electric car, Lakota armored personnel carrier:



Consider using [this article from the US Army](#) where they describe their process for choosing the name Lakota for a new helicopter. Facilitate a discussion and do a search regarding Lakota names for other types of vehicles to see if any of the manufacturers used a similar process that involved tribal input.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### **Comprehension Questions for "Black Hawk Apache"**

**1. What was the original requirement for naming army aircraft according to army regulation 70-28?**

- a. Named after famous generals
- b. Named after American Indian tribes and chiefs
- c. Named after states in the U.S.
- d. Named after animals

**2. Who was responsible for developing the doctrine for army aircraft after the Air Force split from the Army in 1947?**

- a. General Patton
- b. General Hamilton House
- c. Chief Joseph
- d. Colonel Smith

**3. Why did the Army consult with the Lakota tribe before naming the UH-72A helicopter "Lakota"?**

- a. To seek financial support
- b. To obtain permission
- c. To celebrate the tribe's history
- d. To recruit members

**4. Which helicopter was originally named "Sioux"?**

- a. The Dragonfly
- b. The Apache
- c. The Black Hawk
- d. The UH-72A

**5. What was the main purpose of the UH-72A Lakota helicopter?**

- a. Offensive military operations
- b. Medical and casualty evacuations
- c. Transporting troops
- d. Surveillance missions

**6. How many Native Americans have received the Medal of Honor according to the video?**

- a. 10
- b. 20
- c. 32
- d. 50

**7. What did the army release explain about Native Americans in the context of military history?**

- a. They were primarily enemies of the U.S.
- b. They served as fierce fighters for over 200 years
- c. They had no involvement in the military
- d. They only served in the Air Force

**8. What type of names did the regulation specify for assault weapons?**

- a. Names of famous inventors
- b. Names of reptiles and insects
- c. Names of U.S. Presidents
- d. Names of mythological figures

**9. What was the significance of the ceremony held by Rosebud Sioux tribal leaders in February 2008?**

- a. To protest against the Army
- b. To celebrate the naming of the helicopter "Lakota"
- c. To recruit new pilots
- d. To discuss military strategy

**10. What battle did the Sioux warriors famously defeat the Seventh Cavalry Regiment?**

- a. Battle of Gettysburg
- b. Battle of Antietam
- c. Battle of Little Bighorn
- d. Battle of Wounded Knee

**Answer Key:**

- 1. b <00:01:27>
- 2. b <00:00:46>
- 3. b <00:02:09>
- 4. d <00:01:06>
- 5. b <00:02:31>
- 6. c <00:00:46>
- 7. b <00:00:26>
- 8. b <00:01:27>
- 9. b <00:02:52>
- 10. c <00:01:06>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### **Jeep and Cherokee Nation Controversy Comprehension Questions**

**1. Why does the chief of the Cherokee Nation want Jeep to stop using the name "Cherokee"?**

- a. He believes it is disrespectful to the Cherokee people
- b. He wants Jeep to change their marketing strategy
- c. He thinks the vehicles are too expensive
- d. He has no opinion on the matter

**2. What is Jeep's response to the chief's request?**

- a. They agree to change the name immediately
- b. They state that their vehicle names honor Native American people
- c. They plan to stop selling the Cherokee model
- d. They have no response to the chief

**3. What year did Jeep first start using the name "Cherokee"?**

- a. 1980
- b. 1974
- c. 1990
- d. 1965

**4. What does Jeff suggest as a potential solution to the controversy?**

- a. Changing the name of the vehicles
- b. Paying the Cherokee Nation for using the name
- c. Ignoring the chief's request
- d. Conducting a public poll

**5. How does Tori describe Jeep's response to the Cherokee Nation chief's statement?**

- a. Thoughtful and respectful
- b. Tone-deaf
- c. Insightful
- d. Dismissive

**6. What percentage of viewers voted against changing the name of the Jeep Cherokee?**

- a. 60%
- b. 79%
- c. 50%
- d. 85%

**7. According to the discussion, what do some people believe should happen if Jeep continues to use**

**the name "Cherokee"?**

- a. Jeep should conduct more market research
- b. Jeep should provide reparations to the Cherokee Nation
- c. Jeep should create a new vehicle model
- d. Jeep should stop all advertising

**8. Which other names were mentioned that Jeep uses related to Native American tribes?**

- a. Apache and Sioux
- b. Comanche and Cherokee
- c. Navajo and Hopi
- d. Lakota and Iroquois

**9. What is the general sentiment expressed by the commentators regarding the use of Native American names for products?**

- a. It is always appropriate
- b. It is disrespectful and should be reconsidered
- c. It is irrelevant to the discussion
- d. It enhances cultural appreciation

**10. What does Erica suggest should be part of the conversation regarding the name usage?**

- a. Financial terms and reparations
- b. Historical significance of the names
- c. The future of the Jeep brand
- d. Public opinion polls

**Answer Key:**

- 1. a
- 2. b
- 3. b
- 4. b
- 5. b
- 6. b
- 7. b
- 8. b
- 9. b
- 10. a



Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Worksheet: Understanding the Naming of Indian Motorcycles

#### Passage:

Long before Polaris revamped the headdress logo and engineered the Thunderstroke motor to be one of the best V-Twins in the game, there was the original Indian Motorcycle company, the first American-made motorized bicycle in history. The story of Indian goes back to the late 1890s, with 1901 being the year the first Indian motorcycle was revealed to the American public and, soon, the world. Indian Motorcycles began as Hendee Manufacturing company in 1897. Hendee wanted more American flare and named a model the American Indian in 1898 to pique interest in foreign markets. The brand became Indian in 1901, named after a bicycle model designed by co-creators Oscar Hendee and George Hedstrom. The name was chosen to give the motorcycles a striking American name, distinguishing them from European imports. In 2011 Polaris Industries acquired Indian Motorcycle.

**Fill in the Blank:** Fill in the blank with the correct words.

1. Indian Motorcycles began as \_\_ Manufacturing company in 1897.
2. The first Indian motorcycle was revealed in \_\_.
3. The original Indian Motorcycle Company was named after a bicycle model designed by \_\_ Hendee and George Hedstrom.
4. Polaris bought the Indian name and launched their debut line in \_\_.
5. The American Indian model was named to pique interest in \_\_ markets.

**Word bank:** Hedstrom, foreign, 2014, 1901, Hendee

**Multiple Choice Questions:** Choose the correct answer from the choices for each question.

1. What year did the first Indian motorcycle appear?
  - A) 1897
  - B) 1901
  - C) 2014
  - D) 1950
2. Who were the co-creators of the first American motorcycle?
  - A) Harley and Davidson
  - B) Ford and Chevrolet
  - C) Hendee and Hedstrom
  - D) Polaris and Victory
3. What was the original purpose of the name "American Indian" for the bicycle model?
  - A) To honor Indigenous communities

- B) To distinguish from European imports
  - C) To appeal to American markets only
  - D) To confuse competitors
4. Which company acquired Indian Motorcycles in 2011?
- A) Harley-Davidson
  - B) Polaris Industries
  - C) Victory Motorcycles
  - D) BMW
5. Where are modern Indian Motorcycles manufactured?
- A) India
  - B) Sweden
  - C) Iowa, USA
  - D) Germany

**Open Ended Questions:** Answer the following questions in complete sentences:

1. Describe the significance of the name "Indian" for the motorcycle brand.
  2. Explain the controversy surrounding the use of Indigenous imagery by Indian Motorcycles.
  3. Discuss the impact of Polaris Industries on the revival of Indian Motorcycles.
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**Answer Key:**

**Fill in the Blank:**

1. Indian Motorcycles began as **Hendee** Manufacturing company in 1897.
2. The first Indian motorcycle was revealed in **1901**.
3. The original Indian Motorcycle Company was named after a bicycle model designed by **Oscar Hendee**.
4. Polaris bought the Indian name and launched their debut line in **2014**.
5. The American Indian model was named to pique interest in **foreign** markets.

**Multiple Choice Questions:**

1. B) 1901
2. C) Hendee and Hedstrom
3. B) To distinguish from European imports
4. B) Polaris Industries
5. C) Iowa, USA

**Open Ended Questions:**

1. The name "Indian" was chosen to give the motorcycles a striking American name, intended to distinguish them from the less reliable European imports and to evoke a strong American identity.
2. The controversy involves the use of Indigenous imagery and names, which some find offensive and inappropriate. The brand has been criticized for cultural appropriation without adequate engagement or contribution to Indigenous communities.
3. Polaris Industries played a crucial role in reviving the Indian Motorcycle brand by relaunching it in 2014, introducing new models, and maintaining the iconic name and imagery, which contributed to its success in the modern market.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### **Cars Named After Tribes: Cultural Appropriation or Respect?**

**Passage:** Many cars have been named after Native American tribes, raising questions about cultural appropriation. Notable examples include Jeep's Cherokee and Comanche, Chevrolet's Apache, and Pontiac's Aztek. Some argue these names honor the tribes, while others see them as disrespectful. The debate is similar to that faced by sports teams, with some organizations reconsidering the appropriateness of such names. Chuck Hoskin Jr., the Cherokee Nation's principal chief, has called for changes, emphasizing the importance of understanding Native American culture and history.

**Fill in the Blank:** Fill in the blank with the correct words.

1. The most obvious cars named after Native American tribes are Jeep's \_ and Comanche.
2. The Washington Redskins NFL team changed its name to the Washington \_.
3. Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. called on Jeep to change the name of its \_.
4. The employee who submitted the name Thunderbird borrowed it from a \_ creature.
5. The pressure on corporations to change this practice is \_.

**Word bank:** Commanders, Thunderbird, legendary, Cherokee, mounting

**Multiple Choice Questions:** Choose the correct answer from the choices for each question.

1. Which automaker released the Pontiac Aztek?
  - A) Ford
  - B) Pontiac
  - C) Chevrolet
  - D) Toyota
2. Who is the principal chief of the Cherokee Nation mentioned in the passage?
  - A) Tom Williams
  - B) Henry Cesari
  - C) Chuck Hoskin Jr.
  - D) Darren McColleston
3. Which vehicle's name is borrowed from a legendary creature?
  - A) Ford Thunderbird
  - B) Chevrolet Apache
  - C) Jeep Cherokee
  - D) Pontiac Aztek
4. The Nissan Qashqai is named after an ethnic group from which region?

- A) North America
  - B) Sahara Desert
  - C) Iran and surrounding countries
  - D) Eastern Russia
5. What does Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. suggest as the best way to honor tribes?
- A) Naming cars after them
  - B) Plastering names on cars
  - C) Learning about their history and culture
  - D) Ignoring the issue

**Open Ended Questions:** Answer the following questions in complete sentences:

1. What are some arguments for and against naming cars after tribes?
2. How did the Cherokee Nation respond to the naming of the Jeep Cherokee?
3. Do you think automakers should change car names that are derived from tribes? Why or why not?

**Answer Key:**

**Fill in the Blank:**

1. Cherokee
2. Commanders
3. Cherokee
4. legendary
5. mounting

**Multiple Choice Questions:**

1. B) Pontiac
2. C) Chuck Hoskin Jr.
3. A) Ford Thunderbird
4. C) Iran and surrounding countries
5. C) Learning about their history and culture

**Open Ended Questions:**

1. Arguments for naming cars after tribes include the belief that it honors the tribes, while arguments against it suggest it is cultural appropriation and disrespectful to use these names without proper context or permission.
2. The Cherokee Nation, through Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr., has called for the name to be changed, emphasizing that it does not honor them and suggesting that learning about their culture and history would be more respectful.
3. Personal responses will vary; students should support their opinion with reasoning, such as respect for cultural identities, historical context, or the importance of dialogue with tribal communities.